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CES CHAIR OF EDUCATION SYSTEMS

Factbook Education System: Honduras

CES Chair of Education Systems

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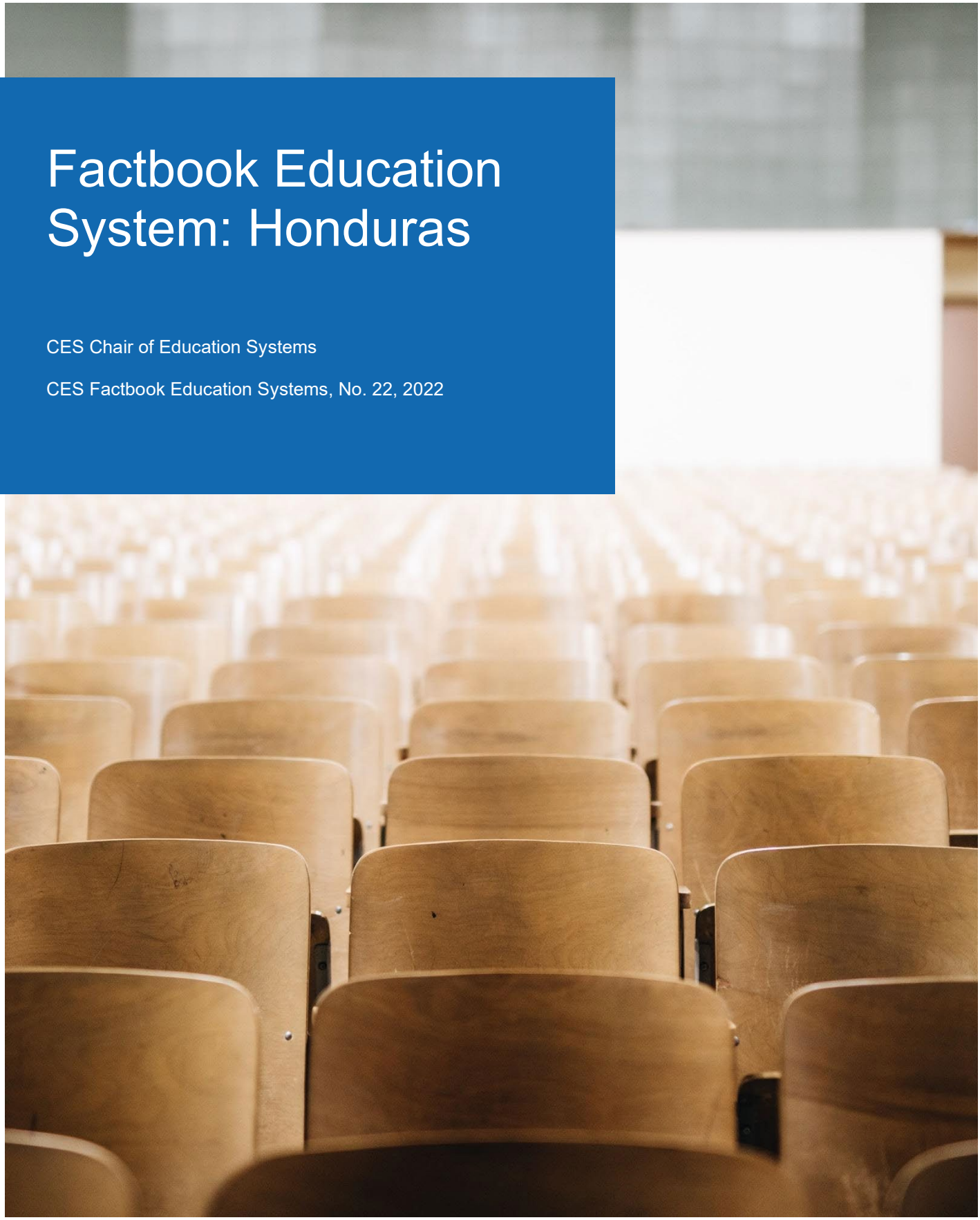

DMTEC

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List of Abbreviations

BCH	Bachillerato Científico Humanista
BTP	Bachillerato Técnico Profesional
CADERH	Advisory Centre for the Development of Human Resources
CENET	National Centre of Education for Work
CES	Higher Education Council
CGT	General Confederation of Workers
CNE	National Education Council
COHEP	Honduran Council of Private Enterprise
COPEMH	Honduran middle-school teachers association
CTC	Technical Advisory Council
DCNB	National Curriculum Design for Basic Education
DES	Directorate of Higher Education
EIB	Intellectual Bilingual Centres
EPL	Employment Protection Legislation
FONAC	National Convergence Forum of Honduras
GCI	Global Competitiveness Index
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GII	Global Innovation Index
HDI	Human Development Index
HEI	Institutions of higher Education
I.T.E.E	Technical Institute of Electricity and Electronics
INFOP	National Vocational Training Institute
INICE	National Institute for Educational Research and Training
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
KOF	Swiss Economic Institute
LA	Latin America

LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
LC	Labour Code
LFPR	Labour Force Participation Rate
MNC-EFTPH	National Qualifications Framework for Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Honduras
MPI	Multidimensional Poverty Index
ODA	Official Development Aid
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PAA	Academic Aptitude Test
PCRH	Constitución Politica de la Republica de Honduras
PEC	Project of the Centre
PER	Public Expenditure Review
PET	Professional Education and Training
PRAEMHO	Honduran Secondary Education Support Program
SDGM	Sub Directorate-General for secondary education
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SHACES	Honduran Higher Education Quality Accreditation System
SINECE	National System for the Evaluation of the Quality of Education
STSS	Secretariat of Labour and Social Security
STSS	Ministry of Labour and Social Security Offices
UNAH	National Autonomous University of Honduras
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UPNFM	The Francisco Morazán National Pedagogical University
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VPET	Vocational Professional Education and Training
VPETA	Vocational and Professional Education and Training Act
WEF	World Economic Forum
YLMI	Youth Labour Market Index

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Foreword

The increasing competitiveness of the world economy as well as the high youth unemployment rates after the worldwide economic crises in 2008/9 have put pressure on countries to upgrade the skills of their workforces. Consequently, vocational education and training (VET) has received growing attention in recent years, especially amongst policy-makers. For example, the European Commission defined common objectives and an action plan for the development of VET systems in European countries in the Bruges Communiqué on Enhanced European Cooperation in Vocational Education and Training for 2011-2020 (European Commission, 2010). In addition, a growing number of US states and other industrialized, transitioning, and developing countries (for example Hong Kong, Singapore, Chile, Costa Rica, Benin and Nepal) are interested in either implementing VET systems or making their VET system more labour-market oriented.

The appealing outcome of the VET system is that it improves the transition of young people into the labour market by simultaneously providing work experience, remuneration and formal education degrees at the secondary education level. If the VET system is optimally designed, VET providers are in constant dialogue with the demand-side of the labour market, i.e. the companies. This close relationship guarantees that the learned skills are in demand on the labour market. Besides practical skills, VET systems also foster soft skills such as emotional intelligence, reliability, accuracy, precision, and responsibility, which are important attributes for success in the labour market. Depending on the design and permeability of the education system, VET may also provide access to tertiary level education (according to the ISCED classification): either general education at the tertiary A level or professional education and training (PET) at the tertiary B level. PET provides occupation-specific qualifications that prepare students for highly technical and managerial positions. VET and PET systems are often referred to together as “vocational and professional education training (VPET)” systems.

Few countries have elaborated and efficient VPET systems. Among these is the Swiss VPET system, which is an example of an education system that successfully matches market supply and demand. The Swiss VPET system efficiently introduces adolescents to the labour market, as shown by Switzerland’s 2007-2017 average youth unemployment rate of 8.1 percent compared to 14.8 percent for the OECD average (OECD, 2017).

Though not many countries have VPET systems that are comparable to Switzerland’s in terms of quality, efficiency and permeability, many have education pathways that involve some kind of practical or school-based vocational education. The purpose of the CES Education System Factbook Series[1] is to provide information about the education systems of countries across the world, with a special focus on vocational and professional education and training.

In the CES Factbook Education Systems: Honduras, we describe Honduras’ vocational system and discuss the characteristics that are crucial to the functioning of the system. Essential components comprise the regulatory framework and the governance of the VPET system, the involved actors, and their competencies and duties. The Factbook also provides information regarding the financing of the system and describes the process of curriculum development and the involved actors.

The Factbook is structured as follows: First, we provide an overview of Honduras’ economy, labour market, and political system. The second part is dedicated to the description of the formal education

[1] From 2013 to 2019, the Factbooks were produced within the framework of the Education Systems research division at the KOF Swiss Economic Institute. From 2020 they will be produced by the Chair of Education Systems (CES) group.

system. The third section explains Honduras' vocational education system. The last section offers a perspective on Honduras' recent education reforms and challenges to be faced in the future.

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The Education System Factbooks have to be regarded as work in progress. The authors do not claim completeness of the information which has been collected carefully and in all conscience. Any suggestions for improvement are highly welcome!

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1. Honduras' Economy and Political System

One of the main purposes of an education system is to provide the future workforce with the skills needed in the labour market. The particularities of a country's economy and labour market are important factors determining the current and future demand for skills. Therefore, these are briefly described in the first chapter of this Factbook. In addition, this chapter provides an overview of Honduras' political system with an emphasis on the description of education politics. **Table 1** reports key statistics and information about Honduras, which are further discussed in this chapter.

Table 1. Key Statistics and Information on Honduras
Source: own table based on Britannica Encyclopædia **(2021)**

Category	Outcome
Population	9,449,000 (2021)
Area	112,492 km^2
Location	Central America
Capital City	Tegucigalpa
Government	Multiparty republic with one legislative house
Official Language	Spanish
National Currency	Honduran Lempira (HNL)

1.1 Honduras' Economy

Honduras is located between El Salvador and Guatemala to the west and Nicaragua to the south and east. Honduras is a lower middle-income country that has a gross domestic product (GDP) of US$50,893,693,122, resulting in the 105th global GDP rank. The former amounts to a GDP per capita[2] of US$5,138.5 that equals to the 135th global rank and is the lowest in comparison to its neighbouring countries. While Nicaragua (US$5,280.1) performs equally poorly in an economic sense, El Salvador (US$7,982.6) and Guatemala (US$8,393.3) assume a much higher GDP per capita. The average GDP per capita in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) region is at US$14,826.4 further stressing the relatively poor economic performance of Honduras. Between 1990 and 2020, the annual GDP growth rate of Honduras averaged 3.2 % that is higher than the average GDP growth rate in the LAC region (2.5 %) and only surpassed by Guatemala (3.5 %) of its neighbouring countries (World Bank, 2022a). Nevertheless, Honduras remains one of the poorest and most unequal countries in Latin America (LA) with more than 66 % of the population living in poverty in 2016. One out 5 Hondurans live in extreme poverty – that is less US$1.90 per day in 2019. The country struggles with high levels of violence, with

[2] Measured in constant 2017 US$ at purchasing power parity (PPP)

over 38 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants as of 2018, that is only surpassed by El Salvador. In the past, natural catastrophes were a constant threat to the Country. Most notably, Hurricane Mitch in 1998 devastated the country, destroying large parts of the infrastructure (World Bank, 2021).

Since 1990 the Honduras' Human Development Index (HDI) has risen by 22,2 % to a value of 0.634 in 2019 that places the country in the medium human development category. Specifically, it ranks 132 out of 189 countries and territories above El Salvador (124), Guatemala (127), and Nicaragua (128) (UNDP, 2020). To acquire a better understanding of Honduras' level of development, it is further worth examining the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI). The MPI provides a more profound understanding of the sources of poverty. In particular, the MPI reflects the intensity of deprivation and the proportion of the people who live under deprivation (head count ratio) with respect to the three dimensions: education, health and living standards. The smaller the value, the more developed the country. **Table 2** In the last evaluation (2011-2012), Honduras' MPI value was 0.093 and thereby smaller than the corresponding value of Guatemala (0.134 in 2014-2015) but is nevertheless higher than the values of Nicaragua (0.074 in 2011-2012) and El Salvador (0.032 in 2014) (OPHI, 2021) .

Table 2. Head count ratio of MPI in Honduras and neighbouring countries

Dimension	Indicators	Honduras	Nicaragua	Guatemala	El Salvador
Health (deprivation in percent)	Nutrient	9.9	4.5	19.0	2.6
	Child mortality	1.0	0.6	2.1	0.4
Education (deprivation in percent)	Years of schooling	10.2	12.5	16.0	5.2
	School attendance	7.9	3.7	12.1	3.3
Living Standards (deprivation in percent)	Cooking fuel	19.2	16.2	27.8	6.3
	Sanitation	14.6	6.2	10.8	5.0
	Water	7.0	13.6	10.5	1.9
	Electricity	NA	11.5	10.1	2.4
	Flooring and roofing	18.5	13.5	22.7	6.1
	Assets	7.9	9.1	10.9	2.5
MPI		**0.093 DHS(2011-2012)**	**0.074 DHS(2011-2012)**	**0.134 DHS(2014-2015)**	**0.032 DHS(2014)**

Source: own table based OPHI (2021)

In 2019, Honduras' Gini coefficient was 48.2, which was comparable to Guatemala's (48.3 in 2014) and Nicaragua's (46.2 in 2017). El Salvador's Gini coefficient (38.8 in 2019) was noticeably lower. The Gini Index measures the inequality of the distribution of income or consumption expenditures among individuals or households. In this numerical measure, a value of 0 means completely equal distribution, and a value of 100 corresponds to extreme inequality in which a single person owns everything (World Bank, 2022a).

Table 3. Value added and employment by sector, 2020

Sector	Honduras: Value added (%)	EU-27 Value added[3] (%)	Honduras: Employment (%)	EU-27 Employment (%)
Primary sector	12.1	1.8	29.5	4.5
Agriculture, hunting and forestry, fishing	12.1	1.7	29.5	4.5
Secondary sector	26.0	25	21.4	22.6
Manufacturing, mining and quarrying and other industrial activities	N/A	19.5	N/A	16
of which: Manufacturing	16.0	16.2	N/A	14.4
Construction	N/A	5.5	N/A	6.6
Tertiary sector	58.3	73.1	49.1	72.9
Wholesale and retail trade, repairs; hotels and restaurants; transport; information and communication	N/A	23.3	N/A	27.1
Financial intermediation; real estate, renting & business activities	N/A	15.8	N/A	3.3
Public administration, defence, education, health, and other service activities	N/A	34.0	N/A	42.5

Source: own table based on Eurostat (2022a), Eurostat (2022b) and World Bank (2022a)

Table 3 summarises the value added and employment by sector for Honduras and the average of EU-27 countries in 2020. Examining the added value in both EU-27 countries and Honduras, the tertiary sector is the largest. In Honduras, it is approximately 58%, while in EU-27 countries, it is approximately 73 % and thus remarkably higher. With respect to the secondary sector, the numbers are more similar; 26 % for Honduras and 25 % for the average EU-27 country. However, the numbers differ remarkably in the primary sector. The primary sector, with an added value of 12%, is approximately six times the size of the primary sector in EU-27 countries (2%) (Eurostat, 2022a; World Bank, 2022).

