

▼ Higher Education in Russia:
History of Complex
Transformation

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Post-Soviet transformation in the focus of HE research



- Huisman J., A. Smolentseva, I. Froumin (eds.) **25 Years of Transformations of Higher Education Systems in Post-soviet Countries**, 2017
- I. Froumin, Y. Kuzminov, D. Platonova (eds.) **White Book of the Russian Higher Education**, 2018
- Oleksiyenko (et al.) **International status anxiety and higher education: Soviet legacy in China and Russia** (2018)
- Y. Kuzminov and M. Yudkevich. **Higher Education in Russia**. J, 2022
- M. Chankseliani, I. Fedyukin, I. Froumin. **Building Research Capacity at Universities: Insights from Post-Soviet Countries.**, 2022 (forthcoming)

- **HSE Institute of Education team:**
D.Platonova, O. Leshukov, E. Terentyev, S. Malinovsky, E. Shibanova, A. Klyagin...

If we know the initial conditions and forces, we can predict an object trajectory.
Soviet HE as a starting point



Comrades, move ahead, towards the top of the knowledge mountain for our people proud being of us

Initial conditions – Soviet model

1. “Quasi-corporate” higher education

- Planning agency regulates supply and demand
- Mandatory job placement
- Narrow specialization of HEIs and links with industry
- Research mission is isolated
- Highly centralized

2. Social and human engineering globally

- Moral, social and ideological training
- Restricted access combined with affirmative actions (affirmative action Empire)
- Russification as the part of modernization
- Building international community of socialist youth

Four driving forces

- Demand for expanding access: expansion is the change and the driving force (Cantwell et al, 2018; Carnoy et al, 2013)
- Pragmatic modernization (westernization, globalization, not policy borrowing)
- Nation-state (global leader) building
- Further development of the Soviet model

Different layers of the vertically differentiated HE system respond to different drivers and have different logic of changes

Periods of transformation

1990-2000:

- “flush of educational freedom” (Kaser, Phillips, 1992)
- reactive - ‘policy of non-policy’
- new stakeholders – households, business, private providers
- crucial role of academic entrepreneurs

2000-2006:

- active government policy -

pragmatic westernization
(Bologna, National Exam...)

2006-2014

- institutionalization of vertical differentiation,
- Competitive funding
- Internationalization

2015-2021

- Links with industry
- Research mission
- Moral and civic education
- Export of education



