

EDUCATION IN THAILAND

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Office of the Education Council  
Ministry of Education  
Kingdom of Thailand

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## **Education in Thailand**

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## PREFACE

The Office of the Education Council under the supervision of the Ministry of Education takes great pleasure in presenting a national report on education development, *Education in Thailand*. This report will also be made available at [www.onec.go.th](http://www.onec.go.th).

This publication gives an overview of the education in Thailand in terms of the general background, educational administration and management, educational system and standards, including resources and investment in education. It also summarises the progress in education development and achievements, ranging from the development of teaching and learning quality to the outcomes of education and learning. It is expected that the information which was updated in 2016 will foster a comprehensive understanding of education development in Thailand and promote international cooperation and exchanges in education.

The Office of the Education Council would like to extend appreciation to the advisers and special advisers of this report for their valuable suggestions and comments. Our gratitude is also expressed to the representatives of main agencies under the Ministry of Education and other concerned agencies outside the Ministry of Education for providing us with valuable information pertaining to the education development and reform.



Kamol Rodklai, Ph.D.

Secretary-General  
The Education Council

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The report on *Education in Thailand* reflects considerable progress in education development in Thailand. In this publication, the first chapter presents the introduction of education in Thailand comprising the long history of education development as well as the emerging challenges affecting education during this period of time.

The second chapter mentions educational administration and management as well as participation in the provision of education. The administration and management of education by the State is mainly under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education through central agencies, regional and provincial education offices, and Educational institutions. Educational administration and management in regional areas, which had been based on the Educational Service Areas, has been restructured. The administration and management of education can also be done by the Local Administration Organisations and agencies other than the Ministry of Education. Moreover, this chapter describes the participation in the provision of education by the private sector which covers non-governmental organisations, private education institutions, private enterprises, families, and religious institutions.

The third chapter presents the educational system, standards and quality assurance. According to the *National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999) and Amendments (Second National Education Act B.E. 2545 (2002))*, there are three types of education which are classified as formal, non-formal, and informal while the level of education comprises basic and higher

education levels. To ensure improvement in the quality of education at all levels and of all types, two major tasks that need to be accomplished are the development of educational standards and the development of a quality assurance system.

The fourth chapter mentions the mobilisation of resources and investment for education and the allocation of budget. During 2010-2015, Thai Government in each period has allotted a remarkable proportion of the national budget for education and the financial contribution from the government to pre-primary, primary, secondary and higher education has increased successively.

In terms of the development of teaching and learning quality, it is crucial for preparing competent Thai people and a prosperous society for the country. So, the outstanding activities and projects mentioned in the fifth chapter are the early childhood education development, the integration of morality and ethics into teaching and learning process, efforts to tackle student illiteracy, and improvement of the teaching and learning through Distance Learning technology (DL).

In the sixth chapter, the development of the teaching profession and educational personnel is presented in terms of the present status of teachers and faculty, recruitment of students in teacher education institutions, teacher education curricula, and projects of teacher production.

The seventh and eighth chapters present the success of education development through information on access to education, participation and progression as well as the outcomes of education and learning at each level of education. The ninth chapter involves the international education and international cooperation in education.

Finally, the tenth chapter focuses on the current efforts and way forward for education reform and development. A proposal for the implementation of education reform comprises six major issues, namely: 1) reform of education and learning; 2) reform of administrative structure and educational management; 3) reform of teacher and educational personnel; 4) reform of opportunity in education and educational quality development; 5) reform of workforce production and development; and 6) reform of information and communication technologies for education. Since 2016, the Ministry of Education has been preparing the *Draft National Scheme of Education B.E. 2560-2579 (2017-2036)* which is considered a long-term guideline for various agencies responsible for the provision of education and management to improve the quality of education.

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction of Education in Thailand

In Thailand, education is considered a fundamental factor of human resources development and a mechanism for developing the Thai economy and society. Education in Thailand has a long history reflecting the evolution of teaching and learning in the country and has gone through several major reforms for greater access to the education of people living in Thailand.

It can be said that education began in the 13<sup>th</sup> century in Sukhothai Period (1238–1378) and was dispensed by the Royal Institution of Instruction (*Rajabundit*) to members of the royal family and the nobility, while commoners were taught by Buddhist monks in the temple. In the period of the Ayutthaya Kingdom from 1350 to 1767 during the reign of King Narai the Great (1656–1688), the *Chindamani*, generally accepted as the first textbook of the Thai language, was a collation of the grammar. In the Rattanakosin Period (1782-present) which was deemed the period of education reform and modernisation, the





development of public education was accelerated in the reign of King Rama IV (1851–1865) who decreed that measures be taken to modernise education.

The policy of educational modernisation was further pursued by King Rama V or King Chulalongkorn (1868-1910). In 1887, King Rama V established *the Department of Education* to oversee the Kingdom's education and religious affairs and, in 1892, became the Ministry of Education. In 1898, the first *Education Plan* was launched, divided into two parts: the first concerned education in the Bangkok area while the second focused on education in the provinces. In 1916, higher education emerged in Thailand as Chulalongkorn University was founded with four faculties: Medicine, Law and Political Science, Engineering, and Literature and Science. In 1921, the *Compulsory Primary Education Act* was proclaimed, followed by the *First National Education Scheme of 1932* which was thus

devised whereby individual educational ability regardless of sex, social background or physical conditions would be formally recognised. In 1977, Thailand's educational system was changed from a 4-3-3-2 structure to a 6-3-3 system wherein six years of compulsory primary education is followed by three years of lower secondary school and by another three years of upper secondary schooling, which is still in use nowadays.

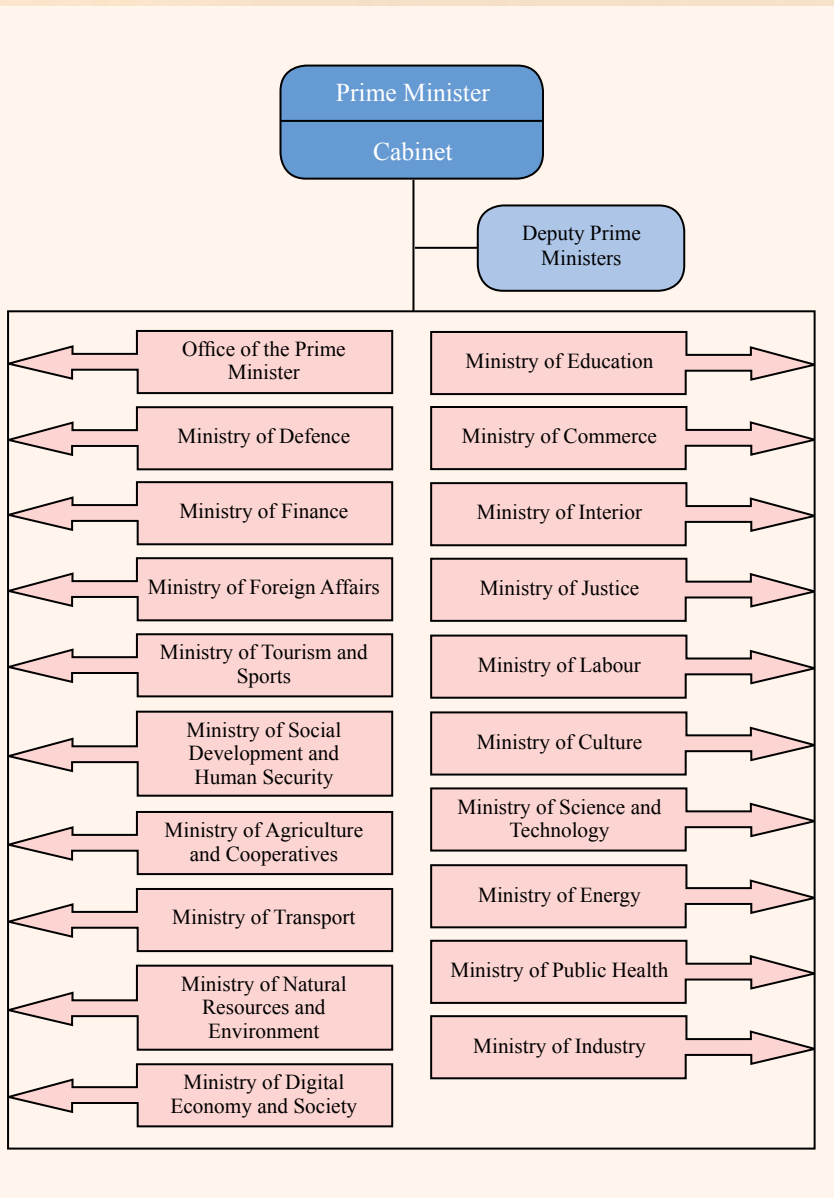
Thai Governments in each period have attached great importance to education provision and promotion. Educational policies delivered have been hoped to improve the quality of education as a whole so that all groups of the Thai population have equal opportunity to access to education of quality. In addition, education development is the main mechanism to drive the country forwards to the desired direction. The educational policies delivered by Thai Governments have shown different highlights but, in general, share the mutual desires to reform education, create equal educational opportunities, develop teachers and educational personnel, upgrade vocational education standards, allocate sufficient budget for education, and encourage participation in educational development of all sectors.

Most of the Governments have considered reform of education as the priority of their educational policies. For example, the educational policy of the Government in 2006 accelerated education reform with an emphasis on virtue-led learning. The Government in 2008 announced reform of the entire education system by various actions such as reforming educational structure and management, amending laws in accordance with the Constitution, pooling resources for the improvement of educational management, and so on. In 2011, the Government initiated improvement of the quality of education by undertaking reform of the knowledge system.

Presently, of 11 government policies, education is the most important according to a statement delivered by the Prime Minister to the National Legislative Assembly, which serves as the House of Representatives, the Senate and the National Assembly. The Government considers that education is a foundation to the production of human resources and the nation's future and creates a robust society, with quality and morality. It is believed that education is able to build a stronger society full with virtue and ethics. Various agencies, both within and outside the Ministry of Education, are collaborating on developing the quality of Thai people through education. Importantly, education reform will be one part of the reform plans of the National Reform Council which is charged with the duty to conduct studies and make proposals for the implementation of reforms in various fields.

Although the main responsibility for education lies with the Ministry of Education, other ministries, namely the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Transport, the Ministry of Culture, and the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, take charge of educational management in specialised fields or in local communities. The organisational chart of the present Government (2014-present) comprising 20 ministries is displayed below:

**Figure 1.1 Organisational Chart of the Thai Government**



From 2015 up to the present, Thailand has been meeting various emerging challenges affecting the education situation which needs to be improved urgently and effectively. The important situations can be described as follows:

### **1. The Progress of Information and Communication Technology and Social and Economic Change**

The Digital Revolution leading to the Fourth Industrial Revolution: The giant leap in the growth of information and communication technology significantly effects the free flow of trade and information and beyond frontier markets. The new face of the globalisation is the world of “Internet of Things”. The economic system worldwide is gradually entering the trend of “the Fourth Industrial Revolution or “Industry 4.0.” As for Thailand, the Government has prepared its policy of Thailand 4.0 to develop Thailand into a value-based economy. The model of Thailand 4.0 will change the country’s traditional farming to smart farming sector, traditional SMEs to smart enterprises, and traditional services to high-value services. The Thailand 4.0 model is considered supportive of unlimited access to information and knowledge sources, with the development of a body of knowledge. Mobile learning is especially important for education. To respond to this situation, education in Thailand must target human resource development, workforce preparation in line with the market’s needs and curriculum improvement.

## **2. The Millennium Development Goals: MDGs 2015 towards the Sustainable Development Goals: SDGs 2030**

Thailand has achieved several MDGs targets prior to the 2015 time frame, including goals on universal primary education and on promoting gender equality and empowering women. In Thailand, the country's gross enrolment rate has exceeded 100 percent and both girls and boys are given equal access to education. After the MDGs 2015, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a universal set of goals, targets and indicators that member states of the United Nations will be expected to use to frame their agendas and political policies over the next 15 years. The SDGs follow and expand on the MDGs, which were agreed by governments in 2001 and are due to expire at the end of 2015. Of 17 Global Goals, the fourth Goal of the SDGs 2030 is to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. This goal ensures that all girls and boys complete free primary and secondary schooling by 2030. It also aims to provide equal access to vocational training and a quality higher education.



### 3. Education for All Movement

In 2000, 164 countries agreed to achieve six goals of the Education for All (EFA) by 2015. Thailand is one which has adopted a Framework for Action to deliver EFA commitments. As a result, Thailand has made strong efforts to achieve the six EFA goals by developing the overall standard of education and human resources of the country.

As revealed in *Education for All 2015 National Review: Thailand*, with a view to expanding and improving childhood care and education, the Thai Government appointed a National Committee on Early Childhood Development and announced a policy for early childhood development. In addition, all relevant agencies were encouraged to work together for the development of young children. Regarding the expansion of the provision of basic education, concerned agencies have worked hard to provide basic education for all and to expand opportunities to access quality education services for every group living in Thailand. As for the goal of the provision of opportunities for learning and developing life skills for young people and adults, Thailand has formulated strategies to develop a society of lifelong learning through the development of continuous learning at each stage of life while vocational education is also being strengthened. For raising the level of adult literacy, Thailand has a policy to strengthen the ability of all Thais to read and write as well as to build up a basic ability in numeracy and knowledge of science and technology for their daily lives. To ensure gender equality in education, curriculum and learning content are being revised to correspond to learner interests and capabilities, taking into account individual and gender-based differences. To achieve the sixth EFA goal of improvement in the quality of education, a number of policies are being implemented to upgrade the quality of education.



#### **4. ASEAN Community**

Human resource development through education provision is necessary to achieve ASEAN integration for the ASEAN Community. The ASEAN Work Plan on Education 2016-2020 was prepared with the key elements on education as follows:

- 1) Promoting ASEAN awareness through strengthening of Southeast Asian history and indigenous knowledge;
- 2) Enhancing the quality and access to basic education for all, including the disabled, less advantageous and other marginalised groups;
- 3) Strengthening the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT);
- 4) Supporting the development of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector as well as lifelong learning in the region;



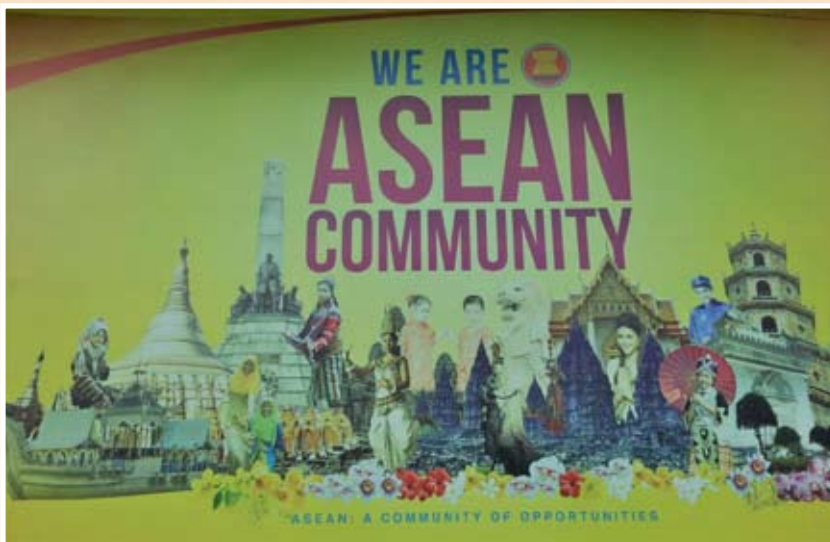
5) Complementing the efforts of other sectors in meeting the objectives of Education for Sustainable Development;

6) Strengthening the higher education sector through the implementation of robust quality assurance mechanisms;

7) Fostering the role of higher education in the area of socio-economic development through University Industry Partnership; and

8) Providing capacity-building programs for teachers, academics and other key stakeholders in the education community.

The Thai education system needs to revise policies, plans, and measures for improving its curriculum and teaching and learning approach, and for equipping Thai people with knowledge, skills, and self-immunity in preparation for the multicultural community of ASEAN. In addition, a competent and highly skilled workforce should be urgently prepared and developed in response to the free mobilisation of workers within the region.



## **5. Thailand's 20-Year National Strategy and Thailand 4.0 Policy**

The 20-Year National Strategy is crucial for Thailand to achieve sustainable development and have a clear direction for long-term development. Under the vision of the “Stability, Prosperity, Sustainability”, it consists of six areas, six primary strategies, and four supporting strategies. The six areas include (1) security, (2) competitiveness enhancement, (3) human resource development, (4) social equality, (5) green growth, and (6) rebalancing and public sector development.

The six primary strategies intend to enhance and develop the potential of human capital; ensure justice and reduce social disparities; strengthen the economy and enhance competitiveness on a sustainable basis; promote green growth for sustainable development; bring about national stability for national development towards prosperity and sustainability; and enhance the efficiency of public sector management and promote good governance.

The five-year *Twelfth National Economic and Social Development Plan*, which is launched from October 1, 2016 to September 30, 2021, continues to focus on the Philosophy of Sufficiency Economy stressing a “middle path” which comprises the three principles of moderation, reasonableness, and self-immunity. In addition, this plan aims at providing Thai people of all ages with skills and competencies for sustainable self-development.

The policy of Thailand 4.0 is one of the significant challenges to education development. Thailand 4.0 is a new economic model to develop Thailand into a value-based economy. This policy will change the country's traditional farming sector to smart farming, traditional SMEs to smart

enterprises, and traditional services to high-value services. The policy also seeks to promote creativity, innovation, and the application of technology in various economic activities. In the step towards Thailand 4.0, education plays an important role in producing and developing human resources with the high skills necessary for transforming the country.

## 6. Change of Population Structure and Ageing

According to the Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board, Thai society will officially be recognised as an aged-society around the year of 2031 while facing a decrease in average working age. Consistently low birth rates and higher life expectancy will increase significantly the share of older persons in the total population in the coming decades. To handle this situation, the education system needs serious improvement to produce a more productive and highly skilled human resources for the country's ongoing development. Lifelong learning will become more important for providing older persons with knowledge to maintain their quality of life.



## 7. The Skills Needed for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

The present economic system and society requires the preparation of highly skilled and competent persons for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The 21<sup>st</sup> century skills that students need for their future jobs and lives are comprised of the 3Rs (Reading, (W) Riting and (A) Rithmetic) and the 7Cs (Critical Thinking and Problem Solving; Creativity and Innovation; Cross-cultural Understanding; Collaboration, Teamwork and Leadership; Communications, Information, and Media Literacy; Computing and ICT Literacy; Career and Learning Skills.

Education provision in Thailand needs to be improved in order to prepare learners for participation in the global economic system of this century, and for developing the country with highly competitive skills. Learning skills of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century; deemed a strategic guideline for learning management – places emphasis on body of knowledge, skills, expertise, and competency of learners for daily living in a changing world.

These challenges, both inside and outside the country, have a significant impact on both the policies and practices of provision of education services. Educational policies and practices need to be revised or redesigned to prepare Thais with skills and competencies corresponding to the realities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

# Chapter 2

## **Educational Administration and Management and Participation in the Provision of Education**

In Thailand, the Ministry of Education is the main agency holding major responsibilities in education, promoting and overseeing all levels and types of education under the administration of both the state and the private sector. Educational administration and management by the State can be done at different levels ranging from the central level of the Ministry of Education to educational institutions. In 2016, there has been a new change in educational administration and management in local areas of Thailand in order to ensure the unity of work in education reform at all levels.

In addition, Local Administration Organisations (LAOs) under the supervision of the Ministry of Interior also play an important role to take charge of educational institutions in local areas while other ministries undertake management of education in specialised fields or for specific purposes.

## **2.1 Administration and Management of Education by the State**

At present, education in Thailand is mainly administered and managed by the Ministry of Education through central agencies, regional and provincial education offices, and educational institutions as described below:

### **2.1.1 Educational Administration and Management at the Central Level**

At the central level, the roles of educational administration and management is chiefly played by the Ministry of Education which is responsible for: promoting and overseeing all levels and types of education; formulating policies, plans and standards; mobilising resources for education; promoting and coordinating religious affairs, arts, culture, and sports relating to education; and monitoring, inspecting and evaluating the provision of education.

The educational administration and management system of the Ministry of Education at the central level is under the responsibility of five main bodies: 1) Office of the Permanent Secretary; 2) Office of the Education Council; 3) Office of the Basic Education Commission; 4) Office of the Vocational Education Commission; and 5) Office of the Higher Education Commission.

*Office of the Permanent Secretary (OPS)* is responsible for: managing general administrative work; coordinating activities within the Ministry, performing other official functions mandated by law; preparing the Ministry's budget and working plans as well as the monitoring, inspection and evaluation of results in the discharge of functions in accordance with the Ministry's policies, guidelines and working

plans; and carrying out other work as provided by ministerial regulations regarding official responsibility division.

***Office of the Education Council (OEC)*** serves as the lead agency responsible for: formulating policies, plans and standards of national education; evaluating the provision of education; conducting research for further development of the provision of education and strengthening capacity for competitiveness; and developing as well as refining education law.

***Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC)*** is responsible for: proposing policies, development plans, standards, and core curricula for basic education; mobilising resources; developing administration systems, promoting and coordinating information networks for learning and teaching; developing educational innovation; supervising, monitoring, inspection, and evaluation of the provision of basic education; and conducting the secretarial work of the Basic Education Commission.

***Office of the Vocational Education Commission (OVEC)*** is the main organisation responsible for tailoring vocational education and training to the needs of labour markets and national economic growth in accordance with the manpower production policy and the National Economic and Social Development Plan. The Office of the Vocational Education Commission has vocational institutes throughout the country. Each college has its own programmes of activities to suit the various needs of local communities.

***Office of the Higher Education Commission (OHEC)*** has, on the basis of academic freedom and excellence, the authority to: propose policies, development plans, and standards for higher education; mobilise resources; coordinate

and promote the development of human resources and capacity of all students; propose the establishment, dissolution, amalgamation, discontinuity and improvement of higher education institutions and community colleges; monitor, inspect and evaluate the provision of higher education; and conduct the secretarial work of the Higher Education Commission.

In addition, there are seven important agencies under the supervision of the Ministry of Education of which responsibilities are explained below:

***Teachers' Council of Thailand (TCT) or "Khurusapha"*** is an organisation for teachers, educational institutions' administrators, and educational administrators that has the power and duty for: setting professional standards; the issuance and withdrawal of licenses; overseeing the maintenance of professional standards and ethics; and developing the teaching profession, educational institutions' administrators, and educational administrators. Thus, teachers, administrators of educational institutions, educational administrators and other educational personnel of both the state and private sectors shall have professional licenses as provided by the law.

***Institute for the Promotion of Teaching Science and Technology (IPST)*** is responsible for: conducting and promoting the study and research of curricula, teaching techniques and evaluation in sciences, mathematics and technology at all levels; promoting and holding training programmes for teachers and students on the teaching of sciences, mathematics and technology; developing science equipment and materials for teaching sciences, mathematics and technology; promoting and developing quality assurance system and evaluation of sciences, mathematics and technology standards in educational institutes; developing and promoting



gifted students and teachers in sciences, mathematics and technology; and offering advice to educational agencies on the provision of education.

***International Institute for Trade and Development (Public Organisation) (ITD)*** is responsible for: conducting educational training and promoting research for personnel from various countries in the areas of international trade, finance, treasury, investment, development and other related topics; rendering assistance to developing countries; promoting and supporting regional economic cooperation; and building unity through the exchange of experience and knowledge. The International Institute for Trade and Development is also the centre for conducting training and capacity enhancing activities.

***Mahidol Wittayanusorn School (Public Organisation)*** is the country's first residential high school that caters to nurturing and developing exceptionally gifted and talented students in mathematics, science and technology. In 1991, the school was founded under the supervision of the General Education Department, now known as the Office of the Basic Education Commission. In 2000, the school's status was changed to that of a public organisation in which a school board holds the autonomous power to run the school.

