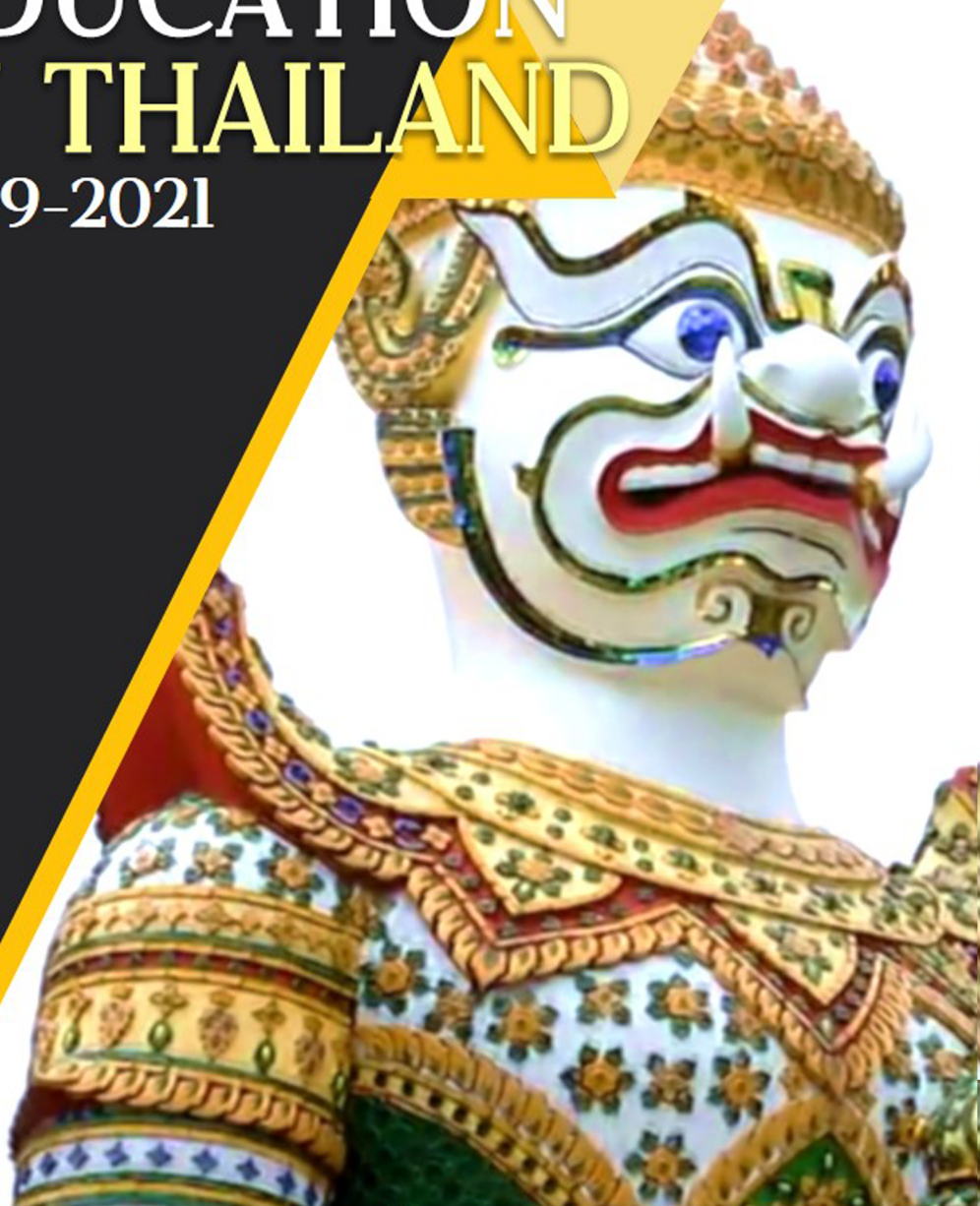


EDUCATION IN THAILAND

2019-2021



Office of Education Council
Ministry of Education



Education in Thailand 2019-2021



Office of the Education Council
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Preface

The Office of the Education Council (OEC) takes great pleasure in presenting a national report on educational development, *Education in Thailand 2019-2021*, published both in English and Thai language versions. This is aimed at distributing the report to our networks both in Thailand and abroad such as to educational agencies, educational institutions, foreign embassies in Thailand, Thai embassies abroad, international organisations, and the general public. Over the past three years, there have been extremely challenging events in the world, the most two important ones are the rapid digital technology development and the spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic. These events have affected the direction of the educational development of the world and Thailand. This publication, therefore, presents the educational information, data and statistics collected from the year 2019 up to August 2021, showing the situation and improvements to educational development in Thailand.

Education in Thailand 2019-2021 presents an overview of Thailand's educational movements beginning from: the introduction about national legislations, strategies, and plans related to the current Thai education; the education system, standards and quality assurance; educational administration, provision and participation; significant information and statistics about educational accessibility, and educational and learning outcomes; quality development of education provision, teachers and education personnel; educational budget

allocation and investment in education; and the international education in Thailand and international cooperation in education. Finally, the report will shed light on the current situation and future direction of Thailand's education reform and development.

The Office of the Education Council does hope that the information provided in this report will foster a comprehensive understanding of educational movements in Thailand and promote international cooperation and exchange in education. In addition, this may be beneficial in terms of reflecting the overall progress of Thailand's education development and of being a reference for organisations and individuals to further conduct Thailand's education development.

Last but not least, the Office of the Education Council would like to express our appreciation and gratitude to the educational experts and representatives of educational management and concerned agencies both under and outside the Ministry of Education for providing us with their valuable consultation and suggestions to this national report on educational development in Thailand.



Amnat Wichayanuwat, Ph.D.
Secretary-General
The Education Council

Executive Summary

Education in Thailand 2019-2021 presents the picture of Thai Education over the past three years following *Education in Thailand 2018*, which gave the picture of the educational management and educational development from the past to present day. The first Chapter of this publication shows the introduction of the education in Thailand 2019-2021 by discussing the challenges that affected the direction of the Thailand's educational development, as articulated in *the 20-Year National Strategy 2018-2037 (focus on educational development under the 12th National Economic and Social Development Plan 2060-2021)*. These challenges include: the role of manufacturing and developing Thailand's workforce in accordance with the principles of the National Qualification Framework (NQF), development of Early Childhood Education Management, major restructuring of the Ministry of Education in 2019, issuance of the Quality Assurance of Education B.E. 2561 (2018), establishment of an Educational Equality Fund to reduce inequality in access to education of disadvantaged learners, and National Educational Standards 2018. These must also be seen against the backdrop of Thailand's experience with the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Chapter Two (Education System, Standards, and Quality Assurance) provides information on the educational system, standards, and quality assurance. *The National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999) and amended (Second edition) B.E. 2545 (2002)* is Thailand's first educational act. Under the National

Education Act, educational management is divided into three forms: formal education, non-formal education, and informal education. There are two main levels of education: Basic education and Higher education. Basic education includes three-year early childhood or kindergarten, six-year elementary, three-year lower secondary school, and three-year upper secondary school in both general and vocational streams. Higher education can be divided into below-degree or diplomas and degrees. As for the standards and quality assurance of education, this chapter discusses the national educational standards, internal quality assurance, external quality assurance, and educational qualification standards.

Chapter Three (Educational Administration and Provision and Educational Participation) discusses the administration and management of education, as well as educational participation, consisting of: 1) Public education administration and management, which in this report refers to the Ministry of Education. Education administration and management are divided into *central* and *regional* levels. In addition, the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research, and Innovation, as well as other agencies, are responsible for the provision of formal and informal education, and specialized education administered according to specific purposes and characteristics, such as: military, police, medical and nursing, and other specialized academic/professional groups. The third level of the education administration and management is at the school level; 2) Education administration and management of local authorities, which is of vital importance for the education of people in local areas. Education can be organized in formal, non-formal and informal

systems which can be provided in a variety of forms and activities; 3) Administration and management of education by agencies other than the Ministry of Education. Education can be provided in a formal system at different levels, while some agencies provide specialized education to meet the specific needs of the recipients, taking into account national education policies and standards; and 4) Participation of private sectors in the provision of education, consisting of non-governmental organizations, including private schools, private enterprises, families and religious institutions.

Chapter Four (Budget Allocation and Investment in Education) is about access to education and educational / learning achievements. Educational statistical data is presented showing student access to education by level and type of education, such as: access to basic education, access to basic education of special needs learners, access to higher education, access to informal education, educational / learning achievements, etc., as well as competitiveness on the international stage, and participation in competitions in different arenas.

Chapter 5 (Quality Development of Education Provision, Teachers, and Educational Personnel) improving the Quality of Educational Management, Teachers and Educational Personnel. Education in Thailand has to cope with a rapidly changing trend of the 21st century, whether it is the advancement of information technology, economic competition with countries on the world stage, and the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. As a result, education development patterns must be adjusted in line with such global changes, especially in teaching and learning.

Teachers and educational personnel is vital for creating and developing the potential of learners and enhancing the quality of Thai education. Therefore, teachers and educational personnel must be produced and developed in accordance with the direction of improving the quality of education in the country and be able to deal with challenging situations in Thailand and around the world. The discussion is about: 1) Education management in the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic; 2) Education sandbox; 3) Promoting Coding Instruction; and 4) Development of teachers and education personnel such as, a four-Year program undergraduate basic education teacher production, Kru Rak Thin (Teacher of the Community) Project. For the development of higher education personnel, the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation has created a *Higher Education Plan for the Production and Development of the Country's Workforce 2021-2027*, with strategy on Capacity Building of Human Resource.

Chapter Six (Access to Education and Educational and Learning Achievement) presents the allocation of education budget based on level and job description, which includes pre-school, primary, secondary, higher education, education across levels, educational support and services, research and development in education, and others. Priority is given to the budget allocation for basic education (pre-school, primary, and secondary levels). Investments in education for fiscal year 2020 allocated by the government amounted to 493,882.7 million baht, which is 15.4% of the total expenditure budget, demonstrating the government's commitment to improving the quality of education and

promoting quality lifelong learning. Chapter Six also discusses the mobilization of educational resources; in addition to the education expenditure budget allocated to government agencies and local governments as well as resources from the community and private sectors, resources are also being mobilized to increase educational opportunities and equality through both the Student Loan Fund and the Educational Equality Fund, by supporting tuition fees, education-related expenses, and living expenses to needy high school students (both ordinary and vocation) and university students, as well as to enhance and facilitate teacher quality improvement.

Chapter Seven (International Education and International Cooperation in Education) presents international education issues in Thailand, both at basic and higher education levels. International cooperation in education consists of: 1) Cooperation with international organizations, and regional /global cooperation groups such as UNESCO, UNICEF, APEC, OECD, ASEAN, and SEAMEO; 2) Multilateral cooperation between countries, utilizing ASEAN, for example, in setting up the ASEAN Qualification Reference Framework (AQRF); 3) Cooperation with countries in the bilateral framework, utilizing, for example, the Office of Education Council, secretariat of the Thai-Russian Roundtable Working Group Project, which conducted the *Thai-Russian Roundtable: Collaboration on Gifted Education and Research*, a project that has followed HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn's initiative. Through such cooperative collaboration, Thailand has worked with the Russian Federation since 2018. Additional examples include the *Thai Master Trainer (TMT) Workshop*, between the Ministry of Education and the British Embassy in Thailand.

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed by both sides to establish a Regional English Teacher Training Center to enhance English language learning and English teaching techniques so that the teachers who have been trained can continue to improve their skills. Cooperation between the Ministry of Education and the Government of the People's Republic of China is currently taking place under the Framework for Cooperation on the Promotion of Chinese Language Instruction between the Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Thailand and the Confucius Institute Headquarters/Office of the International Chinese Language Teaching Promotion of the People's Republic of China.

In addition, the Office of Vocational Education Commission has also launched the 'Finnish Online Teacher Training Program' and the cooperation in internship of vocational education students overseas in various fields and in many countries.

Chapter Eight (Direction of Educational Reform in Thailand) discusses the progress in implementing educational reforms in many aspects, such as the preparation of the National Plan for Education Reform, the National Education Act B.E..., preparation of the Early Childhood Development Act B.E. 2562 (legally enforced since May of 2019), and the Early Childhood Development Plan 2021-2027. The guidelines for driving such plans into action must be focused on the development of sustainable links between education and the digital platform in order to keep pace with the socio-technological evolution of a rapidly changing world. Serious action must be taken and concrete changes must be completed by 2020.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Thailand has given high importance to education, since it is the foundation of all sectors of national development. Thailand's education has a long history of development. It reflects the evolution of the instructional system, and several reforms that attempt to provide educational opportunity for all people and strive to meet with the socio-economic and technological change of the country. The details of educational evolution in Thailand since the Sukhothai Period is reported in "Education in Thailand B.E. 2561" (*Education in Thailand 2018*)

At present, Thailand has legislated laws, and formulated various strategies and plans to express how important education is, since the role of education is vital to a national development. In addition, this shows that the country is striving to improve and reform education, so that it makes the nation and the people prosper in all aspects.

Beginning with the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand B.E. 2560, it emphasizes education in several sections, for example Section 54 which states, *“The State shall ensure that every child receives quality education free of charge for twelve years from pre-school to the completion of compulsory education.”* At the same time, another statement in this section mentions the vital role of education, stating that, *“All education shall aim to develop learners to be good, disciplined, proud of their nation, skillful in their own aptitudes, and responsible for family, community, society, and the country.”*



The Constitution also prescribes that education is an area of national reform. In Section 258 E. Education, the substance of national reform in the area of education is divided into four aspects: 1) ensuring commencement of care and development of young children prior to education as stated by the Constitution; 2) completing the enactment of

a law for the establishment of a fund for the purpose of assisting persons with insufficient means in order to reduce the educational disparity, and to improve and promote the quality and efficiency of teachers; 3) having a mechanism and a system for producing, screening and developing teaching professionals and instructors to engender a spiritual mindset of being a teacher; and 4) improving learning and instruction at every level so that students are able to study according to their aptitudes, and improving a structure of relevant agencies. Furthermore, Section 261 prescribes that, with respect to the reform under Section 258 E, Education, there shall be one independent committee appointed by the Council of Ministers to carry out studies, prepare relevant recommendations and draft laws for achieving the goal, and to present them to the Council of Ministers for implementation. The committee called “Autonomous Committee for Education Reform” had been appointed on 30 May 2017, and was terminated on 30 May 2019. As a result, the Committee recommended educational reform for quality improvement, reduction of disparity, creating the capacity for competitiveness, and increasing the efficiency of the educational system. Furthermore, three draft laws for educational reform were completed (as of February 2020) They are the Act for Educational Equity of B.E. 2561; the Act for Early Childhood Development of B.E. 2019; and the Act for Educational Innovation of B.E. 2019. In addition, the Committee has also prescribed the Plan for National Reform of Education to Support the Implementation of the National Strategies (B.E. 2561-2580).



The National Strategies (B.E.2561-2580), announced in the Government Gazette on 13 October 2018, are sustainable development goals of the nation based on good governance principles. They are used as frameworks for various aspects of national development planning, especially those features relating to human resources development and empowerment. The strategies aim to holistically develop people of all ages to become good, intelligent, and high quality. So that people of Thailand are physically, spiritually, and intelligently ready, with well-rounded development, healthy at all ages, civic-minded, responsible for society and other people, economical, saving funds, generous, disciplined, moral and good citizens. The people should be equipped with decent mindsets and the skills necessary for the 21st Century, which include communication skills, English language and third language skills, preservation of skills in local dialects, lifelong learning and self-developing habits. These characteristics are to be cultivated in order to produce competent citizens of Thailand who are innovators, thinkers, entrepreneurs, and modern farmers, as well as other types of manpower who are skillful in their own aptitudes.

Moreover, the management of education will play an important role in creating opportunities and social equality, and to ensure justice in health and educational services – particularly for the low income and the underprivileged. It will focus on opportunity creation which enables all people

equal access to high-standard quality education, especially inhabitants of remote areas and those who have special needs. It will provide measures to reduce educational disparity; to support cooperative mechanisms of all sectors for educational development at the provincial level; to use technology for the promotion of learning and access to information, knowledge, and innovation for all people. It will provide for a supportive follow-up and evaluation system that ensures people's right to quality education.

One of the focal points and issues in national development as stated in the 12th National Socio-economic Plan (B.E. 2560-2564) which highlights the important role of education is the point related to manpower preparation and capacity building of the population of all ages. It focuses on: 1) early childhood development; 2) the persistent efforts to instill Thai-ness values and social norms; 3) the development of skills, knowledge and efficacy appropriate to each age, labor market and the 21st Century; 4) the preparation of manpower in science and technology; and 5) quality improvement to achieve excellence at all educational levels.

One of the twelve major policies of the present government is to reform learning processes and to develop potentials of all people at each age. Education is the major factor affecting concrete outcomes of this policy which aims to develop people of Thailand to be ready for and live happily in the 21st Century. The policy aims to: 1) promote early childhood development; 2) develop the newly graduated; 3) development of vocations, quality professions, and capable manpower for industrialized Thailand 4.0; 4) attract capable

workers worldwide to work with Thai workers, and promote highly competent ones; 5) research and develop innovations which serve the needs of this nation; 6) promote education and develop skills for all ages; and 7) create systems for community degrees and short term training courses.



The roles of education in producing and developing manpower in Thailand as stated in the principles of the *National Quality Framework (NQF)*, announced in 2013, are to upgrade educational quality of learners and manpower to

become world-class labor, and to enable the linkage of the 8-levels of the NQF with the learning results of schooling, starting from lower-secondary education up to the doctoral degree level. This idea affects the development of lifelong learning systems and the processes in vocations and professions of manpower. Consequently, the Council of Ministers agreed upon two important documents which concretely drive forward the NQF. The first documents is: “*The Plan for Implementation of National Quality Framework, B.E. 2562-2565,*” approved on 20 October 2020. This plan is a mechanism that drives forward the NQF of responsible agencies. The other document is, “*The Action Plan for Producing and Developing Manpower in Urgently-Needed Vocations for National Development under the National Quality Framework, B.E. 2562 – 2565*”, announced on 29 December 2020. This action plan provides a model for developing public and private partnerships to produce and to develop manpower for the nation. It includes matters relating to the cooperation of Thailand with ten other member countries of ASEAN, called ASEAN Qualifications Reference Framework (AQRF). The AQRF is the core qualification framework for ASEAN members, but may also be comparable to Regional Qualifications Framework. A report called, “*AQRF Referencing Report of Thailand*” was published, and formally approved by the AQRF Committee on 31 January 2020. As a result, Thailand is a pilot member country in the project of ASEAN Secretariat Office Phrase 4 (Referencing National Qualifications Frameworks to the ASEAN Qualification Reference Framework – Phrase IV). There are four countries in which the AQRF reports have been approved; Malaysia, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand.

Previously, initiatives in education of Thailand focused on early childhood development. The government and other sectors gave so much importance to early childhood education that the Act for Early Childhood Development of B.E. 2562 was promulgated. The Act is a mechanism for systematically promoting, supporting, and developing early childhood as a whole. It will integrate the administration of early childhood development under the responsibility of four ministries: the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, the Ministry of Interior, and the Ministry of Public Health.



A new system for educational quality assurance was also created. *The Ministry of Education enacted “The Ministerial Regulation on Educational Quality Assurance of B.E. 2561”* which is helpful for every school, because it can internally assure its own educational quality, and can reduce the burden from external evaluation. This new system of

educational quality assurance has brought about higher quality for schools and learners. The evidence is explained in detail in the report “*Education in Thailand 2018*”.

The Equitable Education Fund (EEF) was established to reduce disparity of educational opportunity for underprivileged children, as stipulated in Section 54 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand B.E.2560, and the promulgation of the Equitable Education Act B.E. 2561 (2018). The objective of the Act is to promote educational equality, support those people with a shortage of funds, and reduce educational disparity, as well as promote and develop the quality and efficiency of teachers. For these purposes, the government allocates a portion of the budget to this fund which is under the supervision of the Prime Minister, and autonomously administered.

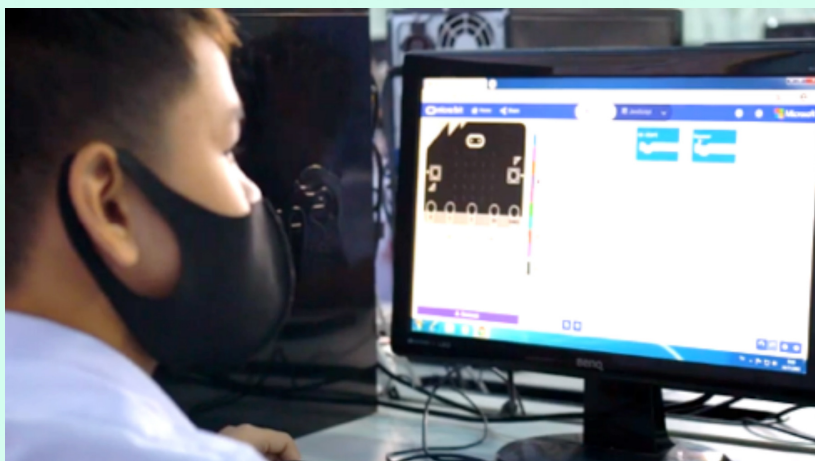


National Education Standard B.E. 2561

The National Education Standards B.E. 2561 have been created. They are the requirements concerning desirable characteristics and quality for Thailand’s people, which schools and responsible agencies shall use as the guidelines for educational provision and benchmarking the minimum standards for each educational level and type. These will foster desirable characteristics of learners during their school education, as well as providing the foundations for their futures after graduation.

The production of vocational and higher education students in accordance with the Project for Producing Vocational and Higher Education Students of New Generation aims to produce and develop manpower with high skills, competencies, and potentials who will become the new growth engine and economic driving force of the nation. The adjustment of instructional processes and educational programs has been made in order to achieve international standards, and to effectively cooperate with private and industrial sectors, such as the cooperation in curriculum design, instruction, and evaluation; out-sourcing of instructors; and using more than 50 percent of the total learning time to learn from actual experience.

In 2019, the Ministry of Education carried out an important restructuring. The Office of the Higher Education Commission (OHEC), which used to be one of the five main agencies under the supervision of the Ministry of Education, was combined within the Ministry of Science and Technology to form a new ministry, ‘The Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation’. This action is responsive to education in the 21st Century, and it should lead Thailand towards the stage of 4.0 which focuses on science, research, and innovation, in which higher education institutions play important roles in their development.



Since 2020, education in Thailand has encountered a crisis unlike any ever met before; the pandemic of COVID-19 which has spread throughout the world. This crisis has resulted in a large number of people becoming infected, and deaths continue even until today (2021). This pandemic period is affecting education so much that it has been necessary to change the pattern for instruction from classroom learning to on-line and distance learning at every level of education. This is highly challenging for the present system of Thailand's education.

Chapter 2

Education System, Standards, and Quality Assurance

The Education System in Thailand has been created to provide various types and approaches of teaching and learning that correspond to learners from different social, economic, and cultural backgrounds in order to provide accessibility to appropriate education for each and every Thai learner. Thailand's first educational fundamental law, *The National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999) and Amendments (Second National Education Act B.E. 2545 [2002])* specify three types of education management which are formal, non-formal, and informal education. Educational institutions can provide either one or all types of these education types for learners. In addition, learning centers, families, communities, non-government organizations, local administration offices, professional organizations, welfare institutes, and other social organizations can also provide different types of education where appropriate. The National Education Act also specifies

both internal and external education quality assurance to improve education quality and standards of all levels of education.

2.1 Types of Educational Provision

There are three types of educational provision in Thailand which are formal, non-formal, and informal education as follows;

2.1.1 Formal Education

According to the National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999) and Amendments (Second National Education Act B.E. 2545 [2002]), formal education is defined as the education that specifies exact aims, methods, curricula, duration, assessment, and evaluation conditional to its completion. There are two levels of formal education, namely the basic education level and the higher education level. The formal education provides both the general education and vocational education streams.



There are various provisions of formal education, which target various groups: 1) Mainstream Education; 2) Basic Education for Children with Special Educational Needs; 3) Education Provision by Religious Institution; 4) Specific Education by other agencies besides the Ministry of Education; 5) International Education using other languages as teaching and learning media. However, this chapter will present only the mainstream and basic education for students with special needs, while specific education and education provision by religious institutions will be presented in chapter three and international education will be presented in chapter seven.

1) Mainstream Education

Mainstream education is the formal education provided by educational institutions where students must study full-time. Mainstream education is divided into general and vocational streams. General education begins from early childhood to upper secondary education level, while vocational education begins from upper secondary to higher education level. At present, compulsory education in Thailand is nine years, from primary to lower secondary education. Section 54 of the *Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand (B.E. 2560 (2017))* states that “*The State must provide 12 years of free and quality education for all children, from pre-school to compulsory education level.*” Therefore, it is the Ministry of Education’s responsibility to provide kindergarten education in public schools under the Ministry’s supervision to comply with the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand. As for basic education, it covers 15 years, from pre-school, or kindergarten, to upper secondary education levels.



At present, early childhood education management follows the Early Childhood Curriculum B.E. 2560 (2017) which is for developing children from newborn to 6 years of age. The structure of the early childhood curriculum is divided into 1) curriculum for children under 3 age group and 2) curriculum for children of 3-6 age group. The first curriculum further divides into the newborn-2 age group focusing on guidelines on a good upbringing based on their ways of living; and the 2-3 age group, which concerns guidelines on a good upbringing and enhancing children's development and learning, so children will have physically and mentally healthy growth, acquire language and communication skills, and develop constant learning interests. The curriculum for children of the 3-6 age group involves both children's upbringing and educational provision in which children's physical, emotional, mental, social, and intellectual aspects will be developed based on their ages and capabilities.



With regard to basic education management in the general stream, it follows the Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2551 (2008) for primary to upper secondary education level. The curriculum emphasizes the student-centered approach based on the concept that everyone is capable of learning and developing oneself. As for the vocational stream, it follows the *Curriculum for the Certificate of Vocational Education B.E. 2556* (2013) (including the Revised Version B.E. 2557 [2014]) and the *Curriculum for Diploma of Vocational Education B.E. 2557* (2014).

The Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2551 (2008) aims to develop all learners who are the nation's strength to be well-balanced physically, intellectually, and morally, as well as to be conscious of being Thai and being a global citizen. In addition, learners will adhere to a Democratic Regime of Government with King as Head of State and have basic knowledge and skills including attitude necessary to

education, occupation, and lifelong learning. The curriculum stresses the student-centered approach, which is based on the concept that everyone is capable of learning and developing oneself to reach their full potential.

At the primary level, the curriculum is designed for not less than 1,000 hours per year, at the lower secondary level for not less than 1,200 hours per year, and at the upper secondary level for not less than 3,600 hours over 3 years. However, certain subject areas of *The Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2551 (2008)* which are mathematics, science, and geography, are revised to accord with technological development towards Thailand 4.0 and to support learners to obtain the skills needed for the 21st century.

In the general stream of basic education, career and technology-related education is offered to both primary and secondary students to provide them with work experience and basic knowledge for career preparation and technological applications. In addition, dual education between vocational education and upper secondary education is offered in certain schools. Graduates from this specific curriculum are awarded with both upper secondary education and vocational education degrees. This creates favorable educational opportunities for learners at the upper secondary education level to learn the vocational stream in order to increase their skills and knowledge and have wider career opportunities than having only the upper secondary education degree.

Starting at the upper secondary education level, teaching and learning in the vocational stream follows the *Curriculum for the Certificate of Vocational Education B.E. 2556* (2013) (including the revised version B.E. 2557 [2014]) at the lower certificate level and the *Curriculum for Diploma of Vocational Education B.E. 2557* (2014) at the higher vocational



education level (or the associate degree level). These curricula are designed in response to labor market demand of skilled manpower and to current technological progress. Vocational students can choose appropriate learning systems and approaches relevant to their potential, interests, and learning opportunities. The vocational curricula promote cooperation in education management and participation in curriculum development among educational institutions, workplaces, and relevant agencies at community, local, and national levels. All levels focus on competency and specify the standards of knowledge, skills, attitude, and qualification of learners.

The National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999) and Amendments (Second National Education Act B.E. 2545 [2002]) states that vocational education and occupational training shall be provided in educational institutions belonging to the state, private sector, enterprises, or those organized through co-operation of educational institutions and enterprises.

Teaching and learning of the lower certificate of vocational education offer a three-year course to graduates of the lower secondary education level. This level follows the Curriculum for the Certificate of Vocational Education B.E. 2562 (2019). The curriculum comprises of ten main subject areas, namely industry, textiles, information and communication technology, commerce, fine arts, home economics, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, and entertainment and music. In each subject area, students can choose a field of study and elective subjects.



As for the higher vocational education level, a two-year course is offered to graduates of the lower certificate of vocational education and the upper secondary education level of the general stream who choose the vocational stream. This level follows *the Curriculum for Diploma of Vocational Education B.E. 2563 (2020)*. The curriculum comprises eleven main subject areas, namely industry, business administration, fine arts, home economics, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, textiles, information and communication technology, entertainment and music, maritime, and elective subjects.

About 200 institutions offer dual vocational education, which is the collaboration between educational institutions and enterprises, state enterprises, or public agencies in the management of curriculum management, assessment and evaluation. Learners study in vocational schools and engage in practicum at the participating enterprises. This enables learners in different subject areas to have opportunities in direct field work experience and also earn income as an employee or become a temporary staff of their internship workplace.

2) Basic Education for Children with Special Education Needs

The *Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand B.E. 2560* (2017) protects the rights and freedoms of all individuals regardless of differences including the disabled or people with special needs. The National Strategy B.E. 2561-2580 (2018-2037) on developing and strengthening human capital also covers the awareness of multiple intelligences of Thai people including children with a prominent or different levels and categories of intelligence. It specifies strategies for developing and maintaining groups of children with special talents of each intelligence category, creating an environment for them, supporting Thai citizens based on multiple intelligences, and strengthening the potential of people with special talents to be able to expand their career stability.

In addition, the National Strategy on social cohesion and equity covers the promotion of equitable access to public health services and education especially for low-income people and underprivileged groups. In the case of education, the key focus will be on providing opportunities to access quality education based on equal standard, especially in remote and poor areas as well as among the target groups that require special attention and assistance; implementing effective measures designed to reduce inequality in education; supporting mechanisms that can bring about cooperation among involved parties in education development at the provincial level; employing technologies to improve learning and access to information, knowledge, and innovation; including supporting, following-up, and implementing assessment systems to help ensure citizen's rights to a quality education.

The *National Education Plan B.E. 2560-2579 (2017-2036)* specifies strategies for providing educational opportunities, equality, and equity for all. One of the targets of the strategy is that all learners including individuals with special needs, who are the gifted, the disabled, and the underprivileged, to have the same opportunity and equality to access to quality education.

The *National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999)* and Amendments (Second National Education Act B.E. 2545 [2002]) also place importance for learners with special educational needs by specifying that this specific group of learners must receive close attention and suitable education management in response to learners' conditions and needs. This group of

learners comprises the disabled, or underprivileged, and the gifted. The Act specifies that special basic education management must be provided for learners with physical, mental, intellectual, emotional, social, communication, and learning disabilities, as well as for unaccompanied learners, or the underprivileged. Similarly, basic education for gifted and talented persons must be provided in appropriate form in accordance with each person's competency.

● *Special Education for Gifted and Talented Learners*

Thailand recognizes the importance of gifted and talented learners because they will become crucial workforce for the development of the country. Therefore, generating and expanding learning opportunities has been carried out to improve competencies of these learners who will bring considerable benefit for the country in the future. The following education and activity management is provided for the development of gifted and talented learners.

1) Establishing schools and colleges for gifted learners in various fields as follows:



1.1) Science and Mathematics: There are Mahidol Wittayanusorn School (MWITS), which is the first science school of Thailand; 12 Princess Chulabhorn Science High Schools (PCSHS), which are science and mathematics schools throughout various parts of the country under the supervision of OBEC, Ministry of Education; Kamnoetvidhya Science Academy (KVIS) founded by the Rayong Science Academy Foundation and the PTT Group of Companies; Vidyasirimedhi Institute of Science and Technology (VISTEC), a private and postgraduate-level university located at the heart of the Eastern Economic Corridor of Innovation (EECI) in Wangchan Valley, Rayong Province; and five Science-Based Technology Schools (SBTS) namely: Science-Based Technology Vocational Colleges (Chonburi), Lumphun College of Agriculture and Technology, Phang-nga Technical College, Singburi Technical College, and Suranaree Technical College, overseen by OVEC, Ministry of Education.

1.2) Sports: There are 13 sports schools throughout the country under the supervision of the Institute of Physical Education, Ministry of Tourism and Sports; 15 sports schools throughout the country, which are under the supervision of the local government organizations, Ministry of Interior; and Bangkok Sport School.





Source: <http://www.bpi.ac.th>

1,3) Music and Dramatic Arts: There are Matthayom Sangkeet Wittaya Bangkok School, which is a music school under the supervision of the Office of Basic Education Commission; 12 Colleges of Dramatic Arts throughout the country under the supervision of Bunditpatanasilpa Institute, Ministry of Culture; College of Music of Mahidol University; and Superstar College of Arts (SCA), which is a private educational institution.

2) Provision of inclusive education in regular schools focusing on educational processes of gifted and talented persons in different fields by means of reducing class hours (Acceleration Program), increasing and expanding experience (Enrichment and Extension Programs), offering Advanced Placement Program, and having specialized experts as mentors. Class hours for gifted and talented students parallel regular class hours.

3) Establishment of special classrooms in schools focusing on teaching and learning for the potential promotion of gifted and talented students in various fields, learning more difficult content than those of special classes, having additional lecturers, and arranging field trips. The special classroom programs are for example:

- *The Enrichment Program of Science Mathematics Technology and Environment*: SMTE organized by the collaboration between the Office of the Basic Education Commission, the Institute for the Promotion of Teaching Science and Technology, the Office of the Higher Education Commission (At present, Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation), and the National Science and Technology Development Agency (NSTDA). Schools participating in this program needs to implement a special curriculum to ensure that their students will be developed and promoted to participate in academic activities such as science camps, study visits and field trips, job internships with researchers in universities or public and private organizations, and projects in science, mathematics, and technology operated by 95 Master Schools in different provinces. At present, there are 220 schools participating in this program to accelerate the development of gifted and talented children and youth in the field of science, mathematics, technology, and environment to be a qualified scientist, researcher, or inventor in accordance with world standards.



