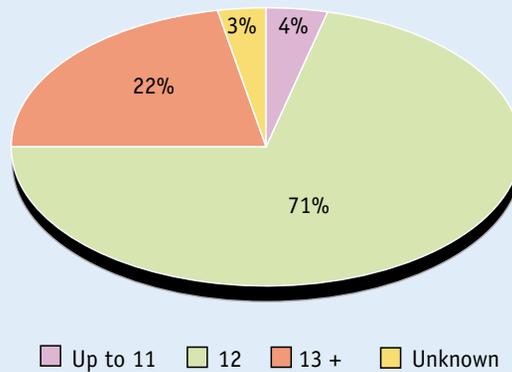


# Students

Undergraduate students, by years of schooling (based on self-reports)



In the 2006-2007 academic year, 39,816 students were enrolled in undergraduate courses, compared with 38,340 in 2005-2006. An additional 2,966 students who were close to completing their degrees were registered for seminar papers only. There were 3,082 students enrolled in graduate studies (including students taking qualifying courses), compared with 3,071 in 2005-2006. An additional 67 graduate students were registered for seminar papers only, 33 for final projects and 26 for theses. About 22% of the graduate students have undergraduate degrees from the Open University.

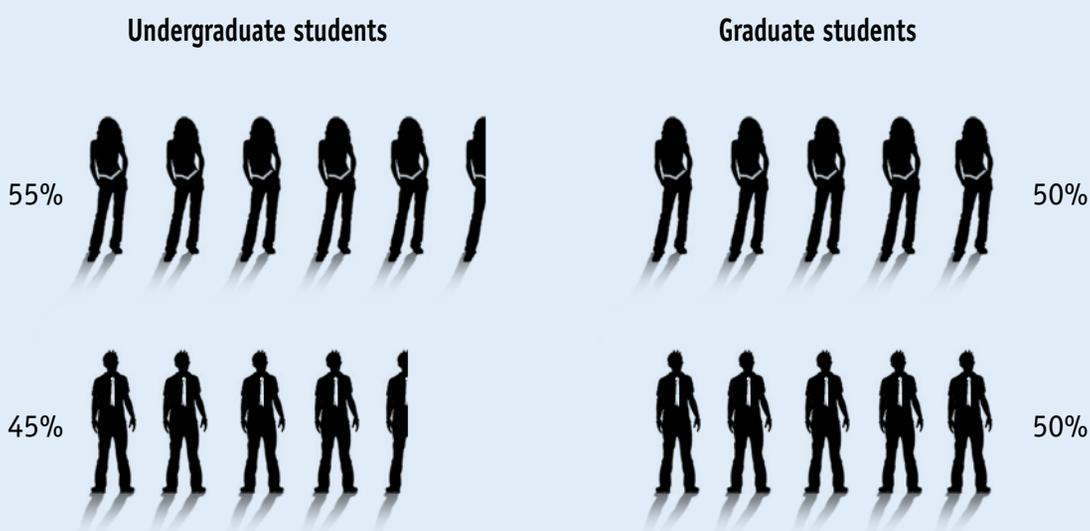
A "student" at the Open University is a person who registered for one or more courses and has not cancelled or deferred studies. The total number of students represents the number of people studying at the Open University. A student taking two or more courses is counted only once.

The study method at the Open University does not require students to take a structured program over a specific period of time. Therefore, in addition to absolute numbers, we are presenting data that enables a comparison with students pursuing a full program towards a degree (FTE – Full Time Equivalent). The calculation is based on the number of course enrollments divided by a factor which expresses the number of annual enrollments that would allow the student to complete a degree in three years. In FTE terms, 17,417 undergraduate and 1,286 graduate students were enrolled at the Open University in 2006-2007.

**Graduate students, by degree (including those taking qualifying courses)\***

Degree	Students
Computer Science	271
Democracy Studies – Interdisciplinary	300
Biological Thought	19
Business Administration	2,162
Education, 'Learning Technologies' and 'Learning Systems'	335
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,087*</b>

\* In 2006-2007, there were 3,082 graduate students, 5 of whom were registered for more than one graduate degree.



