



HE in South Africa: emerging challenges & implications for universities

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Presentation Outline

1. BOUNDLESS TOPIC
2. ASSUMPTIONS
3. SPECIFIC CHALLENGES FACING THE SOUTH AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM
4. CONCLUSION



AKNOWLEDGEMENT OF SOURCES

1. The data slides were sourced from:

- a. DST/NRF Centre of Excellence in Scientometrics and STI Policy/University of Stellenbosch – contributed by Nico Cloete, Charles Sheppard and Johan Mouton;
- b. DHET HEMIS Data;

2. Other information was sourced from:

VARIOUS POSITION PAPERS OF HESA (now Universities South Africa) ON A RANGE OF MATTERS.



BOUNDLESS NATURE OF THE TOPIC

1. Knowledge-economy; funding; globalization; internationalization; education technology; investment; aging professoriate; commodification; public good; private good;
2. quality assurance; massification; access; success; MOOCs; research; innovation; sustainable development; academic freedom; teaching and learning; community engagement; public accountability; institutional autonomy
3. Cyber-infrastructure; qualification frameworks; steering model; governance; reporting regulations; transformation; graduatedness; students; academics, etc.



ASSUMPTIONS

1. HE systems are facing common challenges;
2. Common drivers globally re-shaping the purpose of higher education;
3. Governance and accountability frameworks are also being renegotiated across national HE systems;
4. Many systems are in a state of paralysis – as they are not able to reimagine the role and purpose of HE in a changing environment;
5. The challenges facing HE systems in Africa are largely historical; but some are a product of our policy choices
6. The principles of autonomy, academic freedom and public accountability are being continuously reinterpreted and reimagined



CHALLENGES

1. Massification of Higher Education;
2. Decline in state funding and return on investment discourse;
3. Fluid state-higher education relations
4. Building the next generation of academics;
5. Onset of ICTs and implications for universities;
6. Internationalisation
7. Transformation



