

PART

ACHIEVEMENT AND PROGRESS

1. Access and Participation

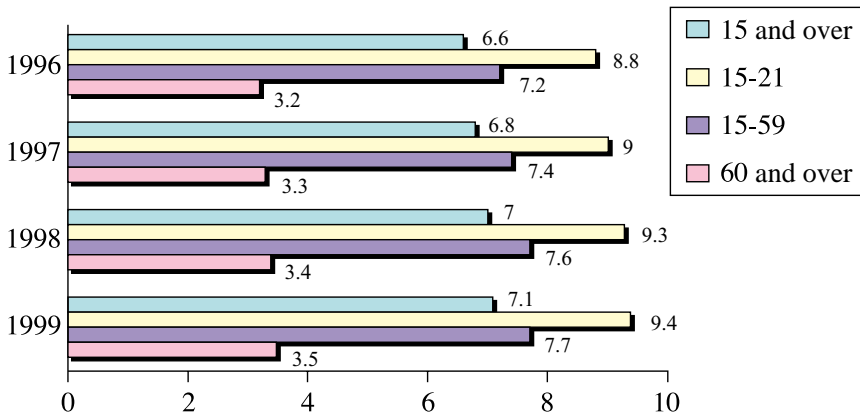
Since education is seen as a mechanism for instilling democratic values, as well as the means for developing the productive and social capacity of the people, an increase in access to and participation in all types of educational activities has been a major goal of the Thai Government.

1.1 Access to Formal Education

A. Increasing Educational Attainment

Greater efforts by all agencies to the expansion of educational services in *Thailand* have resulted in a higher level of educational attainment of the people. It was found that the average years of educational attainment of Thai people aged 15 years and over rose from 6.6 years in 1996 to 7.1 years in 1999 (Figure 13).

Figure 13 Average Educational Attainment of the Thai Population, 1996 - 1999



Source : Educational Information Centre, ONEC.

However, the total student enrolment in formal education including graduate students faced a decrease from 14.4 million in 1997 to 14.3 million in 1999, resulting from a decline in student intake due to the impact of the economic crisis. In the academic year 2000, the total number of students participating in formal schooling was about 14.2 million (Table 3) and it is projected to be 14.1 million in 2001.

Table 3 Number and Increasing / Decreasing Rate of Students by Level of Education : Academic Year 1999 - 2000

Level of Education	1999	2000	Increasing/ Decreasing Rate (%)
Pre-primary	2,716,600	2,748,350	1.2
Primary	5,832,023	5,757,376	-1.3
Secondary	4,070,930	3,975,651	-2.3
• Lower Secondary	2,428,611	2,348,405	-3.3
• Upper Secondary	1,642,318	1,627,246	-0.9
- General Education	932,963	934,077	0.1
- Vocational Education	709,355	693,169	-2.3
Higher Education	1,631,673	1,722,635	5.6
• Diploma	460,587	521,656	13.3
• Undergraduate	1,100,599	1,126,704	2.4
• Graduate	70,488	74,276	5.4
Total	14,251,226	14,204,012	-0.3

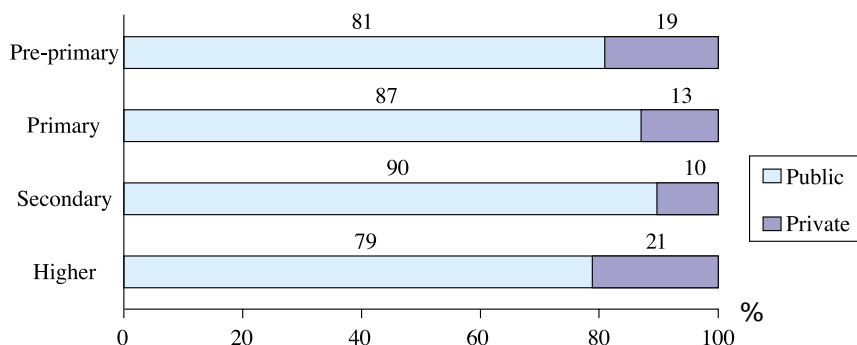
Source : Thailand Student Enrolment Projection 1999-2016.

While there was a slight decrease in the number of students at primary and secondary school levels in the academic year 2000, more children and youth had access to pre-primary and higher education than the previous year.