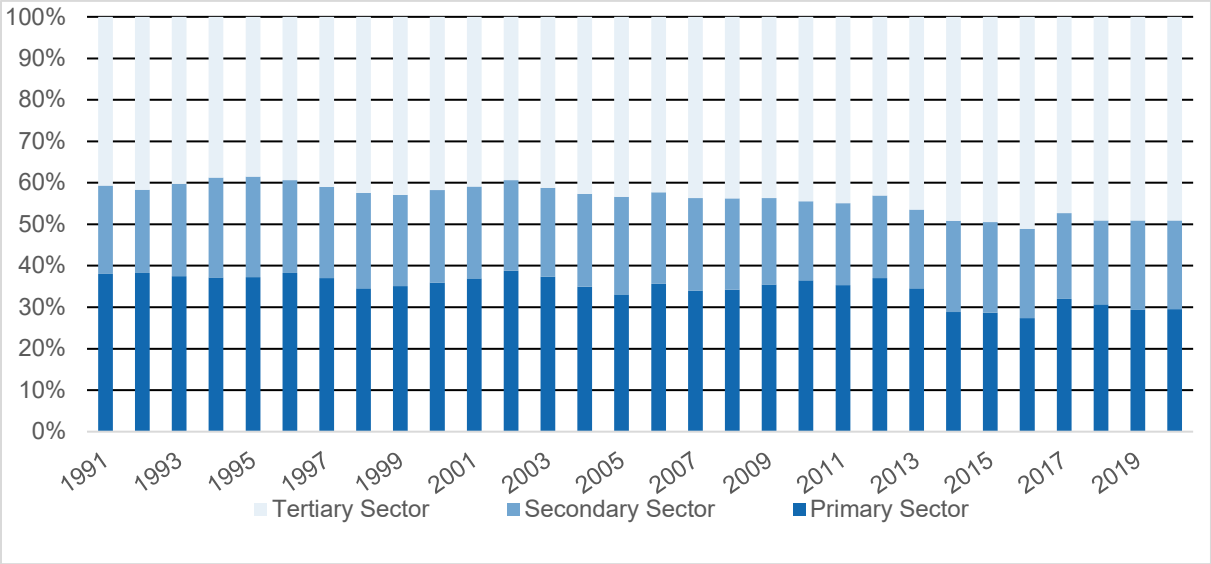
The outlined differences in the added value by sectors further result in apparent differences in the employment by sectors. While the employment in the secondary in Honduras (21%) is comparable to the EU-27 countries (23%), apparent differences in numbers exist when considering the first and tertiary sectors. In the Honduran economy approximately 30 % are still employed in the primary sector further stressing its developing character. On the contrary, EU-27 countries employ only 5 % in the primary sector on average. As it can be expected, the percentage of employment in the tertiary sector is much higher in the EU-27 countries (73%) than it is in Honduras (49%) (Eurostat, 2022b; World Bank, 2022).

The share of the workforce that is employed in the respective sectors is a key factor of the economic structure. **Figure 1** presents Honduras' development of employment by sector as a percentage of total employment from 1991 until 2019. While the employment in the secondary sector has remained relatively constant over the timespan at approximately 21 %, employment in the primary and tertiary sectors have undergone significant changes. Employment in the primary sector in 2020 is about 10 pp

[3].

lower than it was in 1991. Consequently, as employment in the secondary sector remained relatively constant, employment in the tertiary sector increased by 10 pp.

Figure 1. Employment by sector (as % of total employment), 1991-2020



Source: own figure based on World Bank (2022a)

According to the World Economic Forum's (WEF) (2019) Global Competitiveness Index 4.0 (GCI) rankings from 2019, Honduras ranked 101 of 141 countries, which equalled the rank in the 2018 report. With a general score of 52.7 of 100, Honduras placed below the median country in the LAC region. Honduras performs remarkably well in *Macro Economic stability* (83rd) and *Health* (80th) but falls behind in *Institutions* (116th), *ICT adoption* (124th), skills (108th), and *Innovation capability* (106th). Neighbouring countries perform similarly; Guatemala ranks 98, El Salvador 103 and Nicaragua 109, respectively out of 141 countries.

The Global Innovation Index (GII) determines the innovative capability of an economy based on both the input into innovation, such as infrastructure or human capital, as well as the innovative output an economy produces. In the GII rankings of 2021, Honduras ranked 108th of 132 countries, which is 5 places worse than the year before. Honduras ranks slightly better concerning Input (101st) than Output (106th). Honduras is rated remarkably well with respect to the *Market sophistication* (62nd) and *Business sophistication* (72nd). Nevertheless, the country scores poorly regarding *Institutions* (121st), *Infrastructure* (116th)[4], and *Knowledge and technology outputs* (118th) (WIPO, 2021).

In conclusion, Honduras is a lower-middle-income country among LAC that is still heavily dependent on its primary sector. Although the country's GDP growth is well above the average LAC, the country is marked by high inequality and poverty. High crime rates and natural disasters further hinder economic development (World Bank, 2021).

[4] Honduras' infrastructure still recovers from Hurricane Mitch (1998) that devasted large portions of the Honduran infrastructure.

1.2 The Labour Market

In the first part of this section, we describe the general situation of Honduras' labour market. In the second part, we focus on the youth labour market in particular.

1.2.1 Overview of the Honduras Labour Market

Both the Labour Code (LC) and the national constitution, Constitución Politica de la Republica de Honduras (PCRH), provide workers with several rights that explicitly guarantee labour-related rights to workers, such as the freedom of association, the right to collective bargaining, and to strike (PCRH Art. 128 [13-15]). While the PCRH outlines the right in a broader sense, the LC elaborates on limitations and restrictions of the rights. The law places restrictions: for a union to be recognised trade union must represent at least 30 workers (LC Art. 475), foreigners are not allowed to hold union offices (LC Art. 504), union officials must work in the same area of business as the workers they represent, and many workers of typical professions (e.g., military and police) are not allowed to join unions (LC Art. 534). Unions are officially allowed to call strikes given that a two thirds-majority majority of both union and non-union employees at the enterprise approve so. The law, however, was not effectively enforced by the government (U.S. Department of State, 2020). Workers were limited in exercising the rights to form and join unions and to take part in collective bargaining. The Secretariat of Labour and Social Security (STSS) failed to sanction violations of the law consequently providing incentives to continued labour law violations. Furthermore, the government itself is occasionally accused of interference in trade union activities (U.S. Department of State, 2020; ILO, 2020).

The PCRH prohibits any form of forced or compulsory labour, but the law was not effectively enforced by the government. Administrative penalties were either insufficient or rarely enforced (U.S. Department of State, 2020). With respect to child labour Honduras made a significant advancement in 2017 as the government strengthened legal protections for children by updating the list of hazardous occupations prohibited for children. Children in Honduras engage in the worst forms of child labour including sexual exploitation as a result of human trafficking. Children of indigenous or African descent are particularly vulnerable to child labour. Street gangs recruit children into their ranks to commit extortion, drug trafficking, and homicide. Although Honduras has ratified all key international conventions concerning child labour, including the minimum age of 14 to work and a minimum age of 18 for hazardous work (LC Art. 32), the issue of the worst forms of child labour remains (Bureau of International labour Affairs 2020, p.2). According to the U.S. Department of State (2020) estimates of the number of children younger than 18 engaged in child labour ranged from 370,000 to 510,000. Adequate law enforcement is reportedly hindered by financial, and resource challenges of labour and criminal law enforcement agencies.

As of 2020, Honduras has the highest net average monthly minimum wage in the region that is set at 10,022 lempiras per month, or US$415, that is above the poverty line (USAID, 2021, p. 34). In 2022, the net average monthly salary **per person** is approximately US$615 (BDEX, 2022). Additionally, the law prescribes a maximum eight-hour shift per day for most workers, a 44-hour workweek, and at least one 24-hour rest period for every six days of work (U.S. Department of State, 2020). According to the World Population Review (2022), the median net income in Honduras **per household** is US$1,959 monthly, whereas the average net income per household lies at US$3,109 monthly.

Lastly, we look at employment protection through the OECD Index of Employment Protection, which is a multidimensional index that quantifies the strictness of Employment Protection Legislation (EPL) across countries. It is scaled between zero to six, where zero refers to a low level of EPL, and six to a high level of protection. Honduras' most recent value of 2.25 (2014) is similar to the average of the OECD countries value of 2.06 in 2019 (OECD, 2019).

Table 4 presents the Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) and the unemployment rate by age in Honduras and the OECD. While the unemployment rate across age groups is comparably similar between Honduras and the average OECD country, the LFPR differs substantially. The LFPR of the

OECD country is on average higher than in Honduras across all age groups, except the LFPR of the youth that is higher in Honduras. While Honduras reports slightly higher unemployment rates across age groups (expert for the unemployment for the youth), the unemployment rate is very similar to the OECD average (ILO, 2020; OECD, 2020a). However, the labour market in general provides mostly low-quality job to the work force and thus underemployment is a major and rising challenge in Honduras. As of 2020, 71 % of surveyed Hondurans reported to be underemployed (USAID, 2021, p. 34).

Table 4. Labour force participation rate and unemployment rate by age in 2020

	Labour force participation rate		Unemployment rate	
Age group	Honduras	OECD average	Honduras	OECD average
Total (15–64 years)	59.5	71.5	8.4	7.3
Youth (15–24 years)	48.7	45.9	14.7	15.0
Adults (25–54 years)	69.4	81.6	8.0	6.5
Adults (55–64 years)	54.9	63.7	6.5	5.2

Source: Own table based on OECD (2022a), World Bank (2022a), and ILO (2022)

Table 5 displays the labour force participation rate and the unemployment rate by educational attainment for Honduras and the OECD. In Honduras, the LFPR is the highest for those who have tertiary education (83.4 %), whereas the LFPR is the lowest for those individuals who have less than upper secondary education (62.5 %). The OECD average follows the same pattern. While the LFPR is higher for individuals with less than upper secondary education in Honduras, LFPR is lower for upper secondary and tertiary education. Unemployment in Honduras is more than half the OECD average with respect to the lowest education level, stressing the quantity of low-quality jobs in the labour market. Unemployment rates are, however, higher for higher levels of education (ILO, 2022; OECD, 2022b). According to the USAID report (2021, p. 2) the labour market is not capable of providing medium- to high-skilled workers with appropriate opportunities providing further incentives to migrate. In turn, vital human capital is lost that further hinders economic development.

Table 5. Labour force participation rate and unemployment rate by educational attainment in 2020 (persons aged 25–64)

	Labour force participation rate		Unemployment rate	
Education level	Honduras	OECD average	Honduras	OECD average
Less than upper secondary education	62.5	57.7	5.1	10.7
Upper secondary education	69	75.1	10.6	6.5
Tertiary education	83.4	84.6	6.6	4.6

Source: Own table based on OECD (2022b) and ILO (2022)

1.2.2 The KOF Youth Labour Market Index

Dimensions and corresponding indicators of the KOF YLMI

Activity State - Unemployment Rate - Relaxed Unemployment Rate[5] - Neither in Employment, nor in Education or Training (NEET) Rate
Working Conditions - Temporary Worker Rate - Involuntary Part-time Worker Rate - Atypical Working Hours Rate - In-work At-Risk-of-Poverty Rate[6] - Vulnerable Employment Rate[7]
Education - Formal Education and Training Rate - Skills Mismatch Rate
Transition Smoothness - Relative Unemployment Ratio[8] - Long-term Unemployment Rate[9]
Source: Renold et al. (2014).

The KOF Swiss Economic Institute developed the KOF Youth Labour Market Index (KOF YLMI) to compare the youth labour market situation across countries (Renold et al., 2014). The foundation for this index is the critique that a single indicator, such as the widely used youth unemployment rate, does not suffice to describe the youth labour market situation adequately nor provide enough information for a comprehensive cross-country analysis. To increase the amount of information considered and to foster a multi-dimensional view, the KOF YLMI considers twelve indicators that are grouped into four dimensions (see the information box to the right).

The first dimension is the **Activity State**. It contains three indicators and captures to what extent the youth are active. Youth refers to all individuals aged 15-24. The indicators are the Unemployment Rate, the Relaxed Unemployment Rate, and the NEET Rate. The **Working Conditions** dimension consists of five indicators that capture the quality of employment. Those are the Temporary Worker Rate, the Involuntary Part-time Worker Rate, the Atypical Working Hours Rate, the In-work At-risk-of-Poverty Rate and the Vulnerable Employment Rate. **Education**, the third dimension, aims to capture the quantity and quality of education and training via two indicators: the Formal Education and Training Rate and the Skills Mismatch Rate. Finally, the **Transition Smoothness** dimension describes the dynamics of the transition process between school and work. The indicators Relative Unemployment Ratio and Long-Term Unemployment Rate compose this dimension.

Before aggregating the indicators into a single index, each indicator value is rescaled into an indicator score that takes values between 1 and 7, where higher scores suggest more desirable outcomes. The data for the indicators are collected from different international institutions and cover up to 178 countries from 1991 onward. Unfortunately, data is not available for all countries every year, so one of the major

[5] Is calculated as the number of unemployed and discouraged workers as a share of the entire labour force. Discouraged workers have given up the search for work (not actively seeking), although they have nor job and are currently available for work (also: "involuntary inactive").

[6] Those who cannot make a decent living out their earnings. It is calculated as the number of youth at work but earning less than 60% of the median national income as a percentage of the total working population.

[7] Share of the employed population working on their own account or those working in their family business and thus contributing to the entire family income. Both are less likely to have formal work arrangements and are therefore less protected by labour laws and more exposed to economic risk.

[8] Is defined as the youth unemployment rate (15-24 years) divided by the adult unemployment rate (25+). If the youth cohort is affected in the same way than the adult group with respect to unemployment, then the relative unemployment ratio will be equal to one. If the youth are relatively more affected, then the ratio will be larger than one.

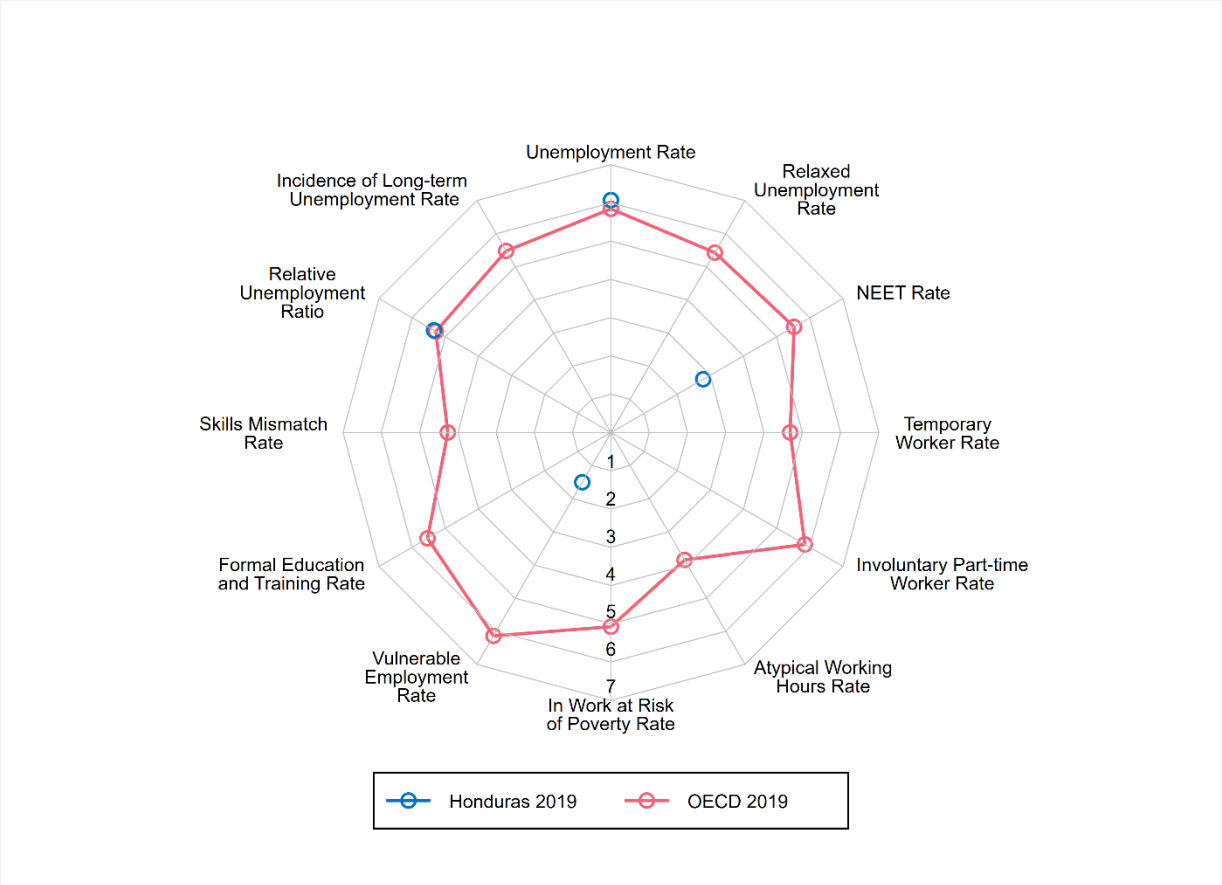
[9] Those unemployed for more than one year (52 weeks) as a share of the total number of unemployed (according to the ILO definition).

limitations of the KOF YLMI is data availability. When data is lacking, a dimension can occasionally be based on a single indicator or must be omitted entirely when no indicator for that category has data available. A lack of indicators can make comparisons across countries or groups of countries problematic and sometimes even impossible.

