

Israel

National Higher Education Equity Policy

Governance

The Council for Higher Education is the state agency responsible for higher education policy and issues in Israel, including policy, planning and budgeting, accreditation of HEIs and study programs, and quality assurance.

Higher Education Policy Documents

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

- The Council for Higher Education Law - 1958
- The Higher Education System in Israel
- The Quality Assurance System in HE in Israel
- HE Budgeting Model
- Students Rights Law - 2007 (only in Hebrew)
- Regulations (2017) regarding Students with Disabilities (only in Hebrew).

Equity in Policy Documents

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

The Council for Higher Education's efforts focus on allowing equal opportunity to all students, by encouraging and supporting HEIs to open their doors to diverse population groups with no compromise on quality.

Which equity target groups are identified in the policy documents?

- Minorities - Ultra-Orthodox, Arabs, Bedouin, Ethiopian.
- Gender
- Students with Disabilities

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

- The Council for Higher Education (CHE) seeks to achieve the same share of minorities in the higher education system as their share in the overall population.
- In its Strategic multi-year Plan, the CHE has set some quantitative targets for participation of several groups, mostly maintaining the growth in student numbers, as follows:

- Ultra-Orthodox - 19,000 Ultra-Orthodox students by 2022.
- Arabs – 1. Growth of the number of Bachelor level students so that their share within the general population will come to 17% by 2021 (already reached). 2. Growth of the number of Master level students so that their proportion within the general population will come to 12% by 2021 (already reached). 3. Growth of the number of PhD students so that their share within the general population will come to 7% by 2021 (almost reached). 4. Doubling the number of East Jerusalem Arab students at the Bachelor level from 300 in 2017 to 600 by 2023. 5. Increasing the number of students in the preparatory programs, from 400 in 2017 to 700 by 2023 (about 75%).
- Bedouin – Increasing the number of Bachelor level students to 1,500 by 2022 (75% growth).
- Ethiopian – Increasing the number of Bachelor degree students so that their share in the general student population will come to 1.7%, similar to their rate in the Israeli population (meaning, a growth of about 40% in Bachelor degree students – from 2,500 students in 2017 to 3,500 students in 2022).

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

- While Israel does not have a standalone policy document on equity, it has prepared several White Papers on various aspects of equity in higher education as part of the 2017-2022 plan.

Are there specific anti-discrimination provisions?

The CHE recently drafted an “Ethical Code” for Higher Education, which should be followed by all HEIs. The Ethical Code specifically condemns any form of discrimination against faculty members and students.

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

- Scholarships and grants targeted to support the various groups, including low-income students.
- Student loans.
- Equity-linked financial incentives given to HEIs, that are integrated into the funding formula.
- Allocation of competitive budgets to HEIs for activities aimed at supporting the various equity groups. Since 1999-2000, CHE’s Program and Budget Committee (PBC) has allocated a specific budget every year – 6.5 million ILS - for promoting equity measures among the HEIs and providing them with an incentive

to implement activities aimed at supporting the students, such as (i) creating suitable exams for the students, (ii) seminars for students and faculty, (iii) mentoring programs, and (iv) individualized counseling.

Non-Monetary Policy Instruments

- Outreach and bridge programs, including academic reinforcement and language support
- Academic and career guidance and counseling
- Retention measures

Financial Resources

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

- Out of the total HE budget of some 12 billion ILS, the following budget is allocated to equity purposes:
 - Ultra-Orthodox –1.2 billion ILS (2017-2022)
 - Arabs – 260 million ILS (170 million are PBS budget and 90 million are Finance Ministry budget)
 - Bedouin – over 200 million ILS.
 - Ethiopian - 95 million ILS.
 - Gender– about 70 million ILS (2017-2022).
 - Students with Learning disabilities – 6.5 million ILS.

Quality Assurance

Do the quality assurance criteria take equity elements into consideration? In what way?

- In the self-assessment reports that the HEI submit they are required to address diversity aspects:
 - Specify the institutional and departmental policy and goals regarding diversity of faculty and students (gender and minorities equality).
 - Specify the mechanisms and activities supporting the implementation of the policy.
 - Supporting documents: statistics on the gender balance among students and faculty members; statistics on the proportion of students and faculty members from various minority groups.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The CHE and its PBC are responsible for monitoring the impact of equity promotion measures, in particular the increase in the number of students in the various equity target groups (Ultra-Orthodox, Arabs, Bedouin), and the increase in the number of women among senior faculty.

Dedicated Equity Promotion Agency

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

Sources

The Council for Higher Education http://lang.che.org.il/en/?page_id=3974