

EDUCATION IN THAILAND:

In Post-Pandemic Era

Office of the Education Council
Ministry of Education
Kingdom of Thailand

Education in Thailand: In Post-Pandemic Era



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Ministry of Education

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full Names
ABET	Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AACSB	Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business
BMA	Bangkok Metropolitan Administration
DOLE	Department of Learning Encouragement
DPA	Digital Performance Appraisal
EEF	Equitable Education Fund
EQUIS	European Quality Improvement System
IMD	International Institute for Management Development
IPST	Institute for the Promotion of Teaching Science and Technology
MHESI	Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
M-Culture	Ministry of Culture
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOI	Ministry of Interior
MOTS	Ministry of Tourism and Sports
MSDHS	Ministry of Social Development and Human Security
NECTEC	National Electronics and Computer Technology Center
NIETS	National Institute of Educational Testing Service (Public Organization)
NSOT	National Scout Organization of Thailand
NSTDA	National Science and Technology Development Agency
OBEC	Office of the Basic Education Commission
OEC	Office of the Education Council
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OHEC	Office of the Higher Education Commission

Abbreviation	Full Names
ONESQA	Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (Public Organization)
ONIE	Office of the Non-Formal and Informal Education
OPEC	Office of the Private Education Commission
OPS	Office of the Permanent Secretary of Education
OTEPC	Office of the Teacher Civil Service and Educational Personnel Commission
OVEC	Office of the Vocational Education Commission
PA	Performance Agreement
PLCs	Professional Learning Communities
RTP	Royal Thai Police
SEAMEO	Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization
TCAS	Thai University Central Admission System
TCT	Teachers' Council of Thailand
TCI	Thai - Journal Citation Index Centre
Wor PA	Performance Agreement System
WUR	World University Rankings
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Preface

The COVID-19 pandemic was an epochal and impactful event that challenged educational systems worldwide including Thailand. As we move into the post-pandemic era, it is important to reflect on the profound impacts of this crisis, i.e., the resilience of our educational system and the necessary reforms to build a sustainable and equitable future. This report, *Education in Thailand in the Post-Pandemic Era*, provides a comprehensive analysis of the evolution of Thailand's education system through three distinct periods: the pre-pandemic, the tumultuous pandemic, and the ongoing post-pandemic recovery.

This report originated from the need to present and analyze Thailand's education journey during this unprecedented time. By examining these three periods, we aim to offer insights into the challenging situations, the implementation of solutions, and the lessons learned, while also outlining a roadmap for the future. The eight chapters cover topics ranging from the historical context of education in Thailand to the innovative strategies employed during the pandemic and the ongoing efforts to align education with the demands of the 21st century.

Central to this work is our commitment to address the key challenges of our time: educational inequities, the digital divide, the aging population, and the skills gap threatening the future workforce. Through detailed analyses of policies, strategies, and outcomes, this report highlights not only the progress of endeavors but also the challenges requiring immediate attention.

The report is prepared for policymakers, educators, researchers, and all those engaging in the future of education in Thailand. We anticipate that the contents presenting in the report will foster meaningful discussions, collaborative efforts, and innovative solutions to transform the current Thailand's education system into the inclusive, resilient, and future-ready one.

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to the contributors, researchers, and policymakers whose invaluable insights and data have been instrumental in bringing about this comprehensive and forward-looking analysis.

As we look ahead, the challenges are significant, but so are the opportunities. We can reimagine education in Thailand, ensuring it not only meets the needs of the post-pandemic era but also lays a strong foundation for future generations.



Atthaphon Sangkawasee, Ph.D.

Secretary-General

The Education Council

Executive Summary

Education in Thailand: in Post-Pandemic Era Report provides an overview of education and aims to gather and analyze information on the development and situation of education in Thailand across three distinct periods within seven years. These three distinct periods are defined by Thailand's Post-Pandemic Era, which began on July 1, 2022, following the National Communicable Disease Committee's approval of reclassifying COVID-19 as an endemic disease, namely, 1) Pre Covid-19 Pandemic (2018–November 2019); 2) During Covid-19 Pandemic (December 2019–September 2021); and 3) Post Covid-19 Pandemic (October 2022–present).

The content of this report is divided into 8 chapters summarized as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction

Part 1: Background of Thailand

This part offers an overview of Thailand, covering its geography, population, and demographic trends. Thailand spans 513,120 square kilometers across six regions and 77 provinces. The population is 65.9 million (as of September 2024), with 20% aged 60 and above, marking its transition to a fully aged society in 2023. The birth rate stands at 10 births per 1,000 population. Projections indicate that it will become a super-aged society within 15 years, with 30% of the population aged 60 or older.

Part 2: History of Education in Thailand

The historical context of education spans the Sukhothai, Ayutthaya, and Rattanakosin periods, highlighting milestones such as the Thai alphabet's invention, the introduction of formal schools, and significant reforms under King Rama V. Key developments include the 1999 National Education Act, revised in 2002, 2010, and 2022, and royal initiatives supporting scholarships and integrating the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy into curricula. Efforts under King Rama X focus on modernizing education to meet global standards while fostering values such as good citizenship, vocational skills, and equity through targeted policies and scholarships.

Part 3: Laws, Strategies, Policies, and Government Plans on Education

Thailand has continuously developed its education system through key legislation, strategies, and policies to enhance quality and reduce societal disparities. The 2017 Constitution guarantees equal access to quality education, promotes lifelong learning, and supports the improvement of educational standards. Furthermore, the National Strategy (2018–2037) lays the foundation for sustainable development, focusing on human capital development, reducing inequalities, and fostering responsible citizenship.

The 12th and 13th National Economic and Social Development Plans emphasize skill and capacity building for all age groups, as well as a full transition to the digital era to keep pace with technological and economic changes. Additionally, the National Reform Plan for Education aims to create equitable educational opportunities, reduce disparities, and enhance

competency-based learning aligned with 21st century demands while investing in teacher development.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Thailand's education system faced significant challenges, including transitioning to online learning amidst technological disparities, addressing mental health concerns, and mitigating educational inequalities. The government responded with hybrid learning models and efforts to close the digital divide though these initiatives revealed the need for continued investment and reform.

Collectively, these strategies reflect Thailand's commitment to modernizing its education system, addressing inequities, and equipping learners with the skills necessary to thrive in an increasingly complex and interconnected world.

Chapter 2: Education System, Standards and Quality Assurance

Part 1: Education System

Education system in Thailand is structured to cater to diverse needs through formal, non-formal, and informal education. Formal education includes basic and higher education, with basic education following a 6-3-3 system (primary, lower secondary, and upper secondary levels). Higher education offers advanced diplomas to doctoral degrees, with vocational education integrated into this system to meet labor market demands.

Non-formal and informal education provides flexible learning opportunities for all ages, emphasizing lifelong learning, self-development, and qualifications. The 2023 Learning Encouragement Act introduced the Department of Learning

Encouragement, aiming to integrate diverse learning networks and ensure access for disadvantaged groups.

Additionally, special education accommodates children with disabilities, gifted learners, and underprivileged groups, ensuring inclusivity. Recent reforms focus on competency-based curricula to develop critical skills, civic-mindedness, and lifelong learning habits, aligning education with 21st-century demands.

Thailand's educational standards and quality assurance systems ensure consistency and improvement, supporting national competitiveness and sustainable development goals.

Part 2: Levels of Education

Education system, as per the National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999), comprises two main levels: basic education and higher education. Basic education includes pre-primary (childcare and kindergarten), primary (grades 1–6), and secondary education (grades 7–12), offering general and vocational streams. Institutions providing basic education include schools, early childhood centers, and learning centers.

Higher education ranges from advanced diplomas to doctoral degrees. Advanced diplomas require three years, bachelor's degrees typically take four years, and graduate diplomas, master's degrees, and doctorates focus on specialized and advanced study, fostering research and innovation.

Educational standards, guided by the National Education Standards B.E. 2561 (2018), emphasize lifelong learning, innovative thinking, and active citizenship, aligned with Thailand's 4.0 development vision. Internal and external quality assurance systems ensure consistent improvement across all

educational levels, supporting national competitiveness and sustainable progress.

Part 3: Educational Standards and Quality Assurance

Education system in Thailand is governed by the National Education Act B.E. 2542 (1999) and its amendments, establishing educational standards and quality assurance frameworks. The system mandates internal and external quality assurance, with institutions evaluating their performance and reporting for improvement.

The National Education Standards B.E. 2561 (2018) emphasizes lifelong learning, innovation, and active citizenship, aligning education with Thailand's 4.0 vision for stability and competitiveness. Internal quality assurance systems require institutions to align with national standards, develop improvement plans, and submit self-assessment reports. External assessments, conducted by the Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (ONESQA) or other approved agencies, verify institutional quality.

Higher education quality assurance follows the 2019 Higher Education Act, allowing universities to design their systems while meeting national standards. External evaluations encourage innovation and compliance, focusing on institutional missions and challenging standards for academic excellence. These measures aim to uphold education quality and foster national development.

Chapter 3: Educational Administration & Provision, and Participation

Part 1: Education Administration and Provision Agencies

Thailand's educational administration involves multiple agencies across various ministries, ensuring comprehensive management at all levels. The Ministry of Education (MOE) oversees early childhood, basic, and vocational education, while the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research, and Innovation (MHESI) handles higher education and innovation. Other ministries, such as Interior and Defense, contribute to localized and specialized education.

Private sectors and Local Administrative Organizations (LAOs) play significant roles in managing schools and vocational training. Regional and provincial education offices coordinate operations to align with national policies. Specialized institutions, such as Mahidol Wittayanusorn School and Border Patrol Police Schools, provide targeted education for gifted students and underserved communities.

MHESI also supports science, technology, and innovation, fostering skilled labor and research development. The system emphasizes collaboration between public, private, and local organizations to meet diverse educational needs and promote lifelong learning.

Part 2: Education Participation

Thailand promotes educational participation through diverse approaches involving private and public collaboration. The private sector, including formal and non-formal institutions, religious organizations, and enterprises, complements state

education by easing government burdens and fostering innovation. Formal private schools follow Ministry of Education (MOE) curricula or international standards, while non-formal institutions offer flexible learning like vocational training and Islamic studies.

Private higher education institutions provide alternative opportunities for students, operating with flexibility and responding to market demands. Enterprises also engage in dual vocational systems and cooperative education programs, integrating practical skills with academics.

Religious institutions contribute significantly to education, such as Buddhist, Islamic, Christian, and Sikh schools, promoting cultural and moral development. Home-schooling is supported by regulations allowing families to provide tailored education. These collaborative efforts enhance accessibility, inclusivity, and lifelong learning across all educational levels.

Chapter 4: Access to Education and Student Success

Part 1: Access to Basic Education

Thailand achieves near-universal basic education enrollment, with improved retention in lower secondary but low rates for upper secondary education, especially vocational pathways.

Part 2: Access to Basic Education of Learners with Special Needs

Inclusive policies address educational needs for disadvantaged and special-needs students, but disparities remain, particularly for socioeconomically disadvantaged children.

Part 3: Access to Higher Education

Higher education shows stability in enrollment, with increased interest in advanced degrees though participation for students with disabilities remains limited.

Part 4: Access to Non-Formal Education

Thailand provides diverse non-formal education programs, emphasizing lifelong learning and vocational training, particularly for marginalized groups.

Part 5: Student Success

While educational has been improved, declining international test scores highlight challenges in foundational skills, calling for reforms to enhance workforce readiness.

Chapter 5: Teachers, Educational Personnel, and Learning Provision Development

Part 1: Statistics of the Number of Teachers

Thailand has nearly 671,000 teachers, with most under the Ministry of Education, focusing on primary and secondary education.

Part 2: Teacher Preparation and Licensing

Comprehensive programs with licensing ensure high standards in pedagogy and ethics, adapting to modern education demands.

Part 3: Teacher Performance Conditions

Defined guidelines address teaching hours, curriculum development, and community engagement tailored to educational sectors.

Part 4: Teacher Development Policies

National initiatives focus on digital literacy, leadership, and ethics to enhance teacher professionalism and education quality.

Part 5: Educational Personnel

Licensed educational personnel uphold high standards in leadership and management, with diverse responsibilities including strategic planning.

Part 6: Teachers and Educational Personnel Appraisal

The Wor PA system evaluates educators' performance through transparent, competency-based frameworks fostering professional growth.

Part 7: Learning Provision Development

Emphasis on active learning, STEM, and technological integration aligns with reforms for quality and equitable education delivery.

Chapter 6: Budget Allocation and Investment in Education

Part 1: Educational Budget Allocation

Thailand's education budget faced significant shifts due to the COVID-19 pandemic, emphasizing digital infrastructure, health measures, and equity. Despite reductions post-pandemic, investments focus on hybrid learning and support for vulnerable groups.

Part 2: Budget Allocation to Support Education in the Form of Funds and Working Capital

Targeted funds like the Student Loan Fund and Equitable Education Fund address systemic inequities, enabling financial assistance for disadvantaged students, supporting digital learning, and fostering vocational education and innovation.

Chapter 7: International Education and International Cooperation

Part 1: International Education in Basic Education and Higher Education

Thailand has positioned itself as a hub for international education, offering diverse global curricula and fostering partnerships to align with international standards. Growth in international schools and programs caters to Thai and expatriate students, enhancing global competitiveness.

Part 2: International Cooperation in Education

Thailand engages in multilateral and bilateral collaborations with organizations like UNESCO, ASEAN, and OECD, focusing on educational innovation, digital transformation, and equity. Key initiatives include teacher training, student exchanges, and international partnerships to promote global citizenship.

Chapter 8: Educational Outcomes and Further Steps

Part 1: Educational Outcomes

Thailand’s education system has evolved through efforts in equitable access, digital learning during COVID-19, and post-pandemic reforms. Key achievements include high enrollment rates, international collaborations, and projects aligned with Thailand 4.0 policy to foster innovation and workforce readiness.

Part 2: Challenges

Major challenges include addressing skills gaps, digital literacy, and inequalities in access to education. Environmental risks, an aging population, and economic constraints further demand targeted reforms and innovative approaches to enhance resilience and equity.

Part 3: Further Steps

Future priorities involve promoting equity, quality, and lifelong learning through vocational education, STEM proficiency, and digital literacy. Investments in teacher development, public-private partnerships, and performance-based budgeting are essential to drive educational transformation and societal progress.

In conclusion, the report “Education in Thailand: in the Post-Pandemic Era” presents a comprehensive analysis of the evolution of education system in Thailand across three critical periods: pre-pandemic, during the pandemic, and post-pandemic. It highlights significant achievements such as enhanced access to basic and higher education, innovative responses during COVID-19, and ongoing efforts to align with

Thailand 4.0's vision of fostering human capital for sustainable development.

However, challenges remain in addressing educational inequalities, skills gaps, and digital literacy, compounded by demographic shifts and environmental risks. The report emphasizes the need for targeted reforms and collaborative efforts to build a resilient education system capable of meeting future demands.

Looking ahead, the report calls for prioritizing equity, quality, and lifelong learning through investments in vocational education, STEM proficiency, digital infrastructure, and teacher development. By fostering public-private partnerships and employing performance-based budgeting, Thailand can ensure a more inclusive, competitive, and future-ready education system that contributes to societal progress and sustainable development.

Contents

Chapter	Pages
Chapter 1 Introduction	1
Part 1: Background of Thailand	1
Part 2: History of Education in Thailand	3
1. Sukhothai Period (1238–1378)	3
2. Ayutthaya Period (1350–1767)	4
3. Thonburi Period (1767–1782)	4
4. Rattanakosin Period (1782–present)	4
Part 3: Laws, Strategies, Policies, and Government Plans on Education	12
1. The Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand	13
2. The National Strategy	15
3. The National Economic and Social Development Plan	17
4. The National Reform Plan for Education	19
5. The National Education Act	20
6. The National Scheme of Education	21
7. The Education Policies of the Government	22
Chapter 2 Education System, Standards, and Quality Assurance	42
Part 1: Education System	42
1. Formal Education	45
2. Non-formal Education and Informal Education	56

Part 2: Levels of Education 61

1. Basic Education 61

2. Higher Education 62

Part 3: Educational Standards and Quality Assurance 65

1. National Education Standards 2018 67

2. Education Quality Assurance 70

Chapter 3 Educational Administration & Provision and Education Participation 84**Part 1: Educational Administration and Provision Agencies 84**

1. Ministry of Education (MOE) 88

2. Ministry of Higher Education, Sciences, Research and Innovation (MHESI) 101

3. Other Ministries and Organizations 108

Part 2: Education Participation 117

1. The Educational Management by Private Educational Institutions under the Ministry of Education 118

2. Educational Management by Private Higher Educational Institutions 122

3. Education Provision by Private Enterprises 123

4. Education Provision by Families (Home-Schooling) 125

5. Educational Provision by Religious Institutions 127

Chapter	Pages
Chapter 4 Access to Education and Student Success	135
Part 1: Access to Basic Education	135
1. Overall Access to Basic Education	136
2. Access to Early Childhood Education	141
3. Access to Primary Education	142
4. Access to Lower Secondary Education	144
5. Access to Upper Secondary Education	145
Part 2: Access to Basic Education of Learners with Special Needs	150
1. Access to Education for Disadvantaged Students	151
2. Inclusive Education for Students with Disabilities	154
Part 3: Access to Higher Education	157
Part 4: Access to Non-Formal Education	162
Part 5: Student Success	167
Chapter 5 Teachers, Educational Personnel, and Learning Provision Development	180
Part 1: Statistics of the Number of Teachers	182
Part 2: Teacher Preparation and Licensing	184
1. Professional Standards for Teachers	185
2. Teacher Preparation Programs	190
3. Teacher Preparation Institutions	194
4. Teacher Licensing	196
Part 3: Teacher Performance Conditions	198

Part 4: Teacher Development Policies	203
1. National Policy for Teacher Development	204
2. Current Initiatives for Teacher Development	205
Part 5: Educational Personnel	216
1. Definition of Educational Personnel	216
2. Professional Licenses for Educational Personnel	218
3. Workloads of Educational Personnel	221
Part 6: Teachers and Educational Personnel Appraisal	224
1. The Performance Agreement System	224
2. Teacher Appraisal	229
3. Educational Institution Administrator Appraisal	234
4. Educational Supervisor Appraisal	240
5. Educational Administrator Appraisal	245
Part 7: Learning Provision Development	251
1. The Driving the Teaching of Artificial Intelligence and Modern Technology in Educational Institutions Project	252
2. The Cooperative and Work-Integrated Education (CWIE) Promotion Project	254
3. The New Breed Graduates Project (Bandit Phan Mai)	256
4. The Innovative Education Area (Sandbox) Scheme	259
5. Bringing Students Back to School Project	261

Chapter	Pages
6. Boarding Vocational Program: Free Education and Career Opportunities Project	261
7. Credit Bank System at the Basic Education and Vocational Education Levels	263
Chapter 6 Budget Allocation and Investment in Education	265
Part 1: Educational Budget Allocation	267
1. Educational Budget in the Normal Form and impact of Covid-19	267
2. Educational Budget Allocation in the Normal Form and impact of Covid-19	271
Part 2: Budget Allocation to Support Education in the Form of Funds or Working Capital	276
1. Student Loan Funds (SLF)	276
2. Equitable Education Fund (EEF)	279
3. Other Key Educational Programs	281
Chapter 7 International Education and International Cooperation	286
Part 1: International Education in Basic Education and Higher Education	288
1. International Education in Basic Education	288
2. International Education in Higher Education	310
Part 2: International Cooperation in Education	316
1. Multilateral Cooperation	318
2. Bilateral Cooperation	334

Chapter	Pages
Chapter 8 Educational Outcomes and Further Steps of Education in Thailand	348
Part 1: Educational Outcomes	348
1. Pre Covid-19 Pandemic (2018–November 2019)	349
2. During Covid-19 Pandemic (December 2019–September 2021)	352
3. Post Covid-19 Pandemic (October 2022–present)	361
Part 2: Challenges	363
1. Challenges Facing the World and Country	365
2. Challenges in Education	371
Part 3: Further Steps	375
1. Learners	375
2. Teachers and Educational Personnel	378
3. Teaching and Learning	379
4. Management	380
5. Investment and Allocation	381
6. Laws and Regulations	383
Bibliography	386
Appendix A	423
Appendix B	424
Board of Editors	426

List of Tables

Tables	Pages
2.1 Quality Levels for the EQA for Early Childhood Education	73
2.2 Quality Levels for the EQA Basic Standards for Basic Education	75
2.3 Quality Levels for the EQA for Vocational Education	78
3.1 Number of Educational Institutions and Number of Students in Formal Education System by other Organizations (Academic Year 2024)	87
3.2 Number of the Regional Education Office and Location	98
3.3 Type and Number of Local Administration Organizations	108
3.4 Number of Students in Basic Education Institutions under the Local Administration Organizations, Ministry of Interior (Academic Years 2020-2024)	111
3.5 Number of Students in Private Higher Education Institutions, in the Academic Years 2020-2024	123
3.6 Number of Students in Basic Education Institutions (Academic Years 2017-2024)	132
3.7 Number of Students in Basic Education Institutions under Local Administration Organizations (Academic Year 2017-2024)	133
3.8 Percentage of Students, University Students in Each Education Level, Public and Private Educational Institution (Academic Year 2017-2024)	134

Tables

Pages

4.1	Percentage of Students per Population in Basic Education (Academic Years 2018-2022)	137
4.2	Percentage of Students per Population in Early Childhood Education (Academic Years 2018-2022)	141
4.3	Percentage of Students per Population in Primary Education (Academic Years 2018-2022)	142
4.4	Percentage of Students per Population in Lower Secondary Education (Academic Years 2018-2022)	144
4.5	Percentage of Students per Population in Overall Upper Secondary Education (Academic Years 2018-2022)	145
4.6	Percentage of Students per Population in General Upper Secondary Education (Academic Years 2018-2022)	146
4.7	Percentage of Students per Population in Vocational Upper Secondary Education (Academic Years 2018-2022)	147
4.8	Number of Students by Types of Disadvantages and Education Levels (Academic Year 2022)	151
4.9	Percentage of Disadvantaged Students per Overall Student Enrollment by Education Level (Academic Year 2022)	152
4.10	Number of Inclusive Education Students by Types of Disability and Education Levels (Academic Year 2022)	154
4.11	Percentage of Students with Disabilities in Inclusive Education per Overall Enrolled Students by Education Levels (Academic Year 2022)	156
4.12	Number of Higher Education Students by Education Levels (Academic Years 2018-2022)	157

Tables

Pages

4.13	Number of Students with Disabilities in Higher Education (Academic Years 2018-2021)	160
4.14	Number of Students in Non-Formal Education by Education Types and Levels (Academic Year 2022)	163
4.15	Number of Students in Non-Formal Education by Jurisdiction (Academic Years 2018-2022)	165
4.16	Number of Learners in Non-Formal Private Education Institutions by Education Types (Academic Year 2022)	166
4.17	Rate and Number of Graduates in Basic Education (Academic Year 2017-2021)	174
4.18	Number of Graduates in Higher Education by Education Levels (Academic Years 2018-2022)	175
5.1	Number of Teachers by Organizations and Levels of Education (Academic Year 2022)	183
5.2	Minimum Workload Hours of Basic Education Teachers	200
5.3	Minimum Workload Hours of Vocational Education Teachers	201
5.4	Minimum Workload Hours of Non-Formal and Informal Education Teachers	202
5.5	Teacher Expected Performance Based on Position and Academic Standing Levels	230
5.6	Educational Institution Administrator Expected Performance Based on Position and Academic Standing Levels	235
5.7	Educational Supervisor Expected Performance Based on Position and Academic Standing Levels	241

Tables

Pages

5.8	Educational Administrator Expected Performance Based on Position and Academic Standing Levels	246
6.1	Budget for Education (2018-2023)	267
6.2	Analysis of Education Budget Allocation by Category (2018-2023)	272
6.3	Incremental Adjustment of Equality Scholarship Rates	280
7.1	Structure of the Curriculum and Year Groups	292
7.2	Comparison of Traditional National Programs, General International Programs, and Government Schools Offering International Curricula in Thailand	306
7.3	Number of International Schools Operating at the Basic Education Level (Academic Years 2018-2024)	308
7.4	Number of Teachers in International Schools at the Basic Education Level (Academic Years 2018-2023)	309
7.5	Number of Students Enrolled in International Schools at the Basic Education Level (Academic Years 2018-2023)	310
7.6	Number of International Programs at the Higher Education Level in Thailand (Academic Years 2018-2024)	314
7.7	Number of Foreign Students Enrolled in International Programs at the Higher Education Level in Thailand (Academic Years 2018-2023)	314
7.8	Numbers of Top Ten Nationalities of International Students in Thailand in 2018-2023	315
7.9	Thailand's International Development Cooperation for 2023-2027	335

Tables	Pages
8.1 PISA Scores 2018	351
8.2 IMD World Competitiveness Ranking 2019-2021	360
8.3 IMD World Digital Competitiveness Ranking 2019-2021	360
8.4 IMD World Competitiveness Ranking 2022-2024	361
8.5 IMD World Digital Competitiveness Ranking 2022-2024	362
8.6 PISA Scores in 2022	362
8.7 Essential Skills for Children and Youth	373

List of Figures

Figures	Pages
1.1 Thailand: Population by broad age groups	2
1.2 The Tenure of Prime Ministers and Relevant Ministers on Education	22
2.1 Education System in Thailand	44
2.2 The desired educational outcomes accumulate and continually relate to all educational levels and types	69
3.1 Structure of Ministry of Education	88
3.2 Structure of Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation	101
4.1 Percentage of Students per Population by Education Level (Academic Years 2018-2022)	138
4.2 Transition Rate of Students in Basic Education (Academic Years 2018-2022)	139
4.3 Transition Rate of Students in Higher Education (Academic Years 2018-2022)	158
4.4 Mean Performance in Mathematics, Reading, and Science in PISA 2022	169
4.5 Top Performers and Low-Performing Students in Mathematics, Reading and Science in PISA 2022	170
4.6 Performance Trends in Mathematics, Reading, and Science since PISA 2000	171
4.7 Average Years of Schooling of Thai People Aged 15-59 Years from 2018 to 2022	173

Figures

Pages

4.8	Retention Rate of Students in Basic Education (Academic Year 2018-2022)	176
4.9	Percentage of Employment per Population by Education Attainment Level from 2019 to 2023	178
8.1	Five Teaching Models During the COVID-19 Pandemic	354
8.2	Measures aim to transform the education and learning models of institutions into “New Normal Schools”	356
8.3	Improving Efficiency of Future Teaching with Blended Learning	357
8.4	Current Risks Landscape	365
8.5	Thailand Population Pyramid	369
8.6	Cyclones of Changes	370
8.7	Skills compare before Covid-19 Pandemic and Post Covid-19 Pandemic	371
8.8	Key Meta Skills	372
8.9	The National Education Reform Plan	384



Chapter 1

Introduction

Chapter 1 is divided into three parts:

Part 1: Background of Thailand

Part 2: History of Education in Thailand

Part 3: Laws, Strategies, Policies, and Government
Initiatives in Education

Elaborate details regarding these topics follow below.

Part 1: Background of Thailand

Thailand covers an area of 513,120 square kilometers and consists of 77 provinces, divided into six regions: the Northern Region, Western Region, Central Region, Northeastern Region, Eastern Region, and Southern Region (Office of the Royal Society, n.d). As of September 2024, the population stands at 65,969,270 people (Department of Provincial Administration, 2024). The age structure is as follows: 0-14 years (15.63%), 15-24 years (12.31%), 25-54 years (44.64%), 55-64 years (13.80%), and 65 years & over (13.62%). The birth rate is 10 births per 1,000 population (Thailand Board of Investment, 2023). Additionally, Thailand became a fully aged society in 2023 when 14 million

older people (aged 60 and above) accounted for 20% of the total population. The country is projected to transition into a super-aged society within the next 15 years, with 21 million older people making up 30% of the population (TDRI, 2023).

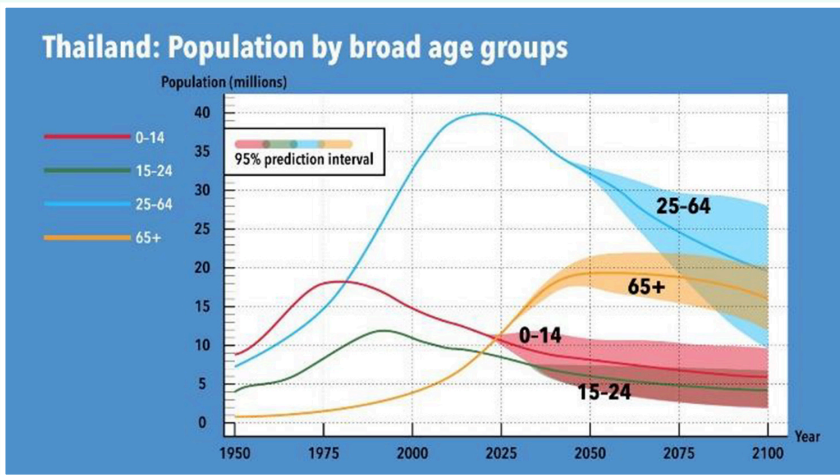


Figure 1.1: Thailand: Population by broad age groups

Source: United Nations Thailand (2020)

Part 2: History of Education in Thailand

Education in Thailand plays a vital role in economic and societal growth, evolving uniquely through historical periods. It has been shaped by Buddhism, modernization, and key reforms, including compulsory education and the establishment of major institutions. These developments reflect Thailand’s efforts to balance tradition with global educational standards.

In Thailand, education is viewed as a crucial element for the development of human resources, playing a pivotal role in fostering economic and societal growth. Education in Thailand possesses a unique identity distinct from other countries, yet it also upholds common global principles that connect it to the broader educational landscape. This report will detail the evolution of Thailand education throughout historical periods, namely the Sukhothai, Ayutthaya, and Rattanakosin periods. It will explore how educational development in each period intertwined with the economic and social landscape, influenced by both domestic and international factors.

1. Sukhothai Period (1238–1378) This period, education was delivered by the Royal Institution of Instruction (Rajabundit) to royal family members and nobles. Conversely, common people received education from Buddhist monks within temple premises. During the rule of King Ramkhamhaeng the Great, the Thai alphabet was invented by the king around the year of 1286 which was evolved into Thai alphabet used until the present time.

2. Ayutthaya Period (1350–1767) This period, education was provided either parents and family members, or learn people whom the parents or community people respected. During under the rule of King Narai the Great, the Chindamani, often recognized as the inaugural Thai language textbook, compiled essential grammar rules.

3. Thonburi Period (1767–1782) King Taksin was the only king of the Thonburi Kingdom. He invited ecclesiastical dignitaries from the capital to teach those monks and brought them back in line with the main teachings of Buddhism.

4. Rattanakosin Period (1782–present)

Reign of King Rama I–IV (1782–1868) Education was provided either by literate parents or family members, by learned people whom the parents of community people respected. The goals of education provision were that learners could read and write, including knew things in daily life, had handiwork and craft skills, understood Buddhism. In addition, during under the rule of King Rama III (King Phra Nangklao Chaoyuhua), the foreign missionaries were granted permission to teach Christianity in addition to western trading troops, during under the rule of King Rama IV (King Mongkut) who was interested in Buddhism, westernization, and modern science, particularly astronomy. Under His Majesty the King’s reign, the great changes in studying and practice of Buddhism.

Reign of King Rama V (King Chulalongkorn) (1869–1910) Education was considered a crucial element of the reform efforts, essential for countering the impact of Western Colonialism and embracing modernization. As a result, education was adjusted in every component. The initial educational institution was the ‘Royal School in the Grand Palace,’ founded

in 1871 to train government officials. Subsequently, the first royal patronage school for the common people, ‘Wat Mahan Naparam,’ was established in 1884, the Department of Education (now known as the Ministry of Education) was established in 1887, and the first normal school for teacher training was established in 1892 and operates to this day. Consequently, the schools were expanded across the country, in collaboration with the Buddhist Sangha under the leadership of Prince Vajirayana Varoros – the Buddhist Supreme Patriarch of Buddhist priests at the time. With this collaborative administration, modern education of Thailand was based on Buddhism from its beginning period. In His Majesty the King’s reign also initiated examinations or educational assessments in 1884 and the educational project (National Education Plan) in 1868 that had been revised three more times.

Reign of King Rama VI (King Vajiravudh) (1881-1925)

Education during this reign advanced in many aspects. For instance, compulsory education, the enactment of the Primary Education Act of 1921, made education for all children aged from the age of 7 or 8 years old. Children were required to stay in school, free from tuition until fully 14 years old, or going to be 15 years old. However, ‘Suksa Plee (educational tax)’ collected from men between 18 and 60 years of age. The compulsory education was divided into 2 types: 1) ‘Saman Suksa’ which was general education or education for children from the elite class, and 2) ‘Wisaman Suksa’ which was basic and vocational education for the children of the general population. For higher education, the first institution was established on March 26, 1916, by transforming the government official school, which was originally established by King Rama V, into Chulalongkorn University.

Reign of King Ramama VII (King Prajadhipok)

(1925-1934) A significant change during this period was the transition from an absolute monarchy to a constitutional monarchy which affected the management of education in Thailand. The first National Education Plan was announced, and the Education Act for education at the primary school level was enforced throughout the nation, both in Bangkok and upcountry. ‘Wisaman Suksa’ (vocational education) was expanded to cover all sectors and cancelled ‘Suksa Plee (educational tax)’. Universities were allowed to provide higher education programs for various degrees as in other countries.

Reign of King Rama IX (King Bhumibol Adulyadej)

(1946-2016) Education during this reign advanced in many aspects. For instance, at the beginning, after World War II, the country sought assistance in education from foreign countries. The educational development projects included sending government officials and number of personnels to study abroad. Moreover, there was a significant educational reform known as the enactment of Thailand’s first comprehensive education law called the National Education Act 1999. This act aimed to provide holistic development of the Thai people, which would have lived physically, mentally, cognitively, morally, ethically, and culturally rich lives, live with others happily with others. In this period, the National Education Act was revised 2 times in 2002 and 2010 to update with changes and leveling up of the quality of education. Nevertheless, during this reign His Majesty the King placed great importance on the education of his people throughout his long reign as king and often used his own money to support education. The examples of King’s royal considerations were as follows.

The Schools under the Royal Patronage

The supports were in the form of subsidies, counseling, and visits to encourage teachers and students. These schools included both public and private schools, such as Chitralada School, Rachawinit School, Wangkaikungwon School, King's College under the Royal Patronage, Rajaprajanugroh School, Rajpracha Samasai School, and others.

The Royal Scholarships The supports were in the form of scholarships to students in primary, secondary, and higher education levels. The names of scholarships including the Royal Scholarship for Education of the Needy, the Rajaprajanugroh Foundation, scholarships from the Anandamahidol Foundation, the Royal Scholarship, and scholarships from the Rajpracha Samasai Foundation, and others. Moreover, 'The Project for Education Funding', which aims to cultivate morality and ethics among children and young adults so that they become good citizens, was established. Through this royal project, needy students with good behavior have opportunities to receive scholarships until they are able to earn their own income for living. Furthermore, this royal project also provides financial support for schools to prepare their facilities, develop teachers, provide benefits for teachers, and to foster respectful and loving relationships between teachers and students.

The Encyclopedia for Thai Youth The project provided 42 books filled with essential academic content. Whenever people need or want to learn something, they can conveniently search and read these books. This type of resource is very useful and important for improving self-education. The encyclopedia covers seven fields: Science, Technology,

Social Science, Humanities, Agriculture, Medical Science, and Mathematics. The content of each book is divided into three levels to suit the learning stages of different readers.

The Philosophy of Sufficiency Economy This philosophy was initiated by His Majesty the King in 1973. The philosophy explains how to develop oneself and one's economy based on sufficiency, moderation, and rationality. Simultaneously, self-immunity must be strong enough to protect oneself both internally and externally. Therefore, one must be knowledgeable, cautious, and meticulous when applying academic concepts at every stage of planning and implementation. Additionally, the application of knowledge must promote the moral values of the Thai nation. The Ministry of Education (MOE) and the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research, and Innovation (MHESI) have integrated the principles of the Philosophy of Sufficiency Economy into the curriculum at every educational level.

Reign of King Rama X (King Vajiralongkorn)
(2016–present) His Majesty the King has followed in the footsteps of the former king very closely in developing education quality. During the reign the National Education of 1999 was revised again 2022 called National Education Act 1999 And Amendments (Fourth National Education Act 2022). Moreover, the Office of the Education Council (OEC) worked to draft a new version of the National Education Act. This new version aims to develop education in Thailand to respond to the needs of the 21st Century in every aspect, and to upgrade the quality and status of education of Thailand to be world class. His Majesty the King also placed great importance on the education of his people by often used his own money to

support education. In 2017, His Majesty the King presented the policies on educational development as the milestones for the Privy Council, the Ministry of Education, and all educational agencies to reach.

“...Education is national stability. Education must build up Thai people who have good and correct attitudes, have stable and strong foundations for life, have careers and jobs, and are good citizens with good discipline....”

From the above speech of His Majesty, we can identify his royal policies for education as focusing on developing four desirable characteristics in Thai people:

(1) Having the Correct Attitudes: (1.1) Knowledge and understanding about Thailand as a nation (1.2) Adherence to one's religious faith (1.3) Stable mindset towards the monarchy, and (1.4) Helpfulness to one's family and community

(2) Having stable foundation for life-Being virtuous: (2.1) Know how to discern conscience, (2.2) Practice only good things, (2.3) Refrain from wrong doing, and (2.4) Cooperate in cultivating good citizens

(3) Having work to do-Having a vocation: (3.1) Child rearing in a family or training activities in school must aim to cultivate good attitudes towards work-to love work, to work hard, and to successfully complete their work, (3.2) Training in both school curriculum or out-of-school curriculum should aim to prepare learners for securing

employment as the final goal, and (3.3) All graduates from schools or any educational institutions must be supported and encouraged to that they are employed and have jobs so that they can earn a living and provide for their families.

(4) Being a Good Citizen: (4.1) Good citizenship is everyone's duty, (4.2) The family, the school, and the workplace must promote opportunities for all to act and become good citizens, and (3) Good citizenship is "If you see anything that you can do for the country, you should do it when you see that it is useful to the nation," such as volunteer work, public service, and charitable works which are done with kindness and generosity.

The examples of King's royal considerations were as follows.

The Crown Prince Vajiralongkorn Scholarship Foundation and the Mor Thor Sor Scholarships His majesty the King graciously established "The Crown Prince Vajiralongkorn Scholarship Fund" in 2009, which later developed into "The Crown Prince Vajiralongkorn Scholarship Foundation" (or Mor Thor Sor Scholarships) officially founded on 4 February 2010 and chaired by His Majesty the King (then the Crown Prince). The Crown Prince Scholarship fund is provided for disadvantaged students with excellent academic performance, good behavior, and good moral character so that they can pursue their higher education in the field that is consistent with their knowledge, ability and needs without any financial obligations to the fund. Upon their graduation, they are also given opportunity to voluntarily work as courtier.

Regarding operation of scholarship program, His Majesty has given the principle to distribute the fund in every province while proceeding with screening and recruitment process until qualified candidates can be identified. Each province is entitled to receive two scholarship funds per year and candidate genders are equally distributed. For upper secondary school, scholarship fund of 18,000 baht is given per year while scholarship fund of 22,000 baht is provided for vocational schools or higher education comparable to college level. By equally allocated 58,000 baht for each recipient per year, the fund covers tuition fees, dormitory expense, cost of living, and textbooks or educational necessities.

The Mor Thor Sor Scholarships are given to students at upper-secondary level, both in the general education stream and in the vocational education stream. The grantees are able to receive this scholarship up until they complete bachelor's degrees in fields that are needed such those related to Agriculture, Armed Forces, Police and Security. From the first year until today, there have been a total of thirteen batches of Mor Thor Sor Scholarship grantees. They come from every province across the country, with 2,088 grantees having received funding of 607,641,205 baht in total. Among them, six batches graduated with bachelor's degrees, with almost 700 graduates in total. Approximately 70 percent of them have returned to work in their hometowns or in the region where their hometowns are located. (Mor Thor Sor Scholarships, 2022)

In 2021, the first group of grantees who completed bachelor's degrees were selected to receive the Mor Thor Sor Scholarships to continue their education further to

earn master's degrees, either domestically or internationally. The scholarships were given to these grantees on the special occasion celebrating the enthronement of King Vajiralongkorn in 2019. The funding was provided by the Office of the Civil Service Commission for this special purpose. After their graduations, they will all be assigned positions as government officials in applicable ministries. They will work in the central offices of these ministries for 2 years before returning to work in their hometowns. As a result, the Crown Prince Scholarship recipients have all been receiving continuous support in all areas which include education, living condition, and encouragement for them to become an individual with a giving heart and leadership characteristic, who can continue to contribute to the benefit of society or their hometown. (Office of the Education Council, 2023)

Part 3: Laws, Strategies, Policies, and Government Plans on Education

Thailand has prioritized equitable access to quality education through legislation like the 2017 Constitution and the 20-Year National Strategy, emphasizing lifelong learning and reducing disparities. Plans such as the 12th and 13th Economic and Social Development focus on digital transitions and competency-based learning. Efforts during COVID-19 highlighted challenges like technological gaps, spurring hybrid models and reforms for a more inclusive and adaptable education system.

Thailand has implemented numerous laws, strategies, policies, and government plans aimed at enhancing the education system. This report presents the hierarchy of laws and the terms of office of the Prime Minister, the Minister of Education, and the Minister of Higher Education, Science, Research, and Innovation. These are outlined within the overarching framework of the research report, categorized into three periods: 1) Pre COVID-19 Pandemic (2018–November 2019), 2) During the COVID-19 Pandemic (2019–2021), and 3) Post Covid-19 Pandemic (from October 2022–present).

1. The Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand

The Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand 2017, serves as the supreme law of the land. It contains several sections specifically related to the provision of education. These sections include the following: (Royal Thai Government Gazette, 2017; Office of the Education Council, 2023).

Section 54: The state must provide education for all children so that they receive twelve years of free school education, starting from pre-school and continuing until the completion of compulsory education, with good quality and with no charges. A part of this section states the significant role of education: “All education must aim to cultivate learners who become good persons with good discipline, national pride, individual capabilities and responsibility for their families, communities, societies, and the nation.”



Section 258 e.: Education: The guidelines for educational reform in Thailand include 4 major aspects: 1) early childhood development and care for pre-school children must be responsive to whatever is prescribed in the Constitution; 2) laws must be enacted to establish foundations to support the disadvantaged so as to reduce educational inequality, and to promote teacher quality and teacher efficiency; 3) there must be mechanism and systems for producing, screening, and developing teachers and other personnel for teaching professions, including a mechanism for management of teaching personnel; and 4) improvement of instruction at every level of education so that learners are able to learn according to their aptitude, and the structures of related organizations must also be improved as necessary.

Section 261: The determination for educational reform as mandated in Article 258 (Jor). The Cabinet shall appoint an autonomous committee to study, propose suggestions, and draft the relevant educational bills to the Cabinet. This committee was called, “The Autonomous Committee for Educational Reform.” The appointment of this committee was on May 30, 2017, and their mission continued until May 30, 2019. The Autonomous Committee for Educational Reform then gave suggestions for reforms to improve educational quality, reduce educational inequality, build competitive capabilities, and improve the efficiency of Thailand’s educational system. Three education reform bills were submitted, and they have been enacted as follows: the Equitable Education Fund Act 2018; the Early Childhood Development Act 2019; and the Education Sandbox Act 2019. In addition, the Committee has also proposed the Educational Reform Plan to Support the Implementation of the National Strategy 2018-2037 to the Cabinet.

2. The National Strategy

After Thailand embraced the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand 2017, the formulation of plans to lay Thailand's development framework has undergone significant changes by dividing into three levels. **The National Strategy 2018-2037** is the 1st level plan, also known as the 20-Year National Strategy represents the country's inaugural long-term national strategy as mandated by Section 65 of the Constitution. It shall be pursued to ensure that the country achieves its vision of becoming



“A developed country with security, prosperity and sustainability in accordance with the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy.” with the ultimate goal being all Thai people's happiness and well-being. The objectives of the strategy are to enable national development towards sustainability and good governance, and to provide the frameworks for planning of all aspects of the national development. There are six strategies under this national strategy: 1) National Strategy on Security; 2) National Strategy on Competitiveness Enhancement; 3) National Strategy on Developing and Strengthening Human Capital; 4) National Strategy on Social Cohesion and Equity; 5) National Strategy on Eco-Friendly Development and Growth; and 6) National Strategy on Public Sector Rebalancing and Development.

The National Strategy relates directly to educational development in strategy 3) National Strategy on Developing and Strengthening Human Capital. Its aim is to cultivate all Thai individuals across every age group to become proficient, talented, and exemplary citizens of high quality. They are expected to be physically, mentally, and cognitively ready-meaning that they are well-rounded in their development, with good health throughout life, equipped with civic-mindedness, taking responsibility for societies and other people; they know how to be economical, how to save, and how to be generous and financially disciplined; and they maintain morality and good citizenship. In addition, in the future Thai people must possess good and correct mindsets, as well as the 21st century skills such as communication skills in English and a third-language, the skills for retaining their local dialects, and the learning habits and skills for lifelong development of themselves. These lifelong learning skills must be developed so that Thai people can become highly skilled as innovators, thinkers, entrepreneurs, modern farmers, and in various other decent livelihoods where they can earn their living according to each individual's competencies.

Moreover, an important role of educational reform is to create opportunities and social equality, thereby ensuring fair and equitable access to health services and educational services, especially for people who have low income and those who are otherwise disadvantaged. The focus is on building opportunities which allow equitable access to education of equal quality and standards, especially for learners in remote areas and those with special needs. There must be some initiatives taken to reduce educational inequality, to support

collaborative mechanisms to engage all sectors in the development of education at the provincial level, to enable the use of technology to promote learning and information/innovation accessibility for all groups of people, and to establish a system which monitors, supports, and evaluates the equal right for all people to access quality education. (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council, 2018)

3. The National Economic and Social Development Plan

The National Economic and Social Development Plan is normally prepared by the Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council (NESDC) every five years in order to reach higher levels of development. This report will outline two plans that are relevant within the scope of this reporting period.



3.1 The 12th National Economic and Social Development Plan (2017-2021)

This plan states that education plays a vital role for goal attainment in economic and social development. The role of education is developing and enhancing human resource potential of people of all ages. This plan focuses on five issues: 1) early childhood development; 2) shaping good attitudes, or Thai-ness, in accordance with the social norms; 3) developing the skills, knowledge, and abilities of people as deemed appropriate for each developmental stage and according to the needs of the employment market, as well as the 21st Century Skills; 4) equipping the people with employment related skilled in sciences and technology fields; and 5) improving the quality of education at every level to be excellent. (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council, 2017)

3.2 The 13th National Economic and Social Development Plan (2023-2027)

This plan was formulated when the world and Thailand were still facing various limitations due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which not only caused illness and death but also adversely affected economic conditions, impacting the livelihoods of all groups of the population. In addition, this plan period falls within a time of rapidly-evolving technological development, worsening climate change, an ageing society in Thailand and many countries around the world, as well as geo-political changes. The role of education in the 13th plan focuses on investment in human resources through upskilling, reskilling and lifelong learning, and promote government open data to keep up with the rapid pace of digital development.

Based on this national plan, there are three targets in this plan: 1) Thai people in all age groups are developed to their full potentials; have necessary capacity for the modern world; are equipped with good qualities according to social norms, integrity, ethics, and immunity against global disruptions; and harmoniously coexist with others in society; 2) Thai workforce has high capability in line with the needs of target manufacturing sectors as well as an ability to generate jobs of the future; and 3) all population groups have access to lifelong learning. (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council, 2022; Bangkok, 2022)

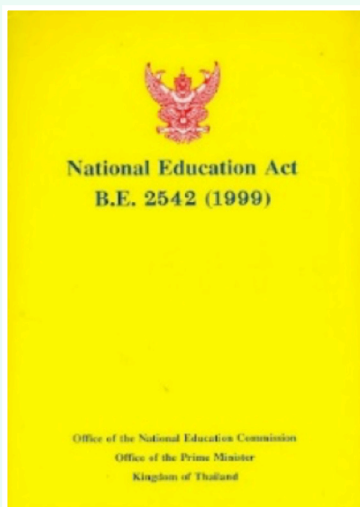
4. The National Reform Plan for Education

The National Reform Plan for Education is one of the twelve plans in the ‘National Reform Plan’ under the National Strategy 2018-2037. This plan was first approved by the Cabinet in 2019 and was revised in 2021. The revised National Reform Plan for Education has been implemented since that time until the present. The plan aims to enable learners of all age groups to receive an education of high quality and standards; to possess the skills necessary for the future world; to cultivate those skills required for problem solving, adapting, communicating, and working effectively with others; to be disciplined and equipped with lifelong learning habits; and to be good citizens who understand rights and duties, responsibilities, and civic-mindedness, with a love for their nation and pride in being Thai.

This plan intended to improve educational quality; to reduce educational inequality; to achieve educational excellence in order to build up the competitiveness of the nation; and to improve the efficiency of the educational

system in resource utilization, agility, and good governance. The reform of education is to include lifelong learning, not to focus only on education for certification. Therefore, to accomplish these purposes, five activities are identified: 1) building equal educational opportunities which start from early childhood level; 2) developing the instructional methods to enable the competency-based learning that respond to developments in the 21st Century; 3) creating a system for producing and ongoing development of high quality teachers and educational personnel; 4) providing a bilateral system, and other systems of vocational education, which emphasize full-time practicums that lead to employment and job creation; and 5) reforming the role of research and governance of higher education institutions to support Thailand's sustainable development 'out of the middle-trap' so that Thailand can progress in becoming a more highly developed country. (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Commission, 2021)

5. The National Education Act



This National Education Act is a fundamental law which every educational agency and all related organizations must follow to improve educational quality for Thai people and to further the development of the country. The Office of the Educational Council (OEC) has the duty to draft this fundamental law of education. The Bill of National Education must pass step by step through

the considerations and revisions of the Educational Council, the Cabinet, the Council of State, House of Representatives meeting, and the parliament before it is enacted through publication in the Royal Gazette and after which it will be legally enforced. The first National Education Act was enacted in 1999. It has been revised 3 times in 2002, 2010, and 2022. (Office of the Education Council, 2023)

6. The National Scheme of Education

The Office of the Education Council (OEC) has the responsibility to prepare the National Scheme of Education in conformity with the National Economic and Social Development Plan. In the past, the National Scheme of Education covered a 5-year time period, but the present National Scheme of Education encompasses a 20-year time span and is called “The National Education Plan B.E. 2560-2579 (2017-2036)”. This plan focuses on

educational provisions which will enable all the people in Thailand to have equal access to quality education, develop efficient administrative system of education, and develop competent manpower to comply with the market needs in the 21st Century. (The Office of the Education Council, 2017, 2023)



7. The Education Policies of the Government

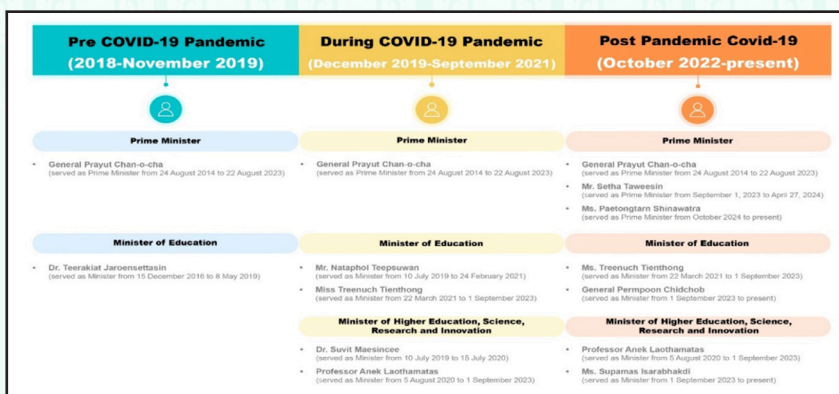


Figure 1.2: The Tenure of Prime Ministers and Relevant Ministers on Education

Since the announcement of the National Strategy 2018–2037, education in Thailand has aligned itself with the strategic framework to achieve its goals effectively. In this report, the policies are structured to align with the three distinct phases outlined in the study: pre Covid-19, during Covid-19 and post Covid-19. However, the policies overlap across time periods.

To enhance clarity and facilitate understanding of the policies within the scope of this report, the tenure of Prime Ministers and relevant Ministers has been summarized in the figure provided below.

7.1 Pre COVID-19 Pandemic (2018–November 2019)

In 2018, the Announcement of the Ministry of Education on the Implementation of the Educational Standards for Early Childhood Education, Basic Education, and Special Basic Education 2018 was promulgated.

In 2019, **General Prayut Chan-o-cha** announced the **Reforming Education and Learning and Enhancing the Potential of Thai People of All Ages** in the Policies Statement of the Council Ministers. This policy comprises of seven issues: 1) Supporting early childhood development: 1.1) Providing systematic childhood development from birth to school age so that children are empowered to reach their full potential, and 1.2) Promoting early childhood development; 2) Developing next generation graduates: 2.1) Adjusting learning and teaching processes to enhance skills and professional training for people of all ages in preparation for the 21st Century, and 2.2) Promoting an educational experience that integrates work or field experience in order to develop capacity; 3) Developing vocational training, professional qualifications, and the labor force to support Industry 4.0; 4) Attracting foreign experts to work in Thailand and supporting highly-skilled personnel; 5) Promoting research and innovation for national development; 6) Promoting lifelong learning and skills development: 6.1) Developing schools in tandem with quality teachers and education personnel, 6.2) Developing digital learning platforms, 6.3) Reducing inequalities in education, 6.4) Developing lifelong professional skills, and 6.5) Promoting the right mindset (The Secretariat of the Cabinet, 2019).