***Office of the Welfare Promotion Commission for Teachers and Educational Personnel*** is responsible for: promoting benefits, welfare, other privileges and the security of teachers and educational personnel; promoting harmony among teachers and educational personnel; promoting and supporting the management of education by the Ministry in connection with teaching and learning materials, educational equipment and materials, and other matters relating to the management of

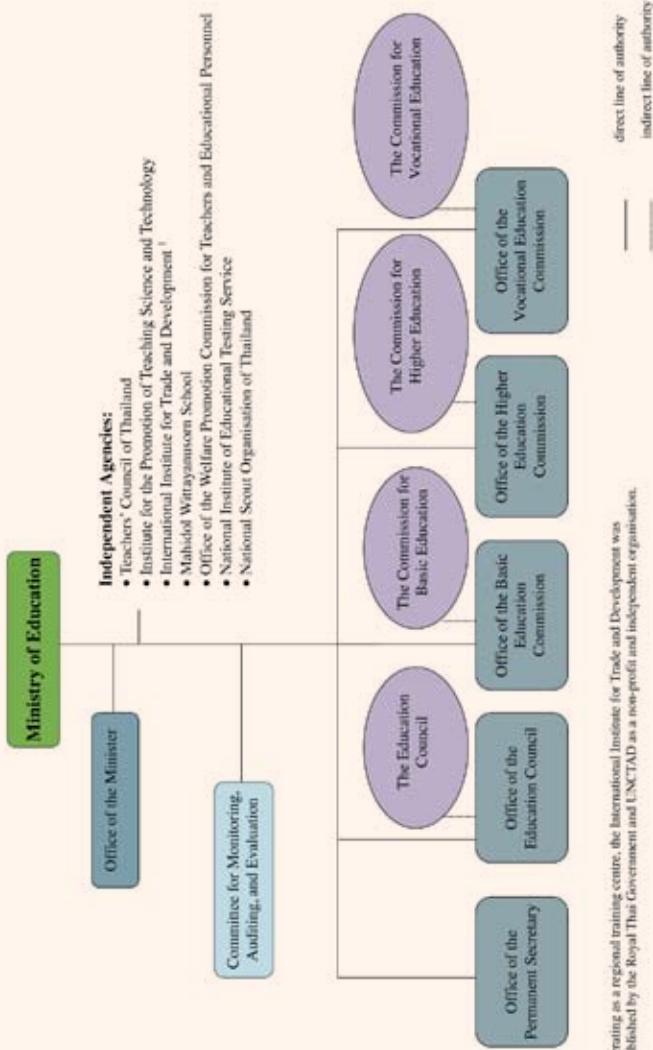
education; and promoting and supporting education and research relating to development, welfare and benefits; and upholding the honour of teachers and educational personnel.

***National Institute of Educational Testing Service (Public Organisation) (NIETS)*** is responsible for: organising testing systems, methods, and tools of educational measurement and evaluation; organising national education testing; providing testing service for basic and vocational educational levels; and conducting research activities as well as disseminating innovative practices and techniques in educational measurement and evaluation. The National Institute of Educational Testing Service is considered an information centre for educational testing and an academic cooperation centre in the field of educational measurement and evaluation at national and international levels.

***National Scout Organisation of Thailand (NSOT)*** was established with the objective of developing scouts in physical, intellectual, emotional and moral aspects to be good and responsible citizens and creating a harmonious and progressive society for national security.

Currently, the administrative structure at the central level is organised as presented in Figure 2.1.

**Figure 2.1 Organisation of the Ministry of Education at Central Level**



Another important education agency playing an important role in external assessment of the educational achievements is the Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (Public Organisation) or ONESQA which, currently, is under the supervision of the Office of the Prime Minister. The Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment is established with the aims of developing the criteria and methods for external quality assessment; assessing educational achievements in order to check the quality of educational institutions. External quality assessment of all educational institutions will be made at least once every five years since the last assessment. The assessment outcomes will be duly submitted to the concerned agencies and the general public. The operation of the Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment gives all agencies responsible for the provision of education at all levels the incentives for self-evaluation so that the quality of education will be continuously enhanced.

### **2.1.2 Educational Administration and Management in Regional Areas**

The educational administration and management of the Ministry of Education for basic education in regional areas was based on the educational service areas under the jurisdiction of the Office of the Basic Education Commission. Comprising an Area Committee for Education, each Educational Service Area was established in consideration of the number of educational institutions, the population and cultural background as the main criteria as well as other appropriate conditions, with the exception of the provision of basic education stipulated in the vocational education legislations. Having the power in academic affairs, budgeting, personnel management, and general administration, the Area Committee for Education was responsible for the supervision of the educational service area,

the Office of Educational Service Areas, and schools under their jurisdiction. Moreover, the Sub-Committee on Teachers and Educational Personnel was established to take charge of the work of teachers and educational personnel within the educational service area. At present, there are 183 Primary Educational Service Area Offices and 42 Secondary Educational Service Area Offices nationwide.

In March 2016, to mobilise the education reform and to ensure working unity for improving education at all levels, the educational administration and management of the Ministry of Education in the regional and provincial areas was restructured. As a result, a Committee on Education Reform in the Regional Areas was established. The Committee, chaired by the Minister of Education, is responsible for setting the directions of operations of the Ministry of Education at the regional and provincial levels. The Minister also plans the management of human resources, considers the budget allocation, appointments, transfers and moves of the executives of educational institutions/ educational service areas/ officers in positions in the regions or provinces.

Under the supervision of the Office of the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education are established 18 regional education offices. The regional offices set strategies for education development in line with the directions of national development, Ministry of Education's policies, and Provincial Cluster Development Strategies. In addition, the regional offices support provincial development in terms of academic work, research and development as well as monitor and evaluate the performance of the provincial education offices under their supervision. Each province has its own Provincial Education Committee, chaired by the Provincial Governor or Deputy Governor, and its own provincial education office.

This organisational restructuring at regional and provincial levels has led to the dissolution of the Committees of Educational Service Areas and the Sub-committees on Teachers and Educational Personnel in the Educational Service Areas. As a result, authority has been transferred to the Committee on Provincial Education with responsibility to indicate strategies, approaches to manage education at all levels in the provinces and having the authority to appoint the Sub-committee. Although the responsibilities of The Offices of the Primary and Secondary Educational Service Areas concerning the work of teachers and educational personnel have been transferred to the Provincial Education Office, other responsibilities of the Office of the Educational Service Areas remain unchanged.

### **2.1.3 Administration in Educational Institutions**

Educational administration and management in educational institutions is categorised into two levels of education:

#### **1) Basic Education**

According to the *National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999) and Amendments (Second National Education Act B.E. 2545 (2002))* or the *National Education Act*, the power of administration and management relating to academic matters, budgets, personnel, and general affairs is decentralised to the basic education institutions. For each institution providing basic education of both general and vocational streams, there is a school board supervising and supporting the management of the institution. The school board is comprised of representatives of parents, teachers and the community, local administration organisations, alumni of the institution, Buddhist monks and representatives of other religious institutions in the area, and scholars. The director of the educational institution serves as

member and secretary of its board. Oversight is through a 9-member board for small basic education institutions and 15 for big ones. The main responsibilities of the school board of basic education institutions consist of supervising the administration and management of the school; promoting and supporting activities of the schools; and overseeing personnel management within the schools.

Functioning as legal entities, basic education institutions have more flexibility, independence, and strength in administration and management under the supervision of the school board members. Consequently, the organisational structure of schools providing basic education must comprise four main sections of management, namely academic matters, budgets, personnel, and general affairs.

## **2) Higher Education**

Universities established in the initial period were public universities holding the status of a department and allocated an annual budget for their operations. Personnel, financing, and general administration of the universities had to fully comply with the bureaucratic system.

As stipulated in the Section 36 of the *National Education Act*, “The state education institutions providing education at the degree level shall be legal entities and enjoy the status of government or state-supervised agencies with the exception of those providing specialised education referred to in the Section 21. The above institutions shall enjoy autonomy; be able to develop their own system of administration and management; have flexibility, academic freedom; and be under supervision of the councils of the institutions in accord with the foundation acts of the respective institutions.” Consequently, several public universities have gradually become autonomous

universities. The autonomous universities have their own administrative structure and budgeting system for full autonomy, making decisions on administrative and management matters whilst still receiving regular budget allocation from the government.

Each public and autonomous university has its own laws concerning administration and management within the universities. These laws increase their autonomy and flexibility and encourage self-management under the supervision of university councils. Within the framework of the law, each public higher education institution can establish its own internal organisations as deemed necessary. Furthermore, the law concerning personnel administration of general public higher education institutions was revised to enhance the efficiency of the personnel administration systems in higher education institutions. According to statistics from the Office of the Higher Education Commission, as of July 2015, 19 public universities have been transformed into autonomous universities, and efforts are being made to encourage existing public universities to move out of the bureaucratic system.

In the academic year 2015, the number of educational institutions providing basic and higher education under the supervision of the Ministry of Education totalled 35,768; under the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, 12; the Ministry of Culture, 16; the Ministry of Interior, 21,270; the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, 763; the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, 1; and 204 under the supervision of the Royal Thai Police.



## 2.2 Administration and Management of Education by Local Administration Organisations

In accordance with the *National Education Act*, local administration organisations can provide education services at any or all levels commensurate with their readiness, suitability, and the requirements of the local area.

The Ministry of Education prescribes criteria and procedures for assessing readiness to provide education services, and assists in enhancing their capability in line with the policies and required standards. Additionally, the Ministry gives advice on the budgetary allocations provided by local administration organisations.

The local administration organisations in Thailand can be divided into four main types. As of 2015, there were 7,853 local administration organisations. Details regarding the types and number of these organisations are shown in the table below.

**Table 2.1 Types and Number of Local Administration Organisations**

| Types of Local Administration Organisations   | Number       |
|---|--------------|
| Provincial Administration Organisations (excluding Bangkok)                                       | 76           |
| Municipalities  | 2,441        |
| Sub-District Administration Organisations   | 5,334        |
| Special Local Administration Organisations (Bangkok Metropolitan Administration and Pattaya City) | 2            |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>7,853</b> |

*Source: Department of Local Administration, Ministry of Interior, 2015*

In transferring authority for the provision of education from the Ministry of Education to local administration organisations, some responsibilities not requiring assessment were transferred. These include tasks related to the supervision of sub-district libraries and child development centres at pre-primary level as well as the procurement of educational materials and supplementary food items, such as milk. Additionally, child development centres were transferred to local administration organisations from other agencies, including the Community Development Department, the Department of Religious Affairs. In Bangkok, several local communities are encouraged to participate in creating pre-school child centres and to provide financial support, supplementary food, and personnel training.

As revealed by the Department of Local Administration under the Ministry of Interior, in 2012, 628 of 7,853 local administration organisations (including Bangkok Metropolitan Administration and Pattaya City) were supervising educational institutions, and 1,855 educational institutions were under local supervision. (Table 2.2)

**Table 2.2 Number of Educational Institutions under the Supervision of Local Administration Organisations (As of 2012)**

| <b>Types of Local Administration Organisations (LAOs)</b> | <b>Number of LAOs in Charge of Educational Institutions</b> | <b>Number of Educational Institutions under LAO Supervision</b> |
|---|---|---|
| Provincial Administration Organisations                   | 52  | 347   |
| Municipalities  | 453   | 923   |
| Sub-District Administration Organisations                 | 121   | 137   |
| Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA)                 | 1   | 437   |
| Pattaya City  | 1   | 11  |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>628</b>  | <b>1,855</b>  |

**Source:** 1) *Report on Statistics of Schools under the Supervision of Local Administration Organisations, Academic Year 2012, Department of Local Administration*  
 2) *Educational Services of Pattaya City, 2012, Pattaya City*  
 3) *Statistical Profile of Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, 2012, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration*

It is noticeable that the majority of schools under local administration supervision are primary level institutions while the minority of them is upper secondary level institutions. During 2011-2015, the average percentages of students in basic education institutions under the supervision of local administration organisations including Bangkok Metropolitan increased steadily: 15.7, 15.8, 16.0, 16.4, and 16.5 respectively as displayed in Table 2.3.

**Table 2.3 Number of Students in Basic Education Institutions under the Supervision of Local Administration Organisations (Academic Years 2011-2015)**

| Levels of Education   | Academic Years   |                  |                  |                  |                  |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
|   | 2011             | 2012             | 2013             | 2014             | 2015             |
| Pre-Primary   | 1,159,816        | 1,162,098        | 1,162,113        | 1,158,981        | 1,162,259        |
| Primary   | 516,479          | 502,591          | 504,345          | 507,824          | 509,478          |
| Lower Secondary   | 212,344          | 199,991          | 195,613          | 195,339          | 196,492          |
| Upper Secondary   | 78,827           | 82,499           | 87,161           | 87,338           | 85,215           |
| - General Ed.   | 76,044           | 79,929           | 84,750           | 84,291           | 82,130           |
| - Vocational Ed.  | 2,783            | 2,570            | 2,411            | 3,047            | 3,085            |
| Percentage of total number of students throughout the country | 15.7             | 15.8             | 16.0             | 16.4             | 16.5             |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>1,967,466</b> | <b>1,947,179</b> | <b>1,949,232</b> | <b>1,949,482</b> | <b>1,953,444</b> |

*Source: Thailand Education Statistics Reports (2011-2015), Office of the Education Council*

Local administration organisations play a greater role in the provision of education. Apart from formal education, local administration organisations provide non-formal and informal education in the form of various activities such as child development centres, lifelong learning sources, work training, and training for life quality development. Many local administration organisations are able to provide education effectively and contribute to the improvement in the ways of life in local communities because of sufficient educational resources and an appropriate number of schools in each area under their supervision. Additionally, they can arrange learning and a teaching curriculum which is flexible and conforms to various needs and ways of life in each local community.

## **2.3 Contribution of Agencies Other than the Ministry of Education**

Specialised education, both at basic and higher education levels, is provided by ministries, bureaus, departments, state enterprises and other public agencies in accordance with their needs and expertise, taking into consideration national education policy and standards.

Courses are offered for graduates from primary schools to upper secondary schools, both from general and vocational streams. All responsible agencies have developed their own curricula, which can be classified into four groups:

**2.3.1 Curricula for the production of professional soldiers and police** include the curriculum of Preparatory School for the Armed Forces Academies; curricula of the military, naval, air force academies and police cadets; and curricula for preparing warrant officers for graduates from lower and upper secondary schools.



**2.3.2 Curricula for specific technicians** include those for training military technicians to work in the Armed Forces, as well as for various agencies such as Irrigation College, Railway Technical School, and etc.

**2.3.3 Medical science curricula** are organised for secondary school graduates, requiring 1-4 years of study in the institutions of the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Defence, the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, and the Thai Red Cross Society.

**2.3.4 Curricula for other specific purposes** are organised for graduates from lower secondary schools, both in general and vocational streams, and general upper secondary schools as required by each institution such as the Merchant Marine Training Centre, Cooperatives School, Postal School, Civil Aviation Training Centre, and etc.

As shown in the following table, several agencies have been involved in the provision of specialised education.

**Table 2.4 Agencies Involved in the Provision of Specialised Education (Academic Year 2013)**

| <b>Responsible Bodies</b>  | <b>Types of Institutions</b>  | <b>No. of Students</b> |
|--|---|------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Irrigation College</li> <li>• Veterinary School</li> </ul>   | 330                    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Transport</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Merchant Marine Training Centre</li> <li>• Civil Aviation Training Centre</li> </ul>   | 2,857                  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Digital Economy and Society (formerly known as Ministry of Information and Communication Technology)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meteorological School</li> <li>• Postal School</li> </ul>  | 190                    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ministry of Defence</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Armed Forces Academies Preparatory School</li> <li>• Military, Naval, Air Forces Academies</li> <li>• Medical Colleges</li> <li>• Nursing Colleges</li> <li>• Technical Training School</li> <li>• Survey School</li> <li>• School of Music</li> </ul> | 11,160                 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Royal Thai Police</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police Cadet Academy</li> <li>• Nursing College</li> <li>• Police School</li> </ul>  | 4,222                  |

**Table 2.4 Agencies Involved in the Provision of Specialised Education (Academic Year 2013) (continued)**

| <b>Responsible Bodies</b>             | <b>Types of Institutions</b>  | <b>No. of Students</b> |
|---------------------------------------|---|------------------------|
| • Ministry of Public Health           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nursing Colleges</li> <li>• Public Health Colleges</li> <li>• College of Medical Technology and Public Health</li> </ul> | 24,208                 |
| • Ministry of Interior                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provincial Electricity School</li> </ul>   | 145                    |
| • Ministry of Justice                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Law Training Institute</li> </ul>  | 32,807                 |
| • Bangkok Metropolitan Administration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medical College</li> <li>• Nursing Colleges</li> </ul>   | 1,293                  |
| • Thai Red Cross Society              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nursing College</li> </ul>   | 702                    |

*Source: Thailand Education Statistics Report (2013-2014), Office of the Education Council*

## **2.4 Participation in the Provision of Education by the Private Sector**

The private sector is an important mechanism in the provision of education at all levels and of all types. In this chapter, the participation of the private sector covers non-governmental organisations, private education institutions, private enterprises, families, and religious institutions.



### **2.4.1 Provision of Education by Private Education Institutions**

The State is responsible for overseeing administration and management as well as for monitoring the quality and standards of private education institutions, both those providing general education and those offering vocational education. According to the section 43 of *the National Education Act*, “The administration and management of education by the private sector shall enjoy independence with the State being responsible for overseeing, monitoring, and assessing educational quality and standards. Private education institutions shall follow the same rules for assessment of educational quality and standards as those for state education institutions.” At present, private education institutions providing basic education are established and managed under the *National Education Act, the Private School Act B.E. 2550 (2007) (As Amended by the Private School Act (No.2) B.E. 2554)*, and other laws and regulations concerning private education of both formal and non-formal types.

As for the educational administration and management in private basic education institutions, the *Private School Act* stipulates that a formal school must have an executive board consisting of the licensee, manager, director, representatives of teachers, representatives of students’ parents, and qualified persons as members. The executive board has powers and duties, including issuing rules and regulations of the school; approving the policy and education development plans of the school; giving advice on school administration and management with regard to personnel, work plans, budget, techniques, student activities, buildings and premises and community relations; providing quality assurance systems in

formal schools; and etc. As revealed in the report prepared by the Office of the Private Education Commission giving statistics on private education for the academic year 2015, there were 12,892 private education institutions providing formal, non-formal, and special and welfare education.

Regarding private higher education institutions, they have played a contributory role in providing higher education for the youth in order to relieve the government of its burden of the provision of education at a higher level. The participation in the provision of education of private higher education institutions took place in 1969 based on *the Private College Act of 1969*. The status of private education institutions in that period was just that of a college. In 1979, *the Private Higher Education Institution Act of 1979* was promulgated, classifying higher education institution into three types, namely university, institution, and college with the aim of changing the status of colleges to universities. As a result, by 1984 a certain number of private colleges that had consolidated their positions were raised to a university status. Increasing participation of private providers has resulted in continued expansion of private higher education to accommodate the social demand for higher education and the need to strengthen the educational development of the country. After the promulgation of the *National Education Act*, the establishment of private higher education institutions and delivery of their programmes of study are now under the close scrutiny of the Office of the Higher Education Commission.

As stated in the Section 45 of the *National Education Act*, “Private institutions providing education at the degree level shall be allowed to function with autonomy, develop their own system of administration and management, flexibility,

and academic freedom and shall be under the supervision of their own council in accordance with the Act on Private Higher Education Institutions.” Consequently, the *Private Higher Education Institution Act of 2003 and its Second Revision of 2007* were promulgated to provide a framework for private higher education administration and to follow up on the quality evaluation and educational standards of private higher education institutions. The establishment of private higher education institutions needs to comply with the *Private Higher Education Institution Act*. A private higher education institution has the right and authority to provide higher education equivalent to public universities. Consequently, private higher education institutions can operate independently and develop their own administrative system that is flexible, having their own academic freedom under the supervision of the University Council. However, private higher education institutions are not entitled to receive budget allocation from the government. They gain support for institutional operation from their own revenue and licensees.

When classified into levels of education, the students’ proportion of private participation is highest at the upper secondary level (vocational stream). The overall increase in private participation at the basic education level is moderate, from 19 percent in 2011 to 20 percent in 2015. (Table 2.5)

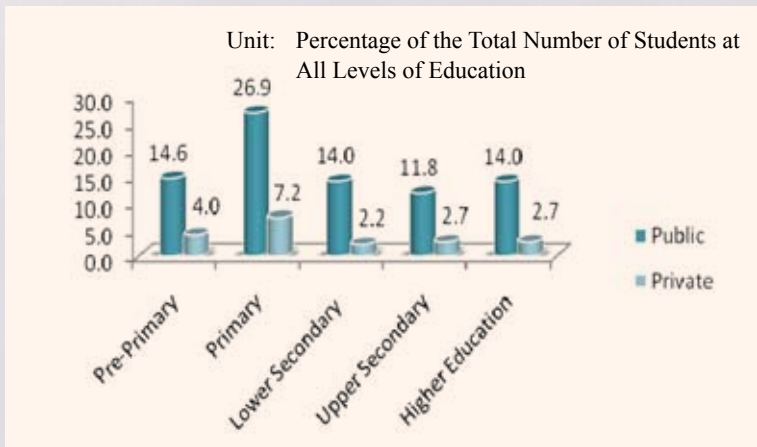
**Table 2.5 Students' Proportion of Public to Private Participation in the Provision of Basic Education (Academic Years 2011-2015)**

| Levels of Education            | Academic Years |                |                |                |                |
|--------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
|                                | 2011           | 2012           | 2013           | 2014           | 2015           |
| Pre-Primary                    | 78 : 22        | 77 : 23        | 77 : 23        | 78 : 22        | 77 : 23        |
| Primary                        | 80 : 20        | 79 : 21        | 79 : 21        | 79 : 21        | 78 : 22        |
| Lower Secondary                | 86 : 14        | 86 : 14        | 86 : 14        | 86 : 14        | 86 : 14        |
| Upper Secondary                | 80 : 20        | 80 : 20        | 80 : 20        | 81 : 19        | 81 : 19        |
| - General Ed.                  | 88 : 12        | 87 : 13        | 87 : 13        | 88 : 12        | 87 : 13        |
| - Vocational Ed.               | 66 : 34        | 65 : 35        | 66 : 34        | 67 : 33        | 68 : 32        |
| <b>Overall Basic Education</b> | <b>81 : 19</b> | <b>81 : 19</b> | <b>80 : 20</b> | <b>80 : 20</b> | <b>80 : 20</b> |

*Source: Thailand Education Statistics Reports (2011-2015), Office of the Education Council*

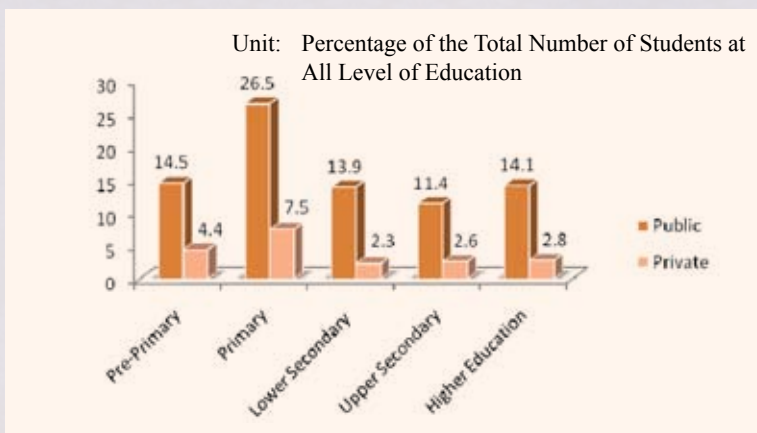
In the academic year 2014, 11,573,004 students at all levels of education were in public education institutions while 2,672,480 students were in private ones. In the academic year 2015, there were 11,476,922 students at all levels of education studying in public education institutions whereas 2,806,526 students were in private ones. When considering the levels of education, percentage of students at each level in public education institutions was noticeably higher than students in private institutions in both academic years 2014 and 2015, as shown in Figures 2.2 and 2.3.