1.2.3 The KOF Youth Labour Market Index (KOF YLMI) for Honduras

In 2019, only very limited data of the KOF YLMI was obtained for Honduras, which does not allow for a sound comparison with the OECD average. In particular, only data on four of possible 12 sections was available for Honduras as can be observed in **Figure 2**. Namely, data on the Unemployment Rate, the NEET Rate, the Vulnerable Unemployment Rate, and the Relative Unemployment Rate was obtained. Nevertheless, the comparison of Honduras provides interesting insights. While Honduras performs slightly better than the OECD with respect to the Unemployment Rate and the Relative Unemployment Rate, it lags significantly behind concerning the NEET Rate and Vulnerable Unemployment Rate. The NEET rate is only 2.8, whereas the OECD score 5.5 on average. The gap is even higher regarding the Vulnerable Unemployment Rate; Honduras' score is only 1.5 whereas the OECD average is remarkably at 6.1. Although incomplete, the comparison shows that Honduras certainly lags behind in certain dimensions concerning the youth labour market.

Figure 2. YLM Scoreboard: Honduras in comparison to the OECD average, 2019

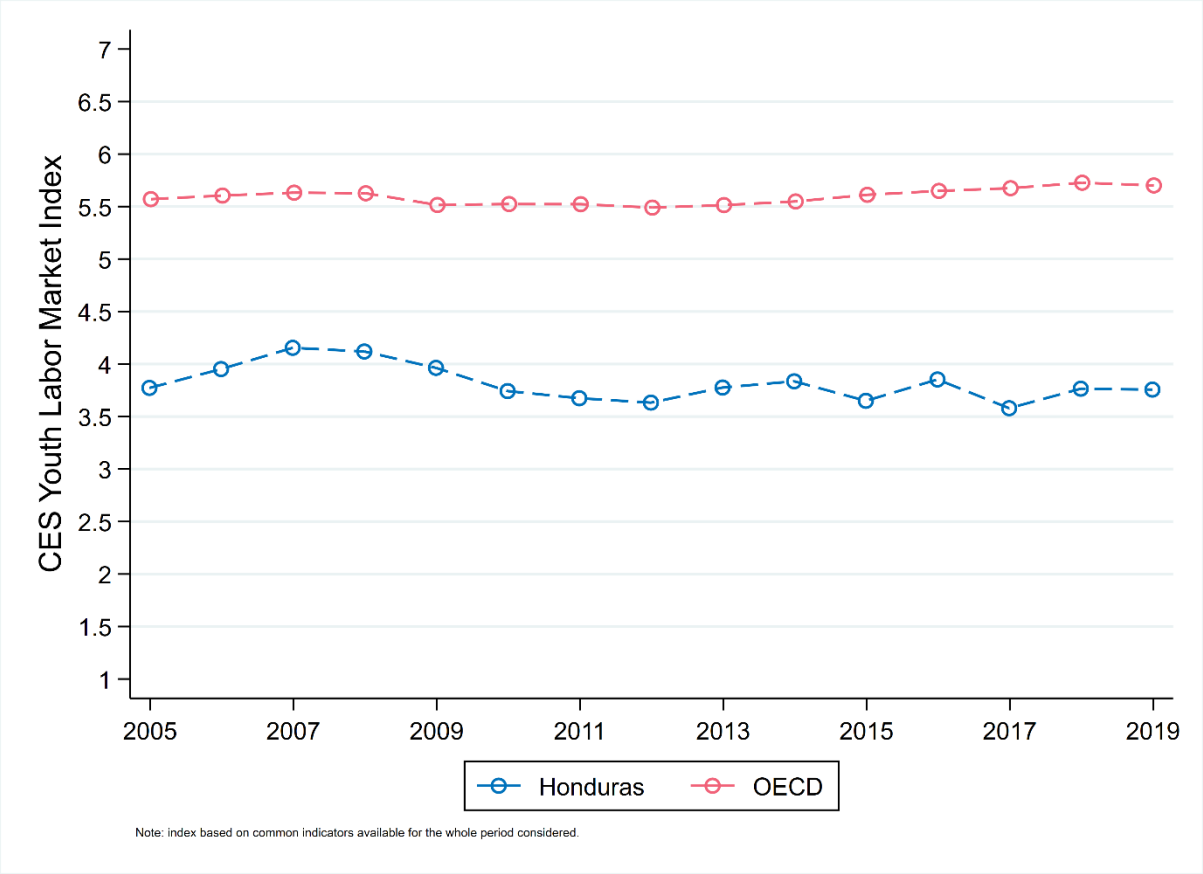


Source: Own table based on KOF (2019).

In **Figure 3** the development of the KOF YLMI of Honduras over time is shown and is again compared to the OECD average. As a matter of fact, only data on the before-mentioned four dimensions was obtained for the case of Honduras since 2005. Over the available time span there is neither an apparent trend of Honduras converging to nor diverging from the OECD average. The OECD YLMI remained very constant and robust to any occurring events since 2005. On the contrary, the Honduran course of the YLMI since 2005 is comparable to a sinus-curve. The YLMI first increased steadily between 2005 and 2007 reaching an all-time high of 4.2. That was, however, followed by a similar fall, ultimately reaching

the same overall score of approximately 3.6 in 2011 as in 2005. Since then, the YLMI has increased three times, approaching a score of 4.0. However, the rise soon came to an abrupt end, and it decreased to a score of approximately 3.5. Now, since 2017, the YLMI is again on the rise, but it remains to be seen whether this rise is soon followed by an equivalent drop. Overall, since 2005, the OECD average increased from 5.6 to 5.7, whereas Honduras could not improve on its score in 2005 of 3.8.

Figure 3. YLM Index: Honduras versus the OECD average, 2005-2019



Source: Own table based on KOF (2019).

1.3 Honduras' Political System

Understanding the basics of a country's political system and getting to know the political goals with respect to its education system are crucial points for the understanding of the education system in a broader sense. Therefore, in Section 1.3.1 we start by presenting Honduras' political system in general. Then, in Section 1.3.2, we focus on the politics and goals of the education system.

1.3.1 Overview of the Honduras Political System

Honduras gained its independence from Spain in 1821 and from Mexico in 1823, respectively when Honduras joined in the formation of the United Provinces of Central America. The political landscape was marked by the opposing liberal and conservative factions. The constantly ongoing conflict between the two factions eventually led to the collapse of the federation and Honduras declared its absolute independence in 1838 (Britannica, Encyclopædia, 2021).

In 1841, Honduras' first constitutional president was elected, namely a Conservative. Liberals assumed the presidency in 1876 and maintained their political superiority well into the 20th century, until the National party was formed to challenge the government of the liberal party. They assumed the presidency for the first time in 1932 and maintained it till the political turmoil and military revolt in 1957

that saw the Liberals regain the presidency. The following years were marked by constant shifts in power, military rule and the Soccer War (1969) with El Salvador. Although military rule came to an end in 1971 after the soccer war that Honduras lost militarily, it was soon restored in 1972. Central America then entered a cycle of violence with violent revolutions taking place in both Nicaragua and in El Salvador. After having managed not to get involved in guerrilla warfare, Honduras, after almost 17 years of military rule, elected a civilian government. The new president, Roberto Suazo Cordova of the liberal Party, favoured strong relation to the U.S that granted them strong economic aid from the U.S. but in turn Honduras had to cooperate with Nicaraguan guerrilla fighters in their ongoing conflict. In 1990, for the first time in 57 years an opposition government, namely the National Party, succeeded to take office peacefully. The 2001 election saw the National Party back at the political top. Notably, Honduras joined the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas, a leftist alliance formed in 2004 by Venezuela and Cuba. After a failed attempt by President Zelaya in 2009 to revise the constitution that would have allowed him to stay in office for another term of four years, the president was ousted in a military coup and was forced to leave the country and remain in exile. After official elections Lobo was elected President, who met Zelaya in 2011 to sign an agreement that allowed Zelaya to enter Honduras. The 2014 inaugurated president Hernandez was involved in a corruption scandal that involved the bilking of hundreds of millions of dollars in public funds by Social Security Institute officials. Allies of Hernandez managed to persuade the Supreme Court to strike down a law that prevented presidents from running for office for a second term. Thus, Hernandez stood for reflection in 2017, managing to win the election by the smallest of margins causing a major outcry followed by massive protests. Nevertheless, a set of electoral reforms were established to restore the Honduran public's faith in the country's elections. Hernandez is continuously accused of corruption and involvement in cocaine trafficking. Although insisting on his innocence, he was identified as a conspirator in several criminal prosecutions. In the 2021 presidential elections Xiomara Castro, notably the wife of former president Zelaya, became the country's first woman president (Britannica, Encyclopædia, 2021).

Honduras is a presidential republic. Operating under the 1982 constitution, the president serves as the chief of state and head of government and is directly elected by simple majority popular vote for a four-year term. Together with the president the cabinet, that is appointed by the president, holds executive power. Immediate re-election is permitted for the president as the Supreme Court struck down the constitutional provisions on presidential term limits. Elected in 18 multi-seat constituencies by closed party-list proportional representation vote to four-year terms are the unicameral National Congress or Congresso (128 seats) which constitute the legislative branch of the government. The judicial branch is headed by the supreme court, which is made up by 15 principal judges, including the court president, and 7 alternates. The court has both judicial and constitutional jurisdiction. With respect to elections, the president is elected by his peers and the judges in general are elected for renewable 7-year terms by the National Congress and proposed by the Nominating Board (a diverse 7-member group of judicial officials and other government and non-government officials nominated by each of their organizations) (CIA, 2022).

In the Economist Democracy Index (2021), Honduras ranked 92nd out of 167 included countries and 18th in Latin America of a total of 24 countries. The recent presidential elections of left-wing candidate, Xiamora Castro were considered free and fair, and the party of the incumbent president did not contest the results. The former resulted in an improved electoral process and pluralism score but was offset by lower scores for functioning of government and political culture (Economist, 2021, p. 49). **Table 6** depicts the Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) issued by the World Bank measuring six dimensions of governance and assigns a value between -2.5 (bad governance) and 2.5 (good governance) to each of these dimensions. The table unmistakably pays tribute to the political turmoil that is omnipresent in Honduras. As well as in 2010 Honduras in 2020 is ranked in the bottom third of all countries across all WGI except for the *Regulatory Quality* indicator. Furthermore, almost no improvement can be observed in the observable timespan. Honduras finished even lower in 2020 than it did in 2010 (World Bank, 2022b). The poor rating for control of corruption is consistent with Honduras' performance in the Corruption Perception Index where Honduras ranks 157th out of 180 examined countries with a score of 23 out of 100. As of 2015, Honduras ranked 111th scoring 31 out of 100. Since then, a clear negative trend is observable as the country scored less year by year (Transparency International, 2021).

Table 6. Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) for Honduras, 2010 and 2020

	2010		2020	
Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI)	Estimate	Percentile Rank	Estimate	Percentile Rank
Voice and Accountability	-0.5	31.8	-0.6	30.9
Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism	-0.5	28.4	-0.5	26.4
Government Effectiveness	-0.6	31.6	-0.6	29.8
Regulatory Quality	-0.2	45.5	-0.5	34.1
Rule of Law	-0.9	21.8	-1.0	17.3
Control of Corruption	-0.9	19.5	-0.9	20.7

Source: Own table based on World Bank (2022b)

1.3.2 Politics and Goals of the Education System

The state fulfils its responsibility for education at different levels through two government bodies: one centralised, the Ministry of Education, and the other decentralised, the National Autonomous University of Honduras (UNAH), each with its own clearly defined competences. The Ministry of Education, founded in 1882, is the national state institution that is responsible for defining and implementing education policies and strategies, administering the education system at the pre-basic, basic and middle educational levels, and seeking coordination mechanisms for the execution of educational actions within the framework of sectoral and national planning. The national education policy is monitored by the National Educational Council (UNESCO, 2021). The higher education system is the responsibility of the UNAH. The Higher Education Council is the governing and decision-making body of the system (UNESCO, 2011, p. 5).

Although some of recent education-related political challenges could be solved to some extent, Honduras still has many hurdles to take. Most notably, Honduras successfully improved access to primary education, which was especially low in rural areas. However, enrolment rates remain low in preschool and secondary education. Furthermore, weak learning outcomes remain an issue as well as the number of trained teachers. As of 2017, less than one in ten pupils achieved a milestone goal in reading, maths or sciences (GPE, 2021). While gender differences in attendance and performance are normal in Honduras, students from urban areas perform much better than those from rural areas (THEDIALOGUE, 2017). Coordination among government institutions as well should be strengthened (GPE, 2021). In the past, a particular reason for low education quality was teacher absenteeism. The government now places significant emphasis on this issue guaranteeing 200 teaching days per year. A major factor in the teacher's high absenteeism was teacher unions calling demonstrations. The ongoing disputes with the teacher union, one of the most powerful unions in Honduras, remains a constant challenge for the Ministry of Education. The state of Honduras is aware of the above-mentioned issues and is eager to solve them in due time. The national strategic goals, that address before-mentioned issues, of Honduran education are (1) to increase access for children aged five years to pre-basic, (2) to increase access for children to basic education, (3) to increase access for students to middle education at the appropriate age, (4) to increase access for young people and adults to literacy, basic and middle education, (5) to improve the quality of education at all levels and in all branches, (6) to raise school life expectancy and approval ratios in the third cycle of basic education and middle education, (7) to improve the administrative and financial management of the education system, (8) and to secure active and harmonious participation from all stakeholders involved in education (Pisa for Development, 2016, p. 14).

