

## **Vocational Education and Training Act**

Promulgated, SG No. 68/30.07.1999, amended, SG No. 1/4.01.2000, SG No. 108/29.12.2000, SG No. 111/28.12.2001, amended and supplemented, SG No. 103/5.11.2002, amended, SG No. 120/29.12.2002, supplemented, SG No. 29/31.03.2003, amended, SG No. 28/1.04.2005, effective 1.04.2005, amended and supplemented, SG No. 77/27.09.2005, effective 27.09.2005, amended, SG No. 94/25.11.2005, effective 25.11.2005, SG No. 30/11.04.2006, effective 12.07.2006, amended and supplemented, SG No. 62/1.08.2006, effective 1.01.2007, corrected, SG No. 63/4.08.2006, amended and supplemented, SG No. 13/8.02.2008, effective 8.02.2008, amended, SG No. 26/7.03.2008, amended and supplemented, SG No. 36/15.05.2009, SG No. 74/15.09.2009, effective 15.09.2009, SG No. 50/2.07.2010, effective from 2011 - 2012 school year, amended, SG No. 97/10.12.2010, effective 10.12.2010, SG No. 66/26.07.2013, effective 26.07.2013, SG No. 68/2.08.2013, effective 2.08.2013, SG No. 70/9.08.2013, amended and supplemented, SG No. 61/25.07.2014, amended, SG No. 98/28.11.2014, effective 28.11.2014, SG No. 107/24.12.2014, effective 1.01.2015, SG No. 14/20.02.2015, SG No. 79/13.10.2015, effective 1.08.2016

Text in Bulgarian: Закон за професионалното образование и обучение

### **Chapter One GENERAL PROVISIONS**

Purpose and Scope of the Act

**Article 1.** (1) This Act shall regulate the social relations in connection with:

1. ensuring the right to vocational education and training of the citizens according to their personal interests and possibilities;
2. meeting the needs for qualified manpower which is competitive on the labour market;
3. providing conditions for functioning and development of the system of vocational education and training based on cooperation between its institutions and the bodies of the executive power and the local independent government and the social partners;
4. (new, SG No. 61/2014) validation of professional knowledge, skills and competences.

(2) The Act shall regulate the organisation, institutions, management and financing of the system of vocational education and training.

(3) (Supplemented, SG No. 103/2002) The primary and the secondary education received respectively in the vocational schools and in

the vocational secondary schools shall be stipulated by the Public Education Act, the Level of Education, General Education Minimum and Curriculum Act and by the state educational requirements inasmuch as this Act does not provide otherwise.

Purpose of the system of vocational education and training

**Article 2.** The system of vocational education and training shall prepare the citizens for realisation in the economy and the other spheres of public life by creating conditions for acquiring professional qualification and for its continuous improvement.

Tasks of the System of Vocational Education and Qualification

**Article 3.** (1) (Previous Article 3, SG No. 61/2014) The basic tasks of the system of vocational education and training shall be:

1. acquisition of professional qualification;
2. (new, SG No. 103/2002, amended, SG No. 77/2005);  
acquisition of legitimate qualification for professions whose practising requires such qualification, including the practising of regulated professions;
3. (renumbered from item 2, SG No. 103/2002) continuous improvement of the professional qualification;
4. (renumbered from item 3, SG No. 103/2002) formation of a motivation system for realisation in the civil society;
5. (renumbered from item 4, SG No. 103/2002) formation and general culture on the basis of the national and all human values.

(2) (New, SG No. 61/2014) The tasks under Paragraph 1 shall be implemented in compliance with the requirements for assurance of quality of vocational education and training.

Structure of the System of Vocational Education and Training

**Article 4.** (Amended, SG No. 61/2014) The system of vocational education and training shall include:

1. vocational orientation, vocational training and vocational education;
2. validation of professional knowledge, skills and competences.

Nature of the System of Vocational Education and Training

**Article 5.** (1) (Amended, SG No. 103/2002) Vocational orientation shall provide information, consulting and counselling to students and to other persons regarding the choice of profession and carrier development.

(2) (Amended, SG No. 103/2002) Vocational training shall ensure the acquisition of qualification for a profession or part of a profession, as well as its improvement. Under conditions determined by this Act, by the Public Education Act and the Level of Education, General Education Minimum and Curriculum Act, it shall also ensure the completion of primary education or of secondary education grades. Vocational training shall include:

1. initial vocational training - acquisition of initial qualification for a profession or part of a profession;

2. continuous vocational training - improvement of the acquired qualification for a profession or part of a profession.

(3) Vocational education shall ensure the acquisition of the general education minimum for secondary education and the acquisition of qualification for a profession.

(4) (New, SG No. 61/2014, amended, SG No. 79/2015, effective

1.08.2016) Vocational training may also be conducted by means of training through work (dual system of instruction). Training through work (dual system of instruction) shall be a form of partnership between a vocational school, a vocational secondary school, a vocational college or a centre for vocational training and one or several employers, which shall include:

1. practical training in real working environment, and

2. training in a vocational school, a vocational secondary school, a vocational college or a centre for vocational training.

(5) (New, SG No. 61/2014, amended, SG No. 79/2015, effective

1.08.2016) Validation of professional knowledge, skills and competences shall be the recognition of acquired knowledge, skills and competences on a profession or a part thereof, obtained through informal training or informal learning in order to gain access to training for acquisition of professional qualification and facilitate access to the labour market.

## **Chapter Two**

### **GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE ORGANISATION IN THE SYSTEM OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

#### **Section I**

#### **Professions and Degrees of Professional Qualification**

List of Professions for Vocational Education and Training

**Article 6.** (1) (Amended, SG No. 61/2014) Vocational orientation, vocational training, vocational education and validation of professional knowledge, skills and competences shall be carried out for professions and specialities included in the List of Professions for Vocational Education and Training.

(2) (Amended, SG No. 68/2013, effective 2.08.2013) The list referred to in Paragraph 1 shall be approved by the Minister of Education and Science in coordination with the Minister of Labour and Social Policy, as well as with the respective branch ministers and with the

representative organisations of employers and of employees on national level.

(3) (New, SG No. 77/2005) The structural elements of the list referred to in Para. 1 shall be professions and specialties.

Protected Professions

**Article 6a.** (New, SG No. 61/2014) (1) Specific professions in the List of Professions for Vocational Education and Training under Article 6 may be endorsed as state protected professions on a regional level.

(2) The list of state protected professions and the criteria for determination thereof shall be adopted by an act of the Council of Ministers.

(3) The list under Paragraph 2 shall be updated on an annual basis by the end of October in the respective year.

List of Regulated Professions in the Republic of Bulgaria

**Article 7.** (Amended, SG No. 77/2005) (1) (Supplemented, SG No. 13/2008, amended, SG No. 68/2013, effective 2.08.2013) The list of regulated professions in the Republic of Bulgaria shall be adopted by a decision of the Council of Ministers, based on a proposal made by the Minister of Education and Science after coordination with the Minister of Labour and Social Policy, as well as with the respective branch ministers and with the representative organisations of employers and of employees on national level.

(2) The structural elements of the list referred to in Para. 1 shall be:

1. the names of the professions which are regulated according to Bulgarian legislation;

2. (amended, SG No. 62/2006) the statutory instrument which determines the requirements for practicing the profession;

3. (amended, SG No. 62/2006, SG No. 13/2008) the authority which is competent to acknowledge the right to practice the respective regulated profession.

(3) The Council of Ministers shall determine the terms and procedure for maintaining the list referred to under Paragraph 1

(4) (New, SG No. 13/2008) The decision referred to in Paragraph (1) shall be promulgated in the State Gazette.

Classification Characteristics of the List of Professions for Vocational Education and Training

**Article 8.** (1) (Amended, SG No. 61/2014) Professions and specialties shall be classified in professional branches and by professional qualification degree.

(2) The degrees of professional qualification acquired pursuant to this Act shall be first, second, third and fourth degree.

(3) The following shall be required for the respective degrees of professional qualification:

1. (amended, SG No. 61/2014) for first degree - acquired professional knowledge, skills and competences for practising professions which include routine activities carried out under permanent conditions;

2. (amended, SG No. 61/2014) for second degree - acquired professional knowledge, skills and competences for practising professions which include activities of complex nature carried out under changing conditions;

3. (amended, SG No. 61/2014) for third degree - acquired professional knowledge, skills and competences for practising professions which include activities of complex nature carried out under changing conditions, as well as assuming responsibility for the work of other persons;

4. (amended, SG No. 103/2002, SG No. 61/2014) for fourth degree - acquired professional knowledge, skills and competences for practising professions which include a wide range of activities of complex nature carried out under changing conditions, as well as assuming managerial responsibilities for the work of other persons and for the allocation of resources.

(4) The minimum entry educational level for acquiring the respective degrees of professional qualification shall be:

1. (amended, SG No. 26/2008) for first degree:

a) completed 6th degree - for students;

b) (amended, SG No. 70/2013) completed initial stage of primary education or a successfully completed literacy course, organised by schools from the system of public education under the Employment Promotion Act or under the terms and procedures of programmes and projects, funded by resources from European structural funds - for people aged 16 and over;

2. for second and third degree - completed 7th degree or primary education;

3. for fourth degree - completed secondary education.

(5) The graduating educational level for acquiring the respective professional qualification degrees shall be:

1. for first degree:

a) primary education - for students;

b) (amended, SG No. 26/2008, SG No. 70/2013) initial stage of primary education or a successfully completed literacy course, organised by schools from the system of public education under the Employment Promotion Act or under the terms and procedures of programmes and projects, funded by resources from European structural funds - for persons aged 16 and over;

2. for second degree - completed 10th or 11th grade, acquired right to take state matriculation examinations for completion of secondary education or completed secondary education;

3. (supplemented, SG No. 103/2002) for third degree - secondary education or acquired right to take state matriculation examinations for completion of secondary education; determined by the state educational requirements for acquiring qualification on professions.

(6) (New, SG No. 61/2014) The professional qualification degree for each profession from the List of Professions for Vocational Education and Training under Article 6 shall be determined in accordance with the National Qualification Framework adopted by an act of the Council of Ministers.

## **Section II**

### **Conditions and Procedure for Acquisition of Professional Qualification**

Training for Acquisition of Professional Qualification

**Article 9.** (1) The following shall have the right to conduct training for acquisition of professional qualification:

1. (supplemented, SG No. 103/2002) vocational schools, vocational secondary schools, vocational colleges, art schools and centres for vocational training;

2. (new, SG No. 50/2010, effective 2011/2012 school year) sports schools;

3. (amended, SG No. 103/2002, SG No. 74/2009, renumbered from item 2, SG No. 50/2010, effective 2011/2012 school year, SG No.

68/2013, effective 2.08.2013) junior secondary schools, primary schools, secondary general education schools, special schools, secondary schools and profiled secondary schools in individual classes of them - on the basis of an order issued by the Minister of Education and Science, if they meet the conditions determined by the state educational requirements.

(2) (Supplemented, SG No. 36/2009, SG No. 61/2014) Training for acquisition of professional qualification may be conducted by ministries, municipalities, higher education institutions, university and multi-profile hospitals, organisations of the employers, organisations of employees and individual employers.

(3) (Amended, SG No. 61/2014, SG No. 79/2015, effective 1.08.2016) Professional knowledge, skills and competences may also be acquired through informal training and informal learning.

Quality of vocational education and training

**Article 9a.** (New, SG No. 61/2014) (1) Quality shall be a set of characteristics of vocational education and training which meet individual and public expectations and needs.

(2) The institutions referred to in Article 9 shall ensure quality of vocational education and training by establishing an internal quality assurance system in compliance with the state educational requirements for acquisition of qualification on professions and the effective legislation.

