

NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION EQUITY POLICY

Germany



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?

- Concerning Bafög: <https://www.bafög.de/de/bundesausbildungs-foerderungsgesetz--bafog-204.php>
- Zukunftsvertrag Studium und Lehre stärken: https://www.bmbf.de/files/Verwaltungsvereinbarung-ZV_Studium_und_Lehre_staerken.pdf
- Hochschulzugang für beruflich qualifizierte Bewerber ohne schulische Hochschulzugangsberechtigung: https://www.kmk.org/fileadmin/veroeffentlichungen_beschluesse/2009/2009_03_06-Hochschulzugang-erful-qualifizierte-Bewerber.pdf
- Aktionspläne der Länder zur Umsetzung der UN-Behindertenrechtskonvention: Maßnahmen im Bereich Hochschule: https://www.studentenwerke.de/sites/default/files/landesaktionsplaene_uebersicht_barrierefrei_st_and_2019_03_0.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?

They are mainly in the form of financial instruments. Please refer to the question on the subject under “Achieving Policy Targets”.

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
- Gender groups
- Older or mature learners
- Students with disability
- Victims of sexual and gender violence
- Members of the LGBT community
- Refugees of all kinds (internally and externally displaced; deported)
- Students with care experience, orphans, youth without parental care.

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

“Zukunftsvertrag Studium und Lehre stärken”: To achieve an increase of female students in the STEM disciplines.

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

There are various agencies depending on the particular policy and target group

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
- International 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?

No information was provided.

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?

- BAFöG: The "Bundesausbildungsförderungsgesetz" (Federal Training Assistance Act) serves to enable students to pursue their education regardless of their parents' income. Students receive a subsidy from the state with which they can finance their living expenses during their education. One half of the BAFöG payments received is a grant from the state, the other half is an interest-free loan. After their studies, they must pay back 50 percent of the amount received as soon as their income exceeds a fixed amount.
- KfW education loan ("Studienkredit"): In addition to BAFöG, the state has created the KfW education loan. It is intended to guarantee that students do not have to interrupt their studies shortly before graduation due to financial bottlenecks. The KfW student loan is also granted if the requirements for BAFöG have not been met. The students receives a monthly payment of between 100 and 650 euros and do have to repay the loan within 25 years.
- Training loan ("Bildungskredit"): Furthermore, the Federal Government created the Training loan in order to allow students in advanced stages to complete their studies. The students can receive a monthly payment of 100, 200 or 300 euros or a single payment of 3600 euros for study-related expenses. They have to repay the loan in monthly installments of 120 euros, starting four years after the first payment.
- Private Education Loan / Student Loan: If BAFöG or KfW education loans are not eligible students have the option of taking out a private loan to secure their education. This is a low-interest loan, even from private banks, and is intended to help students make a living during their education and advance their studies.
- Scholarships: There are scholarships for students provided by the Federal Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF) are organised in a way to represent the whole spectrum of society. In a first step, every beneficiary receives money (300 Euros per month) independently of their parents' income. On top of that, students from low-income background get paid a sum that equals their right to BAFöG, however, now they get the whole sum as a grant from the state and don't have to repay part of it.

These state-financed scholarships are assigned by 13 Scholarship Foundations, each representing a different part of society. Hence, there are for example Foundations to benefit only Muslim (Avicenna) or Jewish (Eles) students.

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

The Federal Ministry of Education and Research. Other agencies of the federal government (depending on policy area/target group), and the governments of the German Länder (states).

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

Every two years a report on the developments and impact of the financial instruments is drawn up by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research and has to be presented to the Parliament of the Federal Republic of Germany (Bundestag) and the Federal Council (Bundesrat).

The federal states (Länder) and the Federal Office of Administration are collecting information on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research. The information are stored in different databases and include for example the number of those who get financial support, their familiar and financial background, or their duration of study.

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

No information was available.

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)

Unranked: Policy setting

Unranked: Technical assistance and capacity building

Unranked: Financial assistance (grants, loan financing, scholarships)

Unranked: Facilitating peer learning, exchange of experience among countries

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?

No information was available.

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 \(ARC8\)](#) on *“Inclusive and Diverse Higher Education in Asia and Europe”* on 10 September 2021.

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