

VIETNAM BUSINESS FORUM

The on-going policy dialogue channel between the Government of Vietnam and business community towards a favorable business environment since 1997



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS


- *SBV Workshop on Draft Circular Amending Circular 09/2023/TT-NHNN on Anti-Money Laundering Implementation – 15 May*
- *ADB Workshop on Enhancing Supply Chain Finance in Vietnam – 20 May*
- *Conference on Draft Resolution on International Financial Center (IFC), chaired by Permanent Deputy Prime Minister Nguyễn Hòa Bình – 20 May*
- *VBF Seminar with MOF and MOHA on Work Permits and Draft Decree Replacing Decree 152/2020/NĐ-CP on Foreign Workers in Vietnam – 28 May*
- *MOJ Appraisal Meeting on Draft Decree Replacing Decree 152/2020/NĐ-CP on Foreign Workers in Vietnam – 3 June*
- *Expert Insights shared: Work-permit regulations in Vietnam and international practices*

UPCOMING EVENT

- *Made in Vietnam Energy Dialogue 2025 - 18 June*


ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES HIGHLIGHTS

BANKING WORKING GROUP (BWG)

 VBF BWG actively participated in the Consultation Workshop on the Draft Circular amending Circular No. 09/2023/TT-NHNN and the dissemination of the National Risk Assessment on Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing.

The workshop, hosted by the State Bank of Vietnam (SBV) on May 15, 2025, provided a valuable platform for open and constructive dialogue. Discussions focused on the practical implementation of the 2022 Law on Anti-Money Laundering and Circular No. 09/2023/TT-NHNN, highlighting areas that may require further refinement to better align with actual practice and meet international standards.

VBF BWG highly appreciates the SBV's continued engagement with the business community to ensure an effective and globally compliant anti-money laundering framework.

 On 20 May 2025, Mr Surajit Rakshit, Head of Transaction Banking BWG, attended and delivered speech at the Workshop on Enhancing Supply Chain Finance: Global Best Practices and Risk Mitigation Strategies, organised by the Asian Development Bank.

With the topic "Supply Chain Finance – Global Context", Mr Sujarit shared insights on risk participation of SCF assets in Viet Nam.

This was a significant opportunity for VBF BWG to advocate for greater recognition and adoption of risk participation products in the Vietnamese market.



ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES HIGHLIGHTS

CONFERENCE ON DRAFT RESOLUTION ON IFC, CHAIRED BY PERMANENT DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER NGUYỄN HÒA BÌNH

🌐 On May 20, VBF was pleased to participate in the high-level Conference to discuss the draft National Assembly Resolution on establishing an International Financial Centre (IFC) in Vietnam chaired by Permanent Deputy Prime Minister Nguyễn Hòa Bình.

✦ This conference represented a key milestone in the policy-making process and is the final expert consultation before the draft is formally submitted to the National Assembly during its 9th session. Once adopted, the Resolution will lay a crucial legal foundation for building a competitive and internationally integrated financial hub in Vietnam. It is expected that up to 8 guiding decrees will subsequently be issued to ensure the effective implementation of the Resolution.

✦ This conference was part of a broader series of consultation activities that VBF experts have been actively involved in, providing technical insight and policy recommendations throughout the drafting process.

✦ VBF reaffirms its commitment to closely accompanying the Government in the development of these important legal documents, contributing to Vietnam's long-term vision of sustainable and inclusive economic growth.



ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES HIGHLIGHTS

VBF SEMINAR WITH MOF AND MOHA ON WORK PERMITS AND DRAFT DECREE REPLACING DECREE 152/2020/ND-CP ON FOREIGN WORKERS IN VIETNAM

On the morning of May 28, the Vietnam Business Forum (VBF) held a successful hybrid seminar at the Ministry of Finance Office to discuss the Draft Decree replacing Decree 152/2020/ND-CP on the management of foreign workers in Vietnam. The event was co-chaired by Mr. Vu Van Chung, Deputy Director General of the Foreign Investment Agency/ Ministry of Finance and Ms. Nguyen Thi Quyen, Deputy Director General of the Department of Employment/ Ministry of Home Affairs. The event attracted strong participation, with more than 300 attendees via both online and in-person.



ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES HIGHLIGHTS

VBF SEMINAR WITH MOF AND MOHA ON WORK PERMITS AND DRAFT DECREE REPLACING DECREE 152/2020/ND-CP ON FOREIGN WORKERS IN VIETNAM

📖 In response to VBF issues, Ms. Quyen confirmed that several recommendations from businesses had already been considered and integrated into the latest version of the Draft Decree. She also informed that the Ministry is developing an online portal for work permit submissions, expected to be operational in Q4 2025. This system will streamline the application process, allowing businesses to submit scanned documents for timely and efficient processing by authorities.

📖 Moreover, following the enactment of the new decree in mid-June, MOHA plans to issue detailed guidance and organize training sessions for provincial departments, relevant agencies, and businesses. This aims to ensure a consistent understanding of the new procedures, minimize unnecessary documentation requests, and avoid administrative delays at the local level.

📖 VBF highly values the active engagement and responsiveness of MOHA and MOF and reaffirms its commitment to ongoing collaboration to improve the legal framework and promote a favorable investment environment in Vietnam.



ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES HIGHLIGHTS

MOJ Appraisal Meeting on Draft Decree Replacing Decree 152/2020/ND-CP on Foreign Workers in Vietnam

✿ As part of our ongoing efforts to enhance the legal framework for foreign workers in Vietnam, the VBF was pleased to participate in the appraisal meeting on the Draft Decree replacing Decree 152/2020/ND-CP, held on June 3 and chaired by Mr. Cao Dang Vinh, Deputy Director General of the Department of Economic and Civil Legislation under the Ministry of Justice (MOJ).

✿ The meeting brought together representatives from key Government Ministries, including the Ministry of Home Affairs (Employment Department – Drafting Committee), Ministry of Public Security, Ministry of National Defense, Ministry of Education and Training, State Bank of Vietnam, Hanoi People Committee, relevant departments at MOJ, and various business Chambers/ Associations.

💡 Representing VBF, Co-Chair Michael Nguyen emphasized the importance of clearer guidance on qualification requirements for technical experts, particularly in emerging and specialized fields such as artificial intelligence, digital innovation, and high-tech industry. As these sectors are relatively new and often rely on on-the-job training rather than traditional academic pathways, he called for a more practical and inclusive definition of what constitutes a “relevant” degree. This would help ensure consistent interpretation and support businesses in attracting qualified global talent in priority industries.

🔍 The meeting reflected a strong spirit of collaboration, aiming to strike a balance between regulatory oversight and the practical needs of businesses and foreign investors. This effort aligns with recent Resolutions, which promote administrative reform and create a more favorable environment for investment and international workforce integration.



EXPERT INSIGHTS SHARED

Work-permit regulations in Vietnam and international practices

*Presented by Mr. Laurent Quistrebert, GMS,
Steering Committee member at VBF HRWG*

Context: Persistent Challenges with the Current Work Permit Framework

Several key concerns remain with both the current work permit system and the recently released draft, which continue to pose significant obstacles for foreign employers and professionals operating in Vietnam:

- **Recruitment Announcement and Labor Demand Approval:** The current requirement to publicly advertise job vacancies and seek approval for foreign labor, before applying for a work permit, is often impractical. It creates delays, raises confidentiality issues, and is particularly unsuitable for senior executives or short-term project roles.
- **Cumbersome and Fragmented Processes:** The work permit procedure involves multiple administrative steps, burdensome documentation, and extensive consular legalization requirements. These inefficiencies lead to uncertainty and limit business agility. Compounding the issue, the location-specific nature of permits prevents intra-country mobility, which complicates operations across multiple sites.
- **One-Size-Fits-All Approach:** Whether a foreign expert is in Vietnam for a two-year assignment or a three-month project, the same lengthy process applies. This lack of differentiation between short- and long-term roles is a major concern for companies needing flexible workforce deployment.
- **Lack of Tailored Categories:** There is no provision for permit categories adapted to various work situations such as short-term missions, freelance consultants, or skilled professionals working in emerging fields like digital transformation or artificial intelligence.
- **Restrictive Short-Term Work Rules:** The current regulation allowing only 30 days of work not exceeding 3 trips per year without a work permit is difficult to manage and misaligned with modern business needs.

