

Nicaragua

National Higher Education Equity Policy

Governance

The Ministry of Education (MINED) is responsible for the Higher Education policy. It is supported by the following instances:

- The National Council of Education is the highest instance of consultation in the field of education in the country.
- The National Council of Universities - CNU coordinating and advisory body of the Universities and Higher Technical Education Centers. It is responsible for the planning of the higher education subsystem.
- The National Council of Rectors CNR, composed by rectors of public and private universities. It is the highest specialized and consultative body in academic matters related to the Subsystem of Higher Education. Its purpose is the definition of university development policies and strategies.
- The National Council for Evaluation and Accreditation -CNEA- The creation of the CNEA is an important step towards establishing the culture of evaluation and accountability of the country's educational institutions.
- The Nicaraguan Association of Higher Education Institutions deals with the academic and administrative aspects of the accreditation of studies and the exchange of information between institutions

Higher Education Policy Documents

- National Human Development Plan 2017-2021
- National Education Plan 2017-2021 (Under construction)
- Strategic plan for higher education institutions 2012-2021
- Educational Goals 2021: the education we want for the Bicentennial generation -OEI In the framework of the Declaration Mar del Plata 2010 XX Ibero-American Summit was signed by Nicaragua

Equity Policy Documents

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

- Expand access to quality higher education in all its modalities, in state institutions and subsidized to people with disabilities
- Guarantee a culture of respect, protection and attention to the fundamental rights of people with disabilities, facilitating their social, educational and labor inclusion, in conditions of equity.
- Promote, through education and laws, the elimination of all forms of violence against women, abusive practices, and family, work and social discrimination.
- Promote the socioeconomic well-being of students.
- Strengthen the implementation of the Regional Autonomous Educational Sub-System; strengthening the culture and use of the mother tongues of indigenous and Afro-descendant communities.

The following equity target groups are identified in the policy documents

- Low-income students
- Students by gender
- Indigenous
- Afro descendants
- Disabled students.

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

- The 2021 development and education plans are under construction and there are still no established official goals and indicators. The last plan indicated the goal of moving from 125 thousand scholarships granted in 2012 to 165 thousand in 2016.

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

- Does not exist

Nicaragua has a number of specific anti-discrimination provisions embedded in the following pieces of legislation:

- Law on Prevention, Rehabilitation and Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities. 195
- Law 238 Promotion, Protection and Defense of Human Rights in the Face of AIDS. 1998

The Government of Nicaragua uses a series of financial and non-monetary instruments to promote equity.

Financial Policy Instruments

- Scholarships Tariff (*Becas Arancel*): Free tuition to Students who access to higher education and covered by the Government through the mandatory 6% of the budget transfer to the universities.
- Special scholarships; support for accommodation, food, basic equipment, study materials, transportation etc.

Non-Monetary Policy Instruments

- Remedial courses for upper secondary students.
- Remote area students with preference of places in higher education institutions.
- leveling or preparation courses for students;
- The two (2) subsidized community colleges are located on the Caribbean Coast that serves multi-ethnic and multicultural populations

Financial Resources

- 6% of the national general budget must be allocated to the public Higher Education Institutions and 6 private universities that by Law (89) are included in this allocation.

Quality Assurance

The quality assurance criteria established in 2011 takes into consideration the following elements of equity:

- Financial policies to facilitate the access of students to higher education (Scholarships and Grants).
- Admission policies that consider social, ethnic and cultural differences.
- Existence and implementation of policies and programs to promote leveling of new students.
- Existence and results of student retention policies.
- Existence and results of remedial programs for students with academic difficulties.

Monitoring and Evaluation.

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

- Not available

Dedicated Equity Promotion Agency

Nicaragua does not have a public agency dedicated to equity promotion in higher education.

Key Equity Indicators

Net Enrollment Rate by Gender, Income Quintile and Area

year	Gender			Income Quintiles					Area	
	Total	Female	Male	1	2	3	4	5	Rural	Urban
2001	11.0	13.5	8.8	0.8	1.8	6.7	13.0	29.6	2.0	17.8
2005	10.0	12.1	8.0	1.1	2.6	6.2	9.4	28.8	3.1	14.9
2009	17.0	19.0	15.1	5.9	12.1	10.6	18.7	35.9	5.2	25.6
2014	20.0	23.3	16.3	6.8	11.1	16.4	24.2	40.3	7.5	29.6

Source: SEDLAC (CEDLAS and The World Bank) Version May 2018

Sources

<http://www.cedlas.econo.unlp.ed.ar/wp/en/estadisticas/sedlac/estadisticas/>

<http://www.cnu.edu.ni/>

<https://www.el19digital.com/app/webroot/tinymce/source/2018/00-Enero/Del22al28Enero/Viernes26Enero/EJES%20DEL%20PROGRAMA%20NACIONAL%20D>

<http://www.cnea.edu.ni/>