2. Formal System of Education

2.1 Formal System of Education

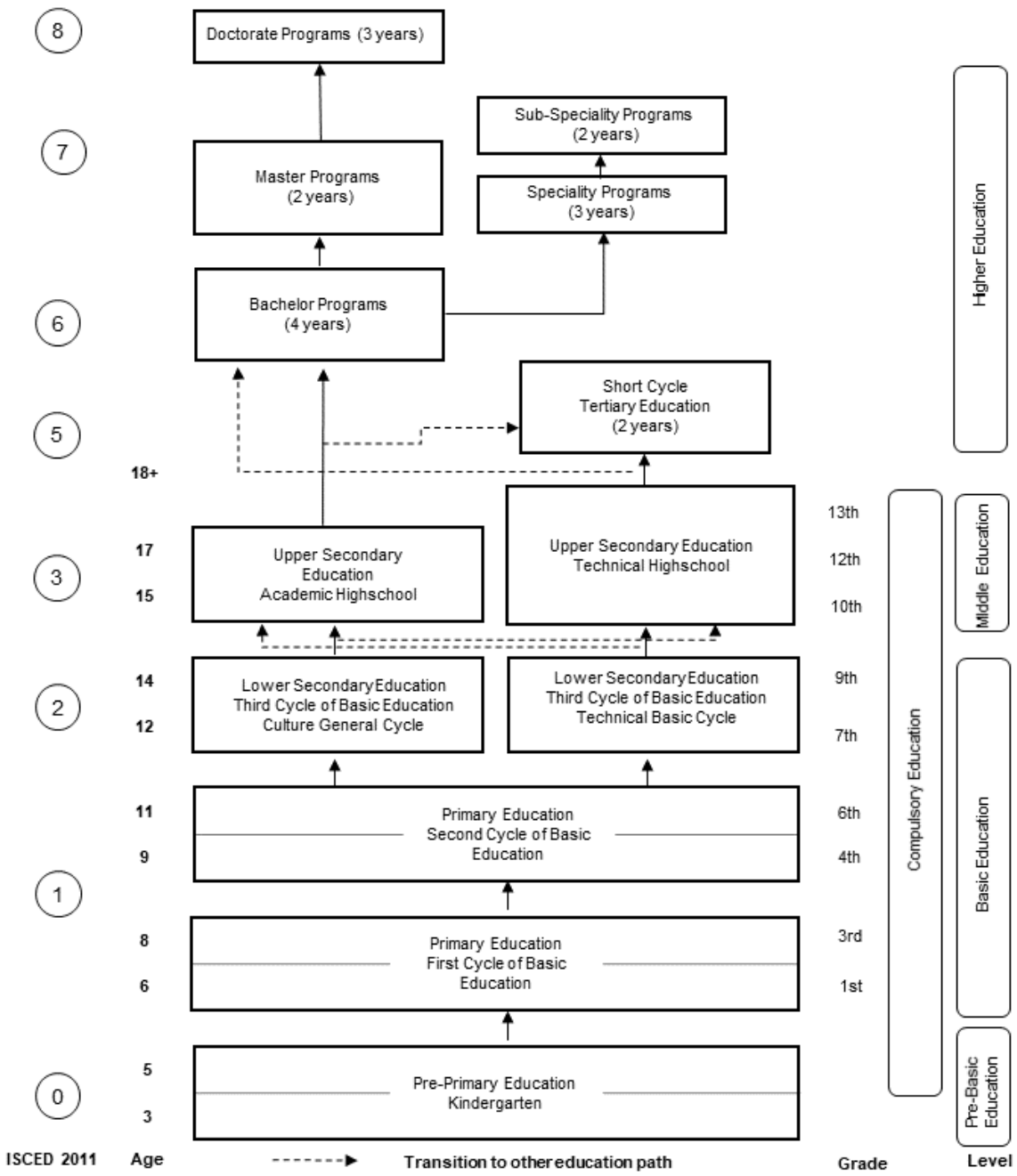
Honduras' formal education is divided into pre-basic (pre-basica), basic (basica), middle (media), and higher (superior) education. Pre-basic education consists of two cycles, one for ages 0 to 3 years and another for the ages 3 to 6 years. Basic education is divided into three cycles. The first cycle refers to the period ranging from 1st to 3rd grade (ages 6 to 8), the second to the period ranging from 4th to 6th grade (ages 9 to 11), and, ultimately, the third to the period ranging from 7th to 9th grade (ages 12 to 14). Students, after having successfully completed basic education, are entitled to choose from two different tracks at the middle education level. On the one hand a purely academic track lasting two years and on the other hand, a technical-vocational track lasting three years. As of 2020, 71.9 % of students enrolled in upper secondary education completed the technical-vocational track. Upon completion of either the academic or technical-vocational track students are entitled to enter tertiary education institutions. Compulsory education includes one year of pre-basic and all of basic and middle education lasting a total of 13 years. Furthermore, compulsory education is free of financial charges. Families, however, need to cover the cost of school uniforms and school supplies (Pisa for Development, 2016, p. 10).

Across pre-basic, basic and middle education approximately 85% of education centres are provided by the state (Dirección de Educatión Superior, 2018, p. 35). Whereas basic education is mostly provided by public education centres, middle education follows the opposite pattern. Education establishments may be official or private. Official education establishments are fully funded by the state. Private establishments are funded by parents and/or investors (UNESCO, 2011, p. 31). In secondary education it is 10.3% in the official sector and 8.7% in public schools; and in higher education it is 17% in the official sector, almost double the 8.8% in the private sector (Secretaría de Educatión, 2003, p. 9).

The Ministry of Education ensures inclusive education for all students regardless of personal, social or cultural background. Education for persons with disabilities, special educational needs (SEN), and special abilities is provided at all levels and is incorporated into regular basic education. SEN is defined in Resolution 1365 in 2014 as "difficulties of varying severity faced by students in accessing and progressing in the national core curriculum for any reason, not necessarily due to disability". Persons with special abilities, on the other hand, are persons that are especially gifted/talented. Special education and care centres provide specialized education to students with disabilities, SEN or special abilities in the form of technical and pedagogical support according to the student's needs and disability, in preparation for entry into pre-basic, basic and middle education. After having completed the preparatory stages, students are placed in mainstream official or non-governmental educational centres receiving psycho-pedagogical support as they complete the compulsory educational grades. Students, however, who cannot follow mainstream education, are educated in resource classrooms or specialized institutions, receiving the same education offered in mainstream schools (UNESCO, 2021). In some cases, these centres receive a subsidy from the state, but in general the main sponsorship is given by private companies or NGOs. There are about 46 centres between organizations, associations, foundations and disability care centres (UNESCO, 2011, p. 23).

The academic year starts in February and ends in November. It comprises a total of 40 school weeks and should consist of a minimum of 200 effective school days at the basic education level. It is estimated that the average annual hours of class time (effective time) are not more than 330 hours per year (UNESCO, 2011, p. 10).

Figure 4 Education system of Honduras



Source: Own figure based on UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2011)

Table 7 shows the GER[10] and NER[11] by education level for Honduras in percentage. The NER quantifies the total number of students in the theoretical age group for a given education level enrolled at that level expressed as a percentage of the total population of that age group. The GER quantifies the number of students enrolled at a given education level—irrespective of their age—as a percentage of the official school-age population corresponding to the same level of education. For example, for the primary education level, the NER indicates how many students at the typical primary school age are enrolled in

[10] The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) defines the gross enrolment rate as the "number of students enrolled in a given level of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the official school-age population corresponding to the same level of education."

[11] The UIS defines the net enrolment rate as the "Total number of students in the theoretical age group for a given level of education enrolled in that level, expressed as a percentage of the total population in that age group."

primary school, while the GER sets the actual number of students in primary education—irrespective of their age—in relation to those who are in the official age to attend primary education.[12]

Table 7. Net enrolment rate (NER) and gross enrolment rate (GER)

Education level	ISCED 2011	NER	GER
Early childhood education development programmes	010	N/A	N/A
Pre-primary education	020	36.7 (2020)	39.4 (2020)
Primary education	1	82.1 (2020)	90.2 (2020)
Secondary education	2–3	43 (2020)	58.7 (2020)
Lower secondary education	2	44.8 (2018)	68.2 (2018)
Upper secondary education	3	30.4 (2018)	45.7 (2018)
Percentage enrolled in vocational secondary education	2–3	71.9 (2020)	
Compulsory education age group	1–3	N/A	N/A
Post-secondary non-tertiary education	4	N/A	N/A
Tertiary education	5–8	N/A	16.2 (2016)
Short-cycle tertiary education	5	N/A	0.8 (2016)
Bachelor or equivalent level	6	N/A	15.0 (2016)
Master or equivalent level	7	N/A	0.4 (2016)
Doctoral or equivalent level	8	N/A	0 (2016)

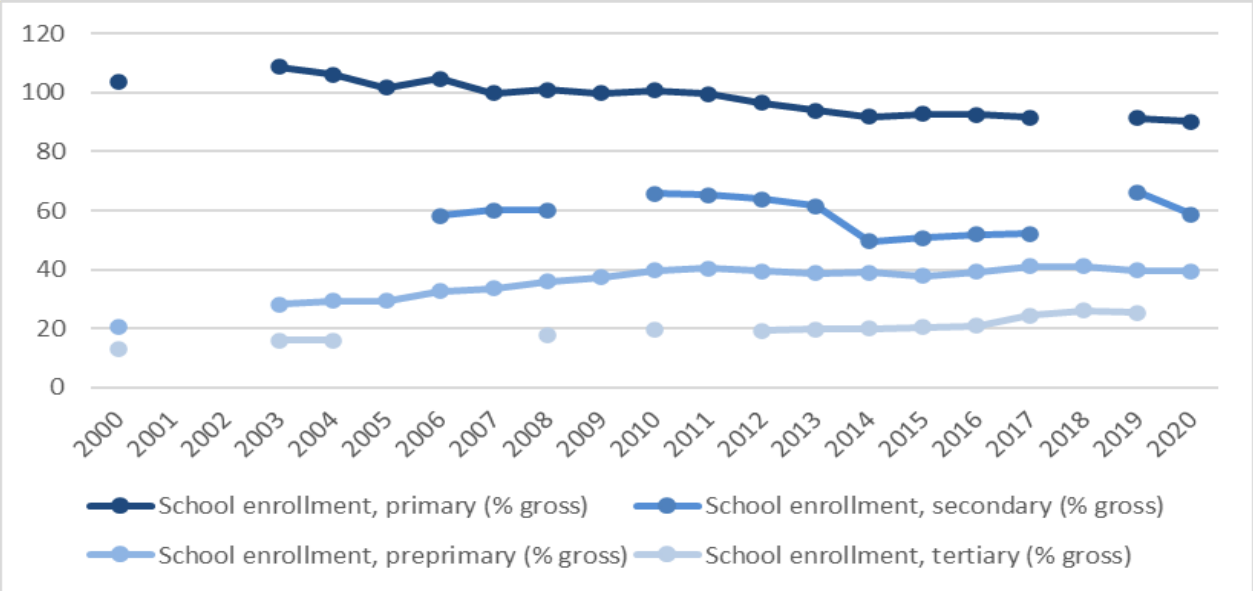
Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2022) and Secretaría de Educatión (2019)

According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2022), the GER for pre-primary education was 39.4 % in 2020, whereas the NER was 36.7 % in 2020. Both the GER and NER were relatively constant over the last 10 years showing neither an apparent upward or downward trend. Nevertheless, since 2000 the GER has almost doubled as the GER from 20.5 %. Primary school enrolment in 2020 was largely universal in Honduras resulting in a primary GER of 90.2 % and NER of 82.1 %. Further note that Honduras' GER (103.7 %) and NER (85.9 %) were both higher in 2000. While the GER gradually decreased year by year, as can be observed in **Figure 5**, the NER slightly increased again since 2015. Secondary school enrolment in 2020 was much lower in comparison to the primary enrolment resulting in a GER of 58.7 % and a NER of 43. **Figure 5** shows that the GER in 2011 was 7 pp higher than it was

[12] A gross enrolment rate of 100 corresponds to a situation where each child in a given country is enrolled in the corresponding education level. A value above 100 could occur due to students who are older than the typical enrolment age for primary education (e.g., must repeat grade, adult learners). A value below 100 implies that not everyone who is in the typical age for primary education is enrolled.

in 2020. However, the GER of 2019 was as high as in 2011. The comparably low GER in 2020 might well be due to the impact of Covid-19. On the contrary, the NER remained very constant since 2011. Furthermore, a clear trend in the data can be observed that both NER and GER decrease from lower to upper secondary education. After the end of upper secondary education, enrolments drop significantly again with a GER of 25.5 % for tertiary education in 2019. Since 2000, however, the tertiary education GER has almost doubled starting at only 13.1 %. Overall, the GER of the different educational levels underline that the focus of the Honduran education system remains still on the primary education-level.

Figure 5. GER of Pre-Primary, Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Education (%), 2000-2020

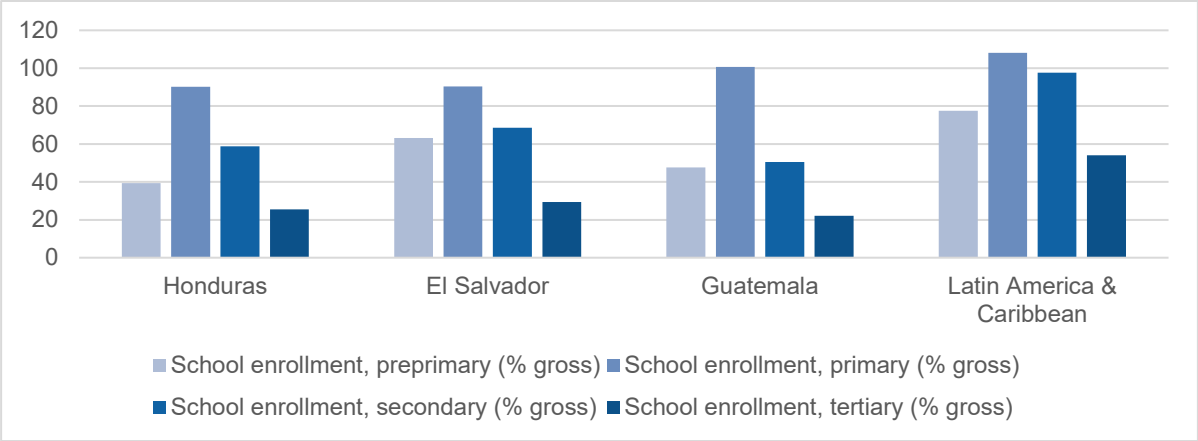


Source: Own figure based on World Bank (2022a)[13]

Where does Honduras stand with respect to the GER in comparison to neighbouring countries and the aggregate LAC country average? Honduras is dead last when it comes to pre-primary enrolments rates. While its GER in 2020 of 39.36 % is only approximately 8 pp below the GER of Guatemala (47.6 % in 2020), the GER of El Salvador (63.2 % in 2019) and of the LAC region (77.5 % in 2020) are significantly higher. While El Salvador's primary NER (90.3 % in 2018) and GER (81.0 % in 2019) are very similar to the ones of Honduras, Guatemala outperforms both countries by clear distance with a GER of 100.6 % in 2020 and a NER of 86.9 % in 2018. The primary LAC average GER and NER lie at 108.2 % and 93.7 %, respectively. Guatemala reaches a GER of 50.4 % and a NER of 42.2 % in 2020 that is both lower than the ones of Honduras. El Salvador, with a GER of 68.7 % and a NER of 59.1 % in 2019 outperforms both Honduras and Guatemala in that respect. According to the World Bank the LAC average GER and NER are at 97.8 % (2019) and 77.5 % (2018), respectively. While Guatemala scores lower (22.1 %), El Salvador (29.4 %) slightly outperforms Honduras. Notably however, the LAC average tertiary education GER (54.1 %) is more than twice as high as in Honduras (25.5 %) in 2019 (World Bank, 2022a). The country comparison highlights the Honduran effort to cover primary education but, at the same time, reveals its low performance on the other educational levels when compared to the LAC average.

[13] Gaps in figure are due to missing data.

Figure 6. GER Country Comparison



Source: Own figure based on World Bank (2022a)

2.2 Pre-Primary Education

Pre-basic education lasts six years from age 0 to 6 and is divided into two cycles. Children ranging from age 0 to 3 can attend the first cycle, whereas the second cycle covers the children of age 3 to 6. However, due to a shortfall in supply of pre-basic education centres, only one year is mandatory for children aged 5. The availability of pre-primary education centres is a current issue of the education system and is currently under expansion (UNESCO, 2011, p. 15). As of 2016, there are 11 073 pre-basic schools (Pisa for Development, 2016, p. 11). Access to electricity is provided for the majority of cases, however, 1431 educational centres still lacked access to electricity in 2014 (Secretaría de Educación, 2017, p. 68). Furthermore, 824 educators reportedly do not have access to water (Secretaría de Educación, 2017, p. 72).