(3) The implementing rules for the internal quality assurance system under Paragraph 2 shall be laid down in the rules of operation of the training institution.

(4) (Amended, SG No. 14/2015) Training institutions shall develop an internal quality assurance system under Paragraph 2 under the terms and procedure set out in an ordinance of the Minister of Education and Science, reconciled with the Minister of Labour and Social Policy, the Minister of Economy, the Minister of Culture, the Minister of Youth and Sports, and the Minister of Agriculture and Food.

(5) The ordinance under Paragraph 4 shall lay down the quality assurance principles, the requirements to institutions under Article 9 for improving the procedures for quality management, the indicators, the conditions and the procedure for measuring the quality attained.

Framework Programmes for Acquisition of Professional Qualification

(Title amended, SG No. 103/2002)

**Article 10.** (1) (Amended, SG No. 103/2002, SG No. 68/2013, effective 2.08.2013) The acquisition of professional qualification in the system of vocational education and training shall be regulated by framework programmes approved by the Minister of Education and Science.

(2) The programmes referred to in Paragraph 1 shall determine the age and the entry educational and qualification level of the candidates, as well as the contents and the duration of the vocational education and vocational training.

(3) The programmes referred to in Paragraph 1 shall be:

1. A Programmes for initial vocational training for acquiring first degree of professional qualification;

2. B Programmes for initial vocational training for acquiring second degree of professional qualification;

3. C Programmes for vocational education for acquiring second or third degree of professional qualification;

4. D programmes for vocational education for acquiring fourth degree of professional qualification;

5. E Programmes for initial vocational training for acquiring qualification on part of a profession;

6. (Amended and supplemented, SG No. 61/2014) F Programmes for continuing vocational training and updating or expanding

the acquired professional qualification, as well as for acquiring first, second and third degree of professional qualification upon acquired qualification on part of a profession respectively, first or second degree of professional qualification.

#### Programmes for Students

**Article 11.** Students may be trained under the following programmes:

1. A Programmes with duration of up to 3 years for students with completed 6th grade at the least;

2. B Programmes with duration of up to 4 years for students with completed primary education or with a completed secondary education grade;

3. (amended, SG No. 103/2002, SG No. 36/2009, effective 2009/2010 school year, supplemented, SG No. 50/2010, effective

2011/2012 school year) C Programmes with duration of 4 years for students with completed primary education or 5 years for students with completed 7th grade, and in the art and sports schools - up to 4 years after primary education or a completed secondary education grade;

4. (Amended, SG No. 61/2014) E Programmes:

a) with duration of up to 1 year for students with completed primary education or a completed secondary education grade;

b) for students with special educational needs with completed lower secondary school grade and duration to be determined by the specific documentation.

#### Programmes for Persons Aged 16 and Over

**Article 12.** The programmes under which persons aged 16 and over may be trained shall be:

1. (Amended, SG No. 26/2008, SG No. 70/2013, SG No. 61/2014)

##### A Programmes:

a) with duration of up to 1 year for persons with at least completed initial stage of primary education or a successfully completed literacy course, organised by schools from the system of public education under the Employment Promotion Act or under the terms and procedures of programmes and projects, funded by resources from European structural funds;

b) for students with special educational needs with completed 8th grade under an individual curriculum, and duration determined by the specific documentation;

2. B Programmes with duration of 1 year for persons with a completed secondary education grade or with completed secondary education;

3. (New, SG No. 103/2002, amended, SG No. 36/2009, effective

2009/2010 school year) C Programmes, with a duration of respectively 4 years for persons with completed primary education;



4. (Renumbered from Item 3, SG No. 103/2002) D Programmes with duration of up to 2 years for persons with completed secondary education;

5. (Renumbered from Item 4, SG No. 103/2002) E Programmes with duration determined by the specific vocational training documentation;

6. (Renumbered from Item 5, SG No. 103/2002) F Programmes with duration determined by the specific vocational training documentation.

Vocational Education and Vocational Training Documentation  
(Title amended, SG No. 103/2002)

**Article 13.** (Amended and supplemented, SG No. 103/2002,

amended, SG No. 61/2014) (1) The programmes referred to in Article 10, Paragraph 3, items 1, 2, 3 and 4 shall be specified for each profession from the list referred to in Article 6, Paragraph 1 for the state educational requirements for acquisition of qualification on professions.

(2) The programmes referred to in Article 10, Paragraph 3, items 5 and 6 shall be specified by the vocational training documentation - curricula and syllabi, which shall be developed on the basis of the state educational requirements for acquisition of qualification on professions.

(3) The documentation referred to in Paragraph 2 shall be developed by the training institution or by the applicant for vocational training. For acquisition of a professional qualification degree the documentation shall be developed in compliance with the state educational requirements for acquisition of qualification on professions.

(4) The state educational requirements for acquisition of qualification on professions shall determine:

1. requirements to candidates;
2. description of the profession;
3. units of study results;
4. requirements to the material base;
5. requirements to the training specialists.

(5) Curricula and syllabi shall be developed on the basis of the state educational requirements for acquisition of qualification on professions.

(6) The documentation under Paragraph 5 may be developed as module curricula and module syllabi.

(7) Vocational training for students and for persons aged 16 and over with special educational needs may also be carried out in accordance with individual syllabi.

(8) Curricula for training of students under A, B, C, E programmes and for training under D programmes shall be approved by the Minister of Education and Science, for art schools - by the Minister of Culture, and for sports schools - by the Minister of Youth and Sports.

(9) Curricula for training of persons aged 16 and over under A, B, D, E programmes shall be developed by the training institutions or by the

vocational training applicant and shall be approved by the director of the training institution.

#### Requirements to Candidates

**Article 14.** (1) The requirements to the candidates for inclusion in the programmes for vocational education and vocational training shall refer to a minimum age, health condition, entry educational level and entry qualification level.

(2) The minimum age of the candidate in the year of application shall be 13 years for schools and 16 years when the training is carried out in another training institution.

(3) (Amended, SG No. 68/2013, effective 2.08.2013) The health condition of candidates shall be certified by a medical certificate proving that the profession for which they want to be trained is not counter-indicative for them. The requirements shall be determined with an ordinance issued by the Minister of Health in coordination with the Minister of Education and Science.

(4) (Amended, SG No. 26/2008, SG No. 70/2013) The entry educational level of the candidate shall be a completed grade of the primary or the secondary education or a successfully completed literacy course, organised by schools from the system of public education under the Employment Promotion Act or under the terms and procedures of programmes and projects, funded by resources from European structural funds necessary for acquisition of the respective professional qualification degree.

(5) The entry qualification level of the candidate shall be the acquired professional qualification degree required for inclusion in an F Programme.

#### Conditions and Procedure for Admission of Candidates

**Article 15.** (Amended, SG No. 103/2002) (1) (Amended, SG No. 28/2005, SG No. 94/2005, amended and supplemented, SG No. 50/2010, effective 2011/2012 school year, amended, SG No. 68/2013, effective

2.08.2013) The conditions and procedure for admission of candidates to state and municipal schools carrying out vocational education and training shall be determined with an ordinance issued by the Minister of Education and Science, to art schools - with an ordinance issued by the Minister of Education and Science and the Minister of Culture and to sports schools - by an ordinance of the Minister of Education and Science and the Minister of Youth and Sports.

(2) The conditions and procedure for admission of candidates to institutions other than those referred to in Paragraph 1 shall be determined by the training institution in compliance with the requirements of this Act and the other statutory instruments regulating vocational education and training.

## **Section III**

### **Organisation of the Educational Process**

Organisation of the Educational Process in Vocational Education

**Article 16.** (1) The forms of education, the organisational forms and the education term for the C Programmes shall be in compliance with the Public Education Act and the Rules for Implementation of the Public Education Act.

(2) The organisation of the educational process for each profession of the list referred to in Article 6, Paragraph 1 shall be determined by the state educational requirements for acquisition of qualification on professions.

Organisation of the Educational Process in Vocational Training

**Article 17.** (1) The forms of education, the organisational forms and the education term for the A, B and E Programmes for students shall comply with the Public Education Act and the Regulations for implementation of the Public Education Act.

(2) The organisational form for the A, B, D, E and F Programmes for persons aged 16 and over shall be a qualification course. The forms of education, the education term and the number of the trainees in the course shall be determined by the educational institution. They can be coordinated with the applicant for the vocational training.

(3) The organisation of the educational process according to A, B and D Programmes shall be determined by the state educational requirements for acquisition of qualification on professions and for E and F Programmes - by the documentation referred to in Article 13, Paragraph 2.

Organisation of Training through Work (Dual System of Instruction)

(Title amended, SG No. 79/2015, effective 1.08.2016)

**Article 17a.** (New, SG No. 61/2014) (1) (Amended, SG No. 79/2015, effective 1.08.2016) Training through work (dual system of instruction) shall be a specific form of vocational training for acquisition of professional qualification, which shall be organised on the basis of partnership, including a contract between the institutions under Article 5, Paragraph 4 and one or more employers.

(2) (Amended, SG No. 79/2015, effective 1.08.2016) Training through work (dual system of instruction) shall be organised and carried out in compliance with this Act, the Labour Code and the ordinance under Paragraph 5.

(3) Training under Paragraph 1 shall be carried out on the basis of admission stated by the employer to the director of the respective institution delivering the training.

(4) Vocational secondary schools and vocational schools the form of training under Paragraph 1 shall be organised in 11th and 12th grades for students who have come to the age of 16.

(5) (Amended, SG No. 79/2015, effective 1.08.2016) The terms and procedure for conducting training through work (dual system of instruction) under Paragraph 1 shall be laid down in an ordinance issued by the minister of education and science, reconciled with the minister of labour and social policy.

### **Chapter Three**

## **INSTITUTIONS IN THE SYSTEM OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

Institutions

**Article 18.** The institutions in the system of vocational education and training shall be:

1. vocational schools;
2. vocational secondary schools;
3. (new, SG No. 103/2002) art schools;
4. (new, SG No. 50/2010, effective 2011/2012 school year) sports schools;
5. (renumbered from item 3, SG No. 103/2002, renumbered from Item 4, SG No. 50/2010, effective 2011/2012 school year) vocational colleges;
6. (renumbered from item 4, SG No. 103/2002, renumbered from Item 5, SG No. 50/2010, effective 2011/2012 school year) centres for vocational training;
7. (renumbered from item 5, SG No. 103/2002, renumbered from Item 6, SG No. 50/2010, effective 2011/2012 school year) centres for information and vocational orientation;
8. (renumbered from item 6, SG No. 103/2002) centres for qualification of training specialists;

Vocational Schools, Vocational Secondary Schools and Vocational Colleges, Art and Sports Schools

(Title amended, SG No. 103/2002, amended and supplemented, SG No. 50/2010, effective 2011/2012 school year)

**Article 19.** (1) Vocational schools, vocational secondary schools and vocational colleges shall be state, municipal and private, Bulgarian with foreign participation and foreign and shall be opened, transformed and closed down following the procedure stipulated by the Public Education Act.

(2) (Supplemented, SG No. 103/2002, amended, SG No. 68/2013, effective 2.08.2013) Vocational schools shall carry out initial vocational training leading to acquisition of first and second degree of

professional qualification and qualification on part of a profession with a duration of four years. They shall admit students with a completed 6th grade at the least. Vocational schools may also carry out vocational education based on an order issued by the Minister of Education and Science, provided that they meet the conditions determined by the state educational requirements.

