

NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION EQUITY POLICY

Cyprus



Policy Frameworks

Does equity with regard to supporting students from low-income or marginalized populations to enter or succeed in higher education feature in any government produced policy documents? If so, which government policy document(s) are these and can you provide website link(s) to them?

There are certain official legislations and regulations in Greek:

- The Student Affairs Law of 2015: http://www.cylaw.org/nomoi/enop/non-ind/2015_1_203/full.html
- The State Scholarship Agency's law of 2006: http://www.cylaw.org/nomoi/indexes/2006_1_154.html
- The University of Cyprus (Student Affairs and Study Matters) Regulations of 2006: http://www.highereducation.ac.cy/gr/nomoi_kanonismoi_pan/pan_kyprou/foititika_themata.pdf
- The University of Cyprus admission Requirements for Students with special criteria: https://ucy.ac.cy/fmweb/documents/UndergraduateOffice/2020/%CE%95%CE%B9%CF%83%CE%B4%CE%BF%CF%87%CE%AE_%CE%95%CE%B9%CE%B4%CE%B9%CE%BA%CF%8E%CE%BD_%CE%9A%CF%81%CE%B9%CF%84%CE%B7%CF%81%CE%AF%CF%89%CE%BD_2020_-2021_28-7-20.pdf
- Supernumerary Admissions in Public Universities Regulations of 2009: http://www.moec.gov.cy/ypexams/pdf/nomothesia/kanonismoi_pagkypriwn_exetaseon.pdf

What policies and actions are described in these government policy documents in terms of supporting students from low-income or marginalized populations to enter or succeed in higher education?

- University Admission requirements based on special criteria that are announced by the Public Institutions of Higher Education
- Categorization of groups of students based on special criteria and socioeconomic factors
- Information on how to apply for student grants and/or state scholarship schemes

Is there a standalone policy document dedicated to equity promotion in higher education? If so, which document(s) is/are these? Can you provide a link(s)?

No information was available.

Which equity target groups are identified in the policy documents? (Please choose as many groups as apply in your own country)

- Low-income or lower socio-economic background students
- Older or mature learners
- Indigenous populations
- Students with disability
- Victims of sexual and gender violence
- Refugees of all kinds (internally and externally displaced; deported)
- Children of people affected by historical violence
- Students with care experience, orphans, youth without parental care
- Other: Students with health issues, students with exceptional performance and/or high distinctions

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

Yes, these concrete targets are identified:

- ➔ In the Supernumerary Admissions in Public Universities Regulations of 2009 (in Greek): http://www.moec.gov.cy/ypexams/pdf/nomothesia/kanonismoi_pagkypriwn_exetaseon.pdf
- ➔ in the Student Affairs Law of 2015 (in Greek): http://www.cylaw.org/nomoi/enop/non-ind/2015_1_203/full.html

Which agency has responsibility for policies related to equity in student participation/success in higher education?

The competent agency related to equity is the Cyprus Equality Body which is under the authority of the Cyprus Ombudsman. As far as the student participation/success in higher education is concerned the responsibility for any policies/laws/regulations relies to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth.

Which stakeholder groups are consulted during the equity policy formulation? (Please choose all the stakeholders that are invited to the consultation process in your own country)

- ➔ Higher Education Institutions' Associations
- ➔ Civil society organisations
- ➔ Private sector organisations
- ➔ Student Organisations/Association

Achieving Policy Targets

Are there any non-monetary instruments such as outreach work between schools and universities, reforms to university admission etc. used to promote access/success for students from specific equity groups in higher education? If so, can you describe what they are?

The Career Counselling and Educational Services (CCES) of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Youth act as a liaison between schools and Higher Education Institutions providing guidance as regard to academic development.

Similarly, students are provided with relevant information and guidance, as far as their admission is concerned, from the Universities' Student Admission and Welfare Services.

Are there any financial instruments such as bursaries, scholarships and loans used to promote access/success for students from specific equity groups in higher education? If so, can you describe what they are?

- ➔ The State Welfare Service of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Youth which is under the authority of the Department of Higher Education provides allowances to students based on socioeconomic criteria.
- ➔ The State Scholarship Agency offers scholarships based on both academic performance and socioeconomic criteria
- ➔ Public Universities are also providing scholarships and other privilege's (e.g. priority to housing)
- ➔ A student loan is provided by the government to indigenous refugees as a result of the Turkish invasion in 1974

Who is responsible for monitoring the impact of measures used to promote access/success for students from specific equity groups in higher education?

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth and the Public Universities' authorities/Student Admission and Welfare Services.

What instruments, methods and data are in place to carry out the monitoring and evaluation?

The Students Welfare Services of the Universities, the Examination Service of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth, the State Welfare Service and the State Scholarship Agency use a scoring criteria cross referring system so as to carry out the monitoring and evaluation of the data provided by student applicants.

What kind of autonomy do higher education institutions enjoy in reaching the policy targets set by government?

Policy targets derive as a result from the cooperation between the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth and the competent authorities of the Public Universities in the form of Regulations which are approved by the House of Representatives as a legal document. Since the policy targets set certain margins for accomplishment, HEIs are given the autonomy to follow the margins set.

How do you see the role of inter-governmental/international organisations in supporting higher education equity policies? In which areas would be their contribution the most valuable? (1= most valuable contribution 4=least valuable contribution)

1. Policy setting
2. Financial assistance (grants, loan financing, scholarships)
3. Facilitating peer learning, exchange of experience among countries
4. Technical assistance and capacity building

COVID-19 and Equitable Access and Success in Higher Education

How, if at all, has Covid-19 affected the existence and implementation of policies designed to encourage greater access and success on higher education of those from low-income/marginalized groups?

COVID-19 has not in any way affected the existence and implementation of existing policies. On the contrary, it has proven to be a crucial test on the functionality and the effectiveness of the measures and actions provided in the policies. Moreover, it revealed the degree of preparedness of the Cyprus Government and also of the HEIs to deal with the uprising numbers of applicants seeking for financial and other support.

Sources

This country brief was prepared as part of the [“ASEM National Equity Policies in Higher Education”](#) report, a collaboration between the [Asia-Europe Foundation \(ASEF\)](#) and the [National Education Opportunities Network \(NEON\)](#). The report was launched at the [8th ASEF Regional Conference on Higher Education \(ARCS\)](#) on *“Inclusive and Diverse Higher Education in Asia and Europe”* on 10 September 2021.

All information in this country brief was provided by the Senior Education Office of the Cyprus Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth, as of 25 September 2020.