**Figure 2.2 Percentage of Students in Public and Private Education Institutions, Classified by Level of Education (Academic Year 2014)**



*Source: Thailand Education Statistics Report (2014-2015), Office of the Education Council*

**Figure 2.3 Percentage of Students in Public and Private Education Institutions, Classified by Level of Education (Academic Year 2015)**



*Source: Thailand Education Statistics Report (2014-2015), Office of the Education Council*

## 2.4.2 Provision of Education for Employees by Private Enterprises

Several private enterprises cooperate with educational institutions in providing training opportunities for students. In addition, business enterprises are encouraged to provide education for their employees.

The *Skill Development Promotion Act* encourages business enterprises to contribute to the *Labour Skill Development Fund* and to provide in-house training for their employees. Similarly, the *Ministerial Regulation on the Rights of Enterprises to Establish Learning Centres to Provide Basic Education* was issued in 2004 to encourage enterprises to provide education programmes for their workers. Some rules that are imposed on educational institutions are not enforced on learning centres established by enterprises. For example, rules on the number of buildings, classrooms and student/teacher ratio are not applied, and teaching licenses are not required for instructors.

In Thailand, there are a number of enterprises providing education for their workers. Some provide formal education at the upper secondary level, while others provide vocational education equivalent to upper secondary level by focusing on a work-related curriculum such as repair and maintenance of industrial machinery, welding, retail business, hotel management, and food-processing.

In response to the needs of the labour market, some organisations have established their own educational institutes, such as Vidyasirimedhi Institute of Science and Technology whose responsibilities are to increase the country's competitiveness and foster excellence in science and technology, and Panyapiwat Institute of Management producing academically skilled and job-ready graduates.

### **2.4.3 Provision of Education by Families**

Family-based early childhood development plays an essential role in education. Some families preferred to provide education for their own children even before the enactment of the *National Education Act* which empowered families to provide basic education. In 2016, the number of home-schooled children was 595 in 474 families.

While some families educate only their own children, others form groups and set up learning centres to provide education for children of their group. Currently, a number of schools allow these children to register as their students in order to maintain eligibility for further study.

### **2.4.4 Provision of Education by Religious Institutions**

As of 2014, the vast majority of Thais were Buddhists at 94.6 percent, while 4.2 percent were Muslims, 1.1 percent Christians, and 0.1 percent others including those with no religious affiliation. In Thailand, there is absolute religious freedom and all religious institutions are encouraged to participate in the provision and support of education.

#### ***1) Provision of Education by Buddhist Religious Institutions***

There are almost 40,000 Buddhist temples in Thailand. Studies in Buddhism as well as general education are provided to monks and novices in these temples as well as to laymen.

- *The Study of Buddhism*

The study of Buddhism is divided into the teaching of Dharma and Pali teachings. The teaching of Dharma is provided to ecclesiastics and also to laymen.





- *General Ecclesiastical Schools*

General Ecclesiastical Schools in various Buddhist temples offer general education at lower and upper secondary education levels to novices and monks in curricula equivalent to those provided by the Office of the Basic Education Commission. Apart from general subjects, the curricula include learning units related to religious practice, Buddhist doctrine and Pali Language.

- *Buddhist Universities*

Presently, there are two Buddhist universities providing higher education for monks, novices and also laymen as follow:

Mahamakut Buddhist University (MBU) offers courses at bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree levels in the faculties of Religion and Philosophy, Humanities, Social Sciences, and Education. In addition, the university also offers a teachers' training programme as well as various academic services to the public.

Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University (MCU) provides courses at the bachelor degree levels at the faculties of Buddhism, Humanities, Social Sciences, and Education. Master's and doctoral degrees are also provided at these faculties. In addition, interested foreigners can also apply for international master's and doctoral degree programmes in Buddhist Studies.

- *Informal Religious Education*

Buddhist Sunday Schools offer instruction to laymen in Buddhism as well as general education. These schools offer religious instruction at the preparatory, basic, intermediate, and advanced levels.

## ***2) Provision of Education by Islamic Religious Institutions***

Islamic religious institutions play a major role in providing formal, non-formal and informal education for Muslim children throughout the country, especially in the five southern border provinces of Yala, Pattani, Narathiwat, Satun, and Songkhla



As of the academic year 2015, 410 private Islamic boarding schools focusing on the teaching of Islam (or Pondok schools) situated in five southern border provinces were registered as Pondok Institutes under the supervision of the Office of the Private Education Commission, Ministry of Education. There were 41,012 students and 1,589 teachers in these Pondok Institutes. As of the academic year 2015, there were 185 Islamic charity general education schools that teach Islam and general education.

Non-formal education, focusing on vocational training and the teaching of Islam, is also provided in some schools. Muslims of all ages embrace Islamic doctrine as their way of life, and religious education is provided informally from childhood by families and nearby Islamic religious institutions.

### ***3) Provision of Education by Christian Religious Institutions***

Christian denominations play an important role in providing formal, non-formal and informal education to the Christian communities.

As for general education, both the Roman Catholic Diocese and Protestant denominations operate general education schools for their followers and others.

Non-formal education is offered for Christians wishing to become ordained while informal education programmes are offered to other Christians by these religious institutions.

### ***4) Provision of Education by Sikh Religious Institutions***

At present, there are 24 Sikh religious institutions and around 70,000 followers with three basic

education institutions offering formal education operated by Sikhs.

Instruction in the Sikh religion using Panjabi Language as the medium of instruction is offered through non-formal and informal programmes for Sikhs wishing to become ordained. Informal education programmes focusing on the Sikh doctrine is also available to the general public.

#### ***5) Provision of Education by Brahman-Hindu Religious Institutions***

There are approximately 10,000 followers of the Brahman-Hindu religion in Thailand with one school operated by the Brahman-Hindu Church. Informal education programmes provide instruction in the religion. Many Brahman-Hindu ceremonies are incorporated in Buddhist observances and in Royal rituals.

#### **2.4.5 Provision of Education by Non-Governmental Organisations**

Both local and foreign non-governmental organisations make a major contribution to the provision of basic education. According to the *National Education Act*, the private sector has the right to provide basic education as prescribed in the ministerial regulations. As stated in the *Ministerial Regulation on the Rights to Provide Basic Education of Community and Non-Governmental Organisations in Learning Centres 2012*, they can provide basic education both in the form of non-formal and informal education through the establishment of learning centres for those without learning opportunities in regular formal school.

# Chapter 3

## Educational System, Standards, and Quality Assurance

Under the present education system, various types and methods of learning are offered to learners regardless of their economic, social and cultural backgrounds. According to the *National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999) and Amendments (Second National Education Act B.E. 2545 (2002))* which is the first comprehensive education law in Thailand, education approaches are classified as formal, non-formal, and informal. All types of education can be provided by educational institutions as well as learning centres organised by individuals, families, communities, community or private groups, local administration organisations, professional bodies, religious institutions, welfare institutes, and other social institutions.

### 3.1 Types of Education

As stipulated in the *National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999) and Amendments (Second National Education Act B.E. 2545 (2002))*, there are three types of education, namely, formal, non-formal, and informal.

### **3.1.1 Formal Education**

As defined in the mentioned *National Education Act*, formal education specifies the aims, methods, curricula, duration, assessment, and evaluation conditional to its completion. General and vocational education is provided at basic and higher education level by both public and private bodies.

Formal education services in Thailand are provided in various formats for several target groups, including: (1) mainstream education, in both general and vocational streams, provided for general students in regular schools; (2) basic education for children with special educational needs including: gifted and talented students; students with disabilities enrolled at special schools, special centres and inclusive schools; disadvantaged students through Welfare Schools, and Border Patrol Police Schools; (3) education for ecclesiastics and educational services provided by religious institutions; (4) specialised education provided by specific agencies other than the Ministry of Education; and (5) international education in which languages other than Thai (generally English) used as the medium of instruction.

The focus in this chapter will be mainstream education and basic education for children with special needs.

#### ***1) Mainstream Education***

Mainstream education means education provided for general students in regular classes. It is classified into general and vocational streams. Within the formal system, general education is provided at all levels, from pre-primary to higher education while vocational education is provided from upper secondary education to higher education. In the academic year 2015, approximately 14 million students or around 85.9 percent of the total population aged 3-21 were enrolled in formal

education. The formal system of basic education in Thailand is based upon a 6-3-3 model comprising six years of primary education; three years of lower secondary; and three years of upper secondary. However, a minimum of nine years of school attendance is compulsory, from primary to lower secondary education.

At present, the teaching-learning activities of basic education in the general stream follows the 2008 Basic Education Core Curriculum (Grades 1-12) and the 2003 Early Childhood Curriculum while the teaching-learning activities of basic education in the vocational stream follows the 2013 Curriculum for the Certificate of Vocational Education (including revised version in 2014) and 2014 Curriculum for Diploma of Vocational Education.

Organised for the 3-5 age group, the 2003 Early Childhood Curriculum focuses on preparing children in terms of their physical, intellectual, emotional/mental and social readiness and provides guidelines to parents, caregivers and teachers in caring for and educating children.



The 2008 Basic Education Core Curriculum aims at developing learners to be well-balanced intellectually, morally and socially. It cultivates attitudes and values regarding Thai citizenship while at the same time promoting an international or global consciousness. It upholds the principles of democracy and a democratic regime of government with the King as Head of State. It equips the learner with the foundational knowledge and basic skills necessary to further their education and their career.

In this curriculum, the knowledge and skills have been grouped into eight subject areas: Thai language, mathematics, science, social studies, career and technology, art, foreign languages, and health and physical education. Activities that focus on responding to the learner's specific interests are also included. At primary level the curriculum is designed for up to but not exceeding 1,000 hours /year, at secondary level up to but not exceeding 1,200 hours / year and at upper secondary level not less than 3,600 hours over 3 years.

In the general stream of basic education, career and technology-related education is offered to school children at both the primary and secondary levels to provide them with work experience and basic knowledge for career preparation and technological applications.

Starting at the upper secondary level, the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Thailand follows the 2013 Curriculum for the Certificate of Vocational Education (including revised version in 2014) at the lower certificate level and the 2014 Curriculum for Diploma of Vocational Education at associate degree level. These curricula are designed in response to technological progress for skilled manpower production. Vocational students can choose appropriate learning system and approach relevant to their



potentials, interests and opportunities. The curricula promote cooperation in education provision and participation in curriculum development among educational institutes, workplaces and other concerned organisations at community, local, and national levels. All levels focus on competency and specify the standards of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and personal attributes required by students in their future careers. According to the *National Education Act*, the Technical and Vocational Education and Training is provided by either public or private institutions, enterprises, or through cooperation between educational institutions and enterprises.

The standards in the above-mentioned curricula cover 10 main fields, comprising industry, commerce, arts and crafts, home economics, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, textiles, information and communication technology, and life skills. Students studying in these fields will have an opportunity to take part in hands-on training in cooperating factories or companies for at least one semester. To expand opportunities for students, a number of entrepreneurs and educational institutions are offering a dual education programme, where students engage in on-the-job training for half of their total study period.



In 2008, the *Vocational Education Act* was promulgated and enforced nationwide. It is believed that this Act will contribute effectively to the development of Thailand's workforce in the future. The learners will have more choices to continue vocational education in bachelor degree of technology since the Act encourages the establishment of vocational institutes in order to provide the programme of bachelor degree of technology. These vocational institutes originate from the amalgamation of vocational colleges in each area of the country.

According to the *2008 Vocational Education Act*, three types of vocational education and training are provided, namely formal technical and vocational education and training; non-formal technical and vocational education and training; and dual-vocational training programme.

As for formal technical and vocational education and training, this is conducted in educational institutions at three levels: upper secondary, leading to the lower certificate of vocational education; post-secondary, leading to a diploma or associate's degree of vocational education; and higher education, leading to a bachelor degree of technology.

Dual-vocational training programme involves the students in hands-on training in suitably selected organisations in the private sector. Educational institutions collaborate directly with public or private enterprises in drafting action plans and setting goals for students to meet. The programme also enables the students to do field work while benefiting from an allowance to cover living expenses and compensation for their contributions made towards the company's income and profits as temporary employees.

## 2) *Basic Education for Children with Special Educational Needs*

Since the promulgation of the *National Education Act*, greater attention has been focused on children with special educational needs, including the gifted, the disadvantaged and the disabled.

The Ministry of Education has announced criteria and procedures for providing facilities, media, services and other forms of educational aid, as well as for budget allocations in these areas.

### • *Special Education for Gifted and Talented Students*

If full and appropriate support is given, gifted and talented persons will become invaluable national resources generating tremendous benefit to the country. Thailand attaches great importance to expanding and diversifying the opportunities available to them.



The *National Education Act* specifies that education for specially gifted persons will be provided in appropriate forms in accordance with their competencies. The Act also states the significance of providing suitable curricula and budgetary allocations for this purpose.

Support given to gifted and talented persons in Thailand may be divided into the following categories:

1) Establishment of Special Schools for Gifted Persons: Of the 28 Special Schools for Gifted Persons that were set up, there are 13 which focus on sciences and mathematics, 13 for sports and two for music.

2) Provision of a School within the School Programme: Regular schools are required to set up special classes, develop specific curricula, and revise the teaching-learning and assessment processes for gifted persons in various fields, including language, science and mathematics.

3) Provision of special activities, tuition sessions and competitions: Several public and private agencies, including 1) the Promotion of Academic Olympiads and Development of Science Education Foundation under the Patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Galyani Vadhana Krom Luang Naradhiwas Rajanagarindra graciously chaired by Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn; 2) the Institute for the Promotion of Teaching Science and Technology (IPST); and 3) the National Science and Technology Development Agency (NSTDA), organise special activities, tuition sessions and competitions for gifted persons, such as the Academic Olympiad Camps, science camps, Junior Science Talent Project (JSTP), exploring centres and competitions in science or mathematics.

4) Provision of Advanced Placement Programme: This programme is based upon cooperation between secondary schools and universities that allow secondary students to take courses organised for first-year university students and receive credits which can be accumulated when they further their study at the bachelor degree level.

5) Provision of Specific Curricula: Some universities provide specific curricula which focus on research studies in specific areas or an Honours Programme.

6) Research Studies and Development of the Body of Knowledge: The Office of the Education Council has conducted research studies aimed at developing curricula for gifted and talented children in the School within the School Programme. The findings as well as the body of knowledge created have been integrated into the Strategic Proposal to Develop Gifted and Talented Children (2006-2016) and now into the Draft Strategies for the Gifted and Talented Children (2016-2020).

7) Establishment of Centres and Research and Development Institutes for Gifted Persons: Such Centres and Institutes have been established by several agencies such as Chulalongkorn University, and Srinakharinwirot University.

8) Provision of Scholarships in Thailand and overseas: Scholarships are offered under the 'Development and Promotion of the Scientific and Technologically Talented' Project; the National Science and Technology Development Agency (NSTDA) Project; the Academic Olympiads Project; as well as by several public and private agencies.



- ***Special Education for Disadvantaged Students***

Several agencies have taken steps to provide education for those who are socially and/or culturally disadvantaged. These include the Ministry of Education, the Border Patrol Police Bureau and the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security. In addition, non-governmental organisations such as Suan Kaew Monastery Foundation, Foundation for Children, Rajprachasamasai Foundation, the Education for Development Foundation and Foundation for the Better Life of Children also play a very important role in education provision for disadvantaged students.



Most disadvantaged students study in a number of mainstream public schools, called Inclusive Schools while the rest study in Welfare Schools and Border Patrol Police Schools.

Welfare Schools offer education for socially and culturally disadvantaged students who are deprived of the opportunity to attend regular schools. Free education, food, clothing, equipment, textbooks and other necessities are provided, and in most cases accommodation is also provided. In the academic year 2015, there were 51 Welfare Schools under the supervision of the Office of the Basic Education Commission. Special vocational training relevant for future employment in the locality of a particular school is usually included.



The Border Patrol Police Schools are under the supervision of the Border Patrol Police Bureau, Royal Thai Police. They are located in the more remote border areas of the country. As stated by the Border Patrol Police Bureau, in the academic year 2015, 6,661 pre-primary students, 17,415 primary, 916 secondary were being educated in Border Patrol Police Schools nationwide. Most students came from farming families and belonged to diverse ethnic groups. The teachers at the Border Patrol Police Schools are Border Patrol Police Officers who are responsible for security in these areas. In the academic year

2015, the total number of schools and learning centres under the jurisdiction of the Border Patrol Police Bureau was 204 comprising 162 primary schools, two secondary and 40 Border Patrol Police Learning Centres. Concerned for people in remote areas, Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn has launched a number of projects with the Border Patrol Police Schools since the year 1982. These projects contribute to the development of children and communities since the knowledge they gain can be transferred to the local community. The Agriculture for School Lunch, Improvement of Educational Quality, Vocational Training, Cooperative Promotion, Conservation of Natural Resources and Environment are among the many examples.



As for the disadvantaged students in Inclusive Schools and Welfare Schools under the supervision of the Office of the Basic Education Commission, they are divided into 10 types comprising (1) children forced to enter the labour market; (2) children who are sex workers; (3) abandoned children; (4) children in Observation and Protection Centres; (5) street children; (6) children affected by HIV/AIDS; (7) children of minorities; (8) physically abused children; (9) children living in poverty; and (10) children affected by narcotic drugs.



• *Special Education for Students with Disabilities*

The budget for students with disabilities is allocated by the Office of the Basic Education Commission from two main sources: the regular budget and the Educational Fund for Students with Disabilities. Formal education for students with disabilities is provided in Inclusive Schools as well as Special Schools.



In accordance with the *National Education Act*, people with disabilities are entitled to receive all levels of education. The Special Education Bureau under the Office of the Basic Education Commission classified children with disabilities into nine types in accordance with their disabilities. These include: (1) hearing impairments, (2) mental impairments, (3) visual impairments, (4) physical impairments or health-related impairments, (5) learning disabilities (LD), (6) autism, (7) emotional and behavioural disorders, (8) speech and language disorders, and (9) multiple disabilities.

Recognising disabled people's right to education, the *Persons with Disabilities Education Act B.E. 2551 (2008)* was promulgated in 2008. According to this Act, disabled persons will be offered free education and learning facilities. Moreover, they can choose educational services relevant to their needs.

***Inclusive Schools:*** Inclusive Schools are regular schools that are willing to accept children with disabilities. In providing education for the disabled, these schools are also assisted by the Special Centres and Special Schools in terms of teachers, training, materials and facilities and coordination with concerned agencies such as the National Electronics and Computer Technology Centre, the Ministry of Interior, and the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security.

***Special Schools:*** In the academic year 2015, there were 46 special schools located throughout Thailand. In practice, children with all types of disabilities will be accepted in these schools. However, special schools are essential for students with disabilities who need special accommodations. In addition, there are 77 Special Education Centres under the supervision of the Bureau of Special Education Administration, Office of the Basic Education Commission. These Special Education Centres bear many responsibilities for education provision for the rehabilitation of disabled persons. They render services at the Special Centres, in Inclusive Schools, at home, and in hospitals. They organise meetings/seminars to provide knowledge to support parents of the disabled and assist relevant agencies. They also conduct research and formulate the curriculum for short-term training for the disabled.

Non-formal education is also specially arranged for children with disabilities. Apart from the Ministry of Education, special education for disabled students is provided by several other agencies including the Department of Social Development and Public Welfare under the supervision of the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, as well as by some demonstration schools, municipal schools, and private foundations. Moreover, some hospitals organise classes for children with disabilities resulting from chronic conditions.

### **3.1.2 Non-Formal Education**

Non-formal education services are provided by both public and private bodies comprising the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Ministry of Industry, private organisations, and non-governmental organisations.

Under the supervision of the Ministry of Education, the Office of the Non-Formal and Informal Education (ONIE) is the main agency in charge of non-formal and informal education. This agency offers services to various target groups through traditional methods and through e-Book, e-Library and e-Learning initiatives.

The services provided by the Office of the Non-Formal and Informal Education target primarily those outside the school system, i.e. infants and pre-school children, the school-age population who have missed out on formal schooling, and the over-school-age population. Recently, such services have been expanded to cover specific target groups, including prison inmates, the labour force, the disabled, conscripts, agriculturists, the aged, hill tribes people, local leaders, slum dwellers, Thai Muslims, religious practitioners, those having no opportunity to further their studies in formal

schooling after compulsory education, Thai people in foreign countries, and other special groups, as well as students in the formal school system.

On March 4, 2008, the *Promotion of Non-Formal and Informal Education Act, B.E. 2551 (2008)* came into force. The major focus of the Act is to promote the development of human resources in accordance with demographic, social, and economic changes. Emphasis is given to the quality of Thai people and to developing their knowledge and skills, moral principles, ethical behaviour, core values, and common sense to ensure not only their individual well-being, but the sustainable development of the nation. Besides, the people will have capabilities in leading pleasurable lives, perceiving the rapid changes around them, being capable of seeking knowledge continuously throughout their lifetime, and having potentiality and wisdom which are useful for the country's development and readiness for international competition. In the academic year 2015, the numbers of non-formal students under the supervision of the Office of the Non-Formal and Informal Education were 3,506,806; the Office of the Vocational Education Commission 1,065,485; the Office of the Private Education Commission 1,263,478; and the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration 19,776.



### 3.1.3 Informal Education

Informal education enables learners to learn by themselves according to their interests, potential, readiness and the opportunities available from individuals, society, environment, media or other sources of knowledge. It includes the following:

- Informal education programmes provided by libraries, museums and science/technology centres, etc. as well as by mass media (radio, television, newspapers and magazines, and etc).

- Informal education programmes available through community learning networks i.e. community learning centres, village reading centres, sub-district health offices, sub-district agricultural offices, as well as natural learning sources in each community.

- Learning from various sources as follows: 1) local wisdom which includes culture and the body of knowledge in each community; 2) local media which plays an important role in passing on knowledge and social values through several kinds of performance; 3) families which are learning sources from birth for all people; and 4) networking through cooperative activities.

Several ministries are involved in providing informal education to promote lifelong learning, through information dissemination, educational activities or academic and professional programmes for different target groups relating to the responsibilities of each organisation.

Many lifelong learning sources have been established, while existing ones have been improved and developed in accordance with the Section 25 of the *National Education Act*, which requires the State to promote the running and establishment, in sufficient number and with efficient

functioning, of all types of lifelong learning sources, namely, public libraries, museums, art galleries, zoological gardens, public parks, botanical gardens, science and technology parks, sports and recreation centres. Efforts have been made to enable individuals to learn at all times and in all places through several sources.

Several other types of lifelong learning sources have also been renovated and improved, including museums and historical parks under the supervision of the Department of Fine Arts, arts and cultural centres, sports and recreation centres, as well as museums of natural science.



### 3.1.4 Linkage among Three Types of Education

The *National Education Act* acknowledges the importance of all types of education. Relevant agencies and educational institutions are, therefore, working to create links between formal, non-formal, and informal education systems. Credit accumulated by learners will be transferable within the same or between different types of education, regardless of whether the credits have been accumulated from the same or different educational institutions, including learning from non-formal or informal education, vocational training and work experience.

It is expected that access to education will be increased from the transfer of learning outcomes to and from all types of education. In so doing, credits can be accumulated and transferred within the same type or between different types of educational approaches and learning.



A more flexible educational system, with the ability to transfer learning outcomes and validate experience, will help increase access to education and create links between all types of education. This will not only draw future generations of Thai people towards lifelong learning but also eventually lead to a learning and knowledge-based society in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The improvement of non-formal and informal education is necessary to cultivate a culture of lifelong learning and create a learning society.

## 3.2 Levels of Education

### 3.2.1 Basic Education

In 2002, in accordance with the *National Education Act*, 12 years of free basic education was made available to students throughout the country for the first time.

