

Georgia

National Higher Education Equity Policy

Governance

The Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia is responsible for defining national policies in higher education, which are then approved by the Parliament of Georgia.

Higher Education Policy Documents

What are the current official documents defining the national higher education strategy / policies?

- Georgian Law “On Higher Education” (December 2004)
<http://eqe.ge/res/docs/2014120816000571585.pdf>
- Georgian Law “On Education Quality Enhancement” (July 2010)
<http://eqe.ge/res/docs/201412081600419310.pdf>
- The Ministry of Education and Science (2017) Unified Strategy for Education and Science for 2017-2021.

Equity in Policy Documents

What broad and specific equity objectives do the policy documents identify?

The documents do not define specific equity targets.

Which equity target groups are identified in the policy documents?

Social Assistance Programs target the following groups:

- learners from mountain and migration regions;
- learners from occupied territories; orphans;
- learners with personal disabilities;
- learners from families deported during the Soviet period;
- learners from villages on the border-lines of the occupied territories;
- learners affected as a result of natural disasters;
- learners from families with dependent children;
- learners from families with low income;
- learners who graduated from Azeri and Armenian secondary schools in the last three years.

Does the country have concrete targets for the participation of specific equity groups?

Is there a standalone policy document dedicated to equity promotion in higher education?

Are there specific anti-discrimination provisions?

None

What specific interventions and/or instruments of equity promotion are included in the official strategy and policy documents (monetary and non-monetary)?

Monetary Policy Instruments

- Needs-based scholarships and grants / Other grants targeted for equity groups: Since 2006, 2% of all grants (full or partial grants) provided by the State have been allocated to students with social needs based on the following criteria: family situation (multiple siblings), orphans, high school location (remote areas, conflict zones) and extreme poverty.

Table 1: Grant allocation in 2017 student cohort at public and private accredited universities

	Number of students	As % of students admitted in 2016
(1) Merit-based grants		
50% merit based grant	4079	10%
70% merit based grant	1456	4%
100% merit based grant	1206	3%
(2) Priority field students	5655	14%
(3) Need-based grants	853	2%
(4) Total number of new enrolments 2016	41702	n/a

Source: (1) National Assessment and Examination Center, 2016; (2) Ministry of Education and Science; (3) #310 Ordinance of the Government of Georgia retrieved from Matsne.gov.ge

Non-Monetary Policy Instruments

What are the main non-monetary instruments to promote equity?

- Reformed admission procedures / Affirmative action programs: partially for the social needs students identified above.
- Language preparation programs for students from language minority secondary schools (Armenian and Azerbaijani) are available. The students have to take just a general aptitude test (unlike students from Georgian language schools who take 4 exams) in their prior language of instruction. If they pass the minimum threshold, they are automatically enrolled in the university of their choice. However, they do not receive financial aid to study in these programs.

Financial Resources

What financial resources does the country devote to equity promotion measures?

- Amount per beneficiary: Needs-based grants come in the form of a 30%, 50%, 70% or 100% tuition waiver, calculated in reference to the tuition cap at public universities (2,250 GEL, equivalent to 830 US dollars).
- Proportion of higher education budget: in 2017, needs-based grants accounted for 8% of the total recurrent budget.

Quality Assurance

In Georgia, the quality assurance criteria do take equity elements into consideration. The new university authorization standard (2017) includes one criterion directly related to equity: the extent to which a university has financial mechanisms to support low-income students. This is measured on the basis of the following two indicators:

- Institution takes into consideration students' socio-economic status (SES) and implements various support services (e.g., stipend, flexible payment mechanisms of tuition, and other benefits);
- Institution has transparent and objective mechanisms for supporting low SES student and the information on these mechanisms are public and accessible.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Who is responsible for monitoring the impact of equity promotion measures?

Not defined in the official documents.

Dedicated Equity Promotion Agency

Georgia does not have an agency dedicated to equity promotion in higher education.

Sources

Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia
<http://www.mes.gov.ge/index.php?lang=eng>

Overview of the Higher Education System: Georgia” European Commission February 2017
https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/sites/eacea-site/files/countryfiche_georgia_2017.pdf