(3) (Amended, SG No. 103/2002, SG No. 36/2009, effective 2009/2010 school year, SG No. 68/2013, effective 2.08.2013) Vocational secondary schools shall carry out vocational education for acquiring second degree of professional qualification, with a duration of four years, or third degree of professional qualification with a duration of four or five years. They shall admit students with completed primary education or 7th grade. Vocational secondary schools may also carry out vocational training for acquiring first, second and third degree of professional qualification and qualification on part of the profession. Vocational secondary schools may also carry out vocational education for acquiring fourth degree of professional qualification based on an order issued by the Minister of Education and Science, provided that they meet the requirements determined by the state educational requirements.

(4) (New, SG No. 103/2002) Vocational schools and vocational secondary schools may organise the training of persons aged 16 years or over according to the programmes referred to Article 12.

(5) (New, SG No. 103/2002, amended, SG No. 36/2009, effective 2009/2010 school year) Art schools shall carry out vocational education for acquiring third degree of professional qualification with a duration of up to four years after primary education.

(6) (New, SG No. 50/2010, effective 2011/2012 school year) The sports schools carry out vocational education with the acquisition of third degree of vocational qualification with a duration of up to 4 years following primary education.

(7) (Renumbered from Paragraph 4, supplemented, SG No. 103/2002, renumbered from Paragraph 6, SG No. 50/2010, effective 2011/2012 school year) Vocational colleges shall carry out vocational training for acquiring fourth degree of professional qualification with a duration of up to two years depending on the acquired professional qualification degree. They shall admit persons with completed secondary education.

#### Centres for Vocational Training

**Article 20.** The centres for vocational training shall carry out vocational training of persons aged 16 and over.

#### Centres for Information and Vocational Orientation

**Article 21.** (Amended, SG No. 103/2002) The centres for information and vocational orientation shall carry out vocational orientation of students and other persons.

Status of the Centres for Vocational Training and the Centres for Information and Vocational Orientation

**Article 22.** (1) The centres for vocational training and the centres for informational and vocational orientation shall be state, municipal or private, Bulgarian with foreign participation and foreign.

(2) (Amended, SG No. 36/2009) The state and municipal centres shall be opened by legal persons which have obtained a licence for carrying out vocational training or vocational orientation.

(3) (Amended, SG No. 36/2009) The private centres shall be opened by sole entrepreneurs or legal persons established as trade companies, co-operatives, associations and foundations with a licence for carrying out vocational training or vocational orientation.

(4) (Amended, SG No. 36/2009) Bulgarian centres for vocational training and centres for information and vocational orientation with foreign participation shall be opened by associations between Bulgarian and foreign natural and/or legal persons registered in the Republic of Bulgaria with a licence for vocational training or vocational orientation.

(5) (Amended, SG No. 36/2009) Foreign centres for vocational training and centres for information and vocational orientation shall be opened by foreign corporate bodies carrying out their activity in the Republic of Bulgaria in compliance with international agreements and which have obtained licence for vocational training or for vocational orientation.

(6) (New, SG, No. 36/2009) Centres for vocational training and centres for information and vocational orientation may not be managed or represented by persons sentenced to imprisonment with an absolute verdict for a premeditated crime.

(7) (Amended, SG No. 103/2002, renumbered from Paragraph 6, SG No. 36/2009) The licence for vocational training or for vocational orientation shall be issued by the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training.

(8) (Repealed, SG No. 103/2002, new, SG No. 36/2009) Each calendar year by the 31st day of January centres for vocational training and centres for information and vocational orientation shall provide the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training with information on the activities carried out during the previous calendar year.

(9) (New, SG No. 36/2009) The National Agency for Vocational Education and Training shall determine indicators for the provision of the annual information referred to in Paragraph 8.

Centres for Qualification of Training Specialists

**Article 23.** (1) The Centres for qualification of training specialists shall be state or municipal servicing units from the public education

system and shall be opened, transformed and closed down pursuant to the procedure stipulated by the Public Education Act.

(2) The Centres for qualification of training specialists shall carry out updating and broadening of the qualification of teachers and other persons carrying out vocational training.

## **Chapter Four**

### **STATE EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENT FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

#### **Section I**

#### **General Provisions**

Content of the State Educational Requirement for Vocational Education and Training

**Article 24.** (Amended, SG No. 103/2002) The state educational requirement for vocational education and training referred to in Article 16, item 6 of the Public Education Act shall determine the organisation of the admission of candidates and of the vocational education and training, the structure and content of the framework programmes for vocational education and training and the organisation of the practical training for the school vocational education and training.

Admission to Vocational Schools, Vocational Secondary Schools, Vocational Colleges, in Art and Sports Schools

(Title amended and supplemented, SG No. 50/2010, effective 2011/2012 school year)

**Article 25.** (Amended, SG No. 103/2002) (1) Vocational education and vocational training according to a state plan for admission shall be organised by the state and municipal schools.

(2) The state plan for admission shall be approved for schools and professions for each academic year.

(3) (Supplemented, SG No. 50/2010, effective 2011/2012 school year) The state and municipal schools, with the exception of art and sports schools, in compliance with the strategies, forecasts, programmes and plans for development of the respective municipality shall submit proposals for state plan for admission for professions to the regional inspectorates for education.

(4) The regional inspectorates for education shall coordinate the proposals referred to in Paragraph 3 with the respective financing bodies, with the commission for employment at the regional council for regional development and with the regional structures of employers.

(5) (Amended, SG No. 66/2013, effective 26.07.2013, SG No. 68/2013, effective 2.08.2013, SG No. 98/2014, effective 28.11.2014)

The state plan for admission to state and municipal schools shall be approved by the Minister of Education and Science based on a proposal of the regional inspectorates for education in coordination with the Minister of Labour and Social Policy and the Minister of Regional Development and Public Works.

(6) (Amended, SG No. 28/2005, SG No. 94/2005, SG No. 68/2013, effective 2.08.2013) The state plan for admission to art schools shall be approved by the Minister of Culture. The conditions and the procedure for approval of the state plan for admission shall be determined with an ordinance issued by the Minister of Culture and the Minister of Education and Science.

(7) (New, SG No. 50/2010, effective 2011/2012 school year, amended, SG No. 68/2013, effective 2.08.2013) The state plan-admission for sports schools is endorsed by the Minister of Youth and Sports under the procedure of the Physical Education and Sports Act.

(8) (Renumbered from Paragraph 7, SG No. 50/2010, effective 2011/2012 school year) Private vocational schools, Bulgarian schools with foreign participation and foreign vocational schools shall determine independently their plan for admission.

Organisation of the Vocational Training of Persons Aged 16 and Over in State and Municipal Schools

(Title amended, SG No. 103/2002, SG No. 61/2014)

**Article 26.** (1) (Amended, SG No. 103/2002) State and municipal schools may carry out vocational training for persons aged 16 or over financed by natural or legal persons.

(2) (New, SG No. 61/2014) In the cases referred to in Paragraph 1 state and municipal schools shall be free to determine the number of admitted trainees.

(3) (Renumbered from Paragraph 2, SG No. 61/2014) The organisation, the fulfilment, the material and financial provision of vocational training shall be settled by a contract between the director of the school and the person financing the training.

## **Section II**

### **Vocational Education and Vocational Training Content**

Structure and Content of the Framework Programmes for Vocational Education

(Title amended, SG No. 103/2002)

**Article 27.** (1) The structure of the programmes for vocational education shall include general education training, obligatory vocational training - general, branch and specific for each profession, obligatory



foreign language studies related to the profession and optional studies - mandatorily elective and optional.

(2) General education studies shall provide the general education minimum necessary for secondary education.

(3) The general obligatory vocational training shall be unified for all professional branches, taking into account their specifics. It shall include theoretical training and practical training - educational practice.

(4) The branch obligatory vocational training shall be unified for all professions of the professional branch taking into account the specifics of each profession. It includes theoretical education and practical education - educational practice.

(5) (Supplemented, SG No. 103/2002) The specific vocational training obligatory for each profession shall include theoretical training and practical training - educational and practical training.

(6) General education training shall be determined pursuant to the Level of Education, General Education Minimum and Curriculum Act.

(7) (Amended, SG No. 103/2002, SG No. 61/2014) The obligatory vocational training and the obligatory foreign language studies related to the profession shall be determined according to the state educational requirements for acquiring qualification on professions.

(8) (Repealed, SG No. 103/2002).

(9) (Amended, SG No. 103/2002) At least 40 percent of the number of the educational hours for obligatory vocational training shall be for practical training.

Structure and Content of the Framework Programmes for Vocational Training

(Title amended, SG No. 103/2002)

**Article 28.** (1) The structure of the programmes for vocational training shall include:

1. general education studies, obligatory vocational studies and optional studies under the programmes for acquiring professional qualification with completion of primary education or a grade of the secondary education;

2. obligatory and optional vocational studies under the programmes for acquiring professional qualification.

(2) Obligatory vocational training shall include theoretical training and practical training.

(3) (Amended, SG No. 103/2002) The number of education hours for practical training for the obligatory vocational studies shall not be less than the number of education hours for theoretical training.

(4) General education training studies shall be determined pursuant to the Level of Education, General Education Minimum and Curriculum Act.

(5) (Amended, SG No. 61/2014) The obligatory vocational studies shall be determined according to the state educational requirements for acquiring qualification on professions.

(6) (New, SG No. 61/2014) The obligatory vocational studies and the optional vocational studies shall be acquired through training in subjects or modules.

### **Section III Practical Training**

#### Types of Practical Training

**Article 29.** (Supplemented, SG No. 61/2014) Practical training shall be organised as educational practice and practical activity or as training through work under Article 5, Paragraph 4, item 1.

#### Places for Carrying out Practical Training

**Article 30.** (1) Practical training shall be carried out in:

1. educational and production facilities of the schools;
2. educational and production facilities of similar schools or centres for vocational training in the Republic of Bulgaria and abroad;
3. enterprises of natural and legal persons;
4. educational and production facilities with the enterprises;
5. (new, SG No. 50/2010, effective 2011/2012 school year) the educational-training facilities of schools, sports halls, stadiums and swimming pools.

(2) (Supplemented, SG No. 50/2010, effective 2011/2012 school year) The educational and production facilities and the educational-training facilities of schools shall be equipped according to the state educational requirements for acquiring qualification on professions.

(3) Conditions in compliance with the state educational requirement for safe conditions of tuition, education and work shall be provided in the places for carrying out practical training.

#### Organisation of Practical Training

**Article 31.** (1) Practical training shall be carried out as educational training, educational practical and practical educational activities.

(2) (Amended, SG No. 50/2010, effective 2011/2012 school year)

Schools shall conclude contracts for carrying out practical training in the locations referred to in Article 30, Paragraph 1, items 2, 3, 4 and 5

(3) Schools may organise independently and/or in co-operation with natural or legal persons production of products and services meeting the state educational requirements for acquiring qualification on professions or the vocational training documentation of the school or of the applicant for vocational training.

(4) (New, SG No. 103/2002, amended, SG No. 68/2013, effective 2.08.2013) The organisation and financing of practical education shall be carried out under conditions and following a procedure determined with

an ordinance of the Minister of Education and Science in coordination with the Minister of Finance.

## **Section IV**

### **Vocational Education and Vocational Training for Students with Special Educational Needs and/or Chronic Diseases, for Students from Raising and Educating Children Deprived of Parental Care and for Persons Deviant Behaviour**

#### **(Title amended, SG No. 103/2002)**

Programmes for Vocational Education and Vocational Training of Students with Special Educational Needs

**Article 32.** (Amended, SG No. 103/2002) (1) Vocational education and vocational training shall be organised for persons with special educational needs corresponding to their respective handicap.

(2) Vocational education or vocational training shall be organised for students with sensor handicaps on professions or parts of professions, the training and practising of which are suitable for their health status.