However, in 2016, **Dr. Teerakiat Jaroensettasin** announced the education policy focuses on aligning with Thailand's 20-year National Strategy (2017–2036), emphasizing ten key areas: 1) Upholding Royal Initiatives: Incorporating royal philosophies into education to promote moral and national identity; 2) National Strategy Compliance: Addressing six strategic areas: security, competitiveness, human potential, equity,

sustainable quality of life, and governance; 3) Curriculum Development: Enhancing learning processes, especially in history, ethics, and STEM education; 4) Teacher and Workforce Development: Strengthening teacher qualifications, digital skills, and workforce readiness for Thailand 4.0; 5) Equity in Education: Supporting underprivileged students and ensuring no child is left behind, including digital learning access; 6) Environmental Sustainability: Promoting waste management and sustainable living practices in schools; 7) Higher Education Accessibility: Reforming university admission systems for fairness; 8) Anti-Corruption Measures: Ensuring transparency in educational projects; 9) Technology Integration: Advancing digital tools in teaching and administrative processes; and 10) Decentralized Implementation: Using regional offices for localized education quality improvement (Uthai Thani Technical College, 2016). Later, in 2018, the Ministry of Education announced its policies and priorities for the fiscal year 2019, emphasizing key objectives of educational reform under the National Education Reform Plan. The main points include: 1) Enhancing the quality of education; 2) Reducing educational inequality; 3) Focusing on excellence and building national competitiveness; and 4) Improving the efficiency of the education system (TruePlookpanya, 2018).

7.2 During COVID-19 Pandemic (December 2019–September 2022)

General Prayut Chan-o-cha cabinet address challenges under the Covid-19, the government provided digital learning tools and facilitated online education platforms, but the effectiveness of these measures was limited by the varying levels of digital literacy among teachers and students.

In addition, many schools struggled with maintaining engagement and ensuring the quality of education remotely. The pandemic also highlighted the need for flexible learning models and stronger support systems for teachers to adapt to new teaching methods, and emphasized the importance of maintaining mental health support for students, particularly as the pandemic led to increased stress and isolation among young people. The government also pushed for measures to mitigate educational inequality by promoting scholarship programs and supporting disadvantaged groups, although the results were mixed. The long-term impact of these initiatives on the quality of education and the overall system remains a subject of ongoing discussion and reform, as Thailand continues to recover from the pandemic's disruptions (Office of the Education Council, 2023)

Mr. Nataphol Teepsuwan announced the transformative policies for Thailand's education system. Key focus areas include: 1) Promoting moral values and integrity in students to build ethical future citizens; 2) Encouraging lifelong learning to meet the demands of a rapidly changing world; 3) Improving English proficiency as part of the Thailand 4.0 initiative; 4) Integrating technology into education for enhanced teaching and learning experiences; 5) Cultivating critical thinking skills and problem-solving abilities in students; and 6) Ensuring equitable access to quality education in all regions to reduce disparities. Moreover, announced plans to improve the standard of Thai education with a focus on developing a platform called **"Thailand Education Eco-System"** to ensure students are well-prepared for the 21st century. Through this approach, a plan was structured to **"unlock, change and widen"** education to

ensure human capital is strengthened for Thailand's future (Open Development Thailand, 2020).

Ms. Treenuch Thienthong announced the principles of educational policies for the fiscal years 2021-2022. (Office of the Education Council, 2023)

1) T.R.U.S.T. or “Confidence and Trust” for the society, especially for children and parents, in the dependability of all educational agencies. The definition of T is Transparency, R is Responsibility, U is Unity, S is Student-Centricity, and T is Technology.

2) MOE ONE TEAM or “The unified collaboration within the Ministry of Education” It also introduced the “TRUST” model, a framework aimed at restoring confidence in the Ministry of Education among teachers, educational personnel, parents, learners, and the public. This model serves to enhance transparency both in operational processes and in monitoring mechanisms involving various sectors.

3) Encourage all personnel to carry out their responsibilities with accountability to themselves, the organization, the public, and the nation. Emphasize the importance of fostering collaboration across all sectors through mechanisms for gathering feedback to inform actions that contribute to improving the quality of education.

4) The Twelve Policies for Educational Management includes 1) improvement of the courses of study and the instruction methods so that they are up to date and keep pace with the changes in the 21st Century; 2) development of the quality and efficiency of teachers and educational personnel in basic education and vocational education so that

they are competent in languages and digital literacy; 3) reforms to learning through the national digital learning platform (NDLP) and promotion of digital skills training for use in daily life; 4) development of efficiency in educational administration and management through the promotion of autonomy at the school level, and through province-based decentralization; 5) improvement of the system for educational evaluation and quality assurance; 6) allocation and distribution of resources to all target groups, including mobilization of resources from all sectors for supporting education; 7) implementation of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and the ASEAN Qualification Reference Framework (AQRF); 8) early childhood development so that all preschool children are developed and learn to be disciplined physically, mentally, socially, and intellectually at each developmental stage; 9) development of vocational education that matches the levels of national competitiveness among all nations, and allows the graduates from degree programs and vocational programs to receive adequate incomes to enable them to have good quality of life; 10) transformation of the educational system of Thailand through adopting educational innovation and technology at every level of education; 11) addition of increased opportunities and access to quality education for the disadvantaged and the special-needs learners; 12) management of formal, non-formal, and informal education to provide the basis for lifelong learning and the participation by all stakeholders. Thus, the Twelve Policies for Educational Management focus on improving education system in Thailand through digital innovation, enhanced teacher competencies, and vocational education alignment with national needs. Key priorities include ensuring

quality education for all, promoting lifelong learning, and increasing access for disadvantaged and special-needs learners. Successful implementation will depend on resource allocation, collaboration, and adaptability to future challenges.

5) The Seven Quick Wins includes 1) *students' safety* by ensuring students' safety in education by providing the model, the methods or the processes that care for and provide assistance to students so that they are able to engage in quality learning with happiness, protection and safety physical and mentally; 2) *competency-based curriculum* by focusing on providing broad-fields of education that is based on the capability of each individual and develops the competencies of each individual learner; 3) *big data* by aiming to develop systematic and unduplicated data collection and accurate data processing in education so that the profile of education in Thailand will be complete, accurate, and up to date, and the data is useful and can be applied for real benefits in education development; 4) *mobilization of vocational excellence centers* by supporting the mobilization of vocational excellence centers in accordance to the excellence of each institution and the local context, and the alignment with the present and future needs of the country; 5) *vocational skills development* by promoting education that aims to develop vocational skills so that learners are able to improve their quality of life, be suitably employed with sufficient incomes, and increase national competitiveness; 6) *lifelong education* by providing high quality and standard of lifelong learning to all people in each developmental stage of their life so that they receive education as needed, developing fully in accordance with their potential from childhood through their senior years,

and also to develop appropriate curriculum that will prepare the elderly to live in society as senior citizens; and 7) *special education provisions* by promoting the education for special groups who need special educational needs so that they can achieve their maximum potential and be able to live with dignity and equality with others in the society, able to depend on themselves and able to participate in the development of their country.

Dr. Suvit Maesincee stated the primary role in laying the foundation for the nation's future as a driving force towards becoming a developed country. There are three core missions to address the nation's development goals effectively: 1) Creating and Developing People into Smart Citizens; 2) Building and Advancing Knowledge for a Value-Based Economy; 3) Creating and Advancing Innovation towards Becoming an Innovation Nation. This involves transforming innovations into economic value and social impact, aiming to sustainably enhance the quality of life and well-being of the population (Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation, 2019). In 2019, **The Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation Policy and Strategy (2020-2027)** was formulated taking into account the National Strategy 2018-2037, the domestic and international situations, the government reform and global challenges. The 2020-2027 Strategy and Plan consists of four platforms: 1) manpower and knowledge development; 2) research, development and innovation for grand challenges; 3) research, development and innovation for competitiveness; and 4) research and development for area-based development and inclusiveness. Each platform contains Objectives and Key Results

(OKR) and programs serving as a blueprint for implementation. Moreover, this year the Science, Research, and Innovation Plan (2020–2022) was formulated. (Office of National Higher Education Science Research and Innovation Policy Council, 2022).

In period of **Professor Anek Laothamatas**, policies follow the Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation Strategy and Plan (2020-2027). He initiated and oversaw several key projects and policies: 1) Bio-Circular-Green (BCG) Economy Model: The model as a pathway to sustainable and inclusive growth. This model leverages Thailand’s rich biodiversity and cultural diversity to promote economic wealth and social well-being. He presented this approach at international forums, emphasizing its potential for post-COVID-19 recovery and alignment with the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goal; 2) International Collaboration in Science and Technology: Under his leadership, Thailand strengthened its cooperation with international partners. Notably, in December 2021, Prof. Anek co-chaired the Special Session of the China-ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Science, Technology, and Innovation. This meeting resulted in the endorsement of the ASEAN-China Plan of Action for a Closer Partnership of Science, Technology, and Innovation for Future (2021-2025), focusing on policy cooperation, joint research, technology transfer, and talent exchange; 3) Development of the Eastern Economic Corridor of Innovation (EECi): A major project aimed at creating a robust innovation ecosystem in Thailand. The EECi serves as a hub for collaborative research and development among government agencies, private sectors, universities, and local communities, with the goal of transforming traditional industries and fostering new ones; 4) Health and Wellness Industry: Aim to invigorate the health

and wellness industry, setting Thailand on the path to becoming the ASEAN Medical Hub by 2027.

7.3 Post Pandemic Covid-19 (October 2022-present)

Furthermore, this period, in addition to the **National Strategy (2017–2036)**, a significant agenda was the **Bangkok Statement 2022**, which focused on achieving effective learning recovery for all and transforming education in the Asia-Pacific region. This agenda also played a role in shaping education in Thailand.

The Bangkok Statement 2022, developed during the 2nd Asia-Pacific Regional Education Minister’s Conference (APREMCII) held from June 5–7, 2024, The Bangkok Statement 2022 that come from the 2nd Asia-Pacific Regional Education Minister’s Conference (APREMCII) from June 5-7, 2024, commit to the following two priority actions in the Asia-Pacific region: **PRIORITY1: Safe School Reopening, Learning Recovery and Continuity of Learning** in 1) Safe return to school and creating enabling learning environments for all learners; and 2) Learning recovery strategies; and **PRIORITY 2: Transforming Education and Education Systems** in 1) Equity, inclusion, and gender equality; 2) Quality and relevance of education; 3) Learning and skills for life, work, and sustainable development; 4) Digital transformation; 5) Planning, Governance and Monitoring; and 6) Increased and improved investment in education (UNESCO, 2022).

During **General Prayut Chan-o-cha** tenure, after Covid-19 pandemic, education policies focused on improving quality, reducing inequality, and preparing students to meet

the demands of a rapidly evolving global landscape. One key initiative was the emphasis on **digital skills development**, aiming to equip students with competencies in technology and innovation. The introduction of **Smart Classrooms** with e-learning technologies were rolled out to modernize education and reduce the digital divide. These efforts complemented the government's drive to integrate digital tools into the classroom and prepare students for the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Structural reforms targeted the **schools** to optimize resource allocation and improve the efficiency of the education system. Decentralization measures empowered local education offices and schools, allowing greater autonomy in decision-making. To address workforce needs, there was a strong emphasis on **vocational education**, with programs like 'Education to Employment' (E2E) fostering closer alignment between the education sector and labor market demands. Additionally, **Lifelong Learning Centers** were established to support continuous skill development for citizens across all age groups (Office of the Education Council, 2023).

Mr. Srettha Thavisin implemented an education reform policy and create a lifelong learning society. It aims to promote good citizenship, discipline, and national pride, as well as enhance learners' potential according to their aptitudes. Promoting reading is essential to building a future, generating income, and decentralizing education so that learners can have equitable access to education. Appropriate learning equipment for each age group and the use of modern educational technology will be provided. The government will develop curricula and provide guidance tailored to learners' knowledge and interests. Research and development will be promoted in

social fields, applied sciences, and frontier research to further the development of knowledge, technology, and innovation. This will be done without neglecting the study of the nation's history and fostering a love for the country's key institutions, ensuring readiness for economic, social, and political changes in the modern world with morality and ethics. The government will prioritize the quality of teachers nationwide, including guidance counselors, to help students receive academic content advice and access useful information for making educational and career decisions. It will also look after the physical and mental health of all students. Additionally, the government will promote income generation for students in both academic and vocational tracks, providing opportunities for earning from their studies and internships during their education. This aims to create skilled and capable personnel who meet employment needs. Most importantly, the government will address educational inequality, which is a fundamental cause of economic inequality in Thai society (The Secretariat of the Cabinet., 2023).

Ms. Paetongtarn Shinawatra announced the policies that in alignment with Chapter 5: Duties of the State under Section 54 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand, the following educational, healthcare, and public utility policies are outlined: 1) Provision of welfare for education, public health, and utilities, including subsidizing the basic living costs of citizens; 2) Promotion of equitable opportunities for all children to be born and raised with quality; 3) Ensuring that all Thai children have access to standardized early childhood care centers and, as they grow, to educational institutions that emphasize the development of skills in science, technology, and

analytical thinking; 4) Encouraging the unlocking of potential in arts, culture, and athletic abilities; 5) Development of a flexible education system encompassing formal, non-formal, informal, and lifelong learning, supported by modern technology to address learner potential, reduce burdens, and minimize disparities in access to quality education; 6) Promotion of bilingual education with AI as an aid, focusing on teaching practical skills for real-life applications and income generation (“Learn to Earn”); 7) Encouragement of collaboration among the state, local administrative organizations, and the private sector in providing education at all levels; 8) Identification and support for children and youth who have dropped out of the education system, as well as promoting the reform of vocational and higher education systems to meet future labor market demands and support lifelong learning (Ministry of Education, 2024).

Police General Permpoon Chidchob launched “**Happy Learning**” policy tackles the challenges faced by two groups: the first comprises teachers and educational personnel while the second centers on students and parents. To ease the burden of teachers and educational personnel and to accelerate the reduction of the burden of students and parents, there are *six key focus areas*: 1) learning anywhere and anytime for students; 2) establishing the 1 district, 1 quality school system; 3) establishing study guidance/counselling; and learning a life goal coaching system; 4) developing the Skill Certificate system; 5) developing the academic equivalency and evaluation system; and 6) enabling students to gain paid work experience while studying so they enhance their employability after graduation. The objectives of this policy are closely in line with

the Ministry of Education’s vision: *“Learners of all ages will be developed to their full potential, be moral and ethical, have the necessary skills, be ready to adopt lifelong learning, and be able to adapt to the way of life in the modern world by the year 2027”*. Therefore, the Ministry needs cooperation among management, teachers, educational personnel, parents and communities to support and push forward the proposed improvements.

The policy that focuses on the work of the Ministry: Easing the burden of teachers and educational personnel in four main dimensions: 1) adjusting the performance appraisal system for teachers and educational personnel by reducing processes and documentation, focusing on student achievement with actual conditions and providing simple and fair assessment processes; 2) promoting transparent mechanisms to facilitate teacher transfer by ensuring teachers and educational personnel can transfer back to their hometown with transparency and without bribery and conducting a survey to identify teacher shortages in each area; 3) solving debt problems incurred by teachers and educational personnel by developing an understanding on budgeting and saving, embracing the principles of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in daily life; 4) providing teaching materials and welfare for “One Teacher and One Tablet” by providing teachers with equipment to help organize effective teaching and learning; Providing teacher-friendly online systems to support widespread usage.

Policies were promptly implemented to reduce the burden on students and parents in six key areas. These measures aimed to provide immediate relief by addressing financial challenges, ensuring access to necessary educational

resources, and fostering a supportive environment for learning. By focusing on targeted interventions, the policies sought to reduce inequities and enhance the overall quality of education for all students. **1) ‘Study Anywhere, and Anytime Policy’** by providing free, ‘learner-centered’ education with learning systems or platforms to reduce educational inequality (One Student and One Tablet) by promoting the role of the private sector (establishments) to support and organize education by providing appropriate compensation for students during their studies or vocational training. In addition, this would combine the national learning platform with traditional teaching in the classroom and the online teaching (hybrid education). Learners will be given opportunities to participate in learning activities both in and outside the classroom by expanding the provision of education for people of all ages across the country and developing education through the accumulating learning unit system (credit bank system) to provide opportunities for learners, as well as the general public, to study and work at the same time; **2) ‘One District and One Quality School’** is to arrange for the development of at least one model quality school in each district or educational area to pilot the development of quality schools by supporting the development of school infrastructure and providing media, equipment, and budget to improve the learning environment; **3) Learning a life goal coaching system** is to improve and modernize the curriculum and learning process with the aim to equip learners at all levels with the skills necessary for life by providing a curriculum that responds to learners’ interests and needs, and enables them to earn an income while studying, and at the same time, meets the needs of the labor market after graduation. In addition, this will provide a guidance/counselling system from elementary

to secondary level to enable learners to discover their learning paths to achieve their life goals throughout the study period; **4) Developing the Skill Certificate system** (the educational assessment system reflects professional standards by allowing learners to take additional classes or subjects in order to receive the certificates needed for their professions, using learners' accumulated credits to recognize and certify the equivalency of learners' professional standards and qualifications. Learners can then receive their certificates and begin to work in their chosen professions and allow vocational students to apply for the recognition and certification of their professional standards during their programs. This policy measure is in place in the expectation that students can earn some income, even during their studies; **5) Developing the academic equivalency and evaluation system** is to allow high-ability learners to pursue higher education faster with a system to determine learners' academic level, recognize and transfer academic results, skills, knowledge, experiences or competencies between different educational institutions that use the same, or different, academic and evaluation systems or between Thai and foreign academic and evaluation systems; **6) 'Learn to Earn'** policy helps students to earn an income while studying, being employed after graduating, providing lifelong vocational education at the professional level to develop the competency of manpower at the technical level by focusing on producing and developing manpower in urgently needed fields to meet the needs of the labor market in line with the National Economic and Social Development Plan and National Education Plan. In addition, this will encourage learners to put their knowledge into practice. Thus, this will help build learners' careers and life skills to ensure that vocational education

graduates will be ready to work and meet the country's manpower needs.

Regarding the above education policy, the Minister of Education has issued the following instructions and guidelines: 1) the management in all agencies under the Ministry's supervision shall adopt and implement the Action Plan for the Cabinet's policy regarding education that was announced to the Parliament, as well as the education policy of the Minister of Education; 2) enforcing measures to prevent and suppress corruption in bureaucratic procedures, such as the hiring, appointing or transferring of personnel; 3) embracing and applying the practice of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy; 4) working together to protect the environment and promoting the use of clean energy; 5) systematically promoting reading. Teachers shall be a role model to demonstrate the love of reading; 6) only persons whose duties are related to the on-site inspection process are allowed to join and receive the inspection teams' site visits or join the inspection teams for the site visits.

During **Professor Anek Laothamatas** tenure, the cabinet approved the Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation Policy and Strategy (2023-2027), the revised Higher Education Plan (2023-2027), and the draft Science, Research and Innovation Plan (2023-2027) as proposed by the National Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation Policy Council (Policy Council). The vision of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation Policy and Strategy is to combine the power of higher education, science, research, and innovation to achieve a rapid and sustainable development, enhance the competitiveness, create value and prepare for the future. It consists of four strategies: 1) develop the economy with

a value-driven and creative economy to enhance competitiveness and self-reliance for the future, 2) enable sustainable social and environmental development to overcome challenges and build resilience, 3) develop cutting-edge science, technology, research, and innovation to open new opportunities into the future, and 4) develop manpower, higher education and research institutes to drive a leapfrog and sustainable development. The Higher Education Plan consists of three strategies: 1) developing human potential, 2) fostering an innovation ecosystem, and 3) reorganizing the higher education system; seven key policies and three mechanisms to reach the goals within a three-year timeframe (2023-2025).

Ms. Supamas Isarabhakdi proposed key policy for higher education is “**Study well, be happy, and have an income,**” with students at the center. The main goal is to reduce the burdens on students and their parents as well as on lecturers, ensuring students’ happiness during their studies and career success after graduation. Lecturers will also benefit from more flexibility in their work. The policy will include a guidance system (Coaching) for study and life goals, and a platform for learning anywhere, anytime to reduce educational inequality and costs. Emphasis will be placed on skills development, especially short-term certificate courses (non-degree), and establishing a skill certification system according to professional standards. There will be increased flexibility in course registration, allowing students to enroll without credit limits each semester. Students will also be encouraged to earn income while studying.

In research and innovation, the focus will be “Good research and innovation that meets needs,” emphasizing key national issues such as Go Green, sustainability, carbon neutrality, clean energy, environmental friendliness, bio-economy, creative economy, and artificial intelligence (AI). The policy aims to achieve excellence and create economic and life security. For excellence in research, the minister supports ongoing missions to develop the nation’s knowledge long-term. MHESI will emphasize research and innovation to drive the economy and solve critical national problems, guided by the principle “Private sector leads, the state supports.” Private sector needs will guide the research directions, which universities and research institutes will then support. This market-driven approach will also involve deregulating various restrictions.

Additionally, MHESI will promote and support innovation entrepreneurs at all levels, from youth to startups, SMEs, and large private companies. The minister outlined eight urgent focus areas for MHESI executives: 1) follow the Prime Minister’s announcements to the parliament and ministerial policies quickly, 2) universities and MHESI agencies should offer short-term courses and skill certificates in high-demand fields, with a credit bank system for accumulating credits, 3) universities and MHESI agencies should collaborate with local communities to apply knowledge to local development, addressing economic and livelihood issues, 4) ensure no corruption or fraud within agencies; appointments and selections must be transparent and fair, 5) include student success and capability indicators in academic position evaluations alongside academic competence, 6) drive practical and impactful Thai innovation, such as the MHESI Fair, a Thai innovation marketplace, showcasing inventors’

works and products to build national and international reputation, 7) ensure travel for both domestic and international missions is efficient, beneficial, appropriate, cost-effective, and budget-efficient, and 8) quickly fill all vacant positions in MHESI agencies with qualified candidates.

Thus, the outlined policies by MHESI reflect a comprehensive approach to fostering innovation, enhancing education, and driving regional and national development. By focusing on skill-building through short-term courses and credit bank systems, the ministry aims to align education with market demands and improve workforce readiness. Collaboration between universities and local communities is expected to translate academic knowledge into practice to response the economic and social needs. Ensuring transparency and efficiency in operations further reinforces trust in governance, while promoting Thai innovation through initiatives like the MHESI Fair aims to elevate the country's global standing. These measures collectively strive to build a robust foundation for sustainable development and competitiveness.



Chapter 2

Education System, Standards and Quality Assurance

Chapter 2 is divided into three parts:

Part 1: Education System

Part 2: Levels of Education

Part 3: Educational Standards and Quality
Assurance

Elaborate details regarding these topics follow below.

Part 1: Education System

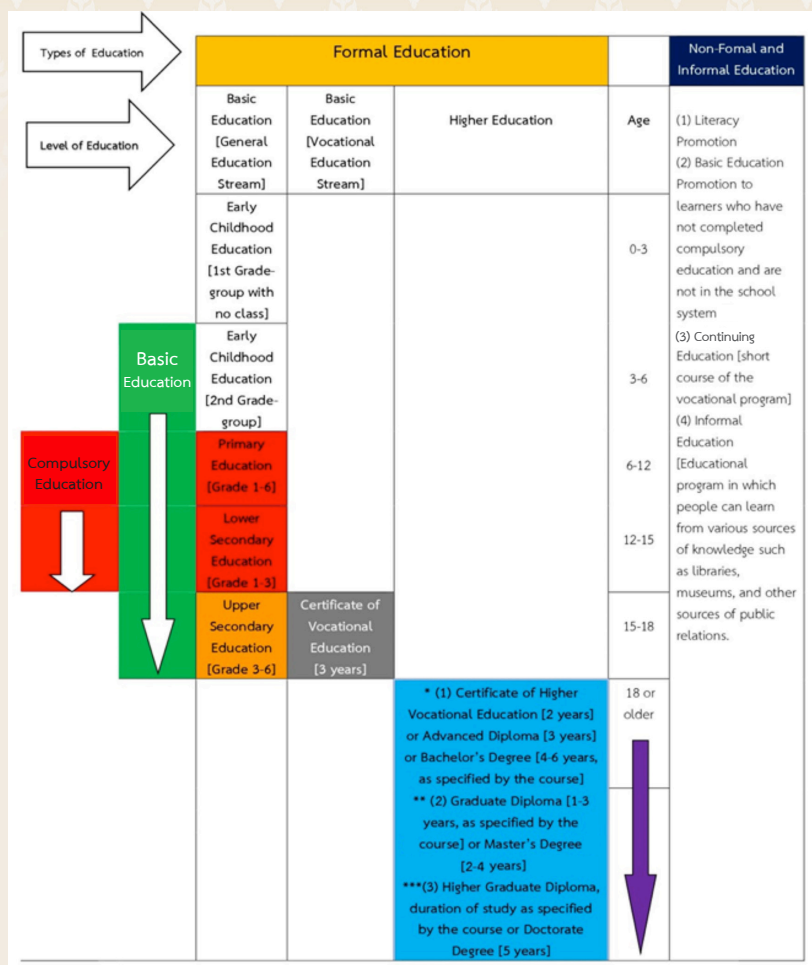
Education in Thailand integrates formal, non-formal, and informal learning to meet diverse needs, emphasizing lifelong learning and inclusivity. Reforms focus on competency-based curricula, vocational training, and education for underprivileged groups, aligned with 21st century demands and sustainable development goals.

The education system in Thailand provides a wide range of teaching methods and approaches to cater to the diverse needs of learners. According to the National Education Act 1999 and its amendments (Second Education) 2002, section 15 outlines three main types of education: formal, non-formal, and informal.

Formal education comprises two levels: basic education and higher education. Basic education is further divided into general education and vocational education. Higher education encompasses six levels of qualifications: advanced diploma, bachelor's degree, graduate diploma, master's degree, higher diploma degree, and doctoral degree. Furthermore, the Office of the Vocational Education Commission provides a higher education program known as the Program for Certificate of Higher Vocational Education.

Non-formal and informal education following the Learning Encouragement Act 2023, focusing on three forms 1) Lifelong Learning, 2) Learning for self-directed development, and 3) learning for qualifications according to level.

For a thorough understanding of Thailand Education System, Figure 2.1 visually represents the types and levels of education available.



- * (1) Certificate of Higher Vocational Education is open to graduates of both general and vocational education streams.
- ** (2) Graduate Diploma is for graduates with a bachelor's degree, and open for teaching in some subject areas.
- *** (3) Higher Graduate Diploma is for graduates with a bachelor's degree and a master's degree (according to the requirements of each course) and is open for teaching in some subject areas.

Figure 2.1 Education System in Thailand
Source: Office of the Education Council (2023)

1. Formal Education

According to the National Education Act 1999 and its amendments (Second Education) 2002, **section 15** ‘Formal education shall specify the aims, methods, curricula, duration, assessment, and evaluation conditional to its completion’, and **section 16** ‘Formal education is divided into two levels: basic education and higher education. Basic education as provided for 12 years before higher education. Differentiation of the levels and types of basic education shall be as prescribed in the ministerial regulations. Higher education is divided into two levels: lower-than degree level and degree level. Furthermore, **section 17** ‘Compulsory education shall be for nine years, requiring children aged seven to enroll in basic education institutions until the age of 16 with the exception of those who have already completed grade 9. Differentiation or equivalence of the various levels of non-formal or informal education shall be as stipulated in the ministerial regulations. (Office of the National Education Commission, 2003; Office of the Education Council, 2023)

Formal basic education in Thailand complies with the 6-3-3 system: six years for primary education (grade 1-6), three years for lower secondary education (grade 7-9) and three years for upper secondary education (grade 10-12) (OECD, 2016). There are five categories of formal education, each designed for specific groups: 1) mainstream education, 2) basic education for students with special needs, 3) education by religious institutions 4) specific education by other agencies besides the ministry of education, and 5) international education using other languages as teaching and learning media. However, this chapter will detail only mainstream education, and basic education for

students with special needs, while education by religious institutions, and specific education by other agencies besides the ministry of education will be presented in Chapter 3 and international education using other languages as teaching and learning media will be presented in Chapter 7.

1.1 Mainstream Education

Mainstream education is the formal education provided by educational institutions where students must study full-time.

1.1.1 General Education

General education can be divided into two levels: the early childhood, primary and secondary education as follows:

1.1.1.1 Early Childhood Education (Pre-primary Education)



Source: Yuvabadhana Foundation (n.d.)

Early childhood education management follows the Early Childhood Curriculum 2017 which is designed to foster the development of children from birth to 6 years old.

The curriculum emphasizes all areas of a child's development: physical, emotional, social, and cognitive. It is based on age, ability, interest, and individual differences as follow: 1) The Physical developed within age-appropriate levels, so children have good health, 2) Mental health is good and children are happy, 3) Health life skills and interact with people around them and get along with others happily, and 4) Language is used to communicate and shows interest in learning things. (Office of the Basic Education Commission, 2017)

The structure of the early childhood curriculum is divided into two age groups: children under 3 years old and children of 3-6 years old: 1) The early childhood curriculum for children under 3 years old is divided into two age groups, the newborn to 2 years old focusing on guidelines on a good upbringing based on their ways of living; and the 2-3 years age group, which concerns guidelines on a good upbringing and enhancing children's development and learning so that children will have physically and mentally healthy growth, acquire language and communication skills, and develop constant learning interests. There is no class for the first age group, but parents or caregivers are responsible for childcare and development appropriate to their age; and 2) The early childhood curriculum for children of 3-6 years old (or three years at the pre-primary education level) at kindergarten, involves children's development and educational provision in which children's physical, emotional, mental, social, and intellectual aspects will be developed according to their age and capabilities. (Office of National Education Council, 2017)

1.1.1.2 Primary and Secondary Education



Source: prachachat (2022)

Primary and Secondary Education follows the Basic Education Core Curriculum 2008 which is designed to develop all learners to become the nation's strength to be well-balanced physically, intellectually, and morally, as well as to be conscious of being Thai and being global citizens. In addition, learners will adhere to a Democratic Regime of Government with the King as Head of State and have basic knowledge and skills including the attitude necessary for education, occupation, and lifelong learning. The curriculum stresses the student-centered approach, which is based on the concept that all students are capable of learning and developing themselves to reach their full potential. Thai learners should have eight desired characteristics: 1) Love of the nation, religion, and the monarchy, 2) Honesty and integrity, 3) Self-discipline, 4) Avidity for learning, 5) Applying

the principle of Sufficiency Economy Philosophy in one's way of life, 6) Dedication and commitment to work, 7) Cherishing Thai nationalism, and 8) Public-mindedness. (Office of the Basic Education Commission, 2008)

The structure of the Basic Core Curriculum has learning standards and indicators in eight subject areas: 1) Thai Language, 2) Mathematics, 3) Science, 4) Social Studies, Religion, and Culture, 5) Health and Physical Education, 6) Art, 7) Occupations and Technology, and 8) Foreign Languages. Later, the learning standards and indicators (the Amended Version 2017 of three subject areas, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies (Geography), were revised to accord with technological development towards Thailand 4.0 and to support learners to obtain the skills needed for the 21st century. (Office of the Basic Education Commission, 2017)

The Ministry of Education is currently developing a new national curriculum called the Competency-based Curriculum (CBC) to replace the 2008 Basic Education Core Curriculum, which was based on standards. This change aligns with 21st century educational trends that emphasize the development of competencies. The draft Competency-Based Curriculum Framework aims to cultivate core competencies in all learners, enabling them to reach their full potential. The curriculum seeks to develop strong citizens who are aware of both internal and external changes, creating meaningful lives and careers with a sense of value and pride in being Thai, grounded in diverse societal understandings. The six core competencies include: 1) self-management, 2) higher-order thinking, 3) communication, 4) teamwork and collaboration, 5) active citizenships, and 6) sustainable coexistence with nature and science. (Office of the Education Council, 2023)

1.1.2 Vocational Education



Source: Office of the Vocational Education (2024)

Vocational Education is divided into three levels: 1) Upper secondary (Lower Certificate of Vocational Education or Por Vor Chor), 2) Post-secondary (Diploma or Vocational Associate Degree or Por Vor Sor), and 3) University level (Bachelor's Degree), which follows the Curriculum for the Certificate of Vocational Education 2019 at the certificate level, and the Curriculum for the Diploma of Vocational Education 2020 at the higher vocational education level. These curricula are designed to meet the labor market's demand for skilled manpower and to keep pace with current technological advancements. Vocational students can select learning systems and approaches that align with their potential, interests, and available learning opportunities. (Equitable Education Fund, 2023; Office of the Education Council, 2023)

1.1.2.1 Certificate and Diploma Levels or

Por Vor Chor offers a three-year program for graduates of the lower secondary education level. The curriculum encompasses ten main subject areas: industry, textiles, information and communication technology, commerce, fine arts, home economics, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, entertainment, and music. Within each subject area, students can select a specific field of study and choose elective subjects.

1.1.2.2 Diploma or Vocational Associate

Degree or Por Vor Sor is a two-year program available to graduates of Por Vor Chor, and to upper secondary education graduates from the general stream who decide for the vocational stream. The curriculum includes eleven main subject areas: industry, business administration, fine arts, home economics, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, textiles, information and communication technology, entertainment and music, and maritime studies, along with elective subjects.

1.2 Special Education for Children with Special Needs

The education system in Thailand adheres to the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand 2017, which includes provisions to protect the rights and freedoms of all individuals, including those with disabilities or special needs. It ensures the provision of education for students with special needs in various areas, such as physical or intellectual disabilities. Additionally, it considers access to education based on geographic location, socioeconomic status, and talents in specific fields such as science, sports, and the arts.

1.2.1 Learners with Gifted and Talented

1.2.1.1 Science and Mathematics



Source: Princess Chulabhorn Science High School Mukdahan (n.d.)

Educational institutions for gifted learners in science and mathematics have been established by public and private sectors to meet the needs of the development such learners: namely Mahidol Wittayanusorn School (MWIT), a public and autonomous school under the supervision of the Ministry of Education, 12 Princess Chulabhorn Science High Schools (PCSHS) under the supervision of the Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC), Ministry of Education, Kamnoetvidya Science Academy (KVIS) founded by the Power of Innovation Foundation and the PTT Group of Companies, 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 the Office of the Vocational Education Commission (OVEC), Ministry of Education; and Vidyasirimedhi Institute of Science and Technology (VISTEC), a private and postgraduate-level university, founded by the PTT Group of Companies.

1.2.1.2 Sports



Source: Yasotorn Provincial Administrative Organization Sports School (2022)

Sports schools have been established to promote gifted learners in sports. This includes 13 sports schools across Thailand under the supervision of the Institute of Physical Education, Ministry of Tourism and Sports, and the Bangkok Sports School. Additionally, there are 15 sports schools throughout Thailand overseen by Local Government Organizations, Ministry of Interior.

1.2.1.3 Music and Dramatic Arts



Source: Faculty of Art Education, Bunditpatanasilpa Institute (2024)

Educational institutions have been established to promote gifted learners in music and dramatic arts. These include Matthayom Sangkeet Wittaya Bangkok School, a music school under the supervision of Office of Basic Education Commission (OBEC); 12 Colleges of Dramatic Arts throughout Thailand under the Bunditpatanasilpa Institute, Ministry of Culture; the College of Music of Mahidol University; and Superstar College of Arts, a private education institution.

1.2.2 Inclusive Education in Regular Schools

Underprivileged children have the opportunity to participate in regular classes at public and private educational institutions that adhere to inclusive education policies. The Office of Basic Education Commission (OBEC) has categorized

underprivileged children studying inclusive education in mainstream schools into 13 groups, including: orphans, children of minorities, abandoned children, child laborers, victims of physical abuse, children impacted by drug abuse, children engaged in sex work, children in Observation and Protection Centers, children living in poverty, street children, children contributing to their family's income, children affected by HIV/AIDS, and other underprivileged children falling into more than one category.

1.3 Special Education for Underprivileged Children

The Association of Institutes for the Promotion and Development of Lifelong Learning has characterized “Underprivileged Children” as children facing challenging circumstances stemming from various issues, resulting in a lower quality of life compared to many other children. These underprivileged children often lack access to educational services and may not be fully developed physically, intellectually, emotionally, socially, and mentally. They require special support to enhance their overall well-being and achieve appropriate developmental milestones for their age in order to realize their full potential. (The Association of Institutes for the Promotion and Development of Lifelong Learning, 2022)

1.4 Special Education for Children with Disabilities

Office of Basic Education Commission (OBEC) has categorized disabilities into nine types, including visual impairments, hearing impairments, mental impairments, physical impairments or health-related impairments, learning disabilities, speech and language disorders, autism, emotional and behavioral disorders, and multiple disabilities. Children with

special needs and disabilities can enroll in formal education at the following types of schools: 1) Education Provision in Co-Studying Schools, 2) Educational Provision in Inclusive Schools, 3) Educational Provision in Inclusive Schools, and 4) Special Education Provision in Special Education Schools.

2. Non-formal Education and Informal Education

Non-formal and Informal education following the National Education Act 1999 and its amendments (Second Edition) 2002 which prescribe educational management is a flexible duration of study, measurement, and evaluation, having appropriate content following the problems and needs of each group of learners. Governmental organizations and the private sectors can provide non-formal education services. At present non-formal and informal education is under the responsibility of the Department of Learning Engagement (DOLE) which is transformed from Office of Non-formal and Informal Education (NFE) in 2023 following Learning Encouragement Act 2023 (Ministry of Education, 2023a; Charungkaittikul, 2023).

Learning Encouragement Act 2023 section 3 indicates that ‘The Promotion of Non-formal and Informal Education Act. 2008 shall be repealed. (Ministry of Education, 2023b). This act marks a new milestone in educational reform, emphasizing the promotion of lifelong learning for Thai people of all ages, from birth to the end of life. Special attention is given to disadvantaged children and youth, enabling them to access diverse learning opportunities anytime, anywhere, through the collaboration of all sectors. A key feature of the Department of Learning Encouragement is its ability to integrate existing non-formal and informal education networks into the establishment of “Learning Centers”. These centers will be

expanded to cover all areas, addressing the needs of modern learners across all levels, including early childhood, basic education, vocational education, and higher education (Ministry of Education, 2023).

Thailand's National Learning Encouragement Act of 2023 represents a significant legislative milestone, effectuated on May 19, 2023, following its announcement in the Royal Gazette. The central purpose of this legal enactment is to elevate the Office of the Non-Formal and Informal Education (ONIE) to a higher status, establishing the "Department of Learning Encouragement", Ministry of Education.

The Department is vested with critical responsibilities encompassing the organization, promotion, and facilitation of learning across three distinct forms: 1) Lifelong learning, 2) Learning for self-development, and 3) Learning for qualifications according to level (Charungkaittikul, 2023).

The details of each form can be described as follow (Charungkaittikul, 2024).

Lifelong learning

It is provided for people of all ages to continuously learn throughout their lives in things that they are interested in or according to their abilities. It is an education to create knowledge for each individual and lead to the creation of a society that is a learning society.

Learning for self-development

It aims to develop potential, skills, and specialized expertise according to their interests or abilities for employment, and to improve the quality of life of themselves, their families, communities, or society.

Learning for qualifications according to level

It aims to provide learning for those who are of school age but do not receive education in educational institutions, or those who are past the age for formal study, who live in remote areas or abroad so that they can receive basic education and higher education than basic education, according to the learner's potential.

Furthermore, in section 15: For the benefits of encouraging learning under this Act, the Department shall provide the systems as follows:

(1) There shall be a system of equivalency determination of educational levels, equivalency comparison, or transfer of learning results, skills, knowledge, experiences, and competencies for the benefits of learning from one form another under Section 6, or from a learning unit to another, or from a learning unit to an educational institute, or vice versa, or for the benefits of accumulated knowledge.

(2) The equivalency comparison of transfer systems under (1) shall be accumulated for the benefits of qualification, occupational, or professional performance.

To provide those systems, the Department shall cooperate with the Institute for Curriculum and Learning Development.

Section 16: The Department shall be responsible for providing, promoting, and supporting learning under section 6 and as prescribed by other laws, and shall have following duties and powers:

(1) to provide, promote, and support the development of curriculum, learning programs, learning media, learning

processes, and others related to learning encouragement under the responsibility of the Department, including utilizing curriculum, learning programs, learning media, learning processes organized by other agencies;

(2) to provide learning encouragement plans in accordance with the National Education Scheme, as well as cooperate with network parties in terms of monitor, inspection, mentoring, and evaluating of learning encouragement in accordance with this Act;

(3) to provide, promote, and support information technology systems for the benefits of learning encouragement;

(4) to provide, promote, and support teaching and learning, environment, technologies, facilities, media, services, and any other help for the disabled or individuals with special needs able to easily learn access to all kinds of learning resources with coverage, equality, and equity without discrimination and undue expense;

(5) to collaborate with network parties to provide facilities and learning resources so as to help the learners access all types of learning anywhere, and anytime, as well as to be well-publicized to the general public;

(6) to prescribe regulations and conditions for issuing certificates, diplomas, or certificates of knowledge to learners under section 14;

(7) to undertake equivalency determination of educational levels, comparison, or transfer of learning results under section 15;

(8) to define criteria for achievement evaluation of the learning provision to improve the educational quality of learning units or network parties;

(9) to promote, support, and develop skills, knowledge, abilities, and competencies of personnel responsible for learning encouragement so as to enable them to effectiveness encourage learning and give advice on learning with the ability to create learning innovations;

(10) to perform any other duties as prescribed in this Act of other laws.

To develop the curriculum under paragraph one and the specification of criteria for achievement evaluation under paragraph eight shall first consult with Institute for Curriculum and Learning Development.

The duties and powers of the Department shall not deprive the authority of other government agencies or deprive any rights of any person for such implementation according to the powers or rights under other laws.

In this act allows to have the Provincial Office of Learning Encouragement in every province acting as the administrative unit of the Provincial Committee for Learning Encouragement to supervise, assist, promote, support, facilitate, and give advice to the officers in the district learning in encouragement center, sub-district learning center, and local learning center.

Part 2: Levels of Education

As outlined in Section 16 of the National Education Act 1999 and its amendments (Second Edition) 2002, Education system in Thailand consists of two primary levels: basic education and higher education. At the upper secondary level of basic education, students have the option to pursue either the general stream or the vocational stream. (Office of the Education Council, n.d.)

1. Basic Education

Basic education is divided into three levels. The definition of each level is as follows:

1.1 Pre-primary level means child-care at the early childhood development centers for a period of 1 year, and then further to kindergarten which has two curricula: namely a 2-year kindergarten curriculum and 3-year curriculum. Parents can choose either one.

1.2 Primary level means further education from the pre-primary level that aims to provide learners with basic knowledge and abilities, taking 6 years to study (Primary 1-6 or Grade 1-6).

1.3 Secondary level refers to education after primary education which is divided into two levels: lower secondary education (secondary 1-3 or grade 7-9) and upper secondary level or high school (secondary 4-6 or grade 10-12). The upper secondary level has two education streams: the general stream and the vocational stream. The students in the vocational stream at the basic education level apply for the Vocational Certificate Program (Por Vor Chor) which takes 3 years to study and after graduation, students can further study in the High

Vocational Diploma Program (Por Vor Sor). This program is at the higher education level.

Basic education is provided by the following institutions:

1.1 Early childhood development institutions, which include 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 other similar facilities.

1.2 Schools, encompassing public schools, private schools, and those under the jurisdiction of Buddhist or other religious institutions.

1.3 Learning centers, organized by a variety of entities such as 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. Higher Education

The Education Statistics of the Office of the Education Council (OEC) defines ‘Higher Education’ as post-secondary education, which includes an Advanced Diploma, High Vocational Certificate, High Dramatic-Arts Certificate, High Art Certificate, High Technical Certificate, Bachelor’s Degree, and higher than Bachelor’s Degree, including Graduate Diploma, Master’s Degree, Higher Graduate Diploma, and Doctorate Degree. (Office of the Education Council, n.d.)

2.1 Advanced Diploma

Higher education at the advanced diploma or higher vocational education certificate level requires six semesters or three years of study. For the Dual Vocational Education (DVE) program or equivalent curriculum in any subject, the advanced diploma must be completed within a maximum of six years for full-time study or nine semesters for equivalent part-time study.

2.2 Bachelor's Degree

Those aspiring to pursue studies at the degree level must finish their upper secondary education (Grade 12), vocational education, or an equivalent qualification. Typically, earning a Bachelor's Degree entails four years of study. However, certain fields may demand five or six years of study, including a mandatory practicum prior to degree conferral. The duration of a continuing Bachelor program does not surpass four years for full-time students or six years for part-time students.

2.2.1 Graduate Diploma

A Graduate Diploma program typically spans one academic year or an equivalent duration if pursued part-time. These programs aim to offer advanced academic and professional education surpassing that of a Bachelor's Degree. They cater to students seeking to enhance their professional expertise and knowledge without fulfilling entry criteria or without the desire to engage in the research or extensive project work expected at the Master's Degree level. While designed as a terminal qualification, individuals who complete a Graduate Diploma may choose to further their studies at the Master's level. However, they might need to finish additional theoretical or practical coursework beforehand.

2.2.2 Master's Degree

A Master's Degree delves into a more focused area of study compared to a Bachelor's Degree. Its goal is to facilitate students in acquiring in-depth knowledge, comprehending the creative process, and utilizing their new knowledge to advance both work and society. Typically, this degree necessitates two years of study, to be completed within a span of six academic years. Students must undertake the task of writing a thesis or an independent study pertinent to their field of study prior to the degree being granted.

2.2.3 Higher Graduate Diploma

A Higher Graduate Diploma represents an elevated professional certification available in select specialized fields demanding professional education beyond the Master's and Doctorate levels. This diploma is predominantly prevalent in domains like medicine and its affiliated sectors such as pharmacy and other medical sciences. Candidates seeking admission must have finished a Master's Degree, and the curriculum mandates a minimum of 24 credit points in advanced professional coursework.

2.2.4 Doctorate Degree

Doctoral programs entail extensive advanced independent research, a profound understanding of the most recent advancements in a primary field of study, and the capacity to generate, interpret, and apply knowledge in a manner that significantly contributes to the advancement of a subject, field, or professional domain. According to the Regulations on Thai Qualifications Standards for Higher Education 2022, the completion timeline for this level of

education should not exceed six academic years if the student enters the program with a Master's Degree. However, if applicants enter with a Bachelor's Degree, the program must be completed within eight academic years.

Part 3: Educational Standards and Quality Assurance

Education system in Thailand ensures quality through internal and external assurance, guided by the National Education Standards and the Higher Education Act, fostering lifelong learning, innovation, and academic excellence aligned with the nation's development goals.

According to the National Education Act 1999 and its Amendments (Second Edition) 2002 states that '**Educational Standards**' means specifications of educational characteristics, quality desired, and proficiency required of all educational institutions. They serve as means, checking, evaluation, and quality assurance in the field of education; '**Internal Quality Assurance**' means assessment and monitoring of the educational quality and standards of the institutions from within. Such assessment and monitoring are carried out by personnel of the institutions concerned or by parent bodies with jurisdiction over these institutions; '**External Quality Assurance**' means assessment and monitoring of the educational quality and standards of the institutions from outside. Such assessment and monitoring are to be carried out by the Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (ONESQA) or by person or external agencies certified by the Office.

Such measures ensure the quality desired and further development of educational quality and standards of these institutions (Office of the Education Council, 2009).

In addition, there are three sections in **chapter 6** of this act stated about the standards and quality assurance: **section 47** ‘There shall be a system of educational quality assurance to ensure improvement of educational quality and standards at all levels. Such a system shall be comprised of both internal and external quality assurance’; **section 48** ‘Parent organizations with jurisdiction over educational institutions and the institutions themselves shall establish a quality assurance system in the institutions. Internal quality assurance shall be regarded as part of educational administration which must be a continuous process. This requires preparation of annual reports to be submitted to parent organizations, agencies concerned and made available to the public for purposes of improving the educational quality and standards and providing the basis for external quality assurance.’; **section 49** ‘An Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment shall be established as a public organization, responsible for development of criteria and methods of external education, conducting evaluation of educational achievements in order to assess the quality of institutions, bearing in mind the objectives and principles and guidelines for each level of education as stipulated in this Act’ (Office of the Education Council, 2009).

Subsequently, adjustments were made to educational standards, internal quality assessment, and external quality assessment for both basic and higher education, as detailed in the following sections.

1. National Education Standards 2018

The National Education Standards 2018 were formulated by the Office of the Education Council, Ministry of Education, which is subsequent version following the 2004. The objectives of the National Education Standards are to provide guidelines to all educational institutes for developing learners to acquire the desired educational outcomes, prepared for parent agencies to use as the objective of educational administration by means of stipulating learners' desired outcomes suitable to educational levels and types of each age, and also to use as the objectives of educational institute support for centralized implementation in order to acquire the desired outcomes. Furthermore, they are objectives for the institutes relative to an educational administration to use as a model for supporting, controlling, inspecting, assessing, and assuring educational quality (Office of the Education Council, 2019).



These standards are encapsulated within the **Desired Outcomes of Education (DOE)**, embodying a quintessential trait of the Thai people 4.0 aligned with the vision of progress towards stability, prosperity, and sustainability. Individuals embodying the essence of 4.0 Thais are required to uphold their cultural heritage while remaining competitive on the global stage and embodying three key attributes, as follows (Office of the Education Council, 2019).

1) Learner Person: Being diligent; eager to learn; having lifelong learning skills in order to catch up with the digital world and the future, and having competency arising from knowledge, skills, aesthetics; and preserving and applying Thai wisdom, and life skills to get a job or creating honest livelihood on basis of sufficiency, life security, and good life quality for oneself, family, and society.

2) Innovative co-creator: Having intellectual skills, 21st century skills, digital intelligence, creative thinking skills, cross-cultural skills, competency on inter-disciplinary science integration, and entrepreneurial skills in order to co-create and develop technological and social innovation, and increase opportunity and value for oneself society.

3) Active citizens: Being people who love nation and community; having responsibility, consciousness of being a good Thai and world citizen, volunteer spirit, ideology, and taking part in national development based on democracy, justice, and equality of management of natural resources and peaceful co-existence in society and global community.

The three aspects based on age will continue, associate, and accumulate from early childhood education, basic education, vocational education until higher education as shown in Figure 2.1.

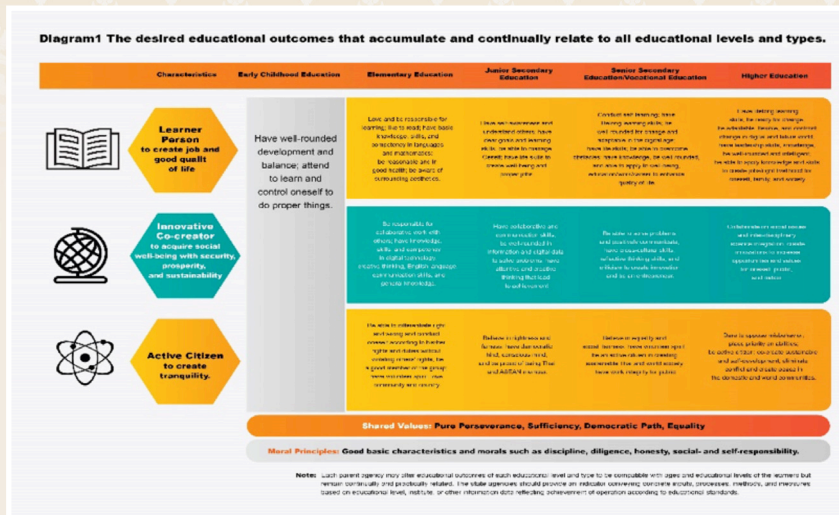


Figure 2.2 The desired educational outcomes accumulate and continually relate to all educational levels and types.

Source: Office of the Education Council (2019)

According to the Ministerial Regulation on Educational Quality Assurance 2018, and the Announcement of the Ministry of Education on the Implementation of the Educational Standards for Early Childhood Education, Basic Education, and Special Basic Education 2018, the education standards of each level consist of three standards; Standard 1: Quality of Children, Standard 2: Management and management processes, and Standard 3: Experiences management focusing on child-centered. (Royal Thai Government Gazette, 2018a)

The Announcement of the Ministry of Education on Vocational Education Standards 2018 states that there are three standards of vocational education: Standard 1: Desired Characteristics of Graduates, Standard 2: Vocational Education Management, and Standard 3: Fostering a Learning Society. (Royal Thai Government Gazette, 2018b)

The Higher Education Act 2019 states ‘Higher Education Standards’ refer to the minimum requirements concerning attributes, quality, and other criteria for higher education management, the minimum requirements for educational curricula, and the minimum criteria for applying for academic positions in higher education institutions, as well as other standards prescribed in ministerial regulations. These standards serve as benchmarks for promoting, overseeing, monitoring, evaluating, and ensuring the quality of higher education. (Office of the Education Council, 2023)

Based on the definition of higher education standards outlined above, four key ministerial regulations have been issued: 1) Ministerial Regulations on Higher Education Standards 2022; 2) Ministerial Regulations on Educational Curriculum Standards 2022; 3) Ministerial Regulations on standards for requesting academic positions in higher education institutions 2022; and 4) Ministerial Regulations on Higher Education Qualification Standards 2022 (Panyapoontragool, 2024).

2. Education Quality Assurance

2.1 Internal Quality Assurance

According to the Ministerial Regulation on Educational Quality Assurance 2018, each educational institution shall establish an internal quality assurance system by setting educational standards in accordance with the levels and types of education as prescribed by the Minister of Education. The institution must also develop an educational development plan aimed at achieving quality in line with these standards, implement the plan, conduct evaluations, and assess the internal quality of education (IQA). Furthermore, the institution

shall monitor the outcomes to ensure continuous improvement in accordance with the educational standards and submit an annual self-assessment report (SAR) to the affiliated agency or the supervising authority.

To ensure the efficiency of the educational quality assurance process as outlined in the first paragraph, the affiliated agency or the supervising authority shall provide consultation, assistance, and guidance to the educational institution to promote continuous development of its quality assurance practices (Ministry of Education, 2018).

2.2 External Quality Assurance

External Quality Assurance (EQA) is based on the results of performance of the assessed institution in accordance with the internal quality assurance system, including: 1) suitability and feasibility; 2) reliability; and 3) effectiveness. Assessment will draw aspects from 3 examples of aspects for considerations, namely: 1) learner quality; 2) management and management processes; and 3) teaching and learning process focusing on learner-centered. In case, the assessed institution sets its own standards other these three aspects, external assessors can adjust the guidelines and criteria for assessment in accordance with the set standards of the assessed institution. IQA system of the assessed institution will be considered in accordance with its goals depending on the institutional context. The mission of institution has to be in line with the national education policy and plan, as well as complying with the policies or focus of the parent organization. It has to reflect the quality of management; educational management process; enhancing students' achievements and their desirable attributes; and availability of educational

infrastructure conducive to encourage continuous self-learning of students. Therefore, EQA conducted by ONESQA is a verification of performance of assessed institution and no new standards imposed for EQA. That is EQA is in accordance with IQA standards derived from mutual agreements between education institutions and their parent organizations. If any education institution formulated its own IQA standards and approved by its parent organization, the IQA standards can be adopted for implementation in the institution. (ONESQA, n.d.a).