Work-permit regulations in Vietnam and international practices

In comparison with other APAC nations, Vietnam is notable for its stringent procedures and considerable administrative complexity.

EXPERT INSIGHTS SHARED (CONT)

Work-permit regulations in Vietnam and international practices

- Most countries in the region do not require recruitment announcements or labor demand approvals, especially for intra-company transfers or short-term roles.
- In other jurisdictions, document requirements are typically limited to essential items, and do not always require lengthy and costly legalization procedures.
- Work permits in many neighboring countries are valid nationwide or allow flexible declarations of work locations, enabling mobile work arrangements that reflect modern business models, such as contract manufacturing model, to better align with how companies operate in practice.
- Simplified procedures or permit exemptions with special visa type for short-term assignments are common elsewhere, whereas Vietnam still applies the same complex process regardless of assignment duration.

These differences place Vietnam at a disadvantage when it comes to attracting foreign talent and supporting dynamic, multinational business operations.

Key Recommendations

While stakeholders acknowledged that the draft decree introduces some positive elements, significant uncertainties around its implementation persist, and many of the most pressing issues remain unaddressed. The dialogue emphasized the importance of including the following recommendations in the final version of the decree:

- **Eliminate or Simplify Recruitment Announcement Requirements:** Particularly for senior roles, intra-company transfers, and short-term positions where this step serve little practical purpose.
- **Further Streamline the Work Permit Process:** Remove unnecessary steps, reduce procedural duplication, and limit document legalization to essential items only.
- **Enhance Electronic Filing:** Fully implement the endorsed electronic application system in a way that eliminates the continued requirement for physical document submissions after online filing.
- **Introduce Flexibility in Expert Qualification Criteria and Job Titles:** Especially for fast-evolving sectors like AI and digital transformation, where conventional academic degrees or three years of experience may not be relevant.
- **Allow Nationwide Work Permit Validity or Multiple Work Locations:** Alternatively, reintroduce a simple work location notification process to account for assignments across multiple provinces.

UPCOMING EVENT

Made in Vietnam Energy Dialogue 2025

This Dialogue is organized by the National Economics University as part of the project **"Enhancing Bankability in Clean Energy Investment in Vietnam"**, developed by the Power & Energy Working Group (PEWG) under the Vietnam Business Forum (VBF) and funded by the Global Energy Alliance for People and Planet (GEAPP)

The key output of the project is the report "Made-in-Vietnam Energy Plan 4.0" (MVEP 4.0) – a strategic document offering a comprehensive approach to Vietnam's energy transition through a long-term vision, medium-term policy framework, and short-term solutions. The report emphasizes measures to enhance national competitiveness in attracting investment in clean energy, with a particular focus on removing administrative and legal barriers to accelerate the development of a reliable, low-emission, and cost-effective power system.

- Time: **8.00 -12.00, Wednesday, 18 June 2025**
- Venue: Auditorium A – Cultural Hall, National Economics University, 207 Giai Phong, Dong Tam ward, Hai Ba Trung district, Hanoi
- Language: English, Vietnamese

For further information, please contact: Mr. Dinh Duc Truong (National Economics University) via Phone: (84) 916 879 768; Email: truongdd@neu.edu.vn, or Ms. Pham Linh Ngan (VBF- PEWG) via Phone: (84) 939 441 494; Email: pewg@vbf.org.vn.

Thank you for your consideration and we hope to see you at the event!

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