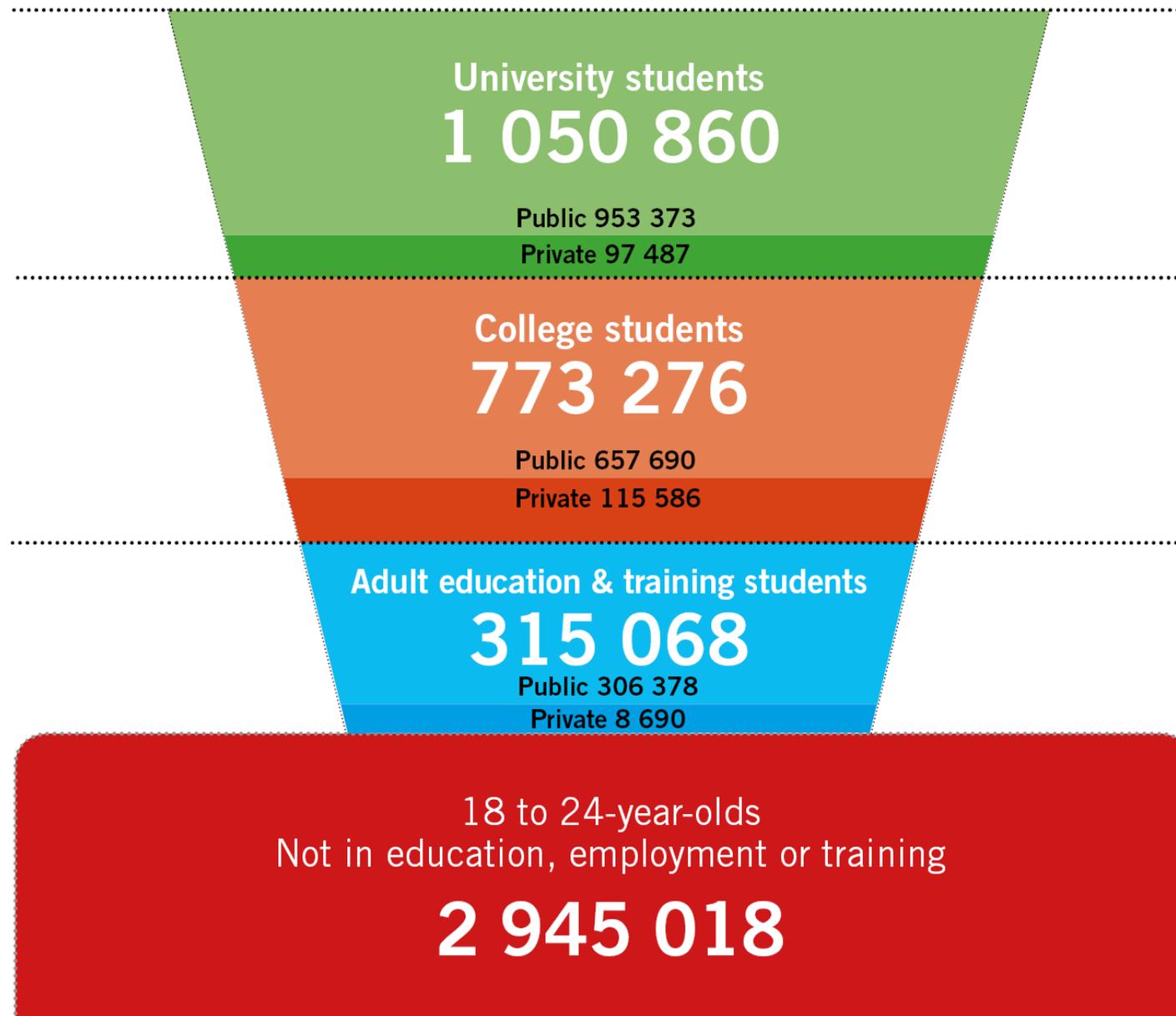
TREND 1: MASSIFICATION

1. *Demand for HE far outstrip existing capacity*
2. *Most systems have “massified” in the last few decades,*
 - *India needs to create 1500 universities and 35 colleges by 2020 (National Knowledge Commission, India)*
 - *the number of private institutions in China has soared to more than 630 (in 2010) up from 20 in 2007*
 - *Public universities in Africa have student enrolment far beyond their capacity (Kenya; Uganda; Nigeria, South Africa, etc.)*
 - *South Africa to increase university student enrolment from 1 million to 1.6 million by 2030 (NDP)*
3. *Proliferation of private HE institutions in Africa (for- profit, faith-based; etc.)*
4. *Established universities have satellite campuses in Africa – offering franchised qualifications.*



The South African Post-school System 2012

DST/NRF Centre of Excellence in Scientometrics and STI Policy/University of Stellenbosch – contributed by Nico Cloete, Charles Sheppard and Johan Mouton



Student Enrolment

Total number of students	2010	2011	2012	2013 (preliminary)
Total number of students	892 943	938, 200	953 373	983 698
Total number of international students	66 181	70 060	72 857	73 859
Number of students (FTE)	600 002	628 409	634 548	665 857
Post graduate students	138 610	147 893	149 027	159 750
Post-graduate students (international students)	18 845	20 046	20 770	23 364
Source: DHET HEMIS DATA				



QUESTIONS

1 What can the public university sector do to meet the growing demand for student enrolment?

- a. Increase state funding - how possible is this in the context of unfavourable macro-economic climate and fiscal pressures?
- b. Increase private sector investment in HE – trust deficit between the private sector and the state
- c. Graduate tax – feasibility in the context of other taxes
- d. Design a low cost “loan” product for poor students – in the context of high levels of unemployment

What is to be done? A “**NEW DEAL**” FOR THE UNIVERSITY SECTOR



TREND 2: Decline in state funding

1. *State funding has been declining in student per capita terms, in part due to massification*
2. *State budget allocation has been directed to initiatives that can demonstrate tangible return on investment*
3. *The 2008/09 global financial crisis – shrinking value of endowments*
4. *A relationship of mistrust between universities and state*