- *The Music Classroom Project* has been established since 2017 by selecting three schools in three southern provinces to be considered a Model School for developing gifted students in the music field. In 2018, the project was expanded to three more schools in the southern region, and in 2019, the expansion covered every region with 14 more schools. Therefore, there are 20 schools and 859 students in total with 568 students at the lower secondary level and 291 students at the upper secondary level participating in the project. The objectives of the project are to promote, support, and open opportunities for gifted students in the music field. These opportunities, along with their interest and proficiency, aim to fully develop them in physical, emotional, societal, and mental aspects; build networks to collaborate with educational agencies and organizations that will further their study to the higher level, and provide them with the opportunity to have a music career in the future.

- *The Advanced Placement Program* for gifted students in various fields. This program between the secondary schools and universities promotes and provides education for gifted and talented students in various fields. Students in secondary schools will take courses meant for first-year university students and receive credit that can be applied when they study at that specific university. At the beginning, the pilot program operated in three universities: Mahidol University, Chulalongkorn University, and Chiang Mai University.

- ***Special Education for Underprivileged Children***

The Compulsory Education Act B.E. 2545 (2002) states that the Ministry of Education, the Committee of the Educational Service Area, the local administrative organization and school shall provide special education for children with physical, mental, intellectual, emotional, social, communicating, and learning impairment or physical disability, or invalidity, or children unable to rely on himself or herself, or underprivileged children so that they obtain compulsory education in appropriate forms and methods, including provision of special education for children with disabilities, provision of education arranged by the Centers for Special Education, provision of inclusive education, and provision of education arranged by the Centers for the Non-formal or Informal Education.



Several public agencies, especially the Ministry of Education, the Border Patrol Police Bureau, and the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security have provided education for socially, economically, and culturally underprivileged children. In addition, numerous public charities also pay close attention to problems in education of underprivileged children. Therefore, they organize projects that support and provide education for various types of underprivileged children, so they are able to get access to both formal and non-formal education. These charitable organizations are, for example, the Rajprachasamasai Foundation under the Royal Patronage, Children Foundation, the Suan Kaew Monastery Foundation, the Education for Development Foundation, and the Foundation for the Better Life of Children. Most underprivileged students study in regular public schools, which are called inclusive schools, while the rest study in Welfare Schools and Border Patrol Police Schools.



The Office of the Basic Education Commission, Ministry of Education has divided underprivileged children studying inclusive education in regular schools into 13 groups: 1) orphans; 2) children of minorities; 3) abandoned children; 4) children forced to enter the labor market; 5) physically abused children; 6) children affected by narcotic drugs; 7) children who are sex workers; 8) children in Observation and Protection Centers; 9) children living in poverty; 10) street children; 11) children working for themselves and their family; 12) children affected by HIV/AIDS; and 13) other underprivileged children (or children underprivileged more than one group).

Welfare Schools provide education especially for underprivileged children to foster education equality. Students are provided with free tuition, food, clothing, textbooks, and accommodation during their study. In the 2020 academic year, there were 52 Welfare Schools under supervision of the Office of the Basic Education Commission. Vocational education in certain Welfare Schools is also provided for the underprivileged.

The underprivileged children studying in Welfare Schools were divided into 11 groups: 1) children living (extremely) in poverty; 2) children affected by narcotic drugs; 3) abandoned children; 4) physically abused children; 5) children affected by HIV/AIDS or serious disease that is shunned by society; 6) children of minorities; 7) street children; 8) children forced to enter the labor market or child labors; 9) children who are sex workers; 10) children in Observation and Protection Centers; 11) children with disabilities studying in inclusive schools.

The Border Patrol Police Schools are under the supervision of the Border Patrol Police Bureau, Royal Thai Police. They are located by the more remote borders and wilderness areas of the country. As stated by the Border Patrol Police Bureau, in the 2019 academic year, the total number of schools under the jurisdiction of the Border Patrol Police Bureau was 218, comprising of 216 primary schools and 2 secondary schools. There were a total of 26,417 students: 6,813 pre-primary education students, 18,421 primary education students, and 1,183 secondary education students. Most students in these schools are from farming families and various ethnic groups.

- *Special Education for Children with Disabilities*

Thailand attaches importance to education for the disabled. It is specified that children with disabilities receive basic education both in Inclusive schools and Special Education Schools. In addition, budget has been allocated for assistance to the children with disabilities for their education. The budget is derived from the regular budget and the Educational Fund for Students with Disabilities.

The Office of the Basic Education Commission has classified disabilities into nine types: 1) visual impairments, 2) hearing impairments, 3) mental impairments, 4) physical impairments or health related impairments, 5) learning disabilities, 6) speech and language disorders, 7) autism, 8) emotional and behavioral disorders, and 9) multiple disabilities.



Children with special needs who have disabilities can enroll for formal education in the following schools:

Education Provision in Co-Studying School:

Co-Studying Schools are regular schools that accept students with disabilities to regular education. In providing education for the disabled, the schools are assisted in terms of students with disabilities studying full day in regular classes under supervision of class teachers without receiving specialized education; or students with disabilities studying full day in regular classes under supervision of class teachers who receive advice or services and other facilities from experts or students with disabilities studying in a specialized class in regular schools where children with special needs who have the same type of disability study together in a small group. Normally, these children study ***full time in a special class***, but join activities with regular children, etc.

Educational Provision in Inclusive Schools:

Inclusive Schools accept children with disabilities to study together with regular students regardless of their disabilities. Instead of excluding the underprivileged children from the majority of children in class, the schools employ management and approaches that enable children to improve their learning ability and development as needed. This can be done by readjusting the surroundings, teaching and learning activities, curriculum, and assessment, in order that teachers can design teaching and learning to correspond with all students' demands.

Special Education Provision in Special Education Schools: Special Education Schools provide special education for students with physical, intellectual, mental, or emotional disabilities to be able to learn in accordance with their physical, mental, and capability conditions. In the academic year 2017, there were 48 Special Schools under supervision of the Office of Basic Education Commission nationwide where children with all types of disabilities are accepted in these schools.

2.1.2 Non-Formal Education

Non-formal education in accordance with the National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999) and its amendments (Second Edition) B.E. 2545 (2003) prescribes to educational management with flexible duration of study, measurement and evaluation, having appropriate content in accordance with the problems and needs of each individual group of learners. The government organizations and the private sector can provide non-formal education services. In the 2019 academic year,

there were 3,638,401 learners under the Office of Non-formal and Informal Education, 525,137 learners under the Office of Vocational Education Commission, 70,289 learners under the Office of the Private Education Commission, 25,285 learners under the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research, and Innovation, and 19,641 learners under the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration.

There are various non-formal education establishments being involved in developing non-formal education activities such as the general education institutions, the Non-formal and Informal Education Centers in the regional and district areas, and the Overseas Center for Non-Formal and Informal Education (Overseas NFE Learning Centers).



The Ministry of Education by the Office of Non-Formal and Informal Education Promotion, which is the main unit for organizing non-formal and informal education, has provided three main types of non-formal education as follows:

1) Literacy Promotion - to organize teaching-learning activities for those who are illiterate. This will enable them to read and write, learn to listen to and speak the Thai language, and complete simple calculations in daily life (3R's). Most of those who make up this group are ethnic, such as the hill tribes or those other highland people, the fishermen inhabiting the west coast of Thailand (Morgan Moglan Urak Lawoi), the illiterate people in the southern border provinces, the illiterate Thai labor group, and the migrant foreign workers in Thailand, etc.

2) Basic Education - is the development of the appropriate educational program at the primary, lower, and upper secondary levels (junior & senior high school). This also includes those in the Vocational Certificate program and the learners who have not yet completed compulsory education and are not in the schooling system such as the elderly people with disabilities, group of labors, migrant workers, inmates, hill-tribes, enlisted soldiers, homeless children, and etc. The development of basic education programs for these groups of learners aims to provide them with educational opportunities at a higher level through the following courses/ programs:

2.1) *The basic level of non-formal education curriculum B.E. 2551* aims to provide the learners with good awareness of morals, ethics, intelligence, good quality of life, and more potentiality in terms of career development and intention to further learning.

2.2) *Non-formal Occupation Program (Vocational Certificate Curriculum B.E. 2556)* - is developed to provide the learners who have completed the lower

secondary education level while working in an enterprise or doing self-employed. According to this curriculum, the program aims to gain the competencies among the learners by organizing learning activities through practical operations in the workplace.

3) Continuing Education - is the non-formal education program developed to meet the needs and necessities in daily life of the learners. The program is aimed to develop knowledge and abilities in obtaining various occupational skills among the learners. The program is also aimed as a tool for developing self-reliant abilities among the learners, their society, and their communities as a whole. This continuing education program is organized in various forms of learning activities comprising of career development, life skills development, social and community development, and other learning activities related to the principle of self-reliance. This continuing education program is organized in two different forms:

3.1) *Interest Group Program* - is an educational activity based on the needs and interests of the learners. Students with common interests group together with six or more members to form the learning course that does not exceed 30 hours.

3.2) *Vocational classroom program* – to be organized in the form of course 31 hours or more with more than 11 students in each learning group. This program is developed into two curriculum courses, consisting of a short course with 31-100 hours of studies and a long-term course of more than 100 hours of studies.

2.1.3 Informal Education

The 1999 National Education Act of 1999 and its amendments B.E. 2545 (2003) has stated that the informal education is an educational program that allows the learners to learn on their own based on their own interests, potential, readiness, and opportunities. Through this program, the learners may learn in terms of observing or studying people, experiences, society, the environment, the media, or other additional sources of knowledge. This informal education program is seen as an opportunity that provides lifelong learning to the people. The Office of the Non-Formal and Informal Education under the Ministry of Education has defined informal education as the model of learning through daily life of the target learners who may identify their own needs of learning interest continuously throughout their life. The informal education program uses learning resources to serve the learners in accordance with their needs, interests, opportunities, readiness, and learning potential.

Informal education is an educational program in which people can learn from various sources of knowledge such as libraries, museums, science centers, as well as other sources of public relations such as radio, television, newspapers, magazines, community learning networks. They can also learn from their families' resources where people can learn from their own families. Since B.E. 2561, Thailand has increased their sources of informal learning, which now comprises of 59 out-of-school academic sources and 923 informal learning resources.



According to the National Strategic Plan B.E. 2561-2580 (2018-2037) on Human Resources Development and Capacity Building, it has been proven that Thailand has recognized the importance of tackling the issue of promoting non-formal and informal education. For example, there are issues regarding lifelong development of human potentialities which focus on qualitative development of the people at all ages from the early stage of pregnancy through the elderly stage; all of which aim to create the potentialities of human resources to enable them to have knowledge, skills, good attitude and discipline, self-learning ability at all ages, financial literate, abilities on life planning and appropriate financial planning at all stages of life and abilities to lead a valuable life. More significantly, the National Strategic Plan aims to develop the appropriate attitudes of the Thai people at all ages who have committed a crime to improve their awareness and return to lead a better life in their society and to be an important force of their community development.

The tasks and management of non-formal and informal education programs are under the responsibility of the Office of the Non-Formal and Informal Education. They play a significant role in mobilizing educational activities at the local level. They also care for the underprivileged who lack the opportunity to become literate and obtain basic education at all levels. The aims are to mobilize the non-formal education programs and activities to serve the out-of-school people at all ages so that they have the opportunity to learn appropriately throughout life.

In terms of basic education, the Office of the Non-Formal and Informal Education has provided services through various forms of learning such as classroom program, small group meeting program, distance learning through online and electronic media, self-learning, etc., They have also provided informal learning through learning centers such as public libraries, mobile libraries, community learning centers and science center for education, etc.

2.2 Levels of Education

There are two levels of education in Thailand, which are basic education and higher education.

2.2.1 Basic Education

According to the *National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999)* and *Amendments (Second National Education Act B.E. 2545 [2002])*, 12 years of free basic education is specified to be made available to all learners.

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 extension also covers special education for underprivileged or impoverished children and special education for people with disabilities.

At present, basic education begins at the pre-primary level 3 years of kindergarten, 6 years of primary, 3 years of lower secondary, and 3 years of upper secondary education. The current compulsory education requirement covers 6 years of primary and 3 years of lower secondary education. According to the *Compulsory Education Act B.E. 2545 (2002)*, children are expected to be enrolled in basic education institutions from age 7 until the age of 16, except for those who have already completed Grade 9, or the final year of the compulsory education level. Basic education is provided by the following institutions:

- Early childhood development institutions, e.g., childcare centers, child development centers, early childhood development centers operated by religious institutions, initial care centers for disabled children or those with special needs, or childhood cares under other names;
- Schools such as public schools, private schools, and those under the jurisdiction of Buddhist or other religious institutions;
- Learning centers, e.g., those organized by non-formal educational agencies, individuals, families, communities, community organizations, local administration organizations, private organizations, professional bodies, religious institutions, enterprises, hospitals, medical institutions, welfare institutes, and other social institutions.



2.2.2 Higher Education

Higher education is provided in universities, educational institutions, colleges, or other types of institutions. According to *Thai Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (TQF:HEd) B.E. 2552 (2009)*, the qualification framework begins at an entry level, which is the successful completion of basic education, and culminates with the degree of doctor.

There are six levels of qualifications as follows:

- Level 1 Advanced Diploma (3 years)
- Level 2 Bachelor's Degree
- Level 3 Graduate Diploma
- Level 4 Master's Degree
- Level 5 Higher Graduate Diploma
- Level 6 Doctorate Degree



A) Advanced Diploma Level

Higher education at the advanced diploma level or certificate of higher vocational education level requires six semesters or three years of study. As for the Dual Vocational Education (DVE) or equivalent curriculum in every subject, the advanced diploma may not be taken over more than six years of full-time and not over more than nine semesters of equivalent part time study.

B) Bachelor's Degree Level

Students who wish to study at the degree level must complete upper secondary education (Grade 12), vocational education, or the equivalent. Normally, the bachelor's degree requires four years of study. Five or six years of study are required in some fields and a practicum is required before the degree is awarded. The continuing bachelor program does not exceed four years of full-time study and six years of part time study.



C) Graduate Diploma Level

The graduate diploma level is normally taken over a period of one academic year or equivalent part-time period of study. The programs are intended to provide advanced academic and professional studies beyond the level of a bachelor's degree for students who want to improve professional skill and knowledge but do not meet entry requirements or do not wish to undertake the research or major project work required for a master's degree. Although intended as a final qualification, students completing a Graduate Diploma may proceed to study at the Master's level. However, they may be required to complete additional theoretical or applied studies before doing so.

D) Master's Degree Level

The master's degree level specifies more depth of the specific scope of study compared to the bachelor's degree level. Its aim is to promote students to gain knowledge, understand the creation process, and apply the new knowledge to develop work and society. In general,

two years of study are required, but it is to be taken within six academic years. Students are required to write a thesis or independent study relevant to their field of study before the degree is awarded.



E) Higher Graduate Diploma Level

A higher graduate diploma is an advanced professional qualification provided in a limited number of specialized fields that require professional studies between the levels of master and doctor. It is used primarily in medicine and related studies such as pharmacy and other medical sciences. Students must have completed a master's degree prior to admission and the programs require a minimum of 24 credit points in advanced professional studies

F) Doctorate Degree Level

Doctoral programs involve substantial advanced independent scholarship, mastery of the most recent developments in a major field of inquiry, and the creation, interpretation and application of knowledge in a way that adds significantly to the development of a subject, discipline or professional field. This level of education requires an additional three years of study following the master's degree, but it is to be taken within six academic years.

The higher education aims to produce graduates in accordance with the national higher education development plan, philosophy of higher education, philosophy of higher education institutions, and international academic and professional standards. The production of higher education graduates is based on the belief that quality manpower must have conscience to be a good citizen. Additionally, this citizen would benefit society and have the ability to be self-reliant in order to navigate the country to sustainable development and make equality with the international standards.

In 2020, there were 156 higher education institutions under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of the Higher Education, Science, Research and Technology. Among these institutions, there were 27 autonomous universities, 9 public universities, 38 Rajabhat Universities, 9 Rajamangala Universities, 72 private higher education, and 1 Institute of Community College. Moreover, other higher educational institutions and specialized higher educational institutions are under supervision of ministries and agencies other than the Ministry of the Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation.

As for the Institute of Community College, there are campuses in 20 provinces nationwide. These are to comply with the government's policy to promote community colleges to be higher educational institutions offering diploma, and academic and vocational education and training with curricula that correspond with the demands of each community. In addition, community colleges are encouraged to promote lifelong learning, career development, and improvement of quality of life of individuals and groups of individuals in communities.

2.3 Educational Standards and Quality Assurance

According to the National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999) and Amendments (Second National Education Act B.E. 2545 [2002]), educational structuring and administration must uphold the main principles of educational standards and provision of quality assurance in all levels and all types of education. In addition, the Act also specifies that the Ministry of Education holds responsibility for the supervision of all levels and all types of education, stipulation of educational policies, plans, and standards. Therefore, educational standards are defined in order to set up different aspects of educational quality assurance such as desired learner attributes, curriculum, and teaching-learning process. Once there is the decentralization of power in educational administration and management of both regional and institutional levels, it is necessary to specify educational standards and quality assurance for the overall educational development.

This chapter reports the national education standards, standards for internal and external educational quality assurance, and educational qualifications standards as follows:

2.3.1 National Education Standards

The Office of the Education Council, Ministry of Education, drew up the *National Education Standards B.E. 2561 (2018)* to replace the one written in 2004. The Standards aim to be the guidelines for all educational institutions to develop learners to achieve desired learning outcomes. The supervising agencies can also use the Standards as the educational goals by specifying desired learning outcomes of students in accordance with their ages in each level and type of education and ensuring that educational institutions can conveniently carry out duties to achieve the set goals. In addition, another purpose of the Standards is for all relevant bodies responsible for education management to use it as a guideline for the promotion of supervision, monitoring, evaluation, and quality assurance.

These sets of standards are in the Desired Outcomes of Education (DOE Thailand), which means it is characteristic of the Thai people 4.0 that correspond to the vision of development towards security, prosperity, and sustainability. The 4.0 Thais need to maintain the “Thai-ness” to be able to compete in the world arena and to be a person with three characteristics as follows:

1) *Learner Person*: Being someone with perseverance, who is eager to learn, who has life-long learning skills to keep up with the digital and future world, and who has the competencies derived from knowledge. The Thai

people should also be knowledgeable, be aesthetic, preserve, apply Thai wisdom, have life skills to get a job or profession based on the philosophy of sufficiency, have life security, and have good quality of life for oneself, family, and society.

2) *Innovative co-creator*: Being someone who has intellectual skills, 21st Century skills, digital intelligence, creative thinking skills, cross-cultural skills, transdisciplinary competency, and entrepreneurial characteristics to co-create and develop technological and social innovations, and increase the opportunities and values for oneself and society.

3) *Active citizen*: Being someone who loves the nation and community, is responsible and conscious about being a good Thai and world citizen, with volunteer spirit, and who will take part in national development based on democracy, justice, and equality for management of natural resources and peaceful co-existence in society and global community.

Educational institutions and education management-related agencies can use the desired education outcomes as guidelines for the provision of basic education management and educational standards necessary for each level and type of education. As a result, this will generate and lay the foundation for the desired attributes in learners during and after their education. The national education standards have another significant aim which is giving freedom to educational institutions to provide education in accordance with their context and students' competencies in order to comply with the Ministerial Regulation on the Education Quality Assurance B.E. 2561 (2018).

The 2020 Annual Report on Implementation Results of the National Education Standards showed that the Ministry of Education and concerned agencies has brought the National Education Standards to set up the national standards framework as follows:

- *The Secretariat Office of the Teachers' Council of Thailand* has amended the Regulation of the Teachers' Council of Thailand on Professional Standards B.E. 2556 (2013) in part of the teaching profession related to knowledge standards, professional experiences, and operational standards in order to meet the change and educational direction of the country;

- *The Office of the Permanent Secretary of Education by the Provincial Education Offices* have applied the National Education Standards as the framework to determine educational standards at provincial level;

- *The Office of the Private Education Commission* has organized school administrators and teacher training both at the central and regional levels so that they gained knowledge and understanding about the educational assurance system. They have also clarified the operation according to the National Education Standards, which is considered the educational management guidelines;

- *The Office of the Non-formal and Informal Education* has determined and developed educational standards of the Non-formal and Informal Education in accordance with the 2018 National Education Standards. They have submitted the Standards to the Minister of Education, so it can be approved for the announcement and clarification of the operation guidelines according to its education standards;

- *The Office of the Basic Education Commission* has applied the 2018 National Education Standards to create the educational standards of educational institutions and to develop the internal quality assurance system of educational institutions;

- *The Office of the Higher Education Commission* (At present, *the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation*) has applied the 2018 National Education Standards to create the higher education standards and to issue the Ministerial Regulation on the Higher Education Standards B.E. 2561 (2018) and the Higher Education Regulation on the Implementation of Higher Education Standards Guidelines in 2018 in order that The higher education institutions will apply the two regulations as the framework for determining higher education standards and developing their internal assurance system based on academic freedom to reach the expected outcomes;

- *The Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (Public Organization) or ONESQA* has conducted external quality assessment during the 2017-2020 fiscal year by synthesizing the results of external quality assessment and preparing summary reports on the performance of the educational institutions. The reports also included policy recommendations in compliance with the 2018 National Education Standards and the issues in line with the policy of the parent agency with jurisdiction over each educational institution in order to submit the reports to the Ministry of Education and relevant agencies;

- *The Department of Local Administration, Ministry of Interior*, has applied the 2018 National Education Standards to create the educational standards of educational institutions and to develop the internal quality assurance system of all levels of educational institutions under the local administration organizations (Provincial Administration Organization, Municipality, Subdistrict Administration Organization).

2.3.2 Educational Quality Assurance

The Ministerial Regulation on Educational Quality Assurance of B.E. 2018 defines educational quality assurance as the evaluation and monitoring of educational quality of each educational institution, in accordance with the educational standards of the particular level and type; having the mechanism which controls and inspects the administrative system of the educational institution, so that educational development is achieved and the stakeholders are confident that such an educational institution is able to successfully provide the standards-based education.



The educational quality assurance system of Thailand comprises of sub-systems for internal and external quality assurance as prescribed by the National Education Act of B.E. 2542 and its revision in B.E. 2545, The Act states that the educational quality assurance system aims to develop the quality and standards of basic education and higher education, and that it comprises of the sub-systems for internal and external assurance. The total system and sub-systems, the criteria, and the procedures for the assurance of basic education and vocational education are regulated by the Ministerial Relation of the Ministry of Education; while those for higher education are regulated by the ministerial regulations of other responsible ministries.

2.3.2.1 Internal Quality Assurance of Education

The internal quality assurance system of an educational institution is a vital part of the administrative process, which is regularly and continuously conducted at each institution. The results are annually reported to the upper level administrators, related stakeholders, and general public. This system will lead to the development of educational quality and standards, as well as to prepare for external quality assurance. According to the Ministerial Regulation for Internal Quality Assurance of Basic Education of B.E. 2561, each basic educational institution must manage its internal quality assurance system by prescribing its own educational standards. They must do so in accordance with the national standards for each educational level and type. In addition, the basic educational institution needs to prepare its school development plan, to evaluate and audit

the educational quality within the school, to monitor and improve the quality in accordance with the educational standards, and to annually submit the school's self-assessment report (SAR) to the upper level of administration.



Moreover, the Announcement of the Ministry of Education on the Implementation of the Educational Standards for Early Childhood Education, Basic Education, and Special Basic Education was declared. This ministerial announcement provides the principles for developing, promoting, supporting, and monitoring educational quality, which should be the responsibility of the educational institution, its upper level of administration, and the offices of primary and secondary education areas, as prescribed by the Internal Quality Assurance System of Education.



For higher education, the Announcement of the Ministry of Education on the Higher Education Standards of B.E. 2561 was declared in 2018. It claims that this is the mechanism for the promotion of higher education quality assurance, which covers four domains: learning outcomes of students; research and innovation; academic service to society; arts, culture and Thai-ness, and management. The provision also states that it aims to create higher education graduates who are qualified Thai citizens as prescribed by the National Strategies, and who can become human resources for the national development towards stability, prosperity, and sustainability. In addition, the Higher Education Act of B.E. 2562 prescribes that every higher education institution provides an educational quality assurance system in order to develop the quality and the standards of its higher education. The internal quality assurance system that assesses, monitors, and develops the quality and standards of higher education institutions is according to the criteria prescribed by the Committee for Higher Education Standards. The quality assessment report of each higher educational institution is to be submitted to the higher education council of each institution, considered for further improvement of the educational quality, and used to inform the Secretariat Office of the Ministry of Higher Education for the purpose of external quality assurance of that particular higher education institution.

2.3.2.2 External Quality Assurance of Education

In the external quality assurance of education, the 4th Revision of the National Education Act, B.E. 2562, provides for the establishment of the Office of National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (Public Organization). The duties are to develop the criteria and procedures for external evaluation of educational quality and to conduct the external evaluation of all levels of education. This does not include higher education, which is under the responsibilities of the Ministry of Higher Education, Sciences, Research and Innovation and other ministries. The external evaluation of every higher education institution will be conducted once every five years. The result of this evaluation is to be submitted to its upper level administration and to the public.

In the 4th Round of the external evaluation of education (2016-2020), the Office of National Education Standards and Quality Assessment has certified the assessment of more than 3,569 schools/institutions. This value does not yet include the assessment of the 2020 year, which is the last year of the 4th Round. The 4th Round External Evaluation will end in the 2021 Fiscal Year, but the COVID-19 pandemic in the 2020 Fiscal Year interrupted the external assessment because schools need time to prepare themselves for the new form of instruction in this New Normal Era. In fact, for the external assessment of educational quality during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Office of National Education Standards and Quality Assessment is using the method that each school's internal quality assurance is responsive to. It is not to give more burden, but to cope with the readiness, voluntary

request, and timeframe of the school. In addition, based on the principle of Social Distancing, the following measures have been prescribed for the external quality assessment of school education during COVID-19:

The First Phrase: Using the analysis of the school's Self-Assessment Report (SAR), which is submitted through the upper level of its administration as stated by the Ministerial Regulation on Educational Quality Assurance of B.E. 2561. The evaluation in this phrase will rely on SAR and the attached documents only.

The Second Phrase: Site Visit. After receiving the result of the SAR's evaluation, the school may also request for the educational quality certification. Upon receiving this request, the Office of National Education Standards and Quality Assessment will assign its external evaluators to visit the school during school days. The site visit will be conducted under the principles of Social Distancing.

Chapter 3

Educational Administration and Provision and Educational Participation

In Thailand, there are many agencies and organisations in charge of educational administration and provision. The main governmental bodies that are responsible for education work and promoting and overseeing education provided by the state and private sectors include the Ministry of Education (MOE), and Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation (MHESI). Local Administrations Organisations (LAO) under the supervision of the Ministry of Interior also have a pivotal role in overseeing educational institutions in local areas. Besides that, there are some educational divisions under the supervision of other ministries and agencies. They also provide education to produce qualified personnel that can fulfil the specific needs of each agency, such as the Ministry of Defence, Royal Thai Police, Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, and Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, etc. Each agency is responsible for education provision according to the needs

and demands of that agency or organisation. There are various curricula from secondary to higher education.

This chapter will present three parts: 1) Educational Administration and Provision by the State; 2) Educational Administration and Provision by Local Administrative Organizations; and 3) Participation in Educational Provision of Private Sector.

3.1 Educational Administration and Provision by the State

The Ministry of Education is the largest governmental body responsible for the educational administration and provision of all levels and types of education. This includes central level agencies, regional and provincial level centres, and educational institutions across the nation. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation is mostly responsible for the educational administration and provision of higher education. Apart from that, there are other ministries and agencies responsible for specific education in response to the needs of each agency.

3.1.1 Ministry of Education

According to the Section 31 of the National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999), the Ministry of Education shall have the powers and duties for the promotion and overseeing of all types and levels of education (except the higher education level, which is overseen by other ministries specifically stipulated by its law); formulation of educational policies, plans, and standards; mobilization of resources for education; promotion and cooperation of religious, art, culture, and sport for education. In addition, Section 32 states

that there shall be three main pillars in the form of groups of individuals including: the Education Council; Commission of Basic Education; and Commission of Vocational Education. Therefore, at present, the main educational administration and provision at the central government level comprises of four agencies. They are: 1) Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education; 2) Office of the Education Council; 3) Office of the Basic Education Commission; and 4) Office of the Vocational Education Commission, which have powers and duties as follows:

Office of the Permanent Secretary (OPS), Ministry of Education has powers and duties relating to general administration, cooperation within the Ministry, operations through a chain of command prescribed by law as well as budgeting, creating an action plan, expediting, following up, and evaluating the performance according to policy, guidelines and action plans and operating in line with the ministerial regulations on organization of the Ministry.

Office of the Education Council (OEC) is the main agency that has duties: 1) to formulate and implement educational policies, schemes, and standards and enhance human resource development; 2) to carry out research to develop policies, plans, and standards for quality education and human resource development; 3) to monitor, evaluate, and develop an evaluation system for educational provision and human resource development; 4) to carry out legal work related to education and human resource development; and 5) to encourage collaboration to drive education and human resource development.

Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC) has the following functions and duties: 1) considering a proposal of policy, educational development plan, educational provision standards, and a central curriculum of basic education; 2) setting criteria and guidelines, and providing support for education by allocating resources and managing the budget; 3) developing administration system, promoting and coordinating information network, using information technology in teaching and learning, and promoting educational supervision, administration, and management; 4) monitoring, examining, and evaluating basic education at educational service areas level; 5) developing educational innovations; and 6) carrying out secretarial duties of the Basic Education Commission.

Office of the Vocational Education Commission (OVEC) is the main governmental body responsible for: 1) providing, promoting, and developing quality and standards of vocational education and professional training in response to the needs of the country; 2) upgrading the quality and standards of vocational education manpower to meet international standards; 3) expanding the vocational education opportunity thoroughly, continuously, equally, and fairly; 4) being a centre in vocational education and professional training at the skill, technical, and technological level; 5) building cooperative networks where all sectors participate in the development of vocational education provision and professional training; 6) conducting research and managing knowledge for professional development and quality of life; and 7) enhancing and developing vocational education teachers and personnel to be excellent.

In addition, there are seven independent agencies under the supervision of the Ministry of Education. Four of them are autonomous state agencies including: the Secretariat Office of the Teachers' Council of Thailand; the Institute for the Promotion of Teaching Science and Technology; the Office of the Welfare Promotion Commission for Teachers and Education Personnel; and the National Scout Organization of Thailand. Three of them are public organisations comprising of: the Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (Public Organisation); the National Institute of Educational Testing Service; and Mahidol Wittayanusorn School.

The Secretariat Office of the Teachers' Council of Thailand (or KHURUSAPHA in Thai language) has duties as follows: to determine professional standards; to issue and revoke licenses and their renewals for Professional Practice; to supervise the conduct and performance of professional educators to be in compliance with professional standards and the code of ethics; and to promote and support research and professional development in education.

The Institute for the Promotion of Teaching Science and Technology (IPST) has main duties as follows: to promote the study and research of curricula, teaching, and learning techniques and evaluate the sciences, mathematics and technology at all educational levels with focus on basic education; to develop and prepare textbooks, exercises, academic papers, all supplementary materials as well as produce equipment and materials for teaching science, mathematics, and technology.

Office of the Welfare Promotion Commission for Teachers and Educational Personnel (OTEP) is responsible for promoting the welfare, well-being, rights, benefits, and security of education professionals and educators. In addition, its objectives are also to promote unity and support, and commend and uphold the honour of teachers and educational personnel.

The National Scout Organisation of Thailand (NSOT) is responsible for developing Scouts in many aspects: promoting physical and mental health, intellect and morality, and Scouts to be good citizens that are responsible for helping create a society with peace and security for the Thai nation (Arquivo, 2009).

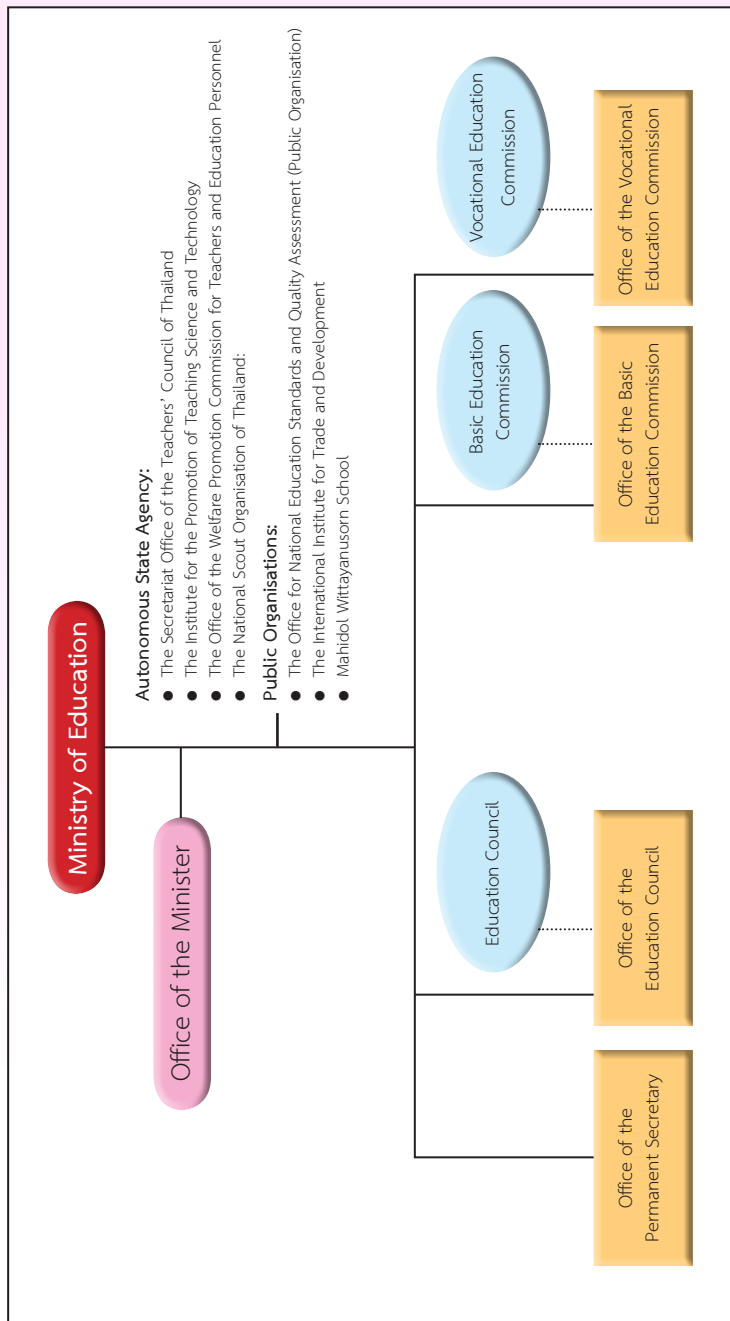
The Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (Public Organisation) or ONESQA is responsible for developing the external quality assessment system; developing standards and criteria for external quality assessment; providing training and certifying external assessors; conducting assessment to all educational institutions once in every five years; and informing assessment results to them and all agencies concerned in order to improve the quality of education in Thailand.

