



STATE OF ISRAEL

MINISTRY OF FINANCE
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
DEPARTMENT

COUNCIL FOR HIGHER
EDUCATION
PLANNING AND BUDGETING
COMMITTEE

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- Joint Press Release -

Press Release

Higher Education System Budgeting Agreement for 2009-2010 Academic Year Signed: Increased to NIS 6.9 Billion

The Ministry of Finance and the Planning and Budgeting Committee of the Council for Higher Education have reached a budget agreement, under which the budget of the higher education system for the current academic year will total approximately **NIS 6.9 billion**. The plenum of the Planning and Budgeting Committee held a prolonged discussion today which concluded with unanimous approval of the budget.

This amount represents an increase of approximately NIS 270 million compared to the original budget for the academic year 2008-2009. The increase in the budget stems from factors including the financing of wage agreements with senior and junior staff, an increase in the number of students, and other factors. The Planning and Budgeting Committee views the 2009-2010 academic year as a transitional budget year, during which a new five-year plan will be formulated for the higher education system in coordination with the Finance Ministry. The five-year plan will include an update of the budget model, aimed at encouraging excellence within the system, and will address the matter of budget-based pensions at the universities. The plan is scheduled for implementation starting in the academic year 2010-2011.

PBC chairman **Prof. Manuel Trachtenberg** commented: "The budget for the 2009-2010 academic year is a transitional budget for the higher education system, which is currently constructing a central long-term plan. It is essential for this plan to chart a new course and strengthen excellence in research and high-quality teaching."

Finance Ministry Budget Director **Dr. Udi Nissan** added: "We see the reinforcement of the higher education system and its contribution to our economy and society as highly important. I believe that the cooperation and productive dialogue between the various parties will enable us to cope with the numerous challenges facing the higher education system, including achieving a genuine change of the budgeting model, prioritizing excellence, and taking advantage of each institution's relative advantages."