### Financial Assistance and Scholarships

The OUI granted 3,750 scholarships in 2006-2007 (compared to 2,645.6 in 2005-2006) in various categories: financial assistance, academic excellence, high school students requiring financial assistance and sports scholarships. Thanks to earmarked donations, the number of students who benefited from scholarships increased. Through the support of various organizations, numerous scholarships were granted to students from northern Israel and to students called to military duty during the second Lebanon war. The number of scholarships for new students from the periphery also increased this year. The OUI also assisted Ethiopian and ultra-orthodox students through earmarked scholarships. The number of Ashdod Project high school students who benefited from special scholarships also grew this year.

### Reduced Student National Insurance Payments

The National Insurance Institute of Israel decided to recognize the entitlement of OUI students to pay reduced national insurance payments, identical to students in all other universities. Students who took five courses in one year and are not employed will be entitled to this reduced payment.

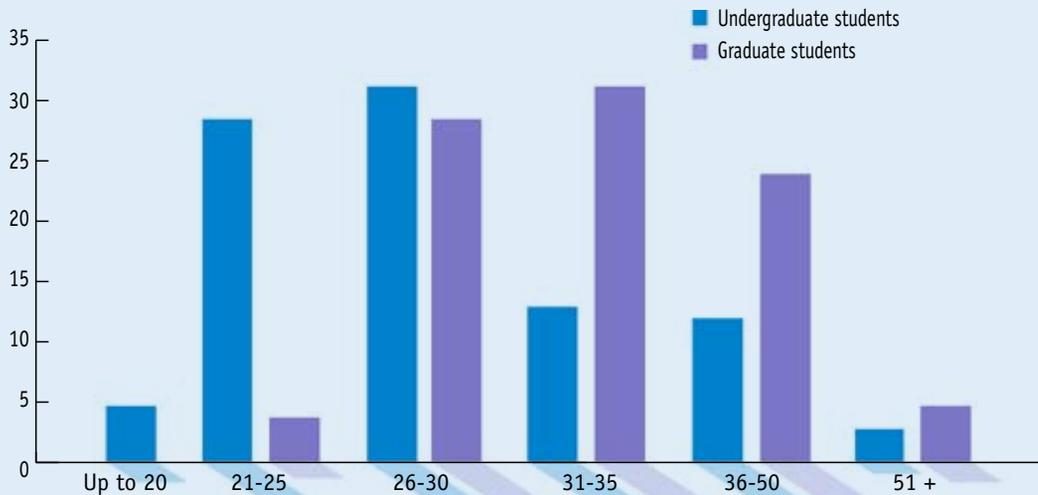
### New Immigrants

The Student Administration in the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption funds the tuition of new immigrants, who, during their third year of studies, volunteer in the *Shahak* (Community Social Service) project. In order to be included in this arrangement, students must demonstrate a specified level of reading comprehension in Hebrew. Students register for studies through the office of the Dean of Students and receive special considerations such as permission to submit assignments in a foreign language (if feasible) and extended time on exams. The OUI and the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption maintain contact with these students throughout their studies and offer cultural and social welfare activities. This year, 330 immigrant students enrolled at the Open University.

### Social Involvement Projects

OUI students take part in various social involvement projects, including ISEF, the International Education Foundation, Impact, the Gross Foundation, *Sachlav* and *Perach*. 784 OUI students tutored through the *Perach* project and 57 through the *Sachlav* project. Fourteen OUI students received certificates of excellence for their activities in *Perach* in 2006-2007 and the OUI granted each of them a scholarship amounting to 50% of tuition for one course.

Undergraduate and graduate students by age (based on self-reports)



### Students with Special Needs

In 2006-2007, 105 students with disabilities were enrolled in OU studies: 32 deaf and hard of hearing; 58 blind, and 16 physically handicapped. These students received study adjustments as well as special examination conditions.