Demand for expansion

Demand for Expansion

One demand in higher education policy (State) was joined by two strong demands



State



Households

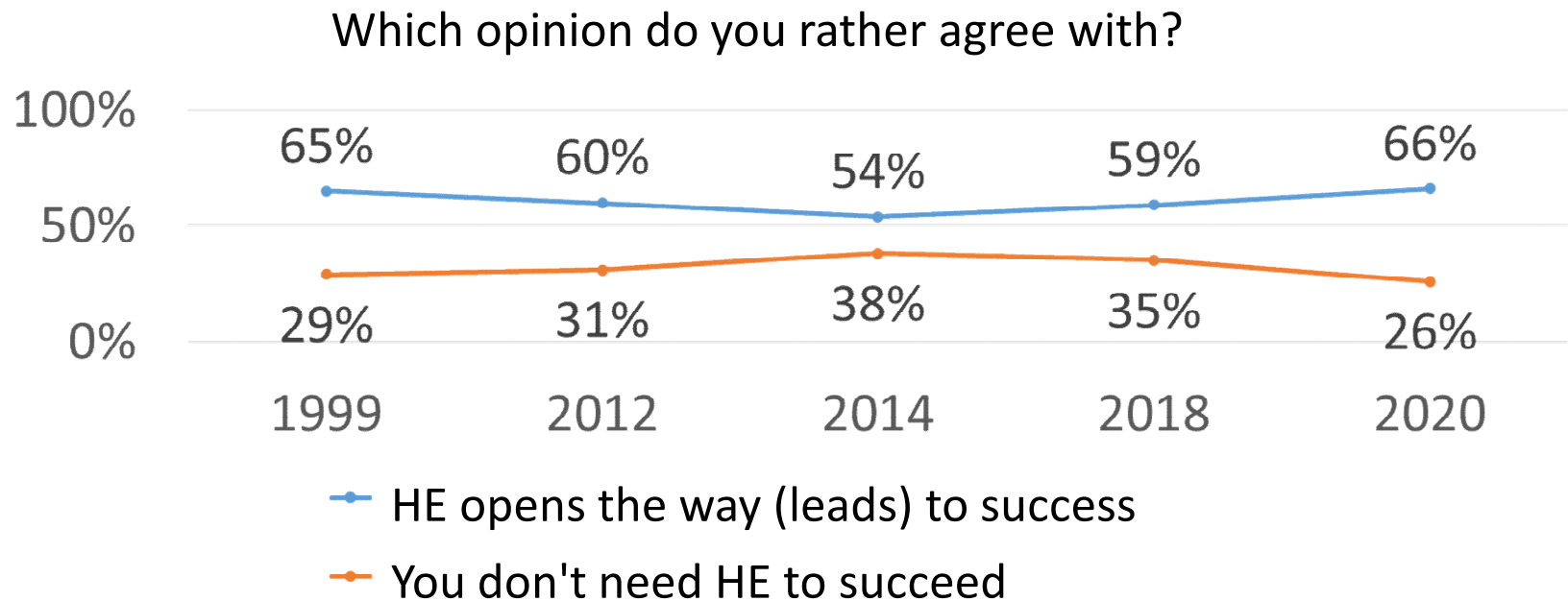


Employers –
private business

The government moved from deficit to wide access :

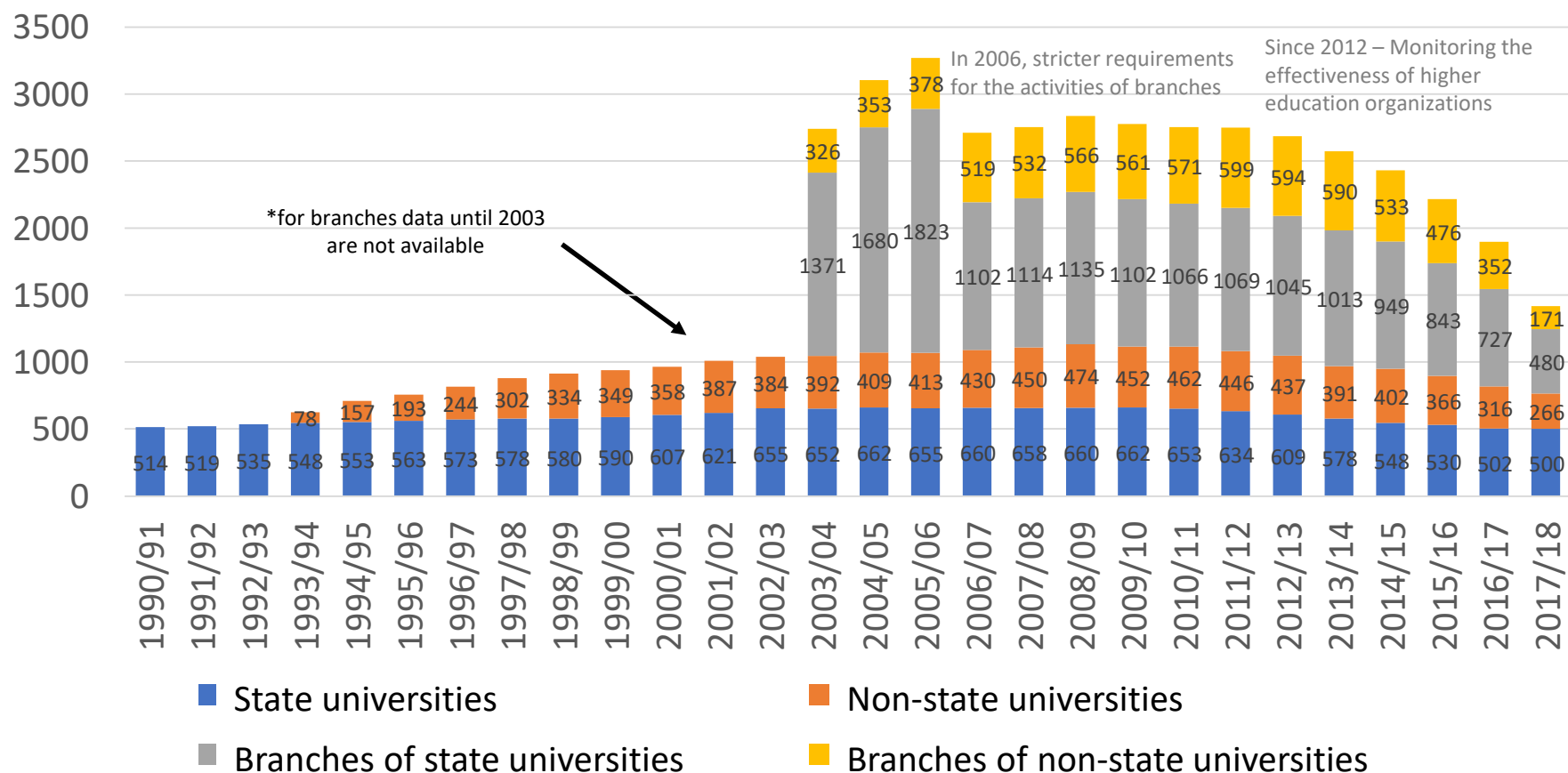
- in 1992 it permitted public institutions to enroll fee-paying students along with state-funded students
- allowed opening private higher education institutions
- new language for “educational services” – students as customers
- increased universities autonomy in enrolling students and use of private money