(3) Vocational training on part of a profession or on a profession for acquiring first degree of professional qualification shall be organised for mentally handicapped students.

Vocational Education and Vocational Training of Students with Chronic Diseases

**Article 32a.** (New, SG No. 103/2002) Vocational education or vocational training shall be organised for students with chronic diseases and physical handicaps on professions or parts of a profession, whose training and exercising are suitable for their health status.

Vocational Education and Vocational Training of Students from the Homes for Raising and Educating Children Deprived of Parental Care

**Article 32b.** (New, SG No. 103/2002) Vocational education and vocational training shall be organised for students from homes for raising and educating children deprived of parental care.

Vocational Education and Vocational Training of Students with Deviant Behaviour in Social-Pedagogical Boarding Schools and Educational Boarding Schools

(Title supplemented, SG No. 61/2014)

**Article 32c.** (New, SG No. 103/2002, supplemented, SG No. 61/2014) Vocational education or vocational training on a profession or part of a profession shall be organised for students with deviant behaviour in social-pedagogical boarding schools and educational boarding schools.

Vocational Education and Vocational Training of Prisoners

**Article 32d.** (New, SG No. 103/2002) Vocational education or vocational training on a profession or part of a profession shall be organised for prisoners.

Organisation of Vocational Education and Vocational Training

**Article 32e.** (New, SG No. 103/2002) (1) (Amended, SG No. 68/2013, effective 2.08.2013) The professions referred to in Articles 32 and 32a shall be determined by the Ministry of Education and Science and by the Ministry of Health, those referred to in Article 32b and 32c - by the Ministry of Education and Science and those referred to in Article 32d - by the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Justice.

(2) Admitted in the vocational schools and in the vocational secondary schools shall be in a class up to 5 students with sensor lesions, with chronic diseases and/or physical lesions, as well as students from the homes for raising and educating children deprived of parental care.

## **Section V** **(New, SG No. 61/2014)** **Credits in Vocational Education and Vocational Training**

Accumulation and Transfer of Credits in Vocational Education and Vocational Training

**Article 32f.** (New, SG No. 61/2014) (1) Professional qualification on profession shall be acquired when subject to assessment or validation it is established that all units of study results included in the state educational requirement for acquisition of qualification on the relevant profession have been achieved.

(2) Individual units of study results included in the state educational requirement for acquisition of qualification on the relevant profession may be assessed or validated, for which credits shall be assigned.

(3) A credit is a measure of a unit of achieved study results included in the state educational requirement for acquisition of qualification on the relevant profession.

(4) Credits shall be assigned by the institutions under Article 9, Paragraph 1 and shall be certified by a document according to a standard form approved by the Minister of Education and Science.

(5) Credits may accrue for acquisition of professional qualification on profession and/or be transferred for acquisition of professional qualification on another profession in the same educational branch.

(6) Credits assigned for units of study results on general vocational studies may be transferred and may accrue for acquisition of professional qualification on all professions from the list of professions under Article 6, Paragraph 1.

(7) The terms and procedure for assigning, accumulation and transfer of credits shall be determined by an ordinance of the Minister of Education and Science.

## **Chapter Five**

# **GRADUATION, CERTIFICATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING**

**(Title amended, SG No. 77/2005)**

Graduation of vocational education and vocational training

**Article 33.** (1) Vocational education shall be concluded by:

1. state matriculation examinations for graduating secondary education according to the Level of Education, General Education Minimum and Curriculum Act;

2. (amended, SG No. 103/2002) state examinations for acquiring professional qualification - theory of the profession and practice of the profession.

(2) (Amended and supplemented, SG No. 103/2002) Vocational training in A, B, C and D Programmes shall be concluded by state examinations for acquiring professional qualification - theory of the profession and practice of the profession.

(3) (Amended, SG No. 103/2002) Vocational training in E and F Programmes shall be concluded by examinations for acquiring professional qualification. When acquiring a professional qualification degree under E Programmes, the examinations shall be state examinations - on theory of the profession and on practice of the profession.

Organisation and Content of the Examinations for Acquiring Professional Qualification

**Article 34.** (1) For completion of A, B, C and D Programmes the organisation of the examinations shall be determined according to the state educational requirement for the system of assessment and their content - according to the state educational requirements for acquiring qualification on professions.

(2) For completion of E and F Programmes the organisation and the content of the examinations shall be determined by the educating institution in coordination with the representatives of the employers and of the employees and when acquiring a professional qualification degree - also according to the state educational requirements for acquiring qualification on professions.

Commissions for Holding the Examinations for Acquiring Professional Qualification

**Article 35.** (1) (Supplemented, SG No. 103/2002, amended and supplemented, SG No. 50/2010, effective 2011/2012 school year, SG No.

61/2014, amended, SG No. 79/2015, effective 1.08.2016) The commissions for holding the examinations shall include representatives of the educating institution, of the employers and of the employees, and for art schools - also representatives of the respective higher art schools, with equal quotas and for sports schools - also representatives of the National

Sports Academy and of the licensed sports organizations. The commissions for training through work (trainingdual system of instruction) shall also include a representative of the employers under Article 5, Paragraph 4.

(2) The representatives of the educating institution shall be teachers or other persons carrying out vocational training.

(3) The representatives of the employers shall have qualification in the respective professional sphere and those of the employees - qualification and time of service not less than four years in the respective profession.

(4) The commissions for holding the examination shall be appointed by the head of the educating institution.

(5) (Supplemented, SG No. 103/2002, SG No. 61/2014) If the organisations of employers or of employees, as well as the higher art schools, the National Sports Academy and the licensed sports organizations do not propose their representatives for inclusion in the examination commissions, the head of the educating institution shall complete the commission by members appointed by him.

State Examinations for Acquiring Professional Qualification in Vocational Education

**Article 36.** (Amended, SG No. 103/2002) (1) The state examinations on theory of the profession and on practice of the profession shall be carried out according to national examination programmes in compliance with the state educational requirements for acquiring qualification on professions.

(2) (Amended, SG No. 28/2005, SG No. 94/2005, SG No. 74/2009, amended and supplemented, SG No. 50/2010, effective 2011/2012 school year, amended, SG No. 68/2013, effective 2.08.2013)

The national examination programmes shall be approved by the Minister of Education and Science, and for art schools - by the Minister of Culture and for sports schools - by the Minister of Youth and Sports.

Examinations for Acquiring Professional Qualification in Vocational Training

**Article 37.** (1) The examinations for acquiring professional qualification degree shall be carried out pursuant to Article 36.

(2) The examinations for acquiring qualification on part of a profession, as well as for updating or widening the professional qualification, shall be carried out based on tasks determined by the educating institution upon coordination with the representatives of the employers and the employees.

Certification of Vocational Education and Vocational Training

**Article 38.** (1) The completion of vocational education shall be certified by:

1. diploma for completed secondary education;
2. certificate for professional qualification;

3. (supplemented, SG No. 77/2005) certificate for legal capacity issued for professions whose exercising requires legal capacity, including the exercising of regulated professions.

(2) Completed vocational training for acquiring professional qualification degree shall be certified by:

1. certificate for primary education or document for a completed grade of the primary or secondary education;
2. certificate for professional qualification;

3. (supplemented, SG No. 77/2005) certificate for legal capacity issued for professions whose exercising requires legal capacity, including the exercising of regulated professions.

(3) A certificate for vocational training shall be issued for completed vocational training for acquiring qualification on part of a profession, for updating or widening the professional qualification.

(4) The content of the documents referred to in Paragraphs 1 and 2 shall be determined according to the state educational requirements for the documents in the public education system and for acquiring qualification on professions and those referred to in Paragraph 3 - with the state educational requirement for the documents in the public education system and the specific documentation referred to in Article 13, Paragraph 2.

(5) (Amended, SG No. 77/2005, SG No. 68/2013, effective 2.08.2013) The conditions and the procedure for issuing a certificate for legal capacity shall be determined by ordinances of the Minister of Education and Science unless otherwise provided by a law.

(6) (New, SG No. 77/ 2005, repealed, SG No. 13/2008, new, SG No. 61/2014) Upon request, a person who has acquired a certificate of professional qualification or a certificate of vocational training may obtain a European supplement.

Right of Issuing Documents for Professional Qualification

**Article 39.** (1) (Supplemented, SG No. 103/2002, SG No. 50/2010, effective 2011/2012 school year, previous Article 39, amended,

SG No. 61/2014) Vocational schools, vocational secondary schools, art schools, sports schools, vocational colleges and centres for vocational training shall have the right to issue documents for professional qualification referred to in Article 38. The schools referred to in Article 9, Paragraph 1, item 3 shall also have the right to issue documents for professional qualification.

(2) (New, SG No. 61/2014) The centres for vocational training set up to the bodies, organisations and other legal entities under Article 9, Paragraph 2 shall also have the right to issue documents for professional qualification under Article 38, Paragraph 2, item 2 and Paragraph 3.

Validation of Professional Knowledge, Skills and Competences

**Article 40.** (Amended, SG No. 61/2014) (1) (Amended, SG No. 79/2015, effective 1.08.2016) Validation of professional knowledge, skills and competences shall be the establishment and acknowledgement of professional knowledge, skills and competences acquired through informal training or informal learning and their compliance with state educational requirements for acquisition of professional qualification.

(2) The institutions under Article 9, Paragraph 1, items 1 and 2 shall have the right to validate professional knowledge, skills and competences.

(3) .Eligible to validate professional knowledge, skills and competences shall be the persons who have acquired the following educational level:

1. for first, second and third degree - the required educational level under Article 8, Paragraph 5 for the relevant professional qualification degree;

2. for fourth grade - completed secondary education;

3. for qualification on part of a profession - the required educational level under Article 8, Paragraph 4 for the relevant professional qualification.

(4) The acquired professional knowledge, skills and competences shall be established by means of:

1. initial juxtaposition of the professional knowledge, skills and competences stated by the person against the study results included in the relevant state educational requirement for acquisition of qualification on profession;

2. examinations on the theory of the profession and on the practice of the profession.

(5) After the initial juxtaposition under Paragraph 4, item 1 the person may be referred to additional training or may be admitted to examination under Paragraph 4, item 2.

(6) State examinations shall be organised for acknowledgement of professional qualification degree under Paragraph 4, item 2 in accordance with Article 36, and for acknowledgement of professional qualification for part of a profession the examinations under Paragraph 4, item 2 shall be organised in accordance with Article 37, Paragraph 2.

(7) The persons who have successfully passed the examinations under Article 4, item 2 shall be issued the following documents:

1. a certificate for validation of professional qualification - when all units of study results included in the state educational requirement for acquisition of qualification on profession have been established;

2. a certificate for validation of professional qualification on part of a profession - when some of the units of study results included in the state educational requirement for acquisition of qualification on profession have been established.

(8) The persons who have obtained a certificate under Paragraph 7, item 1 shall enjoy the rights of the persons who have obtained a certificate of professional qualification under Article 38, Paragraph 2, item



2, and the persons who have obtained a certificate under Paragraph 7, item 2 shall enjoy the rights of the persons who have obtained a certificate of professional training under Article 38, Paragraph 3.

(9) The contents of the documents under Paragraph 7 shall be determined by the state educational requirements for the documents of the system of public education.

(10) The terms and procedure for validation of professional knowledge, skills and competences shall be determined by an ordinance of the Minister of Education and Science.

(11) For the costs for establishment, documentation, assessment and acknowledgement of the experience of the persons and for holding the examinations for acquisition of professional qualification, incurred by the institutions under Article 9, Paragraph 1, items 1 and 2 sums shall be paid in the amounts determined by such institutions, and the sums shall not exceed the amount of the actual costs.

