

THE PRIME MINISTER

THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

Independence - Freedom - Happiness

No. 1981/QĐ-TTg

Hanoi, October 18, 2016

DECISION

APPROVING THE STRUCTURAL FRAMEWORK OF THE NATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEM

THE PRIME MINISTER

Pursuant to the Law on Government Organization dated June 19, 2015;

Pursuant to the Law on Education dated June 14, 2005 and the Law on Revision of certain articles of the Law on Education dated November 25, 2009;

Pursuant to the Law on Higher Education dated June 18, 2012;

Pursuant to the Law on Vocational Education dated November 27, 2014;

Pursuant to the Government's Resolution No. 44/NQ-CP dated June 9, 2014 on introduction of the action program of the Government for implementation of the Resolution No. 29-NQ/TW dated November 4, 2013 of the Central Executive Committee (XIth tenure) on the basic and comprehensive reform of education and training with the aim of meeting industrialization and modernization requirements in the context of socialist-oriented market economy and international integration;

Upon the request of the Minister of Education and Training and the Minister of Labor, War Invalids and Social Affairs;

HEREBY DECIDES

Article 1. to approve the structural framework of the national education system (enclosed herewith the flowchart in the appendix) as follows:

1. The structural framework of the national education system is constituted by formal and continuing education components.
2. Educational levels and qualifications attained in the national education system encompass:
 - a) Early childhood education divided into nursery and kindergarten education;
 - b) General education divided into primary, lower and upper secondary education;
 - c) Vocational education divided into elementary, intermediate and junior college-level training level;

d) Higher education divided into bachelor's, master's and doctorate degrees.

3. The structural framework of the national education system serves as the basis for a fundamental and comprehensive reform of the education and training sector.

4. Provisions of this Decision in contrast to applicable regulations set out in relevant laws and legal documents shall come into force after any change to these laws and legal documents where appropriate.

Article 2. Enrolment criteria, study duration and further education opportunities at each educational level and training qualification

1. Early childhood education, including nursery and kindergarten education:

a) Nursery education is offered to children aged 3 months to 3 years;

b) Kindergarten education is offered to children aged 3 months to 6 years.

2. General education including primary education, lower secondary education (basic education stage) and upper secondary education (vocationally oriented education stage):

a) Primary education lasts for 5 school years from the 1st grade to the end of 5th grade. Primary school graduates will be moved up to the lower secondary education level.

b) The lower secondary education primary school graduates.

Lower secondary education lasts for 4 school years from the 6th grade to the end of 9th grade. Lower secondary school graduates may opt to move up to the upper secondary education level, or continue to enroll in elementary and intermediate-level training programs.

c) The upper secondary education is offered to lower secondary school graduates. Within the stipulated duration of upper secondary education, students can transfer to intermediate-level training programs if they wish and meet requirements set out in these programs.

Upper secondary education lasts for 3 school years from the 10th grade to the end of 12th grade. Upper secondary school graduates can move up to the higher education level, or enroll in vocational education programs.

3. Vocational education:

a) Intermediate-level training programs must be attended by students who have graduated from the lower secondary education level as a minimum requirement.

The intermediate-level training program lasts for a period of time equal to at least 1 year of full-time study by lower secondary school graduates; from 2 to 3 years of full-time study by lower secondary school graduates (varying depending on different majors or areas of study). Intermediate-level training program graduates can move up to the college or university-level education if meeting regulations of training programs, simultaneously having completed and passing tests in the amount of cultural knowledge required for the upper secondary education level in accordance with regulations of the Ministry of Education and Training.

b) College-level training programs are designed for upper secondary school or intermediate-level training program graduates.

The college-level training program lasts for a period of time equal to 2-3 years of full-time study by upper secondary school graduates, depending on different majors or areas of study; from 1 to 2 years of full-time study by intermediate-level training program graduates, or students who have attained the certificate of upper secondary school graduation, or those who have completed and passed tests in the amount of cultural knowledge required for the upper secondary education level in accordance with regulations of the Ministry of Education and Training. College-level training program graduates may opt to move up to the university-level training program in which the relevant major or different major will be studied if satisfying requirements of the training program.

c) In addition to the intermediate and college-level training program, the elementary-level training program is designed to help learners gain skills necessary to do simple work in a single occupation.