The National Institute of Educational Testing Service (Public Organisation) or NIETS was established in order to organise the systems and methods of testing and develop instruments for measuring and assessing in accordance with educational standards of learners; to organise national educational testing and provide support for testing at schools and educational service area offices; and to be a centre for educational testing, support, and providing test results to various organisations, both domestic and international.

Mahidol Wittayanusorn School (MWIT) is the first science and mathematics school in Thailand providing specialized education for high school students who are exceptionally talented in science, mathematics, and technology in order for them to be able to be a researcher and inventor in the future. MWIT is a public and autonomous school under supervision of the Minister of education.

The administration structure of the Ministry of Education at the central level is shown in Figure 3.1 below.

Figure 3.1 The Administration Structure of the Ministry of Education at the Central Level (As of August 2021)



Section 32 of the Fourth National Education Act B.E. 2562 (2019) states that "In Regulating a government administration in the Ministry, there shall be three main organisations in the form of council or commission", which are responsible for providing views or advice to the Minister of Education "

The education administration and provision of the Ministry of Education at the regional level is done through 18 regional education offices under the supervision of the Office of the Permanent Secretary for Education to carry out the mission of the Ministry of Education at the regional level. Its main duty is to drive education at regional and provincial levels by promoting, supporting and developing education, as well as establishing cooperation and integration with agencies under the Ministry of Education and other agencies, as well as other related sectors in the area. The regional superintendent is in charge of the regional education office.



At provincial level, the provincial education offices have been established in 77 provinces under the supervision of the Office of the Permanent Secretary for Education, with the provincial superintendent as the top executive.

The provincial education office carries out the mission of the Ministry of Education on the administration and management of education as required by law, and performs duties related to education according to the policies and strategies as required by related government agencies. According to the government's policy to establish provincial groups and designating provinces which will be the operations centres of the provincial group, 18 provincial groups were formed in six regions. Consequently, the Ministry of Education issued a ministerial announcement to establish six regional education offices under the Office of the Permanent Secretary for Education, which include:

- The Central Regional Education Office, located in Pathum Thani province, responsible for the operations of the regional education office Region 1, Region 2, Region 3 and Region 4.

- The Southern Regional Education Office, located in Nakhon Si Thammarat province, responsible for the operations of the regional education office Region 5 and Region 6

- The Southern Border Regional Education Office, located in Yala province, responsible for the operations of the regional education office Region 7

- The Eastern Regional Education Office, located in Chonburi province, responsible for the operations of the regional education office Regions 8 and Region 9

- The Northern Regional Education Office located in Chiang Mai province, responsible for the operations of the regional education office Region 15, Region 16, Region 17 and Region 18.

As for the Office of the Basic Education Commission, there are central authorities in different regions throughout the country including 183 Primary Educational Service Area Offices (PEASO), and 62 Secondary Educational Service Area Offices (SEASO). Key functions of these offices include establishing policies, development plans and educational standards, at the regional level. They are also responsible for coordinating, promoting, supporting and developing curriculum in conjunction with schools in each educational service area office. In addition, the offices analyse, research and collect educational information in the education service area, coordinate the mobilization of resources in their area, organize educational quality assurance system and evaluate schools in their regional area.

3.1.2 Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation (MHESI)

Originally, the main body overseeing public and private higher education institutions was the Office of the Higher Education Commission, one of the main organizations of the Ministry of Education (Details can be followed in Education in Thailand 2018). However, in order to be in line with the education in the 21st century and the introduction of Thai society to Thailand 4.0 which focuses on science, research and innovation, the idea to establish the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation was initiated. The Higher Education Act 2019 was, therefore, enacted on May 1st, 2019, to support the mission of



the new Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation. The new Ministry emerged from the merger of the Ministry of Science and Technology, the Office of the Higher Education Commission, the Office of the National Research Council (NRCT), and the Office of Thailand Research Fund (TRF). The new Ministry of Higher Education was established on May 1st, 2019, under the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation Act B.E. 2562 (2019). Some of the laws were repealed to highlight the importance of science and research of the Ministry. Main authorities of the new Ministry are to:

1) Promote, support and supervise higher education to be able to cope with global changes, while maintaining independence in academic and management, as well as develop manpower in accordance with the needs of the country and conduct research and innovation to develop communities, social and the country as a whole in science, technology, social sciences, humanities and interdisciplinary studies.

2) Promote, support and supervise the research and innovation of higher education institutions and agencies in the research and innovation system that are affiliated to the Ministry, or under the supervision of the Minister, as well as coordinating with research and innovation agencies outside the Ministry to enhance cooperation and implementation in a direction that is relevant and in line with the country's policy, strategy and science, research and innovation plan.

3) Provide needful ecosystems and infrastructure to develop higher education, science, research and innovation, as well as promote cooperation to produce specialized advanced workforce and cooperation in research and innovation

with government agencies, private sectors, local governments and individuals or agencies abroad.

There will be a Higher Education Commission that is responsible for proposing policies, development plans and higher education standards that meet the requirements of the National Economic and Social Development Plan and the National Education Plan. This commission is also responsible for supporting resources, monitoring, reviewing, and evaluating the management of higher education, taking into account the independence and academic excellence of the higher education institutions. In addition, there is a Higher Education Standards Committee with one important task: to promote, support, monitor, review educational management and quality assurance, as well as to evaluate the management of higher education of public higher education institutions under the Ministry and private higher education institutions.

The Higher Education Commission and the Higher Education Standards Committee are the committees at the ministerial level, and the agency responsible for the operation of such committees is the Office of the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation.



In addition to supervising and evaluating the educational management of higher education institutions, the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation also has a mission to supervise demonstration schools under the universities. The first demonstration school in the country was the Demonstration School of Srinakarinwirot University, Pathumwan, which was established in accordance with the initiative of Professor M.L. Pin Malakul, Minister of Education in 1953. It was established as a demonstration unit in the secondary school teacher training department of a preparatory school. This unit is for students and teachers to go through before teaching at a preparatory school and to study new teaching methods according to the principles of progressive education that flourished at the time before becoming a demonstration secondary school in 1917.

Currently, there are 96 demonstration schools under the public universities, autonomous universities, Rajabhat University, Rajamangala University of Technology, and private universities.

3.1.3 Educational Administration and Provision by Other Organizations

Other state agencies apart from the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation also provide education both in the school system, out-of-the school system, and specialized education which produce personnel with specific knowledge and skills to fulfil the specific needs of each agency. Such agencies are, for example, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, the Ministry of

Public Health, the Ministry of Transport, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, the National Office of Buddhism, and the Royal Thai Police.



Emblem of the Other organizations responsible for education provision in Thailand

Statistical data of the Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education in 2019 shows the number of students and number of other educational institutions providing formal education at basic and higher education levels, which are not specialized education in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Number of Educational Institutions and Number of Students in Formal Education System by other Organizations (Academic Year 2019)

Organization	Number of Institutions	Number of Students
Ministry of Tourism and Sports	29	19,014
Ministry of Culture	16	10,868
Bangkok Metropolitan Administration	437	281,029
Ministry of Social Development and Human Security	2	159
Royal Thai Police	218	26,417

Source: Information Technology & Communication Center, Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education

In addition, some agencies also provide specialized education which has different characteristics from education provided by ordinary educational institutions. Such education aims to produce personnel with special knowledge and skills to fulfil the special needs of each agency. These agencies have specialized educational institutions under their supervision and design their curriculum for students from upper secondary school level to master's degree level in both general and specialized vocational streams. Currently, there are agencies that provide specialized education, including: the Ministry of Defence, the Royal Thai Police, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Transport, the Ministry of Digital Economy and Society, the Ministry of Public Health, the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, the Thai Red Cross Society, and the Thai Bar Association under the Royal Patronage. Specialized educational institutions of these agencies have their own teachers with qualifications and professional expertise with real work experience who can transfer knowledge and practical exercises intensively to learners directly. In addition, specialized educational agencies also have academic partnerships with institutions, universities and other educational agencies in order to link specialized educational courses with education in other systems. This allows students who graduated from institutions of specialized courses to pursue a higher level of education. The Office of the National Education Council has categorized the management of specialized education provision into three groups as follows:

3.1.3.1 Military or Police Education and Training

The Ministry of Defence provides education from upper secondary to higher education level. For bachelor's degree and graduate level, graduates will become commissioned officers. Such institutions as Chulachomklong Royal Military Academy and Royal Police Cadet Academy are institutions providing these types of graduates. For lower than bachelor's degree and upper secondary level, graduates will become non-commissioned officers. Such institutions as Armed Forces Academies Preparatory School and the Naval Rating School. Apart from the Ministry of Defence, the Royal Thai Police also provides education under the Police Education Bureau, Royal Thai Police.

3.1.3.2 Medical and Nurse Education

The medical and nurse education is provided by Phramongkutklao College of Medicine, the Royal Thai Army Nursing College, the Royal Thai Air Force Nursing College, the Royal Thai Navy Nursing College, the Police Nursing College, the Naval Operational Medicine School, the Collaborative Project to Increase Production of Rural Doctor, Faculty of Medicine Vajira Hospital, Navamindradhiraj University, Kuakarun Faculty of Nursing, Praboromarajchanok Institute, and the Thai Red Cross Institute of Nursing.



3.1.3.3 Other Academic/Specialized Vocational Education Serving the Operation of Specialized Organizations/Agencies

This group of institutions includes the Civil Aviation Training Centre, the Merchant Marine Training Centre, the Railway Technical School, the Electrical Vocational School of the Provincial Electrical Authority, the Thai Meteorological School, the Postal School, and the Thai Bar Under the Royal Patronage.

Table 3.2 Number of Educational Institutions Providing Specialized Education and Number of Students by Organization (Academic Year 2018)

Organization	Number of Institutions	Number of Students
Ministry of Defence	35	12,587
Royal Thai Police		
Office of the Prime Minister	12	7,761
Ministry of Interior	1	263
Ministry of Transport	3	2,969
Ministry of Digital Economy and Society	2	34
Ministry of Public Health	51	23,356
Bangkok Metropolitan Administration	2	1,487
The Thai Red Cross Society	1	1,014
The Thai Bar under the Royal Patronage	1	NA

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

3.1.4 Educational Administration and Management at the Institution level

Educational administration and management at the institution level can be divided into two levels as follows:

3.1.4.1 Basic Education Level

According to the National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999) and Amendments (Second Edition) B.E. 2545 (2002), the roles of basic educational institution are

- 1) To prepare a policy on the development of academic, personnel administration, budget, and general administration
- 2) To set up a budget and be responsible for spending of the budget
- 3) To develop the school curriculum and provide education
- 4) To issue regulations, rules, announcements, guidelines
- 5) To supervise, monitor, evaluate projects and plans
- 6) To mobilize educational resources, oversee assets maintenance
- 7) To establish quality assurance system within the school, and
- 8) To promote the strength of the community, and build a relationship with the community.

Each educational institution, in both general and vocational streams, will have the Basic Educational Institute Committee responsible for supervising, promoting, and supporting the operation of the institution and supervising personnel administration as prescribed by the regulations governing the management of government teachers and educational personnel. The educational institution with less than 300 students shall have nine committee members, while the educational institution with more than 300 students shall have 15 committee members. The Basic Educational Institute Committee comprises representatives

from various sectors, i.e., representatives from the parents, from the teachers, from the community organizations, from the local administration, from the educational institution alumni, from monks and /or from other religious organizations in the area, and qualified resource persons. The director of the educational institution shall be a member and secretary of the committee.

According to the Office of Basic Education Commission, educational institutions are divided into two categories, which are: 1) General basic educational institution comprising small institutions, which have nine committee members, and big institutions which have 15 committee members, and 2) Partnership Schools which have 15 committee members.

Since basic educational institutions are legal entities, which allow the institutions to manage flexibly, autonomously and effectively, under supervision of the institution committee. The main organizational structure in the school includes: Academic Department, Budget Department, Personnel Department, and General Administration Department.

Table 3.3 Number of Students in Basic Education Institutions (Academic Years 2015-2019)

Level of Education	Academic year				
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Pre-Primary	2,700,778	2,700,851	2,688,796	2,579,190	2,529,838
Primary	4,866,449	4,817,882	4,761,465	4,752,205	4,744,155
Lower Secondary Education	2,308,439	2,276,593	2,287,269	2,282,379	2,265,875
Upper Secondary Education	1,998,539	1,921,483	1,899,635	1,890,362	1,866,158
- General	1,344,063	1,270,599	1,242,079	1,237,375	1,208,265
- Vocational	654,476	650,884	657,556	652,987	657,893
Total	11,874,205	11,716,809	11,637,165	11,504,136	11,406,026

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

3.1.4.2 Higher Education Level

In the early stage, universities in Thailand were established as public institutions enjoying a status of a department under the government. The administration in various areas of the university also adheres to a full bureaucracy.



Later, Section 36 of the *National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999) and Amendments (Second National Education Act B.E. 2545 (2002)* stipulates that the public educational institutions providing education at degree level shall be juristic person and enjoy the status of government agencies under the supervision of the government, or state-supervised agencies. Such an educational institution has freedom in its operation, can develop its own administration system and management, enjoys flexibility, academic freedom and is governed by the educational institution council in accordance with the law on the establishment of the institution. This has made many public universities turn themselves into autonomous universities which have their own administrative structure, highest degree of freedom in budgeting and administration. However, the budget of those universities is still allocated by the government. Public and autonomous universities have their own administration and management law, with additional freedom and flexibility in administration. This has made universities be able to manage their own internal operations under the supervision of the university council within the framework of the law. Each higher educational institution can also set up its own internal units as necessary.

The Higher Education Act B.E. 2562 (2019) which was effective on May 2nd, 2019, discusses the following principles of higher education management in Article 9:

- (1) Principle of social responsibility,
- (2) Principle of academic freedom,
- (3) Principle of independence,
- (4) Principle of equality,
- (5) Principle of good governance,
- (6) Other principles as defined in the Decree.

Regarding the principle of independence, it is stipulated in Section 15 of the Act, that higher education institutions are free to offer teaching and learning, research, academic management, personnel management, finance, budget and property. With this, effective measures to prevent and eliminate conflicts of interest and corruption and misconduct have to be observed. According to the law on the establishment of higher education institutions and other laws relating to higher education, the control and supervision of higher education institutions can only be done as necessary to preserve the interests of the people or the country as a whole, and as stipulated in this Act or in other acts.

Considering the duties and authorities of higher education institutions, Section 26 of the Act defines as follows:

- (1) Educational management,
- (2) Research and innovation,
- (3) Academic services to society,
- (4) Preservation of arts and culture,
- (5) Duties and other authorities as required by law.

One of the key roles in the management of the education of higher education institutions outlined in this Act is: higher education institutions should provide a variety of courses and forms of teaching and learning up to a degree level. The teaching and learning can be in forms of using learning kits, lifelong education, or part time study to improve the potential and skills of individuals of all ages. In addition, higher education institutions must provide education to learners, aiming to improve the excellence of students both academically or professionally and to be good citizen of the society. Moreover, higher education institutions are obliged to enhance the development of their morality, ethical and responsibility for themselves, their family, community, society and country.



The Act also sets out a mission on undertaking more definitive innovative research as outlined in Sections 37-39, instructing higher education institutions to conduct research and innovation which is in line with the needs and necessities of the country. The research and innovation should be able to develop and solve problems of the country in a concrete way as well as being an academic prosperity. In addition, it must be in line with the guidelines set forth by the Policy Council and the Committee for the Promotion of Science, Research and Innovation, which require higher education institutions to cooperate in the preparation of the country's science, research and innovation database, and to support staff development in research and innovation, research management, and staff exchange. It also encourages the establishment of joint research networks to apply research results in a concrete manner between higher education institutions and local governments, other government agencies, private sectors, civil society at home and abroad, to encourage the use of the findings and innovations of higher education institutions.

In 2021, the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation issued the Ministerial Regulations B.E. 2564 (2021) to organize higher education institutions into the following groups: (1) The world's leading research development group, (2) Technology development and innovation promotion, group (3) Local or other communities development groups, (4) Intellectual and moral development groups by religious principles, (5) Production and development of professional and area-specialized personnel,

(6) Other groups as announced by the Minister. However, to organize all or part of higher education institutions into groups has to take into account the aims, missions, strategies, potentiality, and past performances of higher education institutions. Such division of higher education institutions will enable each group of higher education institutions to be driven to meet their goals. Higher education institutions can then strengthen their skills and aptitudes, and be able to respond effectively to the needs of the country.

3.2 Educational Administration and Provision by Local Administration Organizations

The educational administration and management of local authorities is under the responsibility of the Department of Local Administration, Ministry of Interior, which has the authority to promote, support and coordinate the provision of public services and education of local governments. The local administration organization is divided into four types, which are: Provincial Administration Organization, Municipality, Subdistrict Administration Organization, and Special Administration Organization (Bangkok Metropolitan Administration and Pattaya City) as detailed in Table 3.4 below

Table 3.4 Type and Number of Local Administration Organizations

Type of Local Administration	Number
Provincial Administrative Organization (Not including Bangkok and Pattaya)	76
Municipality	2,472
Subdistrict Administrative Organization	5,300
Special Administrative Organization (Bangkok and Pattaya)	2
Total	7,850

Source: Department of Local Administration

Notes: As of 9 September 2020

The Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand (B.E. 2560) (2017) stipulates that local administration organizations have the authority and duty in overseeing and providing public services and public activities for the benefit of the people in the local areas as well as to promote and support education provision for local residents.



As stipulated in the Constitution, local governments have the authority to promote and support the provision of education for the people in the local areas, so that people at all ages can have a life-long education. The local authority cooperates with the central government to organize all levels of education. The government is responsible for supervising, promoting and supporting the management of education in the local areas to assure quality and international standards. It has also drawn up a Local Education Development Plan (B.E. 2561-2565 (2018-2022)) for local governments and schools under local governments to use as a framework for the development of education during the term of such plans. The vision of the Development Plan is that local residents have a life-long education, driven by the participation of various sectors in the community, based on Thai-ness, following the philosophy of sufficiency economy, equipped with the 21st century skills, and live a happy and sustainable live. The local government's education development mission is clearly defined as follows:

- 1) Provide formal education, non-formal and informal education to children, youth and local residents, so that people at all ages can learn continuously throughout their lives.
- 2) Promote the development of children, youth and citizens with the basic skills needed in the 21st century.
- 3) Encourage all sectors to participate in the provision of education of local governments.
- 4) Promote religion, arts, culture, traditions and local wisdom.

5) Embrace the philosophy of sufficiency economy to integrate in the management of local government education, and

6) Improve the quality of education of local governments in southern border provinces.

It has also set out 11 local education development strategies, which are:

Strategy 1: Development of educational management using schools as a base for local development

Strategy 2: Enhancement of the quality of learners to have language skills for communication and computation (3R)

Strategy 3: Quality improvement of learners to have life skills in the 21st century (8C)

Strategy 4: Development of desirable characteristics and values of learners

Strategy 5: Development of local educational networks

Strategy 6: Promotion of participation in educational management

Strategy 7: Capacity building of local government executives, members of local council and related parties

Strategy 8: Preservation of arts, culture, local traditions and wisdom

Strategy 9: Provide nourishment to the religion

Strategy 10: Development of local education management based on the philosophy of sufficiency economy

Strategy 11: Promotion and integration of education to strengthen the stability, peace, and reduce educational inequality of southern border provinces

It's worth noting that most schools affiliated to local authorities are schools that provide compulsory education. There are only small number of schools that provide education up to high school in both general and vocational streams, as shown in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5 Number of Students in Basic Education Institutions under Local Administration Organizations (Academic Years 2015-2019)

Level of Education	Academic Year				
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Pre-Primary	1,162,259	1,048,538	1,003,592	916,435	970,135
Primary	509,478	306,501	429,930	307,359	314,862
Lower Secondary	196,492	166,145	169,444	167,978	165,464
Upper Secondary	85,215	78,910	78,099	76,906	74,711
- General	82,130	75,476	74,822	73,540	71,620
- Vocational	3,085	3,444	3,277	3,366	3,091
Total	1,953,444	1,600,104	1,681,065	1,468,678	1,525,172

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

Local administrative organization plays an important role in providing education in the local areas. In addition to providing education in the school system, it also provides non-formal and informal education in various form, for example, child development centres, lifelong learning centres. vocational training, and training to improve quality of life.

Local administrative organizations also have “Special Schools” which provide a special basic education curriculum to develop learners towards excellence in certain areas according to the learners’ aptitude. The additional courses are organized in a continuous learning scheme, which are, for example, a curriculum for academic excellence, music excellence, sports excellence, arts excellence, vocational excellence, etc.

In addition, local administrative organizations also provide education for disadvantaged children. In fiscal year 2020, the budget was allocated to 111 local governments (municipalities) to provide education for this group of children. Guidelines for educational management for disadvantaged children were also established with the vision that appropriate education and development must be equally provided for disadvantaged children. A committee on education for disadvantaged children has been set up at the municipality level, having the following responsibilities:

- 1) Set policies/goals on educational management for disadvantaged children.
- 2) Approve the education management plan of the teachers.
- 3) Monitor performance and resolve obstacles with feedback, solutions to problems.
- 4) Mobilize resources to provide education for disadvantaged children.

On the part of the teachers of the disadvantaged children, the responsibility will be to provide education to children at the place where the disadvantaged children are gathered. Teachers need to adjust children's behaviour so that it develops in the appropriate way to help them continue their studies or pursue an honest occupation to earn a living.

3.3 Participation in Educational Provision of Private Sector

The *Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand B.E. 2560 (2017)* stipulates that the State should encourage the participation between the government, local authorities and private sectors in providing education at all levels. The same applies to the *National Strategy (2018-2037)* on the Development and Capacity Building of Human Resources, under the section regarding the reform of the learning process that responds to the change in the 21st century, with participation from the private sectors in providing of education.



In Section 43 of the *National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999) and the Amendment (Second edition) B.E. 2545 (2002)* states that “the administration and management of education by the private sector shall enjoy independence with the state being responsible for overseeing, monitoring, and assessing education quality and standards. Private educational institutions shall follow the same rules for assessment of education quality and standards as those for state educational institutions.” In this connection, it is clear that the private sector plays a role in improving the education of the country. The private sector engaged in the management of education includes: private educational institutions, private enterprises, families, religious institutions, and nongovernmental organizations. In addition, the private sector is engaged with the government in various forms of education development, as will be discussed further.



Private schools can ease the burden of the government on the education management for young people, both in formal and non-formal education, which allow the government to save a big amount of budget on education investment. Presently, private schools are established and managed under the *National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999) and Amended (Second edition) B.E. 2545 (2002) and the Private Schools Act B.E. 2550 (2007), Amended (Second edition), B.E. 2554 (2011)*, and under other regulations relating to the management of education both for formal and non-formal education.

The administration and management of private institutions of basic education or private schools, the Private School Act stipulates that a formal school shall have an executive committee, comprising licensee, manager, director, teachers' representative, parents' representatives, and qualified resource persons as members. Private schools can be divided according to the characteristic of its operations as follows:

- 1) Charity schools are set up with the aim of providing education for the disadvantaged, the disabled, which include the school under Royal Patronage, the charity school of the Buddhist temple, the welfare education school, Islamic school, special education school, inclusive education school.
- 2) General schools provide education according to the Ministry of Education curriculum, the cost of education of the schools being subsidized by the government.

- 3) High potential schools provide education according to the Ministry of Education curriculum and provide supplementary learning in various special forms to improve the quality of education.
- 4) International schools organize education with the curriculum other than that of the Ministry of Education. Learners do not have any education subsidies.
- 5) Vocational schools are the schools which students at the vocational certificate level are allocated full subsidies at the expense rate.
- 6) Informal schools running short courses such as religious schools, arts & sports schools, professional schools, tutoring schools, schools for building life skills, learners do not receive any subsidies from the government.
- 7) Informal schools that provide Islamic teachings which are the Pono Institute of Education, the Center for Islamic Studies (Tadeeka). Teachers in these schools receive special teacher compensation.

According to the statistics of private education provided by the Office of Private Education Commission under the Office of the Permanent Secretary for Education, in the academic year 2019, there were 14,441 private schools that provide education both in the formal and non-formal systems. And according to the Office of the Vocational Education Commission, in the academic year 2020, there were 445 private vocational education institutions in the system.

As for private higher education institutions, it is currently under the supervision of the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation. Since the establishment of a private higher education institution must meet the required framework set forth in the *Private Higher Education Institutions Act B.E. 2546 (2003) and Second edition B.E. 2550 (2007)*, which gives private higher education institutions the same rights and authority in providing education as public higher education institutions. Therefore, private higher education institutions can operate and develop their own management systems with flexibility and independence, as well as having freedom in providing education under the supervision of the university council. Main sources of funding for the management of private higher education institutions come from tuition fees charged to students and from institution owners or licensees of the institutions.

From the research report on the *Development of Private Higher Education Institutions in Thailand*, it was found that newly established private higher education institutions aim to develop into a specialized higher education institution with its own unique characteristics. The development in teaching and learning of private education institutions have become more diverse by applying technology and communication tools to teaching and learning, integrating teaching and learning with research works, academic services, and tangible arts and culture preservation, as well as linking teaching and learning activities with the work in the workplace and the business sector. Many private higher

education institutions have innovated mechanisms to enhance the production process and have widely disseminated the result of the research work, as well as continuously establish a network of research collaborations among higher education institutions.

In the academic year 2018, a total of 10,885,508 students at all levels studied in public education institutions. In private education institutions, there were 2,778,211 students. In the academic year 2019, there were a total of 10,686,110 students in public institutions, and 2,744,021 in private institutions.

From 2015 to 2019, students studying in private institutions continued to increase, although still small in number. When considering the number of students by level of education, it was found that vocational stream secondary school students at private schools was the largest number compared to the number of students at other educational levels of private institutions (Table 3.6).

Table 3.6 Percentage of Students, University Students in Each Education Level, Public and Private Educational Institution (Academic Years 2015-2019)

Level of Education	Academic Year									
	2015		2016		2017		2018		2019	
	State	Private	State	Private	State	Private	State	Private	State	Private
Early Childhood	76.7	23.4	76.6	23.4	76.7	23.3	76.3	23.7	77.4	22.6
Elementary	77.9	22.1	77.8	22.2	77.7	22.3	77.3	22.7	77.1	22.9
Lower Secondary Education	85.9	14.1	85.9	14.1	85.8	14.2	85.7	14.3	85.4	14.6
Upper Secondary Education	81.1	18.9	81.3	18.7	80.6	19.4	80.8	19.2	80.3	19.8
- General	87.4	12.6	87.3	12.7	87.2	12.8	87.2	12.8	86.6	13.4
- Vocational	68.4	31.6	69.7	30.3	68.1	31.9	68.5	31.5	68.6	31.4
Higher Education	83.6	16.4	83.0	17.0	82.8	17.2	81.6	18.4	80.9	19.1
Total	80.4	19.6	80.3	19.7	80.1	19.9	79.7	20.3	79.6	20.4

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

3.3.1 Education Provision by Private Enterprises

Private enterprises can provide their own education, both with their own educational institutions or some providing educational arrangements for their employees. As can be seen from Section 12 of the *National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999) and the Amendment (Second edition), B.E. 2545 (2002)* which stipulates that “Other than the state, private persons, local administration organizations, individuals, families, community organizations, private organizations, professional bodies, religious institutions, enterprises, and other social institutions have the right to provide basic education...”. In addition, *the Skill Development Promotion Act B.E. 2545 (2002) and the Second Edition B.E. 2557 (2014)* encourages private enterprises to contribute more to the enterprises that provide training for their employees. The Ministry of Education also issued a *Ministerial Regulation on the Right of Enterprises to Provide Basic Education in Learning Centers B.E. 2547 (2004)*, which gives the enterprise the right to provide basic education in the learning center to employees and related persons according to their readiness, appropriateness, and needs of the enterprise. Learning centers will receive a waiver regarding the educational management guidelines that apply to public and private education institutions, for example, the number of teachers per student, number of students per classroom and number of buildings, etc. Learning centers may provide basic education in the forms of either formal education, non-formal education or informal education.

According to the ministerial regulation, the learning centre in the enterprise shall have a status of a school or educational institution, be able to manage all matters relating to education on their own. The learning centre can design courses that meet the needs of the enterprise itself, sourcing learners, teaching and learning method, measurement and evaluation, including issuing proof of graduation to employees.



Private enterprises can cooperate with vocational education institutions to organize a dual vocational education system. According to the Announcement of the Vocational Education Commission on *The Standards of Dual Vocational Education Management B.E. 2563 (2020)*, dual vocational education is defined as an occupational education management arising from an agreement between vocational colleges or institutes, and workplaces, state enterprises or government agencies on the matters of curricula, instruction, assessment, and evaluation. Learners spend time in vocational colleges or institutes and then practice in workplaces, state enterprises, or government agencies. There need to be study plans, occupational training plans, work training, assessments

and evaluations which focus on producing graduates at skilled, technical and technological levels. The private enterprise must cooperate on issues such as setting up a study plan, occupational training plans and work training plan with educational institution or vocational education institution throughout the course, as well as providing trainers, coordinators, and a training supervisor in the enterprise. The assessment of the training should be done jointly between the enterprise and the educational institution.

In addition, private enterprises can also collaborate with higher education institutions to manage cooperative education. This type of cooperation is the result of the collaboration between private enterprises and universities. The principle of such initiation emphasizes that students take responsibility and perform practical tasks in the workplace as if they were employees in the cooperative enterprise. Students under this program will be able to learn from real experience, have the opportunity to improve themselves in living in society, as well as the opportunity to learn the technological progress in the workforce. In addition, cooperation between enterprises and universities in cooperative education program will also contribute to on-going academic cooperation between universities and other enterprises aside from graduate production, such as basic research cooperation and developmental research, etc. Cooperative students will work in the private enterprise as temporary employees and gain authentic working experiences in the workplace settings.



At present, it has developed into a Cooperative and Work Integrated Education Program (CWIE Program), which is a co-production course between higher education institutions and enterprises, both public, private or community to get graduates ready to go to the real world right away. It also helps to prepare students to have appropriate competencies to meet the needs of the job market, and be able to develop their jobs and prepare for future careers. The enterprises, including private enterprises participating in the provision of education in this program, play an important role in co-creating a workforce that meets their needs, equipped with knowledge, ideas and new technologies, and also gain benefits from the government.



3.3.2 Education Provision by Families (Home-schooling)

Home-schooling herein is the promotion of basic education to learners in family or family group and is a type of education that encourages educational participation. The State has duties to protect and promote home-schooling in basic education level as stipulated in the laws, regulations, and guidelines concerned. Section 54 of the *Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand B.E.2560 (2017)* stipulates that “The State shall undertake to provide the people education as needed in various systems including promoting a life-long learning, and to enable the cooperation among the State, local administrative organisations and private sector in providing every level of education which the State has the duty to carry out, supervise, promote and support the provision of education to be of quality and to meet

international standards...”. Section 12 of the *National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999) and the Amendment (Second edition), B.E. 2545 (2002)* stipulates that “... a person, family, community organisation, private organisation, professional organization, religious institution, establishment, and other social institutions shall have a right to provide basic education...”. In order that home-schooling can be implemented systematically, effectively and with quality, the Ministry of Education has issued a *Ministerial Regulation on the Right of Families to Provide Basic Education B.E. 2547 (2004)*, which states that “Family” means parents or father or mother who use ruling authority or guardian, and “Educational provider” means family person or person who are assigned by family to provide education.



A family demanding to provide education needs to apply for permission and must conduct learning assessment and evaluation in accordance with the criteria and procedures of the basic education curriculum. When the students pass the assessment and evaluation, they will receive a certificate or a certificate of achievement. In case they fail, the family needs to provide remedial education and re-evaluate within the prescribed period of time.

Home-schooling can be arranged at kindergarten or pre-primary, primary, lower secondary and upper secondary levels. An educational provider or family has to specify their purposes and provide education in line with the *Early Childhood Curriculum and the Basic Education Core Curriculum*. As for the provision of home-schooling in basic education for learners with special needs, provider or family can manage learning areas or contents which are body of knowledge or skills and educational values that learners should learn following the Basic Education Core Curriculum.

The form of home-schooling provided in Thailand is education provision which parents or guardian takes all responsibility or by the agreement between home and school. Parents may teach by themselves or organise the teaching by others or provide in the form of establishment of a learning center by one family or a group of families (some family may choose not to be as a learning center). According to the statistics of the Office of the Basic Education Commission in 2017, there are 515 learners whom family has registered for home-schooling. However, on 10 June, 2021, the members of the Education Council determined the education reform

concretely and clearly including home-schooling that must be supported continuously and strongly as well as accelerates to adjust the form and the teaching and learning curriculum in response to the rapid change of country development.

3.3.3 Educational Provision by Religious Institution

According to Section 12 of the National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999), “Other than State, private persons, local administration organisations, individuals, families, community organisations, private organisations, professional bodies, religious institutions, enterprises, and other social institutions shall have a right to provide basic education as stipulated in the ministerial regulations”, religious institutions of each religion were promoted to participate in educational provision for their believers and general public.

3.3.3.1 Educational Provision by Buddhist Institution

The educational provision by Buddhist Institution is divided into three types as follows:

(1) *Phra Pariyatti Dhamma Education* is divided into three divisions:

- *Phra Pariyatti Dhamma Education, Pali Division* is the Buddhist education in Pali language. In academic year 2020, there were 29,193 monks and 1,374 teachers.

- *Phra Pariyatti Dhamma Education, Dhamma Division* is the Buddhist education in Thai language. Dhamma Division is divided into Dhamma for monks and novices, and Dhamma for laymen and laywomen which has three levels, Elementary, Intermediate, and Advanced.

This type of education cannot be used in equivalency. In academic year 2020, there were 2,422,713 monks/students and 3,339 teachers.