Provision of education at the pre-basic level is split between governmental (public) and non-governmental (private) education centres. Pre-basic education ranging from age 0 to 5 is delegated to alternative entities such as nurseries, comprehensive childcare centres, NGOs and private child education centres. The State is responsible for compulsory pre-basic education for boys and girls in their last year of the second cycle of pre-basic education, mainly through official kindergartens, non-formal pre-school education centres and community pre-basic education centres. Education is free of any financial charges in public education. Notably, instructors at official kindergartens are graduate teachers, whereas instructors at other education centres are not necessarily and appropriately trained (Dirección de Educatión Superior, 2018, p. 33). Overall, as of 2013, only 51 % of pre-primary education teachers have completed at least the minimum organized pedagogical teacher training pre-service and in-service (World Bank, 2022a).

Pre-basic education is conceived as the process through which comprehensive care is offered to boys and girls in a quality environment that favours their growth and development in personal physical, cognitive, social-emotional, psycho-motor and language (oral and gestural verbal) aspects. Pre-basic education's inherent goal is to support and prepare the integration of children to basic education, fostering the development of skills, knowledge, values and attitudes (UNESCO, 2011, p. 16).

According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2022), the GER for the second cycle of pre-primary education was 39.4 in 2020, whereas the NER was 36.7 in 2020. Both the GER and NER were relatively constant over the last 10 years showing neither an apparent upward nor downward trend despite the outlined goal in the Strategic Plan to reach a net coverage of 100 % among 5 years-old at pre-basic by 2018. Eventually, given the completion of the mandatory one year of pre-primary education, children are enabled to transition to the next education level, namely the basic education cycles.

2.3 Primary and Lower Secondary Education

Primary and lower secondary education are covered by the three cycles of basic education. The first cycle refers to the period ranging from 1st to 3rd grade (ages 6 to 8), the second to the period ranging from 4th to 6th grade (ages 9 to 11), and, ultimately, the third to the period ranging from 7th to 9th grade (ages 12 to 14). Since the introduction of the Fundamental Education Law in 2012 the whole basic education is mandatory for all children (Pisa for Development, 2016, p. 9). While the first and second cycle of basic education is uniform i.e. the same for all pupils, the education system of Honduras provides an additional pre-vocational track at the lower secondary education level. Hence, the VPET system already starts at a lower secondary education level. In particular, after having successfully completed the second cycle of basic education, students are free to choose between the academic track, namely the Culture General Cycle, and the Technical Basic Cycle corresponding to the first stage of the VPET system of Honduras. Both cycles last 2 years and complete the basic education, thereby providing access to the higher education levels (UNESCO, 2011, p. 9).

Basic education's fundamental objective is to provide the basic cultural foundation, to foster the comprehensive development of the child's personality. Teaching is oriented objectively and practically enabling students to acquire a scientific and rational understanding of natural phenomena and social facts (UNESCO, 2011, p. 18). The curriculum in basic education focuses on seven distinct areas: (1) Communication, (2) Mathematics, (3) Social Sciences, (4) Natural Sciences, (5) Physical Education and Sports, (6) Technology, and, in the case of the Technical Basic Cycle, (7) Technical Education. The first cycle of basic education initiates the development of instrumental skills. The second cycle further deepens the development of the acquired skills, and the third cycle is of a more scientific and technological character, reinforcing and expanding the curricular contents of the previous cycles (UNESCO, 2011, p. 21). The pre-vocational track additionally comprises the Technical Education Area that makes up to 30 % of their curriculum and prepares students for work as specific practical skills are developed (Secretaría de Educatión, 2003, p. 42).

Education centres at the basic level are also split between public and private, whereas most basic education centres are public. In particular, 89.8 % of education centres at the basic level were public in 2016 (Pisa for Development, 2016, p. 11). Furthermore, many types of schools exist according to their origin and purpose. The varying conditions of the school context and the students' backgrounds vary depending on the school type that further leads to varying school performances. Intellectual Bilingual Centres (EIB) were also introduced at the basic education level to implement bilingual education using native language and maintaining the profile of these languages. The education syllabus is based on the basic national syllabus but was slightly modified to better suit the characteristics of native cultures (Pisa for Development, 2016, p. 15). Basic public education is free of any financial charges. Families, however, need to cover the cost of school uniforms and school supplies (UNESCO, 2021). As of 2014, of total 13 021 educational centres 5316 educational centres lacked access to electricity and 1910 educational centres reported not to have access to water (Secretaría de Educación, 2017, p. 72).

Numerous students at the respective basic education level are overage. 15-year-old students, who were supposed to enter upper secondary school (middle education), are, to a great extent, in lower education levels. In particular, only 36 % of 15-year-old students are enrolled in the tenth grade, whereas 33 % are in ninth grade, and 28 % in 8th or 7th grade (Pisa for Development, 2016, p. 12). The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2022) reports a percentage of repeaters in primary education of 4.2.

According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2022), primary education enrolment in 2020 was largely universal in Honduras resulting in a primary GER of 90.2 % and NER of 82.1 %. Further note that Honduras' GER (103.7 %) and NER (85.9 %) were both higher in 2000. While the GER gradually decreased year by year as can be observed in Figure 5, the NER slightly increased again since 2015. The discrepancy between the NER and GER at the primary level implies a significant degree of over-age or under-age enrolment, meaning the target age for each level of education does not reflect the actual age of the student cohort. A major contributing factor for this age–grade distortion is the high repetition rates exhibited by the Honduran education system. Of those children having started primary

education, 76.7 % remain in primary education, that is the first and second cycle of the Honduran basic education, until completion. After the completion of primary education enrolments sharply fall despite both educational levels being mandatory. The latest available data (2018) on lower secondary education, that is the third cycle of basic education, show that the GER and NER are much lower at 68.2 % and 44.8 %, respectively (Secretaría de Educatión, 2019, p. 19). From those children who completed primary education successfully only 74.7 % effectively continue their studies in lower secondary education (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2022). One potential explanation for this sharp gap is the lack of access to education centres, especially in rural areas. While the access to the first two cycles of basic education is widely provided in urban as well as rural areas, 47 municipalities (out of a total 298), until recently, did not have a centre teaching the third cycle of basic education. Nevertheless, only slow progress can be observed in enrolment rates (Pisa for Development, 2016, p. 15).

2.4 Upper Secondary Education

In Honduras upper secondary education is covered by middle education lasting two to three years and is compulsory. Furthermore, to enter higher education, the completion of middle education is required. Students enter middle education technically at the age of 15 after having successfully completed the basic education program and are provided the opportunity to choose between two different tracks. On the one hand, pupils can pursue the Sciences and Humanities high school degree that is officially referred to as the Bachillerato Científico Humanista (BCH). The latter degree is rewarded after following Academic High school for two years. On the other hand, the technical high school track, namely the Bachillerato Técnico Profesional (BTP), provides a more skill-based alternative that lasts 3 years and is rewarded with the technical high school degree. The former corresponds to the second stage of the VPET system of Honduras. Both degrees enable access to both short-cycle tertiary educational programs, that are of vocational nature, as well as to bachelor programs.

Middle education covers the following six learning areas: (1) Communication, (2) Mathematics, (3) Social Sciences, (4) Natural Sciences, (5) Physical Education and Sports, and (6) Technology (Secretaría de Educatión, 2003, p. 48). While both tracks cover the above-mentioned areas of learning, the BCH does so in greater detail as its main purpose is to provide access to higher education. The BCH builds on the learning achieved in Basic Education and its curriculum strengthens the integral development of the personality, emphasises the knowledge of science, the application of technology and the functional use of a foreign language (UNESCO, 2011, p. 31).

The BTP is organized in semesters and based on both the structure defined by the National Basic Curriculum (CNB) and the economic sectors (industrial, agricultural, administration and services, hospitality and tourism, forestry, and community development), according to the specialty or profession offered in the sector. The BTP qualifies for the entry into the labour market and/or to all higher tertiary education institutions. The curriculum is organized in three cycles. The first cycle provides the foundational training covering the five learning areas of the CNB, whereas the second cycle focuses more on oriented training that includes diversified technical education. Ultimately, the third cycle concentrates on specific training in the form of specialized technical education, enabling horizontal mobility between sectors and professions (Secretaría de Educatión, 2003, p. 44).

In addition, there is a distance secondary education system aimed at sixth grade graduates and those over 15 years of age, mainly in rural areas and who cannot attend the face-to-face system, offering them basic education and then diversified careers with a job orientation (UNESCO, 2011, p. 31).

Whereas basic education was mostly provided by public education centres, middle education follows a different pattern. Public education centres only provide 42 % of total middle education centres. Astonishingly 58 % are privately organized and funded (Pisa for Development, 2016, p. 11). Secondary education establishments may be official, semi-official, or private. Official education establishments are fully funded by the state. Semi-official establishments are funded by parents, municipalities, or any other institution, but always with a state subsidy. Private establishments are funded by parents and/or investors (UNESCO, 2011, p. 31).

The GER of upper secondary education, that is middle education, is 45.7 % in 2018, whereas the NER lies at 30.4 % (Secretaría de Educatión, 2019, p. 19). Of total enrolment in upper secondary education 71.93 % enrol in the VET track. During middle education further 5.7 % drop out of education completely and the repetition rate lies at 6 % (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2022). Net coverage rates at the middle education level mark remarkable gender differences in favour of girls by approximately 6 pp (Pisa for Development, 2016, p. 10). The age-distortion remains present at the middle education level resulting in many pupils being overage. The access to middle education remains an issue as numerous municipalities do not have an education centre, neither public nor private, teaching middle education (Pisa for Development, 2016, p. 15).

2.5 Postsecondary and Higher Education

Higher education is the responsibility of the UNAH. The Higher Education Council is the governing and decision-making body of the system (UNESCO, 2011, p. 6). Higher education institutions (HEI) include universities (state and private) and non-university institutions (schools and institutes of higher education). Upon the successful completion of secondary education, pupils are entitled to enter higher education. Students can either enter the technical university programmes or bachelor programmes. Technical university programs, that are of vocational/labour market-oriented nature, last two years and are the third stage of the VPET system of Honduras. The technical university programs, that are considered short cycle tertiary education, were especially introduced to foster the technical training of human resources. Degrees leading to a bachelor's degree usually last four years, apart from long degrees such as architecture (6 years) and medicine (7 years). The bachelor’s degree further entitles the persuasion of a master’s or a (sub-) speciality degree. Specialisation programmes last from two to four years, depending on the specialisation in question. Master's programmes last two to three years and provide access to doctorate programs that themselves last another three years (UNESCO, 2011, p. 10).

There are 20 HEIs, including six public and 14 private institutions (Dirección de Educatión Superior, 2018, p. 39). HEIs have a mission of academic excellence, the role of intellectual leadership, whose essential functions are framed in the promotion of research, the dissemination of culture, technological development, and the execution of teaching at the highest level. These essential functions take the form of the training of professional staff, which includes all actions related to the initial and ongoing training of teachers, required by all levels of education in the National System (Secretaría de Educatión, 2003, p. 25). Despite the public universities being fewer in numbers, they provide approximately the same number of academic programs to its students as the private universities. In general, the academic offer of the HEIs favours Bachelor programs as they mark 51 % of all programs, followed by Master programs (27 %), Technical University programs (14 %), and Speciality programs (6 %) (Dirección de Educatión Superior, 2018, p. 39). Furthermore, approximately 90 % of teachers at the academic levels teach undergraduate courses (Dirección de Educatión Superior, 2018, p. 57). The system provides a rather traditional offer whereas the areas of social sciences, commercial education and law predominate. Areas such as agriculture, service, health sciences and technology are neglected (Dirección de Educatión Superior, 2018, p. 69). The sources of financing of Honduran HEIs vary according to their type. While public HEIs are predominantly funded by the state, private institutions are funded almost entirely through admission fees paid by students. In addition, private universities may receive other payments from other sources (e.g., private companies).

As can be observed in **Figure 5**, after the end of upper secondary education, enrolments drop significantly again with a GER of 25.5 % for tertiary education in 2019. Since 2000, however, tertiary education GER has almost doubled starting at only 13.1 % (World Bank, 2022a). Approximately two thirds enrol in public and one third in private HEIs, respectively. According to the Dirección de Educatión Superior (DES) (2018, p. 66) about 92 % enrol in Bachelor programs, 5 % in Technical University programs, 2 % in Master programs, 2 % Specialty programs, and only 0.02 % in Doctorate programs, respectively. Notably, women represent between 55-60 % of total enrolment at HEIs since 2015. While access to education remained an issue in lower educational levels, the HEIs provide wide access

throughout the country and offer remote learning programs (Dirección de Educatión Superior, 2018, p. 69).

2.6 Continuing Education (Adult Education)

The management and coordination of adult education is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, specifically in the formal or school-based subsystem, through the General Directorate of Continuing Education. The National Commission for Non-Formal Alternative Education (CONEANFO), established as the governing body for non-formal alternative education, has the purpose of meeting the needs of education, comprehensive training and job training for the population excluded from formal education. In the field of adult education, other government ministries (Health, Natural Resources and Environment, Agriculture, etc.) and decentralised institutions carry out activities in their areas of competence. Each one defines the training and accreditation contents of the courses and learning that they offer, both to institutional staff and to the general population (UNESCO, 2011, p. 6).

According to the Honduran constitution, every citizen has the right to basic education. This also includes adults who were not able to enjoy schooling as children. The government urges to continue implementing programmes aimed to foster the adult literacy rate (Pisa for Development, 2016, p. 10). To improve literacy among all cohorts, upper secondary high school students are required to teach literacy to at least two persons (Pisa for Development, 2016, p. 15). In 2019, the literacy rate for Hondurans over 15 years of age was 88.5%; of this, the rate for men was 88.2% and 88.7% for women. This is below the LAC countries literacy rate of 94.3% (94.7% for men and 93.9% for women). With respect to adults between 15 and 24 years old, the literacy rate is only 4 pp below the 100 % mark in 2019. The literacy rate concerning adults 65 years and older is approximately 20 pp lower. Furthermore, it is necessary to note that there is a huge difference between urban and rural areas. Literacy rates in urban areas are above 90%, whereas they remain below 80 % in rural areas. Over the last 20 years the literacy rate, however, is constantly improving; at the beginning of the century, it was just above 40 % for people 65 years and older (World Bank, 2022a).

2.7 Teacher Education

The Government's focus on improving education quality, saw the teacher education system change significantly. Until 2016, teacher training was offered at the middle education level in so-called *Normal Schools* that prepare high school graduates for teaching in primary schools. The new system only provides teaching training at the tertiary level (Pisa for Development, 2016, p. 15). The Francisco Morazán National Pedagogical University (UPNFM) is the institution that, on a national scale, has the responsibility of training pre-basic, basic and secondary education schoolteachers. The teaching staff of the different educational levels (pre-basic, basic and secondary) will receive Initial Teacher Education (ITE) at undergraduate level. The education program is subject to high quality improvement and updating programmes, whereas 17 different career paths are offered in both the areas of (1) science and technology and (2) humanities. Continuing Teacher Education (CTE) is implemented by the National Institute for Educational Research and Training (INICE) (Secretaría de Educatión, 2003, p. 65).

In order to enter the teaching career at the higher level, it is a requirement to have the minimum degree of bachelor in the academic-scientific field. Teachers must also accredit the higher-level pedagogical training established by the institution and must have an academic degree equal to or higher than the level to which they are assigned. The academic load of higher education teachers comprises a set of teaching, research, extension, guidance, librarianship or academic administration functions or activities, assigned by the academic unit to which they belong, according to the competence or speciality in the academic-professional field and taking into account the respective category and working day (Secretaría de Educatión, 2019, p. 41).