In 2016, the Government announced the extension of free basic education from 12 to 15 years, beginning from the kindergarten level to grade 12 in upper secondary level both in general and vocational streams. The 15-year state-subsidised education plan also covers special education for underprivileged or impoverished children and “special education” for the disabled or handicapped.





Basic education covers pre-primary education, six years of primary, three years of lower secondary, and three years of upper secondary education. The current compulsory education requirement covers six years of primary and three years of lower secondary education. Children are expected to be enrolled in basic education institutions from age seven until the age of 16, except for those who have already completed Grade 9. Basic education is provided before higher education by the following institutions:

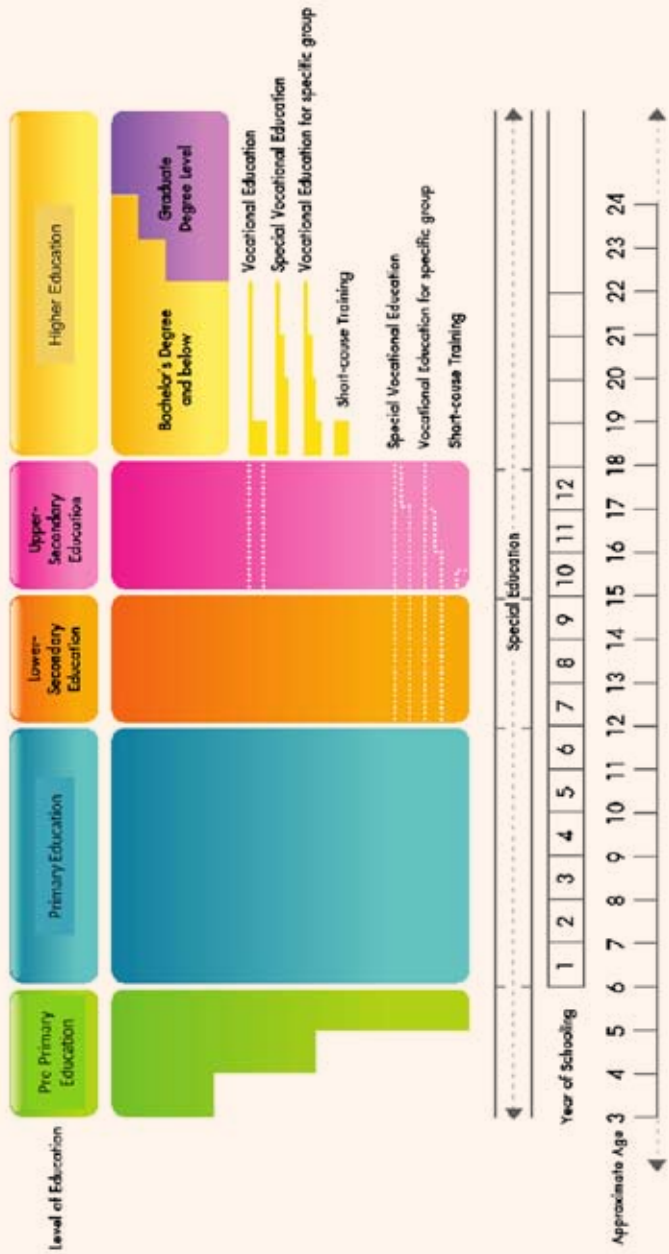
- Early childhood development institutions i.e. childcare centres, child development centres, initial care centres for disabled children or those with special needs, and early childhood development centres operated by religious institutions or by other agencies.

- Schools such as state schools, private schools, and those under the jurisdiction of Buddhist or other religious institutions; and

- Learning centres i.e. those organised by non-formal educational agencies, individuals, families, communities, community organisations, local administration organisations, private organisations, professional bodies, religious institutions, enterprises, hospitals, medical institutions, welfare institutes and other social institutions.

Organisation of the present school system is shown graphically in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1 Organisation of the Present School System



Source: Educational Research and Development Bureau, Office of the Education Council

### 3.2.2 Higher Education

Higher education at the diploma, associate, and degree levels is provided in universities, educational institutions, colleges, community colleges, and other types of institutions.



#### A) Associate Degree or Diploma Level

Higher education at the associate degree or diploma level requires two years of study and is offered by Rajabhat Universities, the Rajamangala University of Technology, state and private vocational colleges, as well as colleges of physical education, dramatic arts and fine arts. The majority of courses offered are related to vocational and teacher education.

#### B) Degree Level

Programmes leading to a degree require two years of study beyond the diploma level, and four to six years of study for those completing upper secondary education or the equivalent.

- The first professional qualification is a baccalaureate, normally attained after four years of study. Five years of study are required in the fields of architecture, painting, sculpture, graphic arts, and pharmacy as well as six years required for medicine, dentistry, and veterinary science. In some of these fields, additional study is required to allow for a *practicum* before professional qualifications are awarded.

- Advanced study of at least one but generally two years, combined with a thesis, leads to the award of a master's degree.

- A doctorate, requiring an additional three years of study following the master's degree, is awarded in some fields, while an advanced diploma or certificate, designed for students already possessing a degree or professional qualification, may be obtained after one or two years of course work.

The amalgamation of education bodies into the Ministry of Education in 2003 resulted in an increasing number of public universities under the supervision of the Office of the Higher Education Commission. The former teacher training institutions and technological education institutions under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education were upgraded to university status and their supervision transferred to the Office of the Higher Education Commission. As of 2015, there are 156 higher education institutions and the Institute of Community Colleges under the jurisdiction of the Office of the Higher Education Commission. The Institute of Community Colleges takes charge of community colleges in 20 provinces. Moreover, there are other specialised institutions under the supervision of other ministries and agencies.

In accordance with government policy, community colleges have been established in provinces where other opportunities for higher education are not available. These colleges offer the education and training to support economic and social development in those communities, including 2-year associate degree programmes. Several curricula are currently offered in associate degree programmes from community colleges.

### **3.3 Educational Standards and Quality Assurance**

The purpose of establishing educational standards is to specify certain qualities in the provision of education, such as desired learner attributes, curriculum, and teaching-learning processes. The decentralisation of power in educational management and administration in Thailand requires quality assurance in the educational system in the form of both internal and external types. One important principle of decentralisation in education is quality.

As for the quality assurance, it is one of the main principles of decentralisation of power in educational administration. So as to ensure quality, institutions are expected to develop excellence within the domain of their regular activities and administrative tasks, whereby it is anticipated that educational quality will flourish. Improvement of quality will be beneficial to direct recipients of the service, including students and parents, as well as indirect recipients, such as employers, individuals, and society as a whole. To ensure improvement in the quality of education at all levels and of all types, two major tasks that need to be accomplished are the development of educational standards and the development of a quality assurance system.

There are three types of standards: national education standards, standards for internal quality assurance, and standards for external quality assessment.

### **3.3.1 National Education Standards**

As specified in the *National Education Act*, the Office of the Education Council (OEC) is responsible for proposing national education standards. Working in cooperation with the offices responsible for basic, vocational, and higher education as well as the Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (ONESQA), sets of standards which would be applicable to all agencies providing education at all levels were formulated and subsequently approved by the Council of Ministers on October 26, 2004. They comprise:

1) Desirable characteristics of the Thai people, as both citizens of the country and members of the world community, for which there are five indicators: (1) sound physical and mental health; (2) required knowledge and skills sufficient for leading a meaningful life and social development; (3) skills in learning and self-adjustment; (4) social skills; and (5) righteousness, public-mindedness, and consciousness of their citizenship of Thailand and the world.

2) Guidelines for education provision for which there are three indicators: (1) development of a diversified curricula and ambiance enabling learners to develop themselves in line with their natural inclinations and to the best of their potential; (2) systematic and effective development of administrators, teachers, faculty staff, and education personnel; and (3) practice of school-based management.

3) Guidelines for creating a learning society/ knowledge society for which there are three indicators: (1) provision of academic services and establishment of cooperation

between educational institutions and community so as to transform educational institutions into a learning and knowledge society; (2) research and study, promotion of and support for learning sources and mechanisms; and (3) generation and management of knowledge for the benefit of all levels and components of the society.

The national education standards also serve as the basis for setting assessment standards for internal and external quality assurance mechanisms. Currently, all concerned agencies have developed relevant educational standards.

### **3.3.2 Internal Quality Assurance**

In 2003, the Ministry of Education announced relevant ministerial regulations for the system, criteria, and methods for internal quality assurance of basic and higher education institutions. Three important principles of the internal quality assurance are as follows:

- It will make educational institutions independent and flexible for management of curriculum, budget, personnel, and resources.

- State/private agencies, local administration organisations, entrepreneurs, local scholars, local communities, and parents will have opportunities to participate in the education management and quality assurance.

- Standards of educational institutions and all internal operations can be inspected by other organisations.

To serve as a basis for external quality assessment, all educational institutions follow guidelines for internal quality assurance standards developed by their supervising agency. Educational institutions are also required to implement an internal quality assurance system comprised of control, audit, and assessment.

In support of this effort, a number of activities have been carried out, including: developing personnel; implementing pilot projects; providing financial support; conducting, monitoring and advisory tasks; and disseminating documents, media, and equipment.

### **3.3.3 External Quality Assessment**

External quality assessment of all educational institutions is conducted at least once every five years, with outcomes submitted to the relevant agency and made available to the general public. The main aims of external assessment of all educational institutions are to stimulate these institutions to continuously enhance their educational quality and achieve efficient educational administration. Authentic assessment enables assessors to identify the strengths, weaknesses and conditions for success of the concerned institution. Useful recommendations are also provided for further improvement of the quality of education offered by the institutions. In conducting these assessments, the “Amicable Assessment Model” was employed by trained external assessors selected from qualified persons from private, professional or academic organisations. The model is aimed at highest quality and efficiency of assessment for enhancing educational quality and standards.

The Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment oversees external quality assessments of both basic and higher education institutions following standards relating to educational achievement (output/outcome); input/processes; and efficiency in administration and leadership. Different sets of standards for external quality assessment are used at the basic and higher education levels. From 2001 to 2015, the Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment has conducted three rounds of the external



assessment. The third round of the external quality assessment (2011-2015) revealed that the quality of education was assured in 96.81 percent of educational institutions at pre-primary level; 77.47 percent at primary and secondary levels; 79.49 percent at vocational level; 95.27 percent at higher level; and 98.81 percent of district non-formal education institutions.

Apart from the three standards mentioned above, Thailand has prepared and developed the qualifications frameworks for the Thai education system. With a view to developing manpower to meet both nationally and internationally comparable standards of knowledge, skills and competences and to promoting the system of quality assurance in education, Thailand has prepared the Thai Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (TQF: HEd), the Thai Qualifications Framework for Vocational Education (TQF: VEd), and the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

In 2003, work began on developing TQF: HEd as a means to ensure consistency in terms of both standards and award titles at the national level and equivalency with awards granted by institutions in other parts of the world. It provides appropriate points of comparison to assist institutions in their planning and internal quality assurance process, evaluators involved in external reviews, and employers in understanding the skills and capabilities of graduates they may employ. In July 2009, TQF: HEd and guidelines were introduced. Since then, efforts have been made to foster understanding within the higher education community and among relevant stakeholders to facilitate its implementation in higher education institutions nationwide. Under this framework, it is required that the quality of graduates at every level and every course or field of study fulfils the five domains of learning set by the Higher Education Commission, namely: ethics and morals, knowledge, cognitive

skills, interpersonal skills and responsibility, numerical analysis, and communication and information technology skills.

The *National Education Act*, the *Second 15-Year Long Range Plan on Higher Education (2008-2022)*, and the government's education policy have all sought to upgrade the quality of higher education provision. Quality and the production and development of quality graduates is linked to the ability to adapt to the changing work environment, create knowledge and innovation to develop the country in a sustainable manner and enhance the country's competitiveness in the globalised world, and strive towards academic excellence in order to become a regional education and research hub.

Regarding the quality assurance of graduates in vocational education, TQF: VEd of 2013 was announced in the Regulations of the Ministry of Education which replaces that issued in 2011. TQF: VEd is a guideline and standard for the Office of the Vocational Education Commission and institutions to develop or adjust vocational curriculum and to improve education provision for producing graduates with good quality.

In 2013, the Office of the Education Council prepared the National Qualifications Framework which was approved by the Council of Ministers. Being a credit transfer system developed on the basis of TQF: HEd and TQF: VEd, NQF is conceived of as an important component in assessing individuals' learning capabilities linking educational qualifications with experience transfer. It is considered a key and powerful concept in connecting and establishing cooperation among all levels and all types of education as well as promoting lifelong learning. In response to the demands of both national and international labour markets, especially in the ASEAN region, it is a mechanism giving an academic or vocational value to qualifications which Thai working-age people have obtained.

Moreover, it enables them to clearly visualise their own learning and progressive path as well as promotes individuals' quality assurance in accordance with their qualification levels. Currently, the Office of the Education Council is in the process of pushing forwards the NQF for its effective implementation. In addition, the Office of the Education Council is establishing cooperation with ASEAN countries to prepare the ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework (AQRF). As a guideline to the quality assurance in ASEAN, AQRF is expected to serve as a mechanism for comparing education qualifications with work experience for the ASEAN Community. Moreover, it is a regional common reference framework, functioning as a device to enable comparisons of qualifications across ASEAN member states, and addressing the education and training sectors with the wider objective of promoting lifelong learning. The Office of the Education Council is a member of the Task Force on ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework (TF-AQRF) taking charge of developing AQRF and designing mechanisms and guidelines for its implementation.

# Chapter 4

## Resources and Investment in Education

The mobilisation of resources and investment for education and the allocation of budget are necessary mechanisms to consolidate education reform efforts. As indicated in the Section 58 of the *National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999) and Amendments (Second National Education Act B.E. 2545 (2002))*, “there shall be mobilisation of resources and investment in terms of budgetary allocations, financial support and properties from the State; local administration organisations; individuals; private organisations; professional bodies; religious institutions; enterprises; other social institutions; and foreign countries, for the use in the provision of education.” Regarding the policy of the government, the allocation of the budget for education is adjusted to be consistent with the needs of those who wish to learn and the characteristics of the locations of the educational institutions.

## **4.1 Mobilisation of Resources and Investment for Education**

In fiscal year 2015, recognising the importance of education, the government allocated a budget to expand opportunities and improve the quality and standard of education on a thorough and equitable basis, and provide support for free basic education. The Government intended to spend 531,044.8 million baht, or 20.6 percent of 2,575,000 million baht with an emphasis on extending Thai people's opportunity to access quality education with standards. The areas of expenditures also included the education reform of teachers, curriculum, classrooms and information technology to attain international standards as well as funding arrangements to provide loans for students. The two major types of loans for students distributed by the Government comprise the Student Loan Fund and the Income Contingent Loan.

In addition, a portion of the education budget was allocated for educational institutions to produce and develop manpower with quality and high standards in accordance with market requirements in terms of quantity and quality. The full education budget in fiscal year 2015 was allocated for education administration from pre-primary to higher education levels, non-formal education, scholarships for students, and research on education. The national budget for the education sector also includes subsidies of education provided by the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration as well as local authorities nationwide.



Considering that education is a crucial factor in national development, the Thai Government has between fiscal years 2010-2015 allotted a remarkable proportion of the national budget to education. Successive Governments resumed the spending level of at least 3.8 percent of Gross Domestic Product. (Figure 4.1)

**Figure 4.1 Education Budget as a Percentage of GDP  
(Fiscal Years 2010-2015)**



*Source: Bureau of the Budget*

To reflect this allocation shift in real baht, in fiscal year 2015, 20.6 percent of the total budget was used by various public agencies to provide public services in schooling, non-formal, and informal systems. After decreasing to 18.7 percent of the national budget in fiscal year 2012, an increasing trend was seen in the following three years (2013, 2014, and 2015 at 20.6, 20.5, and 20.6 percent respectively), revealing the determination of the Thai Government to improve the quality of education. (Figure 4.2)

**Figure 4.2 Education Budget as a Percentage of the National Budget (Fiscal Years 2010-2015)**



*Source: Bureau of the Budget*

Compared to the budget allocated to other sectors, the education budget was third only to the general public services and economic affairs budgets as shown in Table 4.1.



**Table 4.1 Amount of Budget Allocation, Classified by Sector in Fiscal Year 2015**

Unit: million baht

| Sector                            | Amount             | Percentage   |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| General Public Services           | 576,735.2          | 22.4         |
| Defence                           | 191,640.0          | 7.4          |
| Public Order and Safety           | 157,365.5          | 6.1          |
| Economic Affairs                  | 545,023.1          | 21.2         |
| Environment Protection            | 3,926.9            | 0.2          |
| Housing and Community Amenities   | 58,667.3           | 2.3          |
| Health                            | 261,113.1          | 10.2         |
| Recreation, Culture, and Religion | 21,688.2           | 0.8          |
| <b>Education</b>                  | <b>531,044.8</b>   | <b>20.6</b>  |
| Social Protection                 | 227,795.9          | 8.8          |
| <b>Total</b>                      | <b>2,575,000.0</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

*Source: Thailand's Budget in Brief Fiscal Year 2015, Bureau of the Budget*

To ensure equal educational opportunities for all groups of population and to relieve financial burdens of students, the Government has still run the *Project on Financial Support from Pre-Primary Education until Completing Basic Education*. The project offers 15 years of free education from pre-primary up to upper secondary levels or equivalent both in general and vocational streams. Education expenditure funded by the Government comprises the fees for tuition, textbooks, school uniforms, learning equipment, and activities for students' quality improvement. The public expenditure per head has been adopted with the baseline calculation as shown in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2 Education Expenditure for Free Basic Education (Per Head)**

Unit: Thai baht

| Fee Types<br>Funded by the<br>Government     | Levels of Education |              |                    |                    |
|--|---------------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|
|  | Pre-<br>Primary     | Primary      | Lower<br>Secondary | Upper<br>Secondary |
| Tuition                                      | 1,700               | 1,900        | 3,500              | 3,800              |
| Textbooks                                    | 200                 | 500          | 621                | 909                |
| School Uniforms                              | 300                 | 360          | 450                | 500                |
| Learning Equipment                           | 200                 | 390          | 420                | 460                |
| Activities for Students' Quality Improvement | 430                 | 480          | 980                | 950                |
| Top-up for Poverty                           | -                   | 500          | 3,000              | -                  |
| Top-up for Small-sized Schools               | -                   | 500          | 1,000              | -                  |
| <b>Total</b>                                 | <b>2,830</b>        | <b>4,630</b> | <b>9,971</b>       | <b>6,619</b>       |

*Source: Ministry of Education*

Apart from general per head subsidies, the State is also responsible for the distribution of allocations for the operating and capital costs of state education institutions providing basic education and distribution of low-interest loans for students.

The government budget for education provision comes not only from the Ministry of Education, but also from several other government agencies which contribute significantly for educational purposes.

Added to the government budget for education provision, contributions from the private sector and general society are composed of funds from non-government sources, private

education institutions, the business sector, communities and international organisations.

Resources from non-governmental sources include donations made by individuals and communities, which vary both in cash and kind, and revenue from educational institutions such as academic services.

To encourage participation in the backing and development of education from private business and individuals, the Government has approved tax measures to support education. Consequently, a double deduction is granted to individuals for expenses paid to assist either public or private formal education institutions. However, these expenses together with the expenses in aid of education programmes under projects approved by the Ministry of Education cannot exceed 10 percent of assessable income after deduction of expenses and other exemptions. A double deduction is granted to companies or legal entities for expenses in the form of either cash or assets paid to either public or private formal education institutions. Nevertheless, these expenses together with the expenses in support of education programmes under projects approved by the Ministry of Education and the expenses paid to construct and maintain children's playgrounds, parks or privately owned sports fields which are open to the public free of charge (expenses in support of learning and amusement activities) cannot exceed 10 percent of net profit before the deduction of donations for charity, public benefit, and for education or sport.



## 4.2 Allocation of Budget

In terms of investment per level of education, financial contributions from the Government to pre-primary, primary, secondary and higher education increased successively from fiscal year 2011 to 2015 as displayed in Table 4.3.

**Table 4.3 Amount of Budget Allocation for Education Provision (Fiscal Years 2011-2015)**

Unit: million baht

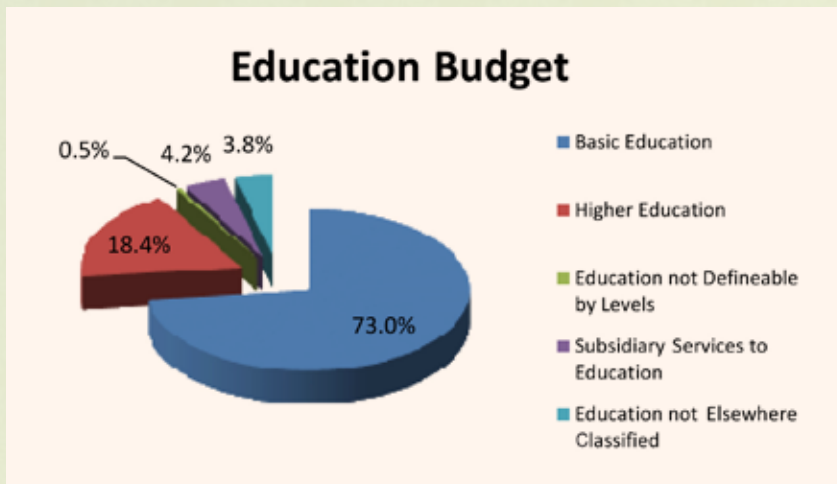
| Budget Allocations                            | Fiscal Years     |                  |                  |                  |                  |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
|   | 2011             | 2012             | 2013             | 2014             | 2015             |
| Pre-Primary, Primary, and Secondary Education | 310,330.0        | 341,316.1        | 368,163.2        | 383,557.2        | 387,886.6        |
| Higher Education                              | 71,749.8         | 72,734.5         | 82,551.6         | 87,721.9         | 97,725.7         |
| Education not Definable by Levels             | 2,406.2          | 2,262.7          | 2,610.8          | 2,720.3          | 2,780.7          |
| Subsidiary Services to Education              | 22,747.4         | 14,199.0         | 22,135.7         | 23,508.6         | 22,521.1         |
| Education not Elsewhere Classified            | 15,006.5         | 13,971.2         | 18,465.8         | 21,011.1         | 20,130.7         |
| <b>Total</b>                                  | <b>422,239.9</b> | <b>444,483.5</b> | <b>493,927.1</b> | <b>518,519.1</b> | <b>531,044.8</b> |

*Source: Thailand's Budget in Brief Fiscal Years 2011-2015, Bureau of the Budget*

The table above showed that the Government prioritises the development with enormous investment in basic education under the year by year system. In higher education, this data emphasises an increasing budget allocation to public universities.

As shown in Figure 4.3, the largest proportion of educational funding in 2015 (73.0 percent) was allocated to basic education (pre-primary, primary, and secondary levels) followed by higher education which received 18.4 percent.

**Figure 4.3 Percentage Distribution of Education Budget by Function (Fiscal Year 2015)**



*Source: Thailand's Budget in Brief Fiscal Year 2015, Bureau of the Budget*

Concerning management of education budget, the *National Education Act* requires that there be a system for effective budget management and oversight. In an attempt to comply with the Act, the Ministry of Education and the Bureau of the Budget implemented a number of projects to develop appropriate systems for auditing, monitoring and evaluation to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in the utilisation of budgetary allocations at all levels of education.



# Chapter 5

## Development of Teaching and Learning Quality

The development of teaching and learning quality is crucial for preparing competent Thai people and a prosperous society for the country. Learners are considered centres for developing teaching and the learning process. Up to the academic years 2015 and 2016, a variety of outstanding activities and projects have been initiated or developed to enhance the quality of teaching and learning in line with the changing world in each period.

### 5.1 Early Childhood Education Development

Early childhood education is deemed important to Thailand since it is the development of learners' quality at an early stage of life. Policies and disciplines on early childhood development have been under continuous development. There have been important movements contributing to early childhood education development as described below:

1) Preparing the *Long-Term Policy and Strategy for Early Childhood Care and Development (0-5 Age Group) 2007–2016* as an integral part of development of our children and youth, and a framework for action on early childhood development, encompassing the initial period of the lives of our children and youth.

