

NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION EQUITY POLICY

Netherlands



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?

It concerns the following policy documents:

- 'Monitor beleidsmaatregelen 2020-2021' Monitor beleidsmaatregelen hoger onderwijs 2020-2021 | Rapport | Rijksoverheid.nl (in Dutch)
- Strategic agenda higher education: Strategische agenda hoger onderwijs en onderzoek Houdbaar voor de toekomst | Rapport | Rijksoverheid.nl, (chapter 4) – English version and infographics:
 - ↘ <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/publicaties/2020/02/12/infographic-strategic-agenda-for-higher-education-and-research>;
 - ↘ <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/publicaties/2020/02/12/summary-strategic-agenda-for-higher-education-and-research>
- Letter to Parliament, 25-10-2018: <https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/verslagen/detail?did=2018D50821&id=2018Z19128> (in Dutch)

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?

You may refer to the previous answer for some of these policies.

The Netherlands has specific policy for status holders (refugees with a residence permit). It concerns the guidance of highly qualified status holders to higher education, for example by giving them the right preparation route. At the moment this is being implemented by the UAF. From the start of 2022 it will be implemented by the local municipalities, as a consequence of the new civic integration act.

The Netherlands has also made efforts in recent years to switch from efficiency thinking to more attention for student success. Among other things, by doing a lot of research into student well-being and trying to detect the causes for differences in influx, throughput and outflow.

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)?

Yes, it concerns the following letter to Parliament: <https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/verslagen/detail?did=2018D50821&id=2018Z19128> (in Dutch)

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
- Students with disability
- Refugees of all kinds (internally and externally displaced; deported)

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

The Netherlands has no concrete targets because of the autonomy of the higher education institutions.

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

There is no specific agency responsible for policies related to equity in student participation and success in higher education. However, the ECHO (Expertise Center for Diversity in Higher Education) is focusing on ethnic cultural diversity. And the ECIO (Expertise Center for Inclusion Education (formerly: center disability and study) is focusing on students with a disability in the broader sense of the term. We allocate resources to both organisations to support and guide students with a migration background and /or a disability, and attention is paid to the 'sense of belonging'.

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?

There are no non-monetary instrument from the central government. It is up the higher education institutions themselves to promote access/success.

The government (Ministry of Education) carries out a lot of monitoring and research; we share the findings with the aim to be used by the institutions in their intake and transfer policies. Furthermore, there are higher education institutions that have a pre-academic offer to prepare students who are unfamiliar with higher education (first-generation students and students with a migration background). This offer is institutional policy.

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?

Students receive student financing if they are taking a programme at a recognised college or university. Student financing consists of an option to borrow money, an additional scholarship (for students with parents with a low-income), a student commuting product (student public transport chip card) and a tuition loan. Student financing is subject to certain conditions. For instance, you must be younger than 30 years of age.

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

It concerns a joint responsibility of the government (Ministry of Education) and higher education institutions.

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

Every year a report is published to monitor the implementation of the policy measures: [Monitor beleidsmaatregelen hoger onderwijs 2020-2021](#) (in Dutch) Furthermore, there are various inquests to track the progress among the students.

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

Education in the Netherlands is highly decentralized and the higher education institutions have a large degree of autonomy in the Netherlands. They receive lump sum finance and have the responsibility to deliver high quality education and research and monitor their own quality and report on this publicly. This also concerns to certain policy targets set by the government, in cooperation with the higher education field.

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. Facilitating peer learning, exchange of experience among countries
2. Policy setting
3. Financial assistance (grants, loan financing, scholarships) (only concerning scholarships like Erasmus+)
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?

The Netherlands has implemented various new and temporary policy measures as a consequence of the COVID-measures and general impact. However, this concerned generic policy, not focusing on specific target groups.

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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