2.2.1 Early Childhood

EQA for early childhood development institution focuses on the verification to confirm results of operation of the early childhood education institution. Three aspects of the management of early childhood development institution provides an example for assessment as follows: 1) Quality of children; 2) Management and management processes; and 3) Experience management focusing on child-centered. However, if there were an early childhood development institution who formulated its own standards other than the three aspects specified above, external assessors can adjust the framework for EQA to align with standards of that particular individual institution (ONESQA, n.d.a).

There are five quality levels for the EQA for early childhood education. Each quality level is qualitative judgments that reflect the actual performance of the institution. They are as follows: (ONESQA, n.d.a).

Table 2.1: Quality Levels for the EQA for Early Childhood Education

Levels	Meaning
Outstanding	Means that the assessed early childhood development institution has implemented in consistent with the criteria completely, appropriately, and feasibly. The process, together with the quality assessment results are reliable. It has affected the improvement of children development their continuous developments. The achievements are satisfied by all parties and providing innovation or good example for others
Very good	Means that the assessed early childhood development institution has operated in consistent with the criteria completely, appropriately, and feasibly. The Process, together with the quality assessment results are reliable. It has affected the development of the quality of children and their continuous developments.
Good	Means that the assessed early childhood development institution has operated in consistent with the criteria completely, appropriately, and feasibly. The Process, together with the quality assessment results are reliable. It has affected the upgrade of the quality of children.

Levels	Meaning
Average	Means that the assessed early childhood development institution has operated appropriately and feasibly. The process, together with the quality assessment results are reliable, meets the criteria, but does not meet some of the requirements.
Need improvement	Means that the assessed early childhood development institution cannot meet most of the criteria.

Source: Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (Public Organization) (n.d.)

2.2.2 Basic Education

EQA for basic education follows the Ministerial Regulation on Education Quality Assurance 2018. It defines educational quality assurance is the evaluation and monitoring of the educational quality of each educational institution, following 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 can successfully provide the standard-based education (Office of the Education Council, 2023).

There are five quality levels for the EQA Basic Standards for basic education. Each quality level is qualitative judgments that reflect the actual performance of the institution. They are as follows: (ONESQA, n.d.a).

Table 2.2: Quality Levels for the EQA Basic Standards for Basic Education

Levels	Meaning
Outstanding	Means that the assessed education institution has implemented in consistent with the criteria completely, appropriately, and feasibly. The process, together with the quality assessment results are reliable. It has affected the improvement of the quality of learners and their continuous developments. The achievements are satisfied by all parties and providing innovation or good example for others.
Very good	Means that the assessed early childhood development institution has operated in consistent with the criteria completely, appropriately, and feasibly. The Process, together with the quality assessment results are reliable. It has affected the development of the quality of children and their continuous developments.
Very good	Means that the assessed institution has operated in consistent with the criteria completely, appropriately, and feasibly. The Process, together with the quality assessment results are reliable. It has affected the improvement of the quality of learners and their continuous developments.

Levels	Meaning
Good	Means that the assessed institution has operated in consistent with the criteria completely, appropriately, and feasibly. The Process, together with the quality assessment results are reliable. It has affected the upgrade of the quality of learners.
Average	Means that the assessed institution has operated appropriately and feasibly. The process, together with the quality assessment results are reliable, meets the criteria, but does not meet some of the requirements.
Need improvement	Means that the assessed institution cannot meet most of the criteria.

Source: Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (Public Organization) (n.d.)

2.2.3 Vocational Education

EQA for vocational education follows the Vocational Education Act 2008, which is classified into three categories of vocational education institutions as follows:

- 1) EQA framework and guidelines for vocational education institutions or other education institutions that provide traditional vocational education and bilateral vocational education systems.
- 2) EQA framework and guidelines for vocational education institutions or other education institutions that deliver work-related training.

3) EQA framework and guidelines for vocational education institutions that deliver undergraduate teaching in the field of technology or teaching vocational students who will work in operational lines.

Development of EQA framework and guidelines for vocational education institution, ONESQA has worked in collaboration with parent organization of vocational education. The EQA focuses on assessing results according to mission and standards at the vocational education level. In addition, the EQA uses the same basic data and information on vocational education with its parent organization and it is in consistent with the internal quality assurance (IQA) of vocational education institutions. Moreover, the EQA may consider the internationalization issues of vocational education institutions in the assessment process. The EQA framework and guidelines for vocational education institutions consists of three aspects as follows: Aspect 1: Desirable characteristics of vocational education graduates; Aspect 2: Vocational education management; and Aspect 3: Building a learning society

There are five quality levels for the category of “Basic Standards” for the EQA for vocational education. Each quality level is qualitative judgments that reflect the genuine performances of the institution. They are as follows:

Table 2.3: Quality Levels for the EQA for Vocational Education

Quality Level	Meaning
Outstanding	Means that the assessed vocational education institution has implemented in consistent with the criteria completely, appropriately, and feasibly. The process, together with the quality assessment results are reliable. It has affected the uplifting the quality of vocational students and they have continuous developments. The achievements are satisfied by all parties and providing innovation or good example for others.
Very Good	Means that the assessed vocational education institution has operated in consistent with the criteria completely, appropriately, and feasibly. The process, together with the quality assessment results are reliable. It has affected the development of the quality of vocational students and their continuous developments.
Good	Means that the assessed vocational education institution has operated in consistent with the criteria completely, appropriately, and feasibly. The process, together with the quality assessment results are reliable. It has affected the uplifting of the quality of vocational students.

Levels	Meaning
Average	Means that the assessed vocational education institution has operated appropriately and feasibly. The process, together with the quality assessment results are reliable, meets the criteria, but does not meet some of the requirements.
Need Improvement	Means that the assessed vocational education institution cannot meet most of the criteria.

Source: Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (Public Organization) (n.d.)

2.2.4 Higher Education

Before the Higher Education Curriculum Standards of 2022, with the establishment of a new ministry, all previous laws were repealed and rewritten. Some existing laws were also reviewed, resulting in what is now referred to as the Higher Education Curriculum Standards of 2022. These standards have been in effect since 2022.

In terms of quality assurance, with the enactment of the new laws, internal quality assurance, which previously required forms like CQA and CHECO to be filled, has been discontinued. Universities are no longer required to submit these forms. However, if a university wishes to complete them for its own records, it may do so, but the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research, and Innovation (MHESI) will no longer utilize them. Under the previous system, universities were required to submit internal quality assurance reports to MHESI. After the 2022 standards were introduced, MHESI delegated

the responsibility to universities to develop and manage their own systems and utilize them internally without adhering to MHESI's standards. With universities now developing their own quality assurance systems, they must report their outcomes to their respective university councils. This allows universities to use the results of quality assurance processes to improve their educational quality and teaching practices. Essentially, universities are now responsible for managing their own systems (Panyapoontragool, 2024).

Previously, was responsible for conducting external evaluations. Under the new MHESI regulations, ONESQA no longer holds this role. However, if ONESQA wishes to conduct external evaluations, it must first seek approval from MHESI through the Higher Education Standards Committee. The Higher Education Act of 2019 states that external evaluations may be conducted by internationally recognized organizations or by government or private agencies within the country. Consequently, ONESQA submitted a request to become an external evaluation agency. Upon review, the HESC issued a public announcement recognizing ONESQA as an external evaluation agency. This announcement allows universities to invite ONESQA to conduct external evaluations. However, it must be ONESQA specifically, as no other agencies are permitted to conduct evaluations without HESC's authorization (Panyapoontragool, 2024).

EQA guidelines for higher education institutions (HEIs) developed by ONESQA includes two categories of EQA, namely: 1) "Common Standards", which are assessed in accordance with the mission and context of HEIs; and 2) "Challenging Standards", which are criteria for assessing quality at the category of "Challenging Standards". The second

category criteria for EQA intends to encourage the development of academic excellence of HEIs. HEIs can choose to be assessed with one of the two criteria based on potential and voluntary of the assessed institution. The certification of standards of EQA for HEIs has the procedure to conclude EQA results of the assessed HEI by reflecting the performance of the HEI management in accordance with the context and category of the particular assessed HEI. EQA will also provide recommendations for improvement and development to each issue for consideration. EQA will be based on the judgment on how the assessed HEI's performances are complying with the higher education standards. (ONESQA, n.d.d).

EQA for higher education for the year 2021 and 2022 will be judgment of the results of performances in various dimensions of HEI to verify whether the assessed HEI's performances are compliant with the national higher education standards or not. It has following connotations: 1) Compliance with national higher education standards meaning that the results of EQA of the assessed HEI meet the national higher education standards, and 2) Incompliance with the national higher education standards meaning that the results of EQA of the assessed HEI do not meet the national higher education standards.

Furthermore, IQA and EQA for Early childhood education to vocational certificate: IQA is used according to the standards of the relevant ministries; whereas EQA is used according to the criteria of Office for Educational Standards and Quality Assessment (Public Organization)

For Higher Vocational Certificate (Vocational Certificate) / Associate Degree: IQA is used according to the standards of

the relevant ministries; while EQA is selected according to the following criteria: 1) Criteria of the Office for Educational Standards and Quality Assessment (Public Organization), 2) Criteria certified by the Higher Education Standards Committee. Education at the bachelor's degree level and above consists of 3 levels:

Level 1 Course level

IQA chooses to use according to the following criteria:

- 1) AUN-QA version 4 criteria
- 2) Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation
- 3) Criteria related to professional standards, such as engineering [Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET)]

EQA is selected according to the following criteria:

- 1) Criteria of the Office for Educational Standards and Quality Assessment (Public Organization)
- 2) Criteria certified by the Higher Education Standards Committee

Level 2 Faculty level

IQA chooses to use according to the following criteria:

- 1) EdPEX criteria (Education Criteria for Performance Excellence)

- 2) Office of the Permanent Secretary,
Ministry of Higher Education, Science,
Research and Innovation

EQA is selected according to the following
criteria:

- 1) Criteria of the Office for Educational
Standards and Quality Assessment
(Public Organization)
- 2) Criteria certified by the Higher Education
Standards Committee

Level 3 Institutional Level

IQA chooses to use according to the following
criteria:

- 1) AUN-QA version 3 criteria
- 2) EdPEX criteria
- 3) TQA criteria
- 4) EdPEX criteria and TQA
- 5) Office of the Permanent Secretary,
Ministry of Higher Education, Science,
Research and Innovation

EQA is selected according to the following
criteria:

- 1) Criteria of the Office for Educational
Standards and Quality Assessment
(Public Organization)
- 2) Criteria certified by the Higher Education
Standards Committee



Chapter 3

Educational Administration & Provision And Education Participation

Chapter 3 is divided into two parts:

Part 1: Educational Administration and Provision
Agencies

Part 2: Education Participation

Elaborate details regarding these topics follow below.

Part 1: Educational Administration and Provision Agencies

Education system in Thailand involves multiple ministries, private sectors, and local organizations managing basic to higher education, vocational training, and specialized programs. The focus is on collaboration, inclusivity, and lifelong learning to meet diverse educational and workforce needs.

Educational administration and provision in Thailand are overseen by various government agencies across Ministries and related organizations, including the **Ministry of Education (MOE)**, **Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation (MHESI)**, **Ministry of Interior (MOI)**, **Ministry of Tourism and Sports (MOTS)**, **Ministry of Culture (MOC)**, **Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (MSDHS)**, **Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA)**, and **the Royal Thai Police (RTP)**. Each entity possesses the necessary legal authority to manage specific types and levels of education, ensuring a cohesive operational framework that facilitates seamless transitions for learners between different education levels and types while upholding educational quality standards.

The MOE predominantly manages educational administration and management from early childhood through basic and vocational education levels, while higher education falls under the jurisdiction of the MHESI. Additionally, other government bodies are empowered by law to deliver education at various levels. For instance, the Local Administrations Organizations (LAO), overseen by the MOI, play a vital role in educational administration and management at the local level. Specific government agencies cater to higher education needs, such as the Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy under the Royal Thai Army within the Ministry of Defense.

Moreover, the private sector actively participates in education management across different levels and types, including private schools, colleges in general and vocational streams, and private universities. Collaborating with government agencies, private entities engage in initiatives aimed at enhancing the overall quality of education in the country.

This chapter will outline the educational administration and provision across all levels by the Ministry of Education (MOE), along with the involvement of other relevant ministries, organizations, and the private sector in education management. Table 3.1 provides an overview of the total number of educational institutions within the formal education system nationwide.

Table 3.1: Number of Educational Institutions and Number of Students in Formal Education System by other Organizations (Academic Year 2024)

Organizations	Number of Institutions	Number of Students
Ministry of Education	35,026	10,271,977
- Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC)	29,152	6,430,880
- Office of the Private Education Commission (OPEC)	3,946	953,488
- Department of Learning Encouragement (DOLE)	1,050	852,628
- Office of the Vocational Education Commission (OVEC)	877	2,034,259
- Mahidol Wittayanusorn School (MWIT)	1	722
Ministry of Higher Education, Sciences, Research and Innovation	261	64,748
Ministry of Interior	19,694	1,298,620
Ministry of Social Development and Human Security	2	89
Ministry of Defense	12	3,084
Ministry of Tourism and Sports	11	4,344
Ministry of Culture	16	4,713
Bureau of Education Bangkok	437	253,711
Bureau of Education Pattaya	13	14,238
National Office of Buddhism	407	31,207
Royal Thai Police	221	24,964
Total	56,100	11,971,695

Source: Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education (2024)

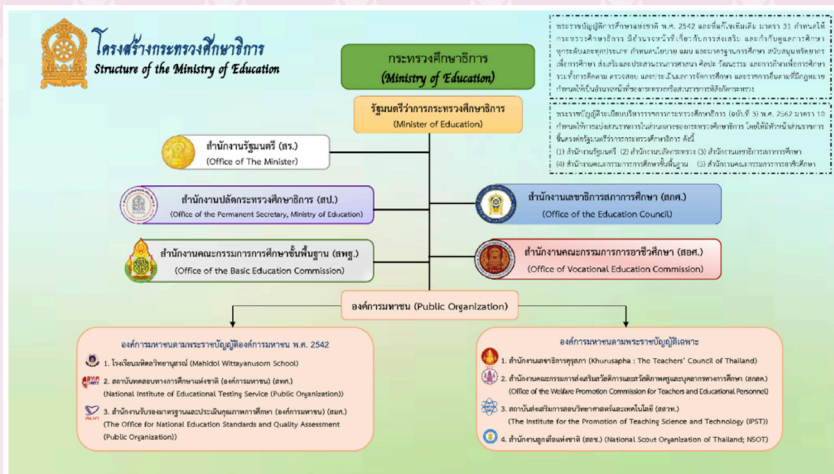


Figure 3.1: Structure of Ministry of Education

Source: Ministry of Education (2019)

1. Ministry of Education (MOE)

At the central level, there are four primary agencies and seven independent agencies, comprising four autonomous state entities and three public organizations. The five main agencies are as follows: 1) Office of the Permanent Secretary, 2) Office of the Education Council, 3) Office of the Basic Education Commission, 4) Office of the Vocational Education Commission and 5) Department of Learning Encouragement, each entrusted with specific powers and responsibilities outlined below:

1.1 Central Level

1.1.1 Office of the Permanent Secretary (OPS)

The Office of the Permanent Secretary holds authority over general administration, interdepartmental coordination within the Ministry, implementation of legally prescribed hierarchical protocols, budget management, formulation of action plans, facilitation, monitoring, performance evaluation in alignment with policies and guidelines, and compliance with ministerial regulations regarding Ministry organization. Furthermore, the OPS provides oversight to three pivotal offices, the Office of the Private Education Commission (OPEC), and the Office of the Teacher Civil Service and Educational Personnel Commission (OTEPC).



1.1.2 Office of the Educational Council (OEC)

The Office of the Education Council is the primary agency entrusted with six key responsibilities:

- 1) Formulating the National Scheme of Education, incorporating aspects of religion, art, culture, and sports across all education levels, and suggesting policies and strategies for education resource allocation.
- 2) Proposing educational policies, plans, and national education standards.
- 3) Engaging in research, coordination, promotion, and support of educational research and development, establishing learning networks, fostering national



competence, and curating information network systems for policy development and the National Scheme of Education.

4) Evaluating education provision as outlined in the National Scheme of Education.

5) Offering feedback or recommendations on various education-related laws.

6) Carrying out any additional tasks mandated by law as the powers, duties, and obligations of the Office of the Education Council assigned by the Minister or Cabinet.

1.1.3 Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC)



The Office of the Basic Education Commission is the primary agency responsible for overseeing formal education at the basic education level, with six key duties:

1) Reviewing policy proposals, educational development plans, provision standards, and central curriculum frameworks for basic education.

2) Establishing criteria, guidelines, and resource allocation strategies to support education and manage budgetary aspects.

3) Enhancing administrative systems, coordinating information networks, utilizing information technology in teaching and learning processes, and fostering educational supervision, administration, and management.

4) Monitoring, inspecting, and evaluating basic education within educational service regions.

5) Driving educational advancements, facilitating, supporting, and supervising basic education management, special education programs for individuals with disabilities, vulnerable populations, and individuals with exceptional abilities. Additionally, promoting the management of private basic education, local administrative organizations, communities, private sectors, professional associations, religious entities, businesses, and social institutions within each educational service region.

6) Fulfilling the secretarial obligations of the Basic Education Commission.

1.1.4 Office of the Vocational Education Commission (OVEC)

The Office of the Vocational Education Commission (OVEC) serves as the primary agency responsible for promoting and overseeing vocational education and training in both public and private sectors. OVEC's key duties include:



1) Drafting policy proposals, development plans, standards, and curricula for vocational education across all levels.

2) Implementing and coordinating vocational and professional education standards.

3) Establishing budget allocation criteria and facilitating resource support.

4) Enhancing the professional development of teachers and educational staff in vocational education.

5) Facilitating coordination between public and private vocational education management while establishing collaboration criteria with other agencies and industries.

6) Monitoring, evaluating, and reporting on the outcomes of vocational education management in public and private sectors.

7) Organizing, fostering, and coordinating information networks, and leveraging information and communication technology in vocational education and training.

8) Managing the secretarial duties of the Vocational Education Commission and undertaking additional tasks as delegated by the Vocational Education Commission.

1.1.5 Department of Learning Encouragement (DOLE)



Department of Learning Encouragement (DOLE) is responsible for organizing, promoting, and supporting the following types of learning
1) Lifelong learning 2) Learning for personal development and 3) Learning for qualification attainment. DOLE's key duties include:

1) Utilizing curricula, programs, materials, and methodologies relevant to the department's scope of learning promotion.

2) Reviewing policy proposals, educational development plans, and provision standards to ensure alignment with the National Education Plan and collaborating with partner networks.

3) Promoting and supporting information technology systems to enhance learning promotion efforts for individuals with disabilities or special needs, ensuring inclusivity and fairness.

4) Collaborating with partner networks to provide facilities and learning resources that enable learners to access education in various forms, locations, and times.

5) Establishing criteria and conditions for issuing certificates, diplomas, or certifications of knowledge, and administering educational equivalency, recognition, or transfer of learning outcomes.

6) Developing criteria to evaluate the effectiveness of learning management in enhancing the educational quality of learning units or partner networks.

7) Promoting and developing the skills, knowledge, capabilities, and competencies of personnel involved in learning promotion to ensure effective guidance and the creation of educational innovations.

1.2 Public Organizations which are independent agencies under the supervision of the MOE

1.2.1 The Secretariat Office of the Teachers' Council of Thailand (Khurusapha)

Khurusapha functions as a council dedicated to teachers and educational personnel, with the following responsibilities: setting professional standards; issuing, renewing, and revoking licenses for professional practice; upholding the dignity of professional educators; certifying degrees, diplomas, or certificates



from institutions based on professional standards; overseeing the behavior and performance of educators to ensure adherence to professional standards and ethical codes; and fostering research and professional development in the field of education.

1.2.2 The Institute for the Promotion of Teaching Science and Technology (IPST)



The Institute for the Promotion of Teaching Science and Technology (IPST) is tasked with the following primary duties: promoting the study and research of curricula, teaching methods, and learning techniques in the fields of science, mathematics, and technology across all educational levels, particularly in basic education; and developing textbooks, assignments, academic publications, supplementary materials, and creating teaching aids and resources for science, mathematics, and technology education.

1.2.3 The Office of the Welfare Promotion Commission for Teachers and Educational Personnel (OTEP)



The Office of the Welfare Promotion Commission for Teachers and Educational Personnel (OTEP) is tasked with advocating for the welfare, well-being, rights, benefits, and security of education professionals and educators. Its goals also encompass fostering solidarity, providing support, and preserving the dignity of teachers and educational personnel.

1.2.4 The National Scout Organization of Thailand (NSOT)

The National Scout Organization of Thailand (NSOT) serves as the country's primary scouting body, dedicated to nurturing Scouts in various dimensions—physical, intellectual, mental, and moral—to cultivate them into responsible citizens contributing to a peaceful and secure society. The Boy Scouts Act B.E.2551 (2008) clarifies that the term “Scouts” pertains to both male and female children and youth participating in scouting activities within and outside educational institutions, encompassing both Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. Scouting plays a vital role in education, emphasizing the development of youth with strong moral values, fostering positive character traits, leadership skills, which are esteemed globally.



1.2.5 The Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (Public Organization) (ONESQA)

The Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (ONESQA), a Public Organization, plays a crucial role in evaluating the external quality assurance system in alignment with educational institutions' internal quality assurance procedures and associated entities. ONESQA oversees and enhances standards and criteria for external quality assessments conducted by certified external assessors sanctioned by the organization. Typically, ONESQA conducts assessments of all educational institutions once every five years,



providing assessment outcomes to institutions and relevant bodies for collaborative efforts aimed at enhancing the quality of education in Thailand.

1.2.6 The National Institute of Educational Testing Service (Public Organization) (NIETS)



The National Institute of Educational Testing Service (NIETS), a Public Organization, was founded to structure testing systems and methodologies and create tools for evaluating and gauging learners' performance based on educational norms. Its core functions include coordinating national educational testing, offering testing assistance to schools and educational service area offices, and serving as a hub for educational testing, support, and disseminating test outcomes to diverse domestic and international entities.

1.2.7 Mahidol Wittayanusorn School (MWIT)

Mahidol Wittayanusorn School (MWIT) is the first science and mathematics school in Thailand, providing a specialized education for high school students who are exceptionally talented in science, mathematics and technology. MWIT takes pride in nurturing and developing exceptionally gifted Grade 10-12 students. The number of school's annual enrollment of new students is 240, with a total of 720 students across three grades. Each class is limited to 24 students in order to maintain an optimum teacher to student ratio for enhanced interaction and learning experience. MWIT is a public and autonomous boarding school governed by a school board and managed by a school principal who reports directly to the Minister of Education.

1.3 Regional Level

Regional level consists of two levels: (1) at the provincial level, and (2) at the regional level, according to the Order of the Head of the National Council for Peace and Order No.19/2560 (A.D. 2017) on Education Reform, as follows:

1.3.1 Regional Level under the Supervision of the Office of the Permanent Secretary of Education (OPS)

Provincial education offices have been established in all 77 provinces under the oversight of the Office of the Permanent Secretary (OPS), with the provincial superintendent serving as the highest-ranking official. These provincial education offices are entrusted with executing the Ministry of Education's directives on education administration and management in compliance with legal mandates. They also fulfill educational duties in alignment with policies and strategies specified by relevant government bodies.

At the regional level, eighteen provincial clusters were established across six regions with 77 provincial education offices serving as operational hubs for these clusters. The Ministry of Education (MOE) released a ministerial announcement outlining the formation of 18 regional education offices, each headed by a regional superintendent. These regional education offices operate under the oversight of the Office of the Permanent Secretary (OPS) and encompass. Table 3.2 provides the number of regional education office and location.

Table 3.2: Number of the Regional Education Office and Location

The Regional Education Office	Location
The Regional Education Office 1	located in Lop Buri, is responsible for the operations of the province of Chai Nat, Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya, Lop Buri, Saraburi, Sing Buri and Ang Thong.
The Regional Education Office 2	located in Pathum Thani, is responsible for the operations of the province of Nonthaburi, Pathum Thani, Nakhon Pathom, Samut Prakan, and Krug Thep Maha Nakhon (Bangkok Metropolitan)
The Regional Education Office 3	located in in Ratchaburi province, is responsible for the operations of the province of Ratchaburi, Kanchanaburi, and Suphan Buri.
The Regional Education Office 4	located in Samut Songkhram province, is responsible for the operations of the province of Samut Songkhram, Samut Sakhon, Phetchaburi, and Prachuap Khiri Khan.
The Regional Education Office 5	located in Nakhon Si Thammarat province, is responsible for the operations of the province of Chumphon, Nakhon Si Thammarat, Phatthalung, Songkhla, and Surat Thani.
The Regional Education Office 6	located in Phuket province, is responsible for the operations of the province of Krabi, Trang, Phangnga, Phuket, Ranong, and Satun.
The Regional Education Office 7	located in Yala province, is responsible for the operations of the province of Narathiwat, Pattani, and Yala,

The Regional Education Office	Location
The Regional Education Office 8	located in Chonburi province, is responsible for the operations of the province of Chonburi, Rayong, and Chachoengsao
The Regional Education Office 9	located in Chachoengsao, is responsible for the operations of the province of Chanthaburi, Trat, Prachin Buri, Nakhon Nayok, and Sa Kaeo
The Regional Education Office 10	located in Udon Thani province, is responsible for the operations of the province of Bueng Kan, Loei, Nong Khai, Nong Bua Lamphu, and Udon Thani.
The Regional Education Office 11	located in Sakon Nakhon province, is responsible for the operations of the province of Nakhon Phanom, Mukdahan, and Sakon Nakhon.
The Regional Education Office 12	located in Khon Kaen province, is responsible for the operations of the province of Kalasin, Khon Kaen, Maha Sarakham, and Roi Et.
The Regional Education Office 13	located in Nakhon Ratchasima province, is responsible for the operations of the province of Chaiyaphum, Nakhon Ratchasima, Buriram, and Surin.
The Regional Education Office 14	located in Ubon Ratchathani province, is responsible for the operations of the province of Si Sa Ket, Yasothon, Amnat Charoen and Ubon Ratchathani
The Regional Education Office 15	located in Chiang Mai province, is responsible for the operations of the province of Chiang Mai, Mae Hong Son, Lampang, and Lamphun.

The Regional Education Office	Location
The Regional Education Office 16	located in Chiang Rai province, is responsible for the operations of the province of Chiang Rai, Nan, Phayao, Phrae and Uttaradit
The Regional Education Office 17	located in Phitsanulok province, is responsible for the operations of the province of Phitsanulok, Tak, Phetchabun, and Sukhothai
The Regional Education Office 18	located in Nakhon Sawan province, is responsible for the operations of the province of Nakhon Sawan, Kamphaeng Phet, Phichit, and Uthai Thani.

Source: Association of Deputy Director of Educational Service Area Offices (2024)

The main duty of the regional and provincial education offices is to lead education at the regional and provincial levels by promoting, supporting, and developing education, as well as establishing cooperation and integration with agencies under the MOE and other agencies, as well as other related sectors in the area. (Ministry of Education, 2021)

1.3.2 Reginal Level under the Supervision of the OBEC

The Educational Service Area (ESA) Office within each region serves as a vital component of the Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC), responsible for implementing regional-level policies, particularly at basic education institutions nationwide. These offices are also tasked with gathering data and educational management outcomes

within their respective regions, providing reports to OBEC to enhance basic education administration and management for improved quality. Presently, OBEC oversees 245 Educational Service Area (ESA) Offices, comprising 183 Primary Educational Service Area (PESA) Offices and 62 Secondary Educational Service Area (SESA) Offices.

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

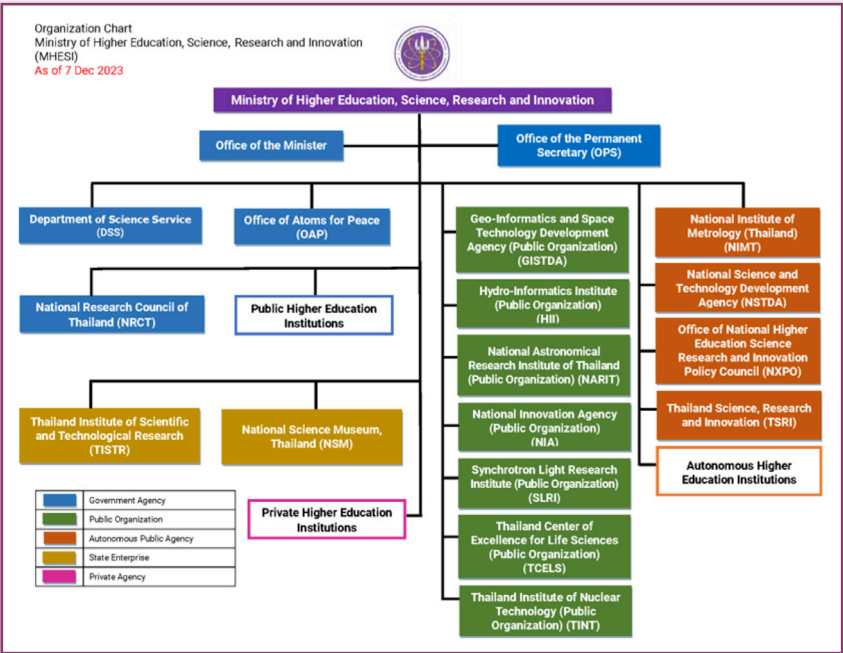


Figure 3.2: Structure of Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation

Source: Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation (2023)

The main authority of the new Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research, and Innovation (MHESI) includes overseeing higher education administration and provision, promoting scientific research and innovation, and integrating various organizations related to education, science, and research in Thailand. Additionally, the ministry aims to align with the country's vision for progress in the 21st century and the development of Thailand 4.0, which emphasizes science, technology, and innovation as key drivers of growth.

1) Promote, support, and supervise higher education to be able to cope with global changes, while maintaining independence in academics and management, as well as develop manpower by the needs of the country and conduct research and innovation to develop communities, social and the country 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 with 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 sound ecosystems and infrastructure to develop higher education, science, research, and innovation, as well as promote cooperation to produce a specialized advanced workforce and cooperation in research and innovation with government agencies, private sectors, local governments and

individuals or agencies abroad (Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation Act 2019).

The offices and the educational institutions of the MHESI comprised of four forms: 1) a group of individuals including councils or committees, 2) government agencies, 3) public organizations/state enterprises or autonomous educational institutions, and 4) private or other sectors.

2.1 Councils or Commissions: There are many groups of individuals under the MHESI, but the four main ones at the ministerial level are: the Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation Council, the Commission on Thailand Science Research and Innovation, the Commission of Higher Education, and the Commission of Higher Education Standards.

2.1.1 The Higher Education, Science, Research, and Innovation Council, chaired by the Prime Minister, is the main pillar of the MHESI in the form of a group of individuals. The powers and duties of the Council are: (1) to propose policies, strategies, and plans for higher education to develop the country's manpower, and plans for science, research, and innovation of the country in line with the national strategies, government policies, and other plans, to the Cabinet for approval; (2) to consider approving the annual budget of higher education, science, research and innovation of the Ministry before proposing to the Cabinet for approval; (3) to supervise the operations of the three commissions: the Commission on Thailand Science Research and Innovation, the Commission on Higher Education, the Commission on Higher Education Standards (CHES), and higher education institutions as well as various agencies of the Ministry; (4) to provide views or advice to

the Cabinet. In this regard, the Office of National Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation Policy Council (NXPO), an autonomous public agency affiliated to the MHESI, serves as the secretariat of the National Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation Council (the National Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation Policy Council Act 2562).

2.1.2 The Commission of Thailand Science Research and Innovation is another autonomous public agency that is the secretariat of Thailand Science Research and Innovation (TSRI). The TSRI, formerly known as Thailand Research Fund (TRF), is responsible for the promotion of research and innovation in science, technology, social science, humanities, and interdisciplinary fields so that the nation can build bodies of knowledge, develop public policy, support the application of research results and innovations for economic and social utilization to achieve balanced and sustainable development. However, the TSRI itself does not conduct research. (TSRI, n.d.)

2.1.3 The Commission of Higher Education 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 Scheme of Education. This commission is also responsible for supporting resources, monitoring, reviewing, and evaluating the management of higher education, considering the independence and academic excellence of higher education institutions.

2.1.4 The Commission of Higher Education

Standards is to promote, support, monitor, and review educational management and quality assurance, as well as evaluate the management of public higher education institutions under the Ministry and private higher education institutions.

The government agency responsible for the operation of these two commissions is the Office of the Permanent Secretary (OPS) of the MHESI.

2.2 Government Agencies: Apart from the OPS, more government agencies are under the supervision of the MHESI including, the Department of Science Service (DSS), the National Research Council of Thailand (NRCT), the Office of Atoms for Peace (OAP), government universities and community colleges.

2.2.1 The Office of the Permanent Secretary (OPS) is the main government agency having duties and powers relating to the general affairs of the Ministry as well as providing continuous support for higher education reform, to supervise and expedite the performance of government agencies in the Ministry in accordance with the national strategy, the plan of higher education, science, research and innovation. It is also responsible for civil service that the Cabinet does not prescribe to be the duties of any government agency under the Ministry.

2.2.2 The Department of Science Service (DSS) has duties and powers related to scientific services by supervising and promoting research and development in science and technology, as well as being the central scientific and technological laboratory of the country to strengthen production efficiency, the competitiveness of the country and sustainable economic and social development.

2.2.3 The National Research Council of Thailand (NRCT) has duties and powers related to the funding for research and innovation, the creation of a scientific database and index, research and innovation of the country, preparation of research standards, promoting and supporting the development of research and innovation personnel and awarding outstanding individuals or entities for research and innovation.

2.2.4 The Office of Atoms for Peace (OAP) has duties and powers related to policy recommendations, guidelines, and strategic plans for peaceful nuclear energy, to supervise the safety of users, people and the environment by managing nuclear energy and radiation in accordance with international agreements and standards.

According to Section 36 of the National Education Act 1999 and the Amendment (Second National Education Act 2002, universities or educational institutions providing education at the degree level shall be legal entities and enjoy the status of government or autonomous universities. Currently, many universities or educational institutions are still public universities that have been fully supported by the government, especially in the budget, but the expenditure must follow the requirements of the Ministry. This type of university includes 9 public universities, 38 Rajabhat Universities, and 9 Rajamangala Universities of Technology. There are also government universities/educational colleges under the supervision of other Ministries. Besides, there is one Institute of Community Colleges which is a public institute providing lower-than degree level and overseeing 20 Community Colleges throughout the country.

In addition, there are also 96 demonstration schools under the public universities, autonomous universities, Rajabhat Universities, and Rajamangala Universities of Technology.

2.3 Public Organizations/State Enterprises or Autonomous Educational Institutions/Universities:

2.3.1 Autonomous educational institutions/universities can develop their own administrative structure and budget system for self-governance and full autonomy. Currently, there are 25 autonomous educational institutions/universities in Thailand.

2.3.2 Public organizations/state enterprises. The Ministry also has many public organizations and state enterprises including the National Science and Technology Development Agency (NSTDA), with its governing board chaired by the Minister of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation. The mission of the NSTDA is to support research and development, design and engineering, technology transfer, science and technology human resource development, and infrastructure development. The **NSTDA comprises five national research centers:** (1) National Electronics and Computer Technology Center (NECTEC), (2) National Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (BIOTEC), (3) National Metal and Materials Technology Center (MTEC), (4) National Nanotechnology Center (NANOTEC), and (5) National Energy Technology Center (ENTEC).

2.4 Private or Other Sectors: There are 75 private universities, and other sectors under other Ministries which are related to higher education, science, research and innovation.

3. Other Ministries and Organizations

3.1 Agencies under the Ministry of Interior, the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, and the Royal Thai Police

3.1.1 Agencies under the Ministry of Interior

Local Administration Organisations (LAOs) across the country are under the supervision of the Department of Local Administration, the Ministry of Interior. The LAOs have four types: (1) Provincial Administration Organization, (2) Municipality, (3) Subdistrict Administration Organization, and (4) Special Administration Organization. At present, there are 7,850 LAOs in Thailand as shown in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Type and Number of Local Administration Organizations

Types of Local Administration	Number
Provincial Administrative Organization (Not including Bangkok and Pattaya)	76
Municipality	2,469
Subdistrict Administrative Organization	5,303
Special Administrative Organization (Bangkok and Pattaya)	2
Total	7,850

Source: Department of Local Administration, Ministry of Interior
(As of 24 November 2024)

The Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand B.E.2560 (2017) stipulates that the LAOs have the authority and duty in overseeing and providing public services and activities for the benefit of the people in the local areas as well as to promote and support education provision for residents. Therefore, the LAOs have duties to provide quality education of international standards for residents of all ages to learn continuously throughout their lives by cooperating with the state. (The Royal Gazette, 2017)

The educational administration and provision of LAOs are in the same direction as the operations of the MOE, namely:

(1) Overseeing, supervising and supporting the management of basic education institutions;

(2) Promoting the management of activities to develop education and build relationships with the community of basic education institutions;

(3) Surveying children at the age of compulsory education to attend school following the National Education Act; and

(4) Preparing educational strategic plans for LAOs by collecting and analyzing educational information of LAOs as well as developing technology, innovation and academic networks for education.

In addition, LAOs are also responsible for non-formal education and career promotion, coordinating the management of adult education in both general and vocational education streams, promoting to establish learning centers to develop learning and informal education for

the people, establishing libraries, places for reading the newspaper or information dissemination center for the public, organizing interesting activities for the young to make good use of their free time and increase family income, establishing youth centers and sports fields to support activities to develop various skills for children and youth, organizing activities and traditional events to promote ethics, morality, preservation of traditions, arts and culture as well as local wisdom in order to conserve the local identity.

According to the data of the 2024 academic year, the number of students studying in educational institutions under LAOs was 1,298,620 in total, and when compared to the number of students from 2020-2024, the number of students in educational institutions under LAOs significantly decreased. Table 3.4 shows the decline of the school-age population due to decreasing birth rate of the Thai population.

Table 3.4: Number of Students in Basic Education Institutions under the Local Administration Organizations, Ministry of Interior (Academic years 2020-2024)

Levels of Education	Academic Years				
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Pre-Primary	877,082	828,358	781,727	756,288	731,568
Primary	314,962	322,514	316,206	308,467	305,783
Lower Secondary Education	165,622	170,254	170,096	164,053	169,382
Upper Secondary Education	77,806	77,806	77,806	70,582	91,886
- General	74,719	79,376	84,826	86,873	88,275
- Vocational	3,087	3,278	3,341	3,709	3,612
Total	1,435,472	1,403,780	1,356,196	1,319,390	1,298,620

Source: Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education (2024)

3.1.2 Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA)

According to the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration Act 1985, Bangkok is a special type of local administrative region where the governor is elected, and its head office is the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA). The Department of Education under the BMA is responsible for educational administration and provision of the general basic education stream in Bangkok. In the academic year 2024, the BMA’s Department of Education reported educational statistics as follows:

There are 437 educational institutions in Bangkok, consisting of 327 schools of pre-primary and primary levels, 1 primary school, 1 primary and lower secondary school, 98 schools of pre-primary, primary and lower secondary levels, 6 schools of lower secondary and upper secondary levels, and 4 schools open to all levels of education. Bangkok has a total of 253,711 students, consisting of 41,537 pre-primary students, 171,771 primary students, and 35,662 secondary school students, with 14,201 government teachers. (Department of Education, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, 2024)

In addition to general basic education, BMA offers other educational services as follows.

10 vocational training centers offering short-term vocational training courses in subjects such as mechanics, electronics, beauticians, foreign languages, home economics, and others.

291 Preschool Child Development Centers, located in the community, take care of early childhood and preschool children. Each center is administered by the supervision of a committee of the community with volunteer carers, which brings social services to the development of children so that they can develop appropriately to their age and be ready for further education in the school system.

In addition, BMA promotes lifelong education by providing various learning resources such as 12 sports centers, 1 Bangkok Youth Center (Thai-Japanese), 35 youth centers (happiness centers for all ages), 36 learning libraries, 1 music training center, 2 Bangkok Children's Museums, 1 Bangkok Local Museum and 1 Bangkok Art Gallery.

3.1.3 Royal Thai Police

The Border Patrol Police Headquarters, under the supervision of the Royal Thai Police, is another government agency that takes part in education provision in remote areas near the border, far from the prosperity of the city. The Border Patrol Police Headquarters has established Border Patrol Police Schools (or Tor Chor Dor schools) along the border in many provinces, mainly for children in pre-primary and primary schools, which later extended to secondary schools in some areas. The statistics of the Border Patrol Police Headquarters show that in the year 2024, the total number of Border Patrol Police Schools was 221, including 218 schools for early childhood and primary education and 2 schools for secondary education. As for the number of students, it shows that in the year 2024, there were 24,964 students consisting of 6,642 in early childhood education, 17,797 in primary education, 525 in lower secondary education. (Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education 2024)

The principle of Border Patrol Police Schools is to ‘Create Wisdom, Improve Quality of Life and Achieve Stability’. Most Tor Chor Dor students come from a family of farmers, and various groups such as Thai Buddhists, Thai Muslims, Thai Yai, and Thai hill tribes, including Karen, Lua, Hmong, Muser, Akha, and Chinese Ho. The teachers are Border Patrol Police (or Khru Tor Chor Dor) who are not specialized in the teaching profession. Accordingly, they need to enhance their pedagogical knowledge and teaching skills continuously, by developing educational qualifications and short-term training in technical teaching methods.

The Border Patrol Police School has provided opportunities to receive education for tens of thousands of children and youth in rural areas. Many students continue their studies until they graduate from university and others have a career that can earn enough money to support themselves and their families. Moreover, communities within each educational service area of the Border Patrol Police School have developed at the same time, making people have a better living. However, there are still many children and minorities in remote border areas who do not have access to education, partly due to the lack of agencies to manage education for them. The Border Patrol Police must continue to provide education for those children and people. (Border Patrol Police Headquarters, 2020)

3.2 Specialized Education by Agencies under Other Ministries

Besides the education provision in the normal curriculum, some government agencies provide specialized education which has different characteristics from the 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 education institutions under their supervision and design their curriculum for students at the upper secondary school level up to the master's degree level in both general and specialized vocational streams. Currently, some agencies provide specialized education, including the Ministry of Defense, 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 education institutions of these agencies have their own teachers with qualifications and professional expertise with real work experience who can transfer knowledge and practical exercises to learners directly. In addition, specialized educational agencies also have academic partnerships with institutions, universities and other educational agencies 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.

3.2.1 Military or Police Education and Training

The Ministry of Defense provides education to produce officers into the military career, consisting of two levels: (1) Education at a lower-than-degree level or upper-secondary level to produce non-commissioned officers, such as the Armed Forces Academies Preparatory School, the Royal Thai Army Band School, the Military Technical Training School, the Naval Rating School, the Navaminda Kasattriyadhiraj Royal Airforce Academy, the Air Technical Training School, the Naval Dockyard Apprentice School. Those who are interested in applying for the above institutions must have graduated from the lower or upper secondary level (Grades 9-12) or the vocational certificate level or equivalent, depending on the qualification required by each institution. (2) Education at bachelor's degree and graduate level. Graduates from the Armed Forces Academies Preparatory School will further their studies in the Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy, the Naval Academy, or the Royal Thai Air

Force Academy, according to their choices of a major subject at the Preparatory School. After graduation, they will become commissioned officers of the Royal Thai Army, the Royal Thai Navy, or the Royal Thai Air Force.

Apart from the Ministry of Defense, the Royal Thai Police also provides education for producing police officers through the Royal Police Cadet Academy which is an institute for higher education. This institute is only open to learners who have graduated directly from the Armed Forces Academies Preparatory School (Police Major). Those who have graduated from higher education according to the police cadet curriculum will be appointed as the rank of “Acting Police Sub-Lieutenant.”

3.2.2 Medical and Nurse Education

Medical and nurse education is provided by the faculty of medicine of public and private universities, including 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 and Kuakarun Faculty of Nursing under the Navamindradhiraj University, Praboromarajchanok Institute, and Srisavarindhira Institute of Nursing of the Thai Red Cross Society. Those interested in studying in the field of medicine and nursing must graduate from schools at the upper secondary level in science and mathematics.

Part 2: Education Participation

Education system in Thailand encourages private sector participation, including schools, enterprises, and religious institutions, to complement state education. Flexible learning options, vocational training, and cultural education promote inclusivity and lifelong learning.

The Thai government allows the private sector to play a role in providing education of all types and at all levels. The private sector mentioned here means non-governmental agencies that participate in education management and includes religious institutions of all religions. This is in accordance with the *Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand 2017* which stipulates that the State should encourage the participation of 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 education. Section 43 of the *National Education Act 1999 and the Amendment (Second edition) 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”.

Currently, the private sector has participated in educational management in many types and forms, which include formal and non-formal private education institutions under the supervision of the MOE, private higher education institutions, private enterprises, families (Home Schooling), and religious institutions. They are explained in detail as follows.

1. The Educational Management by Private Educational Institutions under the Ministry of Education

Private schools can ease the burden of the government on education management both informal and non-formal education, which allows the government to save a significant amount of budget on education investment. Presently, private schools are established and managed under the *National Education Act 1999 and Amended (Second edition) 2002* and the *Private Schools Act 2007, Amended (Second edition) 2011*, and under other regulations relating to the management of education both for formal and non-formal education.

The Private Schools Act 2007, Amended (Second edition) 2011 stipulates that a formal school shall have an executive committee, comprising licensee, manager, director, teachers' representative, parents' representatives, and qualified resource persons as members. Formal private schools at the basic education level conduct education on their own by using the curriculum specified by the MOE or other courses that have been certified from abroad in the case of international schools. The government agency that supervises private education under the MOE is the Office of the Private Education Commission (OPEC), under the Office of the Permanent Secretary (OPS). It is responsible for promoting, supporting, and supervising the operations of private basic education institutions, as well as

ensuring quality assurance and allocation of private education subsidies. In addition, there are also private vocational schools under the supervision of the Office of the Vocational Education Commission according to the Order of the Head of the National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO) No. 8/2016.

OPEC has defined private schools as private educational institutions that provide education, whether formal or non-formal, that are not higher education institutions under the law of private higher education institutions. According to the data in the 2024 academic year, there were 3,946 private schools that provide formal education with 1,956,528 students and 95,906 teachers. (Office of the Private Education Commission, 2024)

1.1 Formal Private School means a school that provides education by setting the objectives, curriculum, education methods, duration of study, measurement and assessment which are conditions for graduation. They are comprised of three types:

1) General Education refers to a private school that provides education according to the curriculum of the MOE at various levels, including pre-primary (pre-kindergarten, kindergarten), primary and secondary levels (lower secondary and upper secondary level schools). This type of school includes charity schools, special education schools, and welfare education schools.

2) Vocational Education refers to a private vocational school that provides education according to the Vocational Certificate Program B.E. 2552, which is under the supervision of the Office of the Vocational Education Commission. In the 2020 academic year, there were a total of

444 private vocational schools that provide formal education. (Office of the Vocational Education Commission, 2023).

3) International Education refers to a school that provides education using foreign curriculum or foreign curriculum that is adjusted to the course content or a self-made curriculum that is not provided by the MOE and uses foreign languages as a medium for teaching and learning to students. There is no limitation on race or religion for students who are interested in applying for schools and they should not be against the morals and security of the country there were 249 international schools that provide formal education with 77,734 students and 9,731 teachers. (Office of the Private Education Commission, 2024)

1.2 Non-formal Private School refers to a school that provides education with flexibility in setting objectives, forms, methods of education, duration of study, measurement and evaluation which is an important condition for graduation. It is divided into different categories: 1) Religious teaching, 2) Arts and sports, 3) Professional, 4) Tutoring, and 5) Life skills development. In addition, non-formal private schools include Pondok institutions (private Islamic schools with specific teachings for Islam), and the Center for Islamic Studies or Tadika (the mosque for teaching young children, open on the weekend or in the evening of weekdays, except Friday which is an Islamic holiday). (The teaching and learning using the course of Islamic studies Fardhuin for the mosque, 2005).

According to the Announcement of the Private Education Promotion Commission on Determination of Types and Characteristics of Schools, Instructional Management and

Curriculum of Non-Formal Schools, which was announced on November 10, 2022, the teaching and learning management of non-formal private schools can be divided as follows:

- 1) Teaching and learning management by teachers or instructors,
- 2) Teaching and learning management by using instructional media. Schools must have a prototype of teaching and learning that uses teachers,
- 3) Integrated teaching and learning management with teachers or instructors and learning materials,
- 4) Integrated teaching and teaching and learning through digital systems, following authorized curricula by delivering educational content via the internet or other networks, enabling students to learn from any location,
- 5) Teaching and learning management according to 1), 2), 3), and 4) may be arranged jointly among schools or with other agencies with quality standards.

Non-formal private school curriculum looks like this:

- 1) Curriculum specified by the MOE,
- 2) A prototype program that the OPEC prepares or organizes in collaboration with other agencies,
- 3) Courses that are taken from other agencies both domestic and international, curriculum provided by the school itself, and the curriculum developed by the school in conjunction with other schools or agencies which have been approved by the MOE.

According to the statistics of non-formal private education provided by the OPEC, in the academic year 2024, there were 7,865 non-formal private schools, consisting of 784,928 students and 31,365 instructors (Office of the Private Education Commission, 2024)

2. Educational Management by Private Higher Educational Institutions

The private higher education institutions in Thailand are established by *the Private Higher Education Institutions Act 2003 and Second edition 2007* which stipulates that private higher education institutions have the same rights and authority in providing education as public institutions. Therefore, private higher education institutions can operate and develop their own management systems with flexibility and independence, as well as have the freedom in providing education under the supervision of the university council. The main sources of funding for private higher education institutions come from tuition fees charged to students and institution owners or licensees of the institutions. The duty to supervise, promote and support the operation of private higher education institutions is under the responsibility of the MHESI.

Table 3.5 shows the survey results of the National Statistical Office on the number of students studying in private higher education institutions in the academic year 2024. There were 223,644 students in total. Looking at the trend over the last five years (2020–2024), the number of students increased significantly from the 2017 academic year. It shows that private sector involvement has provided an opportunity to study at the higher education level for those who have sufficient funds, without relying on only state higher education institutions.

Moreover, private education institutions have developed more diverse courses which respond to learners’ needs, making teaching more effective as well as meeting the needs of the labor market.

Table 3.5: Number of Students in Private Higher Education Institutions, in the Academic Years 2020-2024

Academic years	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Number of students in private higher education institutions	391,888	391,623	231,793	248,310	223,644

Source: Ministry of Higher Education, Sciences, Research and Innovation (2024)

3. Education Provision by Private Enterprises

Private enterprises can provide their own education at their own educational institutions or arrange education for their employees. As it can be seen from Section 12 of the *National Education Act 1999 and the Amendment (Second edition) 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 2002 and the Second Edition 2014* encourage private enterprises to contribute more to provide training for their employees. The MOE issued the *Ministerial Regulation on the Right of Enterprises to Provide Basic Education in Learning Centers 2004*, which gives

the enterprise the right to provide basic education 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, which include the number of teachers per student, the number of students per classroom, and the number of buildings. Learning centers may provide basic education in formal education, non-formal education, or informal education.

According to the ministerial regulation, the learning centers in the enterprise shall have the status of school or educational institution and be able to manage all matters relating to education on its own. The learning centers 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 2020*, dual vocational education is defined as 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. They need to have study plans, occupational training plans, work training, assessments and evaluations that focus on producing graduates to be technically and technologically

skilled. The private enterprise must cooperate on issues such as setting up a study plan, occupational training plans and work training plan with an 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 by the enterprise and the educational institution.

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 initiative emphasizes that students take responsibility for performing 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, can improve themselves in living in society, as well as learn the technological progress in the workforce. In addition, cooperation between enterprises and universities in cooperative education programs will contribute to ongoing academic cooperation between universities and other enterprises, including basic research cooperation and developmental research.

4. Education Provision by Families (Home-Schooling)

Home-schooling is a type of private education that demonstrates the involvement of the private sector. Education provision by family means providing basic education to learners within families or family groups. The State has provided protection and promotion of basic education by a family through laws, rules, and regulations. Section 54 of the *Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand 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 must 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 1999 and the Amendment (Second edition) 2002* stipulates that “... a person, family, community organization, private organization, 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 and effectively with quality, the MOE has issued a *Ministerial Regulation on the Right of Families to Provide Basic Education 2004*, which states that “Family” means parents or father or mother who is a ruling authority or guardian, and “Educational provider” means family or person who are assigned by family to provide education.

A family who would like to provide education needs to apply for permission and must conduct a 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. Home-schooling can be arranged at the kindergarten or pre-primary, primary, lower secondary and upper secondary levels. An educational provider or family must specify their purposes and provide education in line with the *Early Childhood Curriculum and the Basic Education Core Curriculum*. As for the learners with special needs, the provider

or family can manage learning contents that learners should learn following the Basic Education Core Curriculum.

The form of home-schooling provided in Thailand is an education provision in which parents or guardians take all responsibility or by the agreement between home and school. Parents may teach by themselves or organize the teaching by others or provide in the form of establishment of a learning center by one family or a group of families (some families may choose not to be a learning center).

5. Educational Provision by Religious Institutions

Educational provision by religious institutions is another type of private sector participation in education, which is supported by the law. According to Section 12 of the National Education Act 1999, “Other than State, private persons, local administration organizations, individuals, families, community organizations, private organizations, 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 can participate in educational provision for their believers and the general public. Educational provision by religious institutions in Thailand is found in all religions as follows:

5.1 Educational Provision by Buddhist Institutions

Educational provision by Buddhist institutions in Thailand presents three forms, *namely Phra Pariyatti Dhamma Education, Sangha University (Buddhist university), and Informal Education in Buddhism.*

5.1.1 Phra Pariyatti Dhamma Education

In 2019, the promulgation of the *Phra Pariyatti Dhamma Education Act 2019* made a change in monk education in four dimensions: 1) having better management because of the support of the law; 2) having effective management; 3) having a better quality of Phra Pariyatti Dhamma-Pali and General Division; and 4) having a budget allocated by the Government. In the academic year 2024, there were 407 Phra Pariyatti Dhamma General Education Schools, consisting of 31,207 students (National Office of Buddhism, 2024) Phra Pariyatti Dhamma Education is divided into three divisions:

- *Phra Pariyatti Dhamma Education, Pali Division* is the Buddhist education in the Pali language.