Higher education – social norm: 66% of respondents think that HE is a key for life success



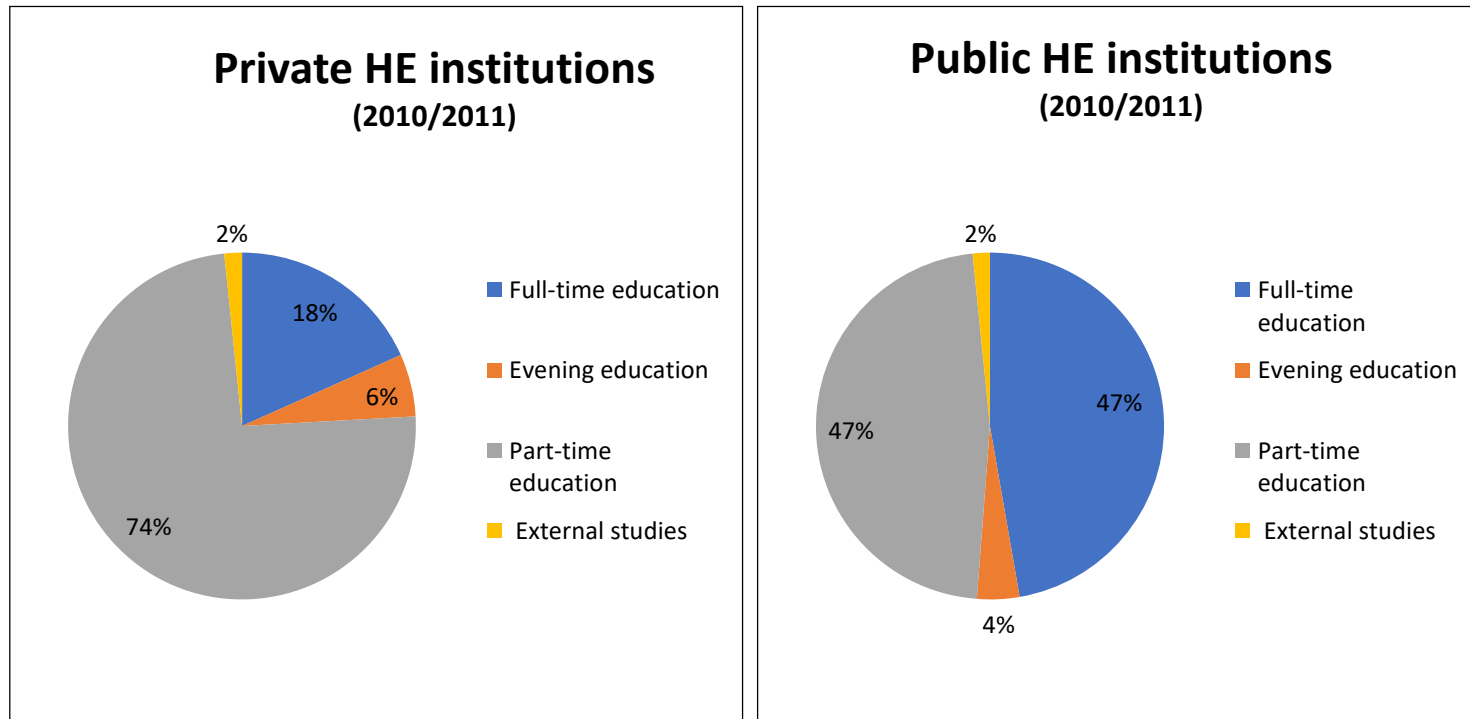
Number of universities and branches

Number of universities and branches in Russia in 1991-2017 (at the beginning of the academic year)



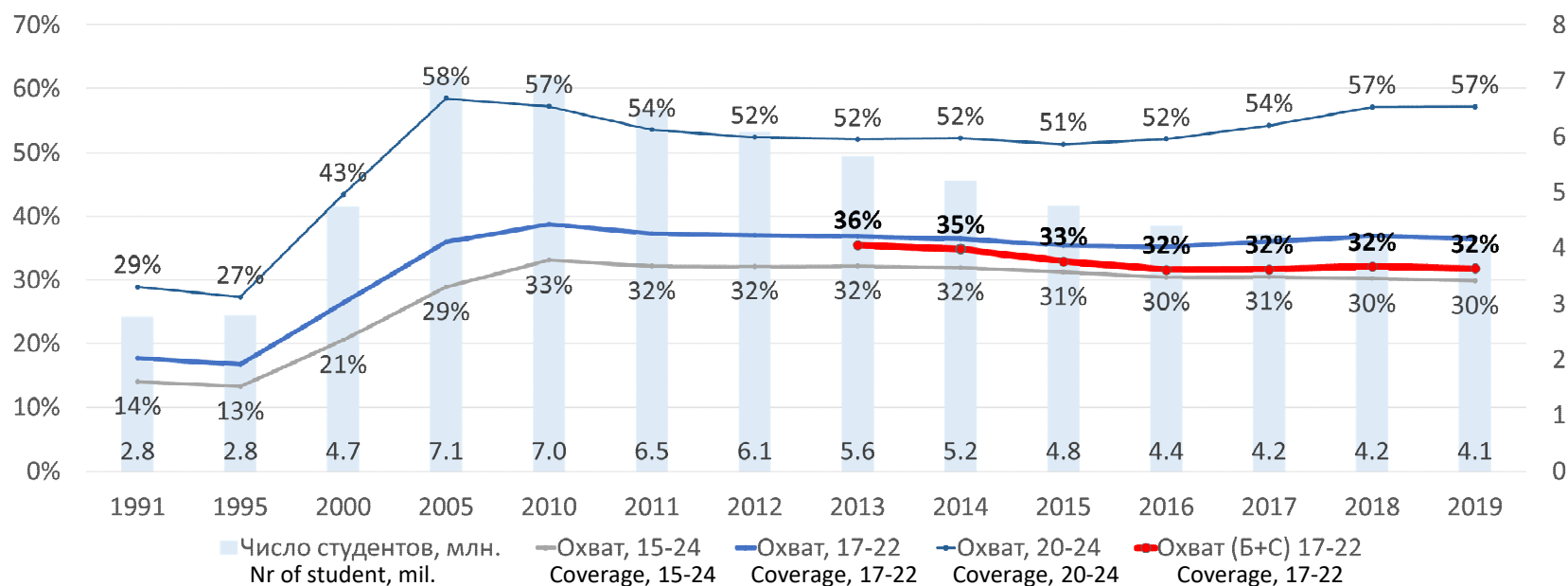
The Development of Private Higher Education Sector

