

NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION EQUITY POLICY

Poland



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?

- The Law on Higher Education and science, Act of 20 July 2018:
<http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/DocDetails.xsp?id=WDU20180001668>
- ↘ English version: <https://konstytucjadlanauki.gov.pl/pobierz-ustawe>
- Programme for the integration of the Roma community in Poland for the period of 2014-2020:
<http://mniejszosci.narodowe.mswia.gov.pl/mne/romowie/program-integracji-spol/8675.Programme-for-the-integration-of-the-Roma-community-in-Poland-for-the-period-201.html>
- <http://mniejszosci.narodowe.mswia.gov.pl/mne/romowie/programy-stypendialne-d>

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?

- The Law on Higher Education and Science sets the principles of financial aid available for low-income students or students with disabilities. They are described in the answer to “What kind of autonomy do higher education institutions enjoy...”.
- The Programme for integration of the Roma community contains/describes comprehensive approach to the situation of the Roma minority in Poland and creates mechanisms to overcome all cultural, social and financial barriers responsible for low level of education of the Roma community.

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.

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
- Other: Roma community

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

No.

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

There is no single agency/institution in Poland responsible for policies related to equity.

- The Ministry of Science and Higher Education is responsible for all matters connected to higher education in Poland.

- The Ministry of Interior and Administration is responsible for policies regarding ethnical minorities living in Poland, including Roma community.

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
- International Organisations
- Student Organisations/Association
- Other: Local government units

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?

Students can apply for sustenance or accommodation in the dormitory (including family members: spouse and children).

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 system of non-refundable benefits consists of:
 - ↘ social scholarships for low-income students, allowance aid (for students who are temporary in difficult situation)
 - ↘ student loans and scholarships for students with disabilities.

The system is financed by government grants for the universities.

- Students from Roma community can apply for scholarships under the same rules as other students in Poland. Moreover, the Ministry of Interior and Administration provides scholarships dedicated specially for people from this community. In order to prevent early school dropout, financial aid is also available on early stages of education.

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

Access/success for students from specific equity groups in higher education? The minister responsible for religious denominations and national and ethnic minorities is monitoring all matters regarding Roma community, including scholarship programme and educational path of the Roma students. The minister is supported by the Ministry of Interior and Administration. The minister responsible for higher education and science is supervising the system of non-refundable benefits for low-income students and students with disabilities. The minister is supported by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education.

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

- Data regarding the system of non-refundable benefits for students collected and published annually by Statistical Office.
- More specific information regarding particular scholarships is available in the Integrated System of Information on Science and Higher Education POL-on.
- Data on ethnicity are recognized as sensitive, therefore they are not collected. The number of Roma students in the higher education system is estimated by the Ministry of Interior and Administration on the basis of the number of applications for scholarships submitted each year and consultations with Roma representatives and organisations.
- Other instruments:
 - Financial and substantive statements from participants of the Integration programme;
 - Studies and reports prepared by experts, NGOs and other institutions,
 - Consultations with Roma representatives and organisations
 - Evaluation in the form of annual report on the monitoring of the implementation of the Integration programme prepared by the Ministry of Interior and Administration.

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

Under the Law on Higher Education and Science universities are obliged to provide scholarships for low-income students and students with disabilities. However, they have autonomy in formulating particular rules regarding obtaining scholarships (such as the amount of financial aid, eligibility criteria and the mechanism of granting scholarship).

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)

2. Financial assistance (grants, loan financing, scholarships)
 3. Policy setting
- Unranked: Technical assistance and capacity building
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?

There has been no impact on the Roma community so far.

Due to higher demand for social scholarships caused by the pandemic, the allocation of funds for universities was increased by the minister responsible for science and higher education.

Universities have also simplified the mechanisms of awarding scholarship and provided additional instruments supporting students in difficult situation.

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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