- *Phra Pariyatti Dhamma Education, Dhamma Division* is the Buddhist education in the Thai language. Dhamma Division is divided into Dhamma for monks and novices, and Dhamma for laymen and laywomen which has three levels, Primary, Intermediate, and Advanced. This type of education cannot be used in equivalency.

- *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 MOE, which is provided by many temples. These temples established 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.

5.1.2 Sangha University (Buddhist university)

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

5.1.3 Informal Education in Buddhism

An example of informal education in Buddhism is Buddhist Sunday School or Buddhist Sunday Study Center, whose name will be chosen by each temple. The school or center provides informal education on dhamma principles of Buddhism for children, youth, and the public to promote the propagation of Buddhism. The school teaches many subjects relating to Buddhism at the beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels.

5.2 Educational Provision by Islamic Institution

The Islamic 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.

The Private Education Statistics of the Office of the Private Education Commission shows the data in 2021 as follows: 1) there were 130 Islamic charity schools established by a foundation providing general education from early childhood to upper secondary education and Islamic studies, with 139,325 students and 6,870 teachers, and 2) there were 530 Islamic

boarding schools or Pondok which registered as Pondok Institute with 32,174 students and 1,448 teachers. These schools provide traditional Islamic education. Besides, there were 2,138 TADIKA schools or Mosque-Based Islamic Educational Centres, with 173,573 students and 15,501 teachers. Pondok are classified as non-formal schools (Office of the Private Education Commission, 2021).

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 an Islamic school nearby.

5.3 Educational Provision by Christian Institutions

Christian institutions play an important role in formal, non-formal, and informal education provision for Christian communities in Thailand. Regarding formal education, Christianity, both Roman Catholicism and Protestantism, have established schools that open for Christians and other religious believers. Regarding 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 the principles of Christianity.

5.4 Educational Provision by Sikh Institutions

There are three basic formal educational institutions for Sikhs in Thailand: 1) the Thai Sikh College, 2) the Thai Sikh International School, and 3) the Thai Sikh School. 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 the principles of Sikhism.

5.5 Educational Provision by Hindu Institutions

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



Table 3.6: Number of Students in Basic Education Institutions (Academic Years 2017-2024)

Levels of Education	Academic Years							
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Pre-Primary	2,688,796	2,579,190	2,529,838	2,385,396	2,302,944	2,283,772	2,162,487	2,079,382
Primary	4,761,465	4,752,205	4,744,155	4,695,591	4,689,583	4,617,114	4,610,539	4,504,391
Lower Secondary Education	2,287,269	2,282,379	2,265,875	2,256,037	2,280,460	2,260,304	2,549,946	2,583,343
Upper Secondary Education	1,899,635	1,890,362	1,866,158	1,910,279	1,981,225	2,023,524	2,478,019	2,446,829
- General	1,242,079	1,237,375	1,208,265	1,241,779	1,300,956	1,357,197	1,843,498	1,832,969
- Vocational	657,556	652,987	657,893	668,500	680,269	666,327	634,521	613,860
Total	11,637,165	11,504,136	13,272,184	13,157,582	13,235,347	13,208,238	11,800,991	11,613,945

Source: Office of the Secretariat of the Education Council, Ministry of Education. (2020; 2021; 2022)

Table 3.7: Number of Students in Basic Education Institutions under Local Administration Organizations
(Academic Years 2017-2024)

Levels of Education	Academic Years							
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Pre-Primary	1,003,592	916,435	970,135	877,082	828,358	778,977	756,288	731,568
Primary	429,930	307,359	314,862	314,962	315,466	309,310	308,467	305,783
Lower Secondary Education	169,444	167,978	165,464	165,622	166,706	166,571	164,053	169,382
Upper Secondary Education	78,099	76,906	74,711	77,806	82,654	87,241	90,082	91,327
- General	74,822	73,540	71,620	74,719	79,376	83,900	86,873	88,275
- Vocational	3,277	3,366	3,091	3,087	3,278	3,341	3,209	3,052
Total	1,681,065	1,468,678	1,525,172	1,513,278	1,475,838	1,429,340	1,318,890	1,298,060

Source: Office of the Secretariat of the Education Council, Ministry of Education. (2020; 2021; 2022; 2023)

Table 3.8: Percentage of Students, University Students in Each Education Level, Public and Private Educational Institution (Academic Years 2017-2024)

Levels of Education	Academic Years											
	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021		2022	
	State	Private	State	Private	State	Private	State	Private	State	Private	State	Private
Early Childhood	77.4	22.6	76.9	23.1	77.3	22.8	79.5	20.5	77.27	22.73	79.54	20.24
											68.70	31.30
											77.41	22.59
Elementary	77.1	22.9	77.0	23.0	76.8	23.3	76.9	23.2	76.75	23.25	76.85	23.15
											76.77	23.23
											77.17	22.83
Lower Secondary Education	85.4	14.6	85.0	15.1	84.5	15.1	84.9	15.1	84.88	15.12	84.93	15.07
											85.12	14.88
											86.87	13.13
Upper Secondary Education	80.3	19.8	79.8	20.2	79.7	20.4	79.4	20.6	79.63	20.37	79.43	20.57
											79.78	20.22
											91.96	8.04
-General	86.6	13.4	86.2	13.8	85.9	14.1	85.7	14.3				
-Vocational	68.6	31.4	67.9	32.1	67.7	32.3	66.7	33.4				
Higher Education	80.9	19.1	80.1	19.1	81.3	18.7	81.2	18.8	81.29	18.71	81.16	18.84
											76.18	23.82
Total	79.6	20.4	79.4	20.7	79.4	20.6	79.8	20.2	79.36	20.64	79.76	20.24
											77.63	22.37
											83.01	16.99

Source: Office of the Education Council, Ministry of Education (2023); Ministry of Education (2024)

Chapter 4

Access to Education and Student Success

Chapter 4 is divided into five parts:

Part 1: Access to Basic Education

Part 2: Access to Basic Education of Learners
with Special Needs

Part 3: Access to Higher Education

Part 4: Access to Non-Formal Education

Part 5: Student Success

Elaborate details regarding these topics follow below.

Part 1: Access to Basic Education

Thailand has achieved near-universal enrollment in basic education, but sustained efforts are needed to address retention challenges and improve participation in upper secondary and vocational pathways.

Ministerial Regulation on the Classification and Types of Basic Education 2003 (Ministry of Education, 2003) delineates the structure of basic education in Thailand, encompassing Early Childhood Education, Primary Education, Lower Secondary Education, and Upper Secondary Education. Early Childhood Education caters to children aged 3-5 or 6, preparing them for formal schooling. Primary Education includes grades 1 to 6 (Prathom 1-6), typically for children aged 6-11, focusing on foundational academic skills. Lower Secondary Education covers grades 7 to 9 (Matthayom 1-3), for ages 12-14, building on primary education. Upper Secondary Education, for ages 15-17 and grades 10 to 12 (Matthayom 4-6), is divided into General Education, which prepares students for higher education, and Vocational Education, which emphasizes practical skills and technical training. The following sections provide detailed information on access to basic education for Thai people.

1. Overall Access to Basic Education

Table 4.1 shows the ratio of students enrolled in basic education related to the population of children aged 3-17 years from the Academic Year 2018 to 2022. Over this five-year period, there is a consistent decline in the population within this age group, dropping from 11,969,925 in 2018 to 11,394,304 in 2022. Correspondingly, the number of students enrolled in basic education decreased from 11,504,136 in 2018 to 11,184,714 in 2022.

Despite these declines, the percentage of students per population has shown a positive trend, indicating slightly improved enrollment rates. The ratio increased from 96.11% in 2018 to 98.16% in 2022, suggesting that a slightly higher percentage of children in the 3-17 age group attend school each

year. This upward trend in the enrollment ratio, even amidst a decreasing child population, may reflect efforts to enhance school participation.

Table 4.1: Percentage of Students per Population
in Basic Education (Academic Years 2018-2022)

Academic Years	Population Aged 3-17 Years	Number of Students	Percentage of Students per Population Aged 3-17 Years
2018	11,969,925	11,504,136	96.11%
2019	11,818,772	11,406,026	96.51%
2020	11,671,965	11,247,303	96.36%
2021	11,530,641	11,254,212	97.60%
2022	11,394,304	11,184,714	98.16%

Source: Office of the Education Council (2023c)

The gradual improvement in the enrollment ratio, particularly the increase to 98.16% in 2022, indicates progress in expanding educational access and retention. This data suggest that a larger proportion of the child population is engaged in basic education, contributing to the overall educational landscape in Thailand.

Figure 4.1 illustrates the percentage of students per population by education level from the Academic Year 2018 to 2022. The data is segmented into early childhood, primary, lower secondary, general upper secondary, and vocational upper secondary education.

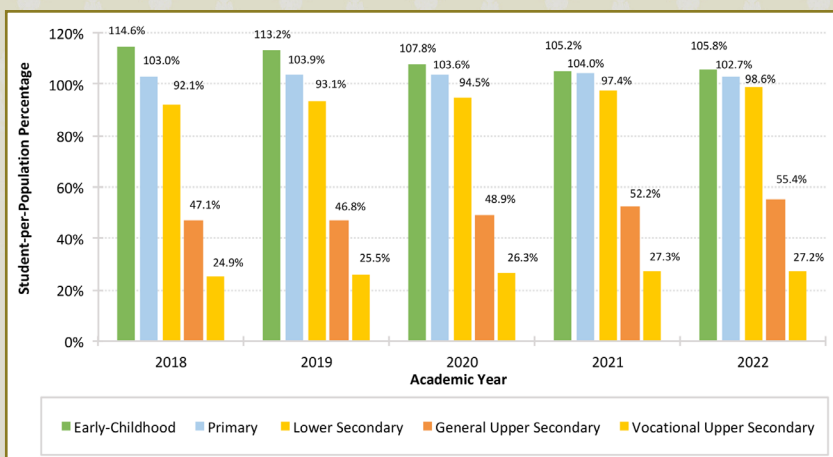


Figure 4.1: Percentage of Students per Population by Education Level (Academic Years 2018-2022)

Source: Office of the Education Council (2023c)

The ratio for early childhood education was consistently been above 100%, peaking at 114.6% in 2018 and slightly declining to 105.8% in 2022. This high ratio is due to the inclusion of children under three years old who join child development centers, which contribute to the enrollment figures. Primary education ratios remained relatively stable, fluctuating around 103-104%, indicating near-universal enrollment. These ratios exceed 100% because they include students slightly outside the typical age range of 6-11 years.

Lower secondary education ratios showed a gradual increase from 92.1% in 2018 to 97.4% in 2021, before a slight drop to 96.2% in 2022. This suggests improvements in retaining students through this education level. In contrast, the ratio for general upper secondary education remained low, increasing slightly from 24.9% in 2018 to 27.4% in 2022, indicating a smaller proportion of the population enrolled at this level.

Vocational upper secondary education ratios showed an upward trend from 47.1% in 2018 to 55.4% in 2022, suggesting a growing interest in vocational education among upper secondary students. Overall, while early childhood and primary education levels have high and stable enrollment ratios, secondary education, particularly at the general upper secondary level, has room for improvement. The increasing ratios for vocational education indicate a positive trend towards diversified educational pathways.

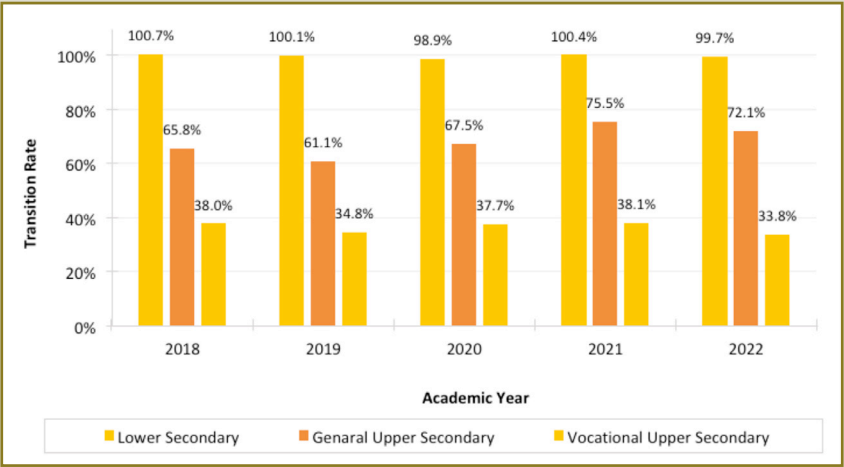


Figure 4.2: Transition Rate of Students in Basic Education (Academic Years 2018-2022)

Source: Office of the Education Council (2023c)

Figure 4.2 outlines the transition rates of students across various levels of basic education in Thailand from Academic Years 2018 to 2022, focusing on lower secondary, general upper secondary, and vocational upper secondary education.

The transition rate for lower secondary education appears to be consistently high throughout the period, averaging close to 100%. This might suggest that most students transition from primary to lower secondary education with minimal dropouts, indicating a strong continuation in the early stages of basic education.

In contrast, the transition rates for general upper secondary education show some variability, ranging from 61.1% in 2019 to a peak of 75.5% in 2021, before slightly decreasing to 72.1% in 2022. These fluctuations could indicate that factors such as student preferences, academic performance, or external socio-economic conditions might influence the progression to general upper secondary education.

The vocational upper secondary education exhibits the lowest transition rates, with some variability. Starting at 38.0% in 2018, rates decreased to 33.8% by 2022, with minor fluctuations in between. These lower and inconsistent rates might suggest a relatively lesser preference for vocational pathways compared to general upper secondary education, which could be influenced by perceptions of vocational education or its alignment with labor market needs.

2. Access to Early Childhood Education

Table 4.2: Percentage of Students per Population in Early Childhood Education (Academic Years 2018-2022)

Academic Years	Population Aged 3-5 Years	Number of Students	Percentage of Students per Population Aged 3-5 Years
2018	2,250,577	2,579,190	114.60%
2019	2,234,313	2,529,838	113.23%
2020	2,213,691	2,385,396	107.76%
2021	2,188,483	2,302,944	105.23%
2022	2,158,424	2,283,772	105.81%

Source: Office of the Education Council (2023c)

Table 4.2 presents the ratio of students enrolled in early childhood education related to the population of children aged 3-5 years from the Academic Years 2018 to 2022. During this period, the population of children in this age group steadily declined from 2,250,577 in 2018 to 2,158,424 in 2022, and the number of students enrolled in early childhood education also decreased from 2,579,190 to 2,283,772. Despite these declines, the percentage of students per population remained consistently above 100%, peaking at 114.60% in 2018 and gradually decreasing to 105.81% in 2022. This high percentage might suggest that early childhood education programs are attracting children slightly outside the typical age range of 3-5 years. The data indicate that early childhood education in Thailand maintains high enrollment rates, reflecting the importance and accessibility of these programs.

3. Access to Primary Education

Table 4.3: Percentage of Students per Population
in Primary Education (Academic Years 2018-2022)

Academic Years	Population Aged 6-11 Years	Number of Students	Percentage of Students per Population Aged 6-11 Years
2018	4,613,244	4,752,205	103.01%
2019	4,567,838	4,744,155	103.86%
2020	4,532,216	4,695,591	103.60%
2021	4,507,425	4,689,583	104.04%
2022	4,495,927	4,617,114	102.70%

Source: Office of the Education Council (2023c)

Table 4.3 presents the ratio of students enrolled in primary education related to the population of children aged 6-11 years from the Academic Year 2018 to 2022. Over this period, the population of children in this age group has shown minor fluctuations, starting at 4,613,244 in 2018 and slightly decreasing to 4,495,927 in 2022. Similarly, the number of students enrolled in primary education has also varied slightly, from 4,752,205 in 2018 to 4,617,114 in 2022. Despite these fluctuations, the percentage of students per population remained stable and above 100%, indicating that primary education programs might be enrolling children slightly outside the typical age range of 6-11 years. The consistently high percentages, starting at 103.01% in 2018 and slightly decreasing to 102.70% in 2022,

suggest robust participation rates in primary education. These trends imply that primary education programs are effectively reaching a large proportion of the child population, highlighting the importance and accessibility of these programs.



Source: True (2023)

4. Access to Lower Secondary Education

Table 4.4: Percentage of Students per Population in Lower Secondary Education (Academic Years 2018-2022)

Academic Years	Population Aged 12-14 Years	Number of Students	Percentage of Students per Population Aged 12-14 Years
2018	2,479,114	2,282,379	92.06%
2019	2,434,015	2,265,875	93.09%
2020	2,388,029	2,256,037	94.47%
2021	2,341,329	2,280,460	97.40%
2022	2,291,461	2,260,304	98.64%

Source: Office of the Education Council (2023c)

Table 4.4 presents the ratio of students enrolled in lower secondary education relative to the population of children aged 12-14 years from the Academic Year 2018 to 2022. During this period, the population of children in this age group declined from 2,479,114 in 2018 to 2,291,461 in 2022, while the number of students enrolled fluctuated slightly, from 2,282,379 in 2018 to 2,260,304 in 2022. Despite these fluctuations, the percentage of students per population increased from 92.06% in 2018 to 98.64% in 2022, suggesting improved enrollment rates and better retention in lower secondary education. This trend indicates that lower secondary education programs are effectively reaching a higher proportion of the population aged 12-14 years, despite the declining population.

5. Access to Upper Secondary Education

Table 4.5: Percentage of Students per Population in Overall Upper Secondary Education (Academic Years 2018-2022)

Academic Years	Population Aged 15-17 Years	Number of Students	Percentage of Students per Population Aged 15-17 Years
2018	2,626,990	1,890,362	71.96%
2019	2,582,606	1,866,158	72.26%
2020	2,538,029	1,910,279	75.27%
2021	2,493,404	1,981,225	79.46%
2022	2,448,492	2,023,524	82.64%

Source: Office of the Education Council (2023c)

Table 4.5 presents the ratio of students enrolled in overall upper secondary education relative to the population of children aged 15-17 years from the Academic Year 2018 to 2022. During this period, the population of children in this age group declined from 2,626,990 in 2018 to 2,448,492 in 2022. Correspondingly, the number of students enrolled in upper secondary education increased from 1,890,362 in 2018 to 2,023,524 in 2022. Despite the declining population, the percentage of students per population increased from 71.96% in 2018 to 82.64% in 2022, suggesting improved enrollment rates in upper secondary education. This trend indicates that upper secondary education programs are effectively reaching a higher proportion of the

population aged 15-17 years, reflecting better access and retention in this educational level.

5.1 Access to General Upper Secondary Education

Table 4.6: Percentage of Students per Population in General Upper Secondary Education)
(Academic Years 2018-2022)

Academic Years	Population Aged 15-17 Years	Number of Students	Percentage of Students per Population Aged 15-17 Years
2018	2,626,990	1,237,375	47.10%
2019	2,582,606	1,208,265	46.78%
2020	2,538,029	1,241,779	48.93%
2021	2,493,404	1,300,956	52.18%
2022	2,448,492	1,357,197	55.43%

Source: Office of the Education Council (2023c)

Table 4.6 shows that the ratio of students enrolled in general upper secondary education related to the population of children aged 15-17 years increased from 47.10% in 2018 to 55.43% in 2022. The population of children aged 15-17 years declined from 2,626,990 in 2018 to 2,448,492 in 2022, while the number of students enrolled in general upper secondary education increased from 1,237,375 in 2018 to 1,357,197 in 2022. This indicates a positive trend in enrollment for general upper secondary education, suggesting improvements in access or retention.

In comparison, overall upper secondary education, which includes both general and vocational streams, saw enrollment rise from 71.96% to 82.64% over the same period, with the number of students increasing from 1,890,362 to 2,023,524. This higher percentage implies a significant role for vocational education in the upper secondary landscape. The data suggest that while general upper secondary education has improved, overall figures are bolstered by vocational education, reflecting a comprehensive approach in Thailand that includes both academic and vocational pathways to cater to a diverse student population.

5.2 Access to Vocational Upper Secondary Education

Table 4.7: Percentage of Students per Population in Vocational Upper Secondary Education (Academic Years 2018-2022)

Academic Years	Population Aged 15-17 Years	Number of Students	Percentage of Students per Population Aged 15-17 Years
2018	2,626,990	652,987	24.86%
2019	2,582,606	657,893	25.47%
2020	2,538,029	668,500	26.34%
2021	2,493,404	680,269	27.28%
2022	2,448,492	666,327	27.21%

Source: Office of the Education Council (2023c)

Table 4.7 shows the ratio of students enrolled in vocational upper secondary education relative to the population of children aged 15-17 years from the Academic Year 2018 to 2022. During this period, the population of children in this age group decreased from 2,626,990 in 2018 to 2,448,492 in 2022. Correspondingly, the number of students enrolled in vocational upper secondary education increased from 652,987 in 2018 to 666,327 in 2022. The percentage of students per population rose from 24.86% in 2018 to 27.21% in 2022, indicating a gradual increase in enrollment in vocational education.

5.3 Comparison of Accesses to General and Vocational Upper Secondary Education

Comparing vocational upper secondary education to general upper secondary education reveals significant differences in enrollment patterns. The enrollment ratios for vocational education are notably lower than those for general education, which saw percentage rising from 47.10% to 55.43% over the same period. Despite this, vocational education shows a consistent upward trend, suggesting a growing interest in vocational pathways.

While general upper secondary education continues to attract a larger proportion of students aged 15-17 years, vocational upper secondary education is steadily gaining traction. This reflects an increasing diversification in educational preferences, with vocational education playing a crucial role in catering to students seeking practical and technical skills. The data underscore the importance of supporting both educational streams to meet the varied needs of the student population.



Source: Udonthani Vocational College (2021)

Part 2: Access to Basic Education of Learners with Special Needs

Inclusive education policies are making strides in supporting disadvantaged and special-needs learners, but targeted interventions are critical to ensure equitable access and retention.

Thailand (2017) addresses the needs of learners with special needs by embedding their rights into the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand 2017, ensuring equal protection under the law, and mandating the provision of accessible and quality education. Section 27 prohibits discrimination and mandates the elimination of barriers to rights and liberties. Section 54 guarantees twelve years of free quality education, emphasizing support for children with disabilities and those facing financial difficulties. Section 71 highlights the state's duty to assist and protect vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities, ensuring they receive necessary care and protection. These sections collectively reflect Thailand's commitment to inclusivity and equality in education, ensuring all learners receive the support they need.

This part will explore the accessibility of basic education for underprivileged students and those with disabilities in Thailand.

1. Access to Education for Disadvantaged Students

Table 4.8: Number of Students by Types of Disadvantages and Education Levels (Academic Year 2022)

Types of Disadvantages	Education Levels				
	Early Childhood	Primary	Lower Secondary	Upper Secondary	Total
Children forced into labor	1	10	11	2	24
Children in prostitution	0	1	5	1	7
Abandoned children	126	796	680	370	1,972
Children in juvenile detention and protection centers	2	77	87	25	191
Homeless children	15	52	14	11	92
Drug-affected children	2	21	15	5	43
Minority groups	269	1,291	794	553	2,907
Children with incarcerated parents	2	25	13	23	63
Impoverished children	484,348	1,899,588	895,733	331,116	3,610,785
Children with drug-related problems	1	26	39	25	91
Orphans	347	2,772	1,347	914	5,380
Children working to support themselves and their families	5	124	481	652	1,262
Children with more than one type of disadvantage	1,649	6,230	3,199	710	11,788
Total	486,767	1,911,013	902,418	334,407	3,634,605

Source: Office of the Education Council (2023c)

Table 4.8 categorizes students across various types of disadvantages and their distribution across different education levels in Thailand for the academic year 2022. The most significant group is impoverished children, totaling 3,610,785 students, highlighting the extensive impact of socio-economic challenges on educational access. Children facing multiple types of disadvantages also represent a critical concern, with 11,788 students affected. Other notable groups include 1,972 abandoned children and 2,907 students from minority groups, pointing to issues related to family stability and equal educational opportunities for ethnic and cultural minorities. Additionally, 191 children are in juvenile detention and protection centers, illustrating the intersection of the juvenile justice system and education.

Table 4.9: Percentage of Disadvantaged Students per Overall Student Enrollment by Education Levels (Academic Year 2022)

Education Levels	Number of Disadvantaged Students	Number of Overall Students	Percentage of Disadvantaged Students per Overall Enrolled Students
Early Childhood	486,767	2,283,772	21.31%
Primary	1,911,013	4,617,114	41.39%
Lower Secondary	902,418	2,260,304	39.92%
Upper Secondary	334,407	2,023,524	16.53%
Total	3,634,605	11,184,714	32.50%

Source: Office of the Education Council (2023c)

Table 4.9 provides a breakdown of the percentage of disadvantaged students within the overall enrolled student population across different education levels. Disadvantaged students constitute 21.31% of early childhood education, 41.39% of primary education, 39.92% of lower secondary education, and 16.53% of upper secondary education. Overall, 32.50% of students across all education levels are classified as disadvantaged. This significant proportion underscores the urgent need for targeted interventions and support systems, particularly at the primary and lower secondary levels, where the concentration of disadvantaged students is highest.

There appears to be a substantial number of disadvantaged students within the Thai education system, emphasizing the necessity for comprehensive support systems and targeted educational programs. Addressing the high ratios of disadvantaged students, especially at the primary and lower secondary levels, is crucial to ensuring equitable access to education and providing the necessary support to mitigate the effects of their disadvantages.

2. Inclusive Education for Students with Disabilities

Table 4.10: Number of Inclusive Education Students by Types of Disability and Education Levels
(Academic Year 2022)

Types of Disability	Education Levels				
	Early Childhood	Primary	Lower Secondary	Upper Secondary	Total
Visual impairments	364	872	315	199	1,750
Hearing impairments	722	1,730	891	682	4,025
Intellectual disabilities	8,522	13,276	5,736	1,910	29,444
Physical/health impairments	3,113	3,493	1,188	456	11,150
Learning disabilities	436	238,484	56,682	3,920	299,522
Speech/language impairments	349	1,770	188	430	2,737
Behavioral/emotional problems	4,595	5,380	1,291	568	11,834
Autism	220	4,335	979	249	5,783
Multiple disabilities	5,514	6,029	1,525	430	13,498
Total	486,767	1,911,013	902,418	334,407	3,634,605

Source: Office of the Education Council (2023c)

Table 4.10 presents a detailed breakdown of students with disabilities across various education levels, categorizing disabilities into nine types. Learning disabilities are the most prevalent, affecting 299,522 students, with a significant concentration in primary education (238,484 students). Intellectual disabilities follow, impacting 29,444 students, predominantly in primary education (13,276 students). Multiple disabilities involve 13,498 students, again mainly in primary education (6,029 students). Visual and hearing impairments affect fewer students but are consistently present across all education levels, while behavioral/emotional problems and autism show notable figures, particularly in primary education, indicating specific support needs at this crucial stage.



Source: Equitable Education Fund (2022)

Table 4.11: Percentage of Students with Disabilities in Inclusive Education per Overall Enrolled Students by Education Levels (Academic Year 2022)

Education Levels	Number of Disadvantaged Students	Number of Overall Students	Percentage of Disadvantaged Students per Overall Enrolled Students
Early Childhood	23,835	2,283,772	1.04%
Primary	275,369	4,617,114	5.96%
Lower Secondary	68,795	2,260,304	3.04%
Upper Secondary	8,844	2,023,524	0.44%
Total	376,843	11,184,714	3.37%

Source: Office of the Education Council (2023c)

Table 4.11 complements this by showing the percentage of students with disabilities related to the overall enrolled students population at each educational level. The total number of students with disabilities is 376,843, constituting 3.37% of the total enrolled students (11,184,714). The highest percentage of students with disabilities is in primary education (5.96%), indicating a significant focus on early intervention and support. Early childhood education has a lower percentage (1.04%), which might reflect underdiagnosis or later entry into the education system. Lower secondary education shows a moderate percentage (3.04%), while upper secondary drops to 0.44%, possibly due to dropout rates or transitions out of the formal education system.

The distribution of disabilities among students and their relative proportion within the educational system underscore the need for targeted interventions, especially in primary education, where the prevalence and impact of disabilities are most pronounced. These data emphasize the importance of supportive educational frameworks to accommodate diverse learning needs and ensure equitable educational opportunities for all students.

Part 3: Access to Higher Education

Higher education in Thailand demonstrates stability and growth in advanced degrees, though participation remains limited for students with disabilities.

Table 4.12: Number of Higher Education Students by Education Levels (Academic Years 2018-2022)

Education Levels	Academic Years				
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Undergraduate and below	2,025,251	1,947,219	1,919,260	1,762,617	1,947,875
Graduate Diploma	9,707	8,771	9,150	10,363	10,749
Master’s Degree	109,268	95,461	101,955	100,458	98,428
Higher Graduate Diploma	1,792	1,544	1,228	1,299	698
Doctorate Degree	25,645	23,929	26,656	27,955	28,887
Total	2,171,663	2,076,924	2,058,249	1,902,692	2,086,637

Source: Office of the Education Council (2023b, 2023c)

Table 4.12 provides a breakdown of higher education students by education level over five academic years from 2018 to 2022. The data show that the majority of students enrolled in undergraduate and below programs, with numbers ranging from 2,025,251 in 2018 to 1,947,875 in 2022. Master’s degree enrollments remained relatively stable, with slight fluctuations, reaching 98,428 in 2022. Doctorate degree enrollments gradually increased from 25,645 in 2018 to 28,887 in 2022. The table indicates a general trend of stability in higher education enrollments across different levels, with a notable dip in 2021 due to potential impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

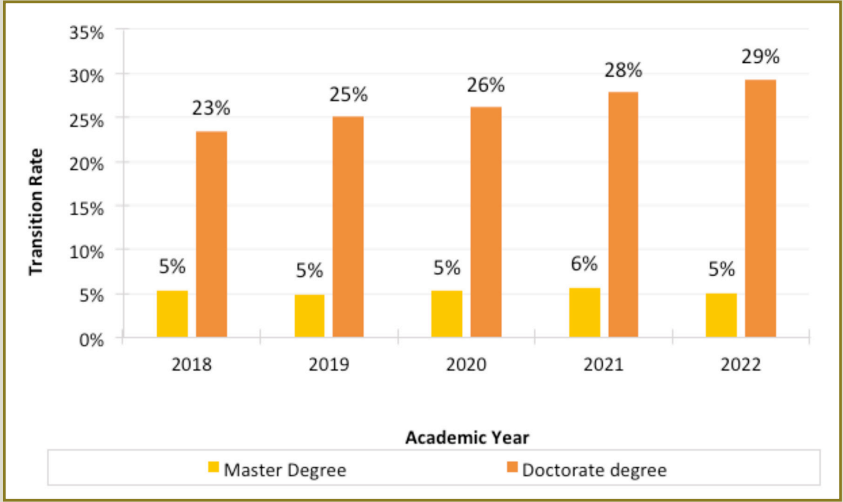


Figure 4.3: Transition Rate of Students in Higher Education (Academic Year 2018-2022)

Source: Adapted from Office of the Education Council (2023b, 2023c)

The data depicted in Figure 4.3 reflects the transition rates of students in higher education from undergraduate to master's programs and from master's to doctoral programs over a five-year period from 2018 to 2022. Throughout this period, the transition rate from undergraduate to master's programs remained relatively stable, primarily hovering around 5% with a slight increase to 6% in 2021, before reverting to 5% in 2022. This consistency suggests that the proportion of undergraduates pursuing master's degrees has not significantly changed, possibly



Source: Chulalongkorn University (n.d.)

indicating steady enrollment patterns or consistent academic and professional motivations among students

In contrast, the transition from master's to doctoral programs shows a gradual and consistent upward trend, rising from 23% in 2018 to 29% in 2022. This incremental increase may reflect a growing interest or perceived value in pursuing doctoral-level education, potentially driven by factors such as increased availability of doctoral programs, enhancements in funding opportunities, or broader shifts in employment markets favoring higher-level qualifications. These trends underscore important dynamics in higher education progression, with potential implications for educational policy and university resource allocation.

Equitable provision of higher education for individuals with disabilities is a priority in Thailand, as demonstrated by

the Notification of the Committee for the Promotion of Education for Persons with Disabilities (2018). These guidelines establish criteria, rates, and lists of educational subsidies for persons with disabilities at the higher education level. They ensure that higher education institutions provide necessary financial support and accommodations to students with disabilities. By outlining eligibility requirements, types of support, and application procedures, the document reflects Thailand’s commitment to promoting inclusive education. This initiative underscores the nation’s value placed on higher education for individuals with disabilities, aiming to ensure equitable access and opportunities for academic success.

Table 4.13: Number of Students with Disabilities in Higher Education (Academic Years 2018-2021)

Types of Disabilities	Academic Years			
	2018	2019	2020	2021
Visual impairments	1,407	438	459	1,303
Hearing and speech/language impairments	85	14	442	434
Intellectual disabilities	114	88	586	74
Physical/health impairments	1,708	1,262	352	499
Learning disabilities	111	82	52	37
Behavioral/emotional problems	90	174	141	635
Autism	144	289	-	99
Multiple disabilities	153	42	-	83
Total	3,812	2,389	2,032	3,164

Source: Office of the Education Council (2023b); Ministry of Higher Education Science Research and Innovation (n.d.a)

Table 4.13 presents the number of students with disabilities in higher education from 2018 to 2021. The data reveal fluctuations across different types of disabilities. For instance, students with visual impairments peaked at 1,407 in 2018 and then dropped to 1,303 in 2021. Hearing and speech/language impairments showed a significant increase in 2020 (442 students) compared to other years. Notably, students with behavioral/emotional problems rose sharply to 635 in 2021 from 90 in 2018. The numbers for intellectual disabilities and physical/health impairments also showed considerable variations, with intellectual disabilities peaking at 586 in 2020.

The increasing numbers in some disability categories over the years might reflect better detection and reporting mechanisms, as well as possibly improved accommodations and awareness in higher education institutions. The overall decline in higher education students suggests potential areas for policy intervention to boost enrollment rates, while the variability in disability-specific enrollments underscores the need for targeted support services to ensure that all students have the opportunity to succeed in their educational pursuits.

Part 4: Access to Non-Formal Education

Thailand's non-formal education system ensures lifelong learning through diverse, inclusive programs, prioritizing accessibility, skill development, and support for marginalized communities.

Thailand broadens educational access beyond traditional formal schooling by offering non-formal education opportunities to those outside the typical academic framework. This inclusive approach embraces learners of all genders, ages, and backgrounds, enabling them to acquire knowledge and qualifications in settings that prioritize life skills, occupational competencies, and other vital knowledge for daily life. This commitment to lifelong learning is evident in the diverse array of non-formal education programs detailed in the subsequent information.



Source: Phakdee Chumphon District Non-Formal and Informal Education Center (2015)

Table 4.14: Number of Students in Non-Formal Education by Education Types and Levels (Academic Year 2022)

Education Types/Levels	Number of Students
Literacy Promotion	57,839
Education Provision in Highland Area	34,246
General Education (Office of the Non-Formal and Informal Education)	849,205
- Primary Level	65,655
- Lower Secondary Level	318,843
- Upper Secondary Level	464,707
Vocational Education	1,968,863
- Special Curriculums (Office of the Vocational Education Commission)	624,916
- Private Curriculums (Office of the Private Education Commission)	654,416
- Short Vocational Courses (Bangkok Metropolitan Administration)	9,800
- Community Colleges' Short Courses (Office of the Higher Education Commission)	9,389
- Short Training Courses (Office of the Non-Formal and Informal Education)	670,342
Total	2,910,153

Source: Office of the Education Council (2023c)

Table 4.14 provides detailed data on the number of students engaged in various non-formal education programs across Thailand for the academic year 2022. This table highlights the government’s initiatives to meet diverse educational needs. The general education program, managed by the Office of the Non-Formal and Informal Education, shows significant participation with 849,205 students across different levels, underscoring a strong commitment to accessible education. A notable portion of these students are in the upper secondary level with 464,707 participants. Vocational education records the highest number of participants at 1,968,863, indicating a strong emphasis on skill-based training through specialized and private curriculums. Programs targeting literacy promotion and education in highland areas show engagement levels of 57,839 and 34,246 students, respectively, reflecting efforts to reach marginalized communities.

Table 4.15: Number of Students in Non-Formal Education by Jurisdiction (Academic Years 2018-2022)

Jurisdiction	Academic Years				
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Office of Private Education Commission	1,529,312	1,494,482	1,184,707	1,210,635	1,210,635
Office of Vocational Education Commission (Special Program)	559,686	525,137	351,976	389,583	566,104
Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation	25,285	25,285	20,498	23,786	13,690
Bangkok Metropolitan Administration	19,428	19,641	12,297	4,824	-
Total	2,133,711	2,064,545	1,569,478	1,628,828	1,790,429

Source: Office of the Education Council (2023b); Office of the Permanent Secretary for Education (2022, 2023)

Table 4.15 tracks the five-year dynamics (2018-2022) of student numbers in non-formal education by jurisdiction, providing insights into the shifts within this sector. The figures reveal a general reduction in participants under the Office of Private Education Commission, decreasing from 1,529,312 in 2018 to 1,210,635 in 2022, possibly due to changes in educational preferences or economic challenges. Conversely, the Office of Vocational Education Commission shows a rebound to 566,104 participants in 2022 after earlier decreases, suggesting revitalized interest in vocational education. The Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation, along with

the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, also display fluctuating figures, emphasizing the importance of flexible strategies to sustain or enhance student engagement.

Table 4.16: Number of Learners in Non-Formal Private Education Institutions by Education Types (Academic Year 2022)

Education Types	Number of Learners
Religious Teaching	695
Arts and Sports	9,630
Profession	294,131
Tutoring	92,544
Life Skill Building	27,957
Pondok	37,372
Tadika	192,087
Total	654,416

Source: Office of the Education Council (2023c)

Table 4.16 illustrates the diversity of non-formal private education in Thailand for the academic year 2022, with a strong focus on vocational training as evidenced by 294,131 learners enrolling in profession-related programs. Early childhood education also shows robust participation with 192,087 learners in Tadika programs, alongside 37,372 participants in Pondok education, which includes traditional Islamic teachings. Fewer learners engage in specialized programs such as Religious Teaching and Life Skill Building, attracting 695 and 27,957

students respectively, while Arts and Sports, and Tutoring record moderate numbers at 9,630 and 92,544.

In conclusion, Thailand’s approach to non-formal education demonstrates its ongoing efforts to provide diverse educational opportunities beyond traditional schooling. By offering a range of programs from vocational training to religious education, the country addresses the varied needs of its population, ensuring that learning opportunities are available for individuals across different backgrounds and interests. The data from Tables 4.14, 4.15, and 4.16 reflect the adaptability and responsiveness of the educational system to societal needs and economic fluctuations, highlighting the government’s commitment to enhancing educational accessibility and promoting lifelong learning within the community.

Part 5: Student Success

While educational attainment is improving, declining performance in international benchmarks highlights the need for reforms to enhance foundational skills and workforce readiness.

In recent years, Thailand has made significant strides in enhancing the quality and accessibility of education across various levels, reflecting the nation’s commitment to educational development. The following sections explore student performance in international assessments, trends in educational attainment, and employment outcomes by education level. These insights provide a comprehensive view of

educational outcomes in Thailand, including student achievement in foundational subjects, graduation and retention metrics, and the role of educational attainment in employment success. Collectively, this analysis highlights areas of progress and identifies critical challenges to ensure the learning and workforce readiness of the Thai population.



Source: Puey Ungphakorn Institute for Economic Research (2022)

1. Learning Achievement

The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), conducted by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), is a global evaluation measuring the knowledge and skills of 15-year-old students in mathematics, reading, and science. First launched in 2000, PISA occurs every three years and aims to assess students' ability to apply their learning to real-life situations, providing insights into the effectiveness of education systems worldwide. Thailand has

participated in PISA since 2001, allowing educators and policymakers to gauge Thai students’ performance compared to international benchmarks.

The PISA 2022 results (OECD, 2023) for Thailand reveal significant insights into the academic performance of Thai students across mathematics, reading, and science. Figures 4.4, 4.5, and 4.6 illustrate both the comparative standing of Thai students internationally and the concerning downward trend in their scores over recent years.

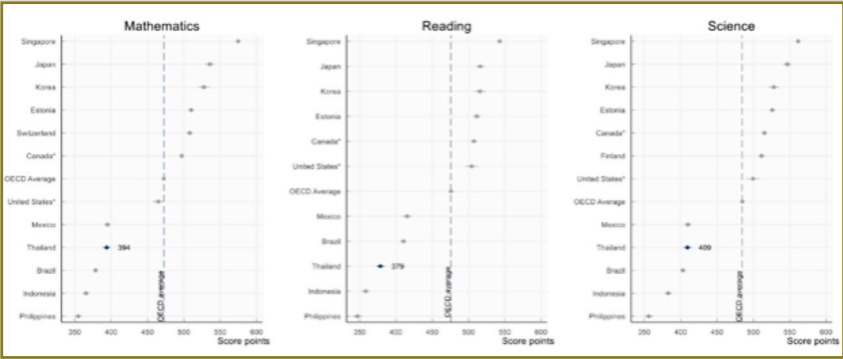


Figure 4.4: Mean Performance in Mathematics, Reading, and Science in PISA 2022

Source: Office of the Education Council (2023)

Figure 4.4 reveals that Thailand’s PISA 2022 scores in mathematics (394), reading (379), and science (409) are significantly below the OECD average, indicating weaker performance across core subjects compared to many peer countries. Thailand’s scores place it among the lower-performing nations in this sample, with results lagging behind countries like Mexico, Brazil, and Indonesia, and far from the top

scores achieved by countries such as Singapore, Japan, and Korea. This performance suggests a gap in foundational academic skills among Thai students, pointing to potential challenges in preparing students for complex problem-solving and critical thinking at an international standard.

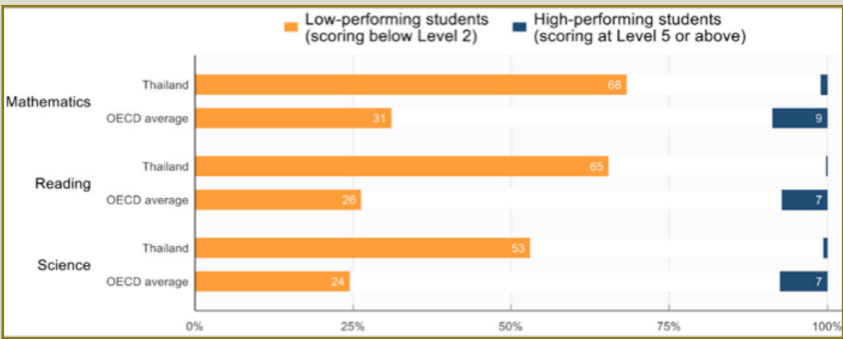


Figure 4.5: Top Performers and Low-Performing Students in Mathematics, Reading and Science in PISA 2022

Source: OECD (2023)

Figure 4.5 highlights a significant performance gap between Thai students and the OECD average in mathematics, reading, and science. A large proportion of Thai students are low performers, with 68% scoring below Level 2 in mathematics, 65% in reading, and 53% in science—each substantially higher than the OECD averages (31%, 26%, and 24%, respectively). High performers are notably scarce in Thailand, with only 1% of students reaching Level 5 or above in mathematics and science, and virtually none in reading, compared to OECD averages of 9% in mathematics and 7% in both reading and science. This distribution indicates that a majority of Thai students struggle to achieve foundational academic skills, with very few excelling

at advanced levels, underscoring a need for interventions to improve both baseline competencies and opportunities for high achievement.

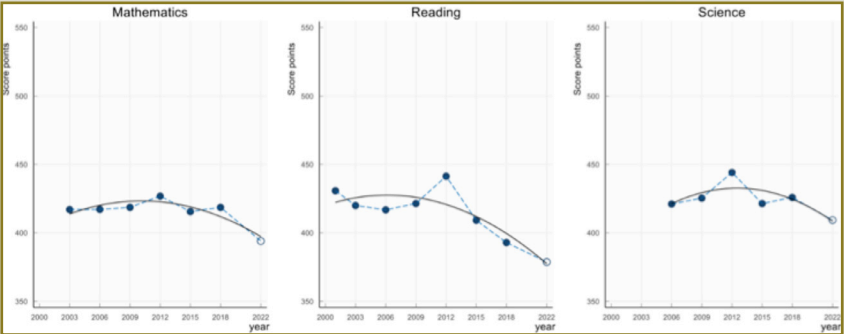


Figure 4.6: Performance Trends in Mathematics, Reading, and Science since PISA 2000

Source: OECD (2023)

Figure 4.6 shows a concerning decline in Thai students’ performance in mathematics, reading, and science over recent PISA cycles. While scores in all three subjects remained relatively stable until around 2012, there has been a consistent and significant drop since then, with 2022 marking the lowest scores observed across the period. Mathematics scores, which were steady until 2015, have since declined sharply. Reading, after peaking in 2012, has seen the steepest decrease, indicating substantial challenges in literacy. Science also followed a similar pattern, with scores dropping after 2012 and returning to early 2000s levels by 2022. These trends highlight a critical regression in foundational academic skills among Thai students, emphasizing the need for immediate educational reforms to address declining outcomes.

In conclusion, the PISA 2022 results underscore critical areas of concern for Thailand's education system. The consistently low scores across mathematics, reading, and science, combined with a significant proportion of students failing to reach basic proficiency, highlight a pressing need to strengthen foundational skills among Thai students. The downward trend since 2012 emphasizes the urgency of addressing these challenges to reverse the decline in academic performance. For Thailand to improve its standing and better prepare its students for the demands of a globalized world, it will be essential to implement targeted interventions that not only raise baseline competencies but also foster higher-level critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

2. Educational Attainment

Educational attainment in Thailand has seen notable improvements over recent years, with increasing average years of schooling and a focus on elevating graduation and retention rates across all education levels. Data from the Office of the Education Council (OEC) and the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research, and Innovation (MHESI) highlight trends in primary, secondary, and higher education, revealing both progress and persistent challenges. By examining metrics such as average years of schooling, graduation rates across education levels, and retention trends, this analysis aims to provide a comprehensive view of Thailand's efforts to enhance educational outcomes and identify areas for further development.

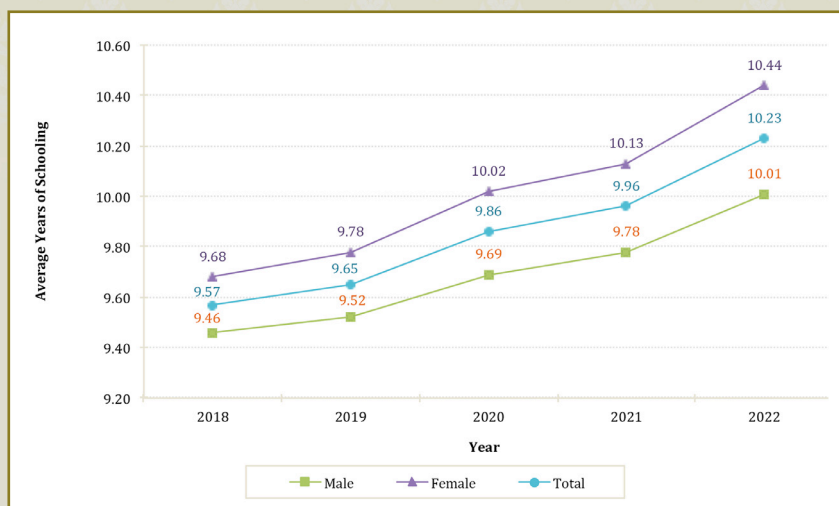


Figure 4.7: Average Years of Schooling of Thai People Aged 15-59 Years from 2018 to 2022

Source: Office of the Education Council (2023a)

Figure 4.7 shows the average years of schooling for Thai people aged 15-59 from 2018 to 2022. The overall trend is an upward trajectory for all groups, with males increasing from 9.46 years in 2018 to 10.01 years in 2022. Females show a steady rise from 9.68 years in 2018 to 10.44 years in 2022, consistently outpacing their male counterparts. The total average years of schooling also follow this positive trend, climbing from 9.57 years in 2018 to 10.23 years in 2022, highlighting overall improvements in educational attainment.

Table 4.17: Rate and Number of Graduates in Basic Education
(Academic Years 2017-2021)

Education Levels	Academic Years				
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Primary					
- Number of final-year students	798,905	793,918	787,971	774,743	776,546
- Number of the graduates	779,146	779,378	610,728	768,212	765,395
Rate of graduates	97.5%	98.2%	77.5%	99.2%	98.6%
Lower Secondary					
- Number of final-year students	731,779	726,618	728,966	726,270	742,891
- Number of the graduates	648,557	704,152	667,201	619,551	665,914
Rate of graduates	88.6%	96.9%	91.5%	85.3%	89.6%
General Upper Secondary					
- Number of final-year students	401,542	400,896	379,936	379,936	398,197
- Number of the graduates	368,407	367,665	357,018	361,736	371,546
Rate of graduates	91.7%	91.7%	94.0%	95.2%	93.3%
Vocational Upper Secondary					
- Number of final-year students	217,379	213,382	213,707	213,707	230,134
- Number of the graduates	126,927	114,934	143,696	152,032	163,290
Rate of graduates	58.4%	53.9%	67.2%	71.1%	71.0%

Source: Office of the Education Council (2023b, 2023c)

Table 4.17 presents the rate and number of graduates in basic education from 2017 to 2021. The primary education level consistently maintains a high graduate rate, peaking at 99.2% in 2020. However, a significant drop is observed in 2019 with a graduate rate of 77.5%, which warrants further investigation. Lower secondary education shows fluctuations in graduate rates, with a notable low of 85.3% in 2020 and a peak of 96.9% in 2018. General upper secondary education maintained relatively stable graduate rates, reaching 95.2% in 2020. In contrast, vocational upper secondary education displays the lowest graduate rates, although there was an improvement from 58.4% in 2017 to 71.1% in 2020.

Table 4.18: Number of Graduates in Higher Education
by Education Levels (Academic Years 2018-2022)

Education Levels	Academic Years				
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Below Undergraduate	5,789	4,583	4,548	5,364	5,729
Undergraduate	325,824	315,484	288,710	269,070	300,963
Graduate Diploma	4,458	5,196	5,053	5,206	5,899
Master’s Degree	28,080	24,158	27,901	22,005	29,254
Higher Graduate Diploma	335	616	577	344	520
Doctorate	4,298	4,065	3,967	3,508	5,362
Total	368,784	354,102	330,756	305,497	347,727

Source: Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation (n.d.b)

Table 4.18 provides a breakdown of the number of graduates in higher education by education level from 2018 to 2022. The undergraduate level consistently has the highest number of graduates, peaking at 300,963 in 2022. Master’s degree graduates also show a significant increase, with 29,254 graduates in 2022, up from 22,005 in 2021. Other higher education levels, such as graduate diploma and doctorate degrees, exhibit steady numbers with slight fluctuations. The data suggest a strong commitment to higher education, particularly at the undergraduate and master’s levels.

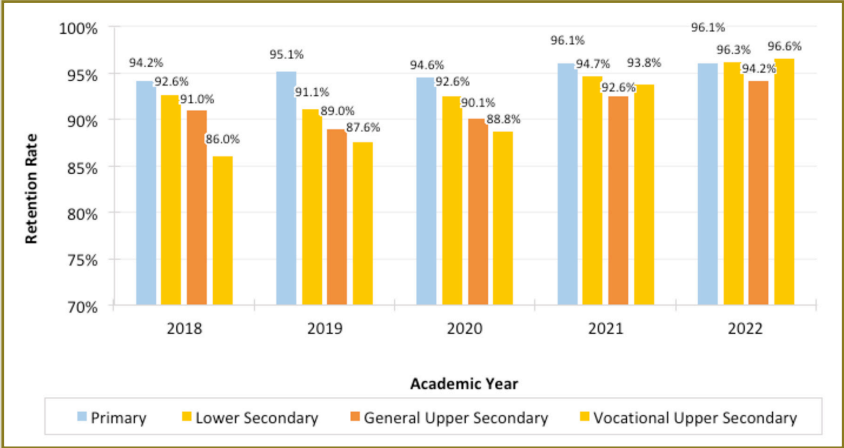


Figure 4.8: Retention Rate of Students in Basic Education (Academic Year 2018-2022)

Source: Office of the Education Council (2020, 2021, 2022)

Figure 4.8 illustrates the retention rate of students in basic education from 2018 to 2022. Primary education shows consistently high retention rates, maintaining above 94% throughout the period. Lower secondary education experiences a dip in 2020, with retention falling to 88.8%, but recovers to 92.6% by 2022. General upper secondary education retention rates show a declining trend, particularly noticeable with a low of 87.6% in 2019. Vocational upper secondary education, although starting low at 86.0% in 2018, sees an improvement to 94.2% by 2022.

Overall, while Thailand has made strides in expanding access to education and improving retention rates, challenges remain in sustaining high graduation rates, particularly at the vocational and lower secondary levels. It is evident that while primary education enjoys high graduate and retention rates, secondary and vocational education levels require more attention. The variability in lower secondary education graduate rates and retention highlights areas for policy enhancement. The consistent improvement in vocational education metrics suggests successful efforts to integrate vocational training as a viable and attractive pathway for students. In higher education, the focus on undergraduate and master’s programs aligns well with workforce demands for advanced qualifications. These insights underscore the importance of targeted strategies to support student success across all education levels in Thailand, paving the way for future educational and workforce readiness.

3. Student Employment

This section explores the educational attainment and employment trends in Thailand over recent years.

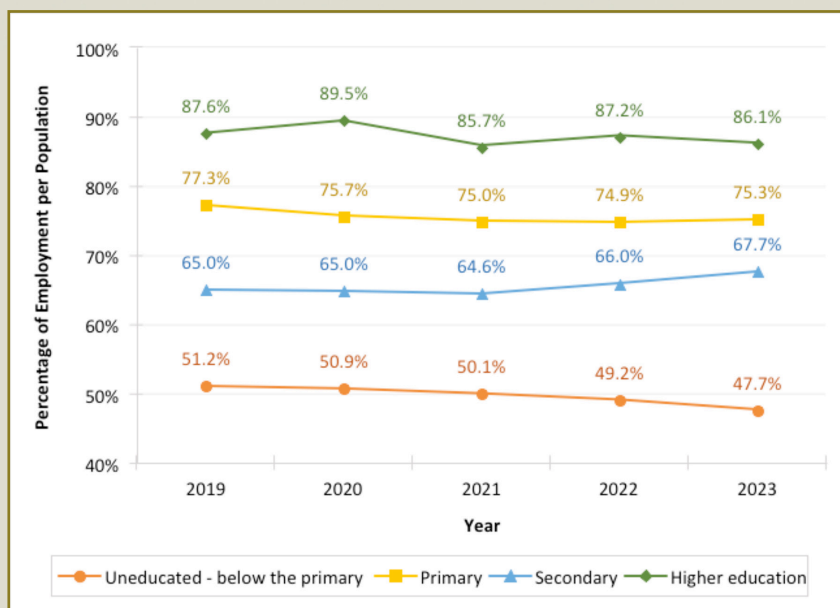


Figure 4.9: Percentage of Employment per Population by Education Attainment Level from 2019 to 2023

Source: Office of the Education Council (2023d)

Figure 4.9 displays the percentage of employment per population by educational attainment level from 2019 to 2023. Higher education graduates consistently show the highest employment rates, although there is a slight decline from 89.5% in 2019 to 86.1% in 2023. Those with secondary education also exhibit high employment rates but with more noticeable fluctuations, maintaining around 75.3% in 2023 after dipping to

74.9% in 2022. Primary education level holders and those uneducated or with education below the primary level display lower employment rates, with primary education holders dropping from 65.0% in 2019 to 67.7% in 2023, and the uneducated decreasing from 51.2% to 47.7% over the same period.