(12) The sums under Paragraph 11 shall not be collected where the activities are financed under programmes and projects funded from European structural funds.

## **Chapter Six**

### **MANAGEMENT OF THE SYSTEM OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

#### **Section I**

#### **National Agency for Vocational Education and Training**

Status of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training

**Article 41.** (1) The National Agency for Vocational Education and Training shall be established at the Council of Ministers as a legal person funded through the budget support and headquartered in Sofia.

(2) (Amended, SG No. 103/2002) The National Agency for Vocational Education and Training shall be a state body for licensing activities in the system of vocational education and training, as well as for coordination between the institutions related to vocational orientation, education and training.

(3) The National Agency for Vocational Education and Training shall carry out its activities in compliance with this Act and with rules approved by the Council of Ministers.

Functions of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training

**Article 42.** (Amended, SG No. 103/2002) The National Agency for Vocational Education and Training shall:

1. (repealed, SG No. 36/2009);

2. issue and withdraw licences for vocational training and vocational orientation;

2a. (new, SG No. 36/2009, amended, SG No. 61/2014) control the activities and assess the quality of training in licensed institutions in the vocational training system;

3. (amended, SG No. 68/2013, effective 2.08.2013) develop and propose to the Minister of Education and Science:

a) the List of professions for vocational education and training;  
b) the state educational requirements for acquiring qualification on professions;

4. participate in developing the state educational requirements for the documents for the public education system and for the system of assessment in their part for vocational education and training;

5. (supplemented, SG No. 77/2005, repealed, SG No. 36/2009);

6. (amended, SG No. 36/2009) based on analysis of the activities of centres for vocational training and centres for information and vocational orientation, propose improvements to the vocational education and training system;

7. assign the carrying out and the implementation of scientific research in the sphere of vocational education, training and orientation;

8. coordinate the activities on the drawing up of strategies for development and improvement of vocational education and training;

9. contribute to the international acknowledgement of the documents for vocational education and vocational training;

10. (supplemented, SG No. 36/2009) create and maintain a register of the centres for vocational training and of the centres for information and vocational orientation and of licences issued and withdrawn;

11. (repealed, SG No. 36/2009, new, SG No. 61/2014) create and maintain a register of the documents under Article 38 and Article 40, issued by the centres for vocational training;

12. (new, SG No. 36/2009) determine indicators for the provision of the annual information referred to in Article 22, Paragraph 8;

13. (new, SG No. 36/2009) develop and approve standard forms and models of licensing documents;

14. (new, SG No. 61/2014) provides methodological support to the centres for vocational training which validate professional knowledge, skills and competences within the vocational education and training system.

Managing Bodies and Executive Bodies

**Article 43.** (1) The managing bodies of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training shall be the Managing Board and its chairperson.

(2) The Managing Board shall establish expert commissions for fulfilment of its functions.

#### Managing Board Composition

**Article 44.** (1) The Managing Board shall consist of a chairperson and 24 members, of which:

1. eight representatives of ministries;
2. eight representatives of the organisations of the employers;
3. eight representatives of the organisations of employees on a national level;

(2) The representatives referred to in Paragraph 1 shall be determined pursuant to a procedure stipulated by the Rules of operation of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training.

(3) (Amended, SG No. 68/2013, effective 2.08.2013) The Prime Minister shall appoint the chairperson of the Managing Board based on a proposal of the Minister of Education and Science.

(4) The chairperson of the Managing Board shall have higher education and at least five years of service in the system of vocational education and training.

(5) (New, SG No. 36/2009) The chairperson of The National Agency for Vocational Education and Training may not be a person who:

1. holds another public office;
2. pursues business activities or is a manager, commercial broker, liquidator or trustee in bankruptcy;
3. is a member of a management or control body of a non-profit legal entity, a company or a cooperative, except for companies in whose capital the state or any municipality holds a participating interest, or legal entities established by a law, provided that the person is not remunerated for that;
4. is a freelancer, except for cases of research or lecturing activities or the exercise of copyright and similar rights.

#### Mandate of the Managing Board

**Article 45.** (1) The mandate of the chairperson and of the members of the Managing Board shall be four years. One person may not be member of the Managing Board for more than two consecutive mandates.

(2) Half of the members of the Managing Board shall be renewed by quotas every two years.

(3) A member of the Managing Board shall be released before the expiration of the mandate:

1. upon written proposal by the institutions referred to in Article 44, Paragraph 1;
2. for systematic non-fulfilment of his/her duties;
3. for factual impossibility to fulfil his/her duties for a period longer than 6 months;

4. upon his/her written request.

(4) The decision for release under Paragraph 3, item 2 and 3 shall be taken by a common majority of the members of the board.

(5) The completion of the Managing Board by a new member shall be carried out following the procedure stipulated by the Rules of operation of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training.

(6) The mandate of new members appointed pursuant to Paragraph 5 shall last until the end of the mandate of the released member.

(7) (New, SG No. 36/2009) The chairperson of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training shall be released before the expiration of the mandate:

1. for systematic non-fulfilment of his/her duties;
2. for factual impossibility to fulfil his/her duties for a period longer than 6 months;
3. upon his/her written request;
4. upon occurrence of any of the circumstances referred to in Article 44, Paragraph 5;

5. (amended, SG No. 97/10.12.2010, effective 10.12.2010) upon the entry into force of an act establishing conflict of interest under the Conflict of Interest Prevention and Ascertainment Act.

Organisation of the Activities of the Managing Board

**Article 46.** (1) The Managing Board shall hold its meetings at least once in three months. Its meetings shall be considered regular if at least two thirds of its members are present.

(2) The Managing Board shall make decisions by open voting and common majority of the members of the board.

Functions of the Managing Board

**Article 47.** The Managing Board shall:

1. (repealed, SG No. 103/2002);
2. (repealed, SG No. 36/2009);
3. establish expert commissions on professional branches and an expert commission on vocational orientation and determine their tasks and members;

4. (amended, SG No. 103/2002, SG No. 36/2009) adopt indicators for the provision of the annual information referred to in Article 22, Paragraph 8;

5. (amended, SG No. 103/2002, SG No. 36/2009, SG No. 61/2014) elaborate specific requirements under Article 49a, Paragraph 2 for granting a licence and approve standard forms and models of licensing documents;

6. (amended, SG No. 36/2009, SG No. 68/2013, effective 2.08.2013) make proposals to the Ministry of Education and Science

for development and improvement of the system of vocational education and training;

7. (amended, SG No. 36/2009, SG No. 61/2014) approve draft Rules of Operation of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training and proposals for amendment or supplement thereof.

Chairperson of the Managing Board

**Article 48.** (1) The chairperson of the Managing Board shall also be chairperson of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training.

(2) The chairperson of the Managing Board shall:

1. represent the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training;

2. manage the activities of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training;

3. convene and chair the meetings of the Managing Board;

4. (amended, SG No. 36/2009, SG No. 68/2013, effective

2.08.2013) propose to the Minister of Education and Science:

a) the List of professions for vocational education and training;

b) draft state educational requirements for acquiring qualification on professions;

5. (new, SG No. 36/2009) endorse the standard forms and models of licensing documents after they have been approved by the Managing Board;

6. (new, SG No. 36/2009) issue or withhold issuance of licences for provision and certification of vocational training or the provision of information and vocational orientation based on reports by the expert commissions;

7. (new, SG No. 36/2009) withdraw issued licences in the cases and according to the procedure stipulated by this Act, based on reports by the expert commissions;

8. (new, SG No. 36/2009) endorse the indicators for the provision of the annual information referred to in Article 22, Paragraph 8;

9. (new, SG No. 36/2009, amended, SG No. 68/2013, effective

2.08.2013) propose to the Minister of Education and Science draft Rules of Operation of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training to be tabled before the Council of Ministers;

10. (new, SG No. 36/2009) appoint civil servants and conclude, amend and terminate employment contracts with the employees of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training.

(3) (New, SG No. 36/2009) In the fulfilment of his/her powers, the chairperson of the Managing Board shall issue orders.

Expert Commissions

**Article 49.** (1) The expert commission shall be established for professional branches according to the List of Professions for Vocational Education and Training, as well as for vocational orientation.

(2) Expert commissions shall consist of 9 members, of which:

1. (amended, SG No. 68/2013, effective 2.08.2013) one representative of the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and of the respective branch ministry;

2. three representatives of organisations of employers from the respective branch;

3. three of the branch trade union organisations of the employees in the respective branch.

(3) Expert commissions shall:

1. (amended, SG No. 103/2002, SG No. 36/2009) prepare reports addressed to the chairperson of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training containing proposals for the issuance, withholding or withdrawal of licences of centres for vocational training and of centres for information and vocational orientation;

2. participate in developing and updating the state educational requirements for acquiring qualification on professions from the respective professional branch, as well as of the state educational requirements for the documents in the public education system and in the system of assessment in their part for the vocational education and training;

3. participate in developing and updating of the List of Professions for Vocational Education and Training;

4. (repealed, SG No. 36/2009);

5. (repealed, SG No. 103/2002).

(4) The procedure for appointing the representatives referred to in Paragraph 2 and the organisation of the activities of the expert commissions shall be settled by the Rules of operation of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training.

Licenses

**Article 49a.** (New, SG No. 103/2002, amended, SG No. 30/2006, SG No. 36/2009) (1) A licence shall give the right to carry out and certify vocational education for acquiring a professional qualification degree or for provision of information and vocational orientation.

(2) A licence shall be issued to the persons referred to in Article 22, Paragraphs 2 - 5 when the activities declared by them meet the state educational requirement for acquisition of a qualification for the relevant profession or the requirements for provision of information and vocational orientation regarding:

1. ensuring high-quality and effective carrying out of the vocational training and/or provision of information and vocational orientation, including by means of an internal quality assessment and maintenance system;

2. ensuring the necessary resources - material and human resources to guarantee high-quality carrying out of the vocational training and/or provision of information and vocational orientation.

(3) As a proof of compliance with the requirements referred to in Paragraph 2, documents specified in the Rules of Operation of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training shall be enclosed with the application referred to in Article 49b, Paragraph 1.

(4) The licence shall contain:

1. the name, seat and registered office of the sole entrepreneur or of the legal person having acquired the licence; a unique identification code - for merchants, or BULSTAT code - for non-merchant persons;

2. name and address of the centre for vocational training or of the centre for information and vocational orientation;

3. scope of the licence;

4. the professions for which the licence for provision and certification of vocational training has been issued;

5. the issue date of the licence.

(5) The rights given by the licence issued may not be transferred or assigned.

Licence Issuing Procedure

**Article 49b.** (New, SG No. 36/2009) (1) The licence shall be issued subject to a written application filed by the persons referred to in Article 22, Paragraphs 2 - 5.

(2) The following shall be enclosed with the application referred to in Paragraph 1:

1. a standard form;

2. (amended, SG No. 61/2014) a certificate of the applicant's current status issued by the relevant court of registration - for non-merchant legal entities;

3. a unique identification code - for merchants, or BULSTAT code - for non-merchant persons;

4. a record of previous convictions of the person who is to represent and manage the centre;

5. rules of the structure and operation of the centre;

6. vocational training documentation - curricula and syllabi for training in professions, in accordance with Article 13;

7. title documents or other documents proving the presence of material and technical facilities wherein vocational training or vocational orientation activities are to be carried out;

8. documents issued by the competent authorities regarding the conformity of the material facilities with health requirements and with fire and emergency safety requirements;

9. a list of the teaching staff, with copies of the documents of completed education and professional qualification and declarations of content attached;

10. a document evidencing that the fee has been paid.