B. Participation of the Private Sector

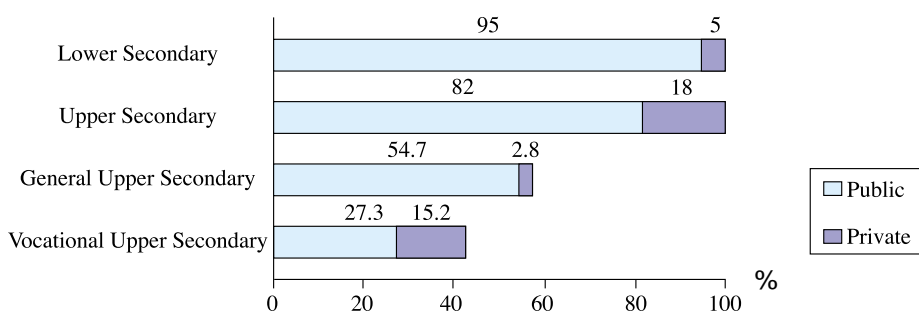
Among the total student enrolments in the academic year 2000, about 15 percent were in private institutions. The private sector plays an important role in providing greater access to children and youth, particularly at vocational upper secondary, higher, and pre-primary education levels (Figure 14).

Figure 14 Proportion of Students in Public and Private Institutions by Level of Education : Academic Year 2000



Source : Educational Information Centre, ONEC.

Figure 15 Proportion of Students in Public and Private Institutions for Secondary Education : Academic Year 2000



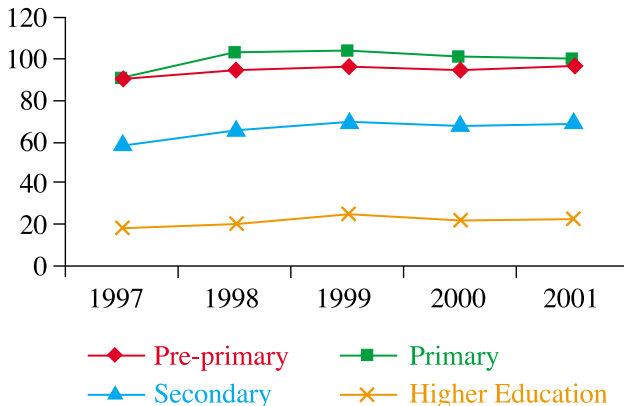
Source : Educational Information Centre, ONEC.

C. Enrolment Ratio

Pre-Primary Education

The proportion of the 3-5 years age group in pre-schooling increased from 90.8 percent in 1997 to 95 percent in 1999. It was estimated that a higher number of this school - age group will have greater access to pre-primary education in the academic year 2001 (Figure 16).

Figure 16 Enrolment Ratio by Level of Education : Academic Years 1997 - 2001



Source : Educational Information Centre, ONEC.

Primary Education

The enrolment rate in six-year primary education for the 6-11 years age group was 90.7 percent in 1997 and increased to 101.2 percent in the academic year 2000. The enrolment ratio at primary level is more than 100 percent as a result of repetition rate as well as the under - age and over - age population of students. However, there are still a lot of children who are not in primary school, particularly those who live in remote areas or those who are handicapped. In 2001, it is projected that 99.6 percent of the 6-11 years age group will have access to primary education.

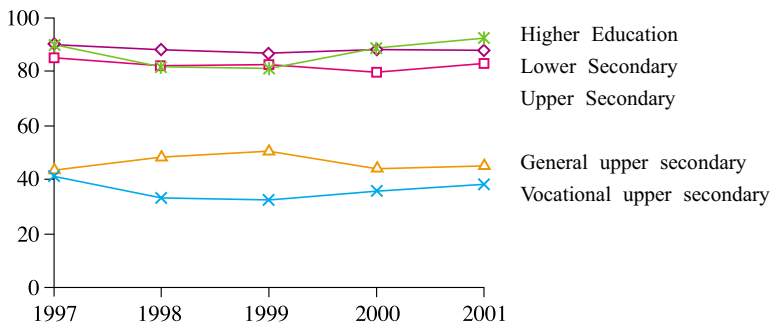
Secondary Education

Enrolment in secondary education has gradually risen from 59.8 percent in 1997 to 68.2 percent in 2000. However, about 30 percent of 12-17 year olds still have no chance to participate in secondary education.

