Abstract

At the beginning of the twenty first century, the higher education system in Israel has undergone comprehensive changes mainly in the establishment of new colleges, academization of regional colleges, and the transformation of branches of the old universities into academic independent colleges. The objective of the decision-makers in the Higher Education Council (hereinafter: CHE) was to meet the growing demands for higher education that began in the late 1980’s with an enhancement in the 1990’s. Of the old and new universities in Israel, Bar-Ilan University was a pioneer in establishing academic branches. Ten years after its establishment, Bar-Ilan opened academic branches for the Southern and Northern population in the periphery. The policy of reinforcing the periphery continued in the 1980’s and 1990’s when Bar-Ilan deployed its academic sponsor over the Regional College of Judea and Samaria, Ariel in 1985, and the Western Galilee Regional College in 1996. The process of the expansion of higher education in the world with its growing perception as a tool for social advancement led the Committee of Budgeting and Planning (hereinafter: PBC) in the CHE to provide solutions for this demand. Although proposals to expand higher education were already discussed in the early 1970"s in the CHE, a comprehensive systemic plan received practical expression only in the early 1990’s. The planning consisted of expanding the system through new colleges, upgrading existing branches, and changing the status of the academic colleges. Global processes and the expansion of the academic system in the country have placed the administration of Bar-Ilan University with a dilemma after which they chose to disengage from the branches.