- *Phra Pariyatti Dhamma Education, General Division* is the Buddhist education both SanamLoung-Pali Division and SanamLoung-Dhamma Division in parallel with the Basic Education Core Curriculum of the Ministry of Education.

Phra Pariyatti Dhamma Education, General Division is provided by many temples. These temples establish Phra Pariyatti Dhamma schools to provide basic education for students; monks and novices or students studying Phra Pariyatti Dhamma, General Division, which includes core subject area, Buddhism and Pali subject area.



Source: <https://www.pstschool.net/>

The data from 10 December 2020 show that there were 409 Phra Pariyatti Dhamma schools, General Division, with 22,205 monks in the lower secondary level,

11,065 monks in the upper secondary level, 2,241 teachers, and 1,681 tutors.

In 2019, the promulgation of the *Phra Pariyatti Dhamma Education Act B.E. 2562 (2019)* made a change of monk education in 4 dimensions: 1) having better management because of the support of the law; 2) having effective management; 3) having better quality of Phra Pariyatti Dhamma-Pali and General Division; and 4) having a budget allocated by the Government.

(2) *Sangha University (Buddhist university)*

At present, there are two Sangha universities in Thailand, providing higher education for monks, novices, laypersons including: *Mahamakut Buddhist University and Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University*. The universities offer bachelor's degree, master's degree and doctoral degree programs to monks, and the general public, both Thai and foreigners.

(3) *Informal Education in Buddhism*

Buddhist Sunday School provides education on dhamma principles of Buddhism for children and the general public and promotes propagation of Buddhism. The school teaches many subjects relating to Buddhism from the beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels.

3.3.3.2 Educational Provision by Islam Institution

The Islam Institution plays an important role in formal, non-formal, and informal education provision for Muslim children and youth in Thailand especially in the five southern border provinces of Yala, Pattani, Narathiwat, Satun, and Songkhla.



Source: <https://www.padungislam.com/>

The private education statistics of the Office of the Private Education Commission showed data that in 2019 as follows: 1) there were 245 Islamic charity schools established by a foundation providing general education from early childhood to upper secondary education and Islamic studies, with 184,349 students and 11,364 teachers. 2) there were 514 Islamic boarding schools or Pondok which registered as a Pondok Institute with 33,561 students and 1,415 teachers. These schools provide traditional Islamic education. Besides, there were 2,128 TADIKA schools or Mosque-Based Islamic Educational Centres, with 186,637 students and 12,985 teachers. Pondok is classified as non-formal schools.

Some schools also provide non-formal education focusing on vocational and Islamic education. Muslims of all ages and genders must follow and practice Islam in daily life; therefore, it is necessary that all Muslims receive religious education which can be informal education by parents in a family or in Islamic school nearby.

3.3.3.3 Educational Provision by Christian Institution

Christian institutions play an important role in formal, non-formal, and informal education provision for Christian communities in Thailand. In the aspect of formal education, Christianity, both Roman Catholicism and Protestantism, have established schools that are open for Christian and other religious believers. In the aspect of non-formal education, Christianity accepts any person who wants to be a priest in their religion. Christian institutions also provide informal education in their institutions for Christians who want to study principles of Christianity.



Source: <https://www.acu.ac.th/acu/index.php>

3.3.3.4 Educational Provision by Sikh Institution

There are three basic formal educational institutions by Sikhs in Thailand. Sikh education uses Punjabi in teaching for non-formal education and formal education for any person who wants to be a Granthi and for any Sikhs who want to study principles of Sikhism.

3.3.3.5 Educational Provision by Hindu Institution

There is and one school administered by a Hindu temple. Specific Hindu religion education is informal. And in Thailand, many Royal ceremonies and other beliefs in society are influenced by Hinduism.

3.3.4 Educational Provision by Private Organisation

In Thailand, both private and international organisations make a major contribution to the promotion of basic education provision. The *National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999)* and *Amendments (Second National Education Act B.E. 2545 [2002])* grant the rights to provide basic education to many sectors including private organisations as prescribed in the ministerial regulations. Now, the Ministerial Regulation on the Rights of Community and Private organisations in Basic Education Provision in Learning Centre B.E. 2555 (2012) stipulates that private organisations, which include associations, foundations or private organisations under other names registered as juristic persons to hold activities for the public interest, can provide basic education in the form of non-formal education and informal education through learning centres for those who cannot attend formal schools, such as the Foundation For the Better Life of Children, Foundation for Children, Children and Youth Development Foundation, etc.



3.3.5 Participation of Private Sector in Education Development

The private sector plays an important role in the development of Thai education through partnerships with the government to operate various forms of activities. The key goal is to improve the quality of Thailand's education and reduce educational inequality. The following key activities are performed:

3.3.5.1 *The CONNEXT ED Foundation*

The Foundation for the Future of Education (CONNEXT ED Foundation) is a modification of the management model from the previous CONNEXT ED education future project. The original name of the project is the Leadership Project for the Development of Sustainable Education. The operation was initiated by the state's national development policy on: "Cooperation of public, private and

civil sectors for basic education and leadership development” which is a collaboration between the government, private sector, and civil society, under the concept that partnership is the key to driving the potential of Thai children to quality, guided by the organization’s vision which is to reduce inequality, improve people’s quality, and increase competitiveness.



Source: <http://pracharathschool.go.th/>

In the Early Stages (2016-2017), 12 leading business organizations co-founded the Leadership Project for the Development of Sustainable Education (CONNEXT ED) to drive the project’s strategy to schools, by putting the potential young leaders into the field of real-world work in developing a school development plan with school administrators to seek support and cooperation from various organizations, as well as taking actions in many other areas. During the Second phase,

(2018-2019), the partnership has been expanded from 12 leading nongovernmental organizations who co-founded the project, with a network of new partners, 21 non-governmental organizations, to 33 organizations. There were 4,781 schools with 1,047,660 students under the Office of the Basic Education Commission participating.

3.3.5.2 Education Innovation Zone

The Education Innovation Zone is the pursuit of the local educational management to promote independence from centralized management, and drive innovation that meets the needs of the area caused by the participation of all sectors and parties to Thai education. All schools can participate as pilot schools in their provinces. The Educational Innovation Area Act B.E. 2562 is the legal supporting such operations.



3.3.5.3 Partnership School Project

The Partnership School Project is an innovative project for school management resulting from the cooperation between the Ministry of Education, private enterprises, foundations, or institutions that support resources and contribute to the management of schools. The focus of this initiative project is to improve the quality of education in various areas while developing the school as a lifelong learning hub in the community to open educational opportunities, reduce educational inequality under the cooperation of local stakeholders and communities.

In academic year 2018, which is the 1st generation of this project, there were 50 schools participating in the program with 12 sponsors. In the 2nd generation in academic Year 2019, there were 84 schools participating in the program and 27 sponsorship agencies.



Source: <https://pda.or.th/>

Chapter 4

Access to Education and Educational and Learning Achievement

This chapter presents educational statistics of Thailand which show the access to education of learners in all levels and types from basic education to higher education, formal and non-formal, as well as the educational statistics of learners with special needs in basic education.

In addition, the educational achievement will be presented. It will show the progress of education quality development in Thailand at the policy level, educational institution level, and community level. It will be presented in the statistics of graduates, education attainment of Thai people, promotion of human resource development, and education capability of Thailand at the international level.

4.1 Access to Basic Education

Basic education in Thailand covers pre-elementary to upper secondary education, both general and vocational programmes. Table 7.1 shows the percentage of students in basic education at all levels nationwide compared to the population aged 3-17 years in the academic years 2015 - 2019.

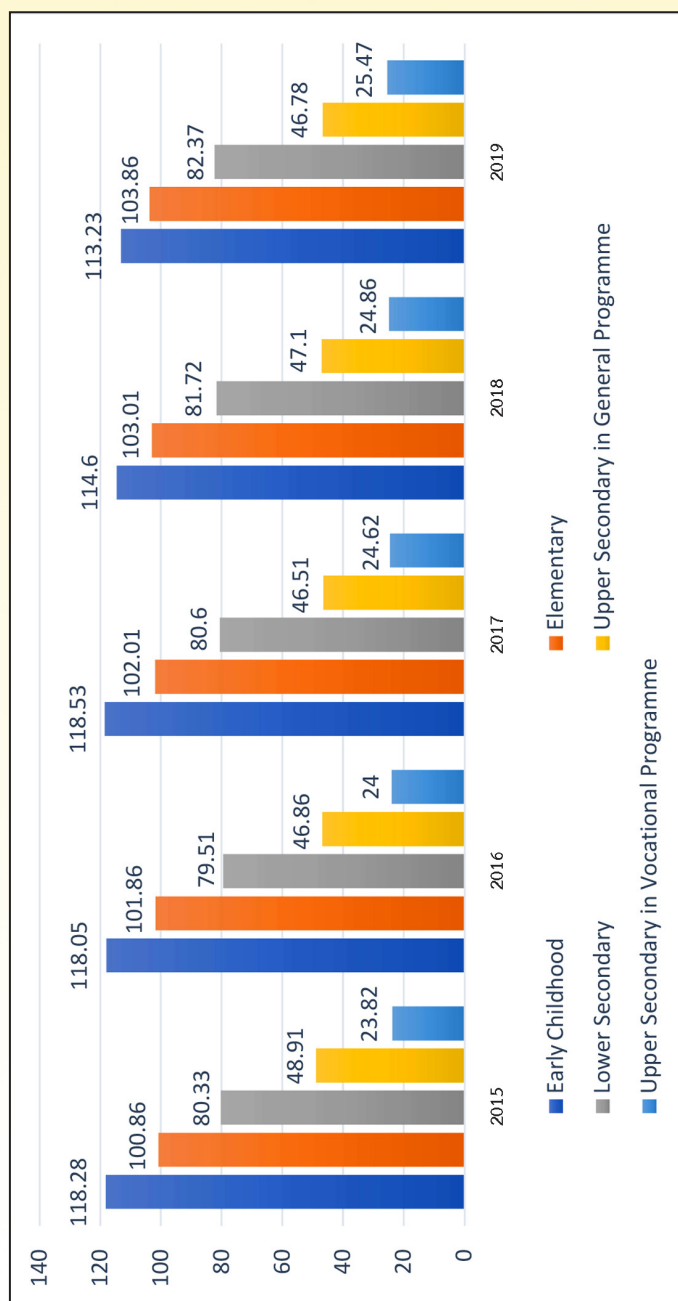
Table 4.1 The Number of Students Who Studied in Basic Education Level (Academic Years 2015 – 2019)

Academic Year	Population Aged 3-17 Years	Number of Students	Percentage of Students Per Population Aged 3-17 Years
2015	12,469,766	11,874,205	95.2
2016	12,357,779	11,710,846	94.8
2017	12,130,226	11,765,273	96.9
2018	11,969,925	11,504,136	96.1
2019	11,818,772	11,406,026	96.5

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

Figure 4.1 shows the ratio of students per the population at the same age studying in basic education from early childhood, elementary, lower secondary, and upper secondary level, both general and vocational programmes.

Figure 4.1 The Ratio of Students Per Population by Education Level (Academic Years 2015 – 2019)

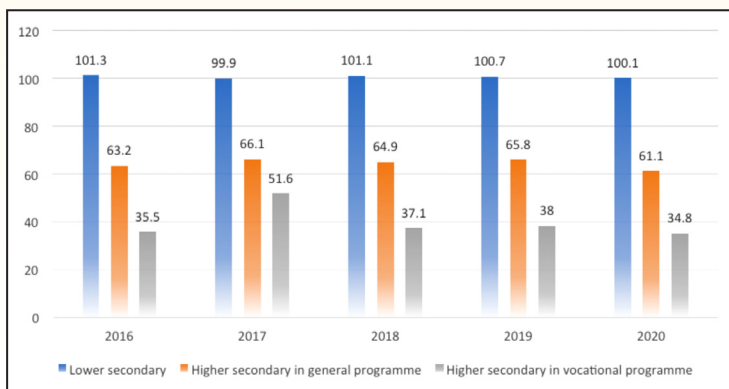


Source: Educational Research and Development Bureau, Office of the Education Council

According to Figure 4.1, during the academic years 2014-2017, the ratio of students in early childhood, elementary, and lower secondary level increased every year because of the policy to expand the period of basic education and compulsory education as well as the government policy to provide financial support in education provision from pre-elementary to completion of basic education for all students. It provides Thai people more opportunities to access education.

Considering the Figure 4.2, during the academic years 2015-2019, the students in lower secondary level had a higher transition rate than upper secondary level, general and vocational programme. In the academic year 2017, the transition rate of the lower secondary level was more than 100 percent (107.5 percent) because there were more new enrolled students in the academic year 2017 than the graduates in the academic year 2016.

Figure 4.2 The Transition Rate of Students in Basic Education (Academic Years 2015 – 2019)



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

4.1.1 Access to Early Childhood Education

The provision of early childhood education is administered in a development centre for early childhood and a nursery with a one-year period of learning as well as education provision in a kindergarten, which has two curricula: a 2-year and 3-year curriculum. At present, the announcement of *the Early Childhood Curriculum B.E. 2019* is beneficial in that it promotes, supports and develops the early childhood children as a whole system. It also integrates the operation of all sectors concerning the early childhood children into one unit.

As shown in Table 4.2, the number of students in the early childhood level of educational institutions nationwide from the 2018 to 2019 academic year decreased continuously because the birth rate of the population decreased continuously. Besides, the ratio of students per population was more than 100 percent because there were over-age children and children aged under 3 years old in the development centre included at this level.

Table 4.2 The Ratio of Students in Early Childhood Level per Population Aged 3-5 Years Old (Academic Years 2015-2019)

Academic Year	Population (Aged 3-5 Years)	Number of Students	Percentage
2015	2,283,392	2,700,778	118.3
2016	2,287,851	2,700,769	118.0
2017	2,268,362	2,701,172	119.1
2018	2,250,577	2,579,190	114.6
2019	2,234,313	2,529,838	113.2

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

4.1.2 Access to Elementary Education

During the academic years 2015-2019, the percentage of students in elementary education in educational institutions nationwide increased every year. The number of students since the academic year 2015 was more than 100 percent because the students aged under or over 6-11 years old were included in this elementary level as shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 The Ratio of Students in Elementary Education per Population Aged 6-11 Years Old (Academic Years 2015-2019)

Academic Year	Population (Aged 6-11 Years)	Number of Students	Percentage
2015	4,825,068	4,866,449	100.9
2016	4,729,741	4,817,882	101.9
2017	4,667,488	4,794,485	102.7
2018	4,613,244	4,752,202	103.0
2019	4,567,838	4,744,155	103.9

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

4.1.3 Access to Compulsory and Secondary Education

1) *Compulsory Education:* Compulsory education is a part of basic education which obliges Thai people to complete, at least, lower secondary education and must enroll in school at the age of seven at the latest. The students in compulsory education are mostly from 6-14 years old. During the academic years 2015-2019, the Percentage of students in that age group increased. In the academic year 2019, the percentage of students in compulsory education nationwide in all educational institutions was 100.1 percent as shown in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4 The Ratio of Students in Compulsory Education per Population Aged 6-14 Years Old (Academic Years 2015-2019)

Academic Year	Population (Aged 6-14 Years)	Number of Students	Percentage
2015	7,438,384	7,174,888	96.5
2016	7,298,461	7,088,588	97.1
2017	7,191,425	7,102,637	98.8
2018	7,092,358	7,034,584	99.2
2019	7,001,853	7,010,030	100.1

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

2) Lower Secondary Education: During the academic years 2015-2019, the percentage of students in lower secondary education nationwide in all educational institutions compared to the population aged 12-14 years old increased continuously as shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5 The Ratio of Students in Lower Secondary Education per Population Aged 12-14 Years Old (Academic Years 2015-2019)

Academic Year	Population (Aged 12-14 Years)	Number of Students	Percentage
2015	2,613,316	2,308,439	88.3
2016	2,568,720	2,276,593	88.6
2017	2,523,937	2,287,269	90.6
2018	2,479,114	2,282,379	92.1
2019	2,434,015	2,265,875	93.1

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

3) Upper Secondary Education: During the academic years 2016-2017, the percentage of students in upper secondary education, general and vocational division nationwide compared to the population aged 15-17 years old decreased but slightly increased in the academic year 2017-2019 as shown in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6 The Ratio of Students in Upper Secondary Education per Population Aged 15-17 Years Old (Academic Years 2015-2019)

Academic Year	Population (Aged 15-17 Years)	Number of Students	Percentage
2015	2,747,990	1,998,539	72.7
2016	2,711,467	1,921,483	70.9
2017	2,670,439	1,899,635	71.1
2018	2,626,990	1,890,362	72.0
2019	2,582,606	1,866,158	72.3

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

As shown in Table 4.5 and Table 4.6, the number of students in upper secondary education was lower than the number of students in lower secondary education. According to the analysis of the website: <https://www.schoolofchangemakers.com/>, students cannot further their study because of the following reasons:



1. *The higher level of education correlated with higher expenses:* At present, although the State fully financially supports the fifteen years, when students enter the upper secondary education, there will be additional expenses to pay that are not covered by the government. These expenses could cover activities, equipment, books, electronic equipment, and the Internet, which is especially important when teaching and learning are becoming more prevalent in the online system.
2. *The education in high level still does not respond to students with various needs:* Most teaching and learning styles were created for the general, average students. It is not comprehensive and applicable to students with various needs, students who are affected by substandard teaching and learning, students who were pressured from educational competitiveness at school, and students who were bullied.
3. *A student does not have a Role Model who is successful in learning and does not set a purpose for his/her life to further study:* Students who are at risk for not continuing their study are likely to grow in a society where everyone has a lot of burdens and problems. This is the reason why students have no time to think about their future. In effect, this makes the people around them and themselves have a negative attitude towards their future. Therefore, they were not motivated to continue their study because they have seen an example of how to survive each day without requiring to study at a higher level and chose to enter the labour sector rather than further their study.



In terms of vocational education, the government prioritises the quality development of vocational education because the labour market and the entrepreneurial sector need skilled labourers, and vocational education plays a vital role in increasing the competitiveness of the nation. The government has policies to support and increase the number of students in vocational education to meet the needs of manpower to develop the economy of the nation. It leads to cooperation between government and private sectors in producing vocational manpower of ten main industries. The focuses are the quality development of learner standards and the upgrade of teacher standards as well as an attempt to continuously improve the image of vocational education to persuade lower secondary students to study in upper secondary education, vocational programme. Considering the number of students in vocational education, during the academic years 2015-2019, there were more than 950,000 students in academic year 2017, and during the academic years

2018-2019, there were more than 1,000,000 students as shown in Table 4.7. This is a result of government promotion. The government encourages more students to study in vocational education because vocational education plays an important role in producing skilled and professional manpower to meet the needs of the labour markets. In particular, in the first S-curve industries such as: 1) Next-Generation automotive, 2) Smart electronics, 3) Affluent, Medical and Wellness tourism, 4) Agriculture and Biotechnology, and 5) Food for the future. It also applies to the new S-curve industries such as: 1) Robotics, 2) Aviation and Logistics, 3) Biofuels and Biochemicals, 4) Digital, and 5) Medical hub.

Table 4.7 The Number of Students in Vocational Education (Academic Years 2015-2019)

Level of Education	Academic Year				
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Vocational Certificate (Voc. Cert.)	434,663	444,324	647,673	642,218	644,533
High Vocational Certificate (High Voc. Cert.)	235,794	242,737	335,936	347,401	358,556
Higher Diploma in Teaching Technology (Higher Dip. Teach.)	3,656	6,916	8,926	9,506	9,471
Total	674,113	693,977	983,609	1,000,125	1,012,580

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

4.2 Access to Basic Education of Learners with Special Needs

This section will present statistics of access to basic education of students with special needs, especially underprivileged students and students with disabilities. Each government has given priority to this group of students and has tried to improve equality to access quality basic education for students of every social status and all types of disabilities. Section 27 of the *Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand (B.E. 2560 (2017))* stipulates the measures to eliminate an obstacle to or to promote persons' ability to exercise their rights or liberties on the same basis as other persons or to protect or facilitate children, women, the elderly, persons with disabilities or underprivileged persons. And Section 71 stipulates that "... The State should provide assistance to children, youth, women, the elderly, persons with disabilities, indigent persons and underprivileged persons to be able to have a quality living, and shall protect such persons from violence or unfair treatment, as well as provide treatment, rehabilitation, and remedies to such injured persons."



Source: <https://en.thaihealth.or.th/>

The National Strategy (2018-2037) on Providing Opportunities and Social Equity addresses the issue of injustice and lack of access to health services and education, especially for the low-income persons and the underprivileged. In terms of education, it focuses on providing opportunities for quality education with the same standards, especially in the poor and remote areas and the target groups who need the special care. This is done by providing measures to reduce the inequality of education.

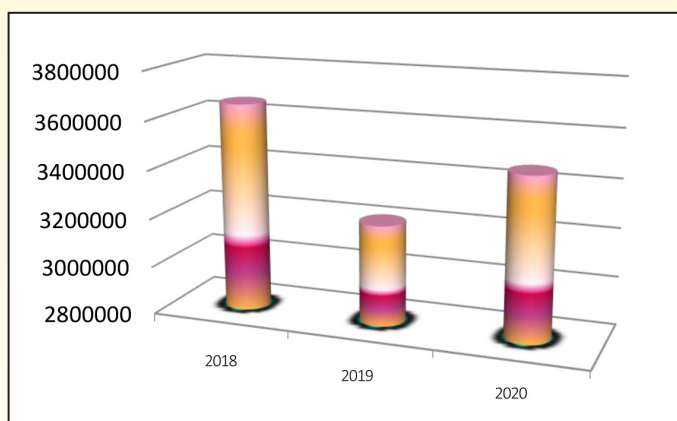
4.2.1 Special Education for Underprivileged Students

Most underprivileged students study in normal public school, or called “inclusive school,” while others study in “welfare education school,” which is a special school that provides education for underprivileged persons who need support from the State. It aims to create educational equality for underprivileged or disadvantaged persons.

The Office of the Basic Education Commission, Ministry of Education has divided underprivileged children studying inclusive education in regular schools into 13 groups: 1) orphans; 2) children of minorities; 3) abandoned children; 4) children forced to enter the labour market; 5) physically abused children; 6) children affected by narcotic drugs; 7) children who are sex workers; 8) children in Observation and Protection Centres; 9) children living in poverty; 10) street children; 11) children working for themselves and their family; 12) children affected by HIV/AIDS; and 13) other underprivileged children (or children underprivileged more than one group).

During the academic years 2018-2020, the number of underprivileged students studying in inclusive schools under the Office of the Basic Education Commission was 3,659,258, 3,214,111, and 3,465,740 by year respectively as shown in Figure 4.3.

Figure 4.3 The number of Underprivileged Students Studying in Inclusive Schools under the Office of the Basic Education Commission (Academic Years 2018-2020)



Source: Basic Educational Plan and Policy Bureau, Office of the Basic Education Commission and Educational Research and Development Bureau, Office of the Education Council

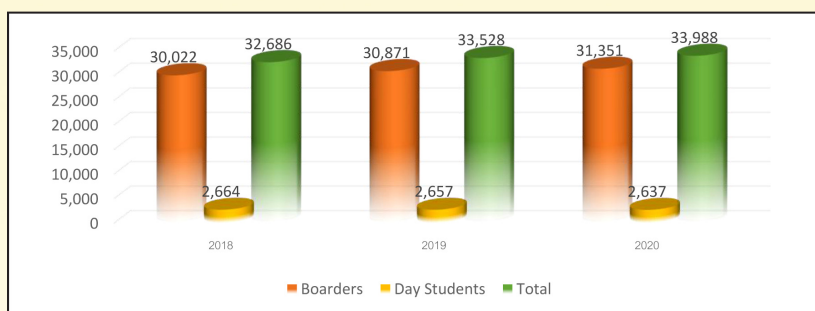
In the 2020 academic year, the number of underprivileged students in regular schools under the Office of the Basic Education Commission were 3,441,773 poor students, 9,104 orphans, and 5,023 other underprivileged children (or children underprivileged more than one group).

The underprivileged children studying in Welfare Schools were divided into 11 groups: 1) children living (extremely) in poverty; 2) children affected by narcotic drugs; 3) abandoned children; 4) physically abused children; 5) children affected by HIV/AIDS or serious disease that is shunned by society; 6) children of minorities; 7) street children; 8) children forced to enter the labour market or child labours; 9) children who are sex workers; 10) children in Observation and Protection Centres; 11) children with disabilities studying in inclusive schools.

Figure 4.4 shows the number of students in Welfare Schools. In the 2018 academic year, there were 32,686 students in total including borders 30,022 students and 2,664 day students. In the 2019 academic year there were 33,528 students in total including borders 30,871 students and 2,657 day students. In the 2020 academic year, there were 33,988 students in total including borders 31,351 students and 2,637 day students.

The highest number of the underprivileged children studying in Welfare Schools was the group of children living in extreme poverty. During the 2018-2020 academic years, there were 24,763, 25,884, and 26,734 students, respectively.

Figure 4.4 The Number of Underprivileged Students in Welfare Education Schools under the Office of the Basic Education Commission (Academic Years 2018-2020)



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

The data from the National Education Information by the Ministry of Education show that in the academic year 2019, there were 26,417 underprivileged students in Border Patrol Schools. Most of those students are from minority groups and were not included in the underprivileged types of the Office of the Basic Education Commission.

4.2.2 Special Education for Students with Disabilities

In Thailand, persons with disabilities or students with disabilities have the right to receive an education free of charge at all times of their study from birth or upon the finding of disabilities throughout their life. They shall also receive financial support in basic education and educational equipment suitable for their disabilities.

In addition, they have the right to receive an education suitable for their disabilities in various educational institutions. They can study in normal schools or educational institutions, which is inclusive education, or in special education institutions. Persons with disabilities can choose the type of education that is suitable for them: formal, non-formal, or informal education. Besides, they can further their study in higher education according to their individual abilities, interests, aptitude, and disabilities.



The Acts and Plans related to the education provision for persons with disabilities are as follows:

1) *The National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999) and Amendments (Second National Education Act B.E. 2545 [2002])* stipulated that persons with physical, mental, intellectual, emotional, social, communication, and learning deficiencies; those with physical disabilities; or cripples; or those unable to support themselves; or those destitute or

disadvantages; shall have the rights and opportunities to receive basic education provided free of charge at birth or at first diagnosis.

2) *The Education Provision for Persons with Disabilities Act B.E. 2551 (2008) and The Second Education Provision for Persons with Disabilities Act B.E. 2556 (2013)* determined that the educational rights for persons with disabilities shall be provided free of charge at birth or at first diagnosis and throughout their life. In addition, they shall be provided with technology, facilities, media, services, and other educational assistance. They shall be able to choose educational services, educational institutions, educational types and systems according to their ability, interest, proficiency, and their special needs. They will also receive education based on educational standards and quality assurance.

3) *The National Plan on Education Provision for Persons with Disabilities Act (Third Act) B.E. 2560-2564 (2017-2021)* is issued by the Ministry of Education. The main mission of this Act is to create opportunities to access educational services, to create quality and standards of all educational systems, and to improve human resources administration and management systems in line with standards and good governance. The Act aims to provide educational opportunities to persons with disabilities in accordance with the needs of the individual and to make sure that persons with disabilities have living skills to help them pursue a self-reliant career based on the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy.

4) *The 5th National Plan on the Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities B.E. 2560-2561 (2017-2018)* issued by the National Committee for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities. This plan consists of strategies related to educational provision for persons with disabilities which are: 1) Strategy on empowerment of persons with disabilities and persons with disabilities organisation; 2) Strategy on quality management, elimination of discrimination on access to the rights of persons with disabilities; 3) Strategy on the promotion of understanding and creative attitude toward persons with disabilities and the disability; and 4) Strategy on environment creation and public services provision that is accessible and practical for all.



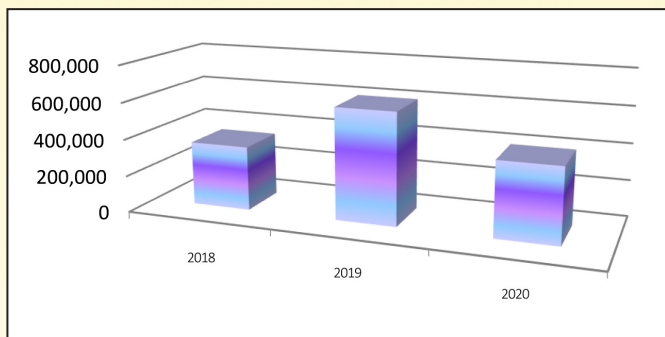
The data from the Report on Disability Situation in Thailand, as of 31 December 2020, by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social

Development and Human Security, show that there were 1,572,343 persons with disabilities receiving an education and 75.73 percent of them having identification card for persons with disabilities. The top five education levels where persons with disabilities are receiving the most are: 1) 1,281,173 (or 81.48 percent) persons in primary education, 176,703 (or 11.24 percent) persons in secondary education, 36,674 (or 2.33 percent) persons in vocational education, 23,013 (or 1.46 percent) persons in higher education, and 21,165 (or 1.35 percent) not specified education.

In addition, the education provision of formal basic education for students with disabilities by the Ministry of Education can be provided both in the form of co-studying and inclusive education in General Schools, Special Education Schools, and Welfare Schools. The Office of the Basic Education Commission has classified disabilities into nine types: 1) visual impairments, 2) hearing impairments, 3) mental impairments, 4) physical impairments or health related impairments, 5) learning disabilities, 6) speech and language disorders, 7) autism, 8) emotional and behavioural disorders, and 9) multiple disabilities.

Normally, the number of students with disabilities in basic education who study with normal students in inclusive schools are higher than the number of students in Special Education Schools. There were 349,272 students with disabilities in the academic year 2018, 607,438 in academic year 2019, and 405,635 in the academic year 2020 as shown in Figure 4.5.

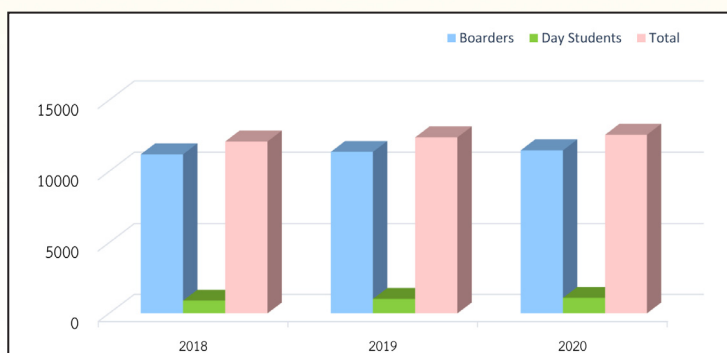
Figure 4.5 The Number of Students with Disabilities in Inclusive Schools under the Office of the Basic Education Commission (Academic Years 2018-2020)



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

In special education schools under the Office of the Basic Education Commission, most of the students are boarders as shown in Figure 4.6.

Figure 4.6 The Number of Students with Disabilities in Special Education Schools under the Office of the Basic Education Commission (Academic Years 2018-2020)



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

In addition to the basic education provision for students with disabilities in Special Education School, there is also non-formal education provision in the Special Education Centres located in various provinces nationwide. At present, there are 77 Special Education Centres, which are under the Office of Basic Education Commission. The main duties of these centres are: providing education as help service centres, preparing the readiness of students with disabilities, and providing the non-formal and informal education to students with disabilities in their province. Moreover, the Special Education Centres can also provide education to boarders and day students in their centres as well outside their centres. The places outside the centres are can include: 1) The house of students with disabilities who cannot go to the centre; 2) The hospital for students with chronic illness; 3) The Service Unit; and 4) The Learning Centres for persons with disabilities. In the second semester of the 2020 academic year, there were 28,062 students under the responsibilities of the Special Education Centres. The largest numbers of students under the Special Education Centres are: 9,121 students with intellectual disabilities, 7,518 students with physical disabilities or movement impairment or health impairment, and 5,706 students with multiple disabilities.

4.3 Access to Higher Education

Higher education is important for national development, both in economic and social fields, and plays a vital role in producing potential manpower to have competencies in both academic and high professional skills. It also plays a role in creating and developing research studies in response to the real needs of society. According to *the Higher Education for the Manpower Production and Development Plan B.E. 2564-2570 (2021-2027)*, issued by the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation, it shows the role with strengths of higher education in Thailand as follows:

- 1) The Higher Education Institution is the main institution in academic and high profession to create technological knowledge and innovation as well as be the source of production and human capital development in order to raise the quality of Thai society;
- 2) The Higher Education Institution is autonomous and, as a source, collects a variety of knowledge, opens opportunities to access education, and provides adequate education for the population entering into educational system;
- 3) The Higher Education Institution integrates various sectors to form a powerful consortium at the international, national, and area-based community level;
- 4) The Higher Education Institution is a source for the production of researchers and academic research studies that can be transferred for future benefits;

- 5) The Higher Education Institution has internationalization in education provision such as the international program of teaching and learning, the joint-venture or the collaboration between foreign institutions, and higher education institutions or private sectors of the country.

Table 4.8 shows that the total number of students in higher education institutions decreased each year during the academic years 2015-2019.

Table 4.8 The Number of Students in Higher Education Institutions (Academic Years 2015-2019)

Educational Level	Academic Year				
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Below Undergraduate	344,377	348,060	329,673	370,756	378,252
Undergraduate	1,851,653	1,780,382	1,715,976	1,640,426	1,517,101
Graduate Diploma	7,788	8,226	10,689	9,749	8,655
Master Degree	179,245	147,096	131,511	109,938	94,203
Higher Graduate Diploma	1,438	1,025	1,761	3,389	2,063
Doctorate Degree	24,742	23,995	24,472	25,325	23,831
Total	2,409,243	2,309,384	2,234,082	2,159,583	2,024,105

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

Studying at higher education level, students with disabilities have an equal chance to receive education services along with the general population. The *Regulations of the Committee for the Promotion of Education Provision for Persons with Disabilities on Higher Education Provision for Persons with Disabilities B.E. 2552 (2009)* prescribes that every higher education institution has the duty to accept a proper proportion or number of persons with disabilities to study in their institution. The educational institution that accepts persons with disabilities is entitled to receive financial support according to the *Committee for the Promotion of Education Provision for Persons with Disabilities Announcement on Criteria, Rate, and Lists of Education Support for Persons with Disabilities in Higher Education* in 2017.

