

NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION EQUITY POLICY

Spain



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?

- ➔ Equity is always one of the main points. In some rules, equity is explicitly mentioned:
 - 📌 Ley Orgánica 6/2001, de 21 de diciembre, de Universidades (<https://www.boe.es/eli/es/lo/2001/12/21/6/con>)
 - 📌 Access to the HE: Orden PCM/362/2020, de 22 de abril, por la que se modifica la Orden PCM/139/2020, de 17 de febrero, por la que se determinan las características, el diseño y el contenido de la evaluación de Bachillerato para el acceso a la Universidad, y las fechas máximas de realización y de resolución de los procedimientos de revisión de las calificaciones obtenidas en el curso 2019-2020 (<https://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-2020-4576>)
- ➔ In some other cases, the word 'equity' is not explicitly mentioned but is the main purpose of the rule, e.g., the rule for grants:
 - 📌 Extracto de la Resolución de 31 de julio de 2020 de la Secretaría de Estado de Educación, por la que se convocan becas de carácter general para el curso académico 2020-2021, para estudiantes que cursen estudios postobligatorios. (https://www.boe.es/diario_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-B-2020-25755)

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 main principle is 'leave no one behind'. In this sense, the new Spanish law on Education is going to modify previous laws in order to have a more inclusive education in order to give more opportunities to the children with more disadvantages.
- ➔ On the other hand, in relation to HE, the Spanish Royal Decree 412/2014 of 6 June laying down the basic rules for admission procedures for official university teachings (https://www.boe.es/diario_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-2014-6008) provides in Article 5. admission to official undergraduate university teachings will be made in compliance with the principles of equality, non-discrimination, merit and ability.
- ➔ To ensure non-discrimination, this same royal decree marks certain percentages of reserve for certain groups of students. For example, Article 26 states that "at least 5 per 100 of the places offered for students who have recognized a degree of disability equal to or greater than 33 per 100 will be reserved, as well as for those students with permanent special educational needs associated with personal circumstances of disability, who during their previous schooling have specified resources and supports for their full educational standardization". Similarly, Articles 24 or 25 establish a reservation of places for students over 25 years of age (2%) and for students over the age of 45 (not less than 1% or more than 3%)
- ➔ Separate Chapter deserves everything about gender equality where we have a law (Law 30/2003, of October 13, on measures to incorporate the assessment of gender impact into the regulatory provisions developed by the government) (<https://boe.es/buscar/doc.php?id=BOE-A-2003-18920>) that raised the obligation to prepare gender impact reports throughout state regulations, including university ones.
- ➔ With regard to gender equality, Organic Law 3/2007 of 22 March on effective equality of women and men (<https://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-2007-6115>) is fully applicable to universities in its three areas of action: as an institution primarily dedicated to higher education and research, as a labour organization and as a public administration.

→ In addition, there are also autonomic regulations - for the different Spanish Regions - in this regard.

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
- Gender groups
- Older or mature learners
- Students with disability
- Victims of sexual and gender violence
- Other: Most Spanish universities have specific sections for LGBT and refugee groups in their host service for new students

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

No information was available.

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

No specific agency, except the Ministry of Universities.

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
- Other: For the development of new rules there is open consultation to the whole society. In any case, universities, students and Autonomous Communities have their own relationship mechanism with the Ministry with ongoing consultation

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?

See previous answer to “What policies and actions are described in these government policy documents...”, with reference to Spanish Royal Decree 412/2014 of 6 June laying down the basic rules for admission procedures for official university teachings.

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?

Every year there is a call for grants where the low-income individuals are considered.

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 Universities, Universities and Autonomous Regions.

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

Data from the universities and their analysis by the own universities, the regions and the Ministry.

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

Full autonomy but with respect to the legal rules.

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. Technical assistance and capacity building
3. Policy setting

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

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 pandemic has affected, among many other things, teaching in the Higher Education Institutions, in many cases going from face- to- face to distance learning.

The Spanish Universities consider the digital divide is not very big in their students – 1.4 % -but even with that low figure, they have tried to look for solutions, for example, giving computers to students who do not have computers or that these were not good enough. In some cases, the problem has not been the tool but the bad internet connection.

In any case, the evaluation of the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic will have to be developed in a short future.

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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