2) Setting the *Regulation of the Office of the Prime Minister on Early Childhood Development B.E. 2551 (2008)* in order to provide children in early childhood with quality development according to the State's basic policies as stipulated in the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand under the auspices of the Committee on National Early Childhood Development 2008 with the Prime Minister as the Chairperson.

3) Forming the Steering Sub-Committee for Early Childhood Development Strategy B.E. 2551 (2008) to drive early childhood development concretely and hold meetings and regularly report operation results to the Committee.

4) Preparing the *National Strategic Plan for Early Childhood Development (Newborn to Pre-First Graders) in Accordance with the Government Policy 2012–2016* which includes the following strategies:

Strategy 1: Essential services for development to full potential of all children;

Strategy 2: Iodine and early childhood development;

Strategy 3: Early childhood rearing; and

Strategy 4: Mechanisms for early childhood development.





At present, early childhood development is driven by the Committee on National Early Childhood Development and the Sub-Committees designated by the Committee. The Prime Minister or a designated Deputy Prime Minister acts as the Chairperson and the Office of the Education Council as the Secretary of the Committee. The members of the Committee are representatives of agencies working on early childhood development and early childhood experts.



The work on early childhood development in Thailand is divided into two levels as follows:

1) At policy level: Preparing, under the responsibility of the Office of the Education Council, policies, strategic plans, action plans, researches, bodies of knowledge, and innovations for early childhood development in order to create implementation framework for early childhood development applied by the Ministries and concerned agencies

2) At practitioner level: Taking charge of work on children with early childhood as indicated in the functions of concerned agencies. For example, the Ministry of Public Health is responsible for knowledge transfer of child health and development. The Ministry of Social Development and Human Security is responsible for subsidies for the newborns and driving early childhood development at provincial level. The Ministry of Interior supervises child care centres across the country. The Ministry of Education by the Office of the Basic Education Commission supervises pre-primary schools nationwide. These functions are carried out in line with policies, strategies, researches and bodies of knowledge offered by the Office of the Education Council.

From 2007 until the present, many activities have been undertaken for developing early childhood education by various responsible agencies. During 2004-2009, the Office of the Education Council, in collaboration with the Book for Children Foundation, conducted a research and development on the *Bookstart Project*. The research findings were developed for implementation by concerned agencies, such as the Department of Health, Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, and Thai Health Promotion Foundation. The Office of the Education Council conducted the

*Research Project on the Development of Early Childhood Competency for Children Aged 0-5 Years* which is divided into two stages of ages: 0-3 years of age and 3-5 years of age. Nowadays, the early childhood competency for age-related development (ages 3-5 years) is utilised in educational institutes under the supervision of agencies such as the Office of the Private Education Commission, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, and Local Administration Organisations. The Ministry of Public Health designed the *Pink Book* recording iodine supplementation of pregnant women and children in early childhood. The Ministry of Social Development and Human Security has designed the *National Standards for Child Care Centres* and the Ministry of Interior offers on-going training programmes offering knowledge, skills and learning experiences to persons responsible for child care.



## 5.2 Integration of Morality and Ethics into Teaching and Learning Process

For improving the Basic Education Curriculum, the Ministry of Education has revised history and civic duties in order to make students learn and become aware of the duty of Thais in terms of discipline, morality and patriotism. In addition, the Ministry of Education has integrated the *12 National Core Values* into the curriculum comprising:

- 1) Upholding the nation, the religions and the Monarchy, which is the key institution;
- 2) Being honest, sacrificial and patient with positive attitude for the common good of the public;
- 3) Being grateful to the parents, guardians and teachers;
- 4) Seeking knowledge and education directly and indirectly;
- 5) Treasuring the precious Thai tradition;
- 6) Maintaining moral, integrity, well-wishes upon others as well as being generous and sharing;
- 7) Understanding, learning the true essence of democratic ideals with His Majesty the King as the Head of State;
- 8) Maintaining discipline, respectful of laws and the elderly and seniority;
- 9) Being conscious and mindful of action in line with His Majesty the King's statements;
- 10) Practicing the philosophy of Sufficiency Economy of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej. Saving money for time of need. Being moderate with surplus used for sharing or expansion of business while having good immunity;

11) Maintaining both physical and mental health and unyielding to the dark force or desires, having sense of shame over guilt and sins in accordance with the religious principles;

12) Putting the public and national interest before personal interest.



To those *12 National Cores Values*, a strategic plan was created and implementation guidelines for the *12 National Core Values* are followed in the provision of education in all subject groups. As of January 2016, in relation to the strategic plan, various activities have been organised to promote the *12 National Core Values* such as installing billboards or posters for public awareness of the 12 National Core Values in 25,000 locations; organising 2,413 forums; arranging 16 batches of Core Values New Generation Youth Camps attended by 3,794 young people; and initiating activities of the 12 National Core Values Development for 15,875 education administrators, teachers, and private school students.



Added to the activities mentioned, Dharma (virtue codes of moral) Studies have been introduced into education institutions nationwide. Attended by 13,655 trainees, the training course, “The Integration of Virtue and Morality into Learning Management” was offered for developing teachers and education personnel. In addition, *the Moral Schools Project*, which was initiated in 2010, has been developed and maintained to create virtuous people with morals for the country. As of January 2016, numerous educational institutions have participated in the *Moral Schools Project*, including 367 schools under the Office of the Basic Education Commission; 500 vocational education institutions; and 250 private schools.

### 5.3 The Government's Efforts to Tackle Student Illiteracy

Literacy is considered a fundamental tool for learning at higher levels and understanding other subjects whereas illiteracy is like a great barrier to children's self-development. In Thailand, because of low quality and a lack of success in basic education as a whole, illiteracy is still a serious concern among disadvantaged children in remote areas of Thailand.

According to a survey made by the Office of the Basic Education Commission, around 25,000-26,000 grade 3 students in primary level nationwide have difficulty in reading and writing because of various problems, particularly students of immigrant families and ethnic minority students who do not use Thai as their primary language.



To tackle the problem of illiteracy among students in Thailand, the Ministry of Education designed innovative approaches for each student in a move towards the country's goal of making 2015 an illiteracy-free year, and announced the Policy on 2015: *The Illiteracy-Free Year* which was implemented and materialised through numerous activities and projects. One of the outstanding projects was the *Project on School Change-Maker Festival*. Initiated in line with the theory of Brain-Based

Learning (BBL), this project aimed at encouraging the students in the first grade at primary level to read and write within one year. As of January 2016, this project offered many activities, such as distance training via DLTV satellite for 65,000 education administrators including Thai language teachers of the primary year 1 nationwide and the selection of 2,022 leader schools for the project to train 5,600 teachers. New Thai language learning and teaching was promoted and in Thai classrooms of primary years 1 to 3, the Consonant and Vowel Spelling and New Speedy Textbooks were distributed to all students while Teaching Manuals were given to Thai language teachers.

These activities and projects were clearly successful in improving the ability of reading and writing of primary 1-6 students. At the end of the academic year 2015, the percentage of primary 1-3 students unable to read Thai decreased from 4.99 to 2.62 and primary 4-6 students who lacked reading fluency from 2.15 to 1.29. In addition, the percentage of primary 1-3 students unable to write Thai declined from 49.92 to 5.40 while for primary 4-6 students such reduction was from 3.59 to 2.10.





## **5.4 Improvement of Teaching and Learning through Distance Learning Technology (DL)**

Distance Learning (DL) in Thailand has for a long time provided education to students nationwide and improved access to educational opportunities for students in remote areas of the country. Lessening problems resulting from a teacher shortage in small-sized schools and educational inequality among all Thai people, education provision via technologies of DL have enabled teachers to manage and arrange effectively average learning in all subjects. Both teachers and students are able to easily tap to modern teaching and learning technologies. The Ministry of Education through the Office of the Basic Education Commission, hence, has launched the *Project on Distance Learning Technology for Educational Quality Development* or *DL Thailand Project* with a view to upgrading the quality of education by using two types of technology, namely Distance Learning Television (DLTV) and Distance Learning Information Technology (DLIT).

The process of education provision through distance learning technology is carried out by the Educational Service Areas (ESAs) and educational institutions.

### **5.4.1 Distance Learning Television (DLTV)**

To tackle the ongoing problems of teacher shortages in remote areas of the country and to increase educational opportunities for Thai children, the present Government has initiated the *Expansion of Distance Learning Television Project* which was inaugurated several decades ago as part of a royal initiative of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej. Through this project, 15,396 small-sized schools under the supervision of the Office of the Basic Education Commission were offered DLTV for teaching and learning. Positive results were realised by 2014 and the project has yielded



slight increases on average in the 2014 Ordinary National Education Test (Onet) scores of the students in these small-sized schools. The Office of the Basic Education Commission found that 97 percent of teachers at the DLTV schools showed improved performance. According to the opinions of parents, teachers, students, and people surveyed in a Suan Dusit Poll conducted by Suan Dusit University, 98.45 percent of respondents were satisfied with this expanded project and saw it as being very beneficial. By way of addition, the students appeared happier in learning and could understand their lessons more easily.

#### **5.4.2 Distance Learning Information Technology (DLIT)**

DLIT is a mode of preparing teaching and learning activities through production, recording, transmission and broadcast of sound or moving pictures including related resources via information technologies and all kinds of modern communication channels. To build on the *DL Thailand Project*, DLIT has been introduced covering 15,553 medium and large-sized schools under the supervision of the Office of the Basic Education Commission nationwide. The DLIT system for

medium and large-sized schools installed via the website [www.dlit.ac.th](http://www.dlit.ac.th) includes:

1) DLIT remote-sensing classrooms transmit teaching and learning activities for difficult lessons directed by model teachers of well-known academic schools to schools in distant sites in order to ease difficulties in teaching of teachers of the latter schools.

2) DLIT resources are similar to the teaching and learning media warehouse of the Basic Education Core Curriculum.

3) DLIT Digital Library is offered for teachers, students, parents and the general public for use in seeking knowledge.

4) DLIT PLC (Professional Learning Community) is a tool for building and developing professional learning community for teachers together with Share and Learn zones.

5) DLIT Assessment is an examination warehouse collecting examinations from primary to upper secondary levels.

This system is deemed useful for building opportunities, decreasing educational inequality and improving the teaching approach of teachers nationwide. Its usefulness can lead to the enhancement of education reform to attain the goal of education quality, starting in the classroom.



# Chapter 6

## Development of Teaching Profession and Educational Personnel

Thailand attaches great importance to improving the status and quality of teachers and educational personnel because they play an important role in developing the learning process and enhancing the quality of students' learning. Moreover, they are considered as a key factor in elevating educational quality and preparing future citizens of the country.

In Thailand, the policies on teachers and educational personnel of each government have focused on the improvement of the quality of teachers and educational personnel which directly affects the quality of students. The main aspects of teacher development indicated in each Thai government can be described as follows:

- 1) Attracting qualified and virtuous persons to teaching profession;
- 2) Preparing teachers of quality to meet international standards;

- 3) Developing regularly the quality of teacher;
- 4) Improving salary, remunerations, and benefit levels for teachers;
- 5) Developing the system of teacher promotion;
- 6) Developing Geo-Informatics or Geomatics for teacher distribution;
- 7) Solving the problem of teacher shortage for core subjects;
- 8) Relieving teachers of burdens irrelevant to teaching and learning;
- 9) Introducing information technology and appropriate equipment in learning and teaching;
- 10) Adjusting the performance evaluation system to significantly reflect the effectiveness of learning and teaching, and developing the quality of learners; and
- 11) Solving teachers' debt problems through payment suspension programme and debt restructuring in line with government policy for solving household debt.

Due to the promulgation of the *National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999) and Amendments (Second National Education Act B.E. 2545 (2002))*, the reform of the teachers and educational personnel system has been seen in order to set teachers and education personnel to become high-status professionals. In line with the Chapter 7 of the *National Education Act*, the teaching profession development system in Thailand was reformed in four key areas: teacher education development; personnel management and a new salary scale; maintaining professional standards; and the development and promotion of teachers and education personnel.



## 6.1 Present Status of Teachers and Faculty

During the academic years 2011-2014, the number of teachers in basic education met the recession successively; but in the academic year 2015, there was a slight increase of the number as shown in Table 6.1.

**Table 6.1 Number of Teachers in Basic Education  
(Academic Years 2011-2015)**

| Responsible Agencies                              | Academic Years |                |                |                |                |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
|   | 2011           | 2012           | 2013           | 2014           | 2015           |
| Ministry of Education                             | 632,019        | 632,019        | 632,400        | 611,842        | 627,465        |
| Ministry of Tourism and Sports                    | 935            | 935            | 576            | 657            | 940            |
| Ministry of Culture                               | 1,040          | 1,040          | 1,040          | 974            | 1,062          |
| Ministry of Interior                              | 89,187         | 88,260         | 84,577         | 91,443         | 88,984         |
| Bangkok Metropolitan Administration               | 16,745         | 16,667         | 16,397         | 15,331         | 16,800         |
| Ministry of Social Development and Human Security | 54             | 54             | 54             | 53             | 10             |
| Royal Thai Police                                 | 1,642          | 1,641          | 1,638          | 1,648          | 1,727          |
| <b>Total</b>                                      | <b>740,651</b> | <b>740,616</b> | <b>736,672</b> | <b>721,948</b> | <b>736,988</b> |

*Source: Thailand Education Statistics Reports (2011-2015), Office of the Education Council*

As for the number of faculties in higher education, there was a small increase during the academic years 2012-2013 from 65,522 to 67,031.

According to Table 6.1, despite the rising number of teachers in basic education, Thailand has still been facing the problem of a shortage of teachers, particularly at the basic education level. The Basic Education Curriculum is comprised of eight core academic subjects, namely, mathematics, science, English, Thai language, arts, social studies, careers and technology, and physical education. Despite attempts to attract qualified persons to teach in the core academic subjects, shortages remain, especially for mathematics, foreign languages, Thai language, science and social studies. Most teachers choose to work in large schools in urban areas while many schools in remote areas have faced teacher shortage.

An important cause of the teacher shortage in Thailand was the early retirement project between the academic years 2000-2006. As stated in the *Report on Preparation and Development of Teachers in Thailand*, the total number of retired teachers and educational personnel who joined this project both in schools under the supervision of the Office of the Basic Education Commission and in the higher education institutions was 62,530 while the number of positions for new teachers and educational personnel was equivalent to only 18,042. Another important cause of the teacher shortage in Thailand is the lack of systematic human resource planning. The distribution of teachers nationwide still has some problems in practice. The teacher shortage gives rise to a diminished quality of education. For example, Thai teachers, particularly at the basic education level, have various and non-teaching duties, including administrative affairs, academic affairs, students' affairs and service affairs.



Moreover, they were often assigned to participate in extra-class activities conducted in school and in the community. In addition, some teachers in basic education institutions do not teach the subjects that they majored or specialised in.



## 6.2 Recruitment of Students in Teacher Education Institutions

At present, teacher education institutions are no longer in the form of specialised institutions. In the past, Thailand had Teacher Colleges and Education Colleges which have now been transformed into “Universities.” As a result, teacher preparation is carried out in the Faculty of Education in certain Universities. The first three teacher education institutions preparing the highest percentage of teachers in Thailand are Rajabhat Universities (63.68 percent), public universities (13.29 percent), and other education institutions not under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education (9.96 percent).

## 6.3 Teacher Education Curricula

Currently, the teacher education curricula in Thailand are classified into three types as follows:



### **6.3.1 Bachelor's Degree of Education Programme in Basic Education (5 years)**

Requiring completion of a five-year bachelor's degree, this programme prepares teachers with the first four years dedicated to intensive coursework and a final year devoted to teaching training at an approved school.

### **6.3.2 Bachelor's Degree of Education Programme in Basic Education (2 years)**

This programme is offered for undergraduates in fields other than education. These undergraduates have to attend one year of coursework and one year of teaching training in an approved school.

### **6.3.3 Master's Degree of Education Programme in Teaching (3 years)**

This programme is offered for graduates in education fields and others. The students have to attend two years of coursework and one year of teaching training in an approved school.





## 6.4 Projects of Teacher Production

With a view to attracting a competent new generation to the career of teaching, Thailand has launched various projects to prepare qualified teachers with productive teaching performance and high moral standards for more than 10 years. The students participating in these projects are guaranteed a teaching job at the end. Some projects offer fully funded scholarships for the entire period of implementation. Important projects on teacher preparation are described as follows:

### **6.4.1 The New Generation of Teachers Project**

The New Generation of Teachers Project comprises two phases of implementation as illustrated below:

Phase 1 offered a 5-year Bachelor of Education programs to prepare teachers in basic education. The project recruited students to train for the teaching profession with scholarships awarded and future positions in schools guaranteed. The project was implemented between 2004 and 2006 and was able to produce 2,500 qualified teachers in each year. Fifty universities joined the project in this phase.

Phase 2 was approved by the Council of Ministers in 2009. The project was implemented between 2009 and 2010 and accepted 4,000 qualified students of teacher education, comprising 2,000 third-year and 2,000 fourth-year students.

In 2012, the New Generation of Teachers Project was changed to be the “Professional Teacher Project” which prepared teachers of high-demand academic subjects in accord with the needs of each area or these employed by various educational agencies such as the Office of the Basic Education Commission and the Office of the Vocational Education Commission. Hence, the teachers produced by this project have academic knowledge, high skills in teaching, and favourable attitude towards the teaching profession. Regarding the conditions for the students participating in this project, the students completing the education degree programme are contractually obliged to work as government teachers in basic education or vocational education.

### **6.4.2 Cooperative Teacher Education Project**

In 2008, the Office of the Higher Education Commission initiated the Cooperative Teacher Education Project for the purpose of solving the urgent problem of teacher shortages in schools under the supervision of the Office of the Basic Education Commission and in colleges under the supervision of the Office of the Vocational Education Commission. The undergraduates in fields other than education had to complete a one-year graduate certificate programme in education and/or attend teaching training at the approved education institutions before receiving their teaching license. This project was able to produce a number of new generation teachers, thereby solving the teacher shortage problem. Additionally, the students attending this project were able to gain career-related experience from the teaching tasks they undertook at schools.

### **6.4.3 Project for the Promotion of Science and Mathematics Talented Teachers (PSMT)**

In the first phase during 1996-2004, this project produced and promoted teachers talented in science and mathematics. According to the assessment of the implementation in phase 1, this project managed to produce qualified science teachers and, thus was able to accomplish its objectives. In the second phase of the project conducted from 2005 to 2006, students were recruited upon completion of the four-year bachelor degree programme. In the third phase, implemented during 2012-2017, the project awarded 580 scholarships of the One Year Graduate Diploma Program in Teaching Profession, annually.

#### **6.4.4 Project on the Bright Students from Poor Families**

Launched and conducted by the Faculty of Education, Srinakharinwirot University since 1986, the project which is called “Diamond in the Rough Project” in Thai aims at expanding educational opportunity for bright students from poor families. As a result, the students involved have succeeded in furthering their studies in Bachelor’s Degree of Education Programme.

#### **6.4.5 Returning-Home Graduate Project (Returning-Home Science Teacher)**

This project encourages youths in remote areas to access education towards a bachelor’s degree after which they can then return home to help develop their local communities. It is a special project in response to the need for teachers at schools under the supervision of the Office of the Basic Education Commission in Nan and Mae Hong Son Provinces.

#### **6.4.6 Project on Local Teacher Development**

Formerly known as the Gurudhayadha Teacher Preparation Project, it is a pilot teacher-producing project with limited admission for some high-demand subjects and localities under the requirements of concerned agencies, namely the Office of the Basic Education Commission, the Office of the Vocational Education Commission, the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, the Office of the Non-Formal and Informal Education. During the first phase, this pilot project will be carried out between 2016 and 2018. The next phase will be undertaken between 2019 and 2029. The project is aimed at attracting competent students to the teaching profession, offering them the curriculum which focuses on intensive practice and training. After graduating from

programme, the students of the project will be recruited as teachers in their hometowns. They are expected to become teachers with expertise in teaching with a positive attitude towards the profession. The year 2016 was the first for selecting 4,079 students to join this project. In that year, there were 39,400 applicants and 30,306 eligible persons to take the exam to be selected for this project. This project allows persons with a teaching profession degree, and those from other fields guaranteed by the Office of the Teacher Civil Service and Educational Personnel Commission (OTEPC) to apply to this programme.







# Chapter 7

## Access to Education, Participation, and Progression

This chapter examines access to education, participation and progression through student enrolments, transition rates and enrolment rates from pre-primary to higher education levels, as well as the number of children with special needs in basic and non-formal education.

### 7.1 Access to Basic Education

Basic education covers pre-primary education, six years of primary, three years of lower secondary, and three years of upper secondary education.

During the academic years 2011-2015, the percentage of students enrolled in basic education at all levels, compared to the population aged 3-17, was rather stable. (Table 7.1)

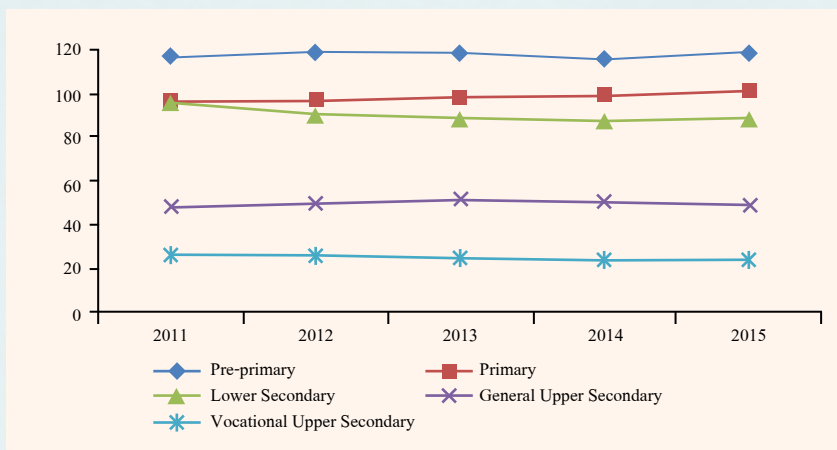
**Table 7.1 Enrolment Ratio in Basic Education  
(Academic Years 2011-2015)**

| Academic Years | Population Aged 3-17 | Number of Students | Percentage of Students Per Population |
|----------------|----------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 2011           | 12,981,183           | 12,514,491         | 96.4                                  |
| 2012           | 12,801,534           | 12,322,197         | 96.2                                  |
| 2013           | 12,607,577           | 12,151,467         | 96.4                                  |
| 2014           | 12,436,848           | 11,925,070         | 95.9                                  |
| 2015           | 12,469,766           | 11,874,205         | 95.2                                  |

*Source: Thailand Education Statistics Reports (2011-2015),  
Office of the Education Council*

The following figure shows that the percentage of children accessing basic education at pre-primary, primary, and lower secondary levels increased inconsiderably in the academic year 2015.

**Figure 7.1 Enrolment Rates in Basic Education  
(Academic Years 2011-2015)**



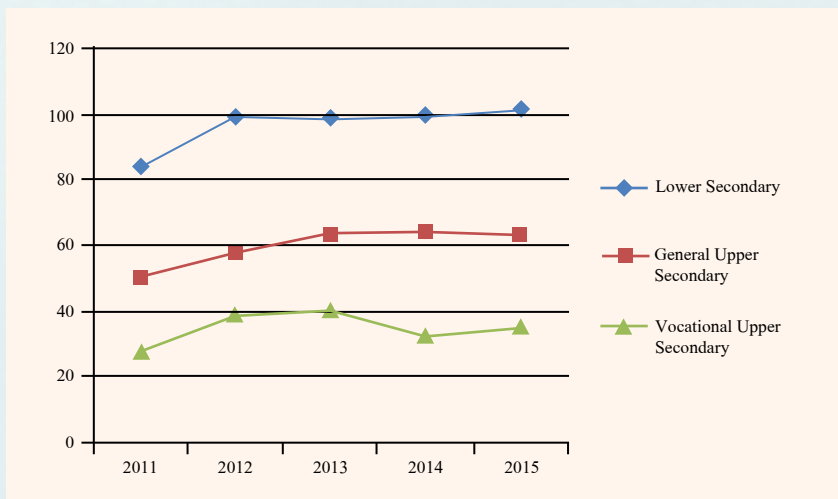
*Source: Thailand Education Statistics Reports (2011-2015),  
Office of the Education Council*

From the figure above, during the academic years 2011-2015, the number of children aged 3-17 enrolling in basic education trended upwards as a result of policies in Thailand offering 15 years of free education, as well as the extension of compulsory education from six to nine years.