The data indicate a clear link between higher educational attainment and better employment prospects. The increase in average years of schooling suggests progress in educational access and quality in Thailand. This improvement in education is likely a contributing factor to the higher employment rates among those with advanced education, underscoring the importance of continued investment in education to enhance employability and economic stability



Chapter 5

Teachers, Educational Personnel, and Learning Provision Development

Chapter 5 is divided into seven parts:

Part 1: Statistics of the Number of Teachers

Part 2: Teacher Preparation and Licensing

Part 3: Teacher Performance Conditions

Part 4: Teacher Development Policies

Part 5: Educational Personnel

Part 6: Teachers and Educational Personnel
Appraisal

Part 7: Learning Provision Development

Elaborate details regarding these topics follow below.

The Teachers and Educational Personnel Council Act Teachers' Council of Thailand 2003 (Thai Government, 2003) defines “Teacher” as one who is a professional in teaching and promoting learning through various methods in early childhood, basic education, and lower levels of tertiary education, both in public and private institutions. The Act also prescribes “Educational Personnel” to be individuals who are involved in supporting education, providing services,

or performing tasks related to organizing the teaching and learning processes, supervision, and educational management in various educational institutions.

Teachers, Educational Institution Administrators, Educational Supervisors, and Educational Administrators are regulated educator professions (Ministry of Education, 2006; Thai Government, 2003). That is, individuals who wish to practice these professions must obtain a license from the relevant authority, except for guest speakers, occasional teacher-fill-ins, trainees, informal educators, non-formal teachers, higher education staff, super-regional educational administrators, and others designated by the Teachers' Council of Thailand (TCT). Such a regulation reflects the high regard for educators in Thailand, as they play a crucial role in shaping future generations and the nation's development.

This chapter explores the current state of the teaching profession in Thailand, focusing on several key aspects. It begins with an overview of the statistical distribution of teachers across various organizations and educational levels, highlighting the predominance of teachers employed under the Ministry of Education. The chapter then delves into the multifaceted system of teacher preparation, covering professional standards, teacher preparation programs, teacher preparation institutions, and licensing procedures. Additionally, it examines the working conditions and workloads of government teachers, explores ongoing initiatives for teacher development and appraisal, and discusses the roles and responsibilities of educational personnel. The chapter concludes by addressing the development of learning provision, emphasizing the strategic initiatives and policies aimed at enhancing educational quality and equity.

Part 1: Statistics of the Number of Teachers

Thailand employs nearly 671,000 teachers, predominantly under the Ministry of Education, reflecting a robust workforce focused on primary and secondary education.

total of 670,998 teachers distributed across various organizations and educational levels. As demonstrated in Table 5.1, Ministry of Education (MOE) employs the vast majority of teachers with 774,888, which is more than four times the number of teachers employed by Other Government Agencies (156,963). Among offices within Ministry of Education (MOE), the Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC) has the most teachers (385,033), followed by the Office of the Private Education Commission (OPEC) with 100,182 teachers. This suggests a focus on primary and secondary education under MOE. Among Other Government Agencies, the Ministry of Interior has the most teachers (124,839), followed by the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) (13,902). This distribution reflects the responsibility of the Ministry of Interior (MOI) for local government schools and the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration for schools within the capital city.

Table 5.1: Number of Teachers by Organizations and Levels of Education (Academic Year 2022)

Organizations	Levels of Education				Total
	Pre-Primary	Primary Education	Lower Secondary	Upper Secondary	
The Ministry of Education					
– The Office of the Basic Education Commission	50,329	223,534	70,814	40,356	385,033
– Office of the Private Education Commission	27,159	47,276	16,094	9,653	100,182
– The Office of the Vocational Education Commission (Public)	-	-	-	15,670	15,670
– The Office of the Vocational Education Commission (Private)	-	-	-	13,070	13,070
– Public Organization under the supervision of the Minister of Education (Mahidol Wittayanusorn School)	-	-	-	80	80
Total	77,488	270,810	86,908	78,829	514,035
Other Government Agencies					
– The Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation	762	1,715	1,074	1,387	4,938
– The Ministry of Interior	85,894	21,380	10,637	6,928	124,839
– The Ministry of Culture	-	-	212	431	643
– The Ministry of Tourism and Sports	-	5	260	228	493
– Bangkok Metropolitan Administration	3,420	8,858	1,432	192	13,902
– Border Patrol Police Bureau	598	1,551	40	13	2,202
– National Office of Buddhism	-	-	2,283	2,051	4,334
– The Ministry of Social Development and Human Security	5,594	12	6	-	5,612
Total	96,268	33,521	15,944	11,230	56,963
Grand Total	173,756	304,331	102,852	90,059	670,998

Source: Office of the Education Council (2023b)

Part 2: Teacher Preparation and Licensing

Comprehensive teacher preparation programs and a tiered licensing system ensure high standards of knowledge, pedagogy, and ethics to meet the demands of modern education.

In Thailand, all teachers, whether Thai or foreign, are required to obtain a teaching license. This licensing procedure entails adherence to professional standards, regulations, and protocols overseen by multiple organizations and agencies. The principal authority responsible for these matters is the TCT (2003), an independent agency operating under MOE. The core functions of TCT include establishing professional standards, administering the issuance and revocation of licenses, ensuring adherence to professional standards and ethics, and promoting ongoing professional development for teachers (Office of the National Education Commission, 2003). Those aspiring to enter the teaching profession need perseverance and determination due to the multiple stages involved. Initially, they must go through a selection process before entering a teacher preparation institution. There, they study pedagogy, gain teaching experience through apprenticeships, and nurture a passion for teaching. Afterward, they undergo examinations to obtain a teaching license from TCT. Finally, they participate in the recruitment process to become government teachers.



Source: Office of the Basic Education Commission (2022)

This part explores the building blocks of teacher preparation in Thailand, including professional standards for teachers, teacher preparation programs, teacher preparation institutions, and teacher licensing.

1. Professional Standards for Teachers

According to the Regulation of the Teachers' Council of Thailand on Professional Standards 2013 (Teachers' Council of Thailand, 2013b) and Regulation of the Teachers' Council of Thailand on Professional Standards (Version 4) 2019 (Teachers' Council of Thailand, 2019), The professional standards for teachers are divided into three categories. These include Standards of Knowledge and Professional Experience, Standards of Performance, and Standards of Conduct.

1.1 The Standards of Knowledge and Professional Experience

The Standards of Knowledge and Professional Experience refer to regulations concerning knowledge and experience in teaching. These regulations define the level of knowledge and experience that professional teachers (including current and aspiring teachers) must have in order to effectively practice their profession. To be considered a qualified teaching professional, individuals must possess a minimum educational qualification of a bachelor's degree in education or its equivalent, or other qualifications recognized by the TCT. Additionally, they must demonstrate proficiency in the following areas:

- Understanding of Global and Societal Changes and Sufficiency Philosophy,
- Developmental, Educational, and Counseling Psychology,
- Subject Matter Expertise, Curriculum Knowledge, Pedagogy, and Digital Technology Integration,
- Assessment, Evaluation, Research, and Student Development,
- Thai and English Language Communication, and Digital Technology for Education, and
- Quality Assurance Design and Implementation.

In addition to the comprehensive knowledge base outlined above, professional aspiring teachers also have to complete at least one year of professional practice training and subject-specific teaching experience in an educational institution and successfully pass the performance evaluation (Teachers' Council of Thailand, 2019).

1.2 The Standards for Performance

The Standards for Performance refer to the specified requirements concerning the qualities or demonstrations of work behavior and job development that individuals in the teaching profession, as well as those aspiring to join the profession, must adhere to. These standards are intended to achieve the desired outcomes and learning objectives in education. Furthermore, teachers are expected to continuously train and improve their skills or expertise to higher levels consistently. The standards are structured around three key domains: teacher duties, learning management, and relationships with parents and the community (Teachers' Council of Thailand, 2019).

- **Teacher duties:** It is required that teachers are dedicated to developing students with a teacher's spirit. They should set a good example, uphold morals and ethics, and be strong citizens. Teachers promote learning by paying attention to and accepting individual differences among students. They inspire students to be lifelong learners and innovators. Additionally, teachers must continuously develop themselves to be knowledgeable, up-to-date, and responsive to changes.

- **Learning management:** Teachers need to develop school curricula, manage learning, create materials, and evaluate learning outcomes. They integrate knowledge and teaching methodologies to plan and organize learning that fosters critical thinking and innovation in students. Teachers care for, assist, and develop each student according to their potential and systematically report on student progress. They organize activities and create a learning environment that ensures students are happy and aware of their well-being. Teachers also engage in research, create innovations, and apply digital

technology to benefit student learning. They work collaboratively with others and participate in professional development activities.

- **Relationships with parents and the community:**

Teachers are to collaborate with parents to develop and solve problems in students, ensuring they have desirable qualities. They build networks with parents and the community to support quality learning for students. Teachers study and understand the community context and live harmoniously with cultural differences. They also promote and preserve local culture and wisdom. These standards provide a comprehensive framework for teachers, focusing on student development, effective learning management, and beneficial relationships with parents and the community.



Source: Thailand Collaboration for Education (n.d.)

1.3 The Standards of Conduct

The Standards of Conduct outline the ethical principles and guidelines that govern teachers' behavior and professional development. It serves as a framework for teachers' conduct, ensuring that they uphold the integrity and reputation of the teaching profession. By adhering to this code, educators earn the trust and respect of students, parents, and the wider community (Teachers' Council of Thailand, 2019). The code is divided into 5 categories: (Teachers' Council of Thailand, 2013a)

- **Personal Ethics:** Teachers must not act in a rebellious manner towards the physical, intellectual, emotional, and social well-being of students and service recipients.
- **Professional Ethics:** Teachers must provide services sincerely and impartially without seeking or accepting unauthorized benefits,
- **Ethics towards Professional Colleagues:** Teachers should collaborate constructively, uphold moral principles, and foster unity within the professional community.
- **Ethics towards Society:** Teachers should behave as leaders in promoting conservation and sustainable development.
- **Ethics towards Customers:** Teachers must show love, compassion, care, support, and encouragement to students and service recipients in their roles, fulfilling their responsibilities consistently.

2. Teacher Preparation Programs

Teacher preparation in Thailand has evolved significantly to address the changing needs of the educational system. Initially, teacher preparation programs were designed to produce a sufficient number of teachers to meet the demands of expanding educational institutions. Over time, the focus shifted towards enhancing the quality of teacher education, incorporating modern pedagogical techniques and educational technologies. Efforts were made to align teacher preparation with national educational reforms, emphasizing the development of skills necessary for the 21st century classroom. This included fostering critical thinking, creativity, and the ability to integrate technology into teaching practices. Despite these advancements, challenges remain in ensuring the continuous professional development of teachers and adapting training programs to meet future educational needs (Rukspollmuang et al., 2017).

The TCT (2024) has recently revised the accreditation criteria for teacher preparation programs and issued the Notification of the Teachers' Council on the Accreditation of Educational Degrees and Certificates according to Professional Standards for Professional Practice 2024. According to the Notification, there are two categories of teacher preparation programs: 1) Bachelor's degree programs and 2) Postgraduate programs.

2.1 Bachelor's Degree Programs

The bachelor's degree programs in teacher education can extend over four or five years. They must adhere to the standards set by the Office of Higher Education Commission (OHEC) of the Ministry of the Higher Education, Science,

Research, and Innovation (MHESI). These programs are designed to ensure compliance with higher education curriculum standards and qualifications. They incorporate compulsory courses that produce learning outcomes in accordance with the TCT standards for knowledge and professional experience. For the four-year program, a minimum of 34 credit hours is required, while the five-year program mandates at least 46 credit hours. Both programs include courses in practical teaching experience during the study period and teaching practice within educational institutions in the respective subject area or major, totaling at least one academic year. Additionally, practical teaching experience courses amount to at least 3 credit hours per academic year, and teaching practice courses require no less than 3 credit hours. Furthermore, the curriculum integrates competencies in subject matter knowledge, teaching methods, and technology (TPACK), requiring at least 12 credit hours. The subject areas or majors must align with early childhood education, basic education, or vocational education as specified by the TCT. It is also noted that the TCT accredits degrees and diplomas for full-time programs only, excluding part-time courses conducted outside regular working hours.

Prospective students for the aforementioned programs can apply for admission through the Thai University Central Admission System (TCAS). The application process may involve submitting a portfolio, taking a written examination, or providing test scores, depending on the specific criteria set by each teacher preparation institution.

2.2 Postgraduate Programs

The postgraduate programs in teacher education encompass graduate diploma, master's, and doctoral degree programs. These programs similarly adhere to the standards set by the OHEC and the MHESI. These advanced programs must also comply with higher education curriculum standards and qualifications. The curriculum for these programs includes compulsory courses designed to achieve learning outcomes aligned with the TCT standards. For graduate diploma programs, a minimum of 27 credit hours is required, while master's programs require at least 45 credit hours, and doctoral programs demand no less than 60 credit hours. Practical teaching experience during the study period and teaching practice within educational institutions in the specific subject area or major must be undertaken throughout the study period, amounting to at least one academic year. Additionally, practical teaching experience courses must include at least 3 credit hours per academic year, and teaching practice courses require no less than 3 credit hours. The curriculum also emphasizes integrating subject matter knowledge, teaching methods, and technology (TPACK), with at least 6 credit hours dedicated to this competency. Graduate programs must ensure the practical teaching components align with the major or subject area, and they are structured to maintain the standards and guidelines set by the TCT.

2.3 Alternative Programs

In addition to the above mainstream programs, government agencies and independent organizations also run special teacher preparation projects. These projects aim to cultivate high-quality educators in local communities by

identifying talented individuals who lack the financial means to access higher education.

One such example is the Kru Rak Thin (Homegrown Teacher) Project, initiated by the Equitable Education Fund (EEF). The EEF is an independent organization established under the Equitable Education Fund Act 2018 (Thai Government, 2018). This project also collaborates with five other government agencies (Office of the Education Council, 2023a): MOE, MHESI, OBEC, TCT, and OTEPC.

Other noteworthy projects include the Khurutayat (Teacher Successor) Project, operated jointly by MOE and MHESI, and the Petnaitom (Diamond in the Mud) Project, carried out by Srinakharinwirot University (Office of the Education Council, 2023a).

MOE is currently exploring the possibility of merging the Kru Rak Thin and Khurutayat Projects. The existing Khurutayat Project has a rich history with thirteen generations of graduates. Their experience would be a valuable asset to the new, unified initiative. The proposed name for the merged project remains Khurutayat, reflecting its comprehensive approach to closed-system teacher preparation. This consolidation aims to leverage existing expertise and resources to better equip future educators in remote locations (The People, 2023).



Source: King Mongkut's University of Technology North Bangkok (n.d.)

3. Teacher Preparation Institutions

Historically, Thailand established specialized institutions for teacher education known as ‘Teacher Training Schools,’ located in Bangkok and various provinces. In 1960, MOE elevated these institutions to ‘Teachers Colleges,’ allowing them to offer courses in the Higher Education Diploma Program (Por Kor Sor Sung) and the bachelor’s degree program under the Teacher Training Council. In 1992, His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej the Great (King Rama IX) graciously renamed these colleges ‘Rajabhat Institutes’ nationwide, expanding their academic offerings beyond education to include other fields of study. In 2004, the ‘Rajabhat Institutes’ were upgraded to ‘Rajabhat Universities,’ transitioning their status from institutes to universities to support local development initiatives. Consequently, Thailand no longer has specific teacher training institutes as it did in the past. Instead, teachers are now trained in the ‘Faculty of Education’ within various higher education

institutions, which have the autonomy to set their criteria for student admissions. These higher education institutions/ universities are categorized into seven groups as the following (Office of the Education Council, 2023a).

- *Public universities and autonomous universities* offer education programs that prepare teachers across all disciplines.

- *Rajamangala Universities of Technology*, which are public institutions, offer technical education programs that train vocational teachers and lecturers.

- *Bunditpatanasilpa Institute of Fine Arts* includes a Faculty of Art Education that prepares teachers and lecturers in dramatic arts, musical arts, and other artistic disciplines.

- *National Sports University* specializes in preparing physical education and health education teachers, with 17 campuses located in various provinces: Krabi, Bangkok, Chaiyaphum, Chumphon, Chiang Mai, Chonburi, Trang, Phetchabun, Maha Sarakham, Yala, Lampang, Sisaket, Samut Sakhon, Sukhothai, Suphan Buri, Ang Thong, and Udon Thani.

- *Rajabhat Universities* include a Faculty of Education, among other faculties, to prepare teachers in various major subjects tailored to local community needs.

- *Private universities*, some of which offer a teacher preparation program.

- *Monastic universities*, namely Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University and Mahamakut Buddhist University, have multiple campuses across various provinces, with some including a Faculty of Education.

According to the TCT's (n.d.) database on accredited teacher preparation programs for Academic Year 2024, a total of 558 programs are being offered by 187 institutions. Specifically, there are 39 graduate diploma programs available at 38 institutions, 422 four-year bachelor's degree programs offered by 121 institutions, 95 master's degree programs provided by 60 institutions, and 2 doctoral degree programs available at 2 institutions.

4. Teacher Licensing

Since 2022, the TCT has implemented new regulations for teacher licensing regulations, establishing a standardized framework for assessing and certifying educator competency. According to the Regulation of the Teachers' Council of Thailand on Professional License 2022 (Teachers' Council of Thailand, 2022), there are three distinct license levels, each designed to reflect the professional growth and expertise of teachers.

- Provisional Teaching License (P-License) serves as an entry point for newly graduated teachers. To qualify, individuals must complete a TCT-accredited education degree starting from the 2019 academic year onwards. The P-License automatically grants recent graduates the opportunity to work as teacher assistants and participate in teacher recruitment exams. Notably, this license holds a validity period of two years.

- Basic Teaching License (B-License) represents a higher level of competency. Eligibility for the B-License requires completion of a TCT-accredited education degree commencing from the 2019 academic year onwards, along with successful completion of a professional competency assessment. The B-License is valid for five years and can be obtained through

application by those who meet the criteria. Holders of original single-level teaching licenses may continue using their existing licenses until expiration. Upon renewal, they will be granted the B-License.

- Advanced Teaching License (A-License) signifies the highest level of teacher competency within the new framework. To qualify, individuals must hold a valid B-License or an original single-level teaching license and achieve the academic standing level of “Professional” or its equivalent. Alternatively, successful completion of an assessment based on the TCT committee’s quality standards for professional practice allows individuals to earn the A-License. This license offers a seven-year validity period and can be obtained through application by those who meet the requirements.



Source: Brandinside (2024)

These new teacher licensing regulations introduce a more structured and rigorous system for evaluating and certifying teachers in Thailand. This framework aims to ensure that teachers possess the necessary knowledge, skills, and competencies to effectively fulfill their professional duties. Furthermore, the differentiated license levels promote continuous professional development and acknowledge the growth of teachers throughout their careers.

Part 3: Teacher Performance Conditions

Teachers balance diverse responsibilities, including teaching, curriculum development, and community engagement, supported by clear workload guidelines tailored to various educational sectors.

OTEPC is responsible for determining the government teachers' working conditions and workloads. As specified in the operation manual for evaluating the position and academic standing of government teachers (Office of the Teacher Civil Service and Educational Personnel Commission, 2021d), "Workload" refers to the total number of hours dedicated to teaching, supporting and promoting learning, participating in professional learning communities, contributing to school improvement initiatives, and responding to policies and priorities. It encompasses the following:

- **Teaching Hours:** This refers to the number of scheduled hours spent teaching specific subjects, fields, or learning areas as outlined by the curriculum. This includes the organization of learning experiences and activities designed to support or remediate student competencies.

- **Supporting and Promoting Learning:** This category includes activities beneficial to the enhancement and development of learning management in schools. Examples include creating learning management plans, experience management plans, Individual Education Plans (IEP), Individual Instruction Plans (IIP), measuring and evaluating learning outcomes, assessing child development, and creating and developing teaching materials. This also includes participation in professional learning communities.

- **Contributing to School Quality Improvement:** This dimension focuses on activities that promote and support various aspects of school education, impacting student quality and overall educational quality. Examples include serving as the head of a learning area group, grade level head, quality assurance, assisting in academic, personnel, budget, and general administration tasks.

- **Responding to Policy and Priority Shifts:** This final area involves activities that align with the policies and focal points of the government, MOE, and the respective governing bodies.

OTEPC (2021d) issued an announcement regarding the workload of government teachers in basic education, vocational education, and non-formal and informal education sectors. This announcement is outlined in OTEPC Circular Letter No. 0309.3/21, dated August 30, 2021, as detailed in Tables 5.2-5.4.

Table 5.2: Minimum Workload Hours of Basic Education Teachers

Levels and Types of Education	Teaching Hours	Overall workload hours
1. Pre-primary	Not less than 6 hours/week	Not less than 14 hours/week
2. Primary	Not less than 12 hours/week	Not less than 20 hours/week
3. Secondary (including special-purpose schools)	Not less than 12 hours/week	Not less than 20 hours/week
4. Special Education		
4.1 Special schools for children with disabilities and special education centers	Not less than 6 hours/week	Not less than 14 hours/week
4.2 Welfare Schools and Rajaprajanugroh Schools	Not less than 12 hours/week	Not less than 20 hours/week

Source: Office of the Teacher Civil Service and Educational Personnel Commission (2021d)

Table 5.3: Minimum Workload Hours of Vocational Education Teachers

Teacher Workload	Teaching Hours*	Overall workload hours*
1. Practice teaching	Not less than 12 hours/week or not less than 216 hours/semester	Not less than 18 hours/week or not less than 324 hours/semester
2. Practice teaching and working as a head of the subject area division	Not less than 6 hours/week or not less than 108 hours/semester	
3. Practice teaching and acting as a teacher advisor	Not less than 10 hours/week or not less than 180 hours/semester	
4. Practice teaching and acting as a mentor who must take care of students staying in the dormitory of the educational institution	Not less than 6 hours/week or not less than 108 hours/semester	
5. Practice teaching and performing professional service duties: training to the community, being a supervising teacher in a bilateral system, and supervisor for internship students.	Not less than 6 hours/week or not less than 108 hours/semester	

* The workload hours are applied for teachers in vocational certificate programs, high vocational certificate programs, and short vocational courses.

Source: Office of the Teacher Civil Service and Educational Personnel Commission (2021d)

Table 5.4: Minimum Workload Hours of Non-Formal and Informal Education Teachers

Levels and Types of Education	Teaching Hours	Overall workload hours
Every level and type of teacher under the Office of the Non-Formal and Informal Education*	Not less than 10 hours/week	Not less than 18 hours/week

* In 2023, the Office of the Non-Formal and Informal Education has recently been elevated to be the Department of Learning Encouragement (Thai Government, 2023)

Source: Office of the Teacher Civil Service and Educational Personnel Commission (2021d)

When comparing the minimum workload hours among the three sectors of education-basic education, and vocational education, formal and non-formal education-several key differences and similarities emerge. Basic education teachers, including those in pre-primary, primary, secondary, and special education settings, are generally required to dedicate a minimum number of teaching and overall workload hours per week, with variations based on the level of education and specific educational needs of students. In contrast, vocational education teachers have specific workload requirements that may include practice teaching, subject area division responsibilities, teacher advisory roles, and mentorship duties, each with its own set of minimum hours per week or semester. Furthermore, teachers in non-formal and informal education settings are expected to commit to a minimum number of teaching and overall workload hours per week, emphasizing

the importance of community involvement and supervision of internship students. These highlight the diverse workload expectations across different educational sectors in Thailand, reflecting the unique demands and responsibilities associated with each sector.

Part 4: Teacher Development Policies

National policies and initiatives prioritize digital skills, ethical teaching practices, and innovative leadership to enhance teacher professionalism and educational quality.

This part explores Thailand's national policies and initiatives aimed at advancing teacher development and educational quality. Key efforts by the Ministry of Education and educational bodies-including the Office of the Permanent Secretary for Education (OPS), the Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC), the Office of the Vocational Education Commission (OVEC), and the Department of Learning Encouragement (DLE)-focus on empowering teachers through targeted professional development, competency-based evaluations, and the promotion of digital literacy. These policies underscore the commitment to building a supportive environment for teachers and improving student outcomes.

1. National Policy for Teacher Development

The Ministry of Education's policy announcements for Fiscal Year 2024 (Ministry of Education, 2022) and Fiscal Year 2024-2025 (Ministry of Education, 2023a) present a strategy aimed at enhancing teacher development and support. This approach aspires to improve educational quality and student outcomes in Thailand.

The 2024 announcement empowers teachers through various professional development initiatives. These initiatives include implementing the Performance Appraisal (PA) system for competency evaluation, promoting digital literacy in basic and vocational education, and equipping teachers with skills to utilize technology for learning and career guidance. Moreover, there are plans to enhance teachers' measurement and evaluation skills, foster adaptability to societal changes, and support language and communication competency testing.

For 2024-2025, MOE aims to establish criteria for teacher appointments and transfers, aligning educators with their aspirations. Additionally, the policy framework addresses teachers' debt issues and prioritizes adequate teaching equipment and welfare benefits.

By investing in professional development and well-being, MOE could create a supportive environment for teachers. This potentially enhances the quality of education and provides better opportunities for students across Thailand's educational landscape.



Source: The New York Times (2013)

2. Current Initiatives for Teacher Development

Teacher and educational personnel development in Thailand is overseen by various agencies, each with plans and initiatives to enhance teacher competencies and adapt to modern educational demands. Such educational agencies are OPS, OBEC, OVEC, and DLE.

2.1 The Office of the Permanent Secretary for Education (OPS)

The OPS's (2022) Human Resource Development Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2023- 2027 focuses on enhancing teachers' skillsets to effectively fulfill their responsibilities and meet the office's objectives. This involves ensuring teachers pass international standard competency tests, narrowing the performance gap in PISA scores across school groups, and boosting attendance rates in lower secondary education as per the master plan.

Furthermore, the plan underscores the importance of continuous learning and self-improvement for teachers, with a specific emphasis on fostering a supportive environment for lifelong learning. It also highlights the significance of promoting the value of public service professions in Thai society to attract and retain high-quality government officials. Additionally, the plan introduces new management policies for state agencies to improve their performance and strive for excellence.

In alignment with the teacher development strategy, the plan includes specific initiatives such as creating long-term competency training roadmaps for staff, establishing individual development plans that align with job descriptions, and promoting collaborative learning environments to enhance job skills comprehensively. Moreover, efforts like developing exemplary leadership models and implementing talent management programs aim to nurture a new generation of public sector officials dedicated to community service and overall societal advancement.

In 2023, the following teacher development activities were conducted by OPS (2024):

- **Development of Digital Skills for Teachers:**

This project focused on enhancing the digital literacy of teachers by providing training in creating promotional materials using Canva. A total of 937 teachers participated in 19 training sessions, each lasting 21 hours. The objective was to equip teachers with the skills to effectively use digital tools for educational purposes. The training was highly successful, with 934 participants meeting the assessment criteria.

- **NIDTEP Learning Mall Platform:** professional development courses for teachers and educational personnel through an online platform. Five courses were offered, including topics such as transitioning from VUCA to BANI, creative-based learning, creating motion infographics with Canva, competency-based learning management, and innovative classroom management. A total of 1,738 participants completed these courses.

- **English Communication Skill Development:** The program was developed to improve English communication skills among teachers using the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) standards. This involved creating and evaluating a training model that integrated digital media with professional learning communities. The program aimed to address existing challenges and improve English language teaching efficiency.

- **Teacher Leadership Enhancement:** This pilot program was introduced in Nakhon Pathom to build leadership skills among primary school teachers as part of the “Nakhon Pathom Education Collaborative Model.” This project focused on developing leadership qualities that contribute to successful learning outcomes in the 21st century.

- **Internal Supervision Model for Private Schools:** Implemented in Roi Et, this project focused on developing a model for internal supervision through PLCs. The goal was to assess the current state and desired outcomes, create and test the model, and evaluate its effectiveness.



Source: TOT (n.d.)

2.2 The Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC)

OBEC (2022) has outlined a detailed plan for teacher development in its 2023-2027 educational development strategy. The plan emphasizes the importance of enhancing teachers' competencies through continuous professional development, aligning with evolving educational standards and societal needs. This includes several key strategies:

- **Active Learning and Innovation:** OBEC aims to promote active learning and innovation among teachers. This involves encouraging teachers to adopt proactive teaching methodologies and to become co-creators of educational innovations that can be applied across various educational levels.

- **Continuous Professional Development:**

The plan supports the ongoing professional development of teachers and educational personnel. This includes maintaining professional ethics and embodying the spirit of being a dedicated teacher. OBEC emphasizes the importance of continuous self-improvement and professional growth to ensure teachers can effectively respond to the changing demands of the educational landscape.

- **Assessment and Personalized Learning:**

Enhancing teachers' abilities in assessment and personalized learning is another critical component. OBEC plans to develop teachers' skills in diverse assessment methods to support individual student learning. This includes intensive training workshops, online training, and other personalized learning strategies.



Source: Bannganchang School Chumphon (n.d.)

Through these strategic initiatives, OBEC seeks to create a dynamic and effective teaching workforce capable of driving educational excellence and fostering a supportive learning environment for all students. The detailed plans and measures are designed to ensure that teachers are well-equipped to meet the challenges of modern education and contribute significantly to the development of students' competencies and skills for the 21st century.

In 2023, OBEC (2024) implemented several projects and activities aimed at enhancing teacher professional development, such as:

PA Support Team Training: This series of workshops aimed to develop knowledge leaders to support changes in personnel management for teachers and educational staff. It included 13 training sessions across various regions, targeting educational administrators, principals, and teachers. The objectives were to enhance professional standards, create a network for effective communication, and address implementation challenges. The workshops involved a total of 2,481 participants from 245 educational areas nationwide.

“Good Civil Servant” Training Program: Aimed at newly appointed civil servants, this program was designed to instill the philosophy of being a good civil servant, enhance necessary competencies, and promote teamwork and ethical conduct. It included self-study, on-site training, and evaluation, involving 228 participants who showed improved performance post-training.

Ethics and Public Spirit Workshop: This workshop aimed to instill ethics, values, and public spirit among educators and administrative personnel. It included contributions from

various stakeholders such as monks, educational administrators, and university representatives. The workshop was attended by 70 participants and focused on creating a shared understanding and strategy for promoting ethics and public-mindedness.

2.3 The Office of the Vocational Education Commission (OVEC)

The Bureau of Personnel Competency Development, under OVEC, has proposed a strategic plan for vocational teacher development from 2023 to 2027 (Office of the Vocational Education Commission, 2022). This plan aims to explore potential approaches to equip vocational educators with the competencies needed to potentially align with national strategies and evolving policy directions. There's a focus on potentially modernizing teaching practices to better meet the demands of the 21st century, while also fostering a culture of continuous learning for vocational educators and personnel.

The plan identifies some key objectives, such as developing standards for vocational teacher competencies (which may need further refinement) and potentially empowering educators and personnel to play a more significant role in providing high-quality vocational education. Additionally, fostering collaborative networks is seen as an important area for exploration. The plan outlines some initial targets, such as increasing the number of educators undergoing competency development each year. However, it acknowledges the need to assess the effectiveness of these programs and adjust targets as needed.

Implementation will be driven through annual action plans starting from Fiscal Year 2023. These plans may include projects such as the analysis of training needs, the design and

development of training curricula (subject to further revisions), and the establishment of assessment criteria for educator competencies (which may require ongoing refinement). The strategy also acknowledges the potential benefits of fostering professional experience through collaborations with industry and potentially promoting research and innovation in teaching practices.



Source: Pimthai Online (2024)

Overall, the Bureau's strategic plan represents an initial effort to systematically enhance the skills and competencies of vocational teachers. It acknowledges the need for ongoing evaluation and adaptation to ensure it meets the evolving educational standards and industry demands. By fostering a culture of continuous learning and improvement, the plan hopes to equip educators with the tools and knowledge necessary to potentially support and inspire the next generation of skilled professionals.

In 2023, some key teacher development activities facilitated by OVEC (2023) included:

- **Development of Positive Youth Skills and Active Learning:** This focused on developing the skills of teachers and educational staff through workshops on designing and writing Active Learning lesson plans. A total of 198 administrators, teachers, and educational personnel participated. Additionally, workshops were held to develop 21st-century life skills for vocational students, involving 500 teachers and educational personnel. The aim was to enhance teaching methods and positively impact student outcomes.

- **Enhancement of Language Skills for Vocational Teachers:** To support language skills essential for professional communication, OVEC hired foreign language teachers (English, Chinese, and Malay) to work with vocational schools. A total of 25 foreign language teachers were employed across 18 institutions. This initiative aimed to improve teachers' and students' ability to use foreign languages in professional and academic contexts.

- **Digital Literacy Training:** Teachers were trained to enhance their digital literacy and understanding of digital technologies relevant to the 21st-century classroom. The program included creating and implementing a training model, studying the results, and ensuring practical application in teaching. This initiative aimed to integrate digital skills into everyday teaching practices.

2.4 The Department of Learning Encouragement (DLE)

Established in 2023, DLE has announced its Fiscal Year 2024 priorities to promote lifelong learning and adapt to the evolving educational landscape. Key efforts include enhancing teacher competencies through continuous professional development and regular training programs aimed at improving academic and pedagogical skills. DLE is committed to updating curricula and learning materials to reflect current educational standards and technological advancements, encouraging teachers to adopt active learning methodologies like STEM education.

A significant focus is integrating digital technologies into teaching. DLE aims to develop digital learning platforms and applications for accessible, anytime, anywhere learning. This initiative enhances resource accessibility and equips teachers to incorporate technology into classrooms, supporting flexible and adaptive learning environments tailored to diverse student needs. DLE also emphasizes building collaborative networks with public and private sectors to provide teachers with additional resources and professional growth opportunities. These partnerships foster a supportive community for sharing best practices, accessing new materials, and engaging in continuous development.



Source: Fucusnews (2023)

Recognizing the need to support teachers in managing financial and administrative challenges, DLE promotes financial literacy and provides necessary technological and infrastructural support. By addressing these needs, DLE aims to enhance teachers' overall well-being and effectiveness. In summary, the DLE's teacher development efforts focus on continuous growth, digital integration, collaborative networks, and support systems to equip teachers with the skills and resources needed for high-quality education in a changing educational landscape.

Part 5: Educational Personnel

Licensed educational personnel uphold high standards in leadership, management, and ethics while managing diverse responsibilities, including overseeing academic programs, strategic planning, community engagement, and professional development.

This part outlines the roles, qualifications, and responsibilities of educational personnel in Thailand, including administrators and supervisors, as defined by national standards. It details the licensing, experience, and professional standards required to ensure leadership effectiveness and describes the diverse workloads, emphasizing academic leadership, strategic management, and ongoing professional development.

1. Definition of Educational Personnel

According to the National Education Act 1999 and its amendments (Second Education) 2002 (Office of the National Education Commission, 2003) defines that “**Educational Personnel**” includes educational institution administrators, educational administrators, and supporting personnel providing services or whose responsibilities relate to the teaching-learning process, supervision, and educational administration in various institutions. Following this, the roles of Educational Institution Administrators, Educational Administrators and Other Educational Personnel have been designated as regulated professions since 2003 (Thai Government, 2003), and the position of Educational Supervisor was then classified as

a regulated profession in 2006 (Ministry of Education, 2006) under the role of other supporting personnel.

- **Educational Institution Administrators** refers to individuals who work in administrative positions within educational institutions in the educational area and other institutions that provide early childhood, basic, and higher education below the degree level, both public and private (Thai Government, 2003).

- **Educational Administrators** refers to individuals who work in administrative positions outside educational institutions at the educational area level (Thai Government, 2003).

- **Other Educational Personnel** refers to individuals who support education by providing services or performing tasks related to the educational process, teaching, supervision, and educational administration in various educational institutions, where these institutions require the positions to have educational qualifications (Thai Government, 2003).

- **Educational Supervisors** mean educational advisors providing guidance and recommendations to educators in schools or colleges (The Royal Institute of Thailand, 2011). They are responsible for supervising, advising, guiding, and motivating teachers and educational institution administrators to develop knowledge, awareness, and skills in administrative and instructional management, while also serving as academic advisors to senior executives in affiliated organizations (OEC, 2023a).



Source: BMA Data Center (2024)

2. Professional Licenses for Educational Personnel

Individuals seeking positions as Educational Institution Administrators, Educational Supervisors, and Educational Administrators must obtain the relevant professional licenses. According to the TCT (2022), applicants for these licenses must meet specific qualifications and must not possess any disqualifying characteristics as outlined below:

- **Qualifications:** the applicant must hold a valid teaching license, which may be an original single-level, Basic, or Advanced license; and possess the knowledge and professional experience as specified in the Teachers Council regulations regarding professional standards.
- **Disqualifications:** the applicant must not engage in immoral or unethical behavior, not be legally incompetent or quasi-incompetent, and not have been convicted of an offense that the TCT deems detrimental to the honor and dignity of the profession.

2.1 Educational Institution Administrators' Standards of Knowledge and Professional Experience

According to the TCT's (2013b) regulations, Aspiring Educational Institution Administrators must possess a minimum of a bachelor's degree in educational administration or an equivalent qualification recognized by the TCT. They also need to obtain several essential areas of knowledge including professional development, academic leadership, educational management, curriculum and instruction, assessment and evaluation of learning outcomes, student affairs and activities, educational quality assurance, and ethics and professional conduct. Additionally, it is required that Educational Institution Administrators have at least five years of teaching experience. Alternatively, they must have teaching experience combined with a minimum of two years in roles such as head of department, head of division, or other significant administrative positions within educational institutions. These requirements ensure that the administrators are equipped with both the knowledge and practical experience necessary for effective leadership in educational settings.

2.2 Educational Supervisors' Standards of Knowledge and Professional Experience

According to the TCT's (2013b) regulations, prospective Educational Supervisors must hold at least a master's degree in education or possess an equivalent qualification that is recognized by the TCT. They also need to possess knowledge in essential areas such as professional development, educational supervision, planning and supervision activities, curriculum development and learning management, educational research, educational innovation and information

technology, educational quality assurance, and ethics and professional conduct. Additionally, the candidates are to have at least five years of teaching experience, or a combination of teaching and administrative experience as a school or educational administrator, totaling at least five years. Furthermore, they must have demonstrated academic proficiency through high-quality scholarly work that has been published. These criteria ensure that Educational Supervisors possess the essential knowledge and practical experience required for effective leadership and supervision in the educational field.



Source: Loei Primary Educational Service Area Office (2023)

2.3 Educational Administrators' Standards of Knowledge and Professional Experience

The TCT (2013b) regulates that Educational Administrator candidates must possess a minimum of a bachelor's degree in educational administration or an equivalent qualification recognized by the TCT. The essential knowledge for the candidates encompasses various areas including professional development, academic leadership, educational management, promotion of educational quality, educational quality assurance, and ethics and professional conduct. Additionally, the candidates are to have at least eight years of teaching experience. Alternatively, they must have a minimum of three years of experience as a school administrator, or at least three years in other educational roles as specified by ministry regulations. Other acceptable experiences include a minimum of five years in educational roles with managerial responsibilities at the level of group head or director, or a combination of teaching experience and administrative roles, such as school administrator or other educational personnel with management duties, totaling at least eight years. These standards guarantee that Educational Administrators have the practical experience and leadership skills essential for their roles.

3. Workloads of Educational Personnel

According to the Circular Letter of OTEPC, No. Sor Thor 0206.3/Wor 21, dated August 30, 2021, the workloads of educational institution administrators, educational supervisors, and educational administrators are defined. These defined workloads highlight the comprehensive and multifaceted nature of the roles within the educational sector, emphasizing the importance of leadership, management, and continuous professional development in fostering a high-quality educational environment.

3.1 Educational Institution Administrators' Workload

Educational Institution Administrators have a multifaceted workload that encompasses several key areas. Firstly, they are responsible for academic administration and leadership, which includes overseeing academic programs and ensuring the quality of education provided. Additionally, they manage the entire educational institution, which involves strategic and innovative change management. Their role extends to community and network administration, ensuring full-time engagement with various stakeholders. Furthermore, they must continuously engage in self-development and professional growth. As part of their academic leadership duties, these administrators are also required to participate in teaching activities. Specifically, school directors must teach no less than five hours per week, while deputy directors must teach no less than ten hours per week. These teaching activities may include direct instruction, co-teaching, observing and providing feedback, leading professional learning communities (PLCs), mentoring teachers, and organizing supplementary learning activities for students (Office of the Teacher Civil Service and Educational Personnel Commission, 2021b).

3.2 Educational Supervisors' Workload

Educational Supervisors carry out their duties full-time with a focus on educational supervision. Their primary responsibilities include supporting and promoting effective educational practices across various institutions. This role involves providing guidance and oversight to ensure educational standards are met. Like other educational professionals, educational supervisors are also expected to pursue continuous self-development and professional growth to stay updated with the latest educational trends and methodologies (Office of

the Teacher Civil Service and Educational Personnel Commission, 2021c).

3.3 Educational Administrators' Workload

Educational Administrators have distinct responsibilities focused on the broader development and leadership of educational systems. Their workload includes the management and leadership of educational development, ensuring the continuous improvement of educational standards. They also handle organizational management and development, applying strategic and innovative approaches to drive systemic changes. Additionally, educational administrators are deeply involved in community and network administration, maintaining full-time dedication to these duties. They, too, must engage in self-improvement and professional development to remain effective in their roles (Office of the Teacher Civil Service and Educational Personnel Commission, 2021a).



Source: Innews (2023)

Part 6: Teachers and Educational Personnel Appraisal

The Performance Agreement System (Wor PA) provides a transparent and competency-based framework to evaluate and promote educators while fostering professional growth and innovation.

This part outlines Thailand's Performance Agreement (Wor PA) system, an appraisal framework aimed at enhancing educational quality by supporting continuous improvement among teachers and educational personnel. Wor PA focuses on professional development, streamlined evaluations, and data-driven planning, aligning performance metrics across roles to foster effective teaching practices, responsive leadership, and better educational outcomes.

1. The Performance Agreement System (Wor PA)

OTEPC (2021a, 2021b, 2021c, 2021d) has synthesized expert opinions and research findings to create a key framework for improving the appraisal criteria and methods for positions and academic standing levels of government teachers and educational personnel. The framework involves four essential elements identified for successful educational quality enhancement.

- **Back to School:** The quality of education starts in the classroom. The performance of teachers and educational personnel across all roles should be aligned and interconnected, working as a team towards a common goal of enhancing educational quality and developing learners.
- **Focus on Classroom Performance:** Evaluations should focus on teachers' actual classroom performance, including

their competency in teaching, the effectiveness of their lesson plans, and the learning outcomes of their students.

- **Teacher as a Key of Success:** Teachers are essential to educational success and must continuously develop their competencies to meet the expected performance of their position and academic standing levels.

- **School as an Organization:** Effective school management recognizes that teachers and principals are the heart of a thriving educational institution. Streamlining tasks and prioritizing professional development are key. Redundancy can be reduced by aligning performance evaluations – whether for salary increases or career advancement-to ensure they use the same clear indicators. Fostering collaboration is also crucial. Principals should actively establish Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) within schools, and their success in doing so should be a key performance metric. Finally, to empower educators with the resources they need, schools should provide continuous and systematic development opportunities through various online platforms tailored to individual needs.



Source: The Matter (2021)

Built on the above framework, the Performance Agreement system, known as Wor PA, has been introduced as a novel approach to appraise the positions and academic standing levels of educators. Wor PA establishes clear criteria and activities tailored to each educator's position or academic standing, responsibilities, and the broader goals of the educational institution. It provides several key benefits across different aspects:

- **Professional strengthening:** Wor PA strengthens the professional capacities of educators across teaching, administration, and supervision roles. It offers a structured pathway for self-improvement and skill development in line with professional ranks, empowering educators to enhance student outcomes, teaching quality, and overall educational standards.

- **Direct access and responsiveness to educational needs:** By promoting greater access to classrooms, educators, and students, Wor PA enables educators to understand specific needs and challenges at the classroom and institutional levels. This insight supports the creation of informed school development plans, fostering sustainable, impactful improvements in educational quality.

- **Personalized professional development:** Annual performance evaluations provide educators with clear feedback on their strengths and areas for growth, establishing a pathway for continuous improvement. This targeted professional development enhances teaching practices and ultimately benefits student learning outcomes.

- **Increased efficiency and transparency through digital technology:** Wor PA integrates digital systems to streamline documentation and reduce administrative burdens, promoting efficiency and transparency. This digitization not only saves resources but also enables educators to focus on core responsibilities without excessive paperwork, making the evaluation process more agile and accessible.

- **Integrated evaluation system:** The alignment and coherence of performance evaluations across all educator roles (for career maintenance, career advancement, and salary progression) reduce redundancies by using unified indicators. This integration streamlines evaluations, decreases costs, and promotes a more cohesive approach to assessing educator performance.

- **Data-driven workforce planning:** With Big Data capabilities, Wor PA supports comprehensive personnel management, allowing data-driven decisions for strategic workforce planning and efficient allocation of educational resources. This multi-dimensional data system ensures effective, needs-based staffing across educational institutions.

The Wor PA appraisal for all educator professions is divided into two systems including the maintenance evaluation and the advancement evaluation.

- **Maintenance Evaluation:** This appraisal system aims to ensure that educators sustain their effectiveness and meet the standards required for their current positions or academic standing levels. Each educator undergoes an annual performance appraisal in which they establish a mutual performance agreement (PA) with their superior. This PA

encompasses two components: the Standard Work Agreement and the Challenging Work Agreement. The Standard Work Agreement evaluates adherence to standard teaching hours and responsibilities, as well as the quality of work within the educator's role. The Challenging Work Agreement emphasizes innovative practices designed to enhance performance outcomes. The superior will appoint a committee of three members to evaluate the educator's performance according to these agreements. The committee comprises the superior as the committee chair and two qualified external members assigned by the superior. The evaluation results guide promotions, validate ongoing competency, and influence salary adjustments, ensuring high performance and career progression for educators.



Source: Bantarue School (2021)

- **Advancement Evaluation:** This appraisal system assesses the educator's competencies required for promotion to the next academic standing level. The evaluation covers two to three key aspects: 1) Performance Skills, 2) Performance Outcomes, and 3) Academic Contributions (applicable only for the two highest academic standing levels, Expert and Senior Expert). The Digital Performance Appraisal (DPA) system is used to ensure efficiency, fairness, and transparency in the evaluation process; however, the DPA system is not yet implemented for Educational Administrators. The educator's competencies are assessed by three qualified evaluators appointed by OTEPC. Educators who successfully pass the advancement evaluation are promoted to a higher academic standing level and receive the associated rewards.

The following sections outline the expected performance for each position and academic standing level of Thai government teachers, educational institution administrators, educational supervisors, and educational administrators, along with the Wor PA criteria and methods specific to each profession.

2. Teacher Appraisal

Effective teaching requires not only that teachers demonstrate high-performance competencies aligned with their designated position or academic standing level but also that they cultivate students' potential, thereby contributing to the overall improvement of educational quality (Office of the Teacher Civil Service and Educational Personnel Commission, 2021d). In support of these objectives, OTEPC (2021d) has developed a framework delineating the requisite performance standards for each position and academic standing level of Teachers, along with criteria and procedures for performance

evaluation. The performance framework and appraisal criteria and procedures are detailed in the subsections that follow.

2.1 Expected Performance Framework

Table 5.5 outlines the expected performance criteria for Teachers across various position or academic standing levels, ranging from Practitioner to Senior Expert. Each level highlights specific competencies and skills required to enhance student learning and professional growth within the educational system. These expectations emphasize a progression from foundational application skills to advanced innovation and impact on the teaching profession.

Table 5.5: Teacher Expected Performance Based on Position and Academic Standing Levels

Position/ Academic Standing Levels	Expected Performance
1. Practitioner (no academic standing)	<i>Apply & Adapt:</i> Able to adapt learning and work processes to achieve outcomes for students that meet the position standards.
2. Professional	<i>Solve the Problem:</i> Capable of effectively addressing issues related to student learning quality.
3. Senior Professional	<i>Originate & Improve:</i> Capable of initiating improvements in student learning quality, resulting in noticeable changes.
4. Expert	<i>Invent & Transform:</i> Able to create, develop, innovate, and adjust learning management to enhance student quality and provide guidance.
5. Senior Expert	<i>Create an Impact:</i> Able to create, develop, innovate, disseminate, and expand impact, leading to transformative changes within the profession.

Source: Office of the Teacher Civil Service and Educational Personnel Commission (2021d)

2.2 Maintenance Evaluation Criteria and Procedures

The maintenance evaluation for teachers is a structured process aimed at promoting continuous professional growth and adherence to educational standards. This evaluation is based on an annual Performance Agreement (PA) comprising two main components: the Standard Work Agreement, which assesses job performance in areas like learning management, student support, and professional development; and the Challenging Work Agreement, where teachers set and pursue goals to improve student outcomes. Teachers must demonstrate capabilities in adaptation, problem-solving, improvement initiation, innovation, or impact-making, aligned with their position or academic standing level and the broader objectives of school and ministry policies.

Each year, teachers submit their PA to the school director for approval, with revisions required if they transfer mid-year. The evaluation is conducted by a committee appointed by the school director, consisting of the director as chair and two qualified members. These members may include educational supervisors at the Senior Professional level or higher, university faculty at the rank of assistant professor or above, or teachers from other schools at the Senior Professional level or higher. The committee assesses the teacher's progress based on criteria specific to their position and academic standing level.

During each evaluation cycle, the committee reviews teachers' achievements, and the school director manages data entry in the DPA system. Teachers must achieve a minimum score of 70% from each evaluator to pass.

2.3 Advancement Evaluation Criteria and Procedures

To achieve the Professional academic standing level or advance to a higher level, teachers must meet specific eligibility criteria. First, they must have held their current position or academic standing level for at least four consecutive years. Additionally, they must have successfully completed Maintenance Evaluations over the previous three cycles. Candidates must also demonstrate professional discipline, moral integrity, ethical standards, and adherence to the professional code of conduct throughout the past four years.

The evaluation is organized around three performance domains: Learning and Classroom Management Skills, Student Learning Outcomes, and Academic Contributions. The Learning and Classroom Management Skills domain assesses teachers based on instructional planning and delivery. This includes a learning management plan developed and applied in real teaching settings, submitted as a PDF file, along with two videos. One video should document a teaching session aligned with the instructional plan, highlighting expected performance levels, while the second video should showcase the challenges, sources, or inspirations behind the instructional strategies used. The Student Learning Outcomes domain evaluates the impact of the teacher's instruction on student performance as demonstrated in the Learning and Classroom Management Skills domain. Candidates are required to submit digital files showcasing student work or outcomes achieved post-instruction, reflecting the teaching methods and classroom management demonstrated in the teaching videos.



Source: Secondary Education Service Area Office ChiangRai (2024)

The Academic Contributions domain is required only for candidates at the Expert and Senior Expert levels. Here, teachers must provide evidence of scholarly or innovative contributions to learning management completed within the past four years. For the Expert level, teachers must submit a PDF file containing either a research study or an educational innovation related to learning management. For the Senior Expert level, candidates must provide both a research study and an educational innovation, each in PDF format. The research must be published in academic journals ranked in Tier 1 or Tier 2 of the Thai Citation Index (TCI).

The evaluation process is conducted through the DPA system. For candidates seeking promotion to the Professional and Senior Professional levels, eligibility and performance evidence must first be approved by their respective school directors, who then submit the documentation to the DPA system for verification by the relevant parent authority agencies.

This agency appoints a panel of three evaluators who assess each candidate through the DPA system. For candidates pursuing the Expert and Senior Expert levels, eligibility and performance evidence undergo further examination and approval by OTPEC, which then appoints the evaluation panel. Evaluators for all academic standing levels are selected from a roster of qualified experts established by OTPEC to ensure they meet the necessary qualifications and standards.

To be promoted, teachers must meet score thresholds specific to each level. For the Professional level, teachers must score at least 65% from each evaluator in the Learning and Classroom Management Skills and Student Learning Outcomes domains. Advancement to the Senior Professional level requires a minimum score of 70% in each of these domains from each evaluator. For the Expert level, teachers must achieve a minimum score of 75% in each of the three domains from each evaluator, including Academic Contributions, which is assessed starting at this level. Finally, for the Senior Expert level, teachers must demonstrate the highest proficiency, securing a minimum score of 80% from each evaluator across all three domains.

3. Educational Institution Administrator Appraisal

Educational institution administrators are expected to exhibit robust competencies consistent with their designated position or academic standing level and to foster an environment where teachers can realize their potential, thus advancing educational quality (Office of the Teacher Civil Service and Educational Personnel Commission, 2021b). To facilitate this goal, OTEPC (2021b) has introduced a framework specifying performance standards for each position and academic standing level of Educational Institution Administrators, accompanied by

detailed criteria and evaluation procedures. The following subsections provide details on these elements.

3.1 Expected Performance Framework

Table 5.6 illustrates the expected competencies and performance standards for Educational Institution Administrators across position and academic standing levels, from Practitioner to Senior Expert. Each level emphasizes progressively advanced abilities in problem-solving, innovation, and dissemination of educational practices to enhance institutional quality and professional recognition.