A vast majority of private universities has been providing education in socioeconomics and humanities and concentrated more on part-time education in comparison with public universities



Private universities (with a few exceptions) failed to become central players in the market of higher education

High participation system



Did the expansion lead to greater equality of educational opportunities?

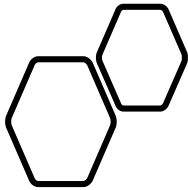
Elite universities remain extremely unequal

General access has risen

Admission to the university of children from various social groups, %, 1963-2013 (Novosibirsk region)

Social groups by social and professional status of parents and place of residence	1963	1983	1994	2004	2013
Workers, peasants	29	23	36	43	61
Employees	41	41	58	59	76
Small entrepreneurs	-	-	-	70	85
Specialists	55	68	76	83	87
Leaders	63	73	75	88	93
Regional centers	51	61	77	-	84
Medium-sized cities	49	43	73	-	69
Small towns	35	33	51	-	69
Villages	23	27	43	-	65

Konstantinovskiy D.L. Expansion of Higher Education and Consequences for Social Inequality (The Case of Russia). Higher Education. 2017. #74 (2), pp. 201-220. DOI: 10.1007/s10734-016-0043-7

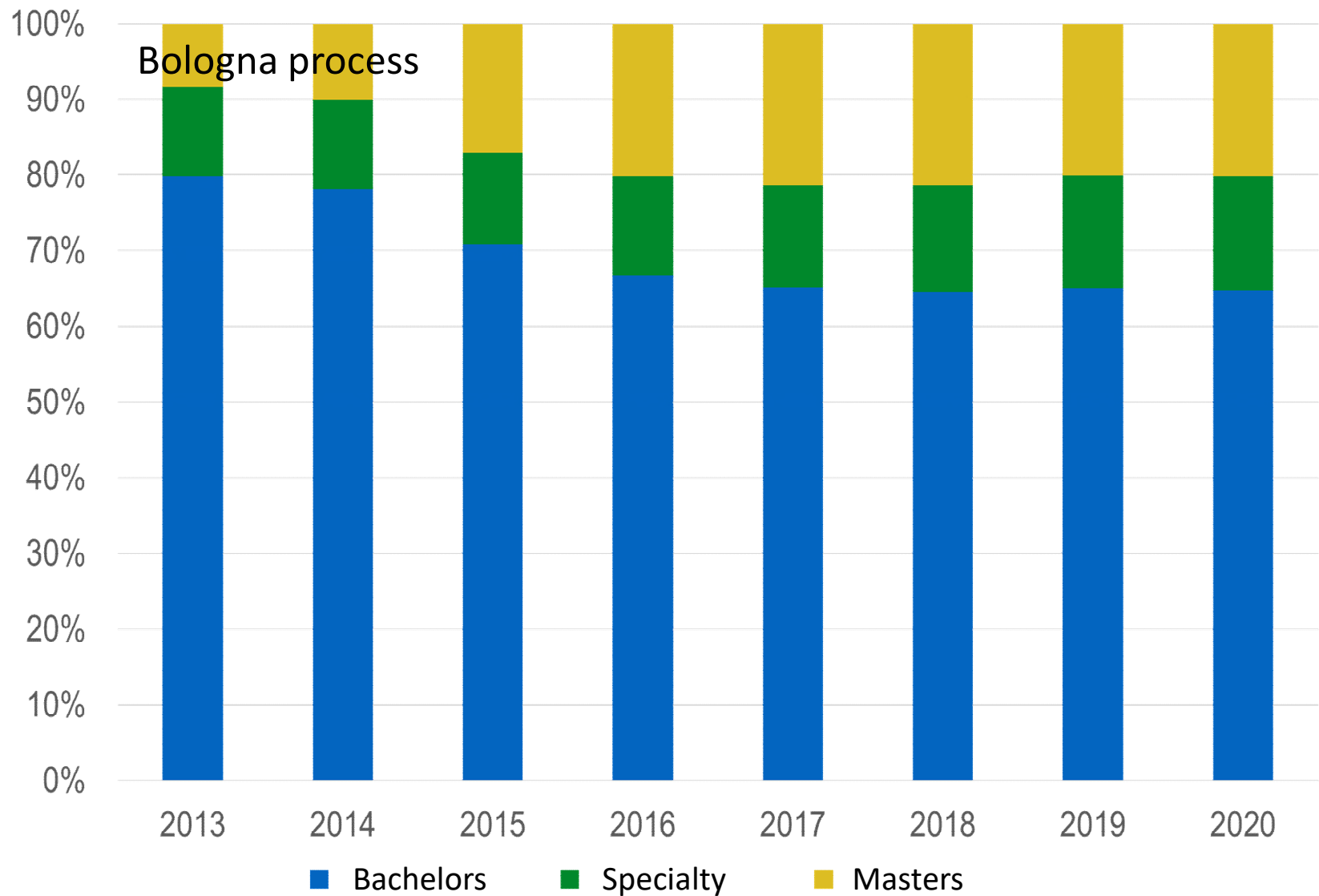


Pragmatic Globalization
(westernization) –
adaptation to “normal”
market economy

Main “pragmatic” reforms

- National entrance exam
- Bologna process
- Doctoral education reform
- Growing vertical stratification and decreasing horizontal differentiation
- Research mission returned to universities
- Liberal reform of higher education financing (per capita, competitive funding)