When compared to the academic year 2011, transition rates for the academic year 2015 increased successively at lower secondary while having a slight fall in the general upper secondary level. As for the transition rates of vocational upper secondary, there was a moderate increase of percentage in 2015 since the Government takes a great effort to make the vocational education more popular among Thai students. The trend of transition rates in basic education during the academic years 2011-2015 is presented in Figure 7.2.

**Figure 7.2 Transition Rates in Basic Education  
(Academic Years 2011-2015)**



**Source:** *Thailand Education Statistics Reports (2011-2015), Office of the Education Council*

Between the years 2011 and 2014 the number of students completing primary saw a successive degradation; however, there were insignificant fluctuations of the number of students in lower and upper secondary education. In 2012, the number of students completing lower secondary levels was recorded as higher than primary level because the data also included the number of lower secondary students not collected in the previous academic years as shown in Table 7.2.

**Table 7.2 Completion of Basic Education  
(Academic Years 2011-2014)**

| Levels of Education | Academic Years |           |         |         |
|---------------------|----------------|-----------|---------|---------|
|                     | 2011           | 2012      | 2013    | 2014    |
| Primary             | 1,054,951      | 802,220   | 776,561 | 780,501 |
| Lower Secondary     | 824,122        | 1,032,020 | 705,107 | 707,653 |
| Upper Secondary     | 563,039        | 660,343   | 635,258 | 609,754 |
| - General Ed.       | 379,281        | 478,383   | 439,917 | 423,519 |
| - Vocational Ed.    | 183,758        | 181,960   | 195,341 | 186,235 |

*Source: Thailand Education Statistics Reports (2012-2015),  
Office of the Education Council*

### 7.1.1 Access to Pre-Primary Education

Pre-primary education programmes, provided by a variety of education providers e.g. nursery schools, or kindergarten and learning centres, aim to prepare children in their physical, emotional, social, and intellectual development before they enter primary school. In addition to state-supported institutions, several private agencies and non-governmental organisations actively participate in providing early childhood development.



Table 7.3 is presenting the successive growth of the number of students in formal schooling at the pre-primary level during the academic years 2011-2015. It is remarkable that number of students per population during this period were larger than 100 percent because the students aged under and over 3-5 years were included in pre-primary level.

**Table 7.3 Number of Pre-Primary Students  
(Academic Years 2011-2015)**

| Academic Years | Population (3-5 Age Group) | Number of Students | Percentage |
|----------------|----------------------------|--------------------|------------|
| 2011           | 2,362,513                  | 2,805,537          | 118.8      |
| 2012           | 2,315,120                  | 2,798,562          | 120.9      |
| 2013           | 2,264,774                  | 2,734,911          | 120.8      |
| 2014           | 2,290,736                  | 2,653,368          | 115.8      |
| 2015           | 2,283,392                  | 2,700,778          | 118.3      |

*Source: Thailand Education Statistics Reports (2011-2015),  
Office of the Education Council*

### **7.1.2 Access to Primary Education**

During the academic years 2011-2015, the percentage of primary students compared to the population aged 6-11 increased gradually from 97.6 in 2011 to 100.9 in 2015. Similar to the percentage of pre-primary students shown in 2014, the primary students exceeded 100 percent because the students aged under and over 6-11 years were included in primary level. (Table 7.4)

**Table 7.4 Enrolment Ratio at the Primary Level  
(Academic Years 2011-2015)**

| Academic Years | Population Aged 6-11 | Number of Students | Percentage of Students Per Population |
|----------------|----------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 2011           | 5,116,776            | 4,993,029          | 97.6                                  |
| 2012           | 5,027,890            | 4,939,044          | 98.2                                  |
| 2013           | 4,937,807            | 4,903,579          | 99.3                                  |
| 2014           | 4,917,167            | 4,861,811          | 98.9                                  |
| 2015           | 4,825,068            | 4,866,449          | 100.9                                 |

*Source: Thailand Education Statistics Reports (2011-2015),  
Office of the Education Council*

### **7.1.3 Access to Compulsory Education and Secondary Education**

**1) Compulsory Education:** Compulsory education in Thailand has a 9-year period beginning from primary to lower secondary education or the ages of 6-14. The percentage of students per population in compulsory education compared to the population aged 6-14, during the academic years 2011-2014 decreased gradually from 97.1 percent in 2011 to 94.8 percent in 2014, and slightly increased to 96.5 percent in 2015. (Table 7.5)



**Table 7.5 Enrolment Ratio in Compulsory Education  
(Academic Years 2011-2015)**

| Academic Years | Population Aged 6-14 | Number of Students | Percentage of Students Per Population |
|----------------|----------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 2011           | 7,844,759            | 7,617,206          | 97.1                                  |
| 2012           | 7,725,794            | 7,399,252          | 95.8                                  |
| 2013           | 7,598,974            | 7,279,575          | 95.8                                  |
| 2014           | 7,574,150            | 7,176,766          | 94.8                                  |
| 2015           | 7,438,384            | 7,174,888          | 96.5                                  |

*Source: Thailand Education Statistics Reports (2011-2015),  
Office of the Education Council*

**2) Lower Secondary Level:** The percentage of students in lower secondary classes witnessed a slight fluctuation during the academic years 2011-2015. (Table 7.6)

**Table 7.6 Enrolment Ratio at Lower Secondary Level  
(Academic Years 2011-2015)**

| Academic Years | Population Aged 12-14 | Number of Students | Percentage of Students Per Population |
|----------------|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 2011           | 2,727,984             | 2,624,177          | 96.2                                  |
| 2012           | 2,697,904             | 2,460,208          | 91.2                                  |
| 2013           | 2,661,167             | 2,375,996          | 89.3                                  |
| 2014           | 2,656,982             | 2,314,955          | 87.1                                  |
| 2015           | 2,613,316             | 2,308,439          | 88.3                                  |

*Source: Thailand Education Statistics Reports (2011-2015),  
Office of the Education Council*

**3) Upper Secondary:** The proportion of students enrolled in upper secondary classes per population aged 15-17 decreased gradually from 77.9 percent in 2013 to 72.7 percent in 2015. (Table 7.7)

**Table 7.7 Enrolment Ratio at Upper Secondary Level (Academic Years 2011-2015)**

| Academic Years | Population Aged 15-17 | Number of Students | Percentage of Students Per Population |
|----------------|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 2011           | 2,773,911             | 2,091,748          | 75.4                                  |
| 2012           | 2,760,620             | 2,124,383          | 76.9                                  |
| 2013           | 2,743,829             | 2,136,981          | 77.9                                  |
| 2014           | 2,777,864             | 2,065,762          | 74.4                                  |
| 2015           | 2,747,990             | 1,998,539          | 72.7                                  |

*Source: Thailand Education Statistics Reports (2011-2015), Office of the Education Council*

From the table above, it is clear that the number of students in upper secondary education was lower than the number of student in lower secondary education. It was explained that, after finishing compulsory education, students had alternative means of further education such as enrolling in vocational education or working as unskilled labour. It is of concern that the lower number of students in upper education will likely creates problems for national competitiveness due to a potential lack of qualified or highly skilled human resources.

## **7.2 Participation in Basic Education of Children with Special Educational Needs**

This part focuses on children with special educational needs (the disadvantaged and the disabled) excluding the gifted and talented. It will present the participation of these children in basic education.

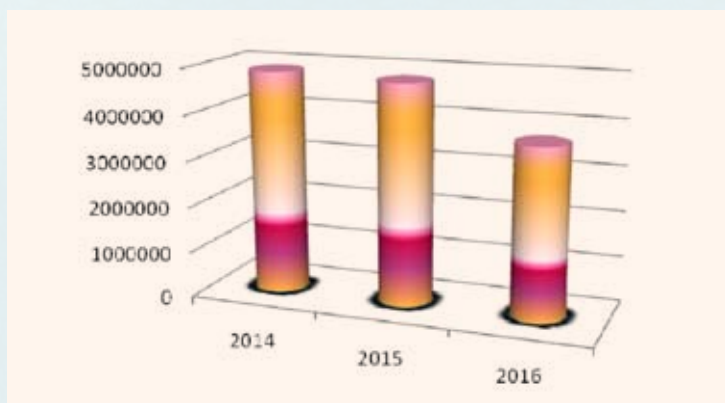
### **7.2.1 Special Education for Disadvantaged Students**

Most disadvantaged students study in public regular schools, known as “Inclusive Schools”, while the rest study in schools that are specially arranged for them, such as “Welfare Schools” and “Border Patrol Police Schools.”

As for the disadvantaged students in Inclusive Schools and Welfare Schools under the supervision of the Office of the Basic Education Commission, they are divided into 10 types comprising children forced to enter the labour market; children who are sex workers; deserted children/orphans; children in observation and protection centres; street children; children affected by HIV/AIDS; children of the minorities; physically-abused children; impoverished children; and children affected by narcotic drugs, and others.

During the academic years 2014-2016, the numbers of disadvantaged students studying in Inclusive Schools under the supervision of the Office of the Basic Education Commission were 4,880,793; 4,802,767; and 3,702,319 respectively as illustrated in Figure 7.3.

**Figure 7.3** Number of Disadvantaged Students in Inclusive Schools (Academic Years 2014-2016)



*Source: Office of the Basic Education Commission*

In the academic year 2016, Welfare Schools took care of 37,274 disadvantaged students, out of which 34,209 were boarders and the remaining 3,065 were day students (Figure 7.4).

**Figure 7.4** Number of Disadvantaged Students in Welfare Schools (Academic Years 2014-2016)



*Source: Special Education Bureau, Office of the Basic Education Commission*

*Remark: The data of 2016 is as of June 10, 2016.*

In the academic year 2016, it was found that the number of disadvantaged children studying in Inclusive Schools was 3,702,319, out of which 3,632,944 were the impoverished children, the largest group among 10 types of disadvantaged children.

In the academic year 2015, the number of disadvantaged students enrolled in Border Patrol Police Schools was 24,992. These students were generally minority children and not classified into the 10 groups classified by the Office of the Basic Education Commission, unlike those in Inclusive Schools and Welfare Schools.

### **7.2.2 Special Education for Students with Disabilities**

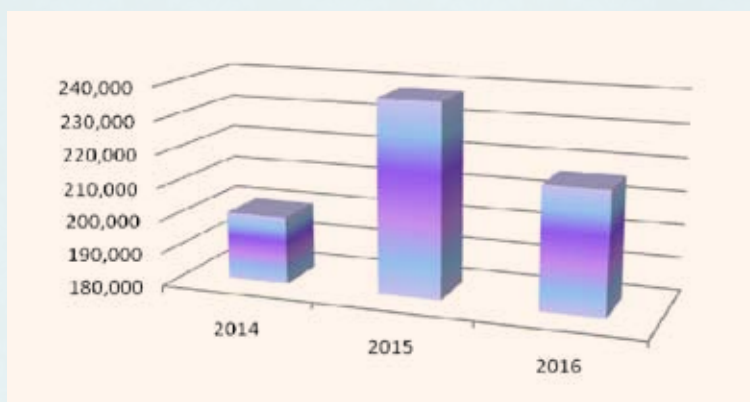
As for the students with disabilities, the formal education is provided by Inclusive Schools, Special Schools, and Welfare Schools. According to the Office of the Basic Education Commission, the students with disabilities are divided into nine types comprising children with visual impairments; hearing impairments; mental impairments; physical/health impairments; learning disabilities; verbal impairments; autism; behavioural/emotional disorders; and multiple disabilities.



In the academic year 2016, the numbers of students with disabilities, at pre-primary to upper secondary levels, in Inclusive, Special, and Welfare Schools under the supervision of the Office of the Basic Education Commission were 216,719, 12,936, and 4,097 respectively. Most students studying in Inclusive Schools were learning-disabled children which numbered 155,080. Three other major groups of students with disabilities included those with mental impairments (22,925), multiple disabilities (10,190), and physical/health impairments (8,221).

During the academic years 2014-2016, the number of students with disabilities in Inclusive Schools which were greater than the Special schools were 200,499; 238,063; and 216,719 respectively (Figure 7.5).

**Figure 7.5** Number of Students with Disabilities in Inclusive Schools (Academic Years 2014-2016)



*Source: Office of the Basic Education Commission*

In the Special Schools under the Office of the Basic Education Commission, most of the students with disabilities were boarders as shown in Figure 7.6.

**Figure 7.6** Number of Students with Disabilities in Special Schools (Academic Years 2014-2016)



**Source:** *Special Education Bureau, Office of the Basic Education Commission (2014-2016)*

**Remark:** *The data of 2016 is as of June 10, 2016.*

Apart from formal education for students with disabilities, non-formal education for children with disabilities is also provided by the Special Education Centres. The Special Education Centres, under the supervision of the Office of the Basic Education Commission, are situated in all provinces of Thailand, providing early intervention services for children with disabilities. A number of the students taken care by the Special Education Centres were 24,061 nationwide.

The satisfactory increase in number during the academic years 2014-2016 represents an achievement of the Government in promoting the right to education of disabled students. Furthermore, the enactment of the *Persons with Disabilities Education Act B.E. 2551 (2008)* promotes equality of access to quality education for people with all levels of disability.

### 7.3 Access to Higher Education

Access to higher education is essential for economic and social development of the country. Higher education is deemed important for the role of producing highly skilled manpower for modern economic development in Thailand.



Currently, the higher education institutions have a higher number of available places than the number of upper secondary graduates. As shown in Table 7.8, student enrolment in higher education institutions, including those in open universities, witnessed the fluctuation of total number during the academic years 2011 to 2015.



**Table 7.8 Student Enrolment in Higher Education Institutions (Academic Years 2011-2015)**

| Levels of Education     | Academic Years   |                  |                  |                  |                  |
|-------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
|                         | 2011             | 2012             | 2013             | 2014             | 2015             |
| Diploma                 | 351,682          | 323,380          | 316,288          | 312,770          | 344,377          |
| Undergraduate           | 1,825,066        | 1,845,253        | 1,881,816        | 1,843,477        | 1,851,653        |
| Graduate Diploma        | 13,434           | 5,409            | 5,399            | 3,829            | 7,788            |
| Master Degree           | 183,858          | 193,638          | 200,304          | 188,327          | 179,245          |
| Higher Graduate Diploma | 1,245            | 1,227            | 1,442            | 1,523            | 1,438            |
| Doctorate               | 18,190           | 21,636           | 25,394           | 24,487           | 24,742           |
| <b>Total</b>            | <b>2,393,475</b> | <b>2,390,543</b> | <b>2,430,643</b> | <b>2,374,413</b> | <b>2,409,243</b> |

*Source: Thailand Education Statistics Reports (2011-2015), OEC*

### **7.3.1 Participation in Higher Education of Students with Disabilities**

The Office of the Higher Education Commission promulgated the national policy on education for students with disabilities in higher education institutions in 2004. This policy aimed to provide equal opportunity for students with disabilities to get access to higher education by encouraging universities to put in place an educational support service system to facilitate study for those students.

In 2009, the Committee on the Education Promotion for Persons with Disabilities issued the *Regulations on the Promotion of Education for Persons with Disabilities* to ensure that all persons with disabilities would be able to receive education up to university level free of charge, but not higher

than bachelor degree level. As such, the Ministry of Education has coordinated with both public and private universities to work out the requirements for enrolling persons with disabilities starting from the academic year 2010. In accordance with such regulations, tuition fees and other education-related expenses are sponsored by the Government. In the academic year 2014, 1,407 students with disabilities registered to receive grants for tuition fees and other expenses.

To put the policy into practice, the Office of the Higher Education Commission has initiated the *Project on Educational Administration for Persons with Disabilities at Higher Education Level*. A series of activities has been implemented including the creation of a database system classifying students with disabilities studying in all higher education institutions, the establishment of Disability Support Service Centres (DSS Centre), and the formulation of a quota system in the universities. As a result of the project's initiatives, DSS Centres were established in 18 universities in 2008 and increased to 33 by 2014 with the key role being to serve as information and services centres for disabled students attending the universities. Table 7.9 shows the number of students with disabilities in higher education institutions.

**Table 7.9 Number of Students with Disabilities in Higher Education Institutions (Academic Years 2011-2014)**

| <b>Types of Students with Disabilities</b>                             | <b>2011</b>  | <b>2012</b>  | <b>2013</b>  | <b>2014</b>  |
|--|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Students with hearing impairments                                      | 568          | 591          | 571          | 504          |
| Students with communication impairments (speech or language disorders) | 44           | 79           | 86           | 80           |
| Students with visual impairments                                       | 1,685        | 1,650        | 1,427        | 1,462        |
| Students with physical impairments                                     | 898          | 1,100        | 1,664        | 1,032        |
| Students with intellectual impairments                                 | 124          | 137          | 136          | 113          |
| Students with multiple impairments                                     | 312          | 278          | 303          | 219          |
| Students with learning disabilities                                    | 34           | 100          | 100          | 96           |
| Students with psychological or behavioural disabilities                | 41           | 41           | 39           | 46           |
| Students with autism   | 69           | 73           | 85           | 77           |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>3,775</b> | <b>4,049</b> | <b>4,411</b> | <b>3,629</b> |

*Source: Higher Educational Information (2011-2014), Office of the Higher Education Commission*

## 7.4 Non-Formal Education: Access and Progression

Apart from formal education which consists of basic education, higher education and vocational education, Thailand also provides education for adults or students who have missed out on the opportunity to enrol in the formal education system. In Thailand, non-formal education is more than simply another form of education provider, rather it is the foundation for lifelong learning. Its main mission is to encourage Thai citizens of all ages, sexes, and levels of education to continue learning throughout their life.

As an education provider, non-formal education provides four main types of education for Thai citizens, namely: Functional Literacy Programme, Education Provision in Highlands, Continuing Literacy Education, and Vocational Education and Training. These types of education are provided by various agencies apart from the Office of the Non-Formal and Informal Education as shown in Table 7.10.

**Table 7.10 Students in Non-Formal Education Programmes, Classified by Level and Type of Education (Academic Years 2011-2015)**

| Levels and Types of Education       | Academic Years |           |           |           |           |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|                                     | 2011           | 2012      | 2013      | 2014      | 2015      |
| 1. Functional Literacy Programme    | 145,066        | 189,667   | 269,146   | 762,888   | 301,473   |
| 2. Education Provision in Highlands | 68,216         | 122,787   | 81,902    | 169,433   | 90,840    |
| 3. Continuing Literacy Education    | 1,309,033      | 2,445,811 | 1,652,554 | 2,188,302 | 1,239,311 |
| 3.1 Primary                         | 141,068        | 299,480   | 191,151   | 211,003   | 116,117   |
| 3.2 Secondary                       | 1,167,965      | 2,146,331 | 1,461,403 | 1,977,299 | 1,123,194 |

**Table 7.10 Students in Non-Formal Education Programmes,  
Classified by Level and Type of Education  
(Academic Years 2011-2015) (Continued)**

| Levels and Types<br>of Education   | Academic Years   |                  |                  |                  |                  |
|--|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
|  | 2011             | 2012             | 2013             | 2014             | 2015             |
| 4. Vocational Education/<br>Training   | 3,811,711        | 3,292,695        | 4,593,687        | 3,911,972        | 4,047,211        |
| - <i>Special Courses (Office of the Vocational Education Commission)</i>                     | 1,160,069        | 900,311          | 1,161,962        | 724,018          | 1,065,485        |
| - <i>Vocational Education Programmes (Office of the Private Education Commission)</i>        | 1,029,777        | 782,517          | 885,479          | 822,708          | 1,065,485        |
| - <i>Vocational Short - Course Training Programmes (Bangkok Metropolitan Administration)</i> | 22,234           | 19,846           | 14,678           | 18,939           | 19,776           |
| - <i>Community Colleges (Short Course Training) (Office the Higher Education Commission)</i> | 29,779           | 17,903           | 24,726           | 23,139           | 21,053           |
| - <i>Vocational Education Programmes (Office of the Non-Formal and Informal Education)</i>   | 1,569,852        | 1,572,118        | 2,506,842        | 2,323,168        | 1,875,182        |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>5,334,026</b> | <b>6,050,960</b> | <b>6,597,289</b> | <b>7,032,595</b> | <b>5,678,835</b> |

**Source:** Thailand Education Statistics Reports (2011-2015), Office of the Education Council

**Remarks:** The number of students of the programmes provided by the Office of the Non-Formal and Informal Education was retrieved only in the 1<sup>st</sup> semester of the academic year 2015.

# Chapter 8

## Outcomes of Education and Learning

Various efforts and initiatives have been undertaken at both policy and planning levels as well as at institutional or grassroots level and have resulted in significant progress in the system and management of education as mentioned earlier. The outcomes of education and learning of Thai people are presented here in terms of graduation from school, educational attainment, labour force participation, and promotion of highly skilled human resources.



## 8.1 Graduation from School

Thailand has witnessed satisfactory outcomes with regard to graduation rates for some education levels. When compared to the academic year 2010, there was, in the academic year 2014, a positive increase in the number of graduates at higher education level. As for the diminishing graduation rate at primary level, this can be attributed to a change in demographic patterns with an increase in single child families or even from schools with no children. (Table 8.1)

**Table 8.1 Number of Graduates by Level of Education (Academic Years 2010-2014)**

| Levels of Education       | Academic Years |                  |                |                |                |
|---------------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
|                           | 2010           | 2011             | 2012           | 2013           | 2014           |
| <b>Primary</b>            | <b>828,347</b> | <b>1,054,951</b> | <b>802,220</b> | <b>776,561</b> | <b>780,501</b> |
| <b>Lower Secondary</b>    | <b>718,697</b> | <b>824,122</b>   | <b>757,276</b> | <b>705,107</b> | <b>707,653</b> |
| <b>Upper Secondary</b>    | <b>497,212</b> | <b>563,039</b>   | <b>570,343</b> | <b>635,258</b> | <b>609,754</b> |
| - General Education       | 320,026        | 379,281          | 388,383        | 439,917        | 423,519        |
| - Vocational Education    | 177,186        | 183,758          | 181,960        | 195,341        | 186,235        |
| <b>Higher Education</b>   | <b>371,936</b> | <b>435,919</b>   | <b>358,434</b> | <b>369,044</b> | <b>410,397</b> |
| - Lower-than-Degree       | 122,116        | 129,025          | 135,288        | 119,049        | 132,609        |
| - Bachelor's Degree       | 207,290        | 255,164          | 189,134        | 174,628        | 249,359        |
| - Graduate Diploma        | 7,038          | 8,253            | 5,304          | 49,530         | 2,420          |
| - Master's Degree         | 32,595         | 41,358           | 27,340         | 24,362         | 24,397         |
| - Higher Graduate Diploma | 971            | 195              | 50             | 155            | 195            |
| - Doctorate Degree        | 1,926          | 1,924            | 1,318          | 1,320          | 1,417          |

*Source: Thailand Education Statistics Reports (2011-2015), Office of the Education Council*



Demand in Thailand for an increase in the number of qualified workers with appropriate skills and basic knowledge indicates an urgent need to enhance the quality of vocational education and training as well as the number of students in vocational education. Nevertheless, between the academic years 2011-2014 the number of students in vocational education in both the formal and non-formal types slightly declined consecutively as shown in Table 8.2. This slight fall shows that the majority of students still chose to pursue a general stream of upper secondary study in order to enter university.