The Report on the Results of the Data Survey Related to the Promotion and Development of the Service System for the Admission of Students and Students with Disabilities to Higher Education Institutions in academic year 2019, published by the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation, showed that the policies, guidelines, and measures for the admission of students and students with disabilities to enter higher education institutions were divided into three parts:

- *The admission of students and students with disabilities to enter higher education level:* Most higher education institutions prepared the announcement of the Institution Council on the criteria and procedure for the admission of students with disabilities. There were 104 higher education institutions (or 68.9 percent of institutions) that responded to the questionnaire;
- *The policy on the admission of students with disabilities of higher education institutions:* Most of higher education institutions were able to receive only some types of students with disabilities due to the lack of readiness. There were 80 higher education institutions (or 53.0 percent of institutions) that responded to the questionnaire;
- *The guideline on the admission of students with disabilities to enter higher education level:* Most higher education institutions accepted students with disabilities at the same rate as general normal students. There were 88 higher education institutions (or 58.3 percent of institutions) that responded to the questionnaire;

The data from the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation (*Academic Years 2014-2018*) showed the number of students with disabilities in higher education institutions as shown in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9 The Number of Students with Disabilities in Higher Education Institutions (Academic Years 2014-2018)

Type of Disabilities	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Hearing impairments	504	625	657	526	628
Language and/or speech impairments	80	83	83	94	85
Visual impairments	1,462	1,513	1,541	1,430	1,407
Physical and/or health impairments	1,032	1,156	1,245	1,321	1,708
Intellectual disabilities	113	87	105	82	114
Multiple disabilities	219	218	187	223	153
Learning disabilities	96	93	109	102	111
Emotional and/or social impairments	46	60	61	79	90
Autism	77	106	100	101	144
Total	3,629	3,941	4,088	3,958	4,440

Source: Office of the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation

4.4 Access to Non-Formal Education

Besides access to formal education in the system which includes basic education and higher education, both general and vocational programme, Thailand also promotes people who do not have a chance to study in the school system to learn and receive education in the form of non-formal education.

The provision and promotion of non-formal and informal education to people consists of four types: 1) Promotion of Literacy, 2) Education Provision in Highland Areas, 3) Continuing Education (General Programme), and 4) Vocational Education. They are under the responsibility of many agencies including the Office of the Non-Formal and Informal Education as detailed in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10 The Number of Students in Non-Formal Education by Level and Type of Education (Academic Years 2015-2019)

Level/Type of Education	Academic Year				
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
1. Promotion of Literacy	301,473	302,175	83,996	68,019	78,952
2. Education Provision in Highland Area	90,840	91,178	38,933	75,316	77,444
3. Continuing Education (General Programme)	1,239,311	2,271,551	2,150,413	1,998,273	1,865,415
- Elementary Level	116,117	173,115	154,373	146,863	142,625
- Secondary Level	1,123,194	2,098,436	1,996,040	1,851,410	1,722,790
4. Vocational Education	4,047,211	2,169,957	3,402,000	4,549,249	4,239,307
- Special Curriculum (Office of the Vocational Education Commission)	1,065,485	219,077	282,991	863,282	863,546
- Curriculum proposed by Private (Office of the Private Education Commission)	1,605,175	38,213	-	1,529,312	1,494,482
- Short Course of Vocational Program (BMA)	19,776	6,494	19,392	6,433	6,979
- Community College, Short Course (Office of the Higher Education Commission)	21,053	19,350	27,079	12,309	13,705
- Profession Education Group (Office of the Non-Formal and Informal Education)	1,875,182	1,886,823	3,072,538	2,137,913	1,860,595
Total	5,678,835	4,834,861	5,675,342	6,690,857	6,261,118

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

4.5 Educational and Learning Achievement

Educational and learning achievement in this Education in Thailand report will present statistics and data of graduation, level of education, education attainment, human resources promotion and development and educational capability of Thailand on the international level.

4.5.1 Graduation

Taking into account the graduation rate of students at the basic education level, the educational achievement in Thailand is at a satisfactory level at the primary, lower secondary, and upper secondary levels. The graduation rate was more than 85 percent. In particular, the graduation rate from the primary level was almost 100 percent. However, the graduation rate at the upper secondary level of the vocational stream was not so high when compared to that of other education levels. The reasons may be derived from the problems related to the personnel behaviors of students, the unprepared family conditions needed for providing educational support, the school environments that do not support the students' learning, or the environments outside of the schools are inconvenient for travel as shown in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11 The Rate and Number of Graduates in Basic Education Level by Level of Education (Academic Years 2015-2018)

Level/Type of Education	Academic Year			
	2015	2016	2017	2018
Elementary				
- Number of the final year students	803,432	811,675	798,905	793,918
- Number of the graduates	785,598	791,815	779,146	779,378
<i>Rate of graduates</i>	<i>97.8</i>	<i>97.6</i>	<i>97.5</i>	<i>98.2</i>
Lower Secondary				
- Number of the final year students	760,079	729,764	731,779	726,618
- Number of the graduates	667,128	657,273	648,557	704,152
<i>Rate of graduates</i>	<i>87.8</i>	<i>90.1</i>	<i>88.6</i>	<i>96.9</i>
Upper Secondary (General Stream)				
- Number of the final year students	467,506	412,410	401,542	400,896
- Number of the graduates	427,650	381,732	368,407	367,665
<i>Rate of graduates</i>	<i>91.5</i>	<i>92.6</i>	<i>91.7</i>	<i>91.7</i>
Upper Secondary (Vocational Stream)				
- Number of the final year students	215,395	204,799	217,379	213,382
- Number of the graduates	128,013	122,604	126,927	114,934
<i>Rate of graduates</i>	<i>59.4</i>	<i>59.9</i>	<i>58.4</i>	<i>53.9</i>

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

At the higher education level, the number of graduates increased and decreased alternately between the academic years between 2015 to 2018 as shown in Table 4.12.

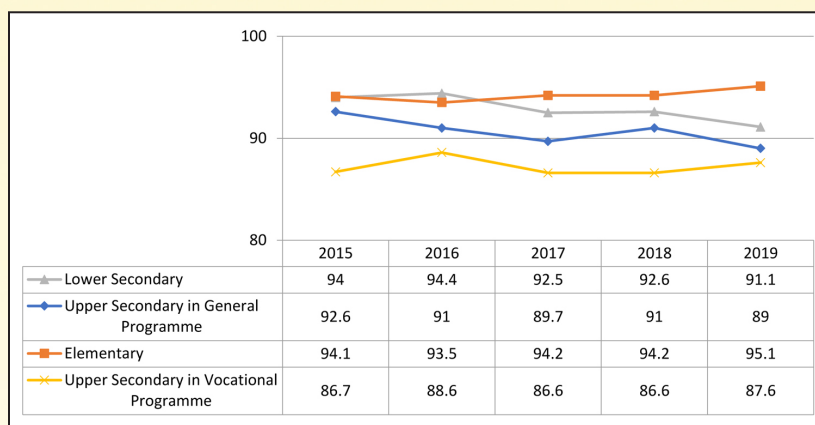
Table 4.12 The Number of Graduates in Higher Education Level by Level of Education (Academic Years 2015-2018)

Level/Type of Education	Academic Year			
	2015	2016	2017	2018
Below Undergraduate	120,975	93,291	129,854	151,937
Undergraduate	267,741	308,422	270,524	276,591
Graduate Diploma	1,216	4,642	4,563	4,489
Master Degree	38,394	34,182	27,962	24,658
Higher Graduate Diploma	751	259	40	283
Doctorate	2,740	3,989	3,876	3,308
Total	431,817	444,785	436,819	461,266

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

During the academic year 2015-2019, the retention rate of students in basic education at a different level increased and decreased alternately as shown in Figure 4.7. However, the number was still satisfactorily high which indicated the progress of government implementation in providing educational opportunities to every person. It can be seen in the roadmap of 15 years of free education to provide access to basic education with quality and equality to all learners. The main reasons for the sudden resignation of students are poverty problems, family problems, student’s adaptation problems, health problems, emigration with parents, and entering into the labour sector to make a living.

Figure 4.7 The Retention Rate of Students in Basic Education (Academic Years 2015-2019)



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

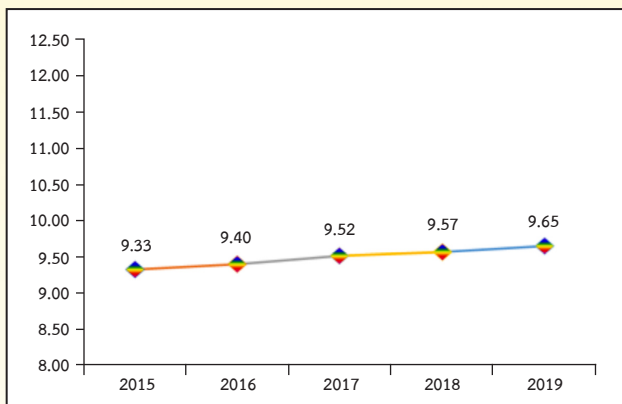
4.5.2 Educational Attainment of Thai Population

The study of the mean years of schooling of the Thai population aged 15-59 years old indicates a satisfactory result that the mean years of schooling tended to increase. As shown in Figure 4.8, from 2015-2019 the mean years of schooling were 9.33, 9.40, 9.52, 9.57, and 9.65 years respectively, which was equal to lower secondary education. This was a result of an attempt to provide educational access to all people in form of formal and non-formal education.

However, the mean years of schooling of work-force age, 15-59 years old, is one of the indicators of access to education mentioned in the National Scheme of Education B.E. 2560-2579 (2017-2036). The Thai population in the 15-29 age groups should have the mean years of schooling at 12.5 years within 2036. This was equal to upper secondary

education. Therefore, it needs the cooperation of different sectors to promote and drive people in Thailand to have opportunities to access a higher level of education including formal, non-formal, and informal education.

Figure 4.8 The Mean Years of Schooling of Thai People (2015-2019)



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

In addition, the Labor Force Survey 3rd Quarter from July to September during 2016-2020 by the National Statistical Office shows that most of the employed persons completed elementary education. However, it was noticeable that during 2016-2020, employed persons tended to complete a higher level of education. As shown in Table 4.13, the percentage of employed persons with elementary education tended to decrease, but those with upper secondary and higher education tended to increase continuously.

Table 4.13 The Percentage of Employed Persons by Level of Graduation Attainment (2016-2020)

Level of Graduation Attainment	Year				
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
None	3.1	2.9	3.1	2.9	2.8
Below Elementary	21.0	19.9	19.3	18.1	17.7
Elementary	22.3	22.2	22.0	22.2	21.7
Lower Secondary	16.3	16.8	16.9	17.3	17.1
Upper Secondary	16.1	16.3	16.7	17.1	17.4
Higher Education	20.5	21.2	21.2	21.5	22.5
Other (included short course of vocational education)	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.3
Unknown	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.6

Source: National Statistical Office

4.5.3 Competitiveness on the International Arena

The competitiveness of Thai students on the international stage has been remarkable, as can be seen by the results of the international academic or various skills competitions. During 2019-2020, Thailand was successful in many international academic and skills competitions including:

- The 11th International Collegiate Snow Sculpture Contest 2019, from January 4-7, 2019 in Harbin, China. There were 55 teams from two countries and two Special Administrative Regions. Representatives from Thailand were students from the Vocational College, and they received three awards from the competition: The Top-Grade Awards and the Best Creative Award for the work of Trad Polytechnic College, the second runner-up for the work of Ubon Ratchathani Vocational College and the work of SuratThani Vocational College.

- Regional Energy Saving Vehicle Competition, namely, Shell Eco-Marathon Asia 2019, held from April 29 to May 2, 2019 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. There were a total of 100 teams representing 18 countries in the competition. Thailand's representative, RMUTP RACING Team, a team of students from Rajamangala University of Technology Phra Nakhon, won with their prototype car that uses ethanol fuel. Participation in such competitions allow students to put their knowledge into practice and further their innovations that will help develop energy-saving and efficient cars in this case.

The competition also featured representatives of Thailand who were vocational students in the competition; students from Amphawa Vocational College in their FUEANG FHA Team. Their work entitled Prototype Gasoline Energy-saving Car was awarded the Off-Track Award, which put them sixth in Asia.

- 70th Intel International Science and Engineering Fair (Intel ISEF 2019) organized in Phoenix, Arizona, U.S. was a science and engineering contest for participants from secondary school. There were 1,886 secondary school students from 80 countries around the world. The contest was held from May 12-17, 2019. Thailand submitted 17 projects to the competition with the support from various agencies and private sectors. Students from Thailand won major projects, as follows:

- 1) Hybrid wind turbines that generate electricity and add optimization techniques with permanent magnetic rings;
- 2) Artificial environmental-friendly seeding nursery balls from cow dung for seed cultivation;
- 3) Innovative colour sensor test kit to measure chloramine content directly from swimming pools, which is a new concepts for conserving water resources;
- 4) Processing the amount of sweet corn meat with Image Processing method; and
- 5) The development of hydrogel from local wood gum for the removal of mollusks, which are agricultural pests.

In addition, three special awards were granted:

- 1) Development of seed coatings carrying water from local wood gum to increase the survival rate of rice in dehydration due to rainfall delay;
- 2) Artificial environmental-friendly seeding nursery balls from cow dung for seed cultivation; and
- 3) The synthesis of nanoparticles of steel on carbon from waste lard to be the catalyst in the seawater power generator.



Source: <https://www.nstda.or.th/home/>

- The 2019 World RoboCup Rescue Competition was held from July 2-8, 2019 in Sydney, Australia. There were 14 teams from different countries. The representative from Thailand was the iRAP Sechzig Team, a team of students from King Mongkut's University of Technology North Bangkok. iRAP Sechzig Team won two awards, which are the World Rescue Robot First Runner-up and the World's Best Robotic Driving Performance Innovation Award. Winning awards from the competition stage has shown that Thailand can develop Thai youth to be technologically competent at the international level, which has been recognized world-wide.



Source: <https://www.kmutnb.ac.th/>

- ASEAN Vocational Skills Competition (China-ASEAN Skills 2019) was held from July 21-25, 2019 in Guiyang, China. Thailand sent students from Minburi Technical College, the MTC Automation Team, to participate in the industrial automation skills competition. The Team was awarded as a winner for double types, and First runner-up.

- World Robot Olympiad (WRO 2019) in Yerevan, Hungary, during November 8-10, 2019 was attended by more than 3,000 participants from 74 countries. Thailand sent 17 delegates to participate and won seven awards in the competitions. In particular, representatives from Thailand won the first prize in the under-15-year-old category, which has brought great recognition and reputation for Thailand.



Source: <https://www.kmutnb.ac.th/>

- International Academic Olympics are as follows:

- The 20th Asian Olympic Physics Championships, held from May 4-13, 2019 in Adelaide, Australia. Eight representatives from Thailand participated in the competition and were awarded six certificates of honour.
- The 51st International Olympic Chemistry Championships from July 21-30, 2019 in Paris, France. There were 309 participants from 80 countries, and representatives from Thailand won one gold and three silver medals.
- The 52nd International Olympic Chemistry Championships 2020, a remote access exam from July 23-29, 2020, hosted by Turkey. Representatives from Thailand received four silver medals.
- International Mathematics Contest 2019: (IMC) from August 2-6, 2019 in Singapore. There were 1,200 participants from 13 countries and 2 Special Administrative Regions. There were 27 representatives from Thailand in the competition, ranging from primary grade 2 to secondary grade 11. Thailand won four gold medals, eight silver medals, 11 bronze medals, and four consolation prizes.
- 2020 International Mathematics, Science, Olympics, IBO Challenge 2020, held from August 10 – 24, 2020. The competition was held online with Thailand and Japan as hosts of this event. There were 53 participating countries. Thailand sent four representatives to the competition, and they achieved one gold and three bronze medals.

- 2020 International Olympic Mathematics Competition online (Virtual) from September 20-28, 2020. There were 616 participants, 560 males and 56 females, from 105 countries/Special Administrative Regions. There were six representatives from Thailand who participated in the competition. Thailand's representatives won two gold medals, three silver medals, and one bronze medal. Their total scores were in the 5th rank in the world rankings.
- The 21st Asian Physics Olympiad was organized by the Republic of China (Taiwan) from May 17-24, 2021. There were 181 participants from 22 countries. Eight representatives from Thailand participated in the online competition from NSTDA, and they won two gold medals, 1 bronze medal, and five certificates of honour.
- The 33rd International Olympiad in Informatics was organized by the Republic of Singapore from June 19-28, 2021. There were 351 participants from 90 countries with four NSTDA representatives from Thailand who participated in this online competition. Thailand received one bronze medal in the competition.



Source: <https://olympic.ipst.ac.th/>

- The Second IBO Challenge 2021 (International Biology Olympiad Challenge) organized by The Republic of Portugal to replace the International Olympic Biology Championships from July 18-23, 2021. There were 304 participants from 76 countries. Four Thai representatives participated in the online competition from student accommodation. Thailand received one gold medal and three silver medals.



Source: <https://olympic.ipst.ac.th/>

- The 62nd International Mathematical Olympiad, organized by the Russian Federation during July 18-24, 2021 had 619 participants from 107 countries. Five Thai representatives from Prince of Songkla University participated in the online competition from NSTDA, and one representative participated in the online competition from Prince of Songkla University. Thailand received one gold medal, three silver medals, and two bronze medals in this event.



Source: <https://olympic.ipst.ac.th/>

- The 51st International Physics Olympiad was organized by the Republic of Lithuania from July 17-24, 2021. There were 368 participants from 76 countries. Thailand had five representatives that competed online from NSTDA. Thailand received three silver and two bronze medals.



Source: <https://olympic.ipst.ac.th/>

- The 53rd International Chemistry Olympiad was organized by Japan from July 25 to August 2, 2021. There were 312 participants from 79 countries. Thailand had three representatives that participated in the online competition from NSTDA and one competed online from the Kamnoetvidya Science Academy School in Rayong. The representatives received three silver medals and one bronze medal.

Chapter 5

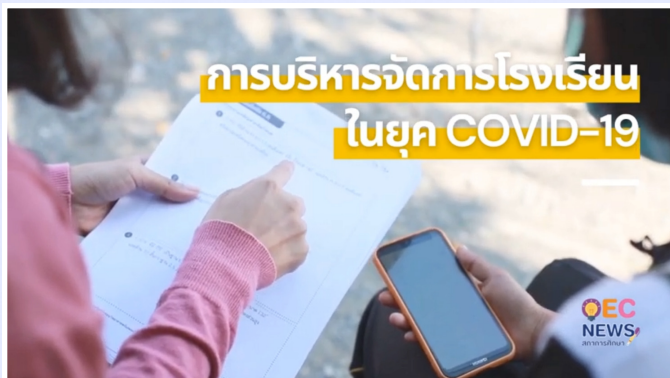
Quality Development of Education Provision, Teachers and Educational Personnel

Over the past few decades up to present, Thai education has been facing the drastically changing trends of 21st century, for example, information technology advancement and economic competition among various countries in the world arena, as well as the entering into the aging society. These trends require adaptation of education provision to be consistent with the changing society. Education provision, and teachers and educational personnel, in particular, are important factors to improve and develop learners' potentiality, as well as to elevate the standard of the Thai education system, which is an important foundation for the country development. The National Strategy B.E. 2561-2580 (2018-2037) on development and potentiality enhancement of human resources, addresses the issue of promoting learning process reform in order to accommodate 21st century changes. It focuses on ensuring that learners obtain learning skills and

desire for learning at all times; designing a new learning system, changing teachers' roles; increasing efficiency of education administration and management; developing an effective life-long learning system; encouraging Thai people's awareness of their roles and responsibilities; positioning of the country in the Asian region and in the world arena; laying foundations for learning that employ digital platforms; and developing an educational system that can deliver academic excellence at international standards. Therefore, there have been major projects and activities aimed toward quality development of education, and teachers and educational personnel, in line with the country's directions for education development, and to accommodate the emerging challenges for the country and the world.

5.1 Education Management during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic Crisis

Thai education is confronting major challenges since the emergence of a new coronavirus disease in 2019, or namely COVID-19, which is actively spreading all over the world, and has emerged or become dominant in Thailand since February 2020. The pandemic has caused a drastic change in the Thai education system; changing the traditional education environment from students learning in a classroom to online education.



Online teaching-learning in the COVID-19 era has occurred due to all types and all levels of schools nationwide being unable to open classes as usual. As a result, the Ministry of Education and educational management agencies had to manage their teaching-learning under the COVID-19 crisis through distance teaching-learning, mostly by using existing resources such as digital TV channels, and supplementary subjects taught through various online programs. [According to the findings of the Office of National Education (OEC)'s *Report on Covid-19 Online Study: Crisis or Opportunities for Thai Education, the Ministry of Education*, and other agencies with the mission to provide education, initiated teaching and learning policies during this period,] academic solutions amid virus are as follows:

5.1.1 Ministry of Education's Policy

Due to COVID-19 outbreak in Thailand in 2020, schools and educational institutions under the Ministry of Education, of all levels and types, including basic education, vocational education, private education, non-formal and informal education, and education for the disabled and disadvantaged, had to postpone the opening of semesters. During the postponement of the semester, there were five forms of the experimental teaching and learning, corresponding to the safety of the area, as follows:

- 1) On-site learning in safe areas, where students could go to schools as usual.
- 2) On-Air Learning through the use of distance learning television provided by DLTV of the Satellite Distance Education Foundation under the royal patronage, and the Office of the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC), that set up 17 digital educational TV channels, for learners from pre-primary, primary, lower secondary, upper secondary, vocational education and non-formal education to learn through a trial class at home before the next semester.



3) Online Learning through DLTV application, for those cases where there were no satellites or digital TVs. This model focuses primarily on upper secondary school students.

4) On-demand Learning through application and,

5) On-hand Learning at home through On-hand documents.

To provide education for the disabled and disadvantaged, the Ministry of Education has created a platform to connect with relevant agencies to give people with disabilities nationwide more access to educational opportunities and self-improvement, according to the guidelines on “Adapting the house to be a classroom and turn parents into teachers”.

In addition, agencies under the Ministry of Education have established guidelines for teaching and learning during the COVID-19 pandemic as follows:

5.1.1.1 Policy of the Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC)

The Office of the Basic Education Commission has established guidelines for distant teaching and learning, which have been divided into four phases as follows:

Phase 1: Preparation Stage (7 April - 17 May 2020)

Main activities at this stage included investigating the readiness of students, parents, and teachers regarding access to the internet, as well as the teaching-learning management system. The Office then requested approval to use digital TV channels from the Office of the Broadcasting Commission National Television and Telecommunications Commission to provide teaching-learning from pre-primary to upper secondary school level and also requested

the approval from the Distance Learning via Satellite (DLTV) to broadcast its first class to pre-primary up to lower secondary schools nationwide. Video teaching-learning materials taught by master teachers for upper secondary school level were initiated. The preparation included the collection of online learning materials for distribution to the general public, by the OBEC Content Center, as a complete set of programs and learning platforms for the Ministry of Education as well as, infrastructure for the network system.



Phase 2: Distance Teaching Trials (18 May – 30 June 2020)

The Office run experiment with distance learning at pre-primary to lower secondary schools through digital TV channels. At pre-primary level, emphasis was on the preparation of the learners, while lower secondary levels the focus was on the main contents of the eight learning areas. As for upper secondary level, teaching through digital and online TV channels was organized by master teachers with appropriate learning tools.

A centre for receiving feedback on the distance learning was also opened for parents, the general public, and related parties, in order that recommendations for improvement and further development, could be made. In addition, the centre also served public relations purposes such as accommodating better awareness and understanding of the distance learning channels among parents and stakeholders.

Phase 3: Teaching and Learning (1 July 2020 – 30 April 2021)

In the event that the epidemic remained unresolved, pre-primary to lower secondary schools were scheduled to be organized remotely via DLTV, and upper secondary schools with video tutorials by master teachers and online systems with appropriate learning tools. And if the epidemic resolves, schools could resume regular teaching in schools with social distancing and a plan to prepare for emergencies.

Phase 4: Testing and Further Study (1 April – 15 May 2021)

The Office of the Basic Education Commission coordinated with the agencies involved in testing and selection for further education, which are the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation for the selection system for higher education institutions, and the National Institute of Educational Testing Service (NIETS).

In addition, the Office of Basic Education Commission provided preparation for teachers, educational personnel, and related parties, by providing a manual for

distance teaching-learning, as well as necessary knowledge in the use of tools, techniques and methods of delivering distance learning through DLTV and OBEC channels. Supervision, monitoring and evaluation of distance teaching and learning were also put in place.

5.1.1.2 Policy of the Office of the Vocational Education Commission (OVEC)

The Office of the Vocational Education Commission prepared teaching and learning for students of each level, including vocational certificates, higher vocational certificates (diplomas), and bachelor's degrees in technology or operations. The implementation was in four forms as follows:

1) Arranged classes with textbooks by having teachers teach through documents,] textbooks. Students were divided into small groups and took turns attending classes, or used communication channels such as telephones, LINE, online messages, etc., including home visit program as appropriate.

2) Organized classes through the satellite distance education (DLTV) system, covering contents in all subjects, both theoretical and practical. At the same time, the content was linked to additional online channels.

3) Provided online teaching and learning through free programs such as Zoom, and Microsoft Team.

4) Organized classes through live teaching and learning by broadcasting the teaching of teachers and leading lecturers in the fields where there were shortages, so that students from other colleges could study simultaneously.

5.1.1.3 Policy of the Office of the Private Education Commission (OPEC)

Teaching and learning in private schools were provided in three forms as follows:

1. Organizing teaching and learning in the regular schools in the ready areas, in line with the measures set forth by the Ministry of Public Health; social distancing was also observed.
2. Organizing distance teaching and learning on air via DLTV for pre-primary level up to lower secondary level through 17 digital TV channels. Video clips of all learning areas and class levels were produced by the Office of the Basic Education Commission.
3. Organizing online courses via internet during school vacation. The Office of the Private Education Commission in cooperation with various sectors provided online learning programmes, so that all students could access online education at no cost. The instruction was in both Thai and English, covering all learning areas from grade 1 to secondary school grade 6, in the form of both live and tape-recorded teaching.

5.1.1.4 Policy of The Office of the Non-Formal and Informal Education (NFE)

The Office of the Non-Formal and Informal Education has established guidelines for implementations, as follows:

1. The Centre for Educational Technology (CET) is the main agency for the production of educational TV and radio programs to meet the needs of lifelong education for learners at all ages, both in basic education curriculum and in informal education to enhance skills for students of all ages.

2. The Distance Education Institute (DEI) is responsible for organizing and promoting non-formal education via distance learning, at both the basic education level and the continuing education level. It also plans and develops style and format for online learning process through applications and other related channels.

5.1.2 Policy of The Department of Local Administration

The Department of Local Administration has taken action as follows:

1) Providing lunch for young children prepared by the Early Childhood Development Center during the closing period to alleviate the suffering of parents. All activities organized by the Early Childhood Development Centres must be strictly in accordance with measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

2) Preparing for online education management by having educational personnel prepare for all situations. For example, in case the COVID-19 pandemic resolves, the teaching-learning process will return to normal, but social distancing measures must continue to be observed. In the case that the situation of the epidemic remains unresolved, classes will be provided mainly through On-air (DLTV) or online (Internet) teaching and learning.



5.1.3 Policy of the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration

The Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) operated comprehensive teaching and learning programs for all students, serving both students who are ready for online learning, and those who are not. Students can learn through four channels:

1. On-line program. Teachers teach live online and can interact with students using such applications as Microsoft Team, Google Classroom, Zoom, Facebook Live, etc.. In this case, the online class schedule is provided by the school. For studying outside the scheduled classes, teachers provide online media such as videos, clips, DLTV schedules, etc., so that students can use these for self-learning, and review lessons at any time.
2. On-air program. Students learn via DLTV media under teacher's guidance and monitoring.
3. On-hand program. This is done by delivering documents to students and parents, such as self- learning manuals, textbooks, work sheets, etc.

4. On-site program. Learners are organized into small groups at school, periodically monitored and evaluated by teachers. The school reports the results to the Education Bureau of the BMA on weekly basis by using Google Form.

In cases when classes can be open normally, BMA sets strict measures to take care and watch out for the spread of the epidemic. In addition, BMA has supported equipment, such as digital TV boxes and internet access for students, and has coordinated with relevant agencies to cooperate in supporting other devices.

5.1.4 Policy of Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation (MHESI)

The Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation has established a number of operational measures to address the COVID-19 pandemic, including establishing guidelines for higher education institutions to prevent the spread of COVID-19. All higher education institutions are requested to cooperate in taking the following actions:

1. Stop all kinds of teaching operations except online teaching. Higher education institutions were advised to completely change their teaching format from physical to online by April 1, 2020, except for some courses that required operations to be at the discretion of each higher education institution. It was also recommended that all study and operations be managed at home as much as possible.

2. Consider cancelling all forms of internships, or adjusting the duration and substituting other activities.

3. Adjust examination and evaluation models by putting in place an effective arrangement to replace traditional operations.

4. Public service missions, public services in general and management in accordance with the obligations of higher education institutions, such as the operation of hospitals, must be carried out with the highest safety measures. Universities across the country, therefore, need to adapt by providing complete online instruction instantly through various applications such as Facebook Group, Facebook Live, Hangouts, Zoom, and Microsoft Teams.

The Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research, and Innovation has also issued a *Handbook with Guidelines for Higher Education Institutions in Teaching and Learning for the Academic Year 2020*, during the outbreak of the disease. The teaching and learning programs have the following guidelines:

- Provide online instruction for subjects with lecture through the LMS System (system limited), merge courses, reduce the number of classrooms to minimize redundancy and create team teaching.
- The operational subjects can be postponed to the next academic year; in cases where the instruction must be held in the laboratory, social distancing needs to be observed by reducing the number of students per room and taking suitable hygiene measures.
- All levels of teaching and learning are instructed to limit the number of students inside and outside the classroom/laboratory so that students can be properly spaced.

- For managing the Internship process, co-operative education should depend on the circumstances of the training facility/establishment in the area. Adjustment of the training structure, arranging a comparable course, or options for a different study plan should be considered.

- In case students are allowed to work at training sites/establishments, the faculty must take the safety of students and teachers strictly into account.

The Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation supported the online teaching-learning of higher education institutions by coordinating with Office of the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission and Thailand’s Mobile Network Communications Group to support online teaching and learning for students countrywide. Students enrolled since April 2020 can use the internet free of charge via mobile phone networks to study online, which has enabled students to access to lessons, and to work and communicate effectively with their teachers.

5.2 Upgrading the Quality of Early Childhood Education Development

Thailand has placed a significant emphasis on early childhood education; it is stated in the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand. B.E. 2560 (2017) that young children must receive care and development prior to education, to develop their bodies, minds, discipline, emotions, social skills and intelligence in accordance with their age. Local government organizations and private sector are encouraged to participate in the implementation of early childhood development.



The Office of the Education Council in cooperation with several relevant agencies has established the National Standard for Early Childhood Care, Development and Education to be as the central standard of the country. This national standard is for all organizations and early childhood development institutions both public and private nationwide to use as a guideline for evaluating performance and improving the quality of childcare services, developing and managing education for children from birth to pre-primary school as well as to serve as tools for internal and external quality assurance. The related agencies comprise the Department of Local Administration under the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, and the Office of National Education Standards and Quality Assessment or ONESQA (Public Organization). In addition, the research findings of the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security and

related standards were also serve as a reference for the preparation of the *National Standard for Early Childhood Care, Development and Education*.

Target groups for implementing such standards are childcare centres, providing early childhood development and learning experiences for children from new-borns to 6 year-olds or children who have not yet entered grade 1 of primary school. The childcare centres' names vary by the organization it affiliated with, as follows:

1. The Ministry of Interior: Child Development Centre, under the Local Administration Department and Kindergarten.
2. The Ministry of Social Development and Human Security: Private Nursery.
3. Bangkok Metropolitan Administration: Pre-school Child Development Centre (under the Social Development Bureau), Day Care Centre (under the Health Bureau) and Kindergarten (under the Education Bureau).
4. The Ministry of Public Health: Children's Centre in Hospital.
5. The Ministry of Education: Kindergarten (under the Office of the Basic Education Commission) and Private Kindergarten (under the Office of the Private Education Commission).
6. Other agencies, such as demonstration kindergartens affiliated with universities, The Ministry of Defence, the Royal Thai Police, foundations and non-governmental organizations.

The enactment of the Early Childhood Development Act B.E. 2562 (2019), issued in the Government Gazette in April 2019, was considered to be a more clear-cut promotion of the quality development of early childhood education. The Act serves as a mechanism for promoting, supporting and developing the entire early childhood system, as well as integrating the work of all sectors related to early childhood to operate effectively and in harmony. The important points are to, as follows:

1. Promote clearly the integration of the work related to early childhood development. Under this Act, the Early Childhood Development Policy Committee was appointed under the cooperation of 4 main ministries, namely the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security and the Ministry of Interior, with the Prime Minister or designee of the Deputy Prime Minister as chairman, with a group of experts serving as committee members. The committee is primarily responsible for formulating the early childhood development plans, standards, competencies, indicators, and guidelines for early childhood development. The Office of the Education Council is also the Secretariat of the Early Childhood Development Policy Board Committees, as stipulated in the Early Childhood Development Act B.E. 2562 (2019).

2. Put in place guidelines for early childhood development, focusing on child care, child development and learning management, with an assurance that early childhood development will not focus on competitive exams. This Act covers children, parents, schools, teachers at pre-primary level, and those who work with early childhood age children,

including the local community, who must play a role in promoting early childhood development in the area. The purpose of early childhood development must aim to enhance the development, positive attitude, and readiness of children in accordance with their age. The most important thing for early childhood development is to develop without focusing on competitive examination.

3. Focus on establishing early childhood development plans and early childhood data preparation. One of the tasks of the Early Childhood Development Policy Board Committees to be carried out is to prepare an Early Childhood Development Plan to be submitted to the Cabinet. The plan should provide a framework for the administration of early childhood development, including identifying units responsible for monitoring units in relevant matters, as well as to make a provision for a database of early childhood age children.

4. Promote the production and development of personnel working in relation to early childhood. The Act places great emphasis on the production and development of personnel who act as care takers and manage learning for early childhood. Section 23 states that in the production of teachers or the development of early childhood development teachers, higher education institutions need to provide instruction in a way that it can enhance the teachers' spirit, morals, ethics, knowledge, skills and ability to provide teaching and learning so that they can provide care for and develop children in early childhood in accordance with the principles and philosophy of early childhood development. In addition, it states that the agencies responsible for early childhood caregivers need to provide instruction which enhances their

spirit, virtues, ethics, knowledge, skills and ability to care for children in early childhood according to early childhood development principles.