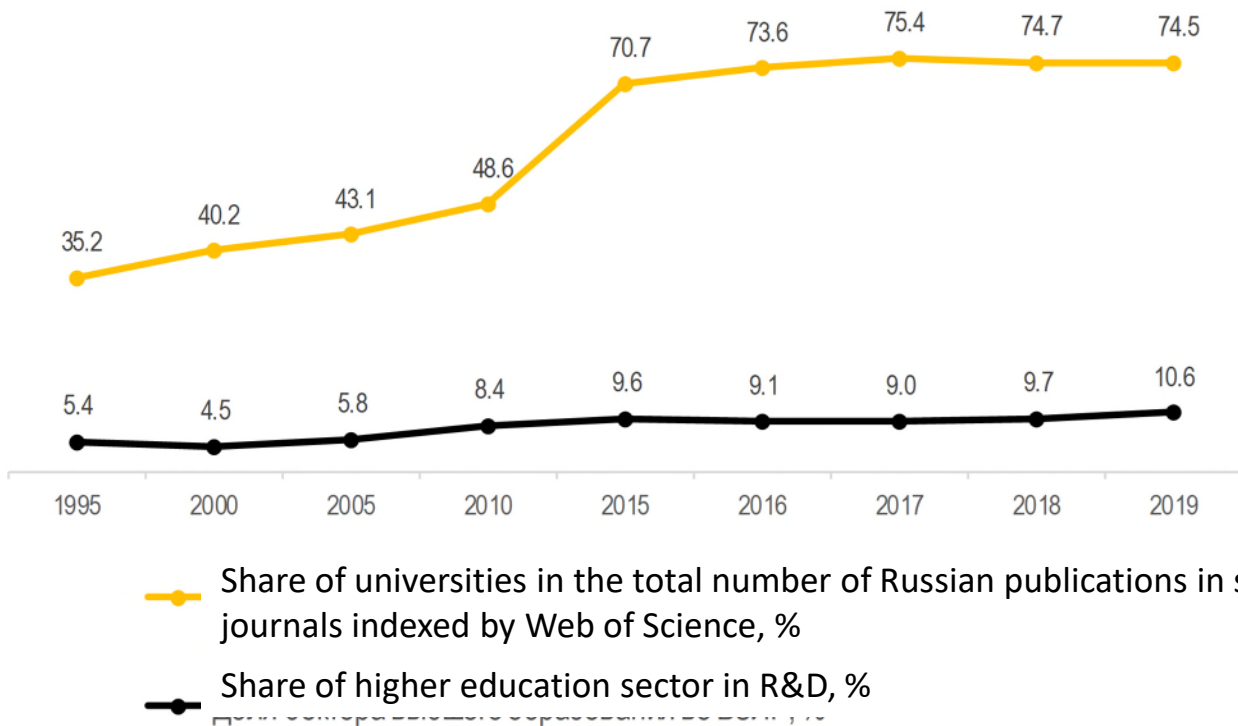
Impact of Bologna - Student admission structure in universities of the Russian