Table 5.6: Educational Institution Administrator Expected Performance Based on Position and Academic Standing Levels

Position/ Academic Standing Levels	Expected Performance
1. Practitioner (no academic standing)	<i>Apply & Adapt:</i> Able to adapt and apply work practices, resulting in outcomes in educational institution administration that meet the position standards.
2. Professional	<i>Solve the Problem:</i> Able to initiate and solve issues in academic development and learning management processes.
3. Senior Professional	<i>Originate & Improve:</i> Capable of developing and applying innovations to improve educational quality within the institution.
4. Expert	<i>Invent & Transform:</i> Able to create and develop innovations in educational management and disseminate them.
5. Senior Expert	<i>Create an Impact:</i> Capable of developing innovations and conducting research, disseminating, and expanding outcomes as a recognized model within the profession.

Source: Office of the Teacher Civil Service and Educational Personnel Commission (2021b)

3.2 Maintenance Evaluation Criteria and Procedures

The maintenance evaluation for Educational Institution Administrators, including both deputy directors and school directors, is structured around two primary components of the Performance Agreement (PA): the Standard Work Agreement and the Challenging Work Agreement. The Standard Work Agreement addresses the fundamental requirements of the role, including responsibilities as outlined by OTEPC. These responsibilities encompass academic administration, academic leadership, institutional management, strategic innovation, change management, community relations, and professional development. The Challenging Work Agreement, on the other hand, focuses on proactive improvement initiatives, requiring administrators to address specific educational challenges that enhance student quality, teacher performance, and institutional growth. Through this component, administrators demonstrate their capacity to adapt, solve problems, initiate improvements, innovate, or drive meaningful changes, in line with their position or academic standing level. This agreement must also align with institutional goals and national educational priorities.

The evaluation process for deputy directors is conducted by a three-member committee chaired by the school director. The committee also includes two additional evaluators who meet specific academic and professional qualifications, such as being senior professional educational supervisors or at a higher level, university faculty members at the rank of assistant professor or higher, or other school directors at the Senior Professional level or above. If the school director cannot serve as chair, a neighboring director with the necessary qualifications may be appointed instead. For school directors, the evaluation

committee is appointed by the director of the educational service area office. This committee is chaired by the director of the educational service area office or an assigned representative and includes two other evaluators with similar qualifications to those required for deputy director evaluations.

Evaluations are conducted annually, with administrators assessed against standards specific to their position or academic standing. Results are recorded in the DPA system and managed by district or provincial authorities. Administrators must achieve a score of at least 70% from each evaluator to demonstrate proficiency in both their Standard Work and Challenging Work Agreements.



Source: Sonfkhla Primary Educational Service Area Office 3 (2021)

3.3 Advancement Evaluation Criteria and Procedures

The advancement evaluation for Educational Institution Administrators to achieve the Professional academic standing level or advance to a higher level assesses their qualifications and performance in three domains: Planning and Management Skills, Institutional Development Outcomes, and Academic Contributions. To qualify, candidates must meet specific eligibility requirements, including holding their current position or academic standing level for at least four years, successfully completing the previous three Maintenance Evaluation cycles, and demonstrating adherence to professional discipline, ethical standards, and codes of conduct over the past four years.

The Planning and Management Skills domain evaluates administrators' strategic abilities and use of management tools or innovations for institutional development. Candidates must submit a PDF report detailing their execution of development plans, strategies, or administrative innovations within the institution, along with a presentation showcasing their planning and management methods. The Institutional Development Outcomes domain assesses the measurable impact of the efforts presented in the first domain on school quality. This includes video evidence of improvements in teacher performance, school quality, or best practices that positively affect student outcomes, directly correlating with the strategies and innovations detailed in the first domain.

The Academic Contributions domain is required only for the Expert and Senior Expert levels. At the Expert level, candidates must submit a PDF file containing either a research study or an innovation related to school management, while

Senior Expert candidates must submit both a research study and an administrative innovation, each published in a TCI Tier 1 or Tier 2 journal. All academic contributions must have been completed within the past four years.

Evaluations are conducted through the DPA system. For the Professional and Senior Professional levels, deputy directors must have their eligibility and performance evidence approved by their school directors before submission to the DPA system; school directors submit theirs through the Educational Service Area Offices or relevant authority agencies. The parent jurisdiction agency then reviews and verifies the documentation and appoints a three-member panel to assess each candidate. For the Expert and Senior Expert levels, eligibility and evidence are further reviewed by OTPEC, which appoints the evaluation panel. Evaluators for all levels are selected from an OTPEC-maintained roster of qualified experts.

To be promoted, administrators must meet score thresholds set for each level. For the Professional level, they must score at least 65% in both the Planning and Management Skills and Institutional Development Outcomes domains. The Senior Professional level requires a minimum score of 70% in these areas. Expert-level candidates must achieve at least 75% across all three domains, including Academic Contributions, which is assessed starting at this level. For the Senior Expert level, candidates must demonstrate the highest proficiency, scoring a minimum of 80% in all three domains.

4. Educational Supervisor Appraisal

Educational supervisors are tasked not only with developing their competencies to meet prescribed position or academic standing levels but also with supporting those they supervise in realizing their full potential, thereby contributing to the enhancement of educational quality (Office of the Teacher Civil Service and Educational Personnel Commission, 2021c). To this end, OTEPC (2021c) has established a framework that specifies the expected performance for each position and academic standing level of Educational Supervisors, in addition to appraisal criteria and methodologies. These elements are presented in the subsequent sections.

4.1 Expected Performance Framework

Table 5.7 demonstrates the expected competencies for Educational Supervisors across five levels of position or academic standing, from Practitioner to Senior Expert. Each level specifies the skills and capacities needed to address challenges, enhance educational quality, and drive innovation in supervisory practices to support teachers, institutions, and educational agencies.

Table 5.7: Educational Supervisor Expected Performance Based on Position and Academic Standing Levels

Position/ Academic Standing Levels	Expected Performance
1. Practitioner (no academic standing)	<i>Apply & Adapt:</i> Able to adapt supervisory practices and work until outcomes are achieved with supervisees, educational institutions, and educational agencies in accordance with position standards.
2. Professional	<i>Solve the Problem:</i> Capable of supervising to resolve issues in learning management for supervisees or to address and improve challenges in educational institutions or educational agencies.
3. Senior Professional	<i>Originate & Improve:</i> Able to initiate improvements to enhance teachers' learning management or to improve educational quality within institutions.
4. Expert	<i>Invent & Transform:</i> Capable of creating, adapting, and innovating in educational supervision to improve teachers' learning management, educational institutions, or educational agencies.
5. Senior Expert	<i>Create an Impact:</i> Able to create transformative supervisory practices, disseminate, and expand their impact.

Source: Office of the Teacher Civil Service and Educational Personnel Commission (2021c)

4.2 Maintenance Evaluation Criteria and Procedures

The maintenance evaluation for Educational Supervisors includes two key components: the Standard Work Agreement and the Challenging Work Agreement. The Standard Work Agreement covers core duties outlined by OTEPC, focusing on educational supervision, support for educational

management, and professional development. The Challenging Work Agreement, on the other hand, emphasizes initiatives aimed at enhancing instructional quality and the performance of educational institutions to improve student outcomes. Educational supervisors are expected to demonstrate capabilities that align with their specific position or academic standing level, as well as with institutional objectives and national educational policies.

Each fiscal year, educational supervisors prepare their PA and submit it to their supervising official for approval. If a supervisor transfers mid-year, a new agreement must be created with the new supervising official. The structure of the evaluation committee depends on the supervisor's affiliation: for those under OBEC, the committee is appointed by the educational service area office director, with the director or their delegate as chair and two qualified evaluators, such as senior academics or experts at the assistant professor level or higher. For supervisors under OVEC or OPS, the committee is similarly formed but led by the respective supervising official or delegate.

Evaluations are conducted regularly, with committees assessing performance against standards specific to the supervisor's position and academic standing. Results are documented in the Digital Performance Assessment (DPA) system, where each supervisor must achieve a minimum score of 70% from each evaluator to demonstrate proficiency in both agreements.



Source: Songkhla Primay Educational Service Area Office 3 (2024)

4.3 Advancement Evaluation Criteria and Procedures

The qualifications for Educational Supervisors seeking to attain or advance to a higher academic standing level are threefold. Candidates must have held their current position or academic standing level for at least four years, successfully passed the previous three cycles of Maintenance Evaluations, and demonstrated adherence to professional discipline, ethical standards, and codes of conduct over the past four years. The evaluation is organized into three performance domains: Supervisory Planning and Development Skills, Supervisory Development Outcomes, and Academic Contributions.

In the Supervisory Planning and Development Skills domain, supervisors demonstrate their ability to plan and implement strategies, media, innovations, or technology to

improve school or agency quality. Candidates submit a PDF report detailing their supervisory development plan and a video presentation showcasing the challenges, motivations, expected standards, and outcomes of these initiatives, highlighting direct impacts on student outcomes.

The Supervisory Development Outcomes domain evaluates the measurable impact of supervisory efforts on educational quality. Candidates provide a video showing improvements in learning management, educational administration, or institutional quality linked to the strategies in the first domain, with evidence of positive changes in student outcomes.

The Academic Contributions domain is required for supervisors seeking the Expert and Senior Expert levels. For the Expert level, candidates must submit an academic contribution in the form of either a research study or an innovation related to educational supervision. For the Senior Expert level, candidates must submit both a research study and an innovation, each published in a TCI Tier 1 or Tier 2 journal. All contributions must be in PDF format and completed within the past four years.

Evaluations are conducted through the DPA system. For the Professional and Senior Professional levels, candidates must have their eligibility and performance evidence submitted through the Educational Service Area Offices or relevant authority agencies. The parent jurisdiction agency then reviews and verifies the documentation and appoints a three-member panel to assess each candidate. For the Expert and Senior Expert levels, eligibility and evidence are further reviewed by OTPEC, which appoints the evaluation panel. Evaluators for all

levels are selected from a roster of qualified experts authorized by OTEPC.

To be promoted, Educational Supervisors must meet the score thresholds set for each level. For the Professional level, they must score at least 65% in both the Supervisory Planning and Development Skills and Supervisory Development Outcomes domains. The Senior Professional level requires a minimum score of 70% in these areas. For the Expert level, candidates must achieve at least 75% across all three domains, including Academic Contributions, which is assessed starting at this level. The Senior Expert level requires candidates to demonstrate the highest proficiency, scoring a minimum of 80% in all three domains.

5. Educational Administrator Appraisal

Effective educational administrators are required to enhance their competencies in alignment with expected academic standing levels and to support students, teachers, and educational staff in achieving their potential to advance educational quality (Office of the Teacher Civil Service and Educational Personnel Commission, 2021a). Accordingly, OTEPC (2021a) has introduced a framework that details the expected performance standards for each position and academic standing level of Educational Administrators, alongside specific criteria and appraisal procedures. The following subsections provide an exploration of the performance framework and appraisal criteria and procedures.

5.1 Expected Performance Framework

Table 5.8 outlines the competencies expected of educational administrators at different academic standing levels,

specifically Senior Professional, Expert, and Senior Expert. Each level reflects an increasing capacity to innovate, apply research, and contribute to the broader educational community through dissemination and recognized professional standards.

Table 5.8: Educational Administrator Expected Performance Based on Position and Academic Standing Levels

Position/ Academic Standing Levels	Expected Performance
1. Senior Professional	<i>Originate & Improve:</i> Capable of developing and applying innovations to improve the quality of educational administration and management.
2. Expert	<i>Invent & Transform:</i> Able to create and develop innovations in educational administration and management and disseminate them.
3. Senior Expert	<i>Create an Impact:</i> Able to develop innovations and conduct research, disseminate, and expand outcomes as a model that is recognized within the profession.

Source: Office of the Teacher Civil Service and Educational Personnel Commission (2021a)

5.2 Maintenance Evaluation Criteria and Procedures

The maintenance evaluation for Educational Administrators is structured through a Performance Agreement (PA) that includes two main components: the Standard Work Agreement and the Challenging Work Agreement. The Standard Work Agreement outlines essential duties aligned with professional standards, covering educational leadership, organizational management, strategic innovation, and community

engagement. The Challenging Work Agreement requires administrators to demonstrate their ability to drive improvement, foster innovation, or make a meaningful impact through projects aimed at enhancing student outcomes, strengthening teacher performance, and raising institutional standards. These efforts must align with both institutional objectives and national educational goals.

Each year, administrators prepare their PA and submit it for approval by their superior. If reassigned mid-year, administrators must create a new agreement with their new superior. For those newly appointed, the PA covers the initial period up to September 30, with a minimum duration of 30 days if the agreement is intended for academic standing advancement.

The evaluation committee consists of three members appointed by the administrator's superior, including the superior or their representative as chair, and two qualified evaluators from academic or senior educational roles. These evaluators must meet one of the following criteria: hold a faculty position in higher education at the rank of assistant professor or higher, serve as a senior-level central administrator within the Ministry of Education, or be an educational administrator in the relevant jurisdiction with a minimum academic standing of Senior Professional level.

Evaluations assess administrators' adherence to the expected performance standards of their academic standing level. They must achieve a score of at least 70% from each committee member to demonstrate effective fulfillment of both their Standard and Challenging Work Agreements.



Source: Office of Basic Education Commission (2024)

5.3 Advancement Evaluation Criteria and Procedures

The qualifications for Educational Administrators seeking promotion to higher levels are as follows: For the Senior Professional level, candidates must have served as deputy directors of educational authority offices for at least one year, passed the most recent Maintenance Evaluation, and demonstrated adherence to professional discipline, ethical standards, and codes of conduct over the past year. For the Expert level, candidates must have served as Senior Professional deputy directors for three years with passing results in the two most recent Maintenance Evaluations, or as directors of educational authority offices for one year with a passing result in the most recent Maintenance Evaluation. Both roles require consistent adherence to professional discipline, ethical standards, and conduct codes over the relevant period. For the Senior Expert

level, candidates must have served as directors of educational authority offices for at least one year, passed the most recent Maintenance Evaluation, and demonstrated adherence to professional standards over the past year.

The Advancement Evaluation for Educational Administrators centers on three core domains: Strategic Planning and Management Skills, Educational Administration Development Outcomes, and Academic Contributions. In the Strategic Planning and Management Skills domain, candidates are assessed on their development and execution of strategic plans, management tools, or innovations aimed at enhancing educational quality. Candidates must submit a report demonstrating the impact of their management plan, aligned with expected standards and aimed at improving the quality of students, educational personnel, schools, and educational agencies within their jurisdiction. The Educational Administration Development Outcomes domain evaluates the tangible improvements resulting from the administrator's strategies and innovations. Candidates must provide evidence showing positive changes or exemplary developments in students, teachers, school quality, and educational agencies, directly linked to the strategic initiatives in the first domain.

The Academic Contributions domain applies only to the Expert and Senior Expert levels. For the Expert level, candidates must submit a research report on educational administration or an innovation in the field. At the Senior Expert level, candidates must submit both a research study and an educational administration innovation, with research published in a TCI Tier 1 journal. All contributions must have been completed within the past three years.

Unlike other educational professions, Advancement Evaluations for Educational Administrators are conducted outside the DPA system. Candidates for the Senior Professional level submit their eligibility and performance evidence to their parent authority agencies for review and approval, while Expert and Senior Expert candidates, after approval from their parent agencies, submit materials directly to OTPEC. OTPEC then appoints a three-member evaluation panel for each candidate. The panel chair must hold an academic standing level higher than the one being evaluated, while the other two members must hold at least the same level as that being evaluated. For Senior Expert evaluations, all evaluators must hold at least the Senior Expert level or its equivalent.

To qualify for promotion, Educational Administrators must meet score thresholds for each level. For the Senior Professional level, they must score at least 70% in both the Strategic Planning and Management Skills and Educational Administration Development Outcomes domains. The Expert level requires a minimum score of 75% across all three domains, including Academic Contributions, which is assessed starting at this level. For the Senior Expert level, candidates must demonstrate the highest proficiency, scoring at least 80% in all three domains.

Part 7: Learning Provision Development

Thailand's education reforms emphasize 21st century skills, lifelong learning, and equitable access through innovative programs like AI integration, vocational education, and dropout recovery initiatives.

The 13th National Economic and Social Development Plan of Thailand for 2023–2027 (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council, 2022) prioritizes the transformation of the education system to foster a high-skilled, continuously learning workforce capable of meeting future development demands. Emphasizing equitable access to quality education, the plan seeks to address existing disparities and promote lifelong learning opportunities. By leveraging technological advancements, the plan aims to enhance educational delivery and management, ensuring that all individuals can acquire the necessary skills for the evolving job market. This strategic focus on education and learning development is designed to support economic growth, reduce poverty, and promote social equity, ultimately contributing to the nation's sustainable development goals.

Moreover, the National Scheme of Education 2017-2036 (Office of the Education Council, 2017) aims to enhance learning by ensuring equitable, high-quality education for all citizens. Key initiatives include aligning educational outcomes with labor market needs, promoting vocational skills, and integrating digital literacy. The plan focuses on improving educational management, enhancing the efficiency of institutions, and encouraging

community participation. The strategy includes legal reforms for education financing and human resource management, as well as projects to increase the efficiency of small schools and develop budget allocation systems. Special attention is given to inclusive education, supporting students with special needs, and reducing educational disparities. Overall, the plan aims to prepare students for the challenges of the 21st century, promote sustainable development, and achieve social cohesion, relying on effective implementation and stakeholder participation.

Important work has been undertaken to develop interesting learning management as follows:

1. The Driving the Teaching of Artificial Intelligence and Modern Technology in Educational Institutions Project

As reported by the National Electronics and Computer Technology Center (NECTEC) (National Electronics and Computer Technology Center, 2024), Thailand's MOE and MHESI formalized a collaborative project titled **“Driving the Teaching of Artificial Intelligence and Modern Technology in Educational Institutions”** on July 4, 2024. This initiative is supported by four major educational bodies: OBEC, OVEC, and The Institute for the Promotion of Teaching Science and Technology (IPST), all under the MOE, and the National Science and Technology Development Agency (NSTDA) under MHESI. The project seeks to incorporate AI knowledge and ethical considerations into curricula at all educational levels, aligned with Thailand's National AI Strategy (2022–2027) to equip students with relevant skills for the modern workforce and responsible digital citizenship.



Source: Nakhonsawan School (2024)

Key elements of the project include:

- **Curriculum Development:** Creating AI-focused curricula tailored to various educational stages, ensuring age-appropriate and effective content for students across all levels.
- **Teacher Training:** Building AI proficiency among educators to enable the use of appropriate tools and methods suited to students' developmental needs.
- **Credentialing:** Establishing AI competency standards that lead to micro-credentials, allowing students to accumulate academic credits and certify AI-related skills.
- **Pilot Programs:** Implementing initial pilot projects to introduce foundational AI and technology instruction nationwide.
- **Collaborative Knowledge Sharing:** Facilitating joint training sessions and seminars among the educational bodies to foster knowledge exchange and professional growth.

The project also corroborates the MOE’s “**anywhere, anytime**” learning policy. It promotes equitable access to AI education, especially in remote or under-resourced schools. By bridging technological proficiency with ethical awareness, the project would develop a generation that is both technologically skilled and ethically grounded, meeting the demands of a 21st century economy.

2. The Cooperative and Work-Integrated Education (CWIE) Promotion Project

The CWIE Promotion Project led by MHESI integrates academic learning with hands-on work experience to equip graduates with practical skills aligned with industry demands. Launched on October 9, 2019, this project bridges university education with workplace readiness, advancing Thailand’s goals for a highly skilled, job-ready workforce. The CWIE initiative has been formally incorporated into the Higher Education Development Plan for Human Resource Production and Development for 2021-2027, as well as the latest educational reform plan, reinforcing its role in Thailand’s national education and workforce strategies.

CWIE is grounded in four key principles: **University-Workplace Engagement** fosters collaboration between educational institutions and employers; *Co-Designed Curriculum* balances academic, professional, and personal development; *Competency-Based Education* focuses on skill-building and systematic assessment; and *Experiential-Based Learning* immerses students in real-world work environments, reinforcing their learning through practical experience and continuous feedback.

The CWIE Platform, also known as the Manpower Demand-Driven Education Platform for Employability and Career Development, supports CWIE implementation nationwide. Developed by MHESI with academic, industry, and community input, the platform standardizes CWIE processes and connects students with employers. Its goals include aligning education with market demands, supporting workforce policies, enhancing CWIE quality, and promoting career readiness.

The platform operates through five key processes: Information sharing aligns expectations among stakeholders; Matching connects students with employers through a centralized CWIE database; Co-Design and Implementation supports curriculum creation and role-setting; Assessment and Development ensures continuous program improvement through the PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) model; and Outreach Activities expand CWIE's impact by promoting international opportunities, career development, and academic-industry partnerships.

The CWIE Platform aims to double student participation in five years, enhancing employability, career development, and entrepreneurial skills. By aligning education with labor market needs, this initiative strengthens Thailand's workforce capabilities and supports sustainable economic growth (MHESI, 2022).



Source: Businessplus (2024)

3. The New Breed Graduates Project (Bandit Phan Mai)

The MHESI initiates the New Breed Graduates or “*Bandit Phan Mai*” project to develop a highly competent workforce aligned with the New Growth Engine industries under the Thailand 4.0 policy. This initiative addresses both academic and professional training, integrating theoretical knowledge with practical skills to meet market demands and promote lifelong learning. It supports economic growth through two strategic approaches: enhancing existing industries (First S-Curve) and investing in emerging sectors (New S-Curve) to drive the future economy. The program offers undergraduate, graduate, and certificate courses, emphasizing multidisciplinary studies to equip graduates with high-level competencies necessary for the digital economy. Target industries include modern automotive, smart electronics, advanced agriculture and biotechnology, food processing, industrial robotics, aviation and logistics, biofuels and biochemicals, digital, and health tourism.

These curricula aim to produce professionals with STEM, innovative, and digital skills, along with a global social and life balance, aligning with national education reforms and societal needs (Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research, and Innovation, 2022).

Since 2019, 122 higher education institutions have offered a total of 535 programs approved by the MHESI, including 46 degree programs and 489 non-degree programs (Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research, and Innovation, n.d.-a). Some interesting example programs spanning various fields, including technology, education, health, agriculture, and business in Fiscal Year 2024 are (Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research, and Innovation, n.d.-b):

- *EV Conversion and Services* at Siam University focuses on converting traditional vehicles to electric and providing related services.
- *Generative AI for Business Opportunities* at the University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce teaches the use of AI for engineering projects to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- *Balanced Literacy for Early Childhood Education* at Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University trains early childhood teachers to design balanced literacy learning experiences.
- *Innovative Educational and Teaching Techniques Development* at King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang focuses on developing skills in creating educational innovations and modern teaching techniques.
- *Advanced Child Caregivers* at Mahasarakham University offers professional training for caregivers specializing in child care.

- *Thai Traditional Medicine Competency Enhancement* at Mahidol University improves skills and knowledge in traditional Thai medicine.

- *Smart Agriculture for Safe Crop Production* at Rajamangala University of Technology Isan, Nakhon Ratchasima Campus, teaches safe crop production using smart agriculture technologies.

- *Elevating Business Management through Intelligence Business Technology* at Hatyai University applies business intelligence technology to improve business management.

- *Developing Processed Food Innovations for Future Food Businesses* at Rangsit University equips participants with skills in food product innovation and business planning.



Source: Samrangsit Online (2023)

4. The Innovative Education Area (Sandbox) Scheme

The Sandbox scheme was established to address the urgent need to improve basic education in response to 21st century social and economic changes. Previous educational reforms had limited success due to high costs and insufficient impact on learning outcomes. Enacted in 2019, the Innovative Education Area Act allows specific regions to experiment with tailored educational innovations, aiming to create scalable models of excellence.

This initiative focuses on decentralizing educational administration by granting autonomy to local educational agencies and pilot schools. This decentralization enhances efficiency and responsiveness while fostering collaboration among government entities, local administrative organizations, the private sector, and civil society. The primary objectives are to improve student outcomes, reduce educational disparities, and provide equitable learning opportunities. For 2021-2025, the plan aims to increase the number of pilot schools to cover 80% of schools in Group 1 areas (Si sa ket, Rayong, Satun) and 50% in Group 2 areas (Chiang Mai, Kanchanaburi, Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat). Additionally, it plans to establish up to three new innovative education areas and extend successful practices to at least 50% of basic education institutions nationwide, ensuring these schools can manage their educational processes autonomously.

The 2022 annual report highlights significant progress, including the implementation of various educational innovations, improved student competencies, and enhanced stakeholder collaboration. Innovative areas have shown improvements in active learning, curriculum adjustments, and quality assurance

systems. Despite these successes, challenges such as policy alignment and resource mobilization persist, requiring ongoing efforts. Initially, eight areas were designated as innovative education areas: Chiang Mai, Kanchanaburi, Si sa ket, Rayong, Satun, Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat. Subsequently, eleven additional areas were included: Bangkok, Krabi, Chanthaburi, Trat, Phuket, Mae Hong Son, Songkhla, Sa Kaeo, Sukhothai, Surat Thani, and Ubon Ratchathani. These areas serve as experimental hubs where new educational methods and practices are developed and tested, with the potential for nationwide application (Office of Innovative Education Area Administration, 2023).



Source: Thai Civil Rights and Investigative Journalism (2023)

5. Bringing Students Back to School Project

This project, also known as “Pha Nong Klap Ma Rien” project, is initiated by the MOE to address the issue of student dropouts by identifying, tracking, and reintegrating these students into the formal education system. The project collaborates with 12 agencies and utilizes an application for efficient tracking and management of dropout students, collecting detailed data on each student and the reasons for their dropout.

As of December 26, 2022, the project has identified 121,642 dropouts and successfully reintegrated 121,050 of them. The remaining 592 students are being reintegrated through specific channels: 22 under OBEC, 168 under OVEC, and 402 under ONIE.

The project’s methodology includes data collection, tailored interventions, and continuous monitoring to ensure students remain in the education system. The comprehensive support network involves government agencies, schools, and communities, significantly improving educational access for marginalized and at-risk students. By leveraging technology and data-driven approaches, the project aims to provide sustainable solutions and enhance the overall quality of education in Thailand (Ministry of Education, 2023b).

6. Boarding Vocational Program: Free Education and Career Opportunities Project

This MOE project aims to increase access to quality education for disadvantaged students, particularly those in remote areas. It provides vocational training, free education, and accommodation to economically disadvantaged students and

those with specific educational needs. The project collaborates with 88 institutions, including technical colleges and vocational schools, to offer comprehensive support, including infrastructure improvements and basic amenities.

In Academic Year 2022, the project enrolled 3,256 students in its first batch of vocational training programs. Overall, it has provided educational opportunities to over 117,480 students, significantly improving their employability through vocational skills. The project's long-term vision is to create sustainable educational pathways for disadvantaged youths, ensuring they acquire necessary skills and secure employment. By continuously expanding its reach and enhancing the quality of education, the project fosters the overall development and career readiness of its participants (Ministry of Education, 2023b).



Source: Focusnews (2022)

7. Credit Bank System at the Basic Education and Vocational Education Levels

In 2024, the Ministerial Notification on Guidelines for Implementing the Credit Bank System at the Basic and Vocational Education Levels 2024 (Ministry of Education, 2024b) was promulgated to advance the credit bank system across these educational levels. This system enables students and the public to accumulate, transfer, and apply academic credits and learning outcomes to further their education and careers, fostering a culture of lifelong learning. Aimed at enhancing national competitiveness, the credit bank system promotes skill and knowledge development aligned with national qualification standards. Credits can be earned through formal education, non-formal education, and experiential learning in vocational training or workplace settings, supporting flexible, continuous learning and skill development for individuals of all ages.

The Notification stated that key elements of the system include enabling credit accumulation at registered educational institutions and facilitating credit transfers between institutions, provided they align with the individual's educational goals. This includes both academic achievements from formal education and validated skills from practical experience. Educational institutions are responsible for managing credit accumulation and collaborating with other institutions for smooth credit transfers, while Provincial Education Offices coordinate regional efforts in credit bank registration and data integration. At the national level, Ministry of Education committees oversee policy, ensuring the system aligns with Thailand's broader educational goals. Regulations on data protection are also established to secure lifetime access to accumulated credits, encouraging ongoing

learning. Institutions are accountable for accurately recording and reporting credits within the National Qualifications Framework, ensuring clear validation of skills and knowledge. National and regional bodies are tasked with collaboratively managing and monitoring this system, each with defined roles to ensure seamless credit transfers and recognition of skills across educational levels (Ministry of Education, 2024b).

The Minister of Education stated that the credit bank system addresses the need for education to support lifelong, flexible learning, allowing individuals to learn anywhere, anytime to keep pace with global changes. OEC is the main agency to drive the system's implementation for basic and vocational education, with guidelines from key agencies expected by the first semester of 2024. OBEC will focus on formal basic education, while DLE addresses non-formal and informal education. For vocational education, OVEC will cover formal, non-formal, and co-education education. OPEC will create non-formal and short-term courses in private institutions to support credit accumulation (Ministry of Education, 2024a).



Chapter 6

Budget Allocation and Investment in Education

Chapter 6 is divided into two parts:

Part 1: Educational Budget Allocation

Part 2: Budget Allocation to Support Education
in the Form of Funds or Working Capital

Elaborate details regarding these topics follow below.

The COVID-19 pandemic reshaped budget priorities, underscoring the urgency of digital transformation, health measures, and support for marginalized communities. Amid declining post-pandemic allocations, this chapter explores strategic approaches to sustain quality education, promote equity, and foster lifelong learning. By analyzing budget trends, key funding mechanisms, and future strategies, it offers insights into the challenges and opportunities for a resilient and inclusive education system. These themes underscore the critical link between investment in education and national progress.

The education budget represents a significant investment by the public sector, officially known as the ‘Budget Allocation for Education.’ This allocation is a crucial mechanism employed by the government to ensure the production and development of quality manpower necessary for the country’s progress.

The budget allocation for education in Thailand has evolved significantly over the years, reflecting the country’s shifting priorities and the changing educational landscape. Initially, the budget focused on developing the necessary infrastructure to support basic educational needs. This included constructing school buildings, providing essential furniture, and procuring learning materials. The financial responsibility for many aspects of a child’s education, such as tuition fees and school uniforms, traditionally fell on parents.

However, with the introduction of the National Education Act 1999, the government took a monumental step towards inclusive education by guaranteeing 12 years of free basic education to all citizens. This policy ensured that from primary grade 1 to secondary grade 12, education would be state-funded, thereby removing a significant financial burden from families (Office of the National Education Commission, 1999). The policy was further expanded in 2016 when the Order of the National Council for Peace and Order No.28/2016 extended the provision of free education to 15 years, including three years of early childhood education.

Part 1: Educational Budget Allocation

1. Educational Budget Allocation in the Normal Form and impact of Covid-19

The COVID-19 pandemic drastically altered the landscape of education worldwide, forcing governments to rethink and restructure their educational budgets to address new challenges and opportunities. In Thailand, the post-pandemic era has seen a strategic realignment of budget allocations to ensure the resilience and sustainability of the education system. This section provides a detailed analysis of the budget allocation for education in Thailand in 2023, highlighting key changes, focus areas, and long-term investment strategies.

Table 6.1: Budget for Education (2018-2023)

Fiscal Years	Education Budget (Million Baht)	Total Budget (Million Baht)	GDP (Million Baht)	% of Education Budget to Total Budget	% of Education Budget to GDP
2018	523,569.40	3,050,000.00	16,373,343.0	17.2	3.2
2019	510,427.00	3,000,000.00	16,892,411.0	17.0	3.0
2020	493,724.00	3,200,000.00	15,653,881.0	15.4	3.2
2021	482,764.50	3,285,962.50	16,179,826.0	14.7	3.0
2022	456,240.10	3,100,000.00	17,102,100.0	14.7	2.7
2023	450,444.90	3,185,000.00	17,905,900.0	14.1	2.5

Source: Office of the Education Council (2023); Ministry of Education (2023)

1.1 Pre COVID-19 Pandemic (2018-2019)

During the pre-COVID period, the education budget in Thailand remained relatively stable and substantial. In 2018, the budget was 523,569.40 million baht, and in 2019, it was 510,427.00 million baht. These figures represented 17.2% and 17.0% of the total national budget, respectively. The investments were primarily directed towards infrastructure development, teacher training, and expanding access to education. This allocation reflects a strong commitment to enhancing educational quality and accessibility, ensuring that the foundational structures and resources necessary for effective learning were in place.

1.2 During COVID-19 Pandemic (2020-2021)

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic had profound implications for Thailand's education budget and priorities. In 2020, the education budget decreased to 493,724 million baht, accounting for 15.4% of the total national budget. This reallocation was necessary to address urgent public health needs, including funding healthcare systems, vaccine distribution, and economic relief measures.

The pandemic necessitated a sudden transition to remote learning, highlighting the digital divide. A significant portion of the education budget was redirected towards providing digital infrastructure, such as internet access and devices for students and teachers. Additionally, schools required extra funding to implement health and safety protocols, including sanitization, personal protective equipment (PPE), and modifications to physical spaces to ensure social distancing.

The shift to online education exposed significant disparities in access to technology and the internet, particularly in rural and low-income areas. Many students struggled with inadequate devices or connectivity issues. Prolonged school closures and the transition to remote learning led to substantial learning losses, especially for younger students and those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Moreover, the pandemic exacerbated mental health issues among students, necessitating additional support services, which required further funding. This included providing counseling services and resources to help students cope with the psychological impact of the pandemic.

Indeed, the COVID-19 pandemic drastically altered the educational landscape in Thailand, leading to a significant reallocation of the education budget to address emergent needs. Investments in digital infrastructure, health and safety measures, and mental health support were prioritized to ensure educational continuity and support the well-being of students and teachers during this challenging period.

1.3 Post COVID-19 Pandemic (2022-2023)

The post-pandemic period saw a continued decline in the education budget, reflecting ongoing economic challenges and the need for recovery. In 2022, the education budget dropped to 456,240.10 million baht, representing 14.7% of the total national budget. This trend continued in 2023, with the budget further decreasing to 450,444.90 million baht, or 14.1% of the total budget. As Thailand focused on economic recovery, there was a need to balance educational investments with other critical areas such as economic stimulus packages and healthcare system strengthening.

The pandemic experiences led to the adoption of hybrid learning models, combining in-person and online education. This shift required sustained investment in digital infrastructure and ongoing teacher training in digital competencies. However, the reduced budget posed significant challenges in adequately funding all necessary areas, including infrastructure upgrades, teacher salaries, and educational programs.

Ensuring equitable access to quality education remained a significant challenge, with ongoing efforts needed to bridge the gaps exacerbated by the pandemic. Additional resources were required to support students from marginalized communities, who were disproportionately affected by the pandemic. Despite the budget constraints, there was a concerted effort to maintain and enhance educational equity and support for vulnerable groups.

The post-pandemic period presented significant challenges for Thailand's education system, with budget declines reflecting broader economic recovery efforts. Nevertheless, the adoption of hybrid learning models and the emphasis on digital infrastructure highlighted the government's commitment to modernizing education. Moving forward, addressing funding constraints, ensuring equity, and supporting vulnerable students will be crucial for the continued development and resilience of Thailand's education system.

2. Educational Budget Allocation in the Normal Form and impact of Covid-19

The table below provides a comprehensive breakdown of the education budget allocation in Thailand across various categories from 2016 to 2023. This analysis aims to examine the trends and shifts in fund allocation across different educational levels and services, with a particular emphasis on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Source: Aksorn. (n.d.).

Table 6.2: Analysis of Education Budget Allocation by Category (2018-2023)

Fiscal Years	Pre-Elementary, Elementary, and Secondary Education (%)	Higher Education (%)	Undefined Education (%)	Support Services (%)	Research and Development (%)	Other Education (%)
2018	62.1	20.7	0.7	1.3	9.1	6.1
2019	66.4	19.4	0.5	0.7	2.0	8.5
2020	69.2	20.4	0.5	2.2	0.2	7.6
2021	68.3	21.2	0.5	2.5	0.1	7.5
2022	67.6	22.8	0.5	1.9	0.0	7.1
2023	65.5	22.9	0.5	2.2	0.0	8.8

Source: Office of the Education Council (2023); Ministry of Education (2023)

2.1 Pre COVID-19 Pandemic (2018-November 2019)

From 2018 to 2019, the budget allocation for Pre-Elementary, Elementary, and Secondary Education averaged around 67.3%, reflecting a strong emphasis on foundational education. However, there was a slight decline from 70.6% in 2016 to 66.4% in 2019, indicating a gradual reallocation of resources to other areas. During this period, Higher Education’s share of the budget remained relatively stable, fluctuating between 19.4% and 21.0%. This consistency suggests a steady commitment to tertiary education to support economic growth and innovation. While the budget for Other Education increased from 3.7% in 2016 to 8.5% in 2019, reflecting a growing investment in alternative educational programs and services.

2.2 During COVID-19 Pandemic (December 2020-September 2021)

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the budget allocation for Pre-Elementary, Elementary, and Secondary Education remained relatively stable at around 68.7%, indicating continued support for this crucial sector despite the crisis. This stability underscores the government's commitment to maintaining foundational education amidst unprecedented challenges.

Higher Education saw a slightly increase in budget allocation, rising to 21.2% in 2021. This trend underscores the importance of advanced education in adapting to and recovering from the pandemic's impacts. The increased funding reflects the need to support higher education institutions in transitioning to online learning and in addressing the broader economic and social challenges posed by the pandemic. Support Services experienced a significant increase to 2.5% in 2021, reflecting the urgent need for digital infrastructure and support systems to facilitate remote and hybrid learning environments due to the pandemic. This allocation highlights the government's recognition of the critical role of technological support in ensuring educational continuity during lockdowns and social distancing measures.

Thailand's education budget allocation from 2016 to 2023 reflects a dynamic response to changing educational needs, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. The trends indicate a balanced approach to supporting foundational education while progressively enhancing higher education and other educational services. These shifts demonstrate a responsive educational policy framework aimed at fostering a comprehensive and resilient education system. By prioritizing

digital infrastructure, support services, and higher education, Thailand is positioning itself to address both current educational challenges and future opportunities.

In response to the educational challenges posed by COVID-19, Thailand's Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC) has outlined key policies for the fiscal year 2023 to ensure equitable and quality education for all students. These policies prioritize the development of safe learning environments, enhanced health measures, and robust safety systems (MOE Safety Platform) to protect students from diseases and disasters. To address learning loss, OBEC focuses on improving access to education and mental health support, especially for early childhood and basic education students, including those with disabilities. The budget also supports developing competency-based curricula, active learning methods, and continuous assessment to enhance student engagement and performance. Additionally, there is an emphasis on leveraging digital technologies for learning and decentralizing educational management with block grant budget allocations to improve efficiency and governance. These measures aim to mitigate the pandemic's impact and ensure sustainable educational development.

2.3 Post COVID-19 Pandemic (October 2022-present)

During the post-COV-19 pandemic (2022–2023), Thailand's education budget faced continued declines, with allocations dropping to 2.7% of GDP in 2022 and 2.5% in 2023, marking historic lows. Foundational education, encompassing Pre-Elementary, Elementary, and Secondary Education, saw a reduced share of the budget, falling from 67.6% in 2022 to

65.5% in 2023, despite persistent learning losses and inequities exacerbated by the pandemic. While higher education's share increased to 22.9% in 2023, reflecting its role in economic recovery and workforce development, foundational education's diminished allocation constrained efforts to address systemic issues like learning recovery, teacher training, and infrastructure improvements. Additionally, alternative education programs and lifelong learning initiatives, categorized under "Other Education," gained prominence, with their share rising to 8.8% in 2023, signaling a shift toward addressing broader educational pathways.

Investments in digital infrastructure and hybrid learning models stabilized, with Support Services maintaining a 2.2% share of the budget in 2023. However, the absence of funding for Research and Development (0.0% in 2022 and 2023) limited Thailand's ability to innovate and modernize its education system. This period highlighted growing inequities in access to quality education, particularly in underserved areas where digital and foundational resources remained insufficient. While the increased emphasis on alternative and higher education aligns with national recovery goals, the lack of prioritization for foundational education and innovation poses risks to long-term resilience and equity in the education system. Addressing these challenges requires a strategic rebalancing of resources to strengthen foundational learning and expand access to high-quality education for all.

Part 2: Budget Allocation to Support Education in the Form of Funds or Working Capital

Thailand's education system has benefited significantly from targeted budget allocations and specialized funds that address systemic inequities and promote access to quality education. These funds have not only alleviated financial barriers for students but also strengthened the country's educational infrastructure, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. By leveraging a combination of working capital and strategic initiatives, the government and related organizations have sought to ensure that no student is left behind, even in the face of unprecedented challenges.

This section explores key programs that demonstrate the role of financial planning in sustaining and improving education in Thailand. These include the **Student Loan Fund (SLF)**, the **Equitable Education Fund (EEF)**, and other specialized initiatives aimed at fostering educational access, supporting underprivileged students, and enhancing educational quality.

These funds are partly supported by government budget allocations and partly through income generated by their management. Among these, two funds stand out for their significant impact on educational development: the Student Loan Funds (SLF) and the Equitable Education Fund (EEF).

1. Student Loan Funds (SLF)

The Student Loan Fund (SLF) is instrumental in ensuring that students across Thailand can access secondary and higher education without financial barriers. In 2023, the SLF introduced several key initiatives aimed at improving its effectiveness, enhancing accessibility, and addressing rising education costs. Below are the significant updates:

1.1 Flexible Repayment Options

The SLF implemented diverse repayment plans tailored to students' financial conditions. Among these, the income-contingent repayment (ICR) plans stand out, as borrowers' monthly payments are calculated based on a percentage of their income. This approach ensures repayments remain manageable, reducing the likelihood of financial strain after graduation.

Additionally, the SLF modified its repayment structure to prioritize principal repayment over interest. This adjustment not only lowers total interest burdens but also helps borrowers clear their debts faster. By the end of 2023, this system had benefited over 5.1 million borrowers, many of whom reported reduced financial stress due to the flexible repayment mechanisms.

1.2 Increased Loan Amounts

To cope with rising education and living costs, the SLF raised its loan budget for 2023 by 13%, allocating 46.1 billion baht—an increase from 40.7 billion baht in 2022. This additional funding supported approximately 610,000 students, up from 560,000 students in the previous year.

The increased loan limits ensure that students receive sufficient financial support to cover key expenses, including tuition, textbooks, accommodation, and living costs. For instance:

Secondary education students can now borrow up to 40,000 baht annually, an increase from 35,000 baht and higher education students can borrow up to 75,000 baht annually, compared to 70,000 baht previously. This adjustment reflects

the SLF's commitment to accommodating the growing demand for financial assistance in education.

1.3 Broadened Eligibility Criteria

The SLF expanded its eligibility requirements to support a more diverse student demographic, ensuring financial inclusion for students pursuing both traditional and non-traditional education pathways. Key updates include:

Inclusion of students enrolled in vocational training programs and part-time studies.

Extension of financial assistance to students pursuing certifications in technical fields, such as automotive technology and healthcare.

Removal of loan guarantor requirements starting in 2022, which has simplified loan applications and encouraged more students to apply without legal or procedural barriers.

In 2023, these changes enabled 87,000 new applicants-many of whom were previously ineligible under the older regulations-to access education loans.

1.4 Online Application and Management

The SLF enhanced its online platform to simplify the loan application and management process. Borrowers can now:

Apply for loans digitally, reducing paperwork and application delays.

Monitor application statuses, access repayment plans, and make payments directly through the online portal.

Utilize mobile-friendly features to manage their accounts conveniently.

This digital transformation has significantly increased operational efficiency, with 98% of borrowers now utilizing online services. By streamlining these processes, the SLF has reduced loan approval times by over 30% compared to manual applications.

In 2023, the SLF supported over 5.7 million active borrowers, with cumulative loans amounting to 693 billion baht since the fund’s inception. These efforts have played a crucial role in addressing educational inequality, enabling students from disadvantaged backgrounds to pursue higher education and acquire skills critical for Thailand’s labor market. The SLF’s initiatives reflect its commitment to adapting to the changing financial landscape, ensuring equitable access to education, and reducing financial burdens on Thai students and their families.

2. Equitable Education Fund (EEF)

The Equitable Education Fund (EEF) is a pivotal organization in Thailand’s efforts to reduce educational inequality by targeting support to students from disadvantaged backgrounds. In 2023, EEF implemented a series of initiatives designed to address systemic challenges and improve educational outcomes across the country.

One of EEF’s key measures in 2023 was the expansion of its scholarship program. Recognizing that financial barriers often force students to drop out, the Cabinet approved a progressive increase in the equality scholarship rate. The current scholarship rate of 3,000 baht per year will gradually rise to 4,200 baht per year by 2026. These scholarships currently support 1.34 million disadvantaged students, providing critical financial relief for travel and living expenses. The progressive adjustments are outlined in the table below:

Table 6.3: Incremental Adjustment of Equality Scholarship Rates

Education Levels	Current Rate (Baht)	New Rate (Baht)	Increase (Baht)	2024 (Baht)	2025 (Baht)	2026 (Baht)
Kindergarten	4,000	4,000	No Change	4,000	4,000	4,000
Primary	4,000	4,000	No Change	4,000	4,000	4,000
Lower Secondary	3,000	4,200	+1,200	3,480 (+480)	3,840 (+360)	4,200 (+360)
Upper Secondary (Rural Areas)	3,000	4,200	+1,200	3,480 (+480)	3,840 (+360)	4,200 (+360)

Source: Cabinet Resolution (2023); Equity Education Fund (2024)

This structured increase acknowledges the growing cost of living and aims to alleviate the financial burden for families in the lowest 15% income bracket. While the rates for kindergarten and primary school students remain unchanged at 4,000 baht per year, the adjustment for lower and upper secondary students ensures their needs are better met.

In addition to scholarships, EEF extended its programs to underserved and remote regions, focusing on bridging geographical disparities in educational access. These areas often suffer from inadequate school infrastructure, a lack of qualified teachers, and limited learning materials. EEF’s initiatives directed resources to improve facilities, deploy trained teachers, and provide additional educational support to ensure students in rural regions receive equitable opportunities.

Another significant area of focus for EEF has been the digital divide, which was exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic. To address this, EEF launched a program providing 357,000 students in grades 7–9 with free SIM cards or e-SIMs to

ensure uninterrupted internet access. Supported by a budget of 200 million baht, this initiative enables students to participate in hybrid learning models and enhances their digital literacy skills.

Furthermore, EEF introduced mental health programs to support students coping with the psychological impacts of prolonged school closures and economic instability. These programs include counseling services, mental health workshops, and initiatives to create supportive school environments, which are critical for fostering academic success and personal well-being. EEF also invested in capacity-building initiatives for educators and schools. In 2023, 23,983 teachers underwent professional training, and 750 schools in underserved regions received targeted support. These efforts aim to improve the overall quality of teaching and equip schools to better address the challenges faced by disadvantaged students.

3. Other Key Educational Programs

3.1 Financial Assistance for Poor Students

The COVID-19 pandemic severely impacted economically disadvantaged families, forcing many to prioritize basic survival over education. This situation heightened the risk of dropouts among students from low-income households, particularly in rural areas. Therefore, to provide immediate financial support to poor students, ensuring they could continue their education without interruption despite financial hardships. Equitable Education Fund (EEF), managed the program to provide 800 baht per student to 294,454 students identified as being at high risk of dropping out. This aid, distributed during the first semester of 2021, ensured that 82.2% of the beneficiaries remained enrolled in school.

3.2 Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) Program

Conditional cash transfer programs were established before the pandemic to support underprivileged students. The economic downturn during COVID-19 made such financial aid even more critical to prevent dropouts and promote consistent school attendance. The aim is to reduce dropout rates by providing financial subsidies tied to attendance, ensuring students remained engaged in their education.

The EEF supported **1,244,591 students** from pre-primary to Grade 9 through the CCT Program. Families received financial subsidies contingent on their children maintaining regular school attendance. This targeted intervention effectively encouraged continued participation in compulsory education and mitigated dropout risks.

3.3 Area-Based Education Project

Students in remote and marginalized areas faced significant challenges during the pandemic, including limited access to learning resources and increased economic pressures. These factors disproportionately affected out-of-school youth and children in early education.

To provide targeted support to marginalized groups, reintegrate out-of-school youth into formal education, and offer vocational training opportunities. This program, led by the EEF in collaboration with local education offices and community organizations, supported 45,028 children in need and reintegrated 7,142 out-of-school youth. The reintegration focused on formal education pathways or vocational training programs tailored to job market demands.

3.4 Educational Budgets During COVID-19 Pandemic

The pandemic prompted a reallocation of government resources, with healthcare and economic recovery prioritized. Education budgets were reduced, posing challenges for maintaining access and quality in schools nationwide. Moreover, education budgets were to optimize available resources and sustain essential educational services during the pandemic, with a focus on digital learning and teacher support.

The Ministry of Education (MOE) and Bureau of the Budget allocated 482.7 billion baht in 2021, representing 14.7% of total government expenditure. This budget supported critical initiatives, including distance learning infrastructure, teacher training, and maintaining operational capacity in schools.

3.5 Quality Development in Rural Schools

Rural schools in Thailand often suffer from inadequate infrastructure, limited resources, and teacher shortages. The pandemic worsened these disparities, creating an urgent need for targeted intervention. To improve educational quality in rural areas is to upgrade infrastructure, enhance teacher training, and provide better learning opportunities for students.

The Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC) spearheaded efforts to upgrade 727 schools, train 23,177 teachers, and support over 258,000 students. Teachers received training in 21st-century skills, while schools benefitted from improved infrastructure and teaching materials.

3.6 Vocational Education and Innovation Scholarships

The pandemic underscored the importance of vocational education in preparing students for critical industries and economic recovery. However, financial barriers limited access for many students to vocational training programs. Therefore, it was necessary to support vocational students financially, and encourage them to pursue innovation-driven careers in technical fields such as engineering and technology. Office of the Vocational Education Commission (OVEC) provided scholarships to students enrolled in vocational education programs. The scholarships were specifically designed to foster innovation and technical proficiency, aligning with national economic recovery goals.

3.7 Online and Distance Learning

School closures during the pandemic necessitated a transition to online and distance learning. Nevertheless, rural areas faced a digital divide, with many students lacking access to reliable internet and digital devices.

It was vital to ensure educational continuity through digital platforms, enabling students to continue learning during school closures. The MOE partnered with the Office of the National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission (NBTC) to develop digital and television-based learning platforms. Efforts included improving ICT infrastructure in schools and providing remote learning resources. However, challenges such as internet connectivity and device shortages persisted in rural areas.

3.8 Monitoring Dropout and Attendance

Dropout rates increased during the pandemic, particularly among students from economically disadvantaged families. Effective monitoring systems were essential to track attendance and intervene early.

The EEF enhanced monitoring systems to identify at-risk students and provide targeted support. This approach ensured that vulnerable students remained enrolled and engaged, even during the challenging circumstances of the pandemic.

In conclusion, the COVID-19 pandemic brought unprecedented challenges to Thailand's education system, particularly for disadvantaged and marginalized groups. The government, alongside key organizations like the Equitable Education Fund (EEF), the Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC), and the Office of the Vocational Education Commission (OVEC), implemented critical programs to mitigate these challenges. Initiatives such as financial assistance, conditional cash transfers, area-based education projects, and vocational scholarships played a pivotal role in preventing dropouts, supporting continued learning, and addressing systemic inequities. Additionally, efforts to enhance digital learning infrastructure, improve rural schools, and monitor at-risk students demonstrated a commitment to ensuring educational continuity and quality amidst crises. While these programs have alleviated some of the immediate impacts of the pandemic, sustained investment and targeted strategies will be essential to address lingering disparities and strengthen Thailand's education system for the future.



Chapter 7

International Education in Thailand

Chapter 7 is divided into two parts:

Part 1: International Education in Basic Education
and Higher Education

Part 2: International Cooperation in Education

Elaborate details regarding these topics follow below.

Thailand's emergence as a hub for international education, driven by diverse global curricula and robust partnerships. From the growth of international schools to innovative collaborations in basic and higher education, the chapter highlights Thailand's efforts to align with global standards. Regional and global cooperation, including initiatives with ASEAN, SEAMEO, and UNESCO, showcase the nation's commitment to fostering educational excellence. By embracing international best practices and promoting global citizenship, Thailand is empowering students for success in an interconnected world. These efforts position the country as a leader in the evolving international education landscape.

Thailand has seen a significant evolution in the realm of international education, characterized by the establishment and growth of numerous international schools and programs. This movement aligns with global educational standards and caters to both Thai and foreign students.

Historically, international education in Thailand was primarily aimed at expatriate children whose parents worked in the country. However, recognizing the value of global education, the Thai government expanded access to include Thai students, thereby fostering a more inclusive approach. The Ministry of Commerce now classifies international education as a service industry with substantial growth potential, attracting students from various parts of the world to study in Thailand's international programs. Thailand's policy on international schools shifted significantly during the tenure of Prime Ministers General Chatichai Choonhavan and Anand Panyarachun. In 1991, the government, recognizing the growing presence of foreign investors and their families, allowed the establishment of additional international schools to address the increasing demand. This marked a pivotal moment, as it was the first time the country liberalized regulations for opening such schools. Prime Minister Anand's administration further expanded this policy, permitting Thai students to enroll in international schools and promoting their establishment at all levels, including preschool. These reforms aimed to curb the outflow of funds for overseas education and to provide adequate educational facilities for both foreign and Thai students. (Prayoon Maiphoka, 1999)

The Thai Ministry of Education has established stringent standards for international schools to ensure quality education. Schools must adhere to guidelines whether they use a national curriculum or an accredited international curriculum. This regulatory framework ensures that international schools maintain high standards of teaching and learning, fostering an environment conducive to academic excellence.

Overall, the development of international education in Thailand reflects the nation's commitment to providing quality education that meets global standards. This commitment positions Thailand as a competitive player in the international education landscape, attracting students from around the world and contributing to the country's socio-economic growth.

Part 1: International Education in Basic Education and Higher Education

1. International Education in Basic Education

At the basic education level, international schools in Thailand offer a variety of curricula, including American, British, and International Baccalaureate (IB) programs, as well as national curricula from other countries. These schools cater to a diverse student population, including children of expatriates and Thai students seeking a global education. The Ministry of Education (MOE) oversees these institutions, ensuring they meet international standards and provide quality education. Private international schools are the predominant providers of international education at this level. These schools are managed under the guidelines set by the Office of the Private Education Commission (OPEC), which ensures they adhere to the necessary standards.

International schools in Thailand offer a variety of globally recognized curricula designed to provide comprehensive and flexible education that prepares students for higher education and beyond. Here are some of the most commonly used curricula in Thailand.