(3) For the issuance of a licence to foreign legal persons as referred to in Article 22, Paragraph 5, besides the documents referred to in Paragraph 2, items 1, 4, 6 - 10, identification documents of the legal person in accordance with the laws of the country wherein it is registered

shall also be enclosed with the application. Where such documents are in a foreign language, they shall be accompanied by a certified translation into Bulgarian.

(4) Within three months after the documents referred to in Paragraph 2 are received, the chairperson of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training shall issue or withhold the licence based on the reports by the relevant expert commissions.

(5) Where the submitted documents for licensing are found to be incomplete or invalid, the chairperson of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training shall invite the applicant to eliminate such incompleteness or invalidities or to provide additional information. The applicant may eliminate the invalidities and/or provide additional information within one month after receiving the invitation.

(6) The decision pronouncement time-limit referred to in Paragraph 4 shall be suspended until the applicant eliminates the inconformities or until the time-limit referred to in Paragraph 5 expires.

(7) If the applicant fails to eliminate the inconformities in due time, the chairperson of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training shall withhold issuing a licence.

(8) The chairperson of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training shall withhold issuing a licence when:

1. not all documents referred to in Paragraph 2 or 3 have been provided, the documents provided are incomplete or are not of the type and in the form prescribed, and the inconformities have not been eliminated in due time;

2. when the requirements of Article 49a, Paragraph 2 have not been met.

(9) The withholding of a licence may be appealed against under the conditions and following the procedure of the Administrative Procedure Code.

(10) (Amended, SG No. 61/2014) The conditions and procedure for issuance of a licence as referred to in Paragraph 1 and the requirements under Article 49a, Paragraph 2 shall be set out in detail in the Rules of Operation of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training.

Subsequent Control

**Article 49c.** (New, SG No. 36/2009) (1) (Supplemented, SG No. 61/2014) The National Agency for Vocational Education and Training shall subsequently control the conformity with the requirements referred to in Article 49a, Paragraph 2 and the provision of the information referred to in Article 22, Paragraph 8 by centres for vocational training and by centres for provision of information and vocational orientation. Control shall be current and periodic and shall be exercised in accordance with the terms and procedure set out herein and in the Rules of Operation of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training.



(2) Conformity with the requirements of this Act and performance of the vocational training or vocational orientation activities in accordance with the terms of the licence obtained shall be controlled by officials of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training appointed by an order of its chairperson.

(3) Regarding the control exerted as referred to in Paragraphs 1 and 2, a statement of findings shall be drawn up, which shall contain recommendations and a deadline for their implementation.

(4) If violations are found under Paragraph 2, the chairperson of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training shall issue an order for temporary or permanent withdrawal of the licence issued pursuant to Article 49a, Paragraph 1, with grounds therefore stated in such order, under the conditions and following the procedure of this Act.

#### Licence Termination and Withdrawal

**Article 49d.** (New, SG No. 36/2009) (1) The validity of licences issued shall be unlimited in time.

(2) The rights under a licence shall be terminated upon:

1. the death of the natural person being a sole entrepreneur, or the dissolution of the legal person;

2. withdrawal of the licence.

(3) The licence shall be temporarily withdrawn for a period of three to 12 months when the centre concerned:

1. allows a violation of the requirements of this Act;

2. provides vocational training or vocational orientation in breach of the terms of the licence obtained;

3. fails to provide the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training with the information referred to in Article 22, Paragraph 8;

4. refuse to give access or render assistance to the officials referred to in Article 49c, Paragraph 2 for them to perform an inspection.

(4) In case violations referred to in Paragraph 3 are found, the issued licence for vocational training or vocational orientation shall be temporarily withdrawn, unless the violations are rectified within the time-limit referred to in Article 49c, Paragraph 3.

(5) After the period for which the licence has been withdrawn as referred to in Paragraph 3 expires, the withdrawn licence shall be restored, provided that the centre concerned has rectified the violation.

(6) The licence shall be permanently withdrawn when the centre concerned:

1. has failed to commence pursuing the licensed activities within 12 months after the licence was issued;

2. suspends pursuing the licensed activities for more than 12 months;

3. commits serious breaches of the requirements of this Act;

4. provides vocational training or vocational orientation in serious breach of the terms of the licence obtained;

5. fails to rectify breaches found pursuant to Paragraph 3 within the time-limit determined according to Article 49c, Paragraph 3;

6. allows a second breach as referred to in Paragraph 3;

7. has provided false data based whereon the licence has been issued.

(7) The order for permanent withdrawal of the licence shall state a period of at least one year in which the person may not apply for a new licence.

(8) The licence shall be withdrawn by an order of the chairperson of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training based on reports by the expert commissions and on the statements of findings as referred to in Article 49c, Paragraph 3 in the cases referred to in Paragraph 3, items 1 and 2 and in Paragraph 6, items 3 - 6.

(9) The person representing the relevant centre for vocational training or the centre for provision of information or vocational orientation whose licence has been temporarily or permanently withdrawn pursuant to Article 49a, Paragraph 1, shall, within 7 days after notification of the order issued under Paragraph 8, terminate the activities pursued and return the issued licence to the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training, which shall be documented in a report.

(10) The licence withdrawal order may be appealed against under the conditions and following the procedure of the Administrative Procedure Code.

Information Activity of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training

**Article 50.** (1) (New, SG No. 36/2009, supplemented, SG No.

61/2014) The National Agency for Vocational Education and Training shall maintain a public register of centres for vocational training, of centres providing information and vocational orientation and of licences issued and withdrawn, which shall be published on its website.

(2) (Amended, SG No. 103/2002, previous Article 50, SG No.

36/2009, amended, SG No. 61/2014) On its website the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training shall:

1. maintain an IT system for processing and summarising the information under Article 22, Paragraph 8;

2. publish the requirements, procedures, forms and standard forms of the necessary documentation for licensing, as well as the procedure for exercising ex-post control of centres for vocational training and of centres for information and vocational orientation;

3. publish a List of Professions for Vocational Education and Training, and a List of State Protected Professions;

4. publish the state educational requirements for acquisition of qualification on professions.

## **Section II**

### **Functions of the Ministries, Municipalities and of the Social Partners Regarding Vocational Education and Training**

## Functions of the Ministry of Education and Science

(Title amended, SG No. 68/2013, effective 2.08.2013)

**Article 51.** (1) (Amended, SG No. 36/2009, SG No. 68/2013,

effective 2.08.2013) The Minister of Education and Science shall implement the state policy in the sphere of the vocational education and training by:

1. adopting the state educational requirements for acquiring qualification for professions;

2. approving the List of Professions for Vocational Education and Training;

2a. (new, SG No. 77/2005) proposing for approval to the Council of Ministers the List of Regulated Professions in the Republic of Bulgaria;

3. maintaining the register referred to in § 1, Paragraph 2 of the supplementary provisions of the Public Education Act regarding the institutions in the system of vocational education and training;

4. approving the state admission plan for state and municipal schools;

5. providing conditions for the fulfilment of the state educational requirements for the system of the professional education and training;

6. approving programmes for qualification in the system of vocational education and training;

7. organising the vocational orientation;

8. (amended and supplemented, SG No. 103/2002) determining independently or jointly with the respective competent ministry the professions for students with special educational needs and/or with chronic diseases and persons with deviant behaviour;

9. allocating the financial resources approved by its budget for vocational education and training and control their utilisation;

10. (amended, SG No. 61/2014) analysing the quality of the system of vocational education and training;

11. appointing its representatives in the Managing Board and in the expert commissions of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training;

12. (new, SG No. 77/2005, repealed, SG No. 13/2008) ;

13. (new, SG No. 61/2014) proposing a List of State Protected Professions for adoption by the Council of Ministers.

(2) (Amended, SG No. 68/2013, effective 2.08.2013) The inspectorates for education of the Ministry of Education and Science shall implement the state policy in the sphere of the vocational education and training in the respective region by:

1. (amended, SG No. 36/2009) coordinating the interaction between the schools, the centres for vocational training and the centres

for information and vocational orientation and the regional employment offices and the employment bureaux, with the regional inspectorates of public health protection and control, with the bodies of the local independent government and with the regional structures of the social partners;

2. coordinating the proposals of the schools for the state admission plan;

3. participating in the organisation of the examinations for acquiring professional qualification.

Functions of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy

**Article 52.** The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy shall participate in implementing the state policy in the sphere of vocational education and training by:

1. determining the needs of vocational education and training by analysing the tendencies in the development of the labour market;

2. participating in the development, coordination and updating of the state educational requirements for acquiring qualification on professions;

3. participating in the coordination of the List of Professions for Vocational Education and Training;

4. determining the requirements for healthy and safe conditions in the practical training and controlling their fulfilment through the regional labour inspectorates;

5. participating in the coordination of the state admission plan in the schools through the regional employment offices;

6. participating in the organising of vocational orientation;

7. appointing its representatives in the Managing Board and in the expert commissions of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training;

8. (new, SG No. 61/2014) participating in the development and updating of the List of State Protected Professions and tabling proposals for inclusion of professions therein;

9. (new, SG No. 61/2014) ensuring conditions for provision of information and motivation to employers and citizens for validation of professional knowledge, skills and competences;

10. (new, SG No. 61/2014) analysing the quality of the system of vocational training.

Functions of the Ministry of Health

**Article 53.** The Ministry of Health shall:

1. (amended, SG No. 61/2014) participate in the reconciliation and updating of the List of Professions for Vocational Education and Training and shall table proposals for inclusion of professions in the List of State Protected Professions, and for its updating;

2. determine the chronic diseases and physical handicaps which are counter indicative for vocational education and vocational training on professions of the List of Professions for Vocational Education and Training;

3. (amended, SG No. 103/2002, SG No. 68/2013, effective 2.08.2013) determine, jointly with the Ministry of Education and Science, the professions for which the vocational education and vocational training is suitable for the health status of the trainees with chronic diseases and physical injuries, with sensor injuries and mental backwardness;

4. (amended, SG No. 36/2009) determine requirements for the health conditions in the practical training and the health and physiological requirements for the weekly programmes, as well as control their fulfilment through the bodies of the State Health Control;

5. (supplemented, SG No. 103/2002) appoint its representatives in the Managing Board and in the expert commission for vocational orientation of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training;

6. (new, SG No. 61/2014) participate with its representatives in the exercise of control under Article 49c over the activity of the centres for vocational training delivering training on the specialties in the "Health" educational field from the List of professions under Article 6, Paragraph 1.

Functions of the Branch Ministries

**Article 54.** The branch ministries shall:

1. participate in the development, coordination and updating of the state educational requirements for acquiring qualification on professions;

2. (amended, SG No. 61/2014) table proposals for inclusion of new professions and specialties in the List of Professions for Vocational Education and Training and shall participate in its reconciliation and updating;

2a. (new, SG No. 61/2014) table proposals for inclusion of new professions in the List of State Protected Professions;

3. propose changes in the register referred to in § 1, Paragraph 2 of the supplementary provisions of the Public Education Act regarding the institutions in the system of vocational education and training;

4. (supplemented, SG No. 103/2002) participate in the coordination of the state admission plan for the schools they finance;

5. allocate the financial resources for vocational education and vocational training approved by their budget and control their spending;

6. (amended, SG No. 103/2002) appoint their representatives in the Managing Board and in the expert commissions in the professional divisions of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training.

Functions of the Municipalities

**Article 55.** (Supplemented, SG No. 61/2014) Municipalities shall participate in forming and implementation of the policy in the sphere of the vocational education and training on their territories regarding:

1. the need for specialists;
2. the vocational orientation of students, unemployed persons, as well as of other persons;
3. the changes in the register referred to in § 1, Paragraph 2 of the supplementary provisions of the Public Education Act regarding the institutions in the system of vocational education and training;
4. the allocation of the financial resources approved by their budget for vocational education, training and orientation and control their spending;
5. the development of the material and technical facilities of the schools, of the centres for vocational training and the centres for information and vocational orientation by financial resources from the municipal budgets;
6. the determining of the state admission plan for the schools.