Federation in 2013-2020



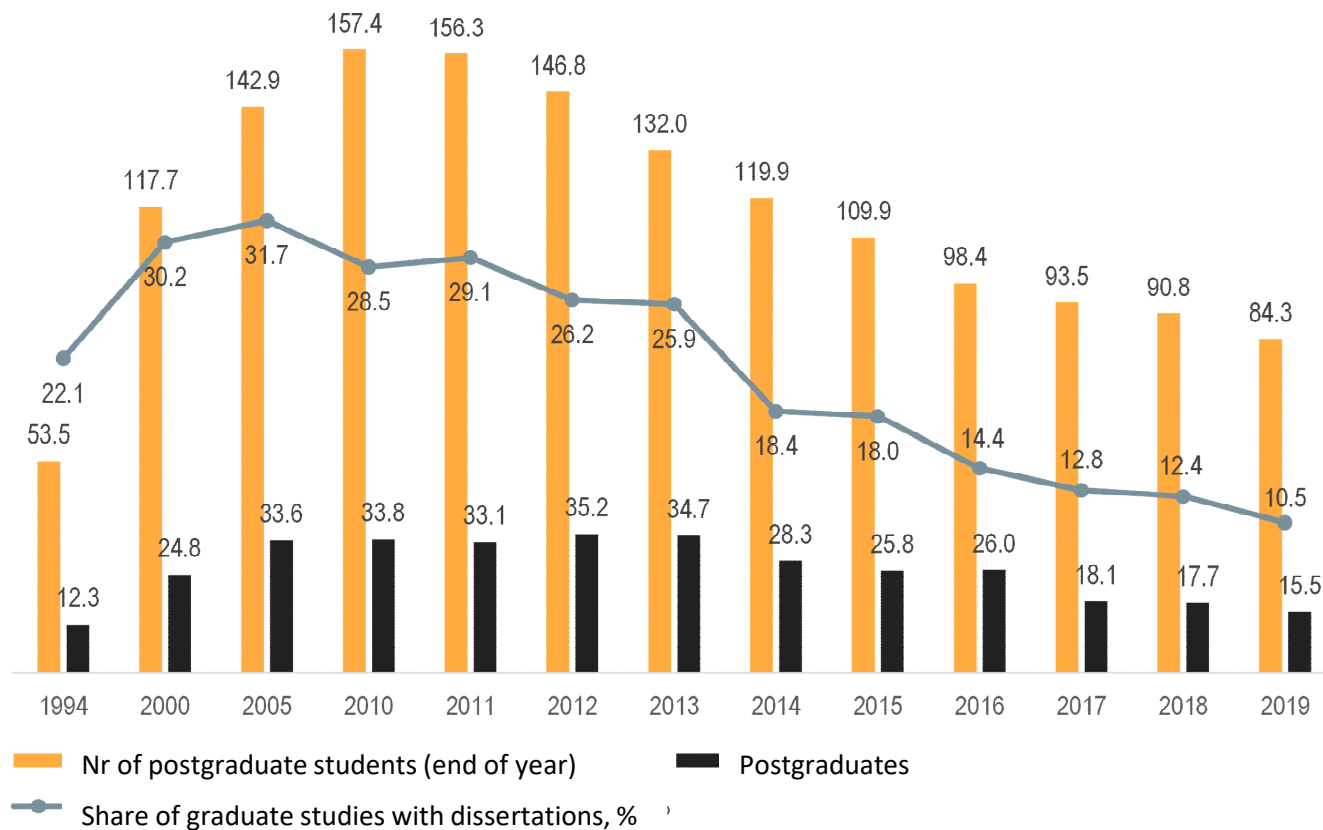
Growing vertical stratification and creation of elite sector

