

An Overview



The Ministry of Education (MOE) is a cabinet-level governmental body of the Executive Yuan, responsible for formulating educational policies and managing public schools throughout Taiwan. Headed by the Minister, who is supported by one Political Deputy Minister and two Administrative Deputy Ministers, the MOE organisation includes the departments of Higher Education, Technological and Vocational Education, Secondary Education, Elementary Education, Social Education, Physical Education and several other agencies. They are in charge of the promotion and implementation of school education at all levels, as well as adult education, physical education and other educational affairs.

In addition there are Bureaus

of Education in the municipal governments and, in the case of county (or city) governments, their jurisdictions encompass local educational administrative affairs.

Taiwan's education system features the following components: basic education; senior secondary education; and higher education.

Basic education covers kindergartens, primary schools and junior high schools. Senior secondary education includes senior vocational schools and senior high schools.

Higher education includes colleges/universities, as well as graduate schools and post-graduate programmes.

According to statistics released in January, 2010, there are a total of 5.07 million students studying in 8,060 schools of various levels.

Preschool education, such as kindergarten, is not a part of

Taiwan's compulsory education.

But to take better care of underprivileged children, starting from September 2010, children from outlying areas and aboriginal townships will be eligible for kindergarten tuition subsidies.

Public kindergartens in those areas will be free, and the government will fund attendance at private kindergartens by up to NT\$ 30,000 (US\$ 937) per year.

Compulsory education consists of six years of elementary education and three years of junior high school education, but the curricula of the two educational levels have been integrated into a New Grade 1-9 Curriculum.

Upon completion of compulsory education, students may choose to follow either an academic track or a vocational track.

The academic track involves three years of senior high school education, plus four years of college/university education, graduate schools and post-graduate programmes.

The educational goal at these levels is to nurture high-quality professionals with a global outlook.

The vocational track includes senior vocational schools, junior colleges, institutes of technology

and universities of technology. The purpose of the track is to cultivate technical manpower for the country.

As for gifted students and physically- or mentally-handicapped students, their needs can be met by special education.

In addition, the MOE actively promotes supplementary education and community education in the hope of providing all Taiwanese

people with abundant opportunities to pursue lifelong learning.

From 1999 to 2009, the total number of schools at all levels increased by 145; at the same time the number of teachers grew by nearly 4%.

Since 1976, the gross enrollment ratio in elementary and junior high schools have remained at a level of more than 99%.

The illiteracy rate in Taiwan has dropped from 7.2% in 1991 to 2.1% in 2009.

These statistics can serve as the best evidence to show that the quality of education in Taiwan is improving.

Looking towards the future, the Ministry plans to extend compulsory education to twelve years, to cover senior secondary education, in the hope of creating a more complete educational structure.