Functions of the Organisations of Employers

**Article 56.** (1) (Previous text of Article 56, SG No. 61/2014) The organisations of employers shall:

1. participate in the development, updating and coordination of the List of Professions for Vocational Education and Training;
2. propose changes in the register referred to in § 1, Paragraph 2 of the supplementary provisions of the Public Education Act regarding the institutions in the system of vocational education and training;
3. participate in the development, coordination and updating of the state educational requirements for acquiring qualification on professions;
4. participate in the organisation and holding of examinations for acquiring professional qualification and propose representatives for participation in the examination commissions;
5. appoint their representatives in the management board and in the expert commissions of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training;
6. (new, SG No. 61/2014) table proposals for inclusion of new professions in the List of State Protected Professions;
7. (new, SG No. 61/2014, amended, SG No. 79/2015, effective 1.08.2016) ensure conditions for implementation of partnership between employers and institutions delivering training through work (dual system of instruction);
8. (new, SG No. 61/2014) participate in the development of an ordinance for vocational education and training quality assurance.

(2) (New, SG No. 61/2014) In addition to the functions referred to in Paragraph 1, branch and industry organisations of employers shall:

1. participate in the development and updating of curricula and syllabi for vocational education and training;
2. participate in the development of national examination programmes;
3. participate in providing the training and production practice of students and shall propose changes in their organisation;
4. ensure conditions for implementation of training under Article 5, Paragraph 4, item 1 in undertakings;
5. participate in the training of teachers and trainers;
6. inform the members of their organisations about the opportunities and procedures for validation of professional knowledge, skills and competences;
7. propose to the representative organisations of employers on national level its representatives for the expert commissions of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training;
8. participate in the assessment of the quality of the vocational education and training.

Functions of the Organisations of Employees on the National Level

**Article 57.** The organisations of employees on the national level shall:

1. participate in the updating of the state educational requirements for acquiring qualification on professions;
2. participate in the development, updating and coordination of the List of Professions for Vocational Education and Training;
3. appoint their representatives to the Managing Board and in the Expert Commission for vocational orientation of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training;

4. (new, SG No. 61/2014) cooperate in improving the quality of practical training;

5. (new, SG No. 61/2014) inform the members of their organisations of the opportunities for validation of professional knowledge, skills and competences and cooperate in the implementation of the validation;

6. (new, SG No. 61/2014) participate in the development of the ordinance under Article 9a, Paragraph 4 for vocational education and training quality assurance.

Functions of the Branch Trade Unions

**Article 58.** Branch trade union organisations shall:

1. defend the interests of trainees before the employers on issues of employment and insurance relations in carrying out the practical training in the enterprises;

2. participate in organising and holding the examinations for acquiring professional qualification and propose representatives for participation in the examination commissions;

3. appoint their representatives to the expert commissions in professional branches of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training;

4. (new, SG No. 61/2014) cooperate in improving the quality of practical training;

5. (new, SG No. 61/2014) inform the members of their organisations of the opportunities for validation of professional knowledge, skills and competences;

6. (new, SG No. 61/2014) participate in the assessment of the quality of vocational education and training.

## **Chapter Seven**

### **FINANCING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION, TRAINING AND ORIENTATION**

#### Sources of Financing

**Article 59.** (1) State and municipal schools, centres for vocational education, centres for information and vocational orientation and centres for qualification of the training specialists shall be financed by:

1. the state budget;
2. the budgets of the municipalities;
3. sponsorship, donations, wills;
4. own revenue;
5. national and international programmes.
6. (new, SG No. 103/2002) other sources.

(2) (Amended, SG No. 107/2014, effective 1.01.2015) The resources from the executive budgets and budgets of municipalities shall provide financing for:

1. support of the vocational education in state and municipal schools;
2. administrative and financial servicing of the state and municipal centres for vocational training and centres for information and vocational orientation, as well as of the centres for qualification of training specialists;
3. support of vocational orientation in the state and municipal centres for information and vocational orientation;
4. the support of the qualification of persons carrying out vocational training in the centres for qualification of training specialists.

(3) (Repealed, SG No. 103/2002).



(4) State and municipal institutions in the system of vocational education and training shall draw up budgets.

(5) (Amended, SG No. 107/2014, effective 1.01.2015) Own revenue shall be used for support and development of the material and technical facilities.

(6) Vocational colleges and centres for vocational training shall collect education fees from individuals and corporate bodies.

(7) State and municipal centres for information and vocational orientation shall also be financed by additional activities determined by their regulations.

(8) (New, SG No. 61/2014) Additional funds shall be provided for the state protected professions under the terms and procedure set out in the act of the Council of Ministers under Article 6a, Paragraph 2.

(9) (New, SG No. 61/2014) Training under Article 5, Paragraph 4 shall be financed as follows:

1. practical training under Article 5, Paragraph 4, item 1 - with employer funds;

2. training under Article 5, Paragraph 4, item 2 - with state budget funds for state and municipal institutions.

(10) (New, SG No. 61/2014) Training under Paragraph 9 may also be financed with European structural funds.

Financing of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training

**Article 60.** (1) (Amended, SG No. 103/2002) The National Agency for Vocational Education and Training shall be financed by resources from the state budget, from own revenue, sponsorship, donations, wills, etc.

(2) (Amended, SG No. 36/2009) For the issuance, amendment or supplementation of licences under Article 49a, Paragraph 1, the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training shall charge amounts in accordance with a tariff approved by the Council of Ministers.

(3) (Repealed, SG No. 103/2002).

Financing of Vocational Education outside the State Educational Requirements

**Article 61.** (Amended, SG No. 61/2014) The financing of vocational education outside the state educational requirements, as well as of the practical training of the persons trained under Article 9, Paragraphs 2 and 3, organised in state and municipal schools and centres for vocational training, shall be carried out with financial resources paid by natural and legal persons pursuant to concluded contracts.

Practical Training Abroad

**Article 62.** Practical training held abroad organised by the state and municipal schools and centres for vocational training shall be financed

by the school or centre on the basis of a contract concluded with foreign institutions for vocational education and training.

**Chapter Eight**  
**(New, SG No. 77/2005, effective 1.01.2007, repealed, SG No. 13/2008)**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE RIGHT TO EXERCISE A  
REGULATED PROFESSION ON THE BASIS OF  
PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION ACQUIRED IN A FOREIGN  
COUNTRY**

**(Title amended, SG No. 62/2006)**

**Section I**

**(New, SG No. 62/2006, repealed, SG No. 13/2008)**  
**Acknowledgement of the right to exercise a regulated  
profession on the basis of professional qualification  
acquired in a Member State**

**Article 63.** (Amended, SG No. 62/2006, repealed, SG No. 13/2008).

**Article 64.** (Amended, SG No. 62/2006, repealed, SG No. 13/2008).

**Article 65.** (Amended, SG No. 62/2006, repealed, SG No. 13/2008).

**Article 66.** (Amended, SG No. 62/2006, repealed, SG No. 13/2008).

**Article 67.** (Amended, SG No. 62/2006, repealed, SG No. 13/2008).

**Article 68.** (Amended, SG No. 30/2006, SG No. 62/2006, repealed, SG No. 13/2008).

**Article 69.** (New, SG No. 62/2006, repealed, SG No. 13/2008).

**Section II**

**(New, SG No. 62/2006, repealed, SG No. 13/2008)**  
**Acknowledgement of the Right to Exercise a Regulated  
Profession for Which There is a Requirement of Having**

**General Trade or General Professional Knowledge and Skills Based on Professional Experience Acquired in a Member State**

**Article 70.** (New, SG No. 62/2006, repealed, SG No. 13/2008).

**Article 71.** (New, SG No. 62/2006, repealed, SG No. 13/2008).

**Article 72.** (New, SG No. 62/2006, repealed, SG No. 13/2008).

**Article 73.** (New, SG No. 62/2006, repealed, SG No. 13/2008).

**Section III**  
**(New, SG No. 62/2006, repealed, SG No. 13/2008)**  
**Acknowledgement of the Right to Exercise a Regulated Profession on the Basis of Professional Qualification Acquired in a Third State.**

**(Title corrected, SG No. 63/2006)**

**Article 74.** (New, SG No. 62/2006, corrected, No. 63/2006, repealed, SG No. 13/2008).

**Article 75.** (New, SG No. 62/2006, repealed, SG No. 13/2008).

**Section IV**  
**(New, SG No. 62/2006, repealed, SG No. 13/2008)**  
**Other Provisions**

**Article 76.** (New, SG No. 62/2006, repealed, SG No. 13/2008).

**Article 77.** (New, SG No. 62/2006, repealed, SG No. 13/2008).

**Article 78.** (New, SG No. 62/2006, repealed, SG No. 13/2008).

**Article 79.** (New, SG No. 62/2006, repealed, SG No. 13/2008).

## **SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISIONS**

**§ 1.** Within the meaning of this Act:

1. "Professional branch" shall mean an aggregate of professions in a branch of the economy or another sphere of public life determined by the National Branch Classification, in accordance with the respective sphere of education pursuant to the International Standard Classification of Education.

2. "Profession" shall mean a type of work activity for which vocational education and vocational training are organised.

3. "Part of a profession" shall mean a separate work activity within a profession for which vocational training can be organised.

4. "Speciality" shall mean an independently separated work activity within a profession.

5. "Professional qualification" shall mean qualification on a profession or part of a profession which includes the combination of professional competence and the general education knowledge and skills necessary for their formation.

6. "Professional competence" shall mean personal qualities formed on the basis of acquired knowledge and skills which contribute to initiative, teamwork and quality practising of a profession according to the state educational requirements for acquiring qualification on a profession.

7. "Professional qualification degree" shall mean the volume and content of professional competence and the general education knowledge and skill necessary for their formation.

8. "Deviant behaviour" shall mean a behaviour which contradicts public norms and which is subject to moral and legal sanctions.

9. (Repealed, SG No. 103/2002).

10. "Legal capacity" shall mean acknowledged possession of an obligatory amount of professional competence which gives right to practise specific work activities.

11. (New, SG No. 77/2005, supplemented, SG No. 62/2006)  
"Regulated profession" shall mean an activity or set of activities, included in the List of Regulated Professions in the Republic of Bulgaria, which is socially significant and/or is of substantial importance for people's life and health, and the practicing of which is regulated by primary and secondary statutory instruments and administrative regulations for possession of specific professional qualification, legal capacity or membership in a professional organisation working towards the maintenance of high standards in the respective area, for which it has been specifically recognised by the government.

**§ 1a.** (New, SG No. 77/2005, effective 1.01.2007, amended and supplemented, SG No. 62/2006, repealed, SG No. 13/2008, new, SG No. 61/2014) For the purposes of the this Act:

1. "Professional knowledge" shall mean a set of theories and practices related to a specific field of work, acquired in the course of training or study.

2. "Professional skills" shall mean the skills for applying the acquired professional knowledge in the implementation of tasks and problem solving.

3. "Professional competences" shall mean a proven competence for using professional knowledge, professional skills and personal qualities which are necessary for practising a profession, in accordance with the National Qualification Framework.

4. (Amended, SG No. 79/2015, effective 1.08.2016) "Study results" shall mean the professional competences acquired by a person upon completing the process of formal or informal training or informal learning, which he/she is capable of demonstrating.

5. "Unit of study results" shall mean part of a professional qualification, including a set of interrelated study results, which can be assessed or validated separately.