4. Higher education:

a) Bachelor's and master's degree education is divided into two branches, including pure research and applied research; the doctorate degree education is pure research-oriented.

Pure research-oriented training programs are designed with targets and contents oriented towards specialization in basic principles or theories in scientific fields that help to develop source technologies forming a foundation for development of applied scientific and technological fields.

Applied research-oriented training programs are designed with targets and contents oriented towards development of basic research results, application of source technologies with a view to making them become technological solutions, administration processes and design of full tools that meet various human demands.

Training programs must provide a minimum amount of knowledge, set out capability requirements that students can obtain after graduation in accordance with regulations imposed by the Ministry of Education and Training.

b) University-level training program graduates must be attended by students who have graduated from the upper secondary education level; those who have graduated from intermediate-level training programs, or have completed and passed tests in the volume of cultural knowledge required for the upper secondary education level in accordance with regulations imposed by the Ministry of Education and Training; those who have completed college-level training programs.

The university-level training program lasts for a period of time equivalent to 3 – 5 years of full-time study by either upper secondary school graduates or students who have completed the intermediate-level training program, have completed and passed tests in the volume of cultural knowledge required for the upper secondary education level in accordance with regulations imposed by the Ministry of Education and Training. University-level training program graduates may opt to move up to the master's degree education level where appropriate for their majors in the previous training program, or may be admitted into the training program that provides majors different from their previous ones if they meet requirements of the training program. University-level training program graduates that have achieved excellent study results can be qualified for direct admission to the doctorate-degree training program in which they can continue to study their majors at the university-level education level.

c) Master's degree training programs must be attended by university-level training program graduates.

The duration of study required by the master's degree education program is equivalent to 1 - 2 years of full-time study, depending on requirements of each area of study. Master's degree training program graduates may opt to move up to the doctorate degree education level at which they are provided training for their majors at the master's degree education level, or they are admitted into training programs with majors different from their previous majors if meeting requirements set out in this training program.

d) Doctorate-degree training programs must be attended by master's degree training program graduates or university-level training program graduates if they satisfy requirements of this training program.

The duration of study for the doctorate-level training program is equivalent to 3-4 years of full-time study depending on requirements of training majors and levels of students enrolling in this program.

5. Continuing education model shall be aimed at providing people of different ages and at various levels with opportunities to study, enhance their knowledge, develop their professional capability, create their own employments, shift to other majors or professions appropriate for specific personal circumstances, contribute to boosting the intellectual standards of the public, quality of the human resource and meeting requirements of socio-economic development as well as building a learning society. Learners can shift from the continuing education to other education models if they wish, have full capability and meet requirements set out in this program.

Article 3. Implementation

1. The Ministry of Education and Training:

a) Take charge of setting out regulations specifying the structural framework of the national education system applied to the early childhood education, general education and higher education under the provisions of this Decision;

b) Take charge of and collaborate with relevant Ministries and sectoral department in studying, reviewing and submitting to regulatory authorities any recommendation on revision of the Law on Education, Law on Higher Education and other relevant legal documents;

c) Take charge of and collaborate with the Ministry of Labor, War Invalids and Social Affairs in establishing and submitting to the Prime Minister the national framework of educational level of Vietnam in conformity with the structural framework of the national education system.

2. The Ministry of Labor, War Invalids and Social Affairs:

a) Take charge of and collaborate with the Ministry of Education and Training in setting out regulations specifying the structural framework of the national education system applied to the vocational education under the provisions of this Decision;

b) Take charge of and collaborate with relevant Ministries and sectoral department in studying, reviewing and submitting to regulatory authorities any recommendation on revision of the Law on Vocational Education and other relevant legal documents.

3. The Ministry of Health shall take charge of and collaborate with the Ministry of Education and Training in applying the structural framework of the national education system to the training of health workers within its jurisdiction.