“Government subsidies are declining, tuition is rising and cost per student is increasing faster than inflation or family income”. James Duderstadt, 2007



Expenditure on higher education as % of GDP, 2010

(Source: DST/NRF Centre of Excellence in Scientometrics and STI Policy/University of Stellenbosch – contributed by Nico Cloete, Charles Sheppard and Johan Mouton)



QUESTIONS

- 1 Given our development challenges; what is an appropriate % of GDP to be spent on HE in South Africa?
- 2 **What are the funding risks for South Africa's universities in 10 to 20 years?**

Possible funding scenarios for HE in South Africa:

- (i) Skorokoro: hop-along and ultimately disintegrate!!!**
- (ii) Muvhango: HEIs fighting for meagre resources and the collective agenda compromised (winners & losers)**
- (iii) State-owned HEIs – with more funds from the state, HEIs become state organs.**
- (iv) Sunshine scenario: differentiated sector appropriately funded to respond to the nation's challenges and needs.**



TREND 3: State-University Relations

1. HE is important for any country's development;
2. Universities must account for using funds appropriately in pursuit of broader public interests;
3. Two opposed views on governance and forms of regulation in Africa:
 - *“A university has to be insulated from the hot and cold wind of politics”, Ashby Commission in the 1960s*
 - *“The university in Africa occupies too critical a position of importance to be left alone to determine its own priorities [and] it should accept the hegemony of government”, Accra Workshop in 1972 on Creating African University*
4. *These two views have shaped models and forms of regulation in HE in Africa; have also given rise to (re)interpretation of academic freedom; institutional autonomy and public accountability.*



TREND 3: State-University Relations

cont....

Models of state university relationship emerged post-1972 (cf. Moja, Muller & Cloete, 1996: 146):

State control:

- University is a state initiative; at the expense of government; and must meet priorities set by the state. To this end, the state appoints a VC; key members of the governing boards (councils) and other key members of the executive;
- Principles of academic freedom and autonomy are compromised / undermined because universities are organs of the state

State supervision: Government's role is limited to monitoring and influencing the framework of rules and guides the behavior of actors, through steering instruments of funding; planning and quality assurance.



Trend 3: State-University Relations

cont....

State intervention:

- Subtle version of state control
- State intervenes from time to time in the name of public accountability
- *“The state intervenes often not to pursue a set of national policy objective [and] state intervention occurs despite the fact that autonomy is the official policy”* Moja, Muller & Cloete; 1996: 148).

In South Africa:

- Higher Education Act Amendment, 2012 (powers of the Minister; Assessor and Administrator changed);
- Reporting Regulations for Public Universities;
- Central Applications Service;
- Transformation Oversight Committee;

- Up to five members of Council appointed by the Minister



QUESTIONS

- 1 How can institutional autonomy and public accountability be pursued simultaneously in the SA system?**
- 2 How can the buffering institutions such as CHE and SAQA defend and protect both autonomy and public accountability?
- 3 What are the specific responsibilities of universities in promoting, defending and protecting the principles of autonomy; academic freedom and public accountability.
- 4 Should there be a National ACCORD between the State and Universities?



TREND 4: Building the next generation of academics

Our system is:

1. Small (1 million students)
2. Only 36% of academics in our system hold a PhD – target is 75% (NDP)
3. System produces approximately 1800 PhD a year
4. Supervisory capacity is concentrated in few universities
5. Academic work-force is largely white and male – need to be de-racialised; de-gendered; demusculined;
6. Over 20% of our professoriate is retiring in the next 7-10 years
7. There is paucity of black South African academics particularly at the professoriate level