The pupil per teacher ratio in Honduras is 22.6 at the pre-basic, 28.7 at the basic, 24 at the middle, and approximately 20 at the higher educational level. Further note, that the pupil per teacher rate is generally higher in public educational institutions (Dirección de Educatión Superior, 2018, p. 57).

3. The System of Vocational and Professional Education and Training

This section of the Factbook describes the VET system at the upper secondary level and the PET at the tertiary level in more detail. Thereby, the term vocational and professional education and training (VPET) refers to both, the VET and the PET system. The VPET system in Honduras is mainly composed of three stages. The first stage is already at the lower secondary education level aiming to foster practical skills from an early age. The first stage, however, is only school based. On the contrary, the second stage – at the upper secondary level – is composed of both a job-/occupation-specific as well as a general education component. The last stage of the Honduran VPET system is at the tertiary education level. Both private and public universities provide technical university programs that last two to two and a half years.

3.1 Vocational Education and Training (VET; Upper Secondary Education Level)

As of the implementation of the CNB, lower secondary education grades 7 to 9 are being incorporated into nine-year basic education and comprise two modalities: academic and pre-vocational. (UNESCO, 2011, p. 9). The latter corresponds to the Culture General Cycle whereas the former to the Technical Basic Cycle. Students who successfully completed primary education and thus obtained the primary education diploma are entitled to enter the third and last cycle of basic education including the pre-vocational modality. The pre-vocational modality lasts two years and upon completion they receive the Basic plan certification. Note, that students who choose the other modality, namely the Culture General Cycle receive the same diploma. The diploma then further enables students to progress to upper secondary education. Students who completed either the pre-vocational track or the purely academic track are free to choose between the pure academic modality and the technical based track at upper secondary education level (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2011).

Just as the Cultural General Cycle, the Technical Basic Cycles includes the following curricular areas: Communication, mathematics, social sciences, natural sciences, physical education and sports, and technology. Furthermore, the Technical Basic Cycles includes the area of technical education (UNESCO, 2011, p. 15). The academic load of the area of technical education will constitute up to a maximum of 30% of the students' total academic load. The primary aim of the technical education area is to instil in students respect for work culture, and to foster the development of practical skills (UNESCO, 2011, p. 22). Ultimately, students are better enabled to identify individual practical skills that will guide them with respect to the choice of a profession later (Secretaría de Educatión, 2003, p. 42). Note that there is no official specialization within this stage of the VPET system. However, curricula might still differ across private and public educational institutions. The Technical Institute of Electricity and Electronics (I.T.E.E.), a private educational centre, for instance provides technical education in the areas of graphic design, electricity, electronics, and electromechanics (I.T.E.E., 2021). Hence, the defined curriculum allows for different implementations leaving room for private institutes to be involved. This

stage of the VET-system is only school based and does not include a firm-/occupation-specific component. However, practical experience at the lower secondary education level is, in general, unusual due to the young age of the students (ages 12 to 15).

Upon the completion of the three cycles of basic education, having received the basic plan certification, students may enter the second stage of the national VPET-system, namely the BTP, that is at upper secondary education level (grades 10 to 12) aimed at young people between 15 and 17 (UNESCO, 2011, p. 9). The BTP lasts another three years and rewards graduates with the technical high school degree. The CNB defines the BTP as the curricular offer that allows students to acquire the necessary competences that provide them access to the labour market or to continue studies at the tertiary education level. Furthermore, within the BTP, several specializations are offered. Students may specialize themselves in orientations of the agricultural, industrial, humanities, or in the admiration and service sector. In total approximately 80 orientations across the economic sectors are provided (Oficina de Educación Media, 2014). The BTP is organised based on both the structure defined by the CNB and as well as on the characteristics of the respective economic sectors according to the speciality or profession offered in the sector. In general, the training is based on competencies and consists of 116 units on average (UNESCO, 2011, p. 31).

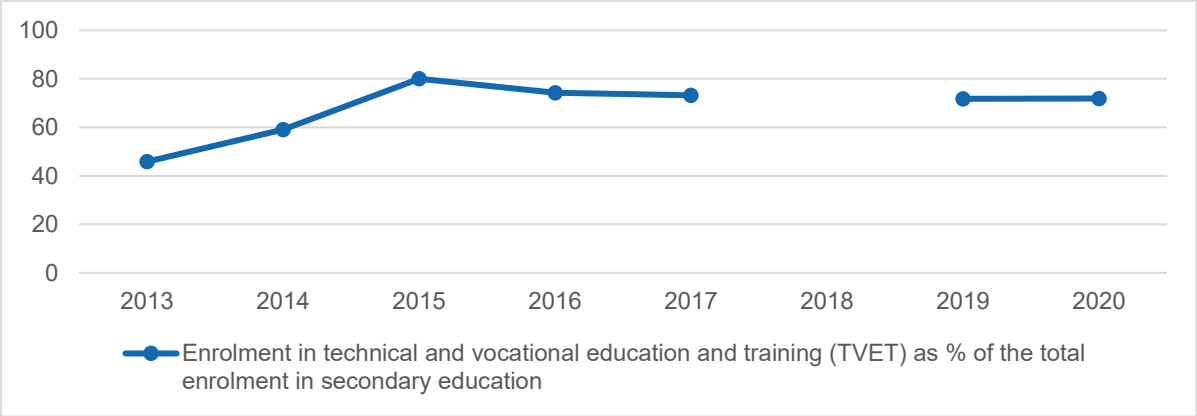
The curriculum of the BTP consists of the following elements: subjects, modules, workshops, projects, internships, professional practices, and social educational work. The subjects are of scientific character aiming to foster the development of fundamental and oriented skills, relevant to the curricular areas. The modules include conceptual, procedural, and attitudinal content. The workshops have a greater emphasis on the development of procedural and attitudinal skills. The projects are curricular spaces that promote the consolidation and innovation of technical-professional skills (UNESCO, 2011, p. 34). Internships are planned practices in companies and institutions that especially aim to deepen practical knowledge and competences. The latter, however, are of only short duration. Intern are assigned to work with a business tutor who assumes responsibility for the work plan of the intern. In advance of the internship, the supervising teacher and students have an appointment with the company to agree on objectives and the tasks that are to be completed by the student. Supervised professional internships are curricular spaces where students are put into practice, in a real work environment, further deepening the different knowledge of the students' technical-professional training and consolidating their competence at work. Students must cover a minimum number of 176 hours or 22 working days where they can practice their knowledge in the orientation of the corresponding BTP. Both for the internship and the professional practice it is not stated whether an official working contract is signed. Social educational work is the curricular space that contributes to the integral formation of young people, strengthening their sense of social belonging and community participation. It will have a minimum duration of 140 hours and will be carried out at times other than the school day (weekends, and/or holidays). To commence both the professional practice and the social educational work it is required to have passed 70 % of subjects and modules (Oficina de Educación Media, 2014, S. 23).

The study plans for any of the specializations are organized in cycles: the first cycle, for foundation training; the second cycle, for oriented training; and the third cycle, for specific training. Foundation training further consolidates the knowledge and skills obtained by students during basic education (UNESCO, 2011, p. 34). Notably, this part of the curriculum of the BTP does not differ from the curriculum of the BCH (Oficina de Educación Media, 2014, S. 19). Oriented training is aimed at the study of certain areas of knowledge. Oriented training prepares students for working life in a broad sense as it promotes the development of highly sought-after skills further allowing mobility in occupational areas. While the curricular space of this training is universal for the BTP, the specific content of the curricular spaces varies across the specialization to achieve the relevant practical competencies demanded by each professionalizing sector. Specific training comprises the set of knowledge directly related to the specialty and includes professional preparation for the respective professionalizing sectors as practical skills are developed that qualify the graduates as competent workers. The curricular organization of the specific training is based on the technological areas of the professionalizing sector and on curricular spaces (modules, workshops, internships, projects, etc). Specific training concludes with a professional internship in a company and social educational work. The professional practice consists of work-

experience specific to the specialty, in real environments of the companies or institutions and under the conditions agreed with the educational centre.

To graduate from the BTP, students are required to have successfully completed both the social educational work as well as the professional practice. Implicitly, students are thus also required to have passed at least 70 % of the academic modules as this is a requirement to commence both the professional practice and the social educational work. The modality allows for a direct entry to the labour market and/or higher education upon completion (UNESCO, 2011, p. 31). The VPET system in Honduras is of dual nature as it comprises both a formal general education component (school-based) and a firm-/occupation-specific component. However, practical work experience is of short duration (approximately 80 days). Notably, the Honduran VPET system differs from the Swiss VPET system as the general education and the firm-/occupation component are strictly separated from one another in time. The private institution's influence on the formulation of the educational curriculum, namely the CNB, is provided and is increasing.

Figure 7. Share of Students in Secondary Education Enrolled in Vocational Programmes



Source: Own figure based on UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2022)[14]

Educational enrolment in VET as % of total enrolment in secondary education has increased by almost 30 p.p. since 2013 as one can observe in **Figure 7**. In 2013 only 46 % (that is 180.204 students) were enrolled in VET, whereas in 2020 72 % (that is 252.425 students) were enrolled in VET. Thus, both in relative and absolute sense, the enrolment rates for VET programmes have increased. Enrolments, however, appear to have reached its peak as they stagnated since 2015 (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2022). It is worth noting that although the total enrolment of secondary education is 73%, it is mostly concentrated in technical orientations in the service sector such as Accounting and Finance, Computer Science and Business Administration. Furthermore, regarding the BTP, it is important to note that 56% of the enrolment in the different orientations corresponds to women and 44% to men. At the secondary education level, in 2016, a total of 2,469 educational centres were registered, 57% of which are private and 43% public (Gobierno de la Republica de Honduras, 2018, p. 9).

3.2 Professional Education and Training (PET; Post-Secondary Level)

The completion of both modalities at the upper secondary education level allows students to enrol in PET. Students may enrol in technical university programmes at the tertiary level, which are classified as short-cycle tertiary education of vocational character according to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2011). Depending on the orientation and the university, however, students are occasionally requested to complete an exam, usually the Academic Aptitude Test (PAA), beforehand to evaluate their skills. The PAA is a test that assesses the skills and knowledge required to do academic work at university

[14] Gaps in the figure are due to missing data.

level. Since its inception, this instrument has been developed to predict, along with other criteria, success in the first year of higher education. The exam consists of reading and writing (Spanish), and mathematics sections (UNAH, 2017b). Universities determine a required score that must be met for the students to commence their studies of the respective program. These programs usually last two to two and a half years and, upon completion, graduates usually enter the labour market as they mark the last stage of the Honduran VPET system. Graduates, however, who want to continue their studies, can do so by starting a Bachelor Program. As of 2019, there are 75 technical university programs, that is 15 % of the total academic tertiary education offer. Both public (four out of six) and private (12 out of 14) universities provide technical university programs (UNAH, 2020). Moreover, both public and private universities, with the aim of responding to the world of work and linking training more closely to the needs of the world of work, have established strategic alliances with various institutions such as cooperatives, industries, hospitals, banks and commerce, as well as with centralised and decentralised State bodies. As a result, some of the technical careers offered are developed within the framework of technical cooperation with these institutions, thereby further promoting learning opportunities such as internships and professional practices (Gobierno de la Republica de Honduras, 2018, p. 10).

The degree of specialization can vary tremendously both within the same university as well as across universities. For instance, the UNAH in 2022 provides both a technical university program in Micro Finance as well as a program for Coffee Quality Control (UNAH, 2022). The latter is rather broad, whereas the former is very specific. Contrary to the previous educational levels, the curricula greatly vary across technical university programs due to different providing institutions and differing degree of specialization among programs. However, universities tend to include general education modules (Mathematics, Spanish, English, etc.) at the start of the program relevant to the respective specialization In general, the curricula of the different programs aims at offering students high-level professional knowledge and skills, through the incorporation of a set of specific job functions, allowing graduates of this level of training to obtain a more efficient entry into the world of employment, i.e. in less time and more effectively, to meet the needs of companies and organisations in the country (UNITEC, 2019). New educational centres, any technical university program and their curricula have to be approved by the Council of Higher Education, that is the management and decision-making body of the Directorate of Higher Education. The Council is composed of only academic members, highlighting the private sectors' limited influence on higher education decisions (UNAH, 2017a).

As of 2015, 16.2 % of the estimated population of Honduras aged 18-24 enrolled in tertiary education, that is 195.461 students. Of the latter, only 5.1 % of all students enrolled in technical university programs. Thus, only roughly 0.82 % of the estimated population of Honduras aged 18-24 enrolled in technical university programs in 2015. In comparison, 92 % of all students enrolled in bachelor programs, marking the low popularity of technical university programs (Dirección de Educatión Superior, 2018, p. 66).

3.3 Regulatory and Institutional Framework of the VPET System

3.3.1 Central Elements of VPET Legislation

The regulatory and institutional framework for the VPET system has its foundation in the Organic Law on Education, approved by Decree No. 79 of 14 November 1966, that regulates education at the pre-school, primary, secondary and teacher training levels. In 2011, however, a new general education law was published, namely Decree No. 262-2011 Fundamental Law on Education, that replaces the Organic Law on Education. From 2011 onwards, this law governs educational activities on the national territory (Oficina de Educación Media, 2014, p. 27).

The curriculum with respect to mandatory education, including both the curriculum of the Technical Basic Cycle at the lower secondary education level and the BTP at the upper secondary education level, is defined by law in the CNB. The CNB itself is based on the *Honduran Society's Proposal for the Transformation of National Education* that was established by the FONAC in 2000.

Agreement 15154-SE-2012 regulates the distribution of responsibilities and attributions for the administration of the BTP. The agreement defines competences and responsibilities of the Departmental, Municipal, and District Directorates of Education, of education centres, and teachers (Oficina de Educación Media, 2014, p. 19). The agreement regulates the internship, the professional practice and the social educational work (Oficina de Educación Media, 2014, p. 21).

The structure of the VPET system is further specified by the National Qualifications Framework, namely the National Qualifications Framework for Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Honduras (MNC-EFTPH). The latter was a recent effort in 2018 that aimed to harmonize the educational offer. Certification and recognition of learnings should thereby be provided resulting in a better horizontal and vertical transition of people in education and work further improving access and inclusion with quality and relevance. The MNC-EFTPH conceptualizes and defines the qualifications and/or technical competences concerning the different levels of the national VPET system in accordance and close cooperation with the productive sectors (Gobierno de la Republica de Honduras, 2018, p. 6).

With respect to tertiary education the Organic Law of the National Autonomous University (UNAH). 1957, is of relevance, as it assigns the responsibility of tertiary education to the UNAH. The Higher Education Law of 1989 regulates the organisation of the higher education system (UNESCO, 2011, p. 4).

In 2010, by means of agreement no. 2304-245-2010 of the Higher Education Council, the creation of Honduran Higher Education Quality Accreditation System (SHACES) was established as the body responsible for developing the processes of quality assessment and accreditation of public and private higher education institutions and degree programmes, including technical university programs (Dirección de Educatión Superior, 2018, p. 61)

3.3.2 Key Actors

a) Vocational Education and Training

Government

The Ministry of Education is responsible for defining and implementing policies and strategies in education, administering the educational system at the pre-basic, basic, and secondary levels. Furthermore, it oversees curriculum design, evaluation, in-service teacher training, and research, the latter two being carried out by the National Institute for Educational Research and Training (INICE). At the central level, responsibility for the curriculum is assigned to the Technical Pedagogical Undersecretary's Office, General Directorate for Curriculum, which includes the Departments of Curriculum Design, Teacher Training, Educational Technology, and Educational Evaluation (UNESCO, 2011, p. 5).