However, there was a slight increase of the number in the academic year 2015 because of the Government's great effort to promote the good image of vocational education and to persuade Thai students to enter upper secondary education in the vocational stream.



**Table 8.2** Number of Students in Vocational Education, Classified by Level of Education (Academic Years 2011- 2015)

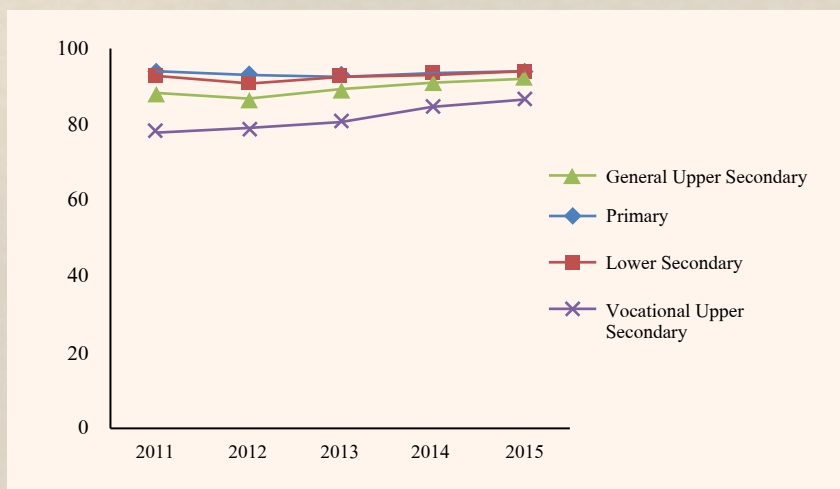
| Levels of Education      | Academic Years   |                  |                  |                |                |
|--------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|
|                          | 2011             | 2012             | 2013             | 2014           | 2015           |
| Certificate (Vocational) | 739,526          | 727,097          | 699,029          | 667,944        | 654,476        |
| Diploma                  | 350,269          | 308,116          | 301,566          | 299,547        | 331,713        |
| Higher Diploma           | 1,674            | 425              | 1,266            | 1,266          | 3,703          |
| <b>Total</b>             | <b>1,091,469</b> | <b>1,035,638</b> | <b>1,001,861</b> | <b>968,757</b> | <b>989,892</b> |

*Source:* Thailand Education Statistic Reports (2011-2015), Office of the Education Council



During the academic years 2011-2015, the retention rates at the level of basic education increased gradually as shown in Figure 8.1. This positive phenomenon resulted from the free basic education policy which increased opportunities in education with quality for all students at the basic education level.

**Figure 8.1 Retention Rates in Basic Education  
(Academic Years 2011-2015)**



**Source:** *Thailand Education Statistic Reports (2011-2015), Office of the Education Council*

As for the figure above, the number of the vocational upper secondary students in certificate and diploma programmes were likely to increased continually, from 78.1 percent in 2011 to 86.7 percent in 2015.

However, according to the research conducted in 2013 by the Labour Market Research Division under the Department of Employment, Ministry of Labour, approximately 8.95 and 14.16 percent of students completing vocational certificate or diploma courses entered the labour market directly thereafter. Most students furthered their study at bachelor's level due to more positive social attitudes regarding university study as well as with hopes for a better future career. This situation has resulted in a shortage of skilled workers in the industrial sector.

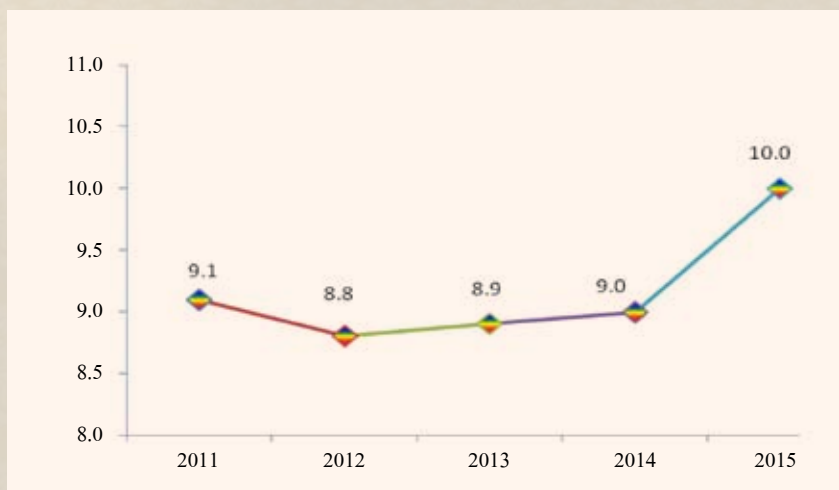


## 8.2 Educational Attainment of Thai People

The average number of years of education for Thais aged 15-59 have increased gradually between the academic years 2012-2015. As displayed in Figure 8.2, the average number of years of education for Thais aged 15-59 extended beyond the primary level as a result of greater efforts to provide both formal and non-formal education to all people.



**Figure 8.2** The Average Years of Education of Thai People Aged 15-59 (Academic Years 2011-2015)



**Source:** *Educational Research and Development Bureau, Office of the Education Council*

However, Table 8.3 shows that the vast majority of employed people had low levels of education, namely below the primary level. Furthermore, the percentage of employed persons with secondary or higher education from 2011 to 2015 rose gradually.



**Table 8.3 Percentages of Employed Persons by Level of Educational Attainment (2011-2015)**

| Levels of Educational Attainment                     | Years        |              |              |              |              |
|--|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
|  | 2011         | 2012         | 2013         | 2014         | 2015         |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>100.0</b> | <b>100.0</b> | <b>100.0</b> | <b>100.0</b> | <b>100.0</b> |
| None   | 2.9          | 3.3          | 3.2          | 3.4          | 3.3          |
| Below Primary  | 27.8         | 25.7         | 22.5         | 21.9         | 21.7         |
| Primary  | 22.6         | 22.9         | 25.1         | 22.8         | 22.1         |
| Lower Secondary                                      | 15.8         | 16.6         | 16.6         | 16           | 15.7         |
| General Upper Secondary                              | 10.8         | 11.1         | 11.7         | 11.6         | 12.2         |
| Vocational Upper Secondary                           | 3.3          | 3.3          | 3.2          | 3.5          | 3.6          |
| Teacher Training Upper Secondary                     | 0.0          | 0.0          | 0.1          | 0.0          | 0.0          |
| Academic Higher Education                            | 9.4          | 9.7          | 10.2         | 12.8         | 13.1         |
| Higher Technical Education                           | 5.1          | 5.3          | 5.2          | 5.1          | 5.4          |
| Higher Teacher Training                              | 2.0          | 1.7          | 1.8          | 2.0          | 1.9          |
| Others ( <i>including Vocational Short Courses</i> ) | 0.1          | 0.1          | 0.1          | 0.3          | 0.3          |
| Unknown  | 0.2          | 0.4          | 0.5          | 0.6          | 0.5          |

*Source: Reports of the Labour Force Survey, Whole Kingdom: Quarter 3 (July-September 2011, July-September 2012, July-September 2013, July-September 2014, and July-September 2015)*



### **8.3 Labour Force Participation**

The labour force participation rates based on educational attainment can be used to indicate the extent to which the education system has succeeded in meeting the minimum requirements of the labour market.

For these years from 2011 to 2015, the percentage of the population aged 15 and over in the work force was 70.4, 73.0, 71.6, 70.7, and 70.1 respectively. Based on data provided by the National Statistical Office, Table 8.4 shows that the level of education after which people were most interested in joining the work force was higher education, especially for those with higher academic education. Those who had completed below primary and lower secondary levels seemed to be more interested in continuing education rather than taking up employment.

**Table 8.4 Labour Force Participation Rates by Level of Educational Attainment (2011-2015)**

| Levels of Educational Attainment            | Years       |             |             |             |             |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
|   | 2011        | 2012        | 2013        | 2014        | 2015        |
| <b>Total</b>                                | <b>70.4</b> | <b>73.0</b> | <b>71.6</b> | <b>70.7</b> | <b>70.1</b> |
| None  | 49.6        | 52.3        | 49.4        | 52.3        | 51.7        |
| Below Primary                               | 69.5        | 67.3        | 66.7        | 63.1        | 61.1        |
| Primary                                     | 83.6        | 82.8        | 78.3        | 79.3        | 78.7        |
| Lower Secondary                             | 63.3        | 64.5        | 63.8        | 63.2        | 62.8        |
| General Upper Secondary                     | 74.6        | 73.3        | 72.1        | 69.3        | 69.4        |
| Vocational Upper Secondary                  | 70.0        | 72.1        | 72.1        | 73.0        | 72.9        |
| Teacher Training Upper Secondary            | 51.6        | 60.5        | 80.1        | 69.4        | 56.7        |
| Academic Higher Education                   | 88.1        | 88.1        | 87.3        | 86.1        | 86.3        |
| Higher Technical Education                  | 85.3        | 86.8        | 86.8        | 85.3        | 86.1        |
| Higher Teacher Training                     | 82.2        | 81.5        | 80.5        | 78.7        | 75.9        |
| Others (Including Vocational Short Courses) | 85.4        | 84.9        | 76.8        | 92.4        | 92.6        |
| Unknown                                     | 78.5        | 79.3        | 64.9        | 81.8        | 79.7        |

*Source: Reports of the Labour Force Survey, Whole Kingdom: Quarter 3 (July-September 2011, July-September 2012, July-September 2013, July-September 2014, and July-September 2015)*

Labour force participation rates were highest among those who had completed higher education. The underlying reason for this is financial incentive which is greater for individuals with higher qualifications since earnings tend to increase with educational attainment. In addition, academically qualified individuals often work in more interesting and stimulating jobs, and hold positions of higher responsibility, which increases their motivation to remain in the labour force.

Participation rates were high among those who had completed primary education since job opportunities for unskilled workers could easily be found in the agricultural sector which is still important for the economy of Thailand.

#### **8.4 Promotion of Highly Skilled Human Resources**

People with higher educational attainment tend to possess skills needed by the labour market. Highly skilled workers are essential to the national economic development and Thailand's competitiveness in the global context, especially in this knowledge-based era. The Government is promoting vocational training and community colleges to develop a skilled labour force, especially in localities in need of skilled labour. It also hopes to raise standards of education to meet the standards required by professional bodies.

The Eleventh National Economic and Social Development Plan (2012-2016) sets out guidelines for labour force development as follows:

- 1) Developing labour force in agricultural sector by providing education for new generations of agriculturists capable of utilising comprehensive knowledge and technology in agriculture;



- 2) Promoting production and development of researchers, innovators in various fields as well as establishing researcher networks at both the national and international levels;
- 3) Developing semi-skilled labour through education provision based on the theory of learning for intellectual creativity, as well as fostering motivation and the value of vocational education and independent jobs;
- 4) Preparing the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) which has established linkages between learning outcomes of education and training and vocational qualifications based on competency levels with the aim of ensuring competencies and clear career paths;
- 5) Preparing Thai people for free labour mobilisation;
- 6) Improving transnational labour force management; and
- 7) Creating systematic and continuous human resource planning and development in public organisation.

Concerned agencies are making considerable efforts to adapt relevant curricula in education, training, and retraining to equip their staff with appropriate skills and competencies to sustain the competitiveness of Thai industries and quality of life. The idea is to move the Thai economy away from low skilled labour-intensive production towards value-added and competitive industries based on identity, managerial expertise and higher technical skills of workers.



Formal, non-formal, informal education and intensive training provide basic, general and specialised skills and are key strategies to enhance competencies, quality and productivity of the workforce as well as to improve quality of life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In this regard, several concerned agencies have also implemented numerous policies and projects to prepare qualified

people through education in response to increasing demand for highly skilled workers.

The Office of the Vocational Education Commission (OVEC) has proposed a policy relating to goals and strategies for producing and developing manpower through vocational education to meet the international demand for the period 2012-2026 as follows:

- 1) Increasing the number of students in vocational education;
- 2) Promoting opportunities for students to access vocational education and professional training;
- 3) Upgrading the quality of vocational education; and
- 4) Increasing efficiency in administration.

At present, to develop manpower through vocational education to meet the country's development strategy, the Office of the Vocational Education Commission is conducting various activities as illustrated below:

1) Project on Vocational Education towards International Standards: the Office of the Vocational Education Commission is studying the best practices of vocational education in renowned industrialised countries, such as, Germany, Singapore, China, Japan, and the United Kingdom and is applying them in 25 participating vocational institutions.

2) Vocational bachelor's degree in Vocational Education Institutions: 19 Vocational Education Institutions and four Agricultural Vocational Education Institutions were established by the amalgamation of some vocational colleges in each part of the country.

3) Provision of bilateral vocational education: The Office of the Vocational Education Commission has prepared the *Announcement of the Ministry of Education on Standards of Provision of Bilateral Vocational Education* used in pilot

vocational colleges providing bilateral vocational education. Provision of bilateral vocational education takes place with cooperation between vocational schools or colleges and the private sector with a view to producing skilled manpower for market needs in Thailand and other countries.

The Office of the Higher Education Commission has launched the university-industry linkage comprising two outstanding initiatives which aimed at preparing highly skilled human resources in response to increased demand for highly skilled workers in the labour market. As a planning and policy making agency, the Office of the Education Council (OEC), Ministry of Education is responsible for the preparation of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and its compatibility with ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework (AQRF).

The establishment of NQF was proposed by the Office of the Education Council and approved by the Council of Ministers in 2013. The NQF consists of nine levels and each level is described by level descriptor based on learning outcome, defined by 1) knowledge, 2) skills, and 3) desirable characteristics.

NQF structure comprises three components; the first, being qualification component and level; the second, connecting and benchmarking mechanisms; and finally, learning outcome according to education qualification levels.

NQF is designed to facilitate regional worker and student mobility, since the number of such is expected to increase sharply in the near future. Recently, the Thai government signed an agreement with a number of other ASEAN countries in order to establish a mutual qualifications framework based on the imminent inauguration of the ASEAN Economic Community. However, this task of harmonising qualification frameworks at all levels has not been easy.

For the preparation on AQRf, the Office of the Education Council has established partnerships with relevant authorities in Thailand in order to put NQF into practice and also to compare it with AQRf i.e. Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Tourism and Sports, Thailand Professional Qualification Institute (TPQI), Office of the Vocational Education Commission, and Office of the Higher Education Commission. A working plan has been developed for AQRf with reference to both the national and regional levels.

The Office of the Education Council is the focal point of the Task Force on ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework (TF-AQRf). The Task Force agreed on the working time frame starting from 2016 to 2018. However, this time frame is rather tentative because there might be some factors affecting such working period, namely, a larger number of issues for consideration, the status of cooperation amongst member states, and their diverse contexts that might affect their readiness. The objectives of TF-AQRf are to conduct research on NQF implementation, which will be developed into operation plans, and to design the reference framework that connects that of education and profession qualifications in Thailand in accordance with NQF.

The Ministry of Education appointed two boards for setting AQRf into practice, namely, the Advisory Board for Mobilising NQF and the Board for the Implementation of NQF. These Boards have responsibilities in determining framework for putting NQF into practice by integrating works of related organisations and also determining guidelines for the compatibility of NQF to AQRf.

# Chapter 9

## **International Education and International Cooperation in Education**

During the last decades, international education has become a growing business as a result of the globalisation and liberalisation process that has facilitated the free flow of cross-border education. Consequently, agencies involved in the provision of education must improve quality to compete in the international arena. At the same time, international cooperation in education is essential to educational development in the entire country.

As for the education sector, international cooperation is a tool that every country uses to seek, explore and share educational innovation, information and knowledge, as well as establishing partnerships. In addition, it plays an important role in the global arena because of its connection to the determination and achievement of the goals of international organisation towards the development of education quality, such as the Millennium Development Goal of the United Nations (UN), the

Education for All of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), and recently the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. The Thai Government through the Ministry of Education recognises the importance of international cooperation in education for society and participates in international commitment to education in order to acknowledge the situation and inform an international audience of the potential and efficiency of Thai Education. In so doing, it cooperates with foreign countries and international organisations in the development of the quality of Thai education.

## **9.1 International Education**

Cross border education has been and will continue to be on the rise in the future in order to cope with the global demand for new generations of workers who are able to function well in an international environment and cross-cultural community, and for greater mobility of professionals across borders. Countries around the world, as a result, are keen to develop their international education potential and promote it globally.

International education in Thailand has gained international recognition over decades. Remarkably, Thai educational institutions have attracted an increasing number of international students both at basic and higher education levels.

Several public and private agencies are involved in promoting international education services in Thailand. These include the Office of the Private Education Commission, the Office of the Higher Education Commission, the Department of Trade Negotiations, and the International Schools Association of Thailand.

A small number of international schools in Thailand use both Chinese and English as medium of instruction. However, English is mainly used as the medium of instruction at basic education level in international schools and at higher education level through international programmes offered by several universities in Thailand.

To cope with competition from international/cross border/transnational education, and the number of students and teachers as well as professionals in neighbouring countries, Thailand, through the Ministry of Education has devised policies and strategic plans for strengthening and empowering the educational personnel and institutions. In global terms, the Ministry of Education through the Office of the Education Council is preparing policy guidelines for the administration and management of transnational education in Thailand, while in regional terms, especially regarding ASEAN, the Ministry of Education has issued the *ASEAN Educational Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Education* to promote understanding, gain proficiency in languages, develop closer relations, maintain pace with technology, and create a spirit of cohesion within ASEAN from 2015-2019. In the Strategy No. 5 of the Strategic Plan, its stated aim is to “develop relevant mechanisms to facilitate the mobility and exchange”, and in the Sub-Strategy No. 5.2, its aim is to “develop standards, regulations, guidelines, and laws to facilitate mobility and exchanges of ASEAN students and workers”.

### **9.1.1 International Schools Providing Basic Education**

International schools providing basic education in Thailand are under the supervision of the Office of the Private Education Commission. Policies, rules, regulations, and standards for the establishment of international schools or colleges are set by the Ministry of Education in accordance with the Council of Ministers’ resolutions.



The main educational systems offered at international schools in Thailand are: the American Curriculum, the British Curriculum, the International Baccalaureate Curriculum, and other national curricula. The number of international schools in Thailand has gradually increased from 133 schools in the academic year 2011 to 161 schools in the academic year 2015. Among these, 95 international schools are located in Bangkok and the rest in other provinces. (Table 9.1)

**Table 9.1 Number of International Schools Providing Basic Education (Academic Years 2011-2015)**

| Academic Years | Number of International Schools |                 |       |
|----------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|-------|
|                | Bangkok                         | Other Provinces | Total |
| 2011           | 88                              | 45              | 133   |
| 2012           | 91                              | 47              | 138   |
| 2013           | 93                              | 50              | 143   |
| 2014           | 95                              | 59              | 154   |
| 2015           | 95                              | 66              | 161   |

*Source: Office of the Private Education Commission*

As revealed by the Office of the Private Education Commission, in the academic year 2015, there were 161 international schools employing 6,898 international teachers in Thailand. (Table 9.2)

**Table 9.2 Number of International Teachers in Basic Education (Academic Years 2011-2015)**

| Academic Years | Number of International Teachers |                 |       |
|----------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|-------|
|                | Bangkok                          | Other Provinces | Total |
| 2011           | 2,971                            | 1,633           | 4,604 |
| 2012           | 4,068                            | 1,888           | 5,956 |
| 2013           | 2,020                            | 4,156           | 6,176 |
| 2014           | 4,471                            | 2,081           | 6,552 |
| 2015           | 4,247                            | 2,651           | 6,898 |

*Source: Office of the Private Education Commission*

The Ministry of Education gave full power to educational institutions for the engagement of foreign teachers; however, the qualifications of teachers are required to meet regulations issued by the Ministry. All foreign teachers possessing eligible qualifications and teaching experience that meet the criteria are accepted but he/she must not be aged over 60 years, and if the school needs to hire an international teacher aged more than 60 years, the school must send a requesting memo to the Ministry of Education for approval. Foreign teachers aged over 70 years are not accepted.

Table 9.3 shows the number of international students in Thailand between the academic years 2011–2015. From the table, it can be seen that Thailand has an increasing number of international students year on year from 33,048 in 2011 to 44,497 in 2015.

**Table 9.3 Number of International Students Receiving Basic Education (Academic Years 2011-2015)**

| Academic Years | Number of International Students |                 |        |
|----------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|--------|
|                | Bangkok                          | Other Provinces | Total  |
| 2011           | 22,879                           | 10,169          | 33,048 |
| 2012           | 24,052                           | 11,384          | 35,436 |
| 2013           | 29,123                           | 12,901          | 42,024 |
| 2014           | 30,206                           | 13,261          | 43,467 |
| 2015           | 27,257                           | 17,240          | 44,497 |

**Source:** 1) *Office of the Private Education Commission*

2) *Office of the Education Council*

3) *International Schools Association of Thailand (ISAT)*

The International Schools Association of Thailand (ISAT), which was established in 1994, currently has 128 international schools as its members. The quality of education offered in member schools of this association has been recognised by accreditation organisations such as the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, the Council of International Schools and CfBT Education Trust. The ISAT member schools offer a range of curricula including American, British, International Baccalaureate and other national curricula such as French, Swiss, Singaporean, Japanese and Korean.

### **9.1.2 International Programmes in Higher Education Institutions**

Thai public and private higher education institutions offer a wide variety of international programmes in many disciplines both at undergraduate and graduate levels as well as certificate programmes. In addition to a university's own qualified faculties, students gain broader perspectives from adjunct business professionals, leading in-country and overseas experts, and visiting professors from the world's leading universities.

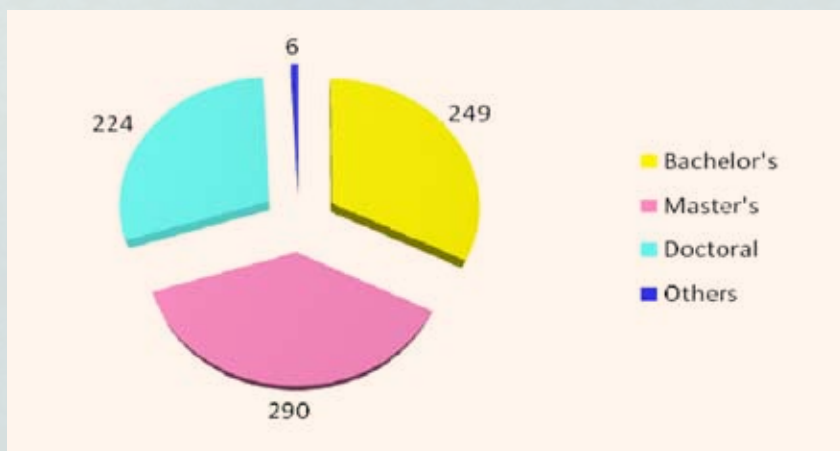
Many programmes are delivered in collaboration with the world's most renowned universities and provide an opportunity for students to gain learning and living experiences both in Thailand and abroad. Some of the programmes offer double degrees. Examples of those programmes are an MBA Programme offered by Sasin Graduate Institute of Business Administration of Chulalongkorn University in partnership with the Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management and the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania; M.Sc. and Ph.D. Programmes in Engineering offered by Sirindhorn International Thai-German Graduate School of Engineering (TGGS) - a joint institution established by RWTH Aachen University in Germany, one of Europe's top ranking universities and King Mongkut's University of Technology North Bangkok; undergraduate double degree programmes in Tropical Agriculture and International Trade co-offered by Kasetsart University and Victoria University of Technology, Australia, and in Aerospace Engineering and Business Administration co-offered by Kasetsart University and Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, Australia.

The number of international programmes continues to increase to accommodate the needs of both Thai and foreign students. International colleges has been established in several universities to administer the provision of international education and provide necessary support services for foreign students. Most of the universities provide accommodation for their students. On-campus accommodation allows students to live within the university vicinity, giving them opportunities to interact with one another and participate in various on-campus social activities.