1.1 International Curricula in Thailand

1.1.1 American Curriculum

In the United States, individual states govern their education systems, leading to considerable variation in curricula across different American schools, including international institutions. American curriculum evolves continuously, anchored by educational standards and benchmarks designed to promote student achievement. International American schools are generally held to higher academic standards compared to public schools in the U.S.

In Thailand, American curriculum schools cater to children starting as young as five years old, or earlier, in preschools or kindergartens. At this stage, education focuses more on socialization and familiarizing children with the school environment though basic instruction in letters and numbers is typically included.

The main stages of education under the American curriculum are divided into Elementary School (ages 6–11), Middle School (ages 11–14), and High School (ages 14–18). To graduate with an American High School diploma, students are often required to pass exit examinations in core subjects. Additionally, many students opt to take external assessments like Advanced Placement (AP) exams, which enhance university applications. Students planning to pursue higher education in the U.S. commonly take standardized tests such as SAT or ACT

to meet the specific entrance requirements of American universities. Many international schools in Thailand offer the US high school curriculum and provide the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme as an optional pathway for students. For instance, Ruamrudee International School delivers both the American curriculum and the IB Diploma, allowing students to choose a program that aligns with their interests and future educational goals (ThTop10, n.d.). This dual-curriculum approach helps students develop skills and knowledge tailored to their aspirations, equipping them for higher education globally.

Schools adhering to the American curriculum in Thailand, much like their counterparts in the U.S., emphasize a balanced approach to education. They offer a diverse array of extracurricular activities to complement academics, including sports, arts programs, and scholastic clubs. Tutoring and mentoring programs are also integral, fostering both personal and academic development. This approach ensures students develop critical thinking skills, creativity, and a strong sense of community, preparing them for thriving in diverse environments globally.

1.1.2 British Curriculum

In the United Kingdom, education is mandatory for all children between the ages of 5 and 16, with additional provisions for early education (ages 3–5) and post-16 education (ages 16–18). Children are placed into year groups according to their age as of 31 August. While progression between year groups is generally automatic, exceptions are made for students who may need to be placed outside their age group due to extraordinary circumstances.

The British curriculum is structured into “Key Stages,” with each Key Stage encompassing specific year groups. A clearly defined curriculum is established for each stage, detailing academic goals and learning outcomes. Regular assessments and examinations are conducted to monitor students’ progress and ensure they meet the expected standards at every stage.

At **Key Stage 4**, which covers ages 14-16, students engage in a two-year program to prepare for the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE). Most students take a core curriculum that includes English, Mathematics, and Science, complemented by a selection of optional subjects tailored to their interests and goals. On average, students pursue 8 or 9 IGCSE courses. These formal examinations evaluate proficiency in each subject and mark the culmination of compulsory secondary education.

For students aspiring to pursue university education, the journey continues into Key Stage 5, commonly referred to as Sixth Form. During this stage, students undertake Advanced Level (A-Level) courses over two years. These qualifications, alongside GCSE or IGCSE results, form an essential part of the selection criteria for admission to prestigious universities worldwide. Both IGCSE and A-Level qualifications are internationally recognized for their academic rigor and are highly valued in global education systems. Similarly, in schools offering the US curriculum, some include the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme (DP) within the Sixth Form framework, providing an additional option for students. For example, Bangkok Patana School offers both A-Level and the IB DP in their

Sixth Form, allowing students to select the pathway best suited to their academic goals and future aspirations (Bangkok Patana, n.d.).

The table below illustrates the organization of the British education system.

Table 7.1: Structure of the Curriculum and Year Groups

Key Stage	Year Groups	Typical Age Range	Focus
Early Years	Nursery, Reception	3–5	Foundational skills, play-based learning
Key Stage 1	Years 1–2	5–7	Introduction to core subjects (Math, English, Science)
Key Stage 2	Years 3–6	7–11	Broadening knowledge, building academic skills
Key Stage 3	Years 7–9	11–14	Expanding subject choices, foundation for GCSE
Key Stage 4	Years 10–11	14–16	IGCSE preparation and examinations
Key Stage 5	Years 12–13	16–18	Advanced Level (A-Level) courses for university readiness

Source: Ministry of Education (2019)

This structured approach, combined with rigorous assessments, ensures that the British curriculum provides a robust framework for academic and personal development, fostering critical thinking and preparing students for higher education and global opportunities.

1.1.3 International Baccalaureate (IB)

Thailand has increasingly embraced the International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum as a prominent choice for international and local families seeking globally recognized education. With a growing number of IB World Schools across the country, the curriculum offers a pathway for students to achieve academic excellence while fostering global awareness and intercultural understanding.

In Thailand, IB World Schools deliver one or more of the three IB programs—**Primary Years Programme (PYP)**, **Middle Years Programme (MYP)**, and **Diploma Programme (DP)**. Each school must obtain authorization directly from the IB Organization, ensuring that the programs meet rigorous global standards. IB schools in Thailand regularly undergo evaluation to maintain the quality and integrity of their offerings.

These schools are situated in key urban centers, including Bangkok, Chiang Mai, and Pattaya, making the IB curriculum accessible to a diverse population. Families in Thailand value the IB for its ability to integrate local cultural elements while maintaining an internationally oriented framework. The IB curriculum is particularly attractive to Thailand's multicultural community for its adaptability and emphasis on holistic education. Key reasons for its appeal include:

1) Global Relevance: The IB curriculum prepares students for transitioning seamlessly into education systems worldwide. This is especially beneficial for expatriate families and Thai students aspiring to study abroad.

2) Holistic Approach: Beyond academics, the IB fosters the development of critical thinking, intercultural awareness, and responsible citizenship. These attributes align with Thailand's goals to cultivate a globally competent workforce.

3) High Standards: The IB's emphasis on teacher training and consistent evaluation ensures that students receive a world-class education.

4) University Readiness: The IB Diploma Programme is highly respected by universities in Thailand and abroad, providing students with a competitive edge in admissions.

Structure of IB Programs in Thailand

1) Primary Years Programme (PYP): For students aged 3–12, the PYP in Thailand nurtures inquiry-based learning and emphasizes the development of the whole child. Schools often integrate Thai cultural studies within the PYP framework, creating a balance between global perspectives and local relevance.

2) Middle Years Programme (MYP): Catering to students aged 11–16, the MYP in Thailand emphasizes intellectual and personal development. It provides a bridge between foundational learning and the academically rigorous Diploma Programme.

3) Diploma Programme (DP): For students aged 16–18, the DP is widely recognized in Thailand as a gateway to top universities. Thai IB World Schools ensure that students can fulfill local educational requirements, such as Thai language studies, while excelling in internationally benchmarked subjects.

1.1.4 French Curriculum

The Baccalauréat International (French Baccalaureate) is a high school program (Lycée level) in France that emphasizes the development of knowledge across various disciplines. Students who complete this program receive the Baccalauréat diploma, which is recognized by universities worldwide. To illustrate in Thailand: Lycée Français International de Bangkok (LFIB): This school offers the French educational curriculum from kindergarten through high school.

1.1.5 German Curriculum

The German curriculum, culminating in the Abitur, prepares students for university education by emphasizing a broad range of academic subjects, critical thinking, and analytical skills. This curriculum is renowned for its structured and rigorous approach, fostering students' intellectual growth and preparing them for the demands of higher education and professional life.

In Thailand, the German curriculum is offered comprehensively from kindergarten to high school, providing a continuous and cohesive educational journey. For example, RIS Swiss Section - Deutschsprachige Schule Bangkok delivers both the German and Swiss educational curricula from kindergarten through high school. This approach ensures that students are immersed in the German educational philosophy from their early years, emphasizing foundational skills, cultural literacy, and multilingual competencies. As students progress, the curriculum expands to include advanced subjects, aligning with the German educational system's rigorous standards and enabling students to earn the Abitur, which is internationally recognized for university admissions (RIS Swiss Section, n.d.).

1.1.6 Canadian Curriculum

The Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) is used in Canadian high schools, particularly in the province of Ontario. Students who complete this program receive the OSSD, which is recognized by universities worldwide. To illustrate in Thailand, the American School of Bangkok as the American curriculum, this school also offers the Canadian curriculum for certain student groups.

1.1.7 Australian Curriculum

The Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) is the high school curriculum used in the state of Victoria, Australia. It prepares students for university education. For example, in Thailand, Australian International School Bangkok (AISB): This school follows the Australian educational curriculum from kindergarten through high school.

1.1.8 Korean Curriculum

The Korean educational curriculum is known for its rigor and high academic standards. Students who complete high school must take the College Scholastic Ability Test (CSAT) to enter universities. For instance, in Thailand, Korean International School of Bangkok (KISB): This school offers the Korean educational curriculum from kindergarten through high school, with instruction in both Korean and English.

The primary objective of providing international curricula in Thailand's international schools is to accommodate expatriate students whose families work or conduct business in Thailand, as well as Thai families who wish for their children to receive education based on a foreign curriculum. This also prepares students for higher education in the countries that own

these curricula. Generally, these schools deliver instruction in the national language of the curriculum's country of origin, such as French, German, or Korean, ensuring that students receive an education closely aligned with the standards of the respective countries. This approach helps students adapt and succeed in their future university studies abroad.

1.1.9 Singaporean Curriculum

Several international schools in Thailand adopt the Singaporean educational framework, focusing on foundational subjects like Mathematics, Science, and English, alongside cultivating multilingual and critical thinking skills. The Singapore International School of Bangkok (SISB) exemplifies this approach by blending Singaporean and UK curricula with the International Baccalaureate (IB) program. This school emphasizes academic excellence, bilingual proficiency, and character development through trilingual instruction in English, Chinese, and Thai (SISB, 2023). SISB's focus is not only on academic achievement but also on fostering global citizenship and adaptability in a multicultural environment.

Similarly, Anglo Singapore International School focuses on academic rigor aligned with the Singaporean curriculum and offers pathways like the Cambridge IGCSE examinations to provide internationally recognized qualifications. The school emphasizes developing analytical thinking, problem-solving skills, and multilingual capabilities in English, Mandarin, and Thai to prepare students for global opportunities (Anglo Singapore International School, 2023).

Institutions like Thai-Singapore International School and St. Mark's International School integrate Singapore's educational principles with holistic learning approaches.

They focus on building a strong academic foundation while nurturing moral values, creativity, and leadership qualities. These schools aim to prepare students for the dynamic demands of the 21st century by fostering teamwork, communication skills, and digital literacy (St. Mark's International School, 2023).

1.1.10 Chinese Curriculum

Thailand has increasingly incorporated Chinese educational frameworks into its international school system, reflecting the growing significance of Chinese language and culture in global education. The China International School (Thailand), launched in 2023, is a groundbreaking institution as the first school in Thailand to fully implement the Chinese National Curriculum. This curriculum places a strong emphasis on Mandarin language proficiency, cultural heritage, and academic excellence. Teaching materials are sourced directly from China to ensure that students receive an authentic educational experience aligned with national standards. The school also focuses on fostering cross-cultural exchange between Thailand and China, aiming to cultivate students with a deep understanding of both cultures and the ability to navigate global contexts effectively (Bangkok Post, 2023).

The Mandarin International School (MIS) takes an innovative approach by combining the Chinese National Curriculum with the UK Curriculum and the Rising STEAM program from China. This hybrid curriculum is designed to offer students a balanced education that incorporates the analytical and problem-solving skills emphasized in Western education with the rigorous academic foundations of the Chinese system. The school's academic focus includes bilingual proficiency in Mandarin and English, achieved through the use of textbooks

from Beijing Language and Culture University and Cambridge University Press. Additionally, MIS integrates STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) education to foster creativity, critical thinking, and innovation among its students, preparing them for dynamic global careers (Mandarin International School, 2023).

The Thai-Chinese International School (TCIS) offers a distinctive blend of an American-based curriculum and a strong trilingual focus on English, Mandarin, and Thai. Established in 1995, TCIS serves a diverse student body, including Thai, Taiwanese, and international students. The curriculum emphasizes language acquisition alongside cultural understanding, aiming to produce students who are proficient communicators and culturally competent global citizens. With its rigorous academic framework and multicultural orientation, TCIS prepares students for excelling in higher education and professional environments worldwide (Thai-Chinese International School, 2023).

These schools demonstrate a commitment to developing comprehensive curricula that integrate the strengths of Chinese education with global academic standards. They focus on fostering multilingual proficiency, cross-cultural understanding, and 21st-century skills, ensuring that students are well-prepared to succeed in a competitive and interconnected world.

1.2 Accreditation of International Schools in Thailand

In Thailand, international schools undergo accreditation to ensure their quality aligns with both national and international educational standards. The process of accreditation can be categorized into Joint Accreditation and Non-Joint Accreditation, each with distinct approaches and requirements.

Joint Accreditation applies to international schools already accredited by recognized overseas accreditation organizations, such as WASC, NEASC, or CIS. These schools must also comply with Thai national education requirements in specific areas, including the teaching of Thai language, Thai culture, and Thai history. The Office for National Education Standards and Quality Assessment (ONESQA) evaluates these aspects using four key indicators and 12 criteria, focusing solely on the implementation of these subjects. This streamlined evaluation acknowledges the comprehensive assessment conducted by the international accreditation bodies, thereby avoiding duplication and allowing ONESQA to concentrate on areas of local importance.

For instance, in Joint Accreditation, ONESQA ensures that Thai culture, language, and history are taught effectively and meet national expectations without re-evaluating other areas already covered by the foreign accreditation organizations. This collaboration reduces the administrative burden on schools and facilitates seamless integration of international and local educational standards.

Non-Joint Accreditation, on the other hand, involves a full-scale assessment conducted by ONESQA. Schools not holding international accreditation are subject to a comprehensive evaluation of all performance standards, covering management, curricular implementation, student outcomes, teaching quality, and facilities. This process ensures that these schools meet the rigorous national education quality benchmarks set by ONESQA.

The differentiation between Joint and Non-Joint Accreditation reflects Thailand's effort to balance global educational practices with the preservation of local identity. It ensures international schools maintain a strong foundation in Thai culture and language while adhering to the highest standards of global education. (ONESQA, 2023).

1.3 International Schools Association of Thailand (ISAT)

The International Schools Association of Thailand (ISAT) serves as the unified voice of international education in the Kingdom, acting as a hub for collective action among its member schools. Established in 1994 to foster collaboration between five founding schools and the Thai Ministry of Education, ISAT has grown to include 128 member schools. Today, it works with various government ministries to promote the value and benefits of international education in Thailand while driving excellence in educational standards across all schools in the country.

ISAT Mission Statement

ISAT is committed to serving and strengthening its member schools by:

- 1) Advocating for high standards in educational quality and ethical practices;
- 2) Supporting students learning through collaboration and professional development;
- 3) Acting as a bridge between member schools and the government; and
- 4) Promoting public awareness of the quality and diversity of ISAT member schools;

Core Objectives

ISAT fulfills its mission through the following key activities:

- 1) Promoting the ISAT Protocol:** Encouraging adherence to high educational and ethical standards among its members;
- 2) Facilitating Collaboration:** Enhancing communication and cooperation among member schools;
- 3) Raising Public Awareness:** Highlighting the benefits and achievements of ISAT member schools;
- 4) Supporting Development:** Offering professional and institutional development opportunities; and
- 5) Engaging with Government:** Partnering with Thai governmental bodies to implement resolutions and support education policies.

ISAT's Role in Thailand's Education Ecosystem

ISAT's influence extends beyond being a link between international schools and the government. It actively promotes quality education for all schools in Thailand, making it a key driver of educational excellence in the country. ISAT works closely with the Ministry of Education, the Board of Investment (BOI), the Department of International Trade Promotion, and the Office of the Private Education Commission. Some of its member schools have even earned the prestigious Prime Minister's Award, a testament to their exceptional standards.

Accreditation and Curricular Diversity

ISAT member schools are distinguished for their commitment to maintaining high educational standards, with many being accredited by internationally recognized organizations. These accrediting bodies include:

- 1) The Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC);
- 2) The New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC);
- 3) The Council of International Schools (CIS); and
- 4) Education Development Trust (EDT).

ISAT member schools offer a wide variety of curriculums to cater to diverse student needs, including:

- 1) American, British, and International Baccalaureate (IB) programs; and
- 2) National curricula from countries such as France, Switzerland, Singapore, Japan, and Korea.

ISAT remains dedicated to fostering high educational standards, ethical practices, and professional development among its member schools. By representing member schools to the government and ensuring adherence to best practices, ISAT continues to play a vital role in shaping the future of international education in Thailand. Its contributions ensure that students from diverse backgrounds have access to world-class learning opportunities, aligning with the nation's vision for a strong, globally competitive education system.

1.4 Instructional Management of Government Schools Offering International Curricula

Government schools in Thailand that offer international curricula are characterized by several key features aimed at providing a high-quality, globally aligned education. Bilingual education is a cornerstone of these schools, with instruction primarily in English, supplemented by Thai to ensure students are proficient in both languages. Additional language support programs, including English as a Second Language (ESL) support, are available to help students develop their English skills. Holistic development is emphasized through a wide range of extracurricular activities, such as sports, arts, music, and clubs, promoting well-rounded education. The curriculum also stresses global citizenship, intercultural understanding, and social responsibility, preparing students for a globalized world. Active parental involvement is encouraged through regular communication and parent-teacher associations, ensuring parents are engaged in school activities and decision-making processes. Feedback mechanisms are implemented to ensure continuous improvement based on input from students, parents, and teachers.

For example, Chulalongkorn University Demonstration School's English Program is a bilingual education model, combining the Thai national curriculum with English-medium instruction in subjects like math and science. It may also be grouped with international programs in Thailand if it incorporates globally recognized components like the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme. The school provides regular professional development for teachers to stay updated with international education standards and best practices and is

equipped with state-of-the-art classrooms, science labs, and sports facilities. Similarly, Mahidol University International Demonstration School (MUIDS) implements the American curriculum with Advanced Placement (AP) courses, preparing students for higher education in the US and other countries. MUIDS offers extensive support services, including academic advising, counseling, and language support, and promotes active community engagement through involvement of parents and the local community in school governance and activities.

In conclusion, government schools in Thailand that offer international curricula play a crucial role in providing accessible, high-quality education that meets global standards. These schools typically operate under two main models. The first model integrates the Thai national curriculum but delivers instruction and assessments in English, catering to students who aim to achieve bilingual proficiency while adhering to the Ministry of Education's standards. The second model adopts internationally recognized curricula, with most schools utilizing the Cambridge curriculum, which provides globally benchmarked academic pathways (Office of Secondary Education, 2023).

This initiative stems from the Education Hub Project introduced by the Office of Secondary Education to position Thailand as a regional leader in education (Office of Secondary Education, 2023). By integrating international and local curricula, focusing on continuous teacher development, maintaining modern facilities, and emphasizing holistic development, these schools prepare students for both local and international opportunities. They ensure students are equipped for future academic and professional success, bridging the gap between Thai education and global competitiveness.

Table 7.2: Comparison of Traditional National Programs, General International Programs, and Government Schools Offering International Curricula in Thailand

Aspect	National Program	International Program	Government Schools Offering International Curricula
Language of Instruction	Thai	Primarily English, supplemented by Thai	Primarily English, supplemented by Thai
Curriculum Standards	Thai National Curriculum	Internationally recognized curricula such as IB, Cambridge, American	Internationally recognized curricula such as IB, Cambridge, American, etc.
Assessment Methods	National standardized tests and exams	International standardized tests (e.g., IGCSE, IB exams, AP exams)	Mix of national and international standardized tests and continuous assessments
Teacher Qualifications	National teaching qualifications	International teaching qualifications, often with advanced degrees	Combination of national and international qualifications, continuous professional development
Extracurricular Activities	Limited and mainly traditional activities	Extensive range including sports, arts, music, clubs, global citizenship	Wide range including sports, arts, music, clubs, promoting holistic development
Parental Involvement	Traditional parent-teacher meetings	Active engagement through regular communication and parent associations	Strong parental involvement through regular communication and participation
Global Preparedness	Focus on national education requirements	Emphasizes global citizenship and prepares for higher education abroad	Emphasizes global citizenship, intercultural understanding, and higher education abroad
Resources and Infrastructure	Standard facilities	Modern facilities including advanced labs, libraries, digital tools	State-of-the-art facilities including modern classrooms, science labs, and sports amenities

Aspect	National Program	International Program	Government Schools Offering International Curricula
Teacher Professional Development	Limited to national standards	Continuous development aligned with international standards	Regular professional development with a focus on international best practices
University Preparation	Prepares for Thai universities	Prepares for local and international universities	Prepares for both local and international universities, focusing on prestigious institutions

Note: Summary by the authors.

Table 7.2 compares traditional national programs, general international programs, and international curricula offered by government schools in Thailand. Traditional national programs primarily use Thai language instruction and follow the Thai national curriculum with limited extracurricular activities and basic resources. General international programs, in contrast, use English as the primary language, offer internationally recognized curricula, provide extensive extracurricular activities, and emphasize global citizenship and holistic development. Government schools offering international curricula combine the benefits of both approaches, using English for instruction, integrating international and national curricula, providing modern facilities and comprehensive student support services, and actively involving parents and the community. These schools prepare students for both local and international university admissions, focusing on continuous teacher development and ensuring students are well-equipped for global opportunities.

A number of international schools in Thailand has continued to increase as shown in Table 7.3.

Table 7.3: Number of International Schools Operating at the Basic Education Level (Academic Years 2018-2024)

Academic Years	Number of International Schools		
	Bangkok	Regions	Total
2018	109	97	206
2019	110	97	207
2020	117	109	226
2021	111	111	222
2022	*119	*115	*234
2023	*120	*116	*236
2024	*121	*128	*249

Source: Office of the Private Education Commission (2021); *Burantaveekoon, N. (2024, September 4).

Educational statistics of the Office of the Private Education Commission showed that the number of teachers in international schools from 2018 to 2024 has an alternate trend of increase and decrease as shown in Table 7.4

Table 7.4: Number of Teachers in International Schools at the Basic Education Level (Academic Years 2018-2023)

Academic Years	Number of Teachers in International Schools		
	Bangkok	Regions	Total
2018	2,917	2,879	5,796
2019	3,030	2,732	5,762
2020	1,264	2,064	3,328
2021	4,842	3,556	8,398
2022	2022	5,108	3,996
2023	2023	4,817	4,299

Source: Office of the Private Education Commission (2021, 2024)

Table 7.5 presents the number of students in international schools providing basic education from the academic year 2018 to 2024. The number of students in international schools increased during the academic year 2018 to 2019. But in the academic year 2020, the number dropped to only 21,647. This may be due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic which caused the economic recession (Office of the Education Council, 2023). However, in 2021, the situation improved reflecting the number of students increased significantly from 21,647 in 2020 to 55,834 in 2021.

Table 7.5: Number of Students Enrolled in International Schools at the Basic Education Level
(Academic Years 2018-2023)

Academic Years	Number of Students in International Schools		
	Bangkok	Regions	Total
2018	43,497	42,948	86,445
2019	44,395	42,948	87,343
2020	10,539	11,135	21,674
2021	33,646	22,188	55,834
2022	37,680	28,672	66,532
2023	40,115	30,424	70,539

Source: Office of the Private Education Commission (2021); Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education (2022; 2023);
*Buranthaveekoon, N. (2024, September 4)

2. International Education in Higher Education

Internationalization represents an effort to reposition the country’s role to engage with the global community, enhance economic capabilities, and foster the exchange of information with other nations. The key goal of advancing internationalization in education is to establish a network of collaboration between countries, focusing on academic exchanges such as faculty and student exchange programs, dual degree offerings, and cross-national research initiatives. These efforts contribute to the recognition of universities as leading institutions on the global stage (World Class Universities).

Achieving World Class University status reflects the ability to manage higher education institutions according to internationally accepted quality standards. Rankings and ratings of programs or institutions serve as tools to highlight strengths and weaknesses in various aspects of educational institutions, providing benchmarks for continuous improvement (Sudjanya & Tongkeo, 2019).

An Analysis Report on the Strength Indicators of Universities in Thailand based on the 2021 Times Higher Education (THE) Rankings reported that THE is a world-leading provider of higher education data and is renowned for its World University Rankings (WUR). These rankings serve as a critical resource and decision-making tool for students worldwide in selecting universities for further study. Recognized internationally, THE rankings are also utilized as key indicators at both national and global levels. For example, they are used in the IMD World Competitiveness Center's ranking of national competitiveness and as a benchmark in Thailand's Higher Education Plan for Workforce Development for 2021-2027 (Office of National Higher Education Science Research and Innovation Policy Council, 2021).

WUR by THE are also used as a key indicator at both national and global levels, including:

- **Indicator for National Competitiveness Rankings by the IMD World Competitiveness Center (IMD):** The University Education Index is one of the indicators used to rank a country's competitiveness by IMD, incorporating data from THE's WUR. The calculation involves three components, each weighted at 33%: The number of universities in a country included in

THE's WUR. The total score of all universities in the country listed in THE's WUR. The total score of all universities in relation to the country's population.

- **Indicator in Thailand's Higher Education Plan for Workforce Development (2021-2027):** This includes two specific indicators utilizing THE's WUR: Twelve higher education institutions listed in the top 200 of the University Ranking by Subject. Two higher education institutions listed in the top 200 of the World Class University Rankings (WUR).

Organizations supporting internationalization in higher education in Thailand include the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation (MHESI), with the International Affairs Division of the Office of the Permanent Secretary playing a key role, and has Strategies for Promoting Internationalization in Thai Higher Education Institutions.

Additionally, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) has also contributed. MFA formulated the **Strategic Plan for Thailand's International Development Cooperation for 2023-2027** which is a New Paradigm of International Development Cooperation. This plan aims to create transformative changes in development issues for partner countries, with one area of collaboration focusing on human resource development. for example, Training Course on Developing Mechanism for Monitoring and Controlling of Domestic (Internal) Trade, ACMECS Scholarships (on-going), Skill Development in Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Myanmar (on-going) (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2022).

Meanwhile, there are diploma valued by leading Thai universities, including Chulalongkorn University and Mahidol University, as well as international institutions with campuses in Thailand. Universities often recognize the IB for its academic

rigor and the additional components of Creativity, Action & Service (CAS), Theory of Knowledge (TOK), and the Extended Essay, which highlight students' multifaceted capabilities. IB World Schools in Thailand often incorporate Thai language, history, and cultural studies within the curriculum to ensure students gain a strong understanding of the local context. Additionally, extracurricular activities reflecting Thai traditions, such as cultural festivals and community service projects, are frequently integrated into the IB's framework of Creativity, Action & Service (CAS). The International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum has established itself as a premier choice for families in Thailand, offering a balanced blend of global standards and local relevance. With its focus on holistic development, academic excellence, and intercultural understanding, the IB equips students in Thailand with the skills and knowledge to thrive in an interconnected world. Its growing presence across the country reflects Thailand's commitment to fostering world-class education for its future generations. Additionally, some schools in Thailand complement the IB Diploma Programme (DP) with the Career-related Programme (CP), providing students with alternative pathways that integrate academic learning with practical and career-oriented skills. For instance, International School Bangkok (ISB) offers the IB CP as an option, catering to students seeking specialized career preparation alongside an internationally recognized education (ISB, n.d.).

Key statistics of international higher education as shown in Table 7.6-7.9

Table 7.6: Number of International Programs at the Higher Education Level in Thailand
(Academic Years 2018-2024)

Academic Years	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Number of International Higher Education Programs	1,095	1,141	1,184	1,234	1,297	1,338	1,355

Source: Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation (2020, 2024)

Table 7.7: Number of Foreign Students Enrolled in International Programs at the Higher Education Level in Thailand
(Academic Years 2018-2023)

Academic Years Levels	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Bachelor's degree	6,649	7,263	7,733	6,596	7,122	9,302
Graduate Diploma	53	64	57	107	158	112
Master's degree	2,147	2,122	2,755	2,965	3,637	4,437
Higher Graduate Diploma	5	6	0	0	0	0
Doctorate Degree	840	842	1,540	1,525	2,200	2,777
Total	9,694	10,297	12,085	11,193	13,117	16,628

Source: Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation (2020, 2023)

Table 7.8: Numbers of Top Ten Nationalities of International Students in Thailand in 2018-2023

Rank	Nationality	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
1	Chinese	10,598	11,978	14,403	15,786	21,419	23,770
2	Myanmar	2,753	2,437	2,701	2,184	3,708	7,036
3	Cambodian	1,179	1,456	1,669	1,436	1,443	1,499
4	Vietnamese	912	899	928	714	546	618
5	Lao	794	946	891	811	538	643
6	Nepali	677	648	658	469	651	-
7	Indonesian	210	505	547	586	326	546
8	Indian	429	399	466	367	363	-
9	Korean	414	372	389	311	248	-
10	Bhutanese	387	333	317	286	262	-

Source: ThaiPBS (2024)

International students pursue higher education in both Thai and international programs at the diploma, undergraduate and graduate levels. According to the MHESI database, now there are a total of 1,355 international programs (Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research, and Innovation, 2024). These include: **1) Undergraduate levels:** *Chulalongkorn University*: Bachelor of arts program in language and culture (international program); *King Mongkut’s Institute of Technology Ladkrabang*: Bachelor of science program in industrial microbiology (international program); *Thammasat University*:

Bachelor of arts program in management technology (international program); *Uttaradit Rajabhat University*: Bachelor of business administration program in international business (international program); *Siam University*: Bachelor of business administration program in international business (international program), and so on. **2) Graduate levels:** *Chulalongkorn University*: Doctor of Philosophy Program in Educational System Management Leadership; *King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang*: Doctor of philosophy program in industrial business administration (international program); *Thammasat University*: Master of science program (international program); *Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University*: Master of education program in mathematics education (international program); *University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce*: Doctor of philosophy program in economics (international program), and so on.

Part 2: International Cooperation in Education

Thailand's educational cooperation with the international community spans all levels of education, involving both multilateral and bilateral partnerships. Various agencies play a role in fostering these cooperations. Key agencies responsible for education include the MOE, MHESI as well as other ministries such as MFA.

Bureau of International Cooperation (BIC) under Ministry of Education (MOE) has the following missions: 1) To manage and coordinate the Ministry's international cooperation activities; 2) To formulate policies and plans for international cooperation; 3) To promote the enhancement of public administration quality within the organization; and 4) To develop

a centralized information database on international education-related matters (Bureau of International Cooperation, 2021). Currently, it oversees multilateral cooperation with organizations and initiatives such as United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO), Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya -Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS).

Besides, **International Affairs Division (IOA)**, **Office of the Permanent Secretary for Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation (MHESI)** organizing meetings, various activities, and providing scholarships, the **Office of the Education Council under MOE** also promotes educational cooperation with other countries, such as conducting research and organizing international conferences. For example, on July 31, 2024, Police General Permpoon Chidchob, Minister of Education, presided over the International Education Council Seminar on *Education Competitiveness in a Globally Changing Environment*. The event was attended by Dr. Suthep Kaengsanthia, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education; Dr. Atthaphon Sangkhawasee, Secretary General of Education Council; and Acting Sub Lt. Thanu Vongjinda, Secretary General of Basic Education Commission (Ministry of Education, 2024).

This report summarizes educational cooperation, categorized into multilateral and bilateral collaborations, with examples highlighted as follows:

1. Multilateral Cooperation

This refers to educational cooperation involving more than two countries. It includes participation in frameworks of global organizations and regional agencies, where Thailand works with other nations to advance education collectively. Key international organizations with which Thailand cooperates in education are as follow.

1.1 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

The collaboration covers various areas, including early childhood education, sustainable development education, and educational innovation. Thailand's involvement in UNESCO programs highlights its dedication to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), which aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. These are the examples of the projects:

- **Asia-Pacific Regional Policy Dialogue and the Launch of the “2023 Recommendations on Education for Peace, Human Rights, and Sustainable Development”**

Police General Permpoon Chidchob, Thailand's Minister of Education, led the Asia-Pacific Regional Policy Dialogue and launched the “2023 Recommendations on Education for Peace, Human Rights, and Sustainable Development” on June 5, 2024 in Bangkok. The event, opened by UNESCO Bangkok and APCEIU leaders, emphasized education's role in fostering peace, equality, and global citizenship. Key initiatives include the “Happy Learning” policy, which integrates academic, vocational, and life skills through international collaboration and technology-enhanced learning.

These efforts aim to reduce inequality, respect human rights, and build a just society, aligning education with ethical values and sustainable peacebuilding (Ministry of Education, 2024).

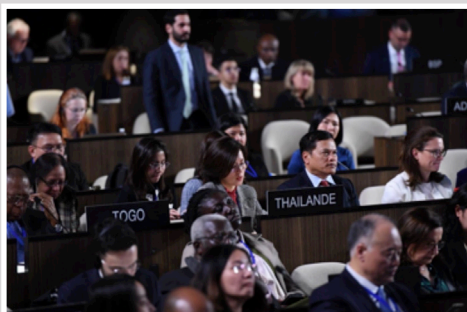


Source: Ministry of Education (2024)

- **The 216th Session of the UNESCO Executive Board**

Thailand's Minister of Education, Ms. Treenuch Thienthong, addressed the Plenary Session of the 216th UNESCO Executive Board in Paris from May 10–24, 2023, as Chairperson of the Thai National Commission for UNESCO. Leading a Thai delegation that included Dr. Attaphon Sangkhawasee (Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education and Vice-Chairperson of the Thai National Commission for UNESCO), and Mr. Pichet Poepakdee (Deputy Permanent Secretary and Secretary General of the Commission), she highlighted Thailand's post-COVID-19 educational recovery efforts. Key initiatives included the “Bringing Children Back to School” project, aimed at

reintegrating out-of-school children through collaborative efforts, and the “Free Vocational Education with Jobs” program, designed to support underprivileged students by enhancing academic and vocational skills. These programs address barriers to education and prepare students with life skills for future opportunities. (Office of the Education Council, 2023).



Source: Ministry of Education (2023)

- **Transforming Education Summit in 2022**

On August 9, 2022, Thailand’s Minister of Education, Ms. Treenuch Thienthong chaired the Transforming Education Summit in 2022 in Bangkok, joined by Dr. Attaphon Sangkhawasee (Secretary General of the Education Council),

Dr. Suphat Champatong (Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education), Mr. Shigeru Aoyagi (UNESCO), Ms. Kyungsun Kim (UNICEF Thailand), and representatives from key organizations such as the Office of Basic Education, Vocational Education, Equitable Education Fund, and the Thai Chamber of Commerce. The meeting focused on gathering insights and strategies for educational transformation. Key proposals from the Transforming Education Summit 2022 emphasized: 1) Empowering education through digital technology to support well-being, open resources, and offline-life respect, 2) Prioritizing marginalized groups by addressing digital divides, safeguarding cultural diversity, and ensuring inclusive design, and 3) Using technology to enhance education by supporting schools, improving knowledge access, and ensuring ethical use of AI and data protection Office of the Education Council, 2022; Equitable Education Fund, 2022).



Source: Office of the Education Council (2022a)

- Thai Government Scholarships in Collaboration with UNESCO for Member States

The Thai Government, in partnership with UNESCO, has initiated scholarship programs to align with UNESCO's medium-term strategy (41 C/4, 2022-2029) and budget framework (41 C/5, 2022-2025). These programs aim to integrate interdisciplinary approaches to achieve all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and foster global citizenship awareness. As a UNESCO Member State, Thailand has leveraged its three UNESCO-designated sites-World Heritage, Biosphere Reserves, and Global Geopark-to promote education for sustainable development (Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, 2023)



Source: Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education (2023)

1.2 United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is the United Nations agency for children, works to protect the rights of every child, especially the most disadvantaged and those

hardest to reach. In Thailand UNICEF works with the Government, partners and our supporters to help provide a fair chance for every child to grow up in a safe, healthy and protective environment and reach their full potential- regardless of gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic background or legal status. These are the examples of the projects:

- **Country Program Document 2022-2026**

UNICEF has cooperated with MOE in preparing the ‘Country Program Document 2022-2026’, which is a program that the Thai government and UNICEF Thailand work together every 5 years to formulate a work plan. The focus of the program includes early childhood development, education, child protection, enhancement of flexibility and social policy. The program contains projects related to the mission of the MOE, such as strengthening education for children at risk of dropout, or those who are out-of-school, development of a competency-based curriculum, teacher development, reducing inequality in education, ensuring school safety, driving early childhood education, and ensuring that early childhood children are ready to learn when they enter primary school.

- **Teacher Handbook for Distance Learning**

UNICEF Thailand has partnered with the OBEC on important projects such as the review of the Teacher Handbook for Distance Learning, the promotion of the use of e-learning for practical learning in educational institutions, organizing reading activities for the safety of life in schools and practices for safety in schools under the supervision of all agencies and organizations (Office of the Education Council, 2023).

1.3 Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

The OECD is particularly well-known for its work in education, where it provides data-driven insights, policy recommendations, and frameworks to improve educational systems worldwide. Its flagship initiatives, such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), help countries benchmark their educational outcomes and identify areas for reform.

Thailand is not a member of the OECD but maintains a strong partnership with the organization to enhance its educational policies and practices. This relationship has been formalized through initiatives like the OECD Country Programme (CPII), which supports Thailand's educational reforms and development strategies. The program focuses on key areas, such as 1) Improving the Quality of Education Statistics: Providing reliable data to inform policy decisions, and 2) Skills Strategy Development: Identifying and developing skills needed for Thailand's economic and social development. These are the examples of the projects:

- **The Education Policies Committee (EDPC)**

EDPC is the highest body of the pyramid created in the new vertical structure of OECD education bodies, which was launched in 2006. The EDPC meetings, which have been held meetings at the level of Education Ministers, are attended by representatives of all member states and representatives of observant countries and the European Union. EDPC, all strategic decisions of which education are taken and plans are made, are carried out on behalf of our country with the representation of the Directorate General of European Union and Foreign Relations. The committee meets twice a year

(in April and November), and at the meeting, developments regarding the programs carried out are presented, the resulting outputs are evaluated, and the medium-term strategy is approved.

Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) was established by the OECD Council in 1968. CERI Governing Board membership is carried out on behalf of countries with the representation of General Directorate. The Board of Directors convenes twice a year (in April and November). CERI monitors the quality of programs, validates the mid-term strategy developed by the EDPC, and evaluates the resulting outputs. Moreover, CERI encourages international dialogue between OECD countries on education and carries out studies for this purpose. CERI is also an extremely important center in which discussions are held and information is compiled on the new orientations of developed countries in their education systems. This center has been conducting educational research and educational innovation studies for OECD countries for nearly 40 years. Within the framework of these activities, new education policies and better links between research and practice are encouraged; the active participation of researchers, practitioners, and government officials in the field of education in international education debates is ensured.

In December 2023, the Cabinet resolved to register Thailand to join the OECD, assigning the National Economic and Social Development Board and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to be responsible for preparing for membership registration. Then, in April 2024, the Minister of Foreign Affairs submitted a letter of intent to join the OECD, and the OECD Council, which consists of 38 member countries, unanimously approved the opening of Accession Discussions for Thailand on

June 17, 2024. As a result, the National Economic and Social Development Board and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs organized a meeting to discuss the progress of Thailand's participation in various OECD committees. Among the 26 cooperation committees, the Education Policy Committee (EDPC) falls under the responsibility of the Office of the Council of Education (Office of the Education Council, 2024).

1.4 Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

an intergovernmental organization that promotes political stability, economic growth, and social development in Southeast Asia. ASEAN has 10 member countries: Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. East Timor has observer status and is expected to become a full member in 2025.



Source: Foreign Affairs Division, Office of the Permanent Secretary for Interior (2024)

- The 13th ASEAN Education Ministers Meeting (13th ASED)

The 13th ASEAN Education Ministers Meeting (13th ASED) took place on August 25, 2024, in Buriram, Thailand, under the theme “*Transforming Education in the Digital Era,*” chaired by Police General Permpoon Chidchob. The event included three key meetings: the 13th ASEAN Education Ministers Meeting (ASED), the 7th ASEAN Plus Three Education Ministers Meeting (APT EMM), and the 7th East Asia Summit Education Ministers Meeting (EAS EMM). The outcomes were encapsulated in the Buriram Joint Statement, highlighting 1) Education in ASEAN Vision 2025: Education supports resilience and addresses vulnerabilities, aligning with global goals, 2) Cooperation for Sustainable Development: Reducing disparities via student exchanges, teacher training, and inclusion, 3) Early Childhood Education: Commitment to equal access through a detailed roadmap, 4) “Happy Learning” Policy: Thailand’s approach focuses on mental well-being and supportive ecosystems, 5) Digital Transformation: Enhancing digital access, literacy, and hybrid learning environments, 6) Human Resource Development: Reskilling/upskilling to meet future workforce needs in green and digital economies, and 7) Regional Partnerships: Acknowledging SEAMEO, UNICEF, UNESCO, and other stakeholders for their contributions (ASEAN, 2024; Foreign Affairs Division, Office of the Permanent Secretary for Interior, 2024).

1.5 Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) is an organization which promotes cooperation in education, science, and culture across Southeast Asia. Its mission focuses on fostering regional collaboration to enhance educational development and address common challenges in

the region. The SEAMEO Secretariat is headquartered in Bangkok. These are the examples of the projects:

- **The 52nd SEAMEO Council Conference in Manila, Philippines**

On February 8–10, 2023, Deputy Minister of Education, Khunying Kalaya Sophonpanich, led a delegation to the 52nd SEAMEO Council Conference in Manila, Philippines. Key discussions included fostering international cooperation through student exchanges, teacher training programs, and integrating cultural values into education. During the 6th SEAMEO Strategic Dialogue, regional ministers emphasized foundational and lifelong learning, digital skills, and equity in education to meet 21st century challenges. Thailand highlighted STEAM education, blending STEM with cultural and historical understanding, and innovative practices like teaching coding without computers to enhance logical thinking and collaboration skills (Office of the Education Council, 2023).



Source: Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education (2023)

- The 6th SEAMEO Strategic Dialogue of Education Ministers (SDEM)

This event chaired by H.E. Sara Zimmerman Duterte-Carpio, Vice President and Minister of Education of the Philippines, focused on the theme *“Prioritising Foundational Learning and Lifelong Learning: Investing in Literacy, Numeracy, and STEM Education in the Digital Era.”* The meeting emphasized regional collaboration to enhance foundational and lifelong learning, addressing learning loss, digital and numeracy skills, curriculum innovation, and capacity-building for educators. As well Thailand’s Deputy Minister of Education, Khunying Kalaya Sophonpanich stressed adapting to automation and digital advancements, promoting digital literacy and self-directed learning. Initiatives like “unplugged coding” for younger students and integrating “Arts of Life” into STEM (creating STEAM) were highlighted to develop reasoning, collaboration, and responsibility among learners. Digital systems were also noted for streamlining education management and real-time data usage for improvement (Office of the Education Council, 2023).



Source: Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education (2023)

1.6 Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) is an intergovernmental forum aimed at fostering dialogue and cooperation between Asia and Europe on various global and regional issues, including education, culture, economics, and sustainable development. ASEM brings together 53 partners, including 30 European and 21 Asian countries, as well as the European Union (EU) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Education is a key area of cooperation within ASEM, with the ASEM Education Process (AEP) focusing on improving collaboration in higher education, promoting mobility among students and academics, fostering lifelong learning, and enhancing the employability of graduates. Examples of projects include:



Source: Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education (2023)

- The 1st ASEM Education Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM1)

On May 22–23, 2023, Thai representatives attended the 1st ASEM Education Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM1) in Malta. The meeting emphasized peer learning, collaboration on SDGs, and sharing best practices across regions. Plans were drafted for the 2nd SOM and the 9th ASEM Education Ministers' Meeting to advance SDG integration in education. Thailand reported progress on developing a national higher education qualifications framework and adopting micro-credentials to enhance student mobility within ASEM member countries, despite limited direct ASEM-related activities in the past three years.

1.7 The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)

is a premier regional forum established in 1989 to foster economic growth, trade, and cooperation across 21 member economies in the Asia-Pacific region. Its initiatives cover diverse areas, including education, aiming to build a resilient, inclusive, and skilled workforce. The Human Resources Development Working Group (HRDWG) is one of APEC's critical mechanisms, promoting collaboration on education, skills development, and workforce policies. Thailand, as an active member, plays a pivotal role in advancing these goals, aligning its national educational strategies with APEC's vision for inclusive and sustainable human resource development. These are the examples of the projects:

- **Participation in the 48th APEC Human Resources Development Working Group and Related Meetings**

Officials from the Bureau of International Cooperation attended the 48th APEC Human Resources Development Working Group (HRDWG) and associated meetings in Detroit, Michigan, USA, from May 14–19, 2023. The event served as a platform for sharing knowledge, exchanging recommendations, and adopting The HRDWG Detroit Non-Binding Principles and Recommendations for Equality and Inclusion in Education, Training, and Employment. These principles focus on fostering equity and inclusivity in the realms of education, training, and workforce engagement (Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, 2023).



Source: Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education (2023)

Additionally, the officials participated in several related events: Education Officials Dialogue: Schools as Community Hubs (May 1-15, 2023). This dialogue explored the role of schools as central points for community engagement and development; High-Level Policy Dialogue (May 15, 2023). Themed on “Strengthening Education and Economic Opportunity and Inclusion for Persons with Disability”, this session focused on enhancing educational and economic inclusion for individuals with disabilities; Workshop on Digital Literacy as a Workforce Skill (May 16, 2023). This workshop emphasized the importance of digital literacy as an essential skill for modern labor markets, highlighting strategies for workforce readiness in the digital age; and Education Network (EDNET) Meeting (May 17–18, 2023). Discussions within this network addressed collaboration in advancing education systems, fostering innovation, and enhancing inclusivity across APEC member economies (Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, 2023).

1.8 The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) is an independent, international cooperative of national research institutions and governmental research agencies. It conducts large-scale comparative studies of educational achievement and other aspects of education. Since its foundation in 1958, IEA studies focus on subjects such as mathematics, science, reading, civic and citizenship education, computer and information literacy, and teacher education. The IEA is responsible for the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) and International Computer and Information Literacy Study (ICILS).

According to the Thai Cabinet resolution on November 21, 1978, the Office of the Education Council is assigned to act as a focal point for IEA and the representative of Thailand at the annual General Assembly as well as maintains Thailand's membership statue in the association and supporting Thai educational agencies in participating in the project to evaluate student achievement in various fields (Office of the Education Council, 2024).

2. Bilateral Cooperation

Thailand has established bilateral educational cooperations with various countries. This report presents these collaborations in alphabetical order of the respective countries. From Strategic Plan for Thailand's International Development Cooperation for 2023-2027 of MFA summarize the cooperation in nine aspects: 1) Agriculture and Rural Development, 2) Development Based on the Philosophy of Sufficiency Economy, 3) Community Economic Promotion, 4) Public Health, 5) Natural Resource, Environmental, and Energy Development, 6) Science and Technology, 7) Trade and Industry, 8) Tourism Promotion, and 9) Education and Human Resource Development (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2022). The following is a summary of collaborative efforts in education:

Table 7.9: Thailand's International Development Cooperation for 2023-2027

Countries	Projects
Strategy 1: Integrated Knowledge and Best Practices of Thailand to Achieve Tangible Outcomes in the Development of Target Countries under the Bilateral Framework	
Cambodia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promoting Teaching and Learning Thai Language Project at the Royal University of Phnom Penh (2019–2024) - Thai Language Project at the National University of Battambang (2020–2023) - Capacity Building Project for Labor and Vocational Education - Capacity Building Project for Teachers - Capacity Building Project for Students by Providing Scholarships in ICT, Construction, Mechanics, and Manufacturing
Loas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research Management and Capacity Building Project (2022–2024) - Development of Non-formal Education Project (2022–2024) - Development of STEM in Lao PDR Project (2022–2024) - Teacher Training and TVET Standards Development Project (2022–2024) - Capacity Building for Sports Science in High-Performance Sport (Elite Sport) Development Project (2022–2024) - Capacity Building for Sports Science and Arts (White School) Project (2022–2024)

Countries	Projects
Myanmar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scholarships and training programs provided upon request for specialized courses: - Project on Disaster Risk Reduction and Management in Schools (DRRM) (Commenced in 2023) - Project on Teacher Training and TVET Standards Development (Commenced in 2023) - Project on Inclusive Education (2022–2024) - Project on Thai Language Teaching Development at Mandalay University of Foreign Languages (MUFL) (Activity-based support upon request) - Project on Thai Language Teaching Development at Yangon University of Foreign Languages (YUFL) (Activity-based support upon request) - Project on Teacher Training and TVET Standards Development, Including Adjustment of Teaching Systems to Address Epidemic Situations
Vietnam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project on Curriculum Development for Thai Language Teaching at Universities in Vietnam
Strategy 3: Promoting Comprehensive and Effective Collaboration with Thailand's Partner Allies	
Germany	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regional Cooperation Programme to Improve the Quality and Labour Market Orientation of Technical and Vocational Education and Training-RECOTVET
Japan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project on ASEAN University Network/ Southeast Asia Engineering Education Development Network (AUN/SEED-Net) phase 4 - Project for Enhancing the Human Resource Development Capacity of Customs Administration
South Korea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Korean Language and International Development for Beginners

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2022)

Furthermore, there are some examples of the projects:

China

- **The “1+2+1” Educational Cooperation Program**

The “1+2+1” Educational Cooperation Program is a cooperation between OBEC, Suan Dusit University (Thailand), and Guangxi University (China) to offer grade 12 students with HSK level 3 or above the opportunity to study a dual-degree program in International Business. Students spend their first year at Suan Dusit University, the next two years at Guangxi University, and their final year back at Suan Dusit University for professional training or thesis completion. Graduates receive degrees from both universities. The program promotes business education, Chinese language proficiency, and aligns with Thailand’s National Strategy to develop globally competent business professionals for future national benefit (Office of the Education Council, 2023).

- **Vocational Education Cooperation Project**

Thai-Chinese Vocational Education Cooperation Project across 210 fields, jointly developing dual-degree programs, providing scholarships, facilitating professional internships in Chinese enterprises, and promoting teacher exchanges. The initiative aims to produce and upskill the workforce to meet industry demands and achieve international standards, covering fields such as modern automotive technology, smart manufacturing technology, solar thermal technology, and high-speed rail maintenance technology. By 2024, the project has developed curricula for 18 vocational diploma programs, standardized 20 dual-degree courses, established two teacher training centers, eight digital

media and standards centers, and four CCTE dual-degree project centers (Royal Thai Government, 2024).

French

- **Teaching in Thailand Project**

The French Language Teaching Assistant Program, “Teaching in Thailand Project,” initiated in 2013, brings French master’s students specializing in teaching French as a foreign language to volunteer in Thai schools for 7-12 weeks. The program aims to enhance French language skills, promote cultural exchange, and strengthen Franco-Thai relations. It was disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, but resumed planning in late 2021. The Office of the Permanent Secretary surveyed schools’ needs for teaching assistants to relaunch the program in the 2022 academic year (Office of the Education Council, 2023).

Germany

- **Developing German language Skills**

The Cooperation Project with the Goethe-Institute Thailand brings German master’s students specializing in teaching German as a foreign language to work as teaching assistants in Thai schools under the MOE. The project aims to improve German language skills among Thai students and teachers, foster cultural exchange, and strengthen Thai-German relations. In 2021, four teaching assistants worked in Bangkok and other provinces for three months. The program benefits Thai students by enhancing communication skills and career opportunities while providing teaching assistants with valuable cross-cultural experience for their future careers (Office of the Education Council, 2023).

Japan

- **National Institutes of Technology (KOSEN)**

The collaboration between Princess Chulabhorn Science High Schools (PCSHS) and National Institutes of Technology (KOSEN), Japan, began in 2016 with the signing of an academic cooperation agreement between the Office of the Basic Education Commission and KOSEN Institutes. In the scope of cooperation are: 1) Student exchange 2) Exchange of faculty, administration, and researchers 3) Exchanging academic information and learning materials 4) Joint research and presentation. In 2024, PCSHS and KOSEN have signed a total of 13 Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) (Charoynoot, 2024).

The Thai Cabinet approved the Royal Thai Government Scholarship to provide scholarships for students from PCSHS to further their studies at KOSEN for 7 years in Japan on January 3, 2018. This scholarship program was targeted for students from PCSHS, starting with the first cohort in the academic year 2018 and the second cohort in 2023. Altogether, there is a total of 24 scholarships under Phase 1. Furthermore, the Cabinet approved on December 4, 2018 the Industrial Human Resources Development Project. It would involve setting up two Thai-KOSEN Institutes at King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang (KMITL) and King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi (KMUTT). The scholarship program has entered into Phase 2 (2020-2030), with 72 scholarships given to PCSHS students to pursue their studies in KOSEN in Japan. (Charoynoot, 2024).

In the academic year 2024, PCSHS students studying at KOSEN reached 91. Graduated scholarship recipients will have a chance to work in target industries or at Thai-KOSEN Institutes or governmental agencies. (Charoynoot, 2024).



Source: Charoynoot (2024)

- Collaboration with Super Science High Schools, Japan

The collaboration between Princess Chulabhorn Science High Schools (PCSHS) and the Super Science High Schools of Japan (SSHs) has been made possible since 2011 with the assistance of the Embassy of Japan in Thailand and Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT). The scope of cooperation covers: 1) Exchange visits of principals, teachers and students for cooperation on academic activities; 2) Promotion of communication among students in

group through the Skype for enhancing English language proficiency and collaboration in science projects among students in Grade 10 and 11 3) Demonstration classes in mathematics, science and related topics for enhancing teaching capability. 4) Joint presentation of science projects and collaboration in research projects among students. 5) Thailand-Japan Student Science Fairs (Charoynoot, 2024).



Source: Charoynoot (2024)

- **Thailand – Japan Student Science Fair (TJ-SSF)**

Thailand – Japan Student Science Fair started in 2015 to ensure the collaborative teaching and learning, and thus building closer and stronger collaboration in gifted education in Mathematics and Science between the Thailand and Japan, as the motto of TJ – SSF “Seeding Innovations through Fostering Thailand - Japan Youth Friendship”. The objective

of this fair is to exchange knowledge and experiences scientifically and culturally among students, teachers, and executives in gifted education in Science and Technology to cultivate global outlook for improving Thailand – Japan’s sustainability and competitiveness in the 21st century (Charoynoot, 2024).



Source: Charoynoot (2024)

- **Thailand – Japan Student ICT Fair (TJ-SIF)**

Thailand – Japan Student ICT Fair started in 2016, co-organized by OBEC, the Embassy of Japan, MEXT, and JICA, allows for the sharing of ICT innovations among students representing PCSHS, SSH, and KOSEN institutions. TJ-SIF are emphasized on information communication and technology (ICT). The topics cover applications and software, robotics, hardware and internet of things (IoT) (Charoynoot, 2024).