6. "Module" shall mean a separate educational content for achieving one or several units of study results determined in the state educational requirements for acquisition of qualification on professions and related to performance of a specific professional activity.

7. "Informal training" shall mean training organised by institutions outside the vocational education and training system.

8. (Amended, SG No. 79/2015, effective 1.08.2016) "Informal learning" shall mean non-institutionalised and non-systematised accumulation of knowledge, skills and competences.

9. "Formal training" shall mean an organised form of training for acquisition of knowledge, skills and competences and a state acknowledged document is issued for the results of such training.

10. "Protected profession" shall mean a profession which is important for the economic development of the respective sphere and in respect whereof there is a proven need of qualified specialists on the labour market.

**§ 2.** The List of Professions for Vocational Education and Training shall also include the list referred to in Article 42, Paragraph 6 of the Public Education Act.

**§ 3.** (Amended, SG No. 66/2013, effective 26.07.2013, SG No. 98/2014, effective 28.11.2014) This Act shall apply in the training institutions in the system of the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works and the Ministry of Transport, inasmuch as something else is not provided by the acts for their establishment and by the provisions of the special laws regarding their structure and activities.

**§ 3a.** (New, SG No. 77/2005, effective 1.01.2007, amended, SG No. 62/2006, repealed, SG No. 13/2008).

## **TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS**

**§ 4.** The Council of Ministers, at the proposal of the Minister of Education and Science, within six months from the entry into force of this Act, shall adopt Rules of operation of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training and shall determine the total number of its personnel.

**§ 5.** Within one year from the enactment of this Act the Minister of Education and Science, at the proposal of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training, in coordination with the Minister of Labour and Social Policy shall transform the existing pedagogical consultative offices and professional information centres into centres for information and vocational orientation or shall close them down.

**§ 6.** (Amended, SG No. 1/2000, SG No. 108/2000, SG No. 111/2001, SG No. 120/2002) The Minister of Education and Science, no later than the beginning of the 2004/2005 school year, shall determine by an order the state and municipal vocational schools, vocational secondary schools and vocational colleges in compliance with Article 18. The order shall be promulgated in the State Gazette.

**§ 7.** Until the adoption of the state educational requirements for acquiring qualification on professions, the curricula and syllabi for the respective professions and specialities approved by the Minister of Education and Science shall apply.

**§ 7a.** (New, SG No. 29/2003) (1) Students admitted during the 1998 - 1999 school year to 1st course or 8th grade with admission after 7th grade with intensive studying of a foreign language in technical schools, secondary professional and technical schools, professional secondary schools or in classes for acquiring professional qualification in secondary general schools and secondary schools, shall acquire professional qualification under the conditions and following the procedure of this Act and shall receive a certificate referred to in Article 25, Paragraph 1, item 2 of the Public Education Act without taking state exams referred to in Article 36, Paragraph 1.

(2) Students who entered 9th grade during the 1999 - 2000 school year with admission after primary education into technical schools, secondary professional and technical schools, professional secondary schools or classes for acquiring professional qualification in secondary general schools, secondary schools and special schools, shall acquire professional qualification under the conditions and following the procedure of this Act and shall acquire a certificate pursuant to Article 25, Paragraph 1, item 2 of the Public Education Act without taking state exams referred to in Article 36, Paragraph 1.

(3) The students referred to in Paragraphs 1 and 2 shall take the exams for acquiring professional qualification, pointed out in the curricula according to § 7:

1. for acquiring of second degree of professional qualification - in theory with a summarised syllabus and in practice according to an assignment determined by the school and after successfully completed 12th grade;

2. for acquiring of third degree of professional qualification - in theory with a summarised syllabus or defence of diploma thesis and in practice according to an assignment determined by the school and after successfully completed 13th grade.

**§ 7b.** (New, SG No. 29/2003) (1) Students who entered during the 1998 - 1999 school year 8th grade with admission after 7th grade in the schools for arts shall acquire professional qualification under the conditions and following the procedure of this Act and shall acquire a certificate pursuant to Article 15, Paragraph 1, item 2 of the Public Education Act without taking state exams referred to in Article 36, Paragraph 1

(2) The students referred to in Paragraph 1 shall take the exams for acquiring professional qualification - in theory with a summarised syllabus or defence of diploma thesis and in practice according to an assignment determined by the school and after successfully completed 12th grade.

**§ 7c.** (New, SG No. 29/2003) (1) The persons completing during the 2002 - 2003 school year their education in professions and specialities with admission after completed secondary education shall not take state exams for acquiring of professional qualification referred to in Article 36, Paragraph 1.

(2) The persons referred to in Paragraph 1 shall take exams for acquiring of second and/or third degree of professional qualification envisaged in the curricula according to § 7:

1. for acquiring of second degree of professional qualification - in theory with a summarised syllabus and in practice according to an assignment determined by the school;

2. for acquiring of third degree of professional qualification - in theory with a summarised syllabus or defence of diploma thesis and in practice according to an assignment determined by the school.

**§ 8.** Half of the members of the Managing Board of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training, during the first mandate, shall be renewed by four representatives of each the quotas of the organisations of employees on national level by cast and by four representatives of the ministries quota.

**§ 9.** Items 7 and 8 in Article 26, Paragraph 1 of the Public Education Act (promulgated, SG No. 86/1991; amended, SG No. 90/1996 and SG Nos. 36, 124 and 153/1998), shall be amended as follows:

"7. vocational secondary schools - from 8th or 9th grade through 12th or 13th grade including;

8. vocational - from 7th or 8th grade with duration of the education of up to three years, from 9th grade - with duration of the education up to four years and vocational colleges after completed secondary education - with duration of the education of up to two years;"

**§ 10.** In the Protection in Cases of Unemployment and Promotion of Employment Act (promulgated, SG No. 120/1997; amended, SG No. 155/1998, SG Nos. 26 and 50/1999) Section I of Chapter Six "Professional Qualification" and § 1, item 8 of the supplementary provisions shall be repealed.

**§ 11.** The implementation of this Act shall be assigned to the Minister of Education and Science.

---

ACT Amending and Supplementing  
the Vocational Education and Training Act  
(SG No. 103/2002)

.....  
§ 40. Throughout the Act the words "the state educational requirement for the level of education, the general education minimum and the curriculum" shall be replaced with "the Level of Education, General Education Minimum and Curriculum Act", and the words "the inspectorates of education" shall be replaced with "the regional inspectorates of education".

TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS  
to the Act Amending and Supplementing the Tourism Act  
(SG No. 28/2005, effective 1.04.2005)

§ 14. The secondary statutory instruments for implementation of the Protection and Promotion of Culture Act, the Public Education Act, the People's Chitalishte Act, the Monuments of Culture and Museums Act, the Vocational Education and Training Act and the Film Industry Act issued by or jointly with the Minister of Culture prior to the coming into force of this Act shall remain in force.

.....  
TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS  
to the Act Amending and Supplementing  
the Professional Education and Training Act  
(SG No. 77/2005, effective 27.09.2005)

.....  
§ 16. The secondary statutory instruments regulating the acknowledgement of professional qualification and/or legal capacity to exercise a regulated profession acquired in member states of the European Union and the European economic space shall be issued or amended within 6 months of the coming into force of this Act.

.....  
TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS  
to the Act Amending and Supplementing  
the Professional Education and Training Act  
(SG No. 36/2009, amended and supplemented,  
SG No. 74/2009, effective 15.09.2009)



§ 18. (1) (Amended and supplemented, SG No. 74/2009, effective 15.09.2009) Students admitted to the 8th grade during the 2004 - 2005 and 2005 - 2006 school year for tuition under a C Programme for acquiring the third degree of professional qualification with a duration of 6 years after completion of the 7th grade, and students admitted to the 9th grade during the 2005 - 2006 and 2006 - 2007 school year for tuition under a C Programme for acquiring the third degree of professional qualification with a duration of 5 years after completion of primary education shall be trained and complete the 13th grade in an individual or extramural course of study.

(2) (Amended, SG No. 74/2009, effective 15.09.2009) Students admitted to the 8th grade during the 2006 - 2007 school year for tuition under a C Programme for acquiring the third degree of professional qualification with a duration of 6 years after completion of the 7th grade, and students admitted to the 8th or 9th grade during the 2007 - 2008 and 2008 - 2009 school years for tuition under a C Programme for acquiring the third degree of professional qualification with a duration of 5 or 6 years, shall complete their studies for acquisition of vocational education with acquisition of the third degree of professional qualification in the 12th grade.

(3) The students referred to in Paragraph 2 shall continue and complete their studies in accordance with school curricula developed for each year's class.

(4) In the school curricula referred to in Paragraph 3, the annual and/or weekly number of classes shall be redistributed, with the names of subjects/modules being preserved as in the curriculum for the profession as approved by the Minister of Education and Science.

§ 19. Pending licensing procedures which have not been closed as at the date of this Act's entry into force shall be completed in accordance with the procedure applied hitherto.

.....  
§ 23. The provisions of § 2, 3, 4 and 21 shall take effect as of the 2009 - 2010 school year.

ACT Amending and Supplementing  
the Professional Education and Training Act  
(SG No. 74/2009, effective 15.09.2009)

.....  
Supplementary Provision

§ 2. Everywhere in the Act the words "the Minister of Education and Science", "Minister of Education and Science", and "Ministry of Education and Science", shall be replaced by "the Minister of Education, Youth and Science", "Minister of Education, Youth and Science", and "Ministry of Education, Youth and Science".

Final Provisions

.....

§ 48. The Act shall become effective in the day of its promulgation in State Gazette, with exception of § 1, which shall become effective at 15.09.2009, and § 47, which shall become effective at 1.10.2009.

TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS  
to the Act amending and supplementing  
the Physical Education and Sports Act  
(SG No. 50/2010)

.....  
62. Paragraphs 20, 21, § 48, item 1, § 52, item 1 and 3 and § 56 shall become effective school year 2011/2012.

FINAL PROVISIONS  
to the Act to the Act amending Youth Act  
(SG No. 68/2013, effective 2.08.2013)

.....  
§ 5. The Vocational Education and Training Act (promulgated, SG No. 68/1999, amended, SG No. 1 and 108/2000, SG No. 111/2001, SG No. 103 and 120/2002, SG No. 29/2003, SG No. 28, 77 and 94/2005, SG No. 30, 62, 63/2006, SG No. 13 and 26/2008, SG No. 36 and 74/2009, SG No. 50 and 97/2010) everywhere the words "the Minister of Education, Youth and Science," "Minister of Education, Youth and Science" and "The Ministry of Education, Youth and Science" is replaced by "the Minister of Education and Science", "Minister of Education and Science" and "the Ministry of Education and Science" and the words "Minister of Physical Education and Sports" be replaced by "the Minister of Youth and Sports".

.....  
ACT Amending and Supplementing  
the Vocational Education and Training Act  
(SG No. 61/2014)

.....  
Supplementary Provision

§ 41. The persons who have completed a grade in an auxiliary school or the students who have completed a secondary education grade under an individual educational programme may be trained:

1. under E programmes with duration of up to 1 year for students who have completed a lower secondary education stage or who have completed a secondary education grade;

2. under A programmes with duration as set out by the relevant documentation - for persons who have completed a grade in an auxiliary school or for persons with special educational needs with a completed grade under an individual educational programme.

Final Provisions

§ 42. Within 6 months from entry into force of this Act, the Minister of Education and Science shall issue the ordinances under Article 9a, Paragraph 4, Article 17a, Paragraph 5, Article 32f, Paragraph 7 and Article 40, Paragraph 10.

§ 43. Within 6 months from entry into force of this Act, the Council of Ministers shall bring the rules of operation of the National Agency for Vocational Education and Training in compliance therewith.

.....