5. Determine the role of agencies responsible for early childhood development. The Act stipulates the functions of units working in relation to early childhood to ensure the clear development of children in early childhood, such as in Section 24, which states that medical facilities of government agencies, local government organizations or private sectors responsible for providing public health services to pregnant women and early childhood children must provide health service to mothers and their children inclusively. In Section 25, early childhood development facilities responsible for providing education to early childhood children must provide inclusive parenting, enhancement of experience, promotion of learning development, and continuous promotion of appropriate development of children during early childhood while crossing from the pre-kindergarten to primary level of education.

The Ministry of Education has implemented the Education and Learning Policy for Early Childhood by issuing a Ministry of Education announcement on *the Policy and Guidelines for Managing Education and Learning for Early Childhood Children*, which was enacted in August 2020. In the management of education and learning for early childhood, the main principle is holistic development for children to develop in four areas: physical, emotional, social skills, and intellectual in accordance with their age, as well as self-development, and executive functions (EF) development.

The Ministry of Education has established guidelines for managing early childhood education and learning for educational institutions, as follows:

1. Focus on child-centred learning by allowing them to practice creative thinking, planning, taking action, presentation, and reflection. Teachers are supporters and co-learners along with children, taking into account the context of children and the society in which the children live.

2. Provide integrated, flexible learning experiences or activities that can be adapted to the interests, situation, context or actual way of life of the children.

3. Provide or develop media, materials and equipment, as well as natural learning resources, giving children the opportunity to learn through a variety of plays that are meaningful to children's development.

4. Provide a positive, warm, safe, friendly learning environment and promote positive interaction between children and children as well as children and teachers.

5. Encourage teachers to take opportunities for personal development.

6. Collaborate and nurture understandings between schools and parents, families and communities in caring, developing and managing learning for early childhood development.

The Ministry also issued guidelines for providing education and learning for early childhood teachers, considering the important role of teachers as lead change agents, from teachers to mentors who facilitate learning, observe, learn along with children, and encourage collaborations from

all relevant sectors so that children can develop and learn to their full potential.



The Office of the Education Council, as a policy and research unit for education, has implemented a pilot project for teaching and learning using Executive Functions (EF) at the early childhood level and for children with special needs. Lesson learned on how early childhood teachers can build EF skills for learners will be considered. Guidelines for teaching and learning to enhance EF skills for early childhood and children with special needs will be made available to the relevant authorities.

The Ministry of Interior, through the Department of Local Administration, has encouraged local government organizations to provide effective early childhood education services, by elevating the quality of education management in both early childhood development centres (child centres, child development centres, or as called by other names)

that provide early childhood education for children aged 2 - 5 years, and affiliated schools with early childhood education for children aged 3 - 6 years, through promoting and improving the quality of child development centres in various areas, as mentioned below:

- Budget Support. Allocating budgets to local government organizations to manage child development centres, including salaries and welfare of teachers and employees who are hired as child caregivers, as well as tuition fees, supplementary food (milk), lunch, etc.

- Personnel Development Support. Encouraging teachers and employees who are hired as child caregivers to develop themselves through early childhood education courses, and also by promoting progression and security in their career paths.

- Management Support. Improving the operating standards of child development centres under local government organizations in order to ensure a higher standard and quality of child development centres.

- Facilities Support. Preparing and improving standard plans for child development centre buildings of local administrative organizations.

5.3 Education Sandbox

Education Sandbox is a form of education management that is appropriate for the local conditions in each area. This leads to the upgrade of the country's education management; by empowering schools to manage freely and organize education in accordance with the context and needs of the community. This includes course arrangement,

teaching & learning , flexible management of educational institutions, as well as the development of cooperation between government organizations, private sector, and civil society in the education sandbox to improve the quality of education and to develop students to meet the specified educational goals. In the early stages, there were 8 pilot areas covering the North to South of Thailand: Satun, Sisaket, Rayong, Chiang Mai, Kanchanaburi, Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat. The schools were free to design changes of their education provision in cooperation with both local and outside partners.

Thailand subsequently enacted the Education Innovation Area Act B.E. 2562 (2019), which came into force on April 30, 2019, as a mechanism for managing the Educational Sandbox areas, to enable them to experiment with independent curriculum management, teaching and learning styles, as well as flexible school management. This allows teachers and educational personnel to have more time for teaching and development to achieve full academic achievement of the students, as well as time to develop innovations in education and learning, which can be further expanded to other basic educational institutions to reduce inequality in education. The Act has brought about decentralization and autonomy to the educational authorities and educational institutions, as well as enabling the establishment of cooperation among governments, local authorities, private sector and civil society in Education Sandboxes appropriately aligned with the problems in each area. This has led to the upgrade of education management of the country which is the foundation of the development of quality for the Thai people.

Therefore, the Education Innovation Area Act is an endorsement of the forward movement of the work, and it sets forth 3 levels of committee:

1) The Education Sandbox Policy Committee is responsible for making decisions at the national level, working in integration with other agencies.

2) The Education Sandbox Driven Committee represents the people in the area in making decisions, seeking methods of work, and encouraging participation and awareness among the local public.

3) Pilot schools can make decisions at the school level, enjoy more academic freedom, project administration, and budget management.

The Education Sandbox Management Office, under the Office of Basic Education, reported in 2020 the progress of the implementation in accordance with the Education Innovation Area Act B.E. 2562 (2019) as follows:

1. Almost all pilot areas have initiated strategies and operating plans to drive Educational Sandboxes.

2. All pilot areas coordinated with educational authorities, local government organizations, and other public and private agencies to jointly drive the Education Sandbox in accordance with the strategies and operational plans of the provinces that had been jointly prepared.

3. All areas coordinated with specialized agencies to provide technical support in the preparation of teaching materials, new forms of learning, staff development, assessment and measurement systems, and other areas necessary to develop the Education Sandbox, such as:

- Sisaket Province: the Siam Commercial Foundation (Siam Kamajol Foundation) in collaboration with, the Thailand Development Research Institute (TDRI), and Sisaket Rajabhat University jointly developed the Intelligence Breeding Project, research-based learning, problem-based learning, etc.

- Satun Province: Chulalongkorn University is main support in promoting academic development, curriculum design of educational institutions in pilot schools, as well as developing measurement and evaluation processes. It also coordinated with Satun Smart City Company to create digital platforms for online learning, research-based learning (RBL), and management of learning for Samsao Teachers, or tri-party teachers, consisting of school teachers, community teachers, and parent teachers.

- Rayong Province: Arsomsilp Institute and Siam Commercial Foundation (Siam Kamajol Foundation) provided academic support for the development of whole-school systems development for teachers and school administrators, such as the establishment of the Rayong Teaching and Learning Academy, production of teachers through the Teachers Scholarship Project (Kuru Suksa), and Rayong Marco courses.

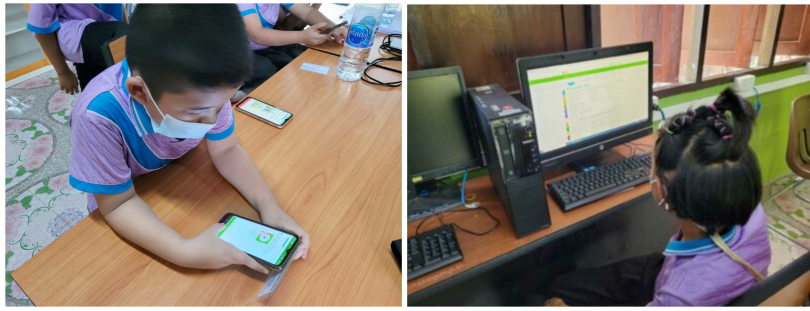
- Chiang Mai Province: Chiang Mai University, the Private School Association, North Chiang Mai University in cooperation with the Private Education Coordination and Promotion Committee, the Chiang Mai Chamber of Commerce, Chiang Mai Rajabhat University, and the Primary Educational Service Area Office 6, jointly developed the educational management of pilot schools, prepared guidelines for teaching ethnic (dual/multilingual) children the Thai language by using

their mother tongue languages. The Committee also introduced innovative education management tools to the pilot schools such as Montessori Teaching and Learning Management, Management of Schools in Highland and Deprived Areas, and the Angkhang Model.

- Three southern border provinces (Yala, Pattani, Narathiwat): Rajabhat University, worked together with technical colleges, the Provincial Industry Council, the Provincial Chamber of Commerce, the Private School Association, and the Primary Educational Service Area Office 1.

- Some of the outstanding innovations of the Narathiwat Education Sandbox are, for example, the theory of literacy development and the ability to read and write, using the King Rama IX's philosophy "Understand, Approach, and Develop" as the main guidelines for educational management, joint lessons development, and open forms of learning using situational challenges, project-based learning management, ethics projects, etc.

- The Pattani Education Sandbox has made outstanding innovations such as sorting of solid waste in educational institutions, agriculture, fisheries, and animal husbandry innovations initiated by Pattani Agriculture and Fisheries Technology College, inventions and innovations for industry, and for the communities of Pattani Technical College and Pattani Vocational College, etc.



Source: <https://www.edusandbox.com/>

- The Yala Education Sandbox has outstanding innovations such as building learning centres in the school that cover five areas (tourism, local wisdom, occupations, quality, language, culture and arts), creating innovation networks locally and with neighbouring countries, educational learning centre resorts, a handbook for online learning that includes teaching and learning, tourism, local wisdom, occupation, language, culture and arts, processing of crispy fried vegetables, as well as innovative PM 2.5 dust sprayers at a Yala vocational institution.



Source: <https://www.edusandbox.com/>

4. In well-prepared provinces, basic educational core curriculum under the National Education Law have been applied to the management of education in schools in pilot areas to appropriately suit the local context. In addition, all provinces have begun to adapt teaching and learning styles geared towards Active Learning using varieties of education innovations, which are suitable for each area, thus leading to the design of curriculum at school level.

5. Each area has continuously promoted the development of the quality and potential of teachers and educational personnel of pilot schools, in order to provide quality and appropriate teaching in the educational innovation area. Supports have been provided by various agencies, not only from the central authorities.

6. In some areas, there has been readiness to design tests to measure students' educational achievement in educational innovation areas for example, Satun province in collaboration with Chulalongkorn University, and Sisaket Province cooperating with the Thailand Development Research Institute, and Rayong Province together with Arsomsilp Institute, have collaborated to design methods for assessing educational achievements in pilot schools that are suitable for the curriculum and teaching in the area.

7. The Education Sandbox Driving Committee of all educational innovation areas have collaborated with the networking parties, local administrative organizations, other local government and private agencies, to provide support and assistance in academics and budgets as well as policy support at provincial level. Meetings have been organized to follow the progress of the innovation areas.

8. Sub-committees have been appointed to perform the tasks assigned by the Driving Committees as appropriate in at least five innovation areas.

In 2020, there were 273 pilot schools in the educational innovation areas in the eight pilot provinces as mentioned above, 226 schools under the Office of the Basic Education Commission (Ministry of Education), 28 schools under the Office of the Private Education Promotion Commission (Ministry of Education), 17 under the Local Administrative Organization (Ministry of Interior), 1 under the Border Patrol Police Headquarters, and 1 under the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation.

In 2021, the findings of the study, “Research Projects to Evaluate and Take Development Lessons in the Educational Innovation Areas” by the Thailand Development Research Institute, found that the Education Innovation Area Act B.E. 2562 (2019) that has been valid for 7 years has changed in two dimensions over the past two years, as follows:

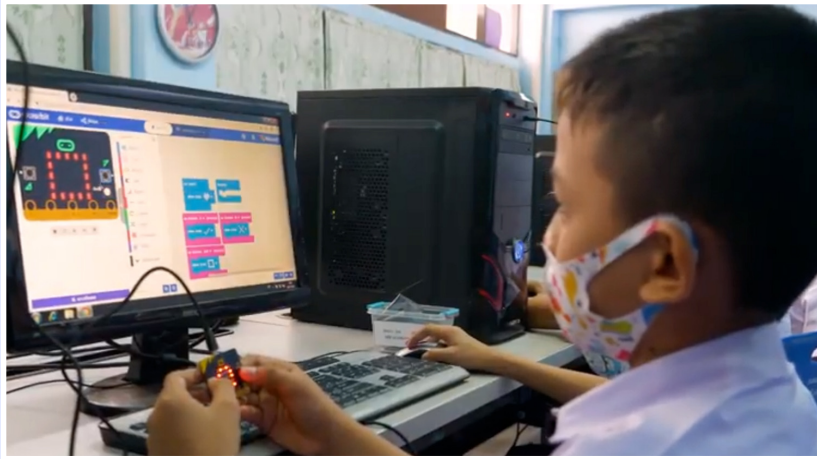
1. Policy dimension: The relaxation of regulations that hinder learning management, such as allowing schools to select media and textbooks outside the Ministry of Education’s list. In case that the media align with school innovation, schools can opt in and reject the project.

2. Amplification of teaching innovation dimension: Education personnel in pilot schools have been provided with a wide range of development areas through support from civil society and private sectors, such as project-based learning and an open approach teaching-learning.

In addition, it was found out that almost 50 percent of students were happier when they came to school. Children with low academic performance were able to understand the lessons more than before. School administrators and teachers had better attitudes towards developing teaching innovation. Teachers began to have more desire for professional development in skills they did not have, especially individual child analysis skills.

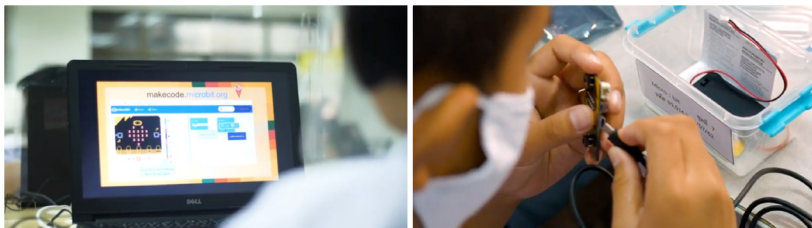
5.4 Promoting Coding in Teaching and Learning

The Ministry of Education has announced the standard of learning courses in science and technology in accordance with the Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2551 (2008 and Amendments 2017) to enable learners to learn computer science, and to develop coding skills which enable step-by-step problem solving and apply technology as a tool to develop innovation and to equip people to keep up with the changing technology of the 21st century. The Ministry of Education announced coding as a curriculum required by students nationwide in November 2019, starting from grade 1 to secondary school. Coding, according to the policy in Thailand, implies to the development of thinking which covers the science of calculation, design and technology. The focus is on learning, reading, writing, rational thinking, step-by-step thinking, computational thinking, and problem-solving skills. It can be taught either with the computer (plugged) or without the computer (unplugged).



Driving on the coding policies is clearer, as the National Strategy and Policy Driving Committee to promote computer language learning (coding) was appointed in January 2020, since the government has foreseen the importance of teaching coding for driving teaching towards critical thinking and skills building. It can increase the efficiency and quality of education, as well as integrate learning from elementary to higher education to support the transformation of technology in the 21st Century. The main functions of the Committee include establishing a strategic plan and master plan for capacity building, skills and computer language learning (coding) to be in line with the country's development in accordance with Thailand's 4.0 driven approach; and also to establish policies and directions for the development of coding teaching and learning at all levels throughout the country. This will enhance lifelong learning and the development of the potential of Thai people of all ages. The Committee also monitors, evaluates and integrates

operations, as well as giving recommendations for effective development of capacity, skills and coding, etc. The appointment of this Committee has made the preparation of a strategic plan and master plan, as well as policy formulation and guidelines for implementation, monitoring, evaluation and integrating of support from all parties, including both public and private sectors, become more streamlined and concrete. The agencies involved in driving the teaching of coding have been able to take action fully, with integration between agencies to create and develop coding courses. Training and development of school administrators, teachers, and supervisors have been put in place, along with the development of innovations, media, teaching and learning technology. Competitions have been arranged for learners, teachers, schools to allow them to show their competence in coding.

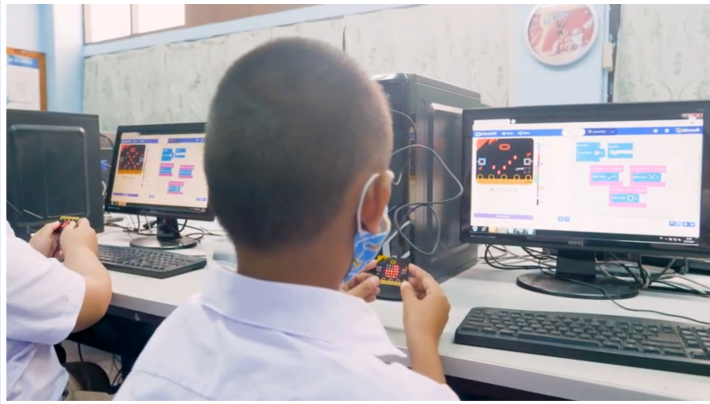


The Ministry of Education, the Office of the Basic Education Commission, and the Institute for the Promotion of Teaching Science and Technology (PTST) have jointly driven the management of learning coding in schools by initiating driving projects to learn coding in schools. Teacher and educational personnel training programs have been developed for teachers and educational personnel

under the Office of the Basic Education Commission, Office of the Private Education Commission, Local Government Organizations and Bangkok Metropolitan Administration. In 2020, four advanced coding courses for teachers (Coding for Teacher: C4T) were created online:

1. Computational Science Learning Management Course for primary school grade 1-3 teachers.
2. Computational Science Learning Management Course for primary school grade 4-6 teachers.
3. Computational Science Learning Management Course for secondary school grade 1-3 teachers.
4. Computational Science Learning Management Course for secondary school grade 4-6 teachers.

The four courses were made available online to 201,799 teachers. There are also seven advanced training courses for teachers (C4TPlus). The second badge of both C4T and C4TPlus courses were continued in 2021. The objective is to focus on preparing students with essential skills, which are computational thinking, digital technology, and media and information literacy. It is important to nurture these basic skills for students from primary to secondary level to be the foundation of technological innovation to enhance students' potential so that they can create innovations which can contribute to the development of the country. These courses are free of charge. In addition to providing training courses for teachers, coding core trainer (CCT) and coding mentor (CM) courses are also provided for teachers and education personnel.



In order to drive coding into basic school practice in fiscal year 2021, the Ministry of Education and the Office of the Basic Education Commission have divided the implementation into three main stages:

- 1) Preparatory stage: explore infrastructure, personnel readiness, and plan for joint learning management.
- 2) Operation stage: supervise, set up infrastructure and provide personnel development.
- 3) Evaluation stage: focus on evaluation for development and create a participatory evaluation culture.

5.5 Teachers and Educational Personnel Development

Thailand has placed great emphasis on the development of teachers and educational personnel, As of 2019, there were 113 higher education institutions that produced basic education teachers and vocational teachers. And in the academic year 2019, there were 55,783 teacher graduates; 47,173 from 5-year Bachelor of Education Programs, and 8,610

from Teacher’s Certificate Programs. According to a survey conducted by Dusit Poll in 2019, the prominent characteristics of Thai teachers that most of the general public find positive are: the commitment to learn new things; diligence, patience, sacrifice and responsibility for various kinds of work; providing good teaching; not clinging to conventional ideas; the ability to practice a diverse range of teaching and learning styles; possession of the “teacher spirit”; and giving love and care to students.



Higher education personnel are key to building knowledge and skills for students in their careers after graduation. They have also created and developed quality human resources to further drive the country’s development.

In the development of teachers and educational personnel, significant operations are, as follows:

5.5.1 Four-Year Curriculum for Basic Education Teacher Production

Beginning in the academic year 2019, the production system of basic education teachers at undergraduate level requires four years of study. Normally, since 2004, a five-year teacher production program has been used to produce bachelor's degrees in education, four-year theoretical study and one-year practice in educational institutions. However, according to the research findings of Srinakharinwirot University, the process for producing teachers is more essential than the number of years teachers study. For example, how to manage learning according to international guidelines and how to create a teacher spirit. This includes selecting learners who truly want to be teachers. Parents, teachers and learners also agreed to the four-years of study for teachers.



In 2019, the Ministry of Education announced the Undergraduate Qualification Standards for graduates with a degree in Education (four Year Program) B.E. 2562 (2019) to comply with the National Higher Education Qualification Standard Framework B.E. 2552 (2009), which requires the establishment of qualification standards in each field of study in order that higher education institutions can prepare courses or improve teaching and learning curriculum accordingly. The announcement requires that the management of undergraduate programs in Education (four year program) must meet standards not lower than “Undergraduate Standards in Education (four Year Program) B.E. 2562 (2019).” Also, the preparation or improvement of undergraduate programs in Education (four Year program) must aim to meet the standards of the graduate learning outcomes, teaching and other elements of which must be in accordance with undergraduate qualification standards in Education (four Year program) B.E. 2562 (2019).

This curriculum improvement aims to modernize the curriculum, meet the country’s development strategy and need for learning in the digital world, and based on the following key principles: 1) The concept of the curriculum design for the teaching profession is an integrated and performance-based curriculum, rather than a content-based curriculum, focusing on self-learning and research. 2) the curriculum structure is designed to be flexible and meet the needs of both teachers and learners, 3) institutions that are producing teachers are free to create a curriculum that suits the school’s identity and local context based on learning outcomes. The curriculum structure should be flexible and able to reflect

the identity of the learners, 4) the preparation of up-to-date curriculum, using technology materials in teaching and learning is encouraged, 5) curriculum management and the teaching-learning process should equip students with professional competencies for teachers, spirit and ideology of teachership, and qualifications that comply with teacher professional standards and 6) the placement of an intensive curriculum quality assurance system should be promoted.

In the four Year Teacher Education Program, students are scheduled to practice teaching from Year 1 throughout Year 4, which allows students to learn how to teach, so that they can be incubated with teachership as well as the standards of education management.

5.5.2 Khru Rak Thin Project

The Kru Rak Thin Project is a cooperation project between the Equitable Education Fund and five state agencies, namely the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation, the Office of the Basic Education Commission, the Office of the Board of Teachers and Educational Personnel, and the Office of the Teachers' Council of Thailand (Khurusapha). Key goals of the project are to:

1. Support local students who have good academic performance and passion to be teachers and enable them to complete their undergraduate studies with a quality education degree, becoming equipped with learning skills for the 21st Century, to become a teacher in a school in the community where they were born.

2. Cooperate with higher education institutions participating in the program to adapt teaching and learning to suit the conditions of small schools in remote areas. During the internship, students will be assigned from the beginning of the course to work with the school and community where they are supposed to teach after graduation.

3. Prepare academic and social conditions for the targeted students before they start the program.

4. Take care of the students' living conditions, encourage them to participate in activities which develop and enhance essential skills, instil in them love for their homeland, and encourage them to join in problem-solving and development for their local community.



The Khru Rak Thin Project has built on important lessons learned from the Guru Heir Project (Project to produce teachers for local development) in two aspects, which are,

- 1) Guaranteed employment into government service as a government teacher at the end of the teacher education program and

- 2) Higher education institutions have incubated community teachership into the hearts of students along the academic pathway.

The program provides scholarships for 300 students per batch of graduates, in total of five batches, which include tuition fees, accommodation, daily living expenses, textbooks and essential school supplies. The first batch started from academic year 2020. Higher education institutions have been selected to participate in the program, focusing on the operational quality of the higher education institutions which is the mechanism for producing and developing a new generation of teachers in accordance with the following seven main issues:

- 1) Availability and reliability of the institution in terms of curriculum, instructors with expertise in the field, availability of researchers, learning resources for practicing and gaining experience in the teaching profession, and cooperation between the university and local communities.

- 2) Finding and selecting students as scholarship recipients who must be those coming from poor families or are at a disadvantage. However, the student should have certain degree of academic performance, when compared with students in the same group of schools.

3) Providing preparation for the scholarship student prior to entering the university, from the beginning of activity plans to the first stage of work.

4) The quality of the curriculum, and plans for student development both in basic capacities for teacher profession and in gaining the learning skills necessary for the 21st century.

5) The management of the system for taking care of the students, and plans for taking care of the students' living conditions, students' welfare and health care for scholarship recipients.

6) Enrichment Programme, guidelines or methods for improving quality for scholarship recipients, and

7) Information management system and participation in academic development.

For the first generation of the project, there were 11 higher education institutions selected as teacher production and development institutions, comprising seven institutions providing early childhood education courses, including Kalasin University, Chiang Rai Rajabhat University, Chiang Mai Rajabhat University, Piboonsongkram Rajabhat University, Chom Bueng Rajabhat University, Surat Thani Rajabhat University, and Kanchanaburi Rajabhat University. There were four institutions providing elementary school courses, including Chiang Mai University, Kamphaengphet Rajabhat University, Loei Rajabhat University, and Yala Rajabhat University. In the academic year 2020, all 11 higher education institutions were ready to accept 328 local teachers' scholarship students. There were 282 small schools in remote areas, which can be the placement schools of Generation 1 students from the 11 institutions participating

in this project. For the academic year 2020, there were 328 students in need of funding and awarded scholarships to attend 11 universities nationwide covering 45 provinces of remote schools with teachers who will retire in 2024. After graduation, all scholarship recipients will fill teacher positions at pre-school and primary levels in the schools where teacher positions are allocated for the schools in their respective domiciles, by the Office of the Basic Education Commission.

For the Second generation of the Project in Academic Year 2021, 301 teacher positions have been allocated by the Office of the Basic Education Commission, for producing teachers to fill teacher positions in 273 remote schools in 45 provinces, 230 sub-districts. The 10 higher education institutions selected as teacher production and development institutes in the second generation of the Project are: Kalasin University, Chiang Mai University, the Pattani Campus of Prince of Songkla University, Piboonsongkram Rajabhat University, Surat Thani Rajabhat University, Chom Bueng Rajabhat University, Yala Rajabhat University, Udon Thani Rajabhat University, Uttaradit Rajabhat University, and Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University.

These higher education institutions had to look for the target students in the area to study according to these basic factors: 1) Poverty factors with an average family income of not more than 3,000 baht/month. 2) Those who receive scholarships, as well as their parents must have been in their domicile for at least 3 years. 3) The student's accumulated average grade point for 5 semesters not less than 2.5., and 4) Students are selected by the community participation process, and should have specific capacity of the Kru Rak Thin of

Thailand 4.0 era, which include the capacity to be a community leader, to be able to teach from pre-primary to primary level, the ability to teach multiple classes in all disciplines.

5.5.3 Development of Higher Education Personnel

The Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation has developed *a higher education plan for the country's manpower production and development 2021-2027*. The 1st strategy for building human resource capacity has established a driving approach for the development of higher education personnel by enhancing the brainpower and concentration of talents so that the higher education system achieves three goals: 1) to develop an environment that attracts high-achieving people into higher education who can perform their duties effectively, including faculty members, researchers, and administrators, as well as supporting staff, 2) to be an academic community with high potential, variety, focus, and strength in different aspects that contribute to the benefit of the country and , 3) to have the ability to compete internationally as a world-class higher education institution, which can attract scholars from all over the world to help develop the country with the following strategies:

- Elevate the level of qualifications and academic positions of faculty members. Higher education institution establishes appropriate guidelines and support for raising the qualifications and academic positions of faculty members and academic staff to enhance professionalism, including curriculum development, teaching and learning, and research to build the body of the knowledge and to gain expertise

in the specific field. Quality research should be encouraged, and be published in leading journals, recognized both at home and abroad. Academic positions should use contributions from sectors such as social sectors and industry sectors, as well as allowing faculty members who have been teaching for some time to increase their academic knowledge through spending sabbatical leave or other assignments with other higher education institutions both inside and outside the country.

- Support the framework of academic personnel management in higher education institutions. Government and higher education institutions join hands to promote the framework of academic personnel management by giving incentives to high-quality faculty members and personnel at home and abroad (Reverse Brain Drain) to participate in the country's academic community. Persuade and give opportunities for successful people in the private sector and public sector to continuously assist academic and professional work in higher education institutions, in line with the focus of each institution.

- Building acceptance of scholastic roles by the global academic society. Higher education institutions must seriously and continuously drive the role of academicians and the academic community to be recognized internationally. The state allocates resources as appropriate and necessary, as well as reducing regulations that limit the development of academic work. The support will go to selected personnel and higher education institutions that are ready to develop with high potential, in order that academics and higher education institutions will be praised and recognized as world-class institutions.

Chapter 6

Budget Allocation and Investment in Education

Budget allocation and investment in education and educational administration are important mechanisms of effective educational development and reform. *The Constitution of the Kingdom Of Thailand (B.E. 2560 (2017))* stipulates in Section 54 that “The State shall ensure that every child receives a quality education for twelve years from pre-school to the completion of compulsory education free of charge” and further stipulates about financial support: “To ensure that young children receive care and development or to provide the people education, the State shall provide the financial support for educational expenses to persons with insufficiency in accordance with their aptitudes.”

Section 58 of the *National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999)* and *Amendments (Second National Education Act B.E. 2545 (2002))* stipulate that “There shall be a mobilisation of resources and investment of budget, finance, and property from the State, local administration, person, family, community, community organisation, private organisation, professional organisation, religious institution, establishment, other social institution, and foreign country in order to provide education.” According to the government policy, the educational budget will be allocated to be consistent with the needs of learners and the environment of the educational institutions or the location of the institutions.

The Cabinet meeting on January 13, 2009, approved the annual budget allocation that provides financial support for education from the pre-primary level to the completion of basic education. They also extended the support period for free from twelve to fifteen years. The Order of the National Council for Peace and Order No.28/2016 supported the act of providing free basic education to every child that is at least 15 years old. The Cabinet also assigned the Minister of Education to set up the cost of the education provision for 15 years of basic education (15 Years Free Education Program) in order to be prepared for the annual expenditure budget that covers five main categories: tuition fee (cost per head), books, learning materials, student uniforms, and student development activities.

6.1 Budget Allocation for Education

In terms of allocating budget for education, the State allocates the budget according to the functions of education; that is, pre-school education, elementary education, secondary education, higher education, non-specific level education, educational support services, educational research and development, and other education types. Table 6.1 shows details of budget allocation from 2016 - 2020.

Table 6.1 Budget Expenditure on Education by Function
(Fiscal Years 2016-2020)

Unit: Million Baht

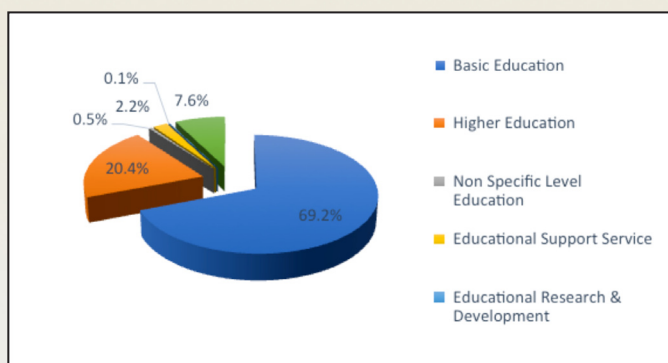
Function	Fiscal Year				
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Pre-School, Elementary, and Secondary Education	388,080.0	376,124.3	325,295.8	347,778.5	341,669.8
Higher Education	106,829.1	112,975.0	108,340.9	101,832.7	100,653.0
Non-specific Level Education	9,214.5	3,116.8	3,780.4	2,688.4	2,447.1
Educational Support Services	25,386.7	15,219.8	47,466.3	10,365.8	10,804.4
Educational Research and Development		1,455.3	6,964.1	3,420.5	779.0
Other Education Types	20,197.0	27,840.8	31,721.9	44,341.1	37,469.4
TOTAL	549,708.1	536,732.0	523,569.4	510,427.0	493,822.7

Source: Bureau of the Budget

The table above shows that the government has prioritised budget allocation for basic education expenditure (pre-school, elementary, secondary education) as it had the largest allocation every fiscal year. However, it was noticeable that since the fiscal year 2017, educational research and development was added to the allocation, which indicates the priority of the government to provide more support on research and educational development activities. This was consistent with one of the emphases and development issues in the 12th National Economic and Social Development Plan B.E. 2560-2564 (2017 - 2021) which was promotion and support of science, technology, and innovation. The budget was allocated in compliance with the situation and overall policy of the country in each year.

Figure 6.1 shows the proportion of budget allocation for education by function, of which basic education has the largest proportion.

Figure 6.1 Percentage of Budget Allocation for Education by Function (Fiscal Year 2020)



Source: Bureau of the Budget

The budget allocation for education by function in the 2020 fiscal year shows that basic education received 69.2 percent, which is the largest proportion of the budget allocation. This is due to covering the largest number of students in the country. Higher education received 20.4 percent, while 0.5 percent was allocated to non-specific level education, 2.2 percent was allocated to educational support service, 0.1 percent was allocated to educational research and development, and 7.6 percent was for other education types.

6.2 Investment in Education

The budget expenditure allocation of the fiscal year 2020 for administration including education was focused on building a sustainable foundation for the nation, reinforcing domestic economic strength, reducing educational inequality, improving quality of life as well as enhancing national capability in competitiveness, promoting lifelong potential development for people, and formulating a strategy of budget expenditure allocation by the government. The state investment in education is under the strategy on development and potential reinforcement of human resources. The strategy on budget expenditure allocation was consistent with objectives and issues in the 20-Year National Strategic Plan B.E. 2561-2580 (2018-2037) the 12th National Economic and Social Development Plan B.E. 2560-2564 (2017-2021), the National Security Policy B.E. 2558-2564 (2015-2021), other Master Plans, and government policies to continuously drive the government administration with concrete results.



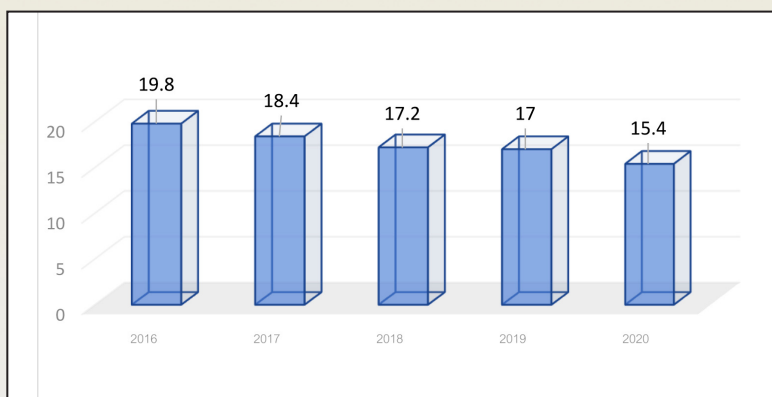
In the fiscal year 2020, the government allocated 493,822.7 million baht or 15.4 percent of all budget expenditure to educational administration. It indicated the government's intention to improve education quality and promote lifelong learning focusing on curriculum development, learning and teaching, and the learning process; to improve educational quality assessment system and standards; to promote teacher preparation and develop the quality of teacher and education personnel to be consistent with the policy of teacher preparation and development to meet the quantitative and qualitative needs; to promote production and development of manpower to be consistent with the direction of the country's development, including increasing opportunity to access educational services and lifelong learning without exception and with quality. Although the percentage of budget expenditure on education decreased from previous years, it was comparatively high and just below the budget allocation of general administration (23.5 percent) and economy (21.3 percent).