Electronic linkages and information services are well-equipped in all public and private higher education institutions both in central and provincial regions. The Inter-University Network (UniNet) was adopted to link all university library systems together for prompt and effective exchanges of resources, and to provide national and international education network services to enable Thai higher education institutions to learn from and share with national and overseas higher education institutions through tele-education, tele-medicine, and tele-meeting. UniNet currently connects most higher education institutions with local internet and global internet, Internet 2, STAR TAP, and APAN that cover 1,000 universities worldwide.

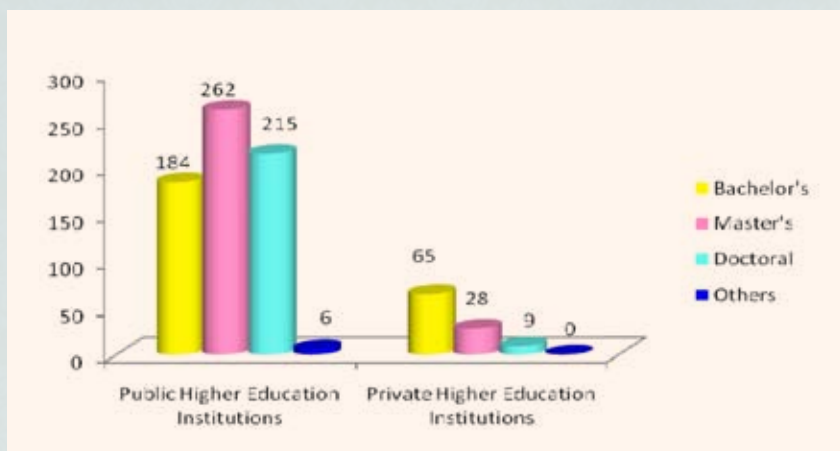
In 2014, both Thai public and private higher education institutions offered a total of 769 international programmes using English as the medium of instruction at undergraduate and graduate levels, i.e. 249 undergraduate programmes, 290 master's degree programmes, 224 doctoral degree programmes, and six other degree programmes. Foreign and Thai students can take courses for credits from those programmes. (Figures 9.1, 9.2 and Table 9.2)

**Figure 9.1 Number of International Programmes, Classified by Level of Study (Academic Year 2014)**



*Source: Study in Thailand 2014, Office of the Higher Education Commission*

**Figure 9.2 Number of International Programmes, Classified by Type of Institution (Academic Year 2014)**



*Source: Study in Thailand 2014, Office of the Higher Education Commission*

**Table 9.4 Number of International Programmes during Years 2007-2014**

| Degree Levels | 2007       | 2008       | 2010       | 2012         | 2013         | 2014       |
|---------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|--------------|------------|
| Bachelor's    | 277        | 296        | 342        | 344          | 335          | 249        |
| Master's      | 327        | 350        | 389        | 394          | 436          | 290        |
| Doctoral      | 220        | 215        | 225        | 249          | 247          | 224        |
| Others        | 20         | 23         | 25         | 30           | 26           | 6          |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>844</b> | <b>884</b> | <b>981</b> | <b>1,017</b> | <b>1,044</b> | <b>768</b> |

*Source: Study in Thailand 2014, Office of the Higher Education Commission*

### **9.1.3 Foreign Students in Thai Higher Education Institutions**

In 2013, the Office of the Higher Education Commission conducted a survey on enrolment of foreign students in Thai higher education institutions. The result of the survey revealed that 18,814 foreign students were enrolled in 105 Thai higher education institutions as shown in Table 9.5.

**Table 9.5 Top Ten Universities for Foreign Students Studying in Thailand (Academic Years 2011-2013)**

| No. | 2011                                       |       | 2012                               |       | 2013                                       |       |
|-----|--|-------|------------------------------------|-------|--|-------|
|     | Institutions                               | Total | Institutions                       | Total | Institutions                               | Total |
| 1.  | Assumption University                      | 4,179 | Assumption University              | 2,661 | Assumption University                      | 2,912 |
| 2.  | Mahachulalongkorn Rajavidyalaya University | 1,276 | Mahidol University                 | 1,186 | Mahidol University                         | 1,328 |
| 3.  | Mahidol University                         | 1,233 | Chulalongkorn University           | 725   | Mahachulalongkorn Rajavidyalaya University | 1,187 |
| 4.  | Ramkhamhaeng University                    | 1,004 | Kasem Bundit University            | 598   | Khon Kaen University                       | 942   |
| 5.  | Dhurakij Pundit University                 | 625   | Bangkok University                 | 567   | Chiang Rai Rajabhat University             | 730   |
| 6.  | Burapha University                         | 585   | Khon Kaen University               | 529   | Dhurakij Pundit University                 | 685   |
| 7.  | Chulalongkorn University                   | 560   | Huachiew Chalermprakiet University | 517   | Kasem Bundit University                    | 668   |
| 8.  | Chiang Rai Rajabhat University             | 521   | Thammasat University               | 486   | Chulalongkorn University                   | 665   |
| 9.  | Khon Kaen University                       | 515   | Mae Fah Luang University           | 470   | Thammasat University                       | 565   |
| 10. | Thammasat University                       | 475   | Chiang Rai Rajabhat University     | 446   | Siam University                            | 547   |

**Source:** *International Students Studying in Public and Private Higher Education Institutions Academic Year 2013, Office of the Higher Education Commission*



Table 9.6 below shows that the Business Administration is the most popular field among foreign students in Thailand while the other popular fields are Thai Language, International Business, Thai for Communication, Marketing, English Language, and Buddhist Studies.



**Table 9.6 Top Ten Fields of Study among Foreign Students Studying in Thailand  
(Academic Years 2011-2013)**

| No. | 2011                               |       | 2012                                       |       | 2013                      |       |
|-----|------------------------------------|-------|--|-------|---------------------------|-------|
|     | Fields of Study                    | Total | Fields of Study                            | Total | Fields of Study           | Total |
| 1.  | Business Administration            | 3,136 | Business Administration                    | 2,014 | Business Administration   | 2,564 |
| 2.  | International Business             | 1,212 | Thai Language                              | 987   | International Business    | 814   |
| 3.  | Thai Language                      | 1,180 | International Business                     | 914   | Thai Language             | 750   |
| 4.  | English Language                   | 740   | Thai for Communication                     | 550   | English Language          | 616   |
| 5.  | Marketing                          | 565   | Marketing                                  | 465   | Buddhist Studies          | 455   |
| 6.  | Thai for communication             | 500   | International Business Management          | 354   | Marketing                 | 389   |
| 7.  | Management                         | 601   | Communicative Thai Language for Foreigners | 341   | Management                | 367   |
| 8.  | Buddhism                           | 379   | English Language                           | 317   | Thai Studies              | 365   |
| 9.  | Business English                   | 344   | Management                                 | 311   | Business English          | 272   |
| 10. | Hospitality and Tourist Management | 333   | Business English                           | 256   | Thai Language and Culture | 240   |

**Source:** *International Students Studying in Public and Private Higher Education Institutions Academic Year 2013, Office of the Higher Education Commission*

Table 9.7 shows that for the academic years 2011 to 2013, Thailand had the highest number of Chinese students. Other foreign countries represented by a high number of students were those from ASEAN countries, such as, Myanmar, Lao PDR, Vietnam, and Cambodia respectively. It is noticeable that between the academic year 2011 and 2013, the number of American students jumped to fifth or sixth next to those from the aforesaid countries.



**Table 9.7 Countries with the Highest Number of Students Studying in Higher Education Institutions in Thailand (Academic Years 2011-2013)**

| No. | 2011       |       | 2012      |       | 2013      |       |
|-----|------------|-------|-----------|-------|-----------|-------|
|     | Countries  | Total | Countries | Total | Countries | Total |
| 1.  | China      | 8,444 | China     | 6,965 | China     | 6,663 |
| 2.  | Myanmar    | 1,481 | Myanmar   | 1,198 | Myanmar   | 1,610 |
| 3.  | Lao PDR    | 1,344 | Vietnam   | 980   | Lao PDR   | 1,372 |
| 4.  | Vietnam    | 1,290 | Lao PDR   | 833   | Vietnam   | 1,083 |
| 5.  | Cambodia   | 955   | USA       | 746   | Cambodia  | 1,018 |
| 6.  | USA        | 830   | Cambodia  | 645   | USA       | 774   |
| 7.  | Korea      | 601   | Korea     | 493   | Japan     | 686   |
| 8.  | India      | 375   | Bhutan    | 391   | Korea     | 553   |
| 9.  | Bangladesh | 374   | Japan     | 369   | Bhutan    | 454   |
| 10. | Japan      | 345   | Indonesia | 368   | Indonesia | 425   |

**Source:** *International Students Studying in Public and Private Higher Education Institutions Academic Year 2013, Office of the Higher Education Commission*

The number of foreign students studying at bachelor degree level dramatically decreased from 13,397 to 10,384 during the academic years 2011-2012 and saw a slight increase in the academic year 2013 because the information related to foreign students of some universities were not available. (Table 9.8)

**Table 9.8 Number of Foreign Students in Higher Education Institutions by Levels of Study (Academic Years 2009-2013)**

| Levels of Study  | Academic Years |               |               |               |               |
|------------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
|                  | 2009           | 2010          | 2011          | 2012          | 2013          |
| Certificate      | 2,613          | 2,078         | 1,722         | 1,488         | 1,218         |
| Bachelor         | 12,465         | 13,138        | 13,397        | 10,384        | 11,785        |
| Master           | 3,141          | 3,371         | 4,031         | 3,830         | 4,327         |
| Doctorate        | 459            | 656           | 667           | 721           | 985           |
| Graduate diploma | 192            | 56            | 12            | 196           | 99            |
| Others           | 182            | 352           | 480           | 380           | 400           |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>19,052</b>  | <b>20,115</b> | <b>20,309</b> | <b>16,999</b> | <b>18,814</b> |

*Source: International Students Studying in Public and Private Higher Education Institutions Academic Year 2013, Office of the Higher Education Commission*

## 9.2 International Cooperation in Education

The Ministry of Education, Thailand recognises the importance of international cooperation in education with the intention to improving the quality of education and personnel towards international standards. The Ministry of Education has put an emphasis on proactive action to build strong relationships with Ministries of Education in other countries both at regional and international levels. International cooperation in education of Thailand is currently being undertaken and can be classified into two forms of cooperation as follows:



### 9.2.1 Multilateral Cooperation

This kind of cooperation means that Thailand's Ministry of Education offers cooperation in education with more than one country at a time. This kind of cooperation mostly appears in the form of regional, international and country group cooperation efforts or participation in international organisations.

The Thai Ministry of Education cooperates with various regional and international organisations focusing on educational development. Outstanding international organisations and multilateral cooperation agreement which Thailand has entered into include with the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organisation (SEAMEO), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) as explained below:

***- The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA)***

The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) is an independent, international cooperative of national research institutions and governmental research agencies. It conducts large-scale comparative studies of educational achievement and other aspects of education, with the aim of gaining in-depth understanding of the effects of policies and practices within and across systems of education. The Office of the Education Council serves as the national centre for IEA, as approved by the Council of Ministers on November 21, 1978. As a national centre of IEA, the Office of the Education Council plays an important role in supporting Thai education agencies participating in student

achievement evaluation in various areas as a benchmark of Thai education in global community, such as Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), International Civic and Citizenship Education Study 2016 (ICCS), Early Childhood Education Study (ECES), and etc.

***- The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)***

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and Thailand has established cooperation in education for a long time since Thailand became a member in 1949. The Secretariat of the Thai National Commission for UNESCO was appointed by the Bureau of International Cooperation (formerly the External Relations Division) of the Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education. The Thai National Commission for UNESCO is chaired by the Minister of Education. UNESCO's Asia and the Pacific Regional Bureau for Education – based in Bangkok – has approved Thailand's working with the organisation as a partner in facilitating regional dialogues in the fields of education and culture. Cooperation in education between Thailand and UNESCO continues to focus on human capital development in line with the Eleventh National Economic and Social Development Plan (2012-2016). UNESCO offers support in the areas of policy development, advocacy, policy dialogue, and institutional capacity building. Thai policy-makers, researchers and practitioners have been involved in various UNESCO activities, such as research on equitable and quality learning, forward-looking research on emerging development trends, skills development and governance in education.



**- Southeast Asian Ministers of Education  
Organisation (SEAMEO)**

As a member country of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organisation (SEAMEO), the Thai Minister of Education will be a member of the SEAMEO Council together with the other 10 Southeast Asian countries. The SEAMEO Council is the organisation's highest policy-making body comprising the 11 Southeast Asian Education Ministers. SEAMEO is considered the largest regional grouping focusing on education, science and culture. The SEAMEO Secretariat operates through the Office of the Secretariat which is located in Bangkok, Thailand. The Bureau of International Cooperation, Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education of Thailand acts as the Secretariat of the Thai National Commission for SEAMEO. In 2015, the Minister of Education of Thailand was selected to be the President of the SEAMEO Council. The SEAMEO Council President assumes leadership in providing new directions and opening up of new avenues of collaboration. During May 6-9, 2015, the Ministry of Education, Thailand hosted the largest gathering of Education Ministers in Southeast Asia at the 48<sup>th</sup> SEAMEO Council Conference in Chonburi Province. The three-day conference was attended by the Ministers of Education and higher education officials from 11 SEAMEO member countries, representatives from SEAMEO associate member countries, SEAMEO affiliate members, SEAMEO Regional Centres, and international organisations/institutions.

**- Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)**

The Thai Ministry of Education takes part in collaborations with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) by attending annual forums and as a member of Senior Official Meeting on Education (SOM-ED). A very successful and

outstanding project for which the Thai Ministry in Education has joined with ASEAN is the ASEAN University Network (AUN). Five leading Thai universities are members of AUN which was established in November 1995 in response to the fourth ASEAN Summit's call to hasten development of the regional identity and solidarity, and to promote human resource development through strengthening the existing network of leading universities and higher education institutions in the region. AUN today plays an integral part in building the ASEAN Community, with a clear role to participate in the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community process. Thailand is host to the permanent office of the AUN Secretariat located at Chulalongkorn University. Currently, AUN consists of 30 leading universities from ASEAN member states. Since its inception, AUN has undertaken a wide range of activities both within ASEAN and with ASEAN Dialogue Partners. Participants of AUN activities include university students, lecturers, deans, and presidents from member universities.

#### **- *National Qualifications Framework (NQF)***

The Ministry of Education of Thailand, through the Office of the Education Council, hosted the International Conference on the Implementation of National Qualifications Framework (NQF): Policies and Strategies in Bangkok on April 27-28, 2011. The Office of the Education Council jointly organised the event with support from UNESCO Asia-Pacific Regional Bureau for Education (UNESCO Bangkok), the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, and Australian Education International (AEI). Participants from Thailand included high-level policy makers, administrators, educators, and representatives from the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour, the Federation of Thai Industries, the Thai Chamber of Commerce, and other leading industry clusters.

In addition, around sixty government officials and experts representing over 10 countries of the region, as well as bilateral and international development agencies and non-governmental institutions, also attended the event.

Apart from cooperation with international organisations and numerous countries in undertaking projects or participating in conferences, multilateral cooperation also includes technical assistance from international agencies such as World Bank, Asian Development Bank (ADB), Ford Foundation, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), International Development Research Centre, International Institute for Educational Planning, and etc.

### **9.2.2 Bilateral Cooperation**

This kind of cooperation means that Thailand's Ministry of Education has cooperation with foreign countries on a one-on-one basis. This kind of cooperation appears in the form of meetings, seminars or conferences between the two countries and the preparing of two-party agreements e.g. memorandums of understanding (MOUs) or frameworks of cooperation. To enhance international cooperation for educational development, Thailand has concluded mutual agreements on development of educational policy in the forms of meetings, seminars, conferences, and the preparing of agreements.

In addition, the bilateral cooperation can be in form of the education agreement which is a direction of cooperation between countries. It is used as the foundation for the implementation of cooperative projects and reflects the close relations between countries. Thailand and foreign countries have signed a number of cooperation agreements on education in a variety of forms e.g. MOUs, frameworks of cooperation, arrangements on education, and declarations of cooperation. To

date, Thailand, through the Ministry of Education has signed 26 education agreements with 16 countries including Australia, China, France, New Zealand, Cambodia, Japan, Vietnam, Germany, Laos, Myanmar, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, and India.

To promote better understanding and partnership in education between countries, the Ministry of Education of Thailand has established relationships between countries through cooperation in both provider and receiver roles. Thailand has very strong and friendly relationships with many foreign countries through the implementation of various educational cooperative projects which bring maximum benefits to students, teachers, educational personnel, and educational institutions such as seminars, country meetings/conferences, exhibitions, and researches. Foreign countries which are essential partners of Thailand are China, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Australia, and New Zealand. Examples of outstanding cooperative projects or activities can be seen as follows:

- **Seminars and Exhibitions on Thai Education in Foreign Countries**

The Office of the Higher Education Commission (OHEC) has organised seminars and exhibitions on Thai education in foreign countries annually since 1999. These events aim to raise the profile of Thai higher education and promote increased and closer collaboration between Thai higher education institutions and their foreign counterparts. In 2009, the Second Seminar and Exhibition on Thai Education was convened during June 12-14 in Nanning, Guangxi Province, People's Republic of China. In addition to the exhibitions, numerous activities were held to allow the participants to gain utmost benefits, i.e. a

discussion forum on ‘International Education: Contribution to Mobility of Professionals across Borders’, study visits to leading universities, and consultative meetings between Thai universities and foreign counterparts. The highlights of the event were the Thai Public Speaking Competition and the quiz game which were held for Chinese students who were currently studying Thai at Chinese institutions.

- **Joint Country Meetings**

The Ministry of Education, Thailand organised joint country meetings with various countries as outlined in the Memorandums of Understanding that Thailand signed with other countries. In this section, two important examples of joint country meetings are shown in order to describe to the reader the benefits received.

- 1) ***Thailand-Malaysia Joint Educational Research Conferences***

In the meeting of the First Joint Working Group under the MOU on Education between Thailand and Malaysia held in Thailand on June 20, 2008, the Office of the Education Council proposed an annual joint conference on educational research. As a result, on behalf of the Ministries of Education of Thailand and Malaysia, the Office of the Education Council of Thailand and the Office of the Education Planning, Research and Development (EPRD) from Malaysia were assigned to organise alternately this important event each year. The First Malaysia-Thailand Joint Educational Research Conference 2008 on the theme, “*Research-Driven Education Reforms: Vision for the Future*” hosted by EPRD, took place in 2008 in Selangor, Malaysia. The Second Malaysia-Thailand Joint Educational Research Conference 2009 on the theme, “*Research-Driven Education Reforms: Innovation for Quality Improvement*” was

organised by the Office of the Education Council in 2009 in Bangkok, Thailand. In 2011, the Third Malaysia-Thailand Joint Educational Research Conference 2011 on the theme, “*Research-Driven Education Reforms: Education Transformation and Human Capital Development*” held in Subang Jaya, Malaysia was under the responsibility of EPRD once again. The Fourth Malaysia-Thailand Joint Educational Research Conference 2012 on the theme, “*Research-Driven Education Reforms: Raising the Quality of Teaching and Learning towards the International Standards*” was hosted by the Office of the Education Council in 2012 in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

## **2) Thailand – US Education Roundtable**

The basis of the Thailand–US Education Roundtable comes from the royal initiative of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn. Her Royal Highness is interested in the development of learning and teaching, and the design of curricula as well as education evaluation particularly in the learning and teaching of mathematics and science in Thailand. To enhance and support the learning and teaching of mathematics and science in the country, Her Royal Highness participated in a meeting of six countries at Pennsylvania University in the United States of America and declared her royal initiative to create a cooperation network between Thailand and the United States of America on the science revolution and higher education system. Her Royal Highness wanted this network to play an important role in supporting and exchanging education innovation and emerging issues, especially in the field of science study, higher education and technology. The Office of the Education Council has put Her Royal Highness’s initiative into practice by creating a Steering Committee on Thailand–US Education Roundtable under the Education Council Committee.



This committee is responsible for the organisation of the Thailand–US Education Roundtable which had been hosted seven times so far. (The first, third, fifth and seventh Roundtables were hosted by Thailand while the second, fourth and sixth were hosted by the United States of America). The 7<sup>th</sup> Thailand – US Education Roundtable were held in Bangkok, Thailand on February 26, 2016 under the theme of “STEM Education in the 21<sup>st</sup> C Workforce.”

Each Roundtable has created most benefit to the education and science sector in Thailand since the outcomes of these meetings are used to produce valuable policies, policy guidelines, plans and researches on science study and higher education development. Well known researches and plans based on these Roundtables include Working Integrated Learning (WIL), Adjunct Lecturers, Liberal Arts Education, Leadership Development in Higher Education Institution, STEM Education, the Second 15-Year Long Range Plan on Higher Education (2008-2022), and etc.

# Chapter 10

## Current Efforts and Way Forward

Education reform has been continually undertaken from the past until the present with a view to developing the quality of education as well as improving organisational structure of concerned agencies, particularly the Ministry of Education. In accordance with the Section 27 of the 2014 Interim Constitution indicating that the National Reform Council makes proposals for the implementation of reforms in 11 fields, it is important for education to be reformed productively. Education reform is deemed a major issue because there are still many problems regarding the quality of education, education policy, decentralisation of power in educational administration, a shortage of teachers in essential fields, manpower production and development, and inequality of access to quality education.





The Ministry of Education, therefore, has proposal for the implementation of education reform comprising the following important issues to be undertaken:

- 1) Reform of education and learning which aims at solving the problem of inappropriate academic class hours in teaching and learning. Students cannot learn happily because they spend too much time in the classroom.
- 2) Reform of administrative structures and educational management which aims to enhance the integration and decentralisation of educational administration and management, especially at the regional level.
- 3) Reform of teacher and educational personnel which aims at solving current problems related to teacher staffing such as lack of teachers in some classes, teacher workloads, teacher shortages in important subjects, lack of incentives to encourage teachers, and etc.

- 4) Reform of opportunities in education and educational quality development which aims to provide access to education at all levels, establish standards for the evaluation of student achievement, improve assessment capacity, and etc.
- 5) Reform of workforce production and development to enhance the country's competitiveness. This aims at preparing and developing the workforce and research studies in line with national development needs, upgrading skills standards, promoting vocational education, upgrading distance learning, and etc.
- 6) Reform of information and communication technologies for education which aims at improving ICT infrastructure for teaching and learning, developing databases and knowledge management, and etc.



At present, these six major areas of education reform in Thailand are under implementation and are making satisfactory progress in many areas such as teaching and learning quality, equal opportunities for education for all people in Thailand, access to education via distance learning, and so on.



Since 2016, the Ministry of Education has been preparing the *Draft National Scheme of Education B.E. 2560-2579 (2017-2036)*. The *National Scheme of Education* is considered a long-term guideline for various agencies responsible for the provision of education and management. It will be used as a framework and guideline for improving education and learning for people of all ages, from birth onwards. The major intentions of this *National Scheme of Education* are: to ensure opportunities and equality in education; develop the quality and standards of education; and promote education for future careers in line with



the economy and society driven by innovations and creativity; and establish a supportive learning environment. As a result, all people will be able to seek knowledge and enjoy lifelong learning opportunities for themselves and, as a result, Thailand should overcome the middle-income trap towards developed country status within the next 15 years. It is believed that the Thai education system will have a new guideline to boost the capacity and competency of its people at all ages with five ultimate goals of education development, namely: access, equity, quality, efficiency, and relevancy to meet the demands of the dynamic economy and society of the nation and the world.



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Ministry of Education

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Office of the Education Council

*www.onec.go.th*

Office of the Permanent Secretary

*www.ops.moe.go.th*

Office of the Basic Education Commission

*www.obec.go.th*

Office of the Higher Education Commission

*www.mua.go.th*

Office of the Vocational Education Commission

*www.vec.go.th*