NGAP and Human Capital Development Strategy (DHET &



TREND 4: Building the next generation of academics

1. Academic staff recruitment and retention remains a challenge across the globe.
2. The challenge is more pronounced in Africa
“The most significant human element is an absence of sufficient highly qualified academics. A pandemic of enrolment explosion” has taken place in recent years without commensurate growth in faculty members”. (Secretary-General of AAU, cited in Walshe, 2008)

Contributory factors:

- High attrition rate to pursue opportunities abroad
- Retirement of productive scientists in South Africa
- Lack of state of the art research equipment and facilities in Africa

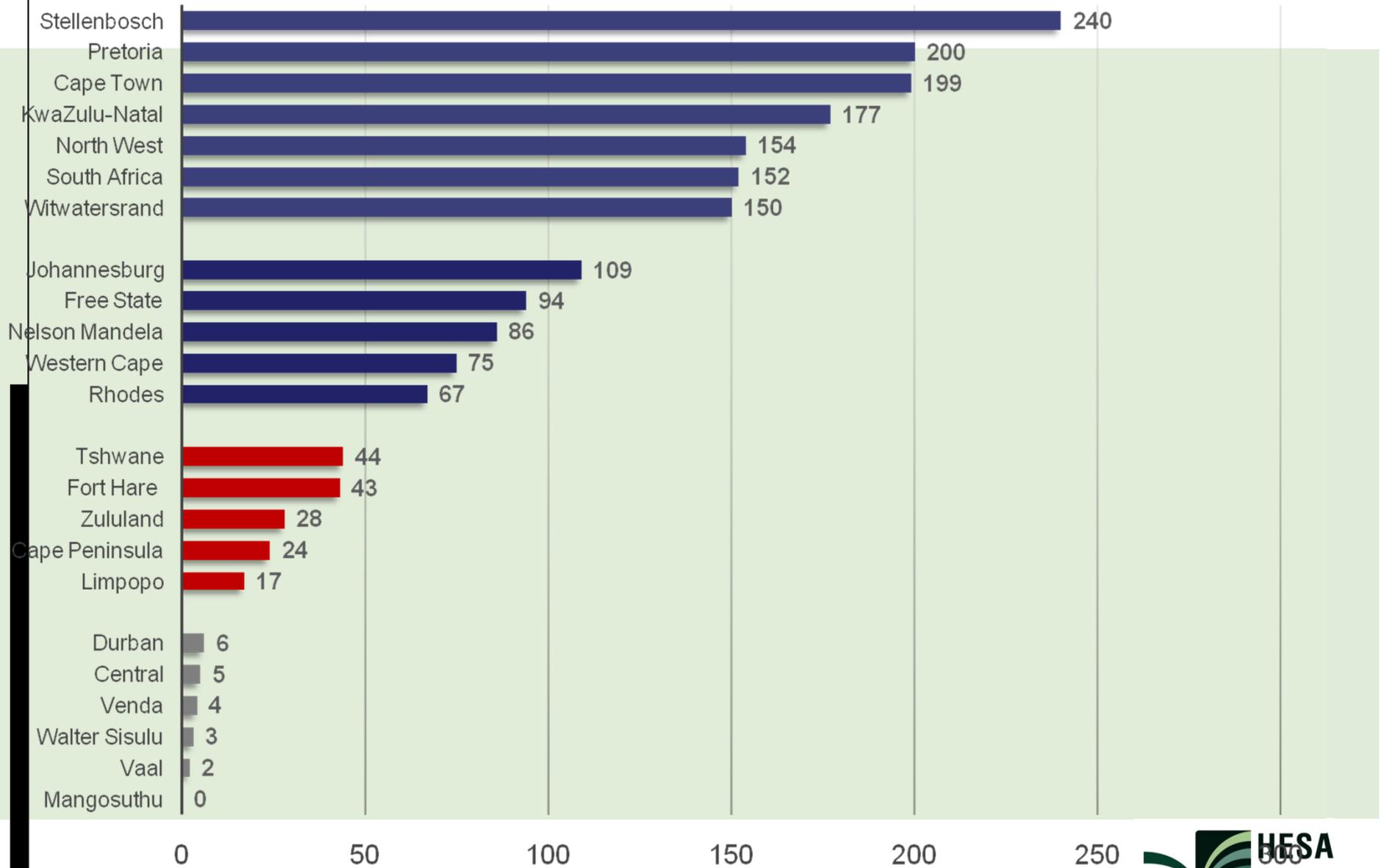
• General state-university relations in Africa