The budget expenditure on education in the 2020 fiscal year aims to operate educational administration and management from pre-primary to higher education level, non-formal education, educational funding, research for educational development as well as educational subsidy for local administration organisations. However, when compared to the previous years, since the fiscal year 2016, the percentage of education budget compared to national budget decreased every year. But most of the decreased budget items were administration expenses, cost of land and building, and other expenses which were not related directly to quality development of education.

Figure 6.2 shows the percentage of education budget compared to national budget from the fiscal year 2016 to 2020.

Figure 6.2 Percentage of Education Budget Compared to National Budget (Fiscal Years 2016-2020)

Unit: Percentage

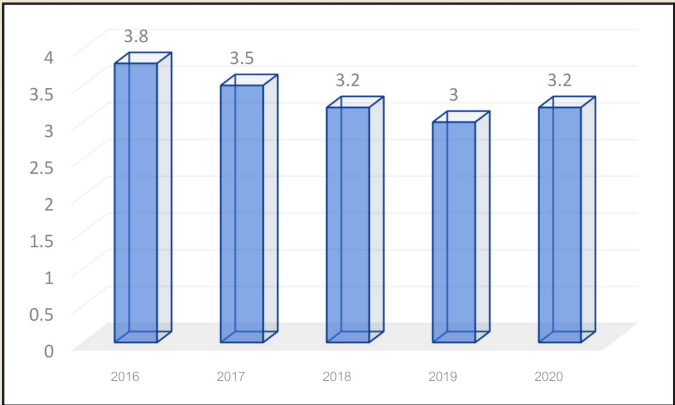


Source: Bureau of the Budget

Thailand continues to give importance to educational development. Every year, the government allocated the budget expenditure for operating educational development to be no less than three percent of the Gross Domestic Product since the 2016-2020 fiscal years, as shown in Figure 6.3.

Figure 6.3 Percentage of Education Budget Compared to Gross Domestic Product: GDP (Fiscal Years 2016-2020)

Unit: Percentage



Source: Bureau of the Budget

When comparing the national budget allocation by function, the budget expenditure on education was third following general administration and economy as shown in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2 Budget Expenditure by Function (Fiscal Year 2020)

Unit: Million Baht

Function	Amount	Percentage
General Administration	750,642.7	23.5
National Defence	228,545.0	7.1
Domestic Public Policy	200,662.8	6.3
Economy	683,204.4	21.3
Environment	12,689.4	0.4
Housing and Community	103,316.3	3.2
Public Health	292,391.4	9.2
Religion, Culture and Recreation	20,997.7	0.7
Education	493,882.7	15.4
Social Work	413,727.6	12.9
Total	3,200,060.00	100.0

Source: Bureau of the Budget

To reduce educational inequality and create opportunities to access basic education of an individual, to promote human resource development to be consistent with the needs of learners, and to reduce the education expense for learners, the government has continuously provided financial support for basic education. The State provides 15-year basic education free of charge which includes pre-elementary to secondary education (Anuban to Mathayomsuksa 6) or vocational certificate (Voc. Cert. 3) or equivalent vocational education as well as welfare education. Fee types that receive

financial support in basic education are tuition, books, school uniforms, learning materials, and student development activities.

Table 6.3 Financial Support in Basic Educational Provision in Formal School (Per Head/Year) (Fiscal Year 2020)

Unit: Baht

Fee Types receiving Financial Support	Education Level			
	Pre-Elementary	Elementary	Lower Secondary	Upper Secondary
Tuition	1,700	1,900	3,500	3,800 (Voc. Cert. 1-3 provided by establishment 11,736 Baht)
Textbook	Textbooks' cost is different in each level as shown in Table 4.4			
School Uniform	300	360	450	500 (Voc. Cert. 1-3 provided by establishment 900 Baht)
Learning Equipment	200	360	420	460 (Voc. Cert. 1-3 provided by establishment 460 Baht)
Student Improvement Activity	430	480	880	950 (Voc. Cert. 1-3 provided by establishment 950 Baht)
Subsidy for Underprivileged Students	-	1,000	3,000	-
Subsidy per Student for Small Schools	500	500	1,000	1,000
Subsidy per Student for Opportunity Expansion Schools	-	-	1,000	-

Source: Office of the Basic Education Commission

Table 6.4 Financial Support for Textbooks in Basic Education by Level of Class (Per Head/Year) (Fiscal Year 2020)

Unit: Baht

Level of Class	Amount
Pre-Elementary	200
Prathomsuksa 1	561
Prathomsuksa 2	605
Prathomsuksa 3	622
Prathomsuksa 4	653
Prathomsuksa 5	785
Prathomsuksa 6	818
Mathayomsuksa 1	700
Mathayomsuksa 2	863
Mathayomsuksa 3	949
Mathayomsuksa 4	1,257
Mathayomsuksa 5	1,263
Mathayomsuksa 6	1,110
Voc. Cert. 1-3 (Establishment)	2,000

Source: Office of the Basic Education Commission

In addition to financial support for basic educational provision to students in schools and normal educational institutions including special education schools and welfare schools, the government also provides financial support for students receiving basic education by family and establishments. There is also a financial measure to help students in private schools by providing a subsidy per person.

Apart from allocating the budget for education in the form of cost per head to reduce educational inequality and providing educational opportunities to students in order to access basic education, the government also allocates the budget through the Student Loan Fund and the Equitable Education Fund as details below:

6.2.1 Student Loan Fund (SLF)

The Student Loan Fund shall be a juristic person under The Ministry of Finance who have the objectives of providing educational opportunities by providing financial support to students to use for tuition fees, expenses related to education and expenses necessary for living during their studies from secondary education, general and vocational to higher education without interest during their studies. The loan should be repaid within two years after graduation. The rate of interest is one percent per year, and the repayment period must not exceed 15 years in total. SFL now offers two main funds:

1) *The Student Loan Fund (SLF)* is the fund to provide loans to destitute students at secondary education level, general and vocational to higher education level with one percent interest per year. The loans are for their tuition fees, and expenses related to education. When a borrower has already graduated or terminated the study for two years, the borrower has the duty to repay the loan within 15 years. In academic year of 2019, there were 442,634 borrowers, with the amount of 19,551.85 million baht.

2) *Thailand Income Contingent Allowance and Loan (TICAL)* is the fund for students at High Vocational Certificate level in every programme and from diploma to bachelor's degree level in national required programmes with one percent interest per year and without the restricted income of borrower's family. When the borrower has income from 16,000 baht per month or 192,000 baht per year, the borrower has to repay the loan within 15 years since the first day of repayment. In academic year of 2019, there were 95,764 borrowers, with the amount of 6,845.47 million baht.

Currently, the *Student Loan Fund Act B.E. 2560 (2017)* was promulgated and published in the Government Gazette which stipulated that the Fund is under the supervision of the Minister and shall be a juristic person, not a Government agency. There is the integration on administration and management of SLF and TICAL with unity under the same law and adding measures to manage the fund more efficiently.

One of the main issues of this Act enforces the rule that the employer from government and private organisations deduct the salary of an employee who is a loan borrower to repay to the Fund in case that a borrower does not repay a large amount of money. Formerly, it was a request from the employer to the borrowers to deduct the money.

6.2.2 Equitable Education Fund (EEF)

To reduce educational inequality which affects the economic sentiment and social confidence in Thailand, Section 54 of the *Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand (B.E. 2560 (2017))* stipulates that “A fund shall be established for the purpose of assisting persons with insufficiency, reducing the educational inequality and promoting and improving the quality and efficiency of teachers for which the State shall allocate budget to such fund or use tax measures or mechanisms, including providing a tax reduction to persons who donate properties into the fund, as provided by the law; such law shall, at least, prescribe that the management of the fund shall be independent and shall be disbursed to implement such purpose.”



Therefore, *the Independent Committee for Education Reform (Details in Chapter 8) approved the Equitable Education Fund Act B.E 2560 (2017) which was published in the Government Gazette on 13 May 2018 and came into force as of the day following the date of its publication which was 14 May 2018. The transitory provision of this Act stipulates that the Quality Learning Fund (QLF) (Public Agency) shall be transformed into the Equitable Education Fund (EEF) with following duties:*

1) Promote childhood development and preparation of children to enter education system by supporting and cooperating with the government, private, and civil society organisations.

2) Assist and support destitute children to complete basic education.

3) Promote and support destitute people of all ages to develop in accordance with their capability.

4) Promote quality and capability of teachers so they can provide education for children according to their differences of background and potential.

5) Study and research on Master Teacher development.

6) Promote educational institutions to support learner development according to their aptitude.

Key Projects under the Equitable Education Fund

- *The Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT)*

The CCT project has been initiated in educational institutions under the Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC) since the first semester of the 2018 academic year. This project was established based on the results of three significant research studies entitled: the National Education Account of Thailand (NEA), the Proxy Means Tests, and the Information System for Educational Equality, which were conducted by the EEF in cooperation with OBEC, Thammasat University, and Naresuan University. This led to a policy recommendation on the Equity-based Budgeting to improve the efficiency of the budget allocation to meet the needs of the individual students (Demand-side Financing) in different areas and to relieve the burden of non-qualified education expenses. The EEF on average provides 700,000 of the poorest students each year with a scholarship of 1,500 baht per month per student. This continues through the completion of the lower secondary level. During the crisis of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the number of students provided with a scholarship increased to 900,000.

- *Higher Vocational Innovation Scholarships*

It is a grant that creates educational opportunities for young people who come from the bottom 20 percent of the country's lowest-income families, so that they can have the opportunity to pursue their education in the fields which are in demand in the labour market and in the major areas for the country's development, which are: potential Industries (First S-Curve) and future industries (New S-Curve),

shortage vocational fields in the province or provincial group where the educational institution is located, and Science, Technology and Digital Technology (STEM). The scholarships were granted to 2,500 students selected by the educational institutions. The scholarship is divided into two types:

5-year scholarship for 9th graders to continue to lower vocational certificate and continue to higher certificate/diploma

2-year scholarship for 12th graders or 3rd year of lower vocational certificate to continue to higher vocational certificate/diploma

- HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Scholarship for Future Career (White Elephant Scholarship)

The goal of the scholarship is to promote further education opportunities for students who are about to finish their higher vocational certificate or diploma. The scholarship recipients should have excellent academic performance with special talent, especially in innovation and technology in New Growth Engine (First S-curve and New S-curve groups), digital technology, and other shortage areas that are in demand in the labour market. In addition, they should have positive attitudes towards furthering their education while lacking financial support and being disadvantaged according to the criteria outlined by the Office of the Student Loan Fund. Forty scholarships are offered to students to pursue higher education towards a PhD.

The Equitable Education Fund (EEF) presented its 2020 Annual Report to the Cabinet Meeting chaired by General Prayuth Chan-Ocha (Prime Minister) on April 7th, 2021. Their performance report was as follows:

1. Spatial Equitable Education Project has developed an integrated system of support for children and young people outside the education system in 20 pilot provinces. The target group of 26,055 people were supported by this project.
2. The allocation of conditional cash transfer (Equity Fund) to the extraordinary poor students. In the 2020 Fiscal Year, the fund was granted to 994,428 students in the schools under the Office of Basic Education and the Border Patrol Police. In addition, the fund was used to help alleviate the financial burden of 753,996 persons in targeted families affected by the coronavirus outbreak 2019 (COVID-19).
3. Higher Vocational Innovation Scholarship Program. This program helps those who lack funds or disadvantaged youth to have education and pursue a career based on their aptitude and potential. There were 4,588 students receiving scholarships across 66 vocational institutions nationwide.
4. HRH Princes Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Scholarship for Future Career is provided to young people who have good grades with special talents and have a positive attitude towards vocational education, but lack financial support and are disadvantaged to receive undergraduate to Ph.D. education. There are 38 scholarship recipients who pursued their education from undergraduate to Ph.D.

5. A Project to create educational opportunities for students in remote areas to become new generation teachers. It aims to improve the quality of schools in the community. It also aims to produce and develop a new generation of teachers to come back to teach in remote areas that are their own domiciles. In the first batch, there were 328 students who are needy and disadvantaged from 45 provinces who received a scholarship to study in the Faculty of Education.
6. Skill Development Program for underfunded and disadvantaged workers using the community as a base for promotion and support. Underfunded workers and disadvantaged people who have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic were supported to have knowledge and ability to pursue a career based on their aptitude and potential. There were 9,056 participants in 51 provinces who benefited from this program.
7. The project to support the development of teachers and children outside the education system. This project helps develop teachers to provide effective learning processes suitable for juvenile learners outside the education system. It also provides students with life skills in accordance with their aptitude, including helping to alleviate the suffering resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic. This project was able to help 35,140 targeted participants.

8. Teacher and school development projects to continuously improve the quality of education. This project encouraged 834 participating schools to provide active learning in the classroom, which will result in learners developing learning skills in the 21st century. There were 19,660 teachers and educational personnel developed, and 194,600 students were given the opportunity to develop their potential.
9. Educational Research and Innovation programs in knowledge development and innovation. This aims to reduce educational inequality and promote human resource development in line with the purpose of the establishment of the EEF. In 2020, there were 23 innovative research projects in education and knowledge development.

Chapter 7

International Education in Thailand and International Cooperation in Education

This chapter will present the overall picture of international education in Thailand, which has been continuously growing in number at both the basic education and higher education levels. It will also mention the international cooperation in education according to the 20-Year National Strategies B.E. 2561-2580 (2018-2037), focusing on international, regional, as well as bilateral levels. Maintaining and expanding international relationships has helped develop the quality of education in Thailand in all aspects.

7.1 International Education in Thailand

International education in Thailand has been growing continuously every year, as can be seen in the market value of the private international schools which has reached 60,000 million Baht, and is expected to grow more than 12 percent each year. The influx of private international schools have opened Thailand's education market wider, so that parents and students have more options in choosing their education. As for higher education, many higher education institutions in Thailand declare that they are international institutions, in terms of the number of foreign students enrolled, the number of foreign staff working in the institution, and cooperation with international institutions or organizations, as well as their university's international ranking.

7.1.1 International Schools Providing Basic Education in Thailand

International schools in Thailand are overseen by the Office of the Private Education Commission (OPEC), under the supervision of the Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education. The OPEC is responsible for setting policy, criteria, rules, and standards for the establishment of an international school. The curriculum that international schools in Thailand use can be divided into four main types: 1) American Curriculum; 2) National Curriculum for the United Kingdom, England, and Wales; 3) International Baccalaureate (IB); and 4) International Curricula of other countries such as Korea, Canada, France, Japan, Germany, Singapore, Switzerland, Australia, India, etc.

Analysis of the business investors for the international school business reveals seven reasons for the increasing demand for international schools in Thailand: 1) The curriculum that the schools use achieves both Thai and international standards. 2) The schools cooperate with recognized schools overseas. 3) The location of the schools is convenient to access. 4) Teachers have passion in teaching and are ready to assist students in all matters. 5) The use of appropriate technology in teaching and learning. 6) Favourable environment and readiness of teaching materials, and 7) The assets of the schools. One of the strengths of international schools in Thailand is the ability to instil “Thainess”, and Thai culture into the students. In addition, each school has a proportion of Thai and non-Thai students which allows students to learn about Thainess as well as cultural diversity. The cooperation with renowned schools overseas can also raise the education standards of the students to be comparable to those who study abroad.

The number of international schools in Thailand has increased continuously since academic year 2015 to 2019. In the academic year 2015, there were 161 international schools, while in the academic year 2019, the number risen to 207 schools. The number has increased both in Bangkok and in the provinces (Table 7.1).

Table 7.1 Number of International Schools Providing Basic Education (Academic Years 2015-2019)

Academic Year	Number of International Schools		
	Bangkok	Regions	Total
2015	95	66	161
2016	96	79	175
2017	94	88	182
2018	109	97	206
2019	110	97	207

Source: Office of the Private Education Commission

According to the statistics of the Office of the Private Education Commission in the academic year 2019, there were 5,762 teachers in international schools located in Bangkok and other provinces as shown in Table 7.2.

Table 7.2 Number of Teachers in International Schools Providing Basic Education (Academic Years 2015-2019)

Academic Year	Number of Teachers in International Schools		
	Bangkok	Regions	Total
2015	4,247	2,651	6,898
2016	4,864	2,530	7,394
2017	2,965	1,693	4,658
2018	2,917	2,879	5,796
2019	3,030	2,732	5,762

Source: Office of the Private Education Commission

Table 7.3 shows the number of students in international schools that provide basic education from the academic years 2015 - 2019. It is clear that the number of students in international schools has increased every year, especially during the academic years 2017-2018 the number of students leaped from 53,754 to 86,445 due to the parents' desire to send their children to international schools due to the reasons mentioned above.

Table 7.3 Number of Students in International Schools Providing Basic Education (Academics Year 2015-2019)

Academic Year	Number of Students in International Schools		
	Bangkok	Regions	Total
2015	27,257	17,240	44,497
2016	32,828	18,130	50,958
2017	33,969	19,785	53,754
2018	43,497	42,948	86,445
2019	44,395	42,948	87,343

Source: Office of the Private Education Commission

7.1.2 International Programs in Higher Education Institutions

In Thailand, many public and private institutions of higher education offer international programs in various fields through academic cooperation with higher education institutions overseas. For some programs, a student will receive two degrees, one from the higher education institution

in Thailand and one from the higher education institution overseas under an agreement called a Double Degree Program, or a Dual Degree Program. For some programs, a student will receive a single degree from both universities, which is called a Joint Degree Program. In addition, there are National Degree Programs and Triple Degree Programs as well. Data from Thai Higher Education: At a Glance 2019, issued by Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation, revealed that there were 119 international programs which higher education institutions in Thailand cooperated with renowned higher education institutions overseas. The programs included 78 Double Degree Programs, 9 Joint Degree Programs, and 32 National Degree Programs.

Many universities in Thailand have also established an international college within their university to provide an opportunity for Thai and foreign students to study in any program of their choice. In addition, some universities provide an “international” dormitory on the campus for Thai and foreign students. Therefore, they can exchange experiences, learn to live together, and join many activities in the university where they study.

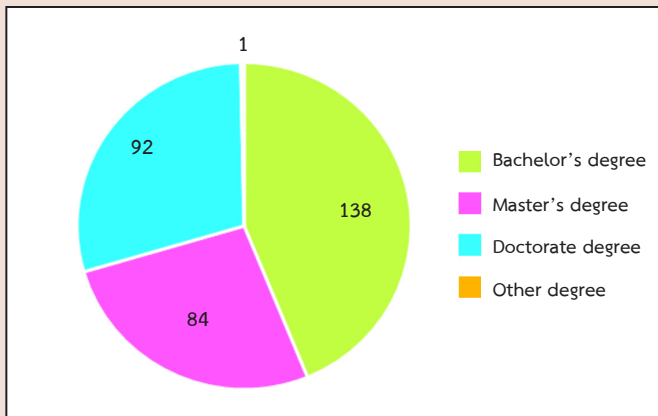
Since Thailand has entered the ASEAN Community, international programs have grown in popularity. International education produces personnel who can move to work within member countries of the ASEAN Community and all over the world, because they are able to use English effectively as the main medium of communication. Such education programs also increase the competitiveness of learners when entering the labour market after graduation. International programs

provide the learners with a vision of learning through knowledge and innovations in different fields. Learners have a chance to learn from foreign experts in each field, either from the course lecturers or guest lecturers from overseas universities.

In 2019, there were 315 international programs offered by public and private higher education institutions in Thailand: 138 bachelor's degree programs, 84 master's degree programs, 92 doctorate degree programs, and 1 other degree program (Figure 7.1). The five most popular courses among foreign students were business administration, Thai language, international business, management, and marketing. There were 26,635 international students, the highest number being Chinese (14,017 students), then Burmese (2,266 students), Cambodian (1,599 students), Vietnamese (821 students), and Lao (781 students), respectively.

Many Chinese students choose to study in Thailand in public and private universities because tuition fees and living expenses in Thailand are cheaper than in many other countries. In addition, Thailand's visa regulations are more relaxed than those of other countries. Universities in Thailand, therefore, try to adjust their curriculum to accommodate Chinese admissions.

Figure 7.1 Number of International Programs of Higher Education by Level of Education (2019)



Source: Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation

7.2 International Cooperation in Education

In the education sector, international cooperation is an important tool for building networks and partnerships that will create, share, and develop innovations, data, and knowledge for Thai education society to strengthen the quality of education. Realizing the importance of international cooperation in education, Thai educational organisations have established cooperation with various countries and organizations. This chapter will present international cooperation for developing teachers and education personnel, as well as cooperation in developing vocational education.

Currently, the Ministry of Education has established guidelines for promoting cooperation with foreign countries, which is likely to expand to more regions of the world.

At the same time, cooperation with existing partners in ASEAN and other regions around the world has expanded further and more in-depth, especially with countries of high economic importance. The implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 and participation in the ASEAN Community since 2015 have been key factors in accelerating the development of education to prepare people with both language and professional skills for a united and sustainable coexistence. Although the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have affected the pursuit and promotion of international cooperation since 2018 to the present day, cooperation in various fields still continue, although the models have been changed to meet the global crisis.

7.2.1 Cooperation with international organizations and other cooperation groups

Cooperation with international organizations under the Ministry of Education has extended to international organizations and cooperation groups both globally, such as UN, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP, OECD, WTO, WHO, etc., and cross-regional cooperation, for example, APEC, ASEM, FEALAC, to regional organizations such as SEAMEO, ASEAN, GMS, ACMECS, Mekong-Lanchang Cooperation (MLC), etc. The relevant organizations in Thailand have worked together to formulate strategies and plans to continuously promote, support and develop Thai education in order to keep pace with the social development and global change. Main cooperation is as follows:

7.2.1.1 Cooperation with UNESCO

Thailand joined UNESCO on January 1st, 1959, becoming the 49th member country signatory to the UNESCO Constitution. Thailand has played outstanding roles so far, and has had many empirical accomplishments, such as having been elected to be member of the UNESCO Executive Committee (in charge from 2019-2023), the main responsibility of which is to screen all the work before submitting for consideration by the UNESCO General Conference, the highest organization of UNESCO. In addition, the Secretariat of the National Committee has also encouraged qualified individuals to be directors on the intergovernmental Committee to exchange and share knowledge with international scholars and to support the selection of individuals, organizations and agencies to receive awards or join global networks.



Taking the lead in education cooperation, Thailand hosted the World Conference on Education for All in 1990, the origin of the Jomtien Declaration, an event which member states continue to refer to its importance as a declaration which marked the beginning of a serious global education drive. Later, Thailand continued to play a role in organizing conferences, implementing projects, and hosting major activities both at regional and global levels. Thailand has also been dedicated to driving education for Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all, by implementing various activities under the Associated Schools Project Network (ASPnet), including pushing various cities in Thailand to become members of the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities to create lifelong learning opportunities for all citizens.

In addition to playing various roles mentioned above as a member state, the Ministry of Education as an overseeing organization of the work of the UNESCO National Committee on Education, Science and Culture, has initiated projects supporting UNESCO's plans and strategies continuously. Some examples are: 1) Thai Government Funding Project under UNESCO partnership for UNESCO member states; 2) Participation Programme; 3) The Celebration of Historic Anniversaries in Member States which are associated with UNESCO work; and 4) The Thailand-Japan International Educational Exchange Programme.

7.2.1.2 Partnership with UNICEF

Thailand, in partnership with UNICEF, has helped children to have access to educational opportunities and education supports; for example, by providing technical support to the Office of the Basic Education Commission for the development of the learning and skills framework through their assistance in reviewing Thailand's core curriculum. They also assisted through supporting the development of a new approach for basic education curriculum evaluation that focuses on the competencies of 21st century learners, whether it's digital learning skills, creativity or advanced critical thinking.



UNICEF has also partnered with the Thai Cyber University to conduct assessments of distance teaching-learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, where the instruction had to be arranged through on-air, on-line, on-demand, on-site and on-hand, so that actual guidelines and recommendations from

the school, parents and students could be considered. It also promotes reading habits and literacy in Thailand, reviews of teachers' manuals for distance teaching, and production of teacher's handbooks to promote knowledge of COVID-19, as well as encouraging the use of e-Learning for learning practices in schools, etc.

7.2.1.3 Cooperation with APEC

The Ministry of Education has joined the Education Network (EDNET), a network under the Human Resources Development Working Group (HRDWG) of APEC. The goal is to strengthen human resource development both in work and social aspects, since human resource development is seen as an important key to long-term economic development. There have been several projects in cooperation between Ministry of Education and APEC.

7.2.1.4 Cooperation in the OECD Framework

Thailand has been working through its partnership with Directorate of Education and Skills, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), on human resources development. The OECD has a framework for cooperation to improve the education of key member states such as: assessment of opportunities and outcomes of educational management and skills development; creation of channels for learning and exchange of knowledge to improve teaching and learning practices; and supporting member countries in education policy development and implementation, etc.



7.2.1.5 Cooperation with ASEAN

The implementation of education cooperation is one of the key issues for the ASEAN Social and Cultural Community, which aims to make ASEAN a people-centric community, a society that is generous and shared, and ASEAN populations are prosperous and developed in all aspects to improve the quality of life. Thailand recognizes education as an important mechanism for driving the ASEAN Community to strengthen and develop human resource potential. It has set national strategy and government policy aiming to reform the learning process and develop the potential of Thai people of all ages, as well as preparing Thai people for the 21st century. The Ministry of Education has conducted many activities with ASEAN, such as the Validation Workshop of the Mid-Term

Review of the ASEAN Work Plan on Education, the Consultative Meeting to finalize the Bangkok Declaration to Advance Partnership on Education for Sustainability, the ASEAN Conference on Out-of-School Children and Youth, the Inception Workshop: Development of the ASEAN Work Plan on Education 2021-2025, the 1st Meeting of the ASEAN TVET Council - ATC, and other conferences and meetings.

In addition to the above-mentioned events, Thailand is also involved in important programs under the ASEAN framework which includes:

1) ASEAN Teacher Exchange Program

The Office of the Teachers' Council has implemented the Teacher Exchange Programs in the ASEAN region, in collaboration with the Malaysia National Union of the Teachers' Profession (NUTP), and the Brunei Malay Teachers' Association (BMTA). This Program started in 2018, with the objective to encourage teachers to expand their worldview and have direct experience in teaching in a foreign context, and to empower teachers to have experience and skills that align with the international context. The Teachers' Council selected five Thai teachers to join in the program in Malaysia, and four teachers to Brunei Darussalam. Two Malaysian teachers and three Brunei Darussalam teachers were sent in exchanged to Thailand. The duration of participation in each exchange program is two weeks; each country has freedom and its own mechanism for selecting teachers to participate in the program.

In 2019, the Teachers' Council collaborated with the Malaysia National Union of the Teaching Profession (NUTP), by recruiting Science, Mathematics, English and primary or secondary Physical Education teachers into the program, from both public and private schools. Public and private schools wishing to participate in the program must be schools that offer primary or secondary level education, and be prepared to host exchange teachers from Malaysia who will participate in the program for 15 days. A teachers' association or confederation, as required by the Teachers' Council, acts as the center for the application and nomination of teachers who are eligible for the program.

Organizationally, the implementation of teacher exchange programs in the ASEAN region has resulted in a positive ongoing cooperation between networks of educational organizations for professional development and educational practitioners themselves, especially in Malaysia and Brunei Darussalam. It is likely to expand cooperation projects with other countries in the future. From the aspect of the educational professionals, teachers who attended the program gained a better understanding of teaching principles in a universal context, experienced in observing school teaching and learning abroad, developed their language skills, increased understanding of their ASEAN neighbors, and were able to apply this knowledge and experience to their teaching practices to become more effective.

2) Short-term training

The short-term training provided by the Student Scholarship Program enabled international students to study and train in Thailand from the 13th to the 22nd of August 2019 in Bangkok and Phitsanulok. On the occasion of Thailand being ASEAN Chairman in 2019, the Ministry of Education allocated scholarship funding for international students from nine ASEAN member states in order to promote education cooperation. This is an important mechanism for quality education management to be consistent with changes in the age of globalization and entry into a borderless world. In addition to gaining academic knowledge, building networks, and learning the differing ways of life between Thai and international culture. Also, Thai universities with potential have evolved to accommodate international students and hence could become international education institutions.

Short-term training entitled, “Wellness for the Aging Society”, for regional ASEAN educators was organized, with the objective being to focus on preparing health sciences, physical and mental care for an aging society, and to be ready to adapt to major changes in the environment and trends of the world. Participants in this training program were staff, university lecturers and secondary school teachers from the Kingdom of Cambodia, the Republic of Indonesia, the Lao Peoples’ Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Republic of the Philippines, and Socialist Republic of Vietnam; in total 9 persons.

7.2.1.6 Cooperation with SEAMEO (Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization - SEAMEO)

The Thai government has focused on the country's human resources development and strengthening education cooperation with other countries to enhance the quality and development of education in the region. In 1967, Thailand was established as the Secretariat of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO Secretariat), with the approval of the Cabinet of the Thai government, which assigned the Ministry of Education as the implementor. The Ministry was tasked to strengthen education, science and cultural cooperation between SEAMEO member states, building regional unity, as well as promoting sustainable human resources development. SEAMEO's scope of expertise includes the development of education at all levels, science, tropical medicine, hygiene and public health, agriculture and the environment, as well as culture, archaeology and history.



Currently, there are 25 regional specialized centers and 1 network under SEAMEO; the main responsibilities of these centers are to develop human resources in the region, and promote academics and capability building, as is useful for the development of the member countries. They are also important organisations to drive the policy of educational cooperation in different fields to be more substantive. These regional centers are located in various ASEAN member countries including Brunei Darussalam (1 center), Cambodia (1 center) Indonesia (7 centers) Laos (1 center), Malaysia (3 centers), Myanmar (1 center), Philippines (3 centers), Singapore (1 center), Thailand (1 network and 5 centers), and Vietnam (2 centers)

Thailand hosts six regional networks/centers, which are:

- 1) The SEAMEO Tropical Medicine and Public Health Network (TROPMED NETWORK), established in 1966, located at the Faculty of Tropical Medicine, Mahidol University, Bangkok. The specialization of TROPMED NETWORK is in tropical medicine and public health.

- 2) The SEAMEO TROPMED Regional Centre for Tropical Medicine was established in 1967 and is located at the Faculty of Tropical Medicine, Mahidol University, Bangkok. Its specialization is in tropical medicine.

- 3) The SEAMEO Regional Centre for Archaeology and Fine Arts (SPAFA) was established in 1978 at SPAFA Building, Sri Ayutthaya Road, Bangkok. SPAFA specializes in archaeology and fine arts.

4) The SEAMEO Regional Centre for Higher Education and Development (RIHED) was established in 1993 and is located on the 5th floor of the Office of the Higher Education Commission, Bangkok. RIHED is specialized in higher education.

5) SEAMEO Regional Centre for Sufficiency Economy Philosophy for Sustainability (SEPS) was established in 2019 and is located on the 11th floor of the Natural and Environmental Building, Science Center for Education, Bangkok. The specialization of the Centre is sustainable development education, based on the philosophy of sufficiency economy.

6) SEAMEO Regional Centre for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Education (STEM-ED) was established in 2019. The temporary office is located on the 11th floor of the Nature and Environment Building, in the Science Center for Education, Bangkok. The Centre is specialized in STEM education.

The main cooperative projects and activities of the key areas of SEAMEO and its centers on education are various, such as: an Open Online Teaching-Learning Network Project that reaches a large number of learners in Southeast Asia; an International Digital Technology Skills Development and Open Educational Resources Program, in collaboration with UNESCO and the WEIDONG Cloud Education Group; the Southeast Asian Technical and Vocational Education and Training (SEA-TVET); and the SEA Teacher Project or Pre-Service Student Teacher Exchange in Southeast Asia.

7.2.1.7 Cooperation within the ASEM Framework (ASEM)

The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation participate with ASEM member states in some activities as follows:

1) *THE ASEM-DUO Fellowship Program (DUO-Thailand)*

This is a scholarship program for students and professors from Thai higher education institutions to participate in exchanges with students and professors from higher education institutions of the European Union member states. (European Union - EU). The aim is to enhance a balanced mobility of students and professors. The program commenced in 2005 with the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation as the main organizer. From 2006 to 2018, a total of 328 people (164 pairs) were selected to participate in the program. The countries that participated most in the exchanges were France, the United Kingdom and Germany, respectively. Currently the program is in the process of recruiting participants in 2021; for more information, please refer to <http://www.asemduo.org/>

2) *ASEM Work Placement Program.*

The Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation has joined the ASEM Work Placement Program under the Asia-Europe Cooperation Framework. The proposal of this program was approved at the 4th ASEM Meeting of Ministers for Education – ASEMME, held during May 2013 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The objective is to promote the balanced exchange of student internships

between Asia and Europe and also to enhance the exchanging of experience, knowledge, understanding of cultural differences, by providing students with the opportunity to discover the world of work in a different regional and cultural setting. Countries participating in the pilot phase included Germany, Belgium, Thailand, Brunei, Darussalam and Indonesia. The letter of intent was signed on April 26th, 2015 in Riga, Latvia prior to ASEMME5 meeting. There were six universities from Thailand participating in the pilot phase: Kasetsart University, Khon Kaen University, King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi, Suranaree University of Technology, Walailak University, and Rajamangala University of Technology Thanyaburi. The Office of the Higher Education Commission (now the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation) allocated funding to the students from the six participating universities; two students from each university (one to Belgium and one to Germany), 12 students per year in total. The Office of the Higher Education Commission also hosted the Expert Meeting of ASEM work placement program in March 2019.