The Departmental Directorate of Education will adapt the national regulations and direct their application in their department, under the advice of the General Directorate of Curriculum of the Ministry of Education (Secretaría de Educatión, 2003, p. 63). With respect to the BTP it is the responsibility of the Departmental Directorates through the Technical Pedagogical Units, Municipal or District Directorates

- to administer the curriculum development in accordance with the norms established at the Central Level.
- to follow up and monitor the curricular development of the different BTP, in accordance with the Educational Project of the Centre (PEC)
- to process the opening of programs according to the requirements already established by the Fundamental Law of Education, Regulations and other normative guidelines established by the Secretary of Education.
- to coordinate physical (e.g., school equipment) and human (e.g., teacher, other staff) resources across educational centres.

Notably, by virtue of Article 28 of the Fundamental Law of Education, the National Education Council (CNE) is established as the body responsible for monitoring national education policy and for the horizontal and vertical coordination of the National Education System. The CNE mainly performs a coordination function between all levels of education (UNESCO, 2011, p. 4).

The Sub Directorate-General for secondary education (SDGM) further fulfils the following duties (Secretaría de Educación, 2022):

- Drawing up the profile of secondary education teachers at bachelor's degree level, submitting it to the higher management level for approval and ensuring that teacher training institutions develop their academic curricula based on this profile.
- Identifying the growth of the population in the secondary education age groups to propose to the Directorate General the opening of educational centres and the hiring of personnel based on the availability of funds.
- Informing teacher training centres of the demand for staff at this level so that they can plan their educational offer.
- Proposing to the Directorate General updates to the secondary education curriculum, in accordance with the needs, problems of the environment, technological and scientific advances, in coordination with the Departmental, Municipal, District and District Education Directorates.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Security Offices (STSS) and the National Centre of Education for Work (CENET) do also have a say in curriculum matters of the BTP.

Representation and advisory bodies

The National Vocational Training Institute (INFOP) is responsible for directing, organizing, supervising, and evaluating all non-formal education activities that are aimed at training, whether professional, occupational, or in crafts, conferring certificates in the levels of skills acquired.

The Advisory Centre for the Development of Human Resources (CADERH), a private non-profit institution founded in 1983, and which brings together businessmen, union leaders and professionals, has the purpose of strengthening the capacity and quality of VPET by responding to the needs and demands of the productive sector (UNESCO, 2011, p. 6). Ultimately, it aims to increase Honduran labour competitiveness and thus promote the development of Honduras. CADERH has become involved in the creation of an affiliation network of several VPET centres, where young people with limited resources receive training to acquire labour skills. Moreover, to support the self-sustainability of the VPET Centres, CADERH offers the business and institutional market services concerning the management of human talent and certification of people (CADERH, 2022).

The National Convergence Forum (FONAC) is a civil society body for the independent verification and monitoring of the fulfilment of the country's vision and the national plan. The forum closely observes the development of education as it regards education as a fundamental tool of social emancipation. In 2000 it laid the cornerstone of the CNB by establishing the Honduran Society’s Proposal for the Transformation of National Education (FONAC, 2000, p. 2).

The Honduran Council of Private Enterprise (COHEP) is also worth mentioning at this point as it is the technical political arm of the Honduran business sector and comprises 70 private organisations representing all productive sectors. The COHEP is also involved in curriculum and accreditation matters with respect to the BTP (COHEP, 2022).

The UPNFM, besides being an education provider at tertiary education level, also functions as an advisory body for secondary education matters, as it assumes the responsibility of training secondary school teachers at all levels on a national scale (UNESCO, 2011, p. 42).

Furthermore, in Honduras, (teacher-) unions are extremely powerful and thus are also involved in all educational matters. In particular, the Honduran middle-school teachers association (COPEMH) and the general confederation of workers (CGT) are of relevance with respect to the VET system (Global Education Monitoring Report, 2017, p. 3).

Education and training providers

VET providers in Honduras are differentiated through the programs they offer, the educational levels they offer (e.g., only lower secondary education vs. both lower and upper secondary education), and the financing (private vs. public). Furthermore, the quality differs substantially across the VET providers. Ultimately, despite the variance in quality across VET providers, all approved VET providers, provide students, upon graduation of the vocational modality at the upper secondary level, with the same certification, namely the BTP.

The educational centre puts into practice the national, departmental and district guidelines that contain strategies, mechanisms and means for curricular administration (Secretaría de Educatión, 2003, p. 63). The governing body of the education centre is further responsible for the following tasks:

- Supervision of the operation of newly implemented programs
- Establishment of strategic alliances with companies, institutions, and organizations of various kinds for the development of internships, professional practices, and social educational work
- Coordination with parents and local authorities to optimize the quality of educational services
- Review and approval of evaluation strategies and teaching performance

b) Professional Education and Training

Government

Contrary to the lower levels of education, the government fulfils its responsibility with respect to education through the UNAH in a decentralized manner (UNAH, 2016).

The UNAH is legally instructed to exclusively organize, direct, and develop the higher and professional education of Honduras (UNAH, 2016). The Higher Education Council (CES) is the system's management and decision-making body. The council is composed of the rector of the UNAH; six further members representing the UNAH, six rectors or higher hierarchical authority of higher education institutions, that were elected by the technical advisory council (CTC), of which at least three will correspond to private higher education centres; and the directors of the Directorate of Higher Education (DES) (UNAH, 2017). The CES dictates sector policies, approves the creation and operation of higher education centres (public or private) approves the opening, operation, merger or suppression of academic programs, schools, faculties, institutes, and scientific research centres, as well as curricular plans and the special higher-level programs of public or private universities (UNESCO, 2011, p. 5). The DES is the executive body for the resolutions of the CES. It acts as the secretariat of the level and its director is the means of communication and liaison with the HEIs. In fulfilling its functions, the DES will integrate HEIs into a homogeneous system, respecting the specific characteristics of their educational fields.

Representation and advisory bodies

The CTC is an advisory body that must be heard to decide on any matter of a general nature or when the CES requests its opinion. The CTC is composed of the Rectors, Directors or the hierarchical superior authority, or their representatives, of the duly authorised HEIs. The president is elected by a simple majority vote of its members for a term of one year and is not eligible for re-election for the following term. Finally, the FONAC, UPNFM, CGT, and COHEP are also worth mentioning with respect to PET as they are involved in the whole VPET system.

Education and training providers

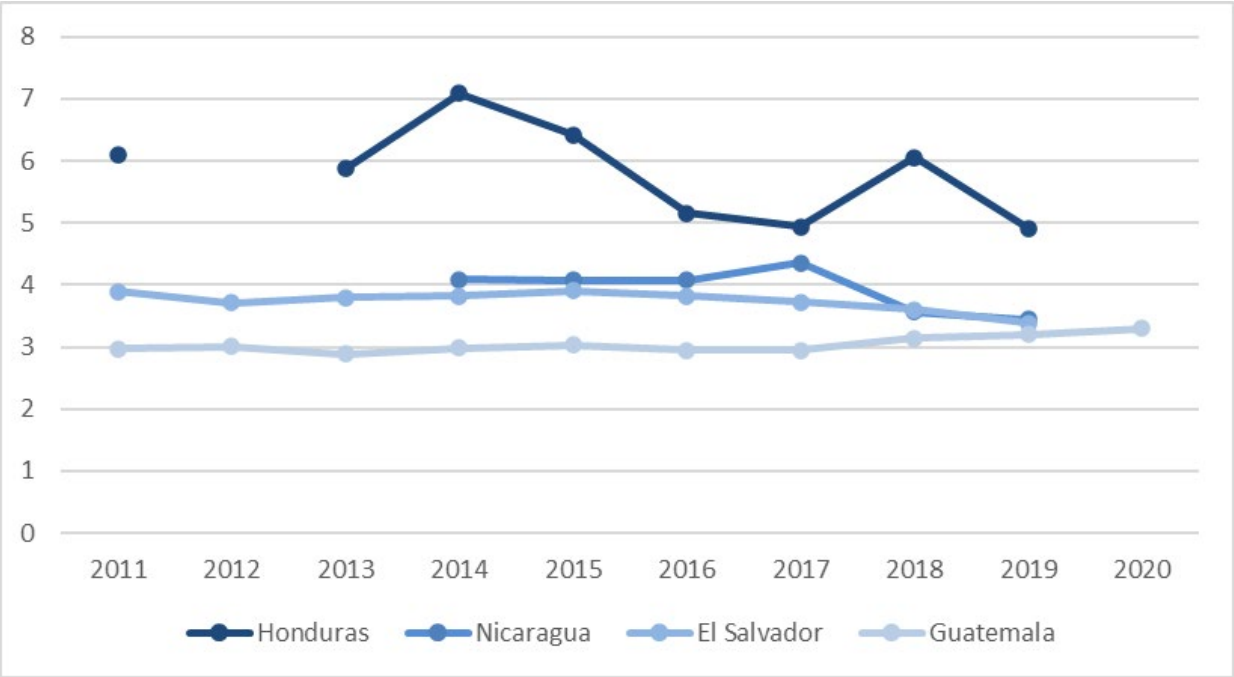
The Honduran higher education system consists of 20 institutions, 6 public and 14 privates. Public and private HEIs alike are regulated by the higher education system. Although public HEIs are fewer in numbers, the majority (approximately 55 %) of students is enrolled in public HEIs. Notably, the UNAH alone comprises 41.5 % of all enrolled students. Among the private HEIs the UNITEC is noteworthy, as it is by far the private HEI with the highest student enrolment. With respect to VPET, it is again the UNAH

and the UNITEC that provide the most programs. In particular, the UNAH provides 23 whereas the UNITEC provides 12 programs out of a total of 75 programs as of 2019.

3.4 Educational Finance of the VPET System

Honduras spends more on education than many of its regional peers as can be observed in **Figure 8**. As of 2019, Honduras spent 4.9 % of its total GDP on Education. In comparison, Nicaragua and El Salvador spent 3.4 % and Guatemala 3.2, respectively. Further note that, as of 2019, the LAC average lies at 4.0 % of the national GDP (World Bank, 2022a). Government expenditure on education of Honduras is on the high end of widely accepted targets for education spending defined by the UNESCO Global Education, that sets education spending targets between 4 and 6 % of GDP for all countries by 2030 (USAID, 2019, p. 17). Moreover, the share of public expenditure on education in total public expenditure is 20 % (Hanni, 2019, p. 36). With respect to per pupil spending (relative to the GDP), Honduras is well above the LAC average. Honduras ranks first in per pupil spending (relative to the GDP) across all educational levels. However, absolute spending per student is low in comparison to the LAC average. Consider however that government effectiveness and corruption remain serious issues in Honduras, casting doubt on the efficiency of education spending. Notably, Honduras ranks second worst in the region concerning government effectiveness (USAID, 2019, p. 18).

Figure 8. Government expenditure on education, total (% of GDP)



Source: Own illustration based on World Bank (2022a).

3.4.1 Educational finance of the VET system

The Ministry of Education oversees education provision, including funding. Official education establishments are fully funded by the State. Budget allocation is de-centralized, resources are allocated based on results. Allocation of resources prioritizes the areas with the greatest school exclusion. Furthermore, the local government also contribute to education funding. In 2016, 11.3 per cent of district budgets were allocated to education spending. From a financial perspective, primary education is clearly prioritized as 48.9 % of total educational expenditure is on primary education in 2017. With respect to secondary education, including the vocational modalities, 25.3 % is spent of the total educational expenditures in 2017. Semi-official establishments are funded by parents, municipalities, or any other institution, but always with a state subsidy. Private establishments are funded by parents and/or investors (UNESCO, 2011, p. 31). Further note, that educational expenditures can be deducted as a

personal expense for the calculation of the income tax. This deduction, however, is limited to HNL40,000 (Hanni, 2019, p. 49). Bilateral official development aid (ODA) for VET is also worth mentioning as Honduras is among the top five recipients in LAC. Honduras has received 42 million dollars from ODA for secondary vocational education in the timespan between 2008 and 2017 (Hanni, 2019, p. 59).

3.4.2 Educational finance of the PET system

The sources of funding for Honduran HEIs, and thus the provider of formal PET, vary according to their type of administration. Public HEIs are predominantly funded by the state. The public universities also receive funding from property rent, the taxation plan, resources through cooperation agreements and postgraduate programmes. Private institutions are funded almost entirely through admission fees paid by students. In addition, private universities may receive other payments from other sources (e.g., private companies).

The INFOP, itself responsible for directing, organizing, supervising, and evaluating all non-formal education activities, receives a significant proportion of its revenue from TVET related payroll taxes. The use of payroll tax instruments for TVET is widespread in the LAC region. In Honduras, employers are the entity that pays the tax, whereas employees are not obliged to pay contrary to other countries in the LAC (e.g., Uruguay) (Hanni, 2019, p. 33). In particular, the contribution rate is 1 % of the total payroll of the companies. As of 2017, the INFOP received 0.17 % of the national GDP in TVET related payroll tax revenues. This tax revenue accounts for upwards of 90 % of total revenue for the INFOP (Hanni, 2019, p. 34).

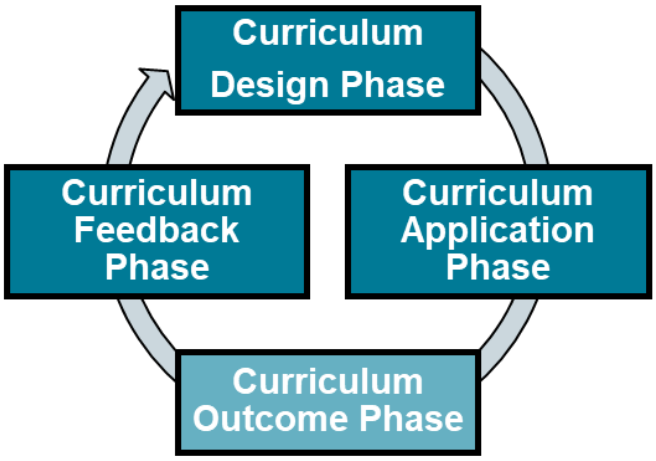
According to a recent study by Flores-Lima et al. (2014), that is based on enterprise level surveys in selected LAC countries, vocational training expenses represent a relatively modest share of overall operating costs of companies in Honduras. Particularly, these expenditures were equivalent to 4% of total operating costs. Notably, the firms' sources of financing for vocational training consists to 81 % of the firms' own resources. The public sector appears to play a very limited role in financing vocational training in firms as only 24 % of the firms' sources of financing vocational training is attributed to public sources. Private credit, resources of the employee, and other sources provide another 6 %, 4 %, and 12 % respectively (Hanni, 2019, p. 54)[15].

3.5 Curriculum Development

The curriculum is a central element for the functioning of a VPET system because it defines the framework and the (quality) standards for the education system. The development of a curriculum can be decomposed into a three-step process with a curriculum design, a curriculum application, and a curriculum feedback phase. This theoretical concept is called the curriculum value chain and is depicted in **Figure 9** (for more details, see Renold et al. 2015; Rageth & Renold, 2019).

[15] Note: Surveys permitted more than one response. Thus, the totals do not sum.

Figure 9. Curriculum Value Chain



Source: Renold et al. (2015) and Rageth & Renold (2019).

In the curriculum design phase, the relevant actors decide upon VET curriculum content and qualification standards. Therefore, the discussion in Section 3.5.1 focuses on the degree and the amount of stakeholder participation concerning curriculum design in Honduras. The curriculum application phase revolves around the implementation of the curriculum. Because learning environments differ substantially across countries, especially with respect to the prevalence of workplace learning, Section 3.5.2 focuses on those learning environments. Specifically, it addresses where learning takes place and whether the curriculum dictates both school and workplace learning or only one of the two. Finally, curriculum outcomes can be collected and analysed in the curriculum feedback phase. Section 3.5.3 focuses on the curriculum feedback phase. This evaluation process is important because it may render a more refined curriculum design than was possible in the first place.