• Poor PhD output rate in Africa compared



Doctoral graduates produced by universities in 2012

(DST/NRF Centre of Excellence in Scientometrics and STI Policy/University of Stellenbosch – contributed by Nico Cloete, Charles Sheppard and Johan Mouton)



TREND 5: ICT and implications for HEIs

1. HE systems are grappling to adapt to the power of ICTs
2. Universities required to harness the power of ICTs in their work, including:
 - Improving teaching and learning (technology education)
 - Use cyber-infrastructure to conduct research that serve the rest of humanity (big data; high-performance computing to support big science initiatives)
 - Expanding alternative access to HE, through open distance learning; open courses and MOOCs.
3. Movement for open source, open content; open learning and open technologies to bridge the knowledge divide
4. Private HE providers are beginning to use ICTs to meet the HE demand, particularly in Africa.



TREND 6: Internationalisation

1. Fierce competition for a mobile global student and academic talent. HE systems internationalise to:
 - Gain world recognition through ranking systems;
 - Produce marketable graduates;
 - Generate additional income from high fee-paying students; and
 - Generate innovation through entrepreneurship and R&D.
2. Internationalisation pursued for both academic and economic reasons. For example, Australia and Malaysia are positioning their systems to attract Asian students
3. 2014 OECD- the number of students enrolled outside their country of citizenship has risen from **0.8** million in 1975 to **4.5** million in 2012.
4. Africa has been a net exporter of students and academic staff to other HE systems (US, UK etc.)



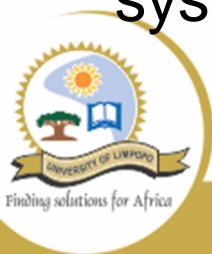
TREND 7: Transformation

1. Access and success challenges;
2. Institutional cultures;
3. Academic profession;
4. Governance of institutions;
5. Differentiation of the HE sector;
6. Improving the effectiveness of curricula for contemporary conditions:
 - breadth of subject matter
 - multilingualism
 - the literacies: academic, quantitative, information/ICT
 - education for responsible citizenship
 - experiential and service learning
7. Towards equity of access and outcomes



RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Develop and strengthen a diverse post-school education system and create a policy certainty about the role of private Higher Education Institutions
2. Create a University-Government Forum to propose funding options for HEIs, beyond the DHET funding allocations
3. Scale up the implementation of a New Generations of Academics Programme and other DST/NRF initiatives
4. Harness ICT to improve teaching and research activities in HEIs
5. Internationalize our university curricula and attract fee-paying international students to our shores.
6. Accelerate the creation of a differentiated higher education system



CONCLUSION

1. The seven trends present serious challenges for both serving and aspirant leaders of Higher Education Institutions
2. Each institution needs to identify how these trends impact on its performance – and mitigate the risks and seize opportunities
3. Individual leaders in departments, schools, faculties / and support service functions must reflect on how these trends impact on their work
4. The financial implications of these trends on universities not always fully appreciated.
5. Scenarios: (i) **Skorokoro**; (ii) **Muvhango**; (iii) **State-owned universities**; and (iv) **Sunshine**
6. **A more sector-wide approach is necessary to address these challenges.**



The Future

Two possible futures:

Future 1:

1. Chronically under-funded system by all indicators
2. Over-enrolled system
3. Productive academic workforce exiting the system in large numbers
4. System unable to produce high quality graduates; knowledge and scholarship
5. System's contribution to national and global development undermined

Future 2:

Adequately funded system able to meet the development needs of South Africa and our continent.





THANK YOU