3) EU Support to Higher Education in ASEAN Region (EU SHARE)

The European Union supports ASEAN higher education through the EU SHARE program, which provided higher education in Southeast Asia (ASEAN) with ten million euros (400 million baht) in EU funding, with the total operating period being four years (starting in May 2015). The project aims to strengthen cooperation in higher education in the ASEAN region, and to enable higher education institutions as well as

students in ASEAN to improve quality, increase competitiveness and become international, thereby strengthening the ASEAN community. It also focuses on close cooperation between the European Union and the ASEAN Community, as well as to adjust ASEAN's higher education systems to be more consistent. Currently, representatives from the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation represent Thailand in the working group on mobility of Higher Education and Ensuring Quality Assurance of Higher Education among ASEAN Plus Three, to establish guidelines for transferring university credits between education institutions in the ASEAN Plus Three member states. The implementation of this project is supported by the European Union.

4) International Conferences within the ASEM Cooperation Framework in education.

Representatives of the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation hosted the International Asia-Europe Conference on Enhancing Balanced Mobility in March 2012, and the ASEM Conference “Lifelong Learning: e-Learning and Workplace Learning” in March 2009. At that time, Assoc. Prof. Piniti Ratananukul was appointed chairman of the ASEM Lifelong Learning (LLL) Hub's Advisory Board Meeting. Thailand also organized the ASEM Lifelong Learning Research Network on Workplace Learning in December 2012. Moreover, Thailand host the 8th ASEM Education Ministers' Meeting: ASEMME on 15 December 2021.

7.2.2 Bilateral Cooperation in Education

The Ministry of Education has continually developed international cooperation with foreign countries, and models of the cooperation have been adapted to meet the proactive and demanding needs of the country. Each year the Ministry of Education handles a large number of cooperation activities with foreign countries, particularly, the signing of the Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs); sending representatives to attend academic conferences on various international stages to bring back knowledge and experience to improve education; providing scholarship support for international students; receiving scholarships from international agencies and organizations to send academics, teachers, lecturers, to attend education and training courses to develop their potential; sending teachers/students to participate in exchange activities to promote relationships and exchange of knowledge; sending teachers and staff on study visits to gain vision and adjust their perspective on work; as well as dispatching experts in various fields to improve the curriculum in neighbouring countries to enhance each other's development and cooperation. In addition to gaining academic benefits, such cooperation also enhances Thailand's image of education development and creates security and stability for the region. Key cooperation includes:

7.2.2.1 Workshop to elevate the potential of Thai Master Trainer (TMT)

The government has an urgent policy to raise English teaching-learning standards, in order to increase Thailand's competitiveness in ASEAN Economic Community.

The Ministry of Education has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the British Embassy in Thailand to cooperate in the establishment of a regional English teacher training centre. The target groups are primary and secondary English teachers under the Office of the Basic Education Commission, who have scored satisfactorily on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) Test which assesses their level of English proficiency. The aims of this project are to enhance English language proficiency of the teachers and to organize an intensive training on the use of Communication Approach Techniques by experts in teaching English according to international standards. There is also the goal to bring the Master Trainer group from the Boot Camp to join the training centre for the course on the development of trainers in conjunction with the teachers. The objective is to enable these core trainers to develop themselves to be effective as key regional trainers.



Source: <https://www.obec.go.th>

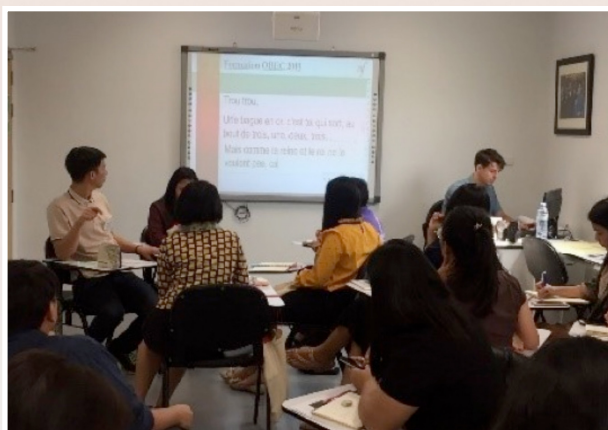
The project's achievement includes: 1) Allocation of the budget to the School District Office to conduct the training. 2) A total of 8,844 English teachers attended the Boot Camp Turbo course in fiscal year 2019. 3) English teachers have sufficient knowledge and skills to use English at a level comparable to international standards, be able to organize language teaching activities for communication, and be able to evaluate language learning. 4) Teachers can apply their knowledge to design teaching and learning activities, using various techniques in class, and apply their knowledge for assessment and evaluation.

7.2.2.2 Second Foreign Language Teaching Promotion Program

The Ministry of Education, by the Office of the Basic Education Commission, has a policy to encourage schools under the Ministry to offer second foreign languages in addition to English, as an option for learners to learn different languages and to prepare people to enter the international community. The Ministry has cooperated closely with native language organizations to help improve and enhance the quality of teaching a second foreign language in Thailand for the schools to provide quality second foreign language teaching and the development of second foreign language teachers. The Office of the Basic Education Commission has initiated cooperation with organizations in four countries: South Korea (Korea Education Center - KEC), Japan Foundation and Kamenori Foundation, Germany (Goethe Institute), and France (French Language Cooperation Department of the French Embassy in Thailand, and the French Association-Alliance Française).

Teachers from schools in the Second Foreign Language Development Network were developed through opportunities to attend meetings on occasion, such as:

- 1) A Workshop on “New Generation Teachers and Teaching French to European Standards”, organized in collaboration with the French Language Cooperation Department, Embassy of France in Thailand, and the French Association - Alliance Française.
- 2) A Korean Language/Cultural Development Workshop and Korean Teaching Techniques organized in collaboration with the Korea Education Center in Thailand (KEC).
- 3) The Project-Based Workshop on Japanese language learning activities to improve skills for the 21st century, in collaboration with the Japan Foundation and Kamenori Foundation.
- 4) A Workshop for German language teachers, organized in collaboration with the Goethe Institute.



Source: <https://www.obec.go.th>

In addition, there have been various activities to enhance the development of the teaching process, teaching techniques and other techniques needed by second language foreign language teachers, have been provided on an ongoing basis. The language levels of second foreign language teachers have been upgraded to higher standards through the cooperation with native organizations and related agencies.

7.2.2.3 Cooperation between the Ministry of Education and the Government of the People's Republic of China on Chinese Teaching in Thailand

Due to the increasing demand for Chinese language education in Thai educational institutions, the Ministry of Education joined forces with the government of the People's Republic of China through the International Chinese Language Teaching Promotion Agency (Han Pun), which later has changed its name to the "Center for Language Education and Cooperation", to promote and support Chinese language learning in Thailand. The current program is operated under *"The Framework for The Promotion of Chinese Language Teaching between the Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Thailand and the Headquarters of Confucius Institute/International Chinese Language Teaching Promotion Agency of the People's Republic of China"*. This agreement was signed on July 15th, 2016. As a part of this collaboration, many Chinese teachers have come to teach Chinese language in educational institutions under the Ministry of Education. The objective is to reduce the shortage of Thai Chinese language teachers and to give students the opportunity to learn Chinese language and

culture directly from native speakers. Chinese volunteer teachers are a new generation with the ability to transfer Chinese language skills as well as the ability to use various technologies, which can solve the shortage of teachers of schools under the Ministry of Education. The table above gives details.

Table 7.4 Number of Chinese Volunteer Teachers distributed by Educational Institutions of Organisations under the Ministry of Education (Academic Years 2008-2020)

Year	Number of Chinese Volunteer Teachers by Organisation					Total Numbers of Teachers
	OBEC	OPEC	OHEC & Confucius Institutes	OVEC	NFE	
2008	380	330	70	20	-	800
2009	407	400	174	38	-	1,019
2010	495	463	179	65	-	1,202
2011	505	488	193	72	-	1,258
2012	479	489	204	98	-	1,270
2013	718	590	225	115	35	1,683
2014	766	617	285	127	14	1,809
2015	695	437	280	114	5	1,531
2016	696	525	285	161	5	1,672
2017	672	543	307	160	-	1,682
2018						1,700
2019	593	490	315	147	-	1,546
2020	No activity due to COVID-19 pandemic					

Notes: In 2018, there was no records classified by organisations.

In addition, the Ministry of Education organized a volunteer program for Chinese teaching assistants from Guizhou Education University.

The Ministry of Education and Guizhou Education University have collaborated in the Chinese Teaching Assistants program. Fourth year students of Guizhou University of Education were selected to practice teaching abroad, as Chinese language teaching assistants in Thai educational institutions for a period of one school year between June and March every year, the number of Chinese teaching assistants are as follows :

Table 7.5 Number of Chinese Teaching Assistants
(Academic Years 2014-2020)

Year	Number
2014	10
2015	15
2016	16
2017	17
2018	21
2019	21
2020	No activity due to COVID-19 pandemic

7.2.2.4 Foreign Language Teaching Assistants Volunteer Program

In addition to cooperating with the Government of the People's Republic of China to promote Chinese language teaching in Thailand, the Office of the Permanent Secretary for Education also sought cooperation and signed agreements with embassies of the native speakers of foreign languages, such as the Embassy of France in Thailand, the Embassy of Germany in Thailand, the Embassy of Japan in Thailand, the Goethe Institute and the Japan Foundation in Bangkok, to run a volunteer project for French teaching assistants, German language assistants, and Japanese language teaching assistants annually. Students are selected to help teach French, German and Japanese during their universities' summer break, in order for the Thai students and teachers to develop language skills directly with native speakers. Each year, there are 15-20 French and German, and 50-80 Japanese teaching assistants participating in this project.

7.2.2.5 Online Teacher Training Program by Universities in Finland

An online teacher training program by universities in Finland is a cooperation project arising from a meeting between the Thai Minister of Education and the Ambassador of the Republic of Finland to Thailand, on 29th April 2020. The objective of this program is to develop the potential in learning, teaching and professional management for Thai teachers and educational personnel. The Office of the Permanent Secretary for Education together with

the Excellence Center for Human Resource Development of the Office of Basic Education Commission cooperated with three universities in Finland: the University of Helsinki, the University of Eastern Finland, and the University of Oulu to conduct a pilot online training program for teachers and educational supervisors. The program consisted of three courses, running during January 7 to May 17, 2021. The English Language Institute (ELI) under the Office of Basic Education Commission recruited teachers and educational personnel interested in participating in the program. English proficiency was the main criteria for selection. The candidate must meet the criteria under CEFR framework, from B1 level or higher, with additional qualifications according to the requirements of the course. The training comprised three courses as follows:

- 1) The University of Helsinki’s “STEM Education for Early Childhood and Primary Teachers” program was attended by 11 participants.
- 2) The University of Eastern Finland’s “Media Skills in Digital Learning Environments” program was attended by 15 participants.
- 3) The University of Oulu’s “Research-Based Professional Development” program was attended by nine participants.

There were 35 participants in total who participated in this program.

The results of the assessment on the satisfaction of the trainees were highly positive. Most participants indicated that the 3 courses were of great benefit to the development of their profession. The knowledge could be applied in teaching and learning. In particular, participants have learnt concepts and teaching methods which are not complicated and useful for learners. The Office of the Permanent Secretary of Education will consider implementing the same type of program, by expanding the target participants to be educational personnel in both the central and regional areas.

7.2.2.6 Asia-Pacific Teacher Exchange Program for Education in the Era of Globalization

The Ministry of Education, through the Office of the Basic Education Commission has cooperated with the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Korea (South Korea), the Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding – APCEIU, and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), in implementing teacher exchange programs in the Asia-Pacific region for education in the age of globalization. The program aims to provide the two countries with the opportunity to exchange teachers to work with each other and enhance their teaching experience. Under this program, for a period of three months Korean teachers come to teach in Thailand, and Thai teachers go to teach in Korea.

In 2019, the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Korea (South Korea) sent a group of 18 South Korean teachers to participate in the program and to teach in Thailand. Local adaptation training and Thai language training were also held prior to the actual teaching. Korean teachers taught at nine schools under the Office of the Basic Education Commission for about three months. This was a great opportunity for Thai students to study with foreign teachers in various subjects. A total of 13 Thai teachers selected for the program also went to teach in South Korea for three months.

7.2.2.7 Cooperation in Internships for Vocational Education Students Abroad

The Ministry of Education, through the Office of the Vocational Education Commission, recognizes the importance of providing professional experience for students, so that they can have the opportunity to prepare for entry into the world of work after graduation. Learners can develop both theoretical and practical knowledge from internships in real-world workplaces, which allow them to learn how things work in real situations, how to make good decision, how to improve the work, and how to use time in the most effective way.

In addition to internships in domestic facilities, the Office of the Vocational Education Commission also encourages learners to have professional experience abroad, in order to increase the capacity of vocational education learners to gain quality skills, professional experience, and language for communication. Therefore, the Ministry has

established cooperation with education authorities abroad to send learners for internships in countries with which the Ministry has a cooperation. In 2019, there were 300 vocational students from a variety of disciplines including transportation and logistics, aerospace, mechatronics & robotics, food and nutrition, tourism, hotel management, animal science/fisheries, plants, information and digital content, and electricity and electronics joined the Internship Programs in Israel, Germany, Japan, China, Taiwan, Denmark, Singapore, Brunei, England, New Zealand and Indonesia.

7.2.2.8 Cooperation with KOSEN Institute to Organize Premium Vocational Courses

The Office of the Vocational Education Commission has had an agreement with the National Institute of Technology (KOSEN Institute) in Japan since 2012. In 2016 the Japanese-Thai KOSEN Institute of Engineering and Technology was established at the Ministry of Education to develop the teaching and learning in industrial subjects, aiming to produce quality manpower to support Japanese entrepreneurs in Thailand. The Higher Vocational Certificate Program (five consecutive years) or ‘Vocational Premium’, which is an international standard program under the cooperation with the National Institute of Technology, KOSEN Institute, Japan, was organized. The Program focuses on producing quality manpower in accordance with Thailand 4.0 policy and the country’s urgent target industries.



Source: <https://www.vec.go.th/>

For the academic year 2019, applications were open for students to attend Japan’s KOSEN-compliant courses in two educational institutions: one in the Science-Based Technology Vocational College (in Chonburi Province) in Electronic Engineering, and the other at Suranaree Technical College (in Nakhon Ratchasima Province) in Mechatronics Engineering. Applicants must have completed lower secondary

school with an average grade of 3.00 or higher. The selection criteria was based on written exams, including Mathematics, Science (Physics) and English language. The exam were conducted by experts from the KOSEN Institute. An interview session conducted by the Thai educational institutions included: presentation of portfolios, measuring engineering and technology skills, and the applicant's personality. Students who could pass the exam must also have the ability to meet KOSEN's qualification standards.

In the academic year 2019, there were 31 students who were able to pass the Vocational Premium exams to attend this course: 15 students from the Suranaree Technical College (Nakhon Ratchasima Province), and 16 students from the Vocational College of Science Technology (Chonburi Province). To prepare for this premium vocational course, the Office of the Vocational Education Commission and the KOSEN Institute held a meeting to plan the arrangement of teaching and learning in accordance with Japanese standards. All trainers of the Development Training Courses were teachers in accordance with Japanese Standards and those of the Training Courses for students to study the basics of mathematics and science were experts from the KOSEN institute of Japan. After graduation, the KOSEN Institute of Japan, will encourage students to work in their vocation, especially in Japanese companies that have partnered with the Office of the Vocational Education Commission and the educational institutions.

In summary, these courses produce quality artisans with knowledge, ability and experience that meet internationally recognized standards, including high performance to meet the needs of the labour market and Thailand's 4.0 policy.

In addition to the cooperation mentioned above, Thailand has also established the **Princess Maha Chakri Award** which is considered the highest honour award for teachers in Southeast Asia. The award is to honour highly dedicated teachers in Southeast Asia countries whose accomplishments make significant contributions to education and human resource development. The first award ceremony was held on 2nd October 2015, on the auspicious year of the 60th birthday anniversary of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn. The award is an international award in honour of Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn for her outstanding achievements in the field of education, as a teacher, administrator, and education developer. Her Royal Highness has made a great contribution to education both in Thailand and overseas. Her kindness has not only been granted to children in remote and deprived areas of her country, but also extended to children in neighbouring countries. Teachers in the basic education level of 11 Southeast Asian countries who are dedicated to changing the lives of students and benefiting education are the main target for the award. This project is a cooperation of the Princess Maha Chakri Award Foundation, the Secretariat Office of the Teachers Council of Thailand, and the Office for Promotion of the Learning Society and the Quality of Youth (the name of



Source: <https://www.matchon.co.th/education>

which has later changed to the Office of Equitable Education Fund (EEF)), and other related organizations, such as the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, Public Relations Department, and the Budget Bureau.

Selection of the awardees will be made every two years; the award is to be granted to teachers who are dedicated to their students and have made a contribution that benefits education and human development in their country. The awardees will be selected from the 11 Southeast Asian countries: Brunei, Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, The Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar Union, Philippines, Singapore, Vietnam, Thailand and The Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste. Each country is responsible for

selecting and nominating one teacher as an awardee to receive the award of \$10,000, a Plaque of Honor, and The Princess Maha Chakri Award Gold Medal

The roles and missions of the Ministry of Education in cooperation with various countries as well as international organizations, as mentioned before, have allowed related education organizations in Thailand to mobilize diverse resources in many forms and methods from overseas. Knowledge, expertise, experience gained from attending meetings, seminars, training, and scholarships have resulted in improvements in education. New ideas and options have been proposed to promote, improve and enhance education management, as well as to develop human resources such as teachers, lecturers and educational personnel so that they are more able to understand the rapid changes in the global society and to be better prepared for such changes. This will lead to the development of sustainable education in the future.

Chapter 8

Direction of Education Reform in Thailand

In conformity with *The Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand*, the *National Education Act*, Government policies and Strategic plans, as well as the National Education Plan, Thailand has been continuously developing and reforming its educational system. At present, Section 258 E (focusing on education) of *The Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand, B.E. 2560*, demands that education reform of the country be focused on four major issues: (1) ensuring the commencement of care and development of pre-school children with a view to developing their physical body, mind, discipline, emotion, society and intelligence in accordance with their age; (2) completing the enactment of a law for the establishment of a fund for the purpose of assisting persons with insufficient means, reducing the educational disparity and promoting and improving the quality and efficiency of teachers; (3) providing for a mechanism and a system for producing, screening and

developing teaching professionals and instructors; and (4) improving learning and instruction at every level so that students are able to study according to their aptitudes, and improving the structure of relevant agencies with a view to uniformly achieving such a goal at both the national and local levels. Moreover, Section 261 requires that, in respect to the education reform under Section 258 E, there shall be one independent committee appointed by the Council of Ministers to carry out studies, prepare relevant recommendations, and draft laws for achieving the goal, and to present them to the Council of Ministers for implementation.



Based on the provisions of Section 258 E (Education), and Section 261 in *The Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand, B.E. 2560*, the *Independent Committee for Education Reform (ICER)* was appointed to develop a national plan for the reform of education, one of the twelve domains which must be reformed under the 20-year National Strategy

2018-2037. As mentioned in the introductory lesson, the Plan for National Reform in Education was adopted by the Council of Ministers on 7 May 2019. The plan prescribes four objectives of education reform which are: (1) to upgrade the quality of educational management; (2) to reduce educational disparity; (3) to aim for excellence and build up global competitiveness of the nation; and (4) to improve the efficiency and flexibility of the educational system so that the system is more adaptable to various forms of education, as well as to promote its good governance. The Plan for National Reform in Education has stipulated the reform of seven aspects. The results from the years B.E. 2562-2563 can be summarized as follows:

1. *The reform of the national education system and learning in general:* It can be concluded that the National Education Act is the fundamental education plan which widely and holistically affects the education reform of Thailand in all aspects, although the National Education Act of B.E. 2542, the first educational law that brought about the reform of national education system and learning, has been revised three times. Due to the rapid advance of technology particularly digital technology, automation systems, artificial intelligence, and so on, the world has already moved to the Disruption Era. Technological advancement has also contributed to the rapid exchange of ideas and the sharing of provisional methods of education around the world. Thus, it is necessary to make another revision of the National Education Act, so that it is more current and responsive to the socio-technological changes of the 21st Century. Consequently, the Office of



Education Council has prepared a new draft of the National Education Act, in order that it may serve as an important mechanism for future education of the nation. On the first of June 2021, the Council of Ministers agreed upon a draft of the National Education Act of B.E....., and it is being processed through the House of Representatives before formal presentation to the Parliament for final approval and promulgation. At the same time, the Ministry of Education and related organizations are cooperatively making a plan to prepare by-laws, composed of timeframes and principles which must to be enacted in accordance with the National Education Act B.E..... This action is expected to enable the enforcement of the education reform as soon as the new Fundamental Educational Act is promulgated. The fundamental principles of the National Educational Act of B.E..... will be explained in the next paragraph.

2. *The reform of education and care for early childhood and preschoolers:* The progress in this aspect of education reform is quite close to reaching its goal. Recently, related public organizations have been implementing the national policies on the development of early childhood and preschoolers in conformity with the measures required by laws and national plans, i.e., the Early Childhood Development Act of B.E. 2562, and the National Standards for Early Childhood Development Institutions. Lastly, the drafted Plan to Develop Early Childhood of B.E. 2564-2560 was passed by the Council of Ministers on 15 June 2021. Alongside this drafted plan, it should be emphasized that the body of knowledge has been evolving continuously, as well as the cultivation of knowledge and the understanding of principles and aims of early childhood development. These particular actions will be explained later.

3. *The reform to reduce educational disparity:* the progress in this aspect of education reform is also close to achieving its goal. *The Equitable Education Fund (EEF)* has been established in order to support disadvantaged children, so that they receive equal educational opportunities, access to quality education, and opportunities to develop according to their potential. The projects related to this matter include: the Project for Allocation of Subsidies to Needy Studies with Conditions, the Project for Spatial Management to Promote Educational Equality, and the Project to Develop Model Institutions for Early Childhood Development to Create Educational Equality. Nevertheless, students in disadvantaged households are still challenged by the problems related to

educational quality. Therefore, the responsible agencies are attempting to better promote educational quality of the disadvantaged, through further development of the educational resource allocation system, and the supporting system for instructional materials, which are applicable and responsive to the needs of each area.

4. *The reform of a mechanism and a system for producing, screening and developing teaching professionals and instructors:* Previously, the related organizations have collaboratively promoted the producing of teachers and the developing of teachers' potentials; as well as the creation of networks for the ongoing exchange of knowledge on instructional management and the continuing improvement of teachers' competencies. At present, however, there remain some problems in the producing and developing of teachers, both quantitatively and qualitatively. The problems in quality begin with the administrative and control systems of producing and developing good teachers, the selection system for student teachers, the procedural standards for producing and developing teachers, the quality of lecturers and professors in institutes or faculties of education, and the screening of prospective teachers. Quantitatively, the problems are related to the admission system of the institutes or faculties of education that out-number the actual demand for teachers, and do not select qualified and diligent applicants as truly required by the national education reform policy. Thus, more serious attention should be given to the reform of the institutes or faculties of education which produce Thailand's future teachers.

5. *The reform of instructional management in conformity with change in the 21st century*: The operational conditions of this aspect continue to face challenges; in response to the rapid social and technological changes in the 21st century, instructional management reform was focused on a competency-based curriculum. However, this type of curriculum has yet to be fully implemented because the pilot project of this educational innovation covered only eight provinces, resulting in significant deficiencies that have compromised the readiness of schools and the quality of teachers and educational personnel. At all levels basic education, vocational education and higher education attitudes and educational patterns need to achieve compliance with a competency-based curriculum, in order that the curriculum can be used in flexible and creative ways.

6. *The structural reform of organizations in the education system*: In order to achieve the goals to improve instructional management and quality of education, the operational conditions are still at risk. Previously, the related public organizations in the education system restructured their organizations based on the principles of administrative autonomy and good governance. The Education Sandbox Act 2019 was enacted, with some reports on its progress. Nevertheless, the implementation of the Education Sandbox is not yet universal, because it is still limited to the eight pilot provinces. Moreover, the restructuring of the Ministry of Education has also been confronted with negative attitudes and the unreadiness of various sub-organizations which could delay the future operations of the reform.



7. *The digitalization for education and learning platform:* The operational conditions of this aspect of education reform are likewise still at risk. Previously, the related organizations brought in digital technology to support classroom instruction in various ways, by providing the platforms for education such as “DEEP” (Digital Education Excellence Platform) and Kruphrom (“Teachers Are Ready”), and others. These are platforms for online learning that assemble a number of educational programs which can serve as bodies of knowledge for the nation. However, online learning platforms are threatened by various factors, such as digital information linkage systems that are not consistent among the many educational institutions and public agencies, as well as the lack of legal bases for educational information management.



On 8 December 2020, a resolution of the Council of Ministers declared that the *(drafted) National Reform Plan (revision)* should be implemented, responsive to, and aligned with the National Strategies, the Fundamental Plan under the National Strategies, and the National Reform Plan related to Education promulgated on 25 February 2021. The National Reform Plan related to Education, drafted by the Committee on the National Reform Plan related to Education, has the same objectives as those of the former plan which had been promulgated on 7 May 2020. Referred to as the “Big Rock,” the plan determines only major activities which would bring about significant changes for people, i.e., the reform activities which would solve urgent problems that truly need to be addressed and could create concrete change. The details of the plan cover the responsible organizations, the procedures and methods of reform, the proposal for legislative improvement, and the deadline for completion (not later than 2023). The plan proposes five activities as follows:

1) **Creating opportunity and equality of education starting from early childhood:** to be carried out under the authority of the Equitable Education Fund Agency.

2) **Improving the instructional management towards competency-based learning:** to comply with technological change in the 21st Century, to be carried out under the authority of the Ministry of Education.

3) **Reforming the mechanism and the system that produce and develop teachers and educational personnel of high quality and standards:** to be carried out under the authority of the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation (MHESI).

4) **Providing for a bilateral vocational education system which fully focuses on practical learning:** to be carried out under the authority of the Ministry of Education.

5) **Reforming of research roles and the development of a good governance system of higher education institutions, in order to support the national development so that Thailand can escape from the “middle income trap” :** to be carried out under the authority of the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation (MHESI).



In order to achieve the educational reform goals, the Committee on the National Reform related to Education launched the Plan to Manage Effective Education Reform Activities (“Big Rock”) composed of opportunities and milestones, operational periods, responsible organizations, supporting organizations, budget, and outputs / outcomes. This plan lasts one and a half year after its announcement to its end. Therefore, it is very challenging for the responsible organizations to implement.



As previously mentioned, one of the important mechanisms for the national education reform of Thailand today is the (drafted) National Education Act of B.E..... It is the educational charter or the central law which enforces all types of educational organizations, either public, local administrative, or private. Its major contents respond to the needs of children, youth, and the general public, so that

they have access to education, and can apply acquired knowledge and continuous lifelong learning to work and to earn their livings. These matters are based on the principles of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand as related to education, National Strategies on Education, National Strategies on Development and Empowerment of Human Resources Potentials, Plan No.11 of the National Basic Plan - Development of Human Potentials from Birth to Death, Plan No.12 – Learning Development, and Plan for National Education Reform. The principles [or essential points] of the (drafted) National Education Act of B.E..... focus on two dimensions, as follows:



The First Dimension: The education reform is focusing on educational management which provides for practical knowledge, or the knowledge which enables learners so that they have competence in each of the seven developmental stages. In order to achieve this objective, the principles of the National Education Act focus on restructuring the educational administrative system, especially that of the Ministry of Education, the major responsible organization for education. It is expected that the restructuring of the Ministry of Education will bring about the results expected by the (drafted) National Education Act. The restructure places a strong emphasis on schools and teachers by determining that schools be managed with a degree of flexibility and autonomous freedom, so that they can create their own educational innovations and provide for quality education, by adapting child-centered and competence-based instruction in accordance with developmental stage of each learner, using information technology to support education and create an educational ecosystem that begins with adapting the education system to the individual goal of each learner, establishing and promoting the development of curriculum and learning as a mechanism responsible for strengthening the particular school's academic affairs, reforming the system for producing, screening, and developing teachers and school administrators so that they become teachers-at-heart who are equipped with the competencies of knowledgeable instructional directors, as well as managing teachers and school administrators with a fair remuneration system and good governance.

The Second Dimension: The education reform is to give opportunities to all people so that they acquire continuous and lifelong learning. The principles of the drafted National Education Act cover various statements which enhance, support, assist, and encourage all people of all ages and vocations to absorb continuous and lifelong self-development. For example, the determination that a credit transfer and accumulation system be established, so that all people of all ages can gain the competencies needed in the world of rapid socio-technological change and unexpected crises such as national disasters, pandemics, and so on. The determination is also based on the principles of flexibility, diversity, and multi-dimensional and multi-sectorial participation in various aspects.

Furthermore, the drafted National Educational Act prescribes that the Committee for National Education Policies be established and chaired by the Prime Minister. The authorities of this committee are to develop and control the policies for education. Establishing this mechanism should bring about effectiveness in educational resources management through national education plans that are flexible, diverse, and responsive to rapid global change. In addition, it determines that a system should include inspection, follow-ups, and evaluation of the national education plan implementation at each province, not only at the agencies under the Ministry of Education. Also, it expects that the human resources development of Thailand achieves sustainable development goals that are in accordance with the intentions, principles, and guidelines of the Constitution

of the Kingdom of Thailand, the national strategies, the development plans, the national socio-economic plans, and the national reform plans in various sectors .

There are seven chapters and one transitional provision in the (drafted) National Education Act Chapter 1: Objectives and Goals of Educational Management; Chapter 2: Educational Institutions; Chapter 3: Teachers and Educational Personnel; Chapter 4: Educational Management; Chapter 5: Duties of Government Organizations; Chapter 6: National Education Plans and Educational Resources; Chapter 7: The Committee for National Education Policies; followed by a transitional provision. There are 110 sections altogether. The enactment will occur after the draft receives all necessary approvals. The new plan should be an important mechanism for the national reforms of Thailand, as well as a reliable and effective response to the ongoing changes in the 21st Century.



Previously, educational reform in Thailand has focused on early childhood development, as provided by the Early Childhood Development Act of B.E. 2562, effective since 1 May 2019. Section No. 9 of the act determines that the committee for national policies on early childhood development be established, headed by the Prime Minister or Deputy Prime Minister. The Office of the Education Council is authorized as the secretariat office of this committee, and to operate in accordance with the duties assigned by Section 14, i.e., to prepare national policies on early childhood development, to give primary approval to early childhood development plans before proposing for the final approval of the Council of Ministers, to approve integrated annual budgetary plans and operational plans of government and local administrative organizations as related to early childhood development, to give suggestions and advice to the Council of Ministers on matters concerned with early childhood development that are pertinent to the developmental stages - especially at the levels of kindergarten and primary education, to offer opinions about enactment or improvement of laws concerning early childhood development, to promote the integration of the early childhood development which is operated by government organizations, local administrative organizations, private sectors, civil societies.

Additionally, in order to carry out the early childhood development duties, the committee has the authority to establish six sub-committees: 1) the sub-committee for integration of early childhood development; 2) the sub-committee for development of information systems and databases

on early childhood; 3) the sub-committee for research, development, and knowledge management concerning early childhood development; 4) the sub-committee for legislation and right protection of early childhood; 5) the sub-committee for early childhood development communication; and 6) the sub-committee for special and disadvantaged early childhood development.

For the last several years, the important duties of Office of Education Council included a proposal of the (drafted) Early Childhood Development Plan of B.E. 2564-2570 to the Council of Ministers, which was approved on 15 June 2021. The next duty was to follow up on the implementation of the national standards for early childhood development institutions. This follow-up duty was assigned to the Office of Education Council by the Cabinet, and the reports are to be submitted periodically to the Committee for Early Childhood Development Policy – or at least once a year. Furthermore, the Office of Education Council also published documents, research reports, and databases of knowledge, such as: the guidelines for the development of early childhood teachers' competencies to the world-class standards for teaching professions; the guidelines for the healthy developmental stages of the early childhood (0-8 year-old); a study of the current states of producing and developing early childhood teachers in higher education institutions in Thailand; and instructional management using Effective Functions among early childhood and children with special needs.



In 2022, the Office of the Education Council will direct the Early Childhood Education Plan of B.E. 2564-2570 toward the practitioners themselves. This will be managed so that the responsible organizations can prepare their respective operational plans in accordance with the Early Childhood Education Plan by integrating cooperation from all related Ministries and upgrading the quality of early childhood education institutions under all types of jurisdiction to comply with the national standards – so that all children in Thailand are given equal and universal opportunities for educational development with high quality and sustainability.

The continuing pandemic crisis of COVID-19 necessitates adaptation to socio-technological change, including the intensive use of information technology for teaching that replaces face-to-face classroom instruction. All of the related organizations, either public or private, as well as educational jurisdiction, schools, teachers, students, parents, and guardians must



adjust to these changes. In order to receive the data related to actual conditions of the schools that use online instruction methods, the Office of Education Council conducted a study about models of learning management through digital platforms in various countries. In addition, a proposal was submitted to the national level, suggesting that the guidelines for the promotion of digital platforms should be applied in the learning management procedures of Thailand. The study has found that good policy is the most important factor in clearly and systematically applying the guidelines for schools. The second factor is the supporting of media and instruments for online instruction. Online teaching cannot be successful if the students do not have the necessary tools and technology for internet access. Another factor is the school leader and the support which he or she gives to teachers for on-line instruction. After online technology is made available,

the development of teachers' skills for effective online teaching should follow. To do that, teachers should be trained for all related knowledge and skills. The last factor is the online instruction management, which can be highly effective only if the necessary technology is ready, and teachers are skillful and knowledgeable enough to use it to teach online.



To promote online instruction development, and to respond to the social needs caused by the pandemic crisis of COVID-19 and the “new normal” that follows, the Office of Education Council has proposed “The Guidelines for Promotion of Learning through the National Learning Platform for Thailand.” There are four components specified in the guidelines: 1) policies, 2) teacher development, 3) supporting systems, and 4) instructional management. These four components are mutually related. The policy is the framework that signifies the clear operational processes of the other three components. After the policy determination, the development of teachers to fulfill their knowledge and skills for online instruction will follow. In parallel with teacher development is the systemic support of both teachers and learners, so that they can teach and learn through the National Digital Learning Platform for Thailand. Quality and effective instruction management is the outcome of the previous three components. Therefore, it is suggested that Thailand takes the proposal into serious consideration as a means to fulfill the expectation. The learning through Digital Platform will be increasingly necessary at all educational levels, so that overall learning system of Thailand will be prepared to respond effectively to global socio-technological change.

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