3.5.1 Curriculum Design Phase

The design phase is crucial for the whole curriculum process. To ensure that the skills taught in the VPET programmes correspond to the needs of the labour market, experts from companies should be involved in defining the qualification standards and learning content of the curricula.

The decision-making process in curricular matters is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and is executed through the Technical-Pedagogical Undersecretariat, General Directorate of Curriculum, which includes the Departments of Curriculum Design, Teacher Training, Educational Technology and Educational evaluation. Currently the spaces for social and political participation in the discussion of educational issues tend to be more open than in the past. The different representative sectors of society and the state participate in the construction of new curricula (UNESCO, 2011, p. 10). An example for the inclusion of non-state actors in the curriculum development is the formulation of the CNB, that is the most important curriculum document in Honduras. In 2000, the FONAC laid the cornerstone of the CNB by establishing the Honduran Society's Proposal for the Transformation of National Education. The proposal included the concerns of the education system demanded by private companies, workers and professionals and other members of the Honduran society (FONAC, 2000, p. 2).

In Honduras there are four levels of curricular design. The first level is the CNB, which stipulates the main guidelines within the framework of the national curricular policy. The CNB establishes the characteristics, scope and modalities of the curriculum for the different levels of the VPET system. The second level is the National Curriculum Design for Basic Education (DCNB). This establishes the fundamentals, characteristics, professional profiles, and contents according to the different programs. In sum, the DCNB further specifies the Curriculum Design of the VPET. The third level of curricular specification is the Centre Educational Project (PEC). The PEC is considered the main management tool of the educational centre from which a set of specific projects are derived. The PEC is the institutional concretisation of the curricular issue. Specifically, the objectives and contents proposed by

the curriculum must be contextualised and detailed, as well as the means to achieve them. The teaching work must also be further specified by the PEC as reference points. The fourth level refers to the teacher of the educational centre in charge of developing students' competence in a certain curricular space providing internal coherence. The programmes of the curricular spaces must be developed by teachers to articulate the learning processes of a specific group of students, establishing an orderly sequence of the work units, making explicit the organisation and sequencing of the contents, the timing and the assessment (Secretaría de Educación, 2006, p. 17).

3.5.2 Curriculum Application Phase

The way in which a curriculum is implemented, especially with respect to learning environments, is important to achieve the intended learning outcome.

The BTP programs in Honduras are to a large extent school-based (approximately 90 %) with only a short part of the program conducted in internships, professional practices, and social educational work. The curriculum of the VET programs at the upper secondary level is implemented in four different learning and training locations. There is the educational centre, that comprises most of the curriculum, the host institution of the internship, the host institution of the professional practice, and the host institution of the social educational work.

Both the school-based as well as the work-based contents of the curriculum is regulated in detail by the CNB. The entry requirements, contents, durations and evaluations of the internship, the professional practice and the social educational work are described in Agreement 15154-SE-2012 (BTP). Moreover, it is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education to provide educational centres with physical (books and other training material) and human resources (teachers, trainers, and assistants). Employers are involved in the curriculum application through the offering of internships and professional practices. While the curriculum of foundation training across all BTP do not differ and is equivalent to the curriculum of the foundation training of the BCH, oriented and specialized training curricula differ across the various BTP programs. However, evaluation criteria and graduation requirements are standardized across the BTP by Agreement 15154-SE-2012 (BTP). To graduate from the BTP, students are required to have successfully completed the social educational work and the professional practice. Implicitly, students are also required to have passed at least 70 % of the academic modules as this is a requirement to commence both the professional practice and the social educational work.

In contrast, PET programs are less standardized and regulated, as described in section 3.2. Curricula, evaluations and entry and graduation requirements differ to a great extent. While some are only school-based, other PET programs include work-based components. However, as only 5 % of total tertiary enrolments are in technical university programs, their relevance seems to be limited.

3.5.3 Curriculum Feedback Phase

The curriculum feedback phase deals with the questions of whether and how educational outcomes are analysed. Based on this, the curriculum could be reworked and improved.

The SINECE aims to regulate the evaluation processes that are developed in the National Education System, to guarantee the degree of significance in academic performance, in the teaching performance, in the educational institutions, in the curricular development, in the execution of educational programs and projects and in the degree of commitment of the student body, parents and the community in general in the educational activity (Secretaría de Educación, 2006, p. 64).

This system responds to a new approach to assessment, according to the demands of a competency-based curriculum, more focused on the formative value and with a more qualitative than quantitative character. The quality of education is linked to at least four fundamental aspects that must be considered by the assessment: The relevance of learning for students' current and future lives, i.e. the relationship between the learning objectives and outcomes achieved by the education system and socially defined needs; the effectiveness of learning, i.e. the degree to which the results achieved respond to the stated objectives; equity, which refers to the degree to which the education system achieves its basic objectives

with all its students, regardless of their family, socio-cultural and economic backgrounds; and efficiency, which relates to the cost of inputs and outputs achieved during the learning process (Secretaría de Educación, 2006, p. 65).

The evaluation of learning is the responsibility of the educational centres as defined in the PEC. The interests, needs and demands of the educational actors (students, teachers, parents, and the community in general) will be considered in different components of the evaluation components.

The first component is the competence evaluation, that is understood as the process by the means of which the achievement of complex capacities is determined. This assessment enables to determine the competence attained by the students and to guide the pedagogical mediation towards the achievement of educational objectives and performance standards (Secretaría de Educación, 2006, p. 66).

The second component comprises the internal evaluation that takes place in all learning environments with the purpose of determining and verifying the achievement of the competence by the students. Internal assessment is the responsibility of the different bodies of the educational centre and consists of diagnostic, formative, and summative elements. The diagnostic assessment is carried out in the first instance at the beginning of the students' training process, through tests, interviews, observations, questionnaires, and surveys in order to determine the level of competence with which they begin their training process. The results serve as a basis for planning, designing and executing different work strategies to make learning more efficient in order to achieve competence. The second stage of diagnostic assessment is applied during the learning process; it is used to investigate the factors that influence the students' academic performance (Secretaría de Educación, 2006, p. 66). The formative assessment is carried out throughout the teaching-learning process or the total development of an educational programme, in order to judge progress, identify gaps and needs and facilitate the readjustment of the learning process according to the characteristics of the students (Secretaría de Educación, 2006, p. 67). The essence of the formative function of evaluation consists of supporting and guiding students in solving their learning problems, through timely and constant reinforcement (UNESCO, 2011, p. 23). Summative assessment consists of a final account of the learning process, in order to determine the competence acquired at the end of a subject, module, cycle, course or level and records the results of the learning assessments in the portfolio of evidence to determine the achievement of competence by the learners. This evaluation serves to assess the fulfilment of the educational objectives, the degree of success or failure of the educational process, the teaching performance and the degree of competence of the educational centre to graduate students from the BTP (Secretaría de Educación, 2006, p. 68).

The third component is external evaluation that aims to provide timely, periodic, and reliable information on how much and what students learn in the national education system (UNESCO, 2011, p. 23).

The fourth component is the evaluation of teaching performance according to the provisions of the Honduran Teacher Statute, whereas the following criteria are taken into account: Personality, professionality, pedagogical skills, communication, and projection (Secretaría de Educación, 2006, p. 69).

The fifth component is the evaluation of study plans and programmes that is carried out with the purpose of establishing their value as a normative resource for the concretion of the teaching-learning process. Furthermore, it aims to determine the convenience of conserving, modifying or substituting study plans and programmes in accordance with the demands of the competences of the professional profile according to current educational and socioeconomic demands (Secretaría de Educación, 2006, p. 70).

3.6 Supplying Personnel for the VPET System (Teacher Education)

The teaching staff of the BTP must have completed an ITE at the higher education level and will be subject to improvement and updating programs, in the form of CTE, according to the changes that occur or are foreseen in the technical-professional secondary education. (UNESCO, 2011, p. 34). Teachers

are required to take annual training programmes that train or update them in a specific professional competence, as established in the Honduran Teachers' Statute (Secretaría de Educación, 2006, p. 61).

ITE for vocational secondary education at the higher education level is regulated by the Ministry of Education, which establishes the curricular requirements and employment conditions that guarantee quality teachers for this level of education. The Ministry of Education is also responsible for establishing and administering the system of CTE, in-service teacher training, for which it may contract the services of higher education institutions and other accredited institutions. The management body of the educational centre will further ensure that the school's teachers are trained and kept up to date in the implementation of the curriculum (Secretaría de Educación, 2006, p. 61). ITE for the BTP will be carried out by the UPNFM or other duly accredited HEIs. CTE for this level of education will be carried out by the INICE, through its own or contracted actions, coordinated with the educational centres (Secretaría de Educación, 2006, p. 62).

To enter the teaching career at the PET level, it is a requirement to have the minimum degree of bachelor in the academic-scientific field. The academic load of higher education teachers comprises a set of teaching, research, extension, guidance, librarianship, or academic administration functions. The specific contents, however, may differ across academic-scientific fields due to varying competences of the scientific fields (Secretaría de Educatión, 2019, p. 41).

4. Major Reforms in the Past and Challenges for the Future

4.1 Major Reforms

This section focuses on the major reforms of the professional and higher education subsystems which have undergone significant changes in recent decades.

The education system was majorly affected by the establishment of the CNB in 2003. The CNB comprises a set of guidelines related to the general objectives of each level and each cycle of pre-primary, primary, and middle education, to the areas of learning, to the assessment criteria, and to the methodological orientations to be adopted to achieve the knowledge, skills, and abilities to be developed in students. Thus, the CNB proposes a comprehensive concept of education and a process of permanent change (Secretaría de Educatión, 2003, p. 5).

The BTP was significantly modified by the Honduran Secondary Education Support Program (PRAEMHO) in 2006. A new curriculum was established due to the lack of response of the curriculum to most of the needs and aspirations of the student body, the family, the community, higher education, work, and the country. The reform introduced updated teaching staff performance standards as well as adequate training and an objective system for evaluating student performance. Evaluation, as a fundamental element of the pedagogical process, was reconsidered as a system that allows feedback of all the factors that intervene in education (UNESCO, 2011, p. 32).

Moreover, since the introduction of the Fundamental Education Law in 2012 the whole basic education is mandatory for all children (Pisa for Development, 2016, p. 9). The Fundamental Education Law replaces the Organic Law on Education that was enacted in 1966 by Decree No. 79 of 14 November.

The establishment of the National Qualifications Framework for Vocational Technical Education and Training in Honduras (MNC – EFTPH) in 2018 is another recent effort to reform the VPET system of Honduras. The latter strengthens, coordinates, and articulates VPET, as the main strategic tool to harmonise the educational offer, recognises and certifies lifelong learning, and facilitates a more

effective and efficient horizontal and vertical transition of people in education and work, thus improving access and inclusion with quality and relevance (Gobierno de la Republica de Honduras, 2018, p. 6).

With respect to PET the Honduran Higher Education Quality Accreditation System (SHACES) is of particular importance. In 2010, by means of agreement no. 2304-245-2010 of the CES, the creation of SHACES was established as the body responsible for developing the quality assessment and accreditation processes of the country's higher education institutions and degree programmes (Dirección de Educatión Superior, 2018, p. 61).

4.2 Major Challenges

Honduras' VPET system is key to the country's development. To conclude this factbook, the most important challenges affecting the VPET system are summarised. The education strategic sector plan 2018-2030, that was approved by the National Council of Education in 2019, discusses the most important challenges of the VPET system.

The globalised world requires the creation of competitive conditions to enter global markets with high added value, which is only possible with a skilled labour force in line with the needs of the productive sectors. For this reason, it is necessary to reorient the current training offer of Honduras and to adjust it to the trends in the world of work. Honduras' greatest challenge with respect to VPET is to work on the creation of a VPET structure based on competitiveness and the new segments of the country's economic growth, in accordance with the following (República de Honduras, 2019, p. 54):

- Ensure that the development of vocational-technical education is articulated with the components of the national education system and adapted to the demand of the productive system. This should result in improving the relevance and quality of VPET.

- Achieve the functioning of an integrated system between the institutions that provide VPET, aimed at improving the labour insertion and productivity of companies and workers, through the improvement of their qualifications.

- Establish means to procure, facilitate and accredit the acquisition of professional qualifications to help young people and adults to increase their chances of access to employment and thus promote their social mobility.

- Establish procedures to validate and recognise qualifications already acquired by the active population.

- Adapt the design of the training offered in vocational-technical education to the specific needs of each region or municipality.

Furthermore, in addition to the aforementioned challenges, there are some issues of very general nature such as the provision of (vocational) secondary education in rural areas, the low quality of education, the educational governance, and the comparably low enrolment rates in secondary education in general that influence the VPET system of Honduras.

Because of the urgency required to solve them, the problems related to access and inclusion are peremptory, as there is a large population outside the classroom, especially among those living in rural areas or those with lower incomes. Access to the education system is limited by factors linked to social demand, the characteristics of the educational offer and the lack of internal efficiency of the system, which determines the level of utilisation of existing capacity (República de Honduras, 2019, p. 63). Once again, the NER at upper secondary education is at only approximately 30 % as of 2018. Since the youth of age 13-17 are also the one being mainly targeted by criminal groups to engage in activities such as extortion and drug trafficking, it is of particular importance to increase and promote secondary education for the sake of the development of Honduras.

Equally pressing is the issue of academic performance, whose assessments show how far educational institutions are from having an effective impact on student learning (República de Honduras, 2019, p. 63).

Finally, current educational governance, despite its progress in terms of regulations, is not generating the support that education systems need. On the contrary, a half-tone decentralisation, the lack of deepening of community accompaniment and empowerment with schools, the weak linkage and articulation with the initiatives of donors and private or non-state organisations, the lack of vigorous administrative processes and the poor articulation of education policy have conspired to aggravate the lack of access and the precariousness of learning (República de Honduras, 2019, p. 64).

Appendix I: Overview of the VPET system

VET pathway enrolment share out of all upper secondary (%)	**71.93 % in 2020**
Number of Curricula/Qualifications	4 Sectors (Agricultural, Industrial, Humanities, and Administration and Services). Ca. 80 qualifications
Ø Share of time spent in workplace (vs. classroom)	Ca. 10 % (reference: official school year = 200 days)[16]
Work contract (Yes/No)	No
Ø Share of vocation-specific content (vs. general) in classroom education	Ca. 60 %
Classroom/workplace sequencing (Alternating, Sequentially)	Sequentially
Frequency of workplace learning (Annually, Semi-annually, quarterly, monthly, weekly)	3 times (Short internship, Professional practice, and social educational work)
Programme Duration	3 years
Involved Actors	Ministry of Education; National Institute of Vocational Training (INFPOP); National Convergence Forum (FONAC); National Center for Education for Work (CENET); Honduran Council of Private Enterprise (COHEP); Secretary of State in Labor and Social Security Offices (STSS); Advisory Center for the Development of Human Resources (CADERH); Commission for the Development of Non-formal Alternative Education (CONEANFO); General Workers Center (CGT); Departmental Directorates of Education; Office of Secondary Education; Sub Directorate-General for secondary education (SDGM); National Education Council (CNE); Francisco Morazán National Pedagogical University (UPNFM); National Autonomous University (UNAH)
Reform Years (most recent)	2003, 2006, 2012, 2018
Reforms Summary	CNB: Conceptualization of each level of formal education comprising pre-basic, basic, and middle education PRAEMHO: Reform of the BTP (updated evaluation criteria, programs, teaching performance, objective system.) MNC – EFTPH: Introduction of Qualification Framework

Source: Own figure based on UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2022) and Officina de Educación Media (2014)

[16] Note however, that teaching absenteeism is high, and in 2013 only 133 teaching days were achieved.

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