Article 4. Entry into force

1. This Decision shall enter into force from the signature date.

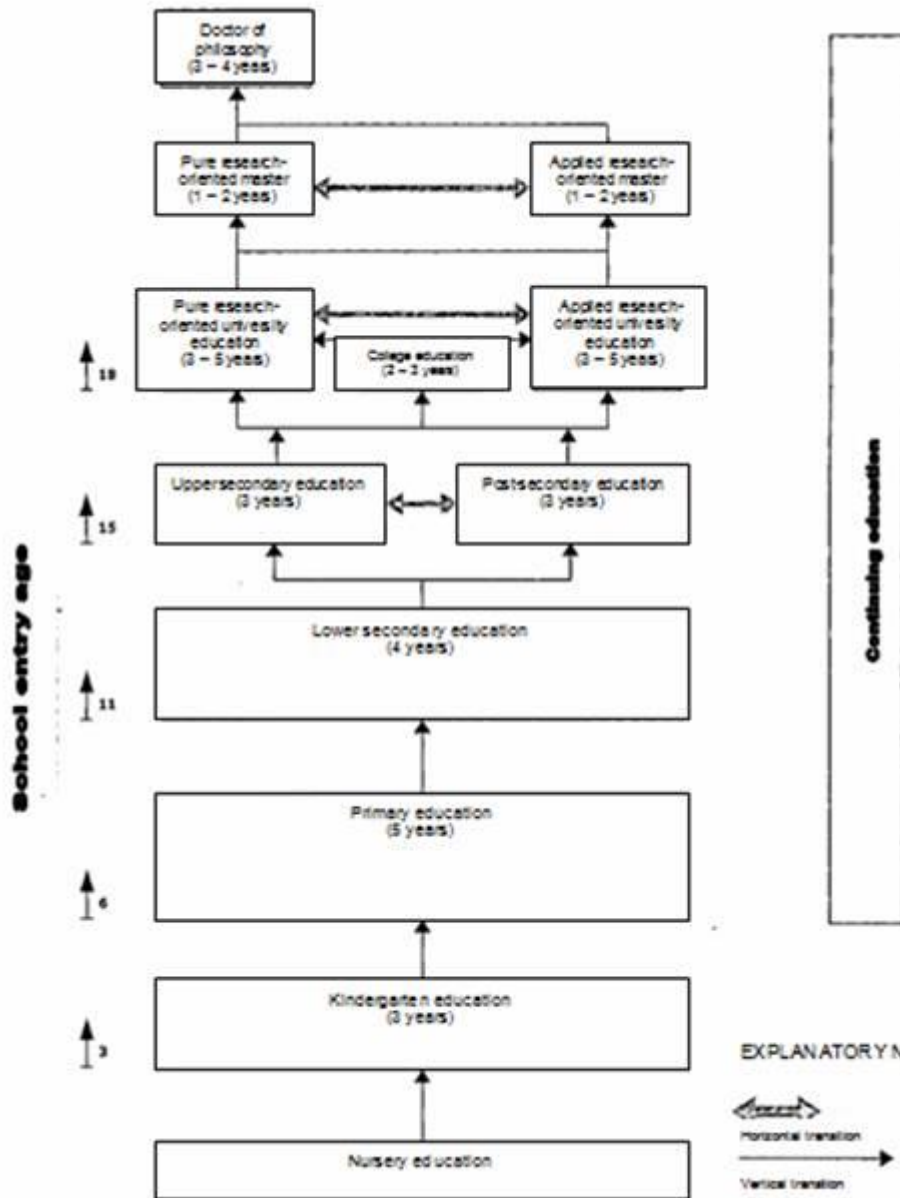
2. Ministers of Education and Training; Labor, War Invalids and Social Affairs; Health; heads of Ministry-level agencies, Government bodies; Presidents of People's Committees of centrally-affiliated cities and provinces; heads of entities, organizations and individuals concerned, shall be responsible for implementing this Decision./.

THE PRIME MINISTER

Nguyen Xuan Phuc

APPENDIX

STRUCTURAL FRAMEWORK OF THE NATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEM
(Appended to the Prime Minister's Decision No. 1981/QĐ-TTg dated October 18, 2016)



EXPLANATORY NOTES