**Virtual Perach:** Virtual *Perach* is a project that enables students with special needs – with motor disabilities, visually impaired or hearing impaired – to coach children with physical disabilities similar to their own, via e-mail and the Internet. The virtual environment enables pupils to expand their social relations and to enhance their writing and technological skills. The coaches, students who themselves have disabilities, contribute their personal experience and serve as role models. Two of our students coached through Virtual *Perach* this year.

Gali Simon, a visually impaired, fourth year Psychology student at the OUI, was chosen this year to represent Virtual *Perach* in a delegation of outstanding coaches who visited Germany. She was chosen due to her volunteer activities in the project over the past two years. Together with her studies and *Perach* tutoring, Gali works in *Enosh* (an Israeli non-profit association that deals with the rehabilitation of persons with mental illness in the community) and performs in the *Enoshi* [human] Theater, a special theater group composed of individuals undergoing rehabilitation, volunteers and students who put on classical as well as original plays. Gali recently played in "Vacation in Holland," a play about children with various disabilities.

### Elections to the Student Council

The OUI initiated a process to create an elected Student Council that will act to establish an OUI Student Association and shape its goals. This year, elections were held for the first time for the provisional Student Council. The University invested extensive efforts and resources to enable students to vote directly, electronically from any computer. Temporary bylaws were formulated for establishing the Student Association and the election campaign was conducted through a designated website. All the stages of the election process were documented on the website: candidacy announcements, objections and the elections themselves. However, the percentage of the student body that voted (5.9%) was below the minimum threshold (12%) set in the election bylaws and the elections were therefore invalid. The OUI decided to conduct elections again in the 2007-2008 academic year.

## Sport

At the end of the International Academic Sport Association (ASA) games, the OUI was ranked 9th in the general ranking scheme. The women's table-tennis team won first place this year and the men's team came in third. The squash and chess teams won second prize, the women's basketball team came in third and the men's mini-football team was ranked fourth. OUI athletes won personal medals in fencing, table-tennis, squash, athletics, judo, taikondo, mountain biking and swimming.

**Sports excellence scholarships:** 39 students received scholarships of varying amounts for their achievements in representing the Open University in competitions during the year.

## Improving Computer Services to Students

**Sheilta** – *Online interactive services to students via the Internet:* The system provides easy, user-friendly and efficient data retrieval. All the information in the University computer systems, from the registration stage, through tracking of studies and academic achievements up to receipt of a degree, is accessible to students. Improvements resulted in accelerated growth in system use. Several services were added to the system this year, including publication of exam grades in relation to the distribution of grades in the course, information on the number of available places in exam centers and improved assignment of examinees in the centers, and presentation of responses by the Committee for Accreditation of Prior Studies.

**Support to students using computerized systems:** Students using the OUI's computerized systems are often in need of support services. They receive such services from the OUI support system for *Sheilta*, the online assignment system, electronic information resources, multimedia courseware, InterWise and course websites.

## Employment Counseling and Placement

The Placement website is updated on a regular basis enabling students to send CVs directly to prospective employers. This year we conducted career selection workshops to help prospective and current students examine their abilities, talents and career options. The first virtual employment fair was held this year with the participation of 50 leading companies that offered more than 1,200 positions in different fields. A technologically innovative website was created with detailed information about all job openings and employers. The students searched for jobs, received information about the companies, and sent their CVs through the site. The site enables students to create a personal file and consolidate suitable job openings. All contact between students and employers is conducted through the website. The site also offers additional employment search services such as a form for writing a CV and tips related to job interviews and assessment centers.

Contact continued with large companies, which submitted attractive job openings for students and graduates to the Dean of Students. These openings were transmitted via e-mail to the relevant population segment and the pertinent CVs were submitted to the prospective employers. Contact was also initiated with bodies that will help us find employment for students in the Arab sector.