Although greater efforts have been made to increase participation in secondary education, the transition rate of students completing primary education who proceeded to lower secondary education faced a slight decrease, from 90.9 percent in 1997 to 88 percent in 2000 and it is estimated to remain the same in 2001.

At upper secondary level, only 54.1 percent of the age-group participated in formal education in 2000. It is noticeable that there was a decline in the transition rate from lower secondary to upper secondary level from 85.4 percent in 1997 to 79.8 percent in the academic year 2000, while nearly half of the school-age population still had no access to upper secondary education. In the vocational stream, in particular, there was a significant decrease in the transition rate from 41.4 percent in 1997 to 32.5 percent in 1999 as a result of the economic crisis and it rose to 36 percent in the academic year 2000. In 2001, it is projected that more students will continue their studies at upper secondary level.

Figure 17 Transition Rate by Level of Education : Academic Year 1997 - 2001



Source : 1997-1999 : Educational Information Centre, ONEC.
 2000-2001 : Thailand Student Enrolment Projection 1999 - 2016.

Higher Education

In 1998 and 1999, there was a sharp decrease in the number of upper secondary school graduates who continued studying at a higher level. However, the transition rate at higher education level rose to 89 percent in the academic year 2000 and it is projected to be 92.6 percent in 2001. However, only 23.6 percent of the 18 -21 year - olds have access to formal education at this level.

1.2 Participation in Non - Formal Education

Non - formal education has increasingly provided a second chance to a large number of the out-of-school population in Thailand. Starting with the first national campaign in 1938, it has now become a diversified further education programme encompassing general and vocational education.

In 1999, the total number of participants in non-formal education activities under the responsibility of the *MOE*, *MOI* and *Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare* was around 3.8 million. The majority of activities were provided by the *MOE* with 95 percent of the total participants. Over 50 percent of the activities are general education programmes provided by *DNFE* and *OPEC* to the out-of-school population.

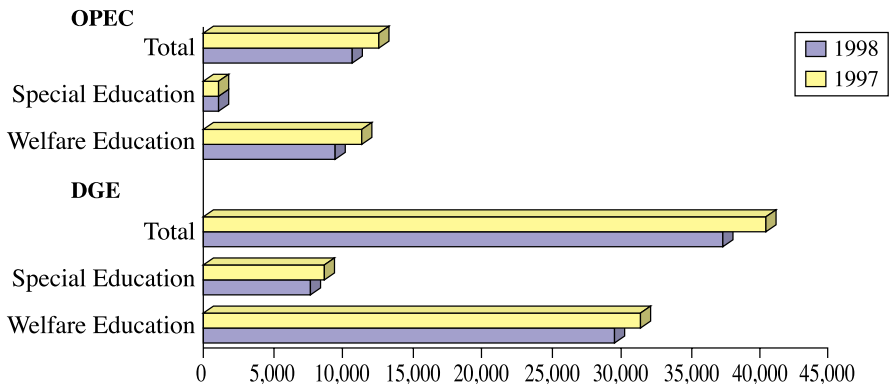


1.3 Access to Special and Welfare Education

Both public and private sectors have made greater efforts to expand educational opportunities and services to the handicapped and the disadvantaged such as the poor and those living in remote rural areas, in slums or on the streets as well as children without a birth certificate.

In 1998, more children had access to special and welfare education provided by the *Department of General Education* and the *Office of the Private Education Commission*. Nevertheless, there was a decline in the number of students in special schools under the *OPEC* from 1,301 in 1997 to 1,190 in 1998 (Figure 18).

Figure 18 Number of Students in Special and Welfare Education : Academic Years 1997 and 1998



Source : Department of General Education, MOE.

1.4 Participation in Education for Ecclesiastics and Laymen

The disadvantaged, especially boys from poor families in rural areas, have benefited greatly from education provided for ecclesiastics by going into the monkhood. Formal general education for monks and novices is organized at lower and upper secondary levels. The number of monk and novice students at both levels increased from 55,528 in 1995 to 78,555 in 1999; an increase of 41.5 percent. Apart from the study of Buddhism on Dharma and Pali provided for monks and novices, the teaching of Dharma was also offered to an increasing number of laymen.

At higher education level, the number of monk students at bachelor and master degree levels increased sharply from 4,669 in 1995 to 9,786 in 1999, an increase of over 100 percent. The highest increase rate was at master degree level at approximately 600 percent.