Source: Charoynoot (2024)

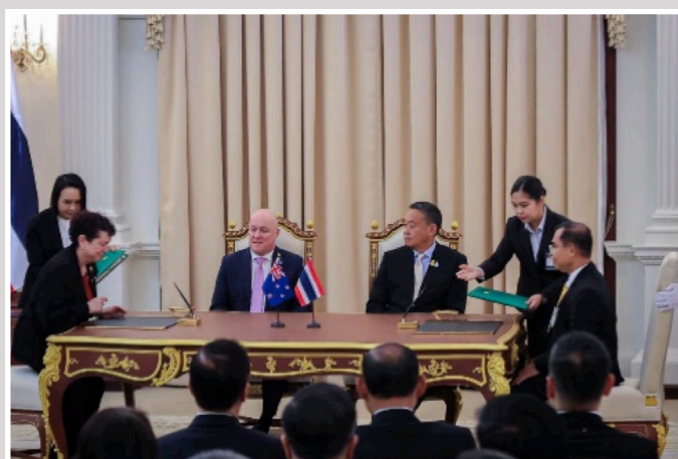
New Zealand

- Academic Collaboration between Princess Chulabhorn Science High Schools (PCSHS) and New Zealand

The collaboration between PCSHS and New Zealand started in 2016, and the major collaborations have grown to include the following activities 1) English Skill Development Program: Annual training for administrators, teachers, and students at University of Otago, New Zealand, every March-April since 2016. 2) New Zealand Government Scholarships for PCSHS students to attend short-term English language programs at University of Otago 3) Collaboration with eight universities in New Zealand for direct undergraduate admissions, offering a three-year study pathway. 4) Short-Term Exchange Program: Exchange opportunities through Study New Zealand and Study Dunedin. 5) Teacher Training Program: The online training for science and mathematics teachers in

teaching in English in partnership with University of Otago
6) IELTS Preparation Program Online training for students to improve IELTS proficiency. 7) Digital Classroom Project: An online collaboration between PCSHS and Otago Girls' High School.

The Office of the Basic Education Commission, Thailand (OBEC) have signed MOU with Massey University and University of Otago aim to 1) Exchange of information and materials that are of mutual interest 2) Mobility between both parties for staff and students as appropriate 3) Provision of briefing services by each party for visitors from the other party and other forms of cooperation which the parties may jointly arrange (Charoynoot, 2024).



Source: Charoynoot (2024)

Russia

- **Thai-Russian Roundtable Conference**

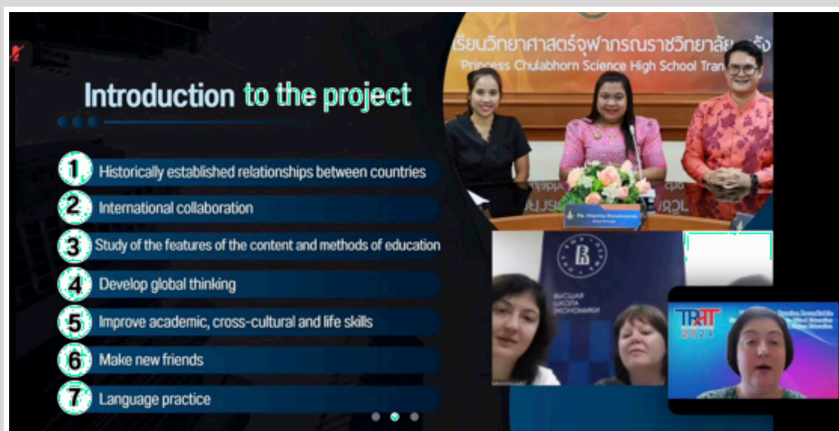
This roundtable conference was initiated by Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, following her visit to the Russian Federation in 2017. The initiative aims to establish educational cooperation between Thailand and Russia, particularly in the field of special education for gifted students. Therefore, the Secretariat of the Education Council established a working committee, chaired by Associate Professor Dr. Khunying Sumontha Phromboon, to organize the conference and advance collaborative research efforts: 1st Roundtable (August 21-22, 2018) hosted by Thailand in Rayong Province and Bangkok; 2nd Roundtable (October 22-23, 2019) hosted by the Russian Federation in Moscow; 3rd Roundtable (September 16-17, 2021) conducted virtually, focusing on advancing cooperation during the COVID-19 pandemic, and 4th Roundtable (December 4-8, 2022), Dr. Suthep Kaengsanthia, Secretary General of Thailand's Education Council, led a delegation to Moscow and Sochi, Russian Federation (Office of the Education Council, 2023; 2024).



Source: Office of the Education Council (2022b)

• Academic Collaboration between Princess Chulabhorn Science High Schools and Russia

PCSHS has established academic collaborations with schools in Russia for further collaboration and enhancement of educational experiences such as MoU with High School PCSHS Phitsanulok signed a Memorandum of Understanding to develop academic cooperation, Collaboration with High School of Economics Perm Lyceum, Russia Partnered with PCSHS Trang, Collaboration with the Engineering Lyceum, Russi with PCSHS Chiang. Key Activities; 1) Online cultural exchange program 2) Online Mathematics Demonstration Sessions 3) Online Presentation of Collaborative Achievements 4) Online Science Teaching Demonstration 4) Join Thai-Russia Education Roundtable. These collaborations are for the purpose of academic excellence, cultural exchange, and innovative educational practices between PCSHS and Russian institutions (Charoynoot, 2024).



Source: Charoynoot (2024)

United Kingdom

- **Thai-UK World-class University Consortium**

The Thai-UK World-class University Consortium, a cooperation between the British Council Thailand and MHESI, was launched in 2021-2022 to strengthen partnerships between Thai and UK universities. Its goals are to enhance teaching, learning, and research quality, foster human resource development with UK expertise, and facilitate collaborative programs and knowledge exchange. The initiative supports Thailand's efforts to achieve globally competitive higher education through strategic partnerships addressing shared priorities of quality, inclusion, and internationalization. The UK plays a key role in helping Thailand reinvent its university system for global recognition (Office of the Education Council, 2023).



Chapter 8

Educational Outcomes and Further Steps of Education in Thailand

Chapter 8 is divided into three parts:

Part 1: Educational Outcomes

Part 2: Challenges

Part 3: Further Steps

Elaborate details regarding these topics follow below.

Part 1: Educational Outcomes

Education system in Thailand has evolved through equitable access, digital learning during COVID-19, and post-pandemic reforms. Key efforts include bridging digital divides, enhancing teacher development, and promoting lifelong learning.

1. Pre Covid-19 Pandemic (2018–November 2019)

1.1 Achievement

In this period several laws and regulations were amended to address emerging challenges and align with the national strategy, such as the National Education Standard 2018, the Ministerial Regulation on Educational Quality Assurance; the Announcement of the Ministry of Education on the Implementation of the Educational Standards for Early Childhood Education, Basic Education, and Special Basic Education 2018.

From 2018-2019, the percentage of educational access remained high. In basic education, the percentage increased slightly from 96.11% to 96.50%. At the primary education level, the rate rose modestly from 103.01% to 103.86%. Meanwhile, the percentage of students per population in early childhood education decreased from 114.60 to 113.23%, which remains a very high rate (exceeding 100% due to the inclusion of children in overlapping age groups). In lower secondary education, the percentage increased from 92.06% to 93.06%, while in upper secondary education, it grew marginally from 71.96% to 72.26% (Chapter 4).

In addition, number of students in international schools that provide basic education from the academic year 2015-2019, the students increased every year, especially between academic year 2017 and 2018 from 53,754 to 86,445. There were 119 international programs which higher education institutions in Thailand cooperated with renowned higher education institutions overseas, and 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. The five most popular courses among foreign students were business administration, management, and marketing. There were 26,635 international students (Office of the Education Council, 2021).

The important projects show the determination of the government to prepare human resources with knowledge and working skills to meet the demands of the business and industrial sectors to drive the traditional economy to the new economy by innovation according to Thailand 4.0 policy and the 20-Year National Strategy, including the New Generation of Graduates Project (2018-2026) which has been divided to vocational education and higher education levels, digital community center which is to promote learners to have information technology skills for learning and living, implementation of educational qualification system and occupation of educational standards. (Office of the Education Council. 2019).

1.2 Outcomes

In 2018, the International Institute for Management Development (IMD) ranked the competitiveness of 63 countries worldwide. Thailand was ranked 30th, dropping three places from 27th in 2017 by analyzing the results across the four main factors: Economic Performance at 10th (the same rank), Government Efficiency at 22nd (decrease by 2), Business Efficiency at 25th (the same rank), and Infrastructure at 48th (increase by 1). (Office of the Education Council, 2018)

In addition, IMD World Digital Competitiveness Ranking which first introduced in 2017, measuring the capacity and readiness of economies to adopt and explore digital technologies as a key driver for economic transformation in business, government, and wider society. Based on a mixture of hard data and survey replies from business and government executives, the ranking help governments and companies to understand where to focus their resources and what best practices might be when embarking or building upon on digital transformation. In 2018, Thailand was ranked 39th by analyzing the results across the three main factors: Technology 28th, Knowledge 44th, and Future Readiness 49th (National Science and Technology Development Agency, 2019; International Institute for Management Development, n.d.).

According to the 2018 PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) results, the average scores of Thai students compare to Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries are as follows: (PISA Thailand, 2019).

Table 8.1: PISA Scores 2018

Literacy	2018	
	Thailand	OECD
Reading Literacy	393	487
Mathematical Literacy	419	489
Scientific Literacy	426	489

Source: PISA Thailand (2019)

The results of the 2018 National Test for Basic Education (O-NET) which evaluates students in grade 6, 9, 12 in Thai Language, Social studies, Religion, & Culture, English Language, Mathematics, and Science & Technology show a decline in scores across all grade levels, with the average score decreasing as the education level increases. However, MOE issued an announcement dated December 25, 2020, canceling the requirement to use O-NET exam scores. Additionally, the administration of the O-NET exam by the National Institute of Educational Testing Service (Public Organization) (NIETS) was designated as a voluntary option, allowing students to take the test at their own discretion. (The National Institute of Educational Testing Service (Public Organization), n.d.; Posttoday, 2021).

2. During Covid-19 Pandemic (December 2019–September 2021)

2.1 Achievement

During 2019-2021, the percentage of educational access remained high. The proportion of students per population in basic education increased slightly from 96.50% to 96.33%, and then to 97.60%. When disaggregated by levels, early childhood education showed a decline from 113.29% to 107.76%, and further to 105.23% (exceeding 100% due to the inclusion of children in overlapping age groups). At the primary education level, the rate fluctuated, decreasing slightly from 103.86% to 103.60%, before rising to 104.04% (also exceeding 100% for the same reason). In lower secondary education, the percentage grew from 93.09% to 94.47%, and then to 97.40%. Similarly, in upper secondary education, the rate increased significantly from 72.26% to 75.27%, and then to 79.46% (Chapter 4).

Educational outcomes during the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted in this report will cover basic education, higher education, and vocational education.

The research titled *“Learning Management Models for Basic Education Students Affected by the COVID-19 Situation”*, which studied focuses on learning management in basic education institutions under the Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC), Office of the Private Education Commission (OPEC), Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA), and local administrative organizations was found out that at **Pre Semester (May 16-June 30, 2020)** on-hand (home-visit), online, and on-air (television) methods were used. Most schools combined these approaches, prioritizing home visits. Schools adjusted curricula, lesson plans, and learning priorities to align with each model. Teacher training and preparation of learning materials were emphasized. Online platforms used included Google Meet, Zoom, and Microsoft Teams, and in **Post Semester (July 1-August 12, 2020)** on-site method was used, combined with other models depending on the area’s risk level. Low-risk areas adopted normal classes with health protocols. Large schools alternated attendance days, supplementing with online and on-air method. Some schools reduced class sizes and integrated online and on-air methods. Schools adapted curricula, improved facilities, and used integrated and prioritized learning activities (Office of the Education Council, n.d.). However, MOE has recommended five Learning and teaching options, including on site (in classroom), on air (television), on demand (VDO), online and on hand, for all subjects in all education establishments. (Satharatthana, 2021; Office of the Basic Education Commission, 2022; Office of the Education Council, n.d.).

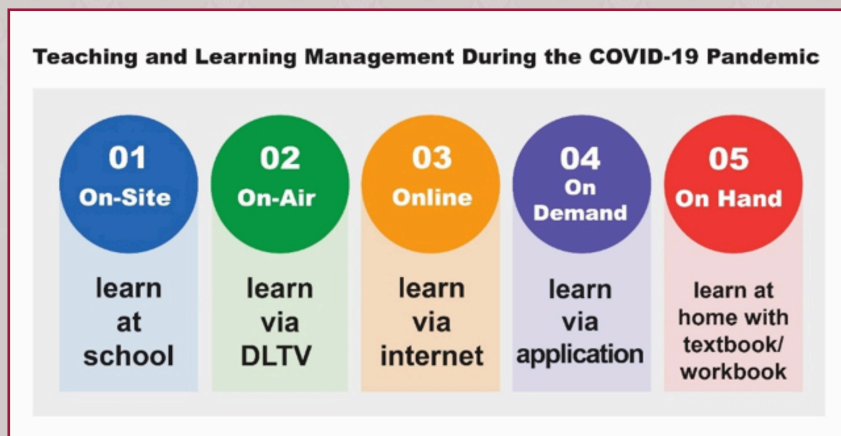


Figure 8.1: Five Teaching Models During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Partnership during Covid-19, the significant success in educational sector, MOE in collaboration with various stakeholders, implemented digital platforms and resources to ensure continuity in education despite school closures. The online learning platforms were expanded, providing students across the country with access to learning materials. Moreover, the government worked to address the digital divided by distributing tablets and internet packages to underprivileged students, ensuring that even those in remote areas could continue their studies. This transition not only mitigated the immediate impact of the pandemic on education, but also laid the groundwork for integrating technology more deeply into the Thai educational system in the future (Office of the Education Council, 2023).

For vocational students, they faced unique struggles as their education required hands-on practice. Many institutions replaced practical training with simulation software or alternative

methods, but these were not always effective substitutes. For example, **Mechatronics students** had to use simulation programs like PLC controllers instead of actual machinery, resulting in increased personal expenses as students had to purchase equipment for home use. **Thai traditional medicine students** encountered difficulties practicing massage therapy online, prompting institutions to send representatives to attend in-person sessions and relay the skills to peers (Equitable Education Fund, 2021).



Source: Equitable Education Fund (2021)

In addition, Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research, and Innovation (MHESI) proposed recovery measures aim to transform the education and learning models of institutions into “**New Normal Schools.**” The focus is on ensuring continuous, high-quality education that is accessible to everyone. This approach will enable students, learners of all ages, and individuals to learn anytime, anywhere, even during crises (Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation, 2020).

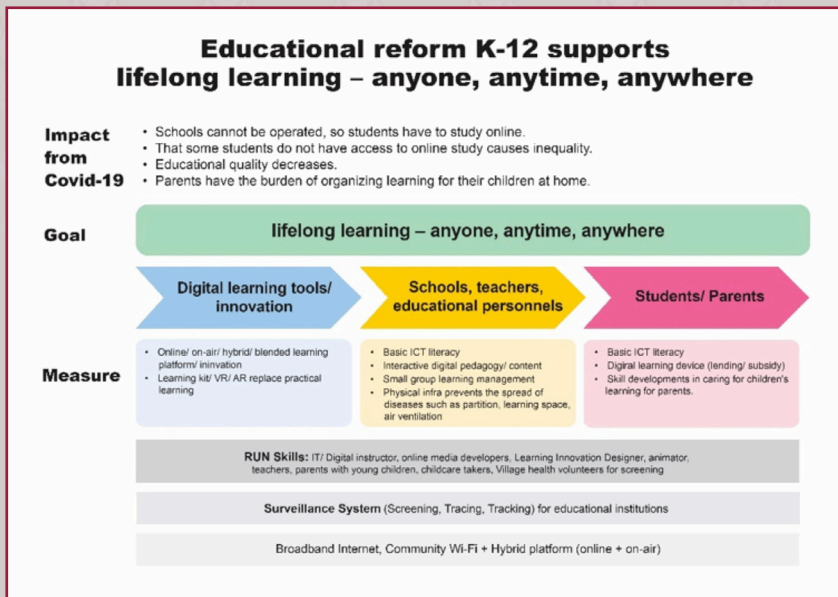


Figure 8.2: Measures aim to transform the education and learning models of institutions into “New Normal Schools”.

Source: Adjust from Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation (2020)

Additionally, the research title “*Guidelines of Learning and Teaching in Chulalongkorn University in the Future*” which the university initiated to respond the prevention of Covid-19 national policy, and to respond the global change. The research finding is the model of “*Improving Efficiency of Future Teaching with Blended Learning*” as shown in figure 8.2.

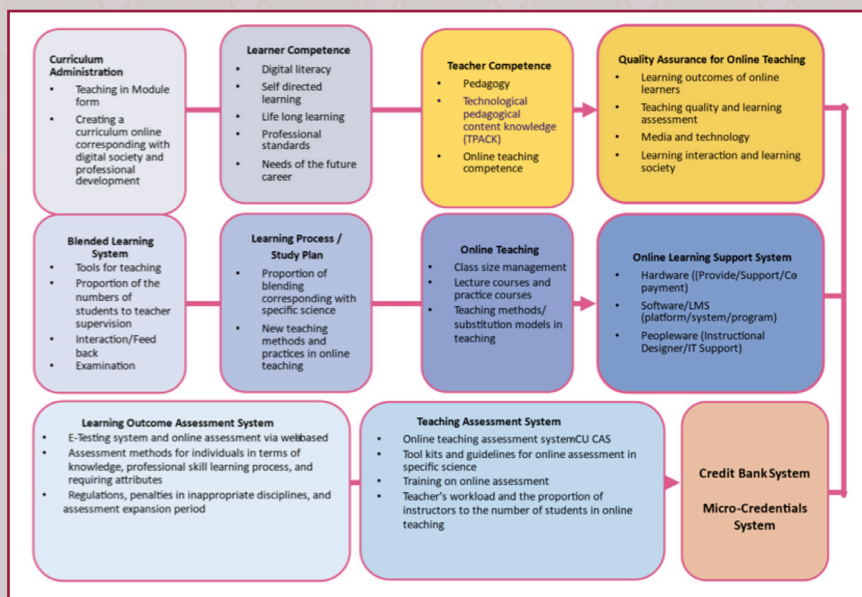


Figure 8.3: Improving Efficiency of Future Teaching with Blended Learning

Source: Polsaram, et. (2020)

One important aspect to highlight during the COVID-19 pandemic is the role of educational institutions in supporting society. The examples as shown as follows:

Minister of Education, Ms. Treenuch Thienthong, addressed the escalating COVID-19 crisis by tasking vocational colleges with developing innovations to support hospitals. Six pilot colleges created practical inventions, including: Rayong Technical College: UV-C sterilization robots, misting robots, and fogging vehicles, Phichit Technical College: Negative/positive pressure boxes, medical delivery robots, and infrared monitoring tools, Phrae Technical College: Disinfecting robots, drones with thermal imaging, and positive pressure helmets, and other

Colleges: Delivery robots for food, medication, and supplies. These innovations are already deployed in hospitals and field hospitals. The ministry plans to scale production and encourages vocational students to develop more solutions for societal challenges (Office of the Vocational Education Commission, 2021).

Since 2020, universities under MHESI have operated field hospitals nationwide, caring for over 100,000 patients during previous waves of the pandemic. While many field hospitals have temporarily paused operations due to declining cases (Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation, 2022). In addition, King Mongkut's University of Technology North Bangkok (KMUTNB) invented ULV fogging robots, capable of continuous operation for three hours and covering 37,680 square meters, and UV-C radiation robots that effectively kill airborne and surface pathogens, including COVID-19, using UVGI technology (Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation, 2021a), and Chulalongkorn University's Faculty of Engineering invented robots called "Pinto 2", designed for transporting food, medical supplies, and equipment, aim to reduce direct contact and the use of PPE during the COVID-19 crisis and MHESI delivered these robots to hospitals (Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation, 2021b).



Source: Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation (2021a, b)

During the COVID-19 pandemic, emphasis was still placed on the development of teachers and educational personnel, such as **the Coding for All' Policy**: MOE has continuously concretely and effectively implemented the policy of Coding for All between 2020-2021 to increase the effectiveness and quality of education. More than 300,000 teachers and

educational personnel have been trained and the Coding curriculum has been developed with cooperation of the Institute for the Promotion of Teaching Science and Technology (IPST) (Office of the Education Council, 2023).

2.2 Outcomes

From 2019-2021, the results of IMD ranking and IMD World Digital Competitiveness ranking of 63, 63 and 64 countries worldwide consecutively were shown in tables 8.2 and 8.3.

Table 8.2: IMD World Competitiveness Ranking 2019-2021

Main Factors	2019	2020	2021
Economic Performance	8	14	21
Government Efficiency	20	23	20
Business Efficiency	27	23	21
Infrastructure	45	44	43
Overall	25	29	28

Source: National Science and Technology Development Agency (2019a, 2020a, 2021)

Table 8.3: IMD World Digital Competitiveness Ranking 2019-2021

Competitiveness	2019	2020	2021
Knowledge	43	43	42
Technology	27	22	22
Future Readiness	50	45	44
Overall	40	39	38

Source: National Science and Technology Development Agency (2019b, 2020b)

3. Post Covid-19 Pandemic (October 2022–present)

3.1 Achievement

In 2022, the percentage of students per population in overall basic education was 98.16%. When disaggregated by levels, early childhood education accounted for 105.81%, primary education for 102.70%, lower secondary education for 98.64%, and upper secondary education for 82.64% (Chapter 4).

‘Bring Students Back to School’ project is cooperated by three organizations under the supervision of the MOE: the Office of Permanent Secretary (OPS); the Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC); and the Office of the Vocational Education (OVEC) (Office of Education Council, 2023).

3.2 Outcomes

From 2022-2024, the results of IMD ranking and IMD World Digital Competitiveness ranking of 63, 64 and 67 countries worldwide consecutively were shown in tables 8.4 and 8.5.

Table 8.4: IMD World Competitiveness Ranking 2022-2024

Main Factors	2022	2023	2024
Economic Performance	34	16	5
Government Efficiency	31	24	24
Business Efficiency	30	23	20
Infrastructure	44	43	43
Overall	33	30	25

Source: National Science and Technology Development Agency (2022a, 2023);
Office of National Higher Education Science Research and Innovation
Policy Council (2024)

Table 8.5: IMD World Digital Competitiveness Ranking 2022-2024

Competitiveness	2022	2023	2024
Knowledge	45	41	40
Technology	20	15	23
Future Readiness	49	42	41
Overall	40	35	37

Source: National Science and Technology Development Agency (2022b);
Department of Industrial Promotion (2024); Bangkobbiznews (2024)

According to the PISA 2022, results, the average scores of Thai students compared to OECD countries are as follows: (PISA Thailand, 2023).

Table 8.6: PISA Scores in 2022

Literacy	2022	
	Thailand	OECD
Reading Literacy	394	472
Mathematical Literacy	409	485
Scientific Literacy	379	476

Source: PISA Thailand (2023)

Part 2: Challenges

Thailand's National Strategy (2018–2037) emphasizes human capital development, addressing skills gaps, digital literacy, and equitable access to education. Challenges like climate change, aging demographics, and inequality demand targeted reforms. Public-private partnerships and innovation are key to building a resilient education system.

The **National Strategy (2018–2037)** aims to guide the country toward achieving its vision of becoming “a developed country with security, prosperity, and sustainability in accordance with the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy”. It aims to position Thailand as a high-income country with an average per capita income exceeding USD 15,000 by 2036. It also targets an annual economic growth rate of over 5% throughout the period from 2016–2036. This vision directly aligns with educational development, particularly under Strategy 3: National Strategy on Developing and Strengthening Human Capital. The strategy emphasizes cultivating Thai individuals across all age groups to become proficient, talented, and exemplary citizens of high quality (Office of the National Economic and Social Development, n.d.; Equitable Education Fund, 2023). Furthermore, the **13th National Economic and Social Development Plan (2023–2027)** is set within a period marked by rapid technological advancements, escalating climate change, the challenges of an ageing society in Thailand and globally, and significant geopolitical shifts. Education under the 13th Plan focuses on strategic investments in human

resources by fostering upskilling, reskilling, and lifelong learning. It also promotes the use of government open data to enable the country to keep pace with the rapid digital transformation (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council, 2022; Bangkok, 2022).

The World Bank and the Equitable Education Fund (EEF) Thailand uncovered that three-quarters of Thai people can barely read and solve problems using digital devices. The economic costs of the skills crisis can be as high as 3.3 trillion Thai Baht or 20% of GDP in 2022, higher than the government budget of 3.1 trillion Thai Baht in the same year. Thailand needs to accelerate investments in foundational skills to push the country out of the middle-income trap (Equitable Education Fund, 2024).

Based on the national goals and various challenges in areas such as the economy, society, environment, natural disasters, human-made threats, and technological advancements, this chapter compiles challenges and presents approaches to driving Thai education in response to these challenges, as detailed below.

1. Challenges Facing the World and Country

1.1 Global and National Risks

According to the Global Risks Report¹ 2024, the 1st ranked of risk is “Environment (Extreme weather)”, driven by the Northern Hemisphere experiencing its hottest summer on record in 2023 and the ongoing impact of the El Niño phenomenon. Respondents highlighted potential extreme weather events, such as intense heatwaves, droughts, wildfires, and flooding. The 2nd risk is “Technology (AI-generated misinformation and disinformation)”, the 3rd and 4th are “Society (Social and/or political polarization and Cost-of-living crisis)”, and the 5th “Technology (Cyberattacks)” as shown in figure 8.4 (World Economic Forum, 2024).

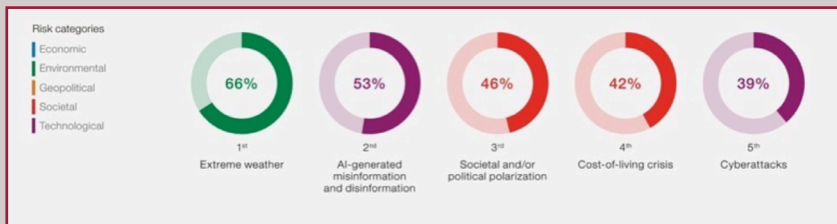


Figure 8.4: Current Risks Landscape

Source: World Economic Forum (2024)

¹ The Global Risk Report is published by the World Economic Forum ahead of the Forum’s Annual Meeting in Davos, Switzerland. The report describes changes occurring in the global risks in five categories: economic, environmental, geopolitical, societal, and technological aspect, which landscape from year to year. Read more information from www.weforum.org

For Thailand, the World Economic Forum's 2023 Executive Opinion Survey (EOS), conducted between April and August 2023, Thai business leaders identified the following as the most significant threats to the country over the next two years:

1) Economic downturn: A slowdown in overall economic activity is leading to weaker GDP growth, reduced borrowing opportunities for businesses, and tighter bank lending. Prolonged stagnation (over three years) could escalate into an economic depression.

2) Pollution: Thailand has faced severe pollution challenges, particularly air pollution from PM2.5 particles. This issue prompted government measures such as work-from-home policies and school closures in cities like Bangkok and Chiang Mai.

3) Labor shortage: A complex problem with wide-ranging economic and social impacts. Insufficient labor forces businesses to struggle to meet consumer demand, leading to increased prices amid slowing economic growth.

4) Household debt: In Q1 2024, Thailand's household debt stood at 16 trillion THB (90.6% of GDP). High debt levels reduced consumer spending, potentially slowing economic growth.

5) Inequality: The World Bank Group reported that in 2019, Thailand had the highest income inequality in East Asia and the Pacific, with a Gini coefficient of 43.3%. Inequality is especially severe in the southern region, driven by urban-rural disparities. Thailand had to focus on skill development and education to create a more equitable society.

1.2 BANI World

BANI is an acronym of Brittle, Anxious, Nonlinear, and Incomprehensible. This BANI acronym indicates a new situation that cannot be described anymore by VUCA² because it was considered obsolete. This acronym was introduced by Jamais Cascio during in an IFTF (Institute of The Future) event. He indicated that the situation of strategic environment nowadays was not only unstable, but also chaotic. Unfortunately, VUCA and BANI have similarity that they are actually a form of threats with different type, magnitude, and or seriousness (Baskoro, 2023).

The BANI acronym describes a framework for understanding challenges in volatile and uncertain environments:

Brittle (B): Represents fragility, where systems, businesses, or positions can collapse suddenly due to unpredictable changes. Resilience is crucial to withstand these vulnerabilities.

Anxious (A): Reflects anxiety stemming from fragility and fear of loss. Exaggerated information, fake news, and post-COVID uncertainties contribute to this. Mindfulness, empathy, and a growth mindset are key to managing this anxiety effectively.

Nonlinear (N): Indicates situations where cause-and-effect relationships are unclear, leading to unpredictability. Flexibility and adaptability are essential to navigate these complex conditions.

² VUCA is an acronym of Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguity which was introduced in 1985 by Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus.

Incomprehensible (I): Describes a state where reasoning fails to provide clarity or confidence, hindering creativity. Courage and imagination are needed to confront and overcome these challenges.

some other ways are adapted to a BANI world: Understand students' concerns and create a supportive environment, Collaborate with other educators, Be aware of students' mental health challenges, Incorporate diverse viewpoints and global issues into the curriculum, Develop resilience and practice self-care, Regularly reflect on teaching practices and be willing to adapt, and Experiment with new approaches and technologies Asymmetric. (n.d.).

1.3 Demographics

As of September 2024, population of Thailand stands at 65,969,270, which became a fully aged society in 2023 when 14 million older people (aged 60 and above) accounted for 20% of the total population. The country is projected to transition into a super-aged society within the next 15 years, with 21 million older people making up 30% of the population (Department of Provincial Administration, 2024; TDRI, 2023). Thailand's transition to an ageing society is largely driven by its very low fertility rate. The total fertility rate (TFR), defined as the average number of children a woman would have over her lifetime, is projected to decline from 1.53 (from 2015–2020) to approximately 1.42 (from 2025–2030). As a result, the number of children is expected to decrease to a level equal to that of older people by 2025. This reflects the rapid decline in fertility that began in the mid-1980s in Thailand. As the population transitions into an ageing society, the growth of the working-age population is expected to decrease significantly. In Thailand,

the working-age population is projected to drop from 43.2 million in 2020 to 36.5 million in 2040. Meanwhile, the ratio of working-age individuals to older people is expected to decline from 3.6 in 2020 to just 1.8 in 2040, according to data from the National Economic and Social Development Council (NESDC) (United Nations Thailand, 2020).

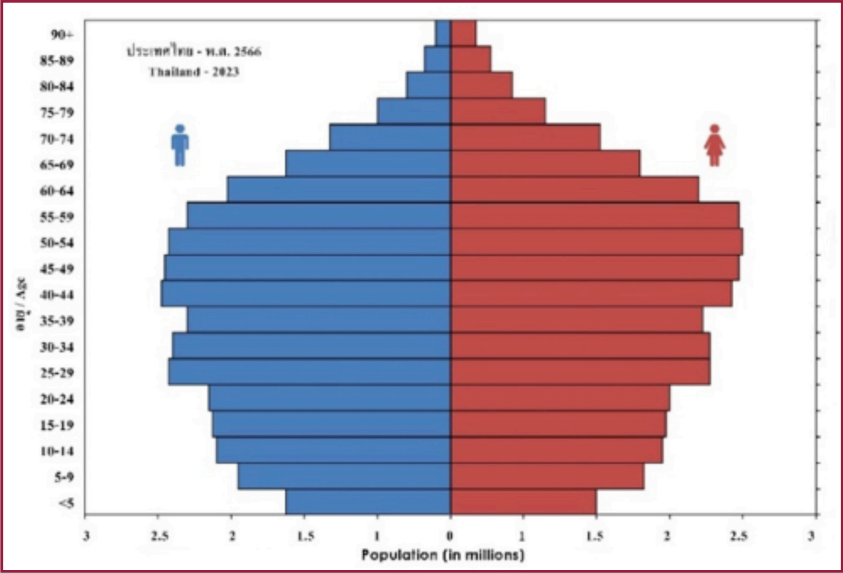


Figure 8.5: Thailand Population Pyramid

Source: Thailand Board of Investment (2024)

Furthermore, Office of the Education Council (2024) proposed ‘Pilot Approach for Developing an Essential Skills Set for Thai Children and Youth’. This document provided ‘The Cyclones of Changes’, which comprised of seven components, including 1) Globalization, 2) Geopolitical Conflicts, 3) Climate Change and

Global Warming/Global Boiling, 4) Disintermediation, 5) Digitalization, 6) Demographic Changes, and 7) Twelve Disruptive Technologies: (1) Mobile Internet, (2) Automation, (3) Internet of Things, (4) Cloud Computing, (5) Robotics, (6) Autonomous or Semi-Autonomous Vehicles, (7) Geonomics, (8) Energy Storage Devices or Systems, (9) 3D Printing, (10) Smart Material Technology, (11) Oil Exploration and Drilling Technology, and (12) Renewable Energy Technology. All of the information was shown in figure 8.6.

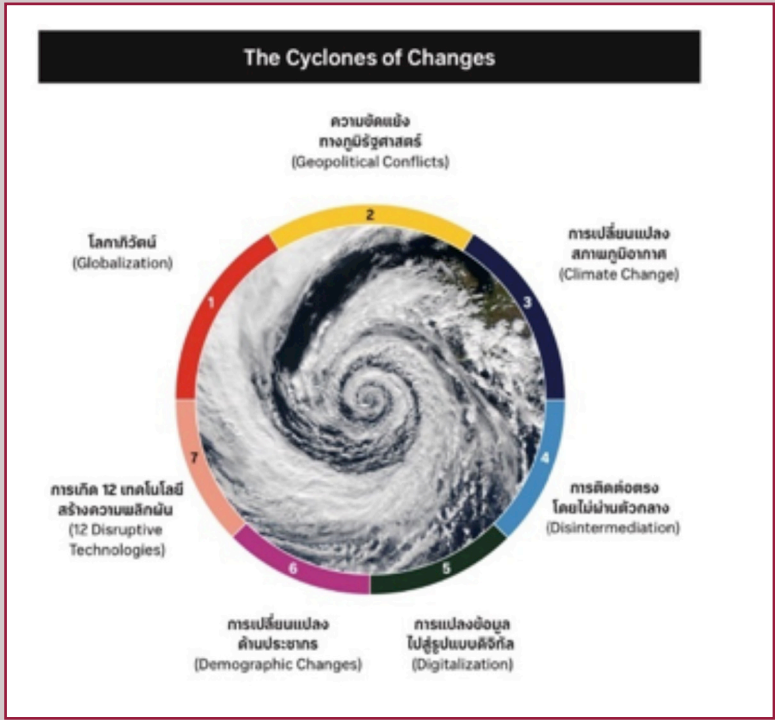


Figure 8.6: Cyclones of Changes

Source: Office of the Education Council (2024)

2. Challenges in Education

In this report, will highlight key educational challenges as a foundation for shaping future actions as follow.

2.1 Future Skills

The report title “*A Pilot Approach to the Essential Skills Set for Thai Children and Youth*” showed the differences of skills before Covid-19 pandemic and post Covid-19 pandemic. Additionally, this report proposed the essential skills which comprises of basic skills and advancing skills for Thai children and youth as shown in figure 8.7 (Office of the Education Council, 2024).

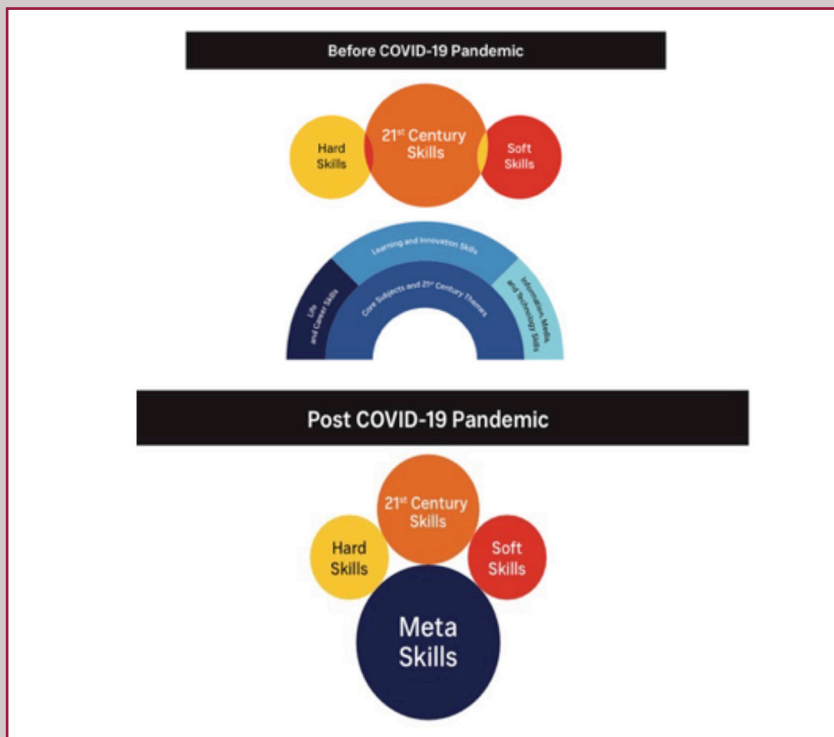


Figure 8.7: Skills compare before Covid-19 Pandemic and Post Covid-19 Pandemic
Source: Office of the Education Council (2024)

This report also indicated that essential skills set in the future not only hard skills, soft skills, but also meta skills. Meta Skills are emerging abilities designed to accommodate change, fostering a growth mindset framework. They encourage a readiness to grow, enthusiasm for learning, enjoyment in problem-solving, and the creation of innovative and challenging solutions. These skills promote lifelong learning, enabling individuals to adapt to future changes effectively. Meta Skills comprise of three components: Self-Awareness, Creativity, and Resilience as shown in figure 8.8 (Office of the Education Council, 2024).



Figure 8.8: Key Meta Skills

Source: Office of the Education Council (2024)

Moreover, there are Essential Skills for Thai Children and Youth, which comprises Basic Skills Set and Advanced Skills Set as shown in figure 8.7 (Office of the Education Council, 2024).

Table 8.7: Essential Skills for Children and Youth

Basic Skills Set	
(1) Literacy	(5) Ethical Literacy
(2) Numeracy	(6) Health Literacy
(3) Learning Literacy	(7) Financial Literacy
(4) Socio-Cultural Literacy	
Advanced Skills Set	
(1) Active Learning and Growth-Mindset	(11) Critical and Analytical Thinking
(2) Communication	(12) Creativity and Innovation
(3) Negotiation	(13) Complex Problem-Solving
(4) Cognitive Flexibility	(14) Emotional Intelligence (EQ)
(5) ICT and Digital Literacy	(15) Collaboration
(6) Interpersonal Skills	(16) Initiative
(7) Leadership and Social Influence	(17) Systems Thinking
(8) Reasoning and Ideation	(18) Judgement & Decision-Making
(9) Self-Awareness and Self-Management	(19) Resilience/Stress-Tolerance/ Survival Skills
(10) Technology Design and Monitoring	

Source: Office of the Education Council (2024)

Additionally, Thailand Equitable Education Fund (2024) indicates that due to the world's fast-paced changes, the educational model needs to be adjusted accordingly. Schools, therefore, play an essential role in preparing children to become future human resources. There are eight education skills for the future school: 1) Innovative and Creativity Skills; 2) Technological Skills; 3) Global Citizenship Skills; 4) Self-Learning; 5) Accessible and Comprehensive Learning; 6) Communication Skills; 7) Learning from problems and Collaborations; and 8) Lifelong learning.

2.2 Digitalization in Education

In the era of rapid digital disruption, which significantly impacts society, the economy, the environment, livelihoods, and education, digitalization in education is integrated into four key areas: teaching and learning, management, supervision, and support systems. (Preededilok, 2024). To illustrate this, Personalized learning mentoring consists of One-on-one tutorship, search engines, tiered targets; Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs); Collaborative learning; and Flipped classroom (IOT Business News, 2023).

2.3 Response to national and global issues

To align with the national strategy and the national economic and social development plan of Thailand, education is expected to serve as a key instrument in achieving these objectives. Thailand aims to escape the middle-income trap while fostering sustainable development. For instance, education can help produce a workforce that meets labor market demands with appropriate skills. In addition, addressing an aging society offers tangible benefits, such as retaining skills

and knowledge accumulated over long careers. Older workers possess formal and technical expertise gained through extensive experience, which is invaluable in sectors facing labor shortages. Employers are increasingly utilizing programs like mid-career apprenticeships to harness these skills. Moreover, older workers can mentor younger generations, guiding them toward secure and well-paid employment through mentoring and job-sharing initiatives (United Nations Thailand, 2020). This approach aligns with global priorities outlined in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2015–2030, which encompass 17³ goals aimed at creating a more sustainable and equitable world.

Part 3: Further Steps

To respond to the national strategy and the country's development goals-particularly in terms of lifting Thailand out of the middle-income trap, ensuring the well-being of its people, and addressing challenges in an era of global disruption-the report provides a summary of the following further steps.

1. Learners

1.1 Enhance Equity and Access

Continued efforts are needed to reduce educational inequality, particularly in rural and underprivileged areas. Programs like the Equitable Education Fund (EEF) should be expanded and optimized to ensure that all students, regardless of their socio-economic background, have access to quality education. This includes addressing issues such as school

³ Read more information about SDGs in <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

dropout rates, particularly exacerbated by economic challenges during events like the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.2 Focus on Quality of Education

Improving the quality of education, especially in core subjects such as mathematics, science, and reading, is essential. Thailand's performance in international assessments like PISA has shown a decline, highlighting the need for curriculum reform, better teaching methodologies, and more robust teacher training programs.

1.3 Competencies

As the demands of the modern world evolve, learners must develop key 21st century skills, including critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, collaboration, and Meta skills. These skills are fundamental for addressing complex challenges and thriving in diverse, interconnected environments.

Office of National Higher Education Science Research and Innovation Policy Council (NXPO) surveyed key job roles and competencies for Thailand's 12 targeted industries (2020–2024), focusing on high-skill and emerging positions, especially in the gig economy influenced by digital advancements. Gig workers need IT, technical, and social skills to remain competitive amidst rapid changes. For the grassroots economy, essential skills include IT for business opportunities, production and value addition for competitiveness, accounting for financial management, marketing for diverse channels, and management for risk and organizational processes. These efforts aim to empower individuals and promote sustainable income distribution (Office of National Higher Education Science Research and Innovation Policy Council, 2022)

1.4 Digital Literacy

Mastery of digital tools and platforms is essential in the digital age. Learners should be trained to navigate, analyze, and create content using technology responsibly. This includes understanding cybersecurity, data privacy, and the ethical use of digital resources.

1.5 Global Citizenship Skills

Cultivate an understanding of global issues, cultural diversity, and sustainability. Learners should be equipped with empathy, adaptability, and the ability to engage in constructive dialogue, fostering a sense of responsibility toward global challenges like climate change and social inequities.

1.6 Lifelong Learning Skills

Promote the ability to learn independently and adapt to new knowledge throughout life. This involves fostering curiosity, resilience, and self-directed learning to help learners continuously upgrade their skills in response to evolving economic and technological landscapes.

1.7 Entrepreneurial Mindset

Encourage creativity, innovation, and a proactive approach to problem-solving. Learners should develop financial literacy, leadership skills, and the confidence to initiate and manage projects or businesses, which are critical in a rapidly changing economy.

1.8 STEM Proficiency

Strengthen science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education to prepare learners for careers in emerging industries. This includes hands-on learning, coding, robotics, and an emphasis on analytical thinking.

1.9 Social and Emotional Skills

Equip learners with emotional intelligence, stress management, and interpersonal skills. These competencies are crucial for maintaining well-being, building strong relationships, and succeeding in collaborative environments.

1.10 Environmental Awareness

Educate learners about sustainability and the importance of preserving natural resources. Foster a sense of responsibility toward environmental stewardship, aligning with global efforts for a greener future.

1.11 Adaptability and Resilience

Prepare learners to face uncertainties and challenges in a world characterized by rapid technological and societal shifts. This includes the ability to pivot, embrace change, and maintain mental and emotional well-being in the face of adversity.

2. Teachers and Educational Personnel

2.1 Professional Development

Implement ongoing training programs for teachers to adapt to modern educational technologies and methodologies. Programs like the “Home Grown Teacher Scholarship” should be expanded to ensure a sustainable supply of qualified teachers in underserved areas.

2.2 Empowerment: Strengthen teacher networks for peer learning and provide additional resources for teachers in remote schools. Use technology as a tool to support teachers in lesson planning and delivery, ensuring a high standard of education nationwide.

2.3 The New Literacies

Essential modern skills to understand, utilize, and stay updated with technology.

2.4 Advanced Technical Skills

High-level technological expertise that transforms users into creators, enhancing competitiveness.

3. Teaching and Learning

3.1 Strengthen Lifelong Learning and Vocational Education

Promoting lifelong learning and enhancing vocational education are crucial for equipping students with the skills needed in the 21st century. Expanding vocational scholarship programs and developing partnerships with industries can create pathways for students to enter the workforce with relevant skills and knowledge.

As Thailand transitions toward an innovation-driven economy, the education budget must emphasize vocational and lifelong learning programs. Scholarship opportunities should be expanded for students pursuing technical education in high-demand fields, such as engineering and healthcare. Additionally, adult education initiatives, including upskilling and reskilling programs, are critical to ensure workers can adapt to evolving labor market demands.

3.2 Leveraging Technology for Inclusive Education

Technology has the potential to transform education, particularly for students in remote areas. Investments in digital infrastructure, such as high-speed internet and affordable devices, are essential to bridging the digital divide. Hybrid

learning models that combine in-person and online instruction should be supported to ensure flexibility and accessibility for all learners. Moreover, assistive technologies must be developed to support students with disabilities and those with special educational needs, enabling them to participate fully in modern learning environments.

3.3 Area-based Education

The Area-based Education (ABE) fosters collaboration among relevant components within the areas to support beneficiary groups of all ages. This involves establishing local-level collaboration platforms to connect assistance models developed for various projects and scholarship programs, aiming to comprehensively serve all beneficiary (Equitable Education Fund, n.d.).

3.4 Provide diverse learning approaches tailored to all learner groups, including upskilling and reskilling opportunities, with an emphasis on experiential learning that equips learners with practical experiences they can apply in real life and the workplace.

4. Management

4.1 Strengthening Public-Private Partnerships

Collaboration with private sector organizations and non-governmental both national and international (bilateral and multilateral cooperation) entities can enhance educational resources and reduce the financial burden on public budgets. Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) can help fund infrastructure projects, provide scholarships, and introduce technological innovations in schools. These collaborations also encourage resource-sharing and innovation, particularly in underfunded areas.

4.2 Digitalization

- **Bridging the Digital Divide:** Continue efforts to provide equitable access to digital tools and internet connectivity. This includes distributing devices and subsidized internet packages to students and schools in remote areas.

- **Integration of Digital Learning:** Expand the use of online platforms and digital resources in classrooms, leveraging technologies like artificial intelligence to personalize learning experiences. Encourage hybrid learning models that combine in-person and digital instruction.

- **Digital Competence:** Focus on building digital literacy for both students and teachers, ensuring they are prepared for a technology-driven world. This involves developing a digital curriculum and offering training programs to enhance skills in using digital tools effectively.

5. Investment and Allocation

5.1 Increase Efficiency in Budget Allocation

While Thailand has consistently allocated a significant portion of its budget to education, the efficiency of this allocation needs improvement. The focus should be on maximizing the impact of investments rather than just the amount spent. Prioritizing spending on areas that directly contribute to educational outcomes, such as teacher development, infrastructure, and technology, can ensure that the allocated resources are used effectively.

5.2 Prioritizing Equity in Budget Allocation

Despite efforts to improve access to education, significant disparities persist, particularly in rural and marginalized communities. To address these inequities, budget allocations must be targeted toward schools and regions with the greatest need. Initiatives like EEF should be expanded to support students at risk of dropping out, while resources should be directed to rural schools, ethnic minority areas, and low-income urban neighborhoods. Additionally, data-driven methodologies can help identify and prioritize underserved regions, ensuring funding decisions are based on measurable needs.

5.3 Prioritizing Investment

The importance of investing in four areas to build Thai children's competencies: (1) supporting newborns with better nutrition and health through financial aid, (2) investing in early childhood education for seamless development, (3) ensuring children remain in the education system to prevent social issues and skill gaps, and (4) equipping children with 21st century skills (ASK: Attitude, Skill, Knowledge) to thrive in a complex, rapidly changing world. These investments aim to create a strong foundation for lifelong learning and adaptability (TEP Forum, 2024).

5.4 Performance-Based and Needs-Based Budgeting

To ensure effective use of educational funds, budgeting should be linked to specific outcomes. Performance-based budgeting ties funding to indicators such as enrollment rates, literacy improvements, and reduced dropout rates. Meanwhile, needs-based allocation considers variables like school size, poverty levels, and geographic challenges, directing

resources where they are most required. Together, these approaches can enhance transparency and accountability in the education budget.

5.5 Invest in Research and Innovation

To keep pace with global educational standards, Thailand should increase its investment in educational research and development. This includes fostering innovation in teaching methods, curriculum development, and educational technologies. A focus on STEM education and vocational training can help align educational outcomes with the needs of the modern economy.

6. Laws and Regulations

6.1 National Education Act of B.E. ...

According to the National Reform Plan (Revision) responsive to and aligned with the National Strategies, the National Reform Plan related to education. “Big Rock” the plan proposes five activities as follow: (Office of the Education Council, 2023)

- **Creating an opportunity and an equality of education starting from early childhood:** to be carried out under the authority of the Equitable Education Fund Agency.
- **Improving the instructional management towards competency-based learning:** to comply with technological change in the 21st Century, and to be carried out under the authority of MOE.
- **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 MHESI.

- Providing for a bilateral vocational education system which fully focuses on practical learning: to be carried out under the authority of MOE.
- Reforming of research roles and the development of a good governance system of higher education institutions: to support the national development so that Thailand can escape from the “middle income trap,” and to be carried out under the authority of MHESI.



Figure 8.9: The National Education Reform Plan

Source: Phetchaburi Provincial Education. (2022).

One of the mechanisms for the national education reform is “National Education Act of B.E. ...”. On September 23, 2024, Dr. Atthaphon Sangkhawasee, Secretary General of the Education Council mentioned that the draft of this act was

developed collaboratively with over 10,000 stakeholders and emphasizes reforms in curriculum, resource management, and dual education systems. The draft National Education Act B.E. is currently in the stage where the Secretariat of the House of Representatives is gathering public opinions in accordance with Section 77 of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand. The consultation period is open from December 2, 2024 to January 1, 2025 (Focusnews, 2024; Parliament, 2024).

6.2 School Governance and Decentralization Laws

Policies under this category promote the decentralization of education management, allowing local education authorities to tailor education strategies to regional needs. This includes legislation supporting area-based education management to improve resource allocation and school efficiency.

6.3 Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Data Privacy in Education

Future legal frameworks must address the ethical use of AI in education, data protection for students, and the responsible use of learning analytics to enhance educational outcomes.

6.4 Cybersecurity in Digital Education

Legislation to safeguard students and educators from cyber threats, ensuring safe online learning environments.



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Appendix

Appendix A

Authors

Associate Professor Dr. Fuangarun Preededilok
Head of Department of Educational Management and Leadership
Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University
Dr. Panya Akkaraputtapong
Division of Supervision and Curriculum Development
Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University
Dr. Jeerayoo Khowchernklang
Meejai Creation

Research Assistant

Mr. Sumet Laorsirsakulchai
Ph.D. Student, Division of Development Education,
Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University
Mr. Piyakasidet Plueaisri
Ph.D. Student, Division of Development Education,
Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University

Assistant

Miss Somnapha Phadung
Miss Kitsanan Thongjaroen

Appendix B

Acknowledgement

1. Dr. Atthaphon Sangkhawasee - Secretary General of Education Council
2. Acting Sub Lt. Thanu Vongjinda - Secretary General of Basic Education Commission
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4. Professor Emeritus Dr. Chanita Rukspollmuang - Vice-president and Dean of the Graduate School of Education at Siam University
5. Professor Dr. Pruet Siribanpitak - Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University
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7. Dr. Rangsan Maneelek – Former Deputy Secretary General of the Basic Education Commission
8. Dr. Nahathai Thewphaingarm – Education Commission
9. Dr. Kawinkiaat Nonthapala – Education Commission
10. Mr. Chayaphol Leeraphante – Director of Thai International School, Education Commission

Informants

1. Associate Professor Dr. Suwithida Charungkaittikul - Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University
2. Associate Professor Dr. Arunee Hongsiriwat - Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University
3. Assistant Professor Dr. Doungkamol Bangchuad - Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University
4. Assistant Professor Dr. Penvara Xupravati - Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University

5. Dr. Sorrapong Charoenkittayawut - Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University
6. Dr. Poramet Charoynoot - Ministry of Education
7. Dr. Jakkrapong Panyapoontragool - Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation
8. Dr. Phathara Yuenyong - Researcher
9. Dr. Wallop Prakobnoppakao - Researchers and academics of the Krabi Provincial Administrative Organization School Foundation
10. Ms. Thanyamon Naunchome - Deputy Director of Educational Institution
11. Mr. Marut Saksaengwijit - Deputy Director of Educational Institution
12. Mr. Thawisak Hongcharoen, Professional Level Teachers (K 2 Teachers)
13. Mr. Cherdchai Sansud - STEM Educational Specialist, Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization, Regional Centre for STEM Education (SEAMEO STEM-ED)
14. Mr. Sawaphob Debkasikul
15. Mr. Chaiwat Panchaipol

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Editor-in-chief

Office of the Education Council, Foreign Cooperation Policy Bureau

Dr. Sasirat Viravaidya	Director of the Foreign Cooperation Policy Bureau
------------------------	---

Foreign Educational Policy Unit

Ms. Warangkana Krittasampan	Educator, Practitioner Level (Proofreader)
-----------------------------	--

International Cooperation and Relations Unit

Dr. Sairoong Saengjaeng	Educator, Senior Professional Level
Ms. Ornvipa Rumroy	Educator, Practitioner Level

General Administration Unit

Ms. Parinda Katepoonga	Administration officer, Practitioner Level
Ms. Kitjawan Luarlux	Assistant officer

Tel: 0 2668 7123 ext: 2538, 2539

Fax: 0 2243 8330

Email: oeclnterpol@gmail.com

Website: <http://www.onec.go.th>



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