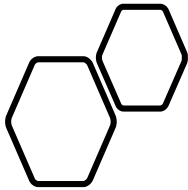
- Federal universities
- National research universities
- Project 5/100
- Project “Priority 2030”

The role of HE in research production



Example of “cargo-cult” in pragmatic westernization – new doctoral education





Make Russia great again –
the role of higher education
in international positioning

Russia as a global leader in science and technology, in geopolitics

- Global positioning (including ranking)
- International students (talents and soft power)
- International researchers

“Excellence Initiative” (Competitiveness initiative) – May 2012

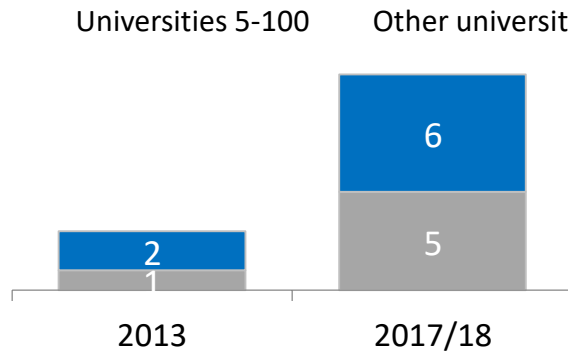
Russian President’s Decree “To implement the program aimed at increasing the international competitiveness of Russian universities.”

The performance indicator – 5 Russian universities in top 100 of major international university rankings by 2020”

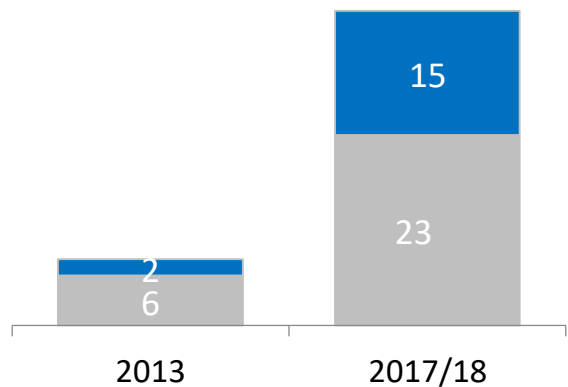
Allocation of funding –\$30 million annually per university (15 universities in total) for institutional strategy implementation in 2013-2015 (expected increase in 2016-2020)

Russian universities in international rankings (by subjects)

Number of universities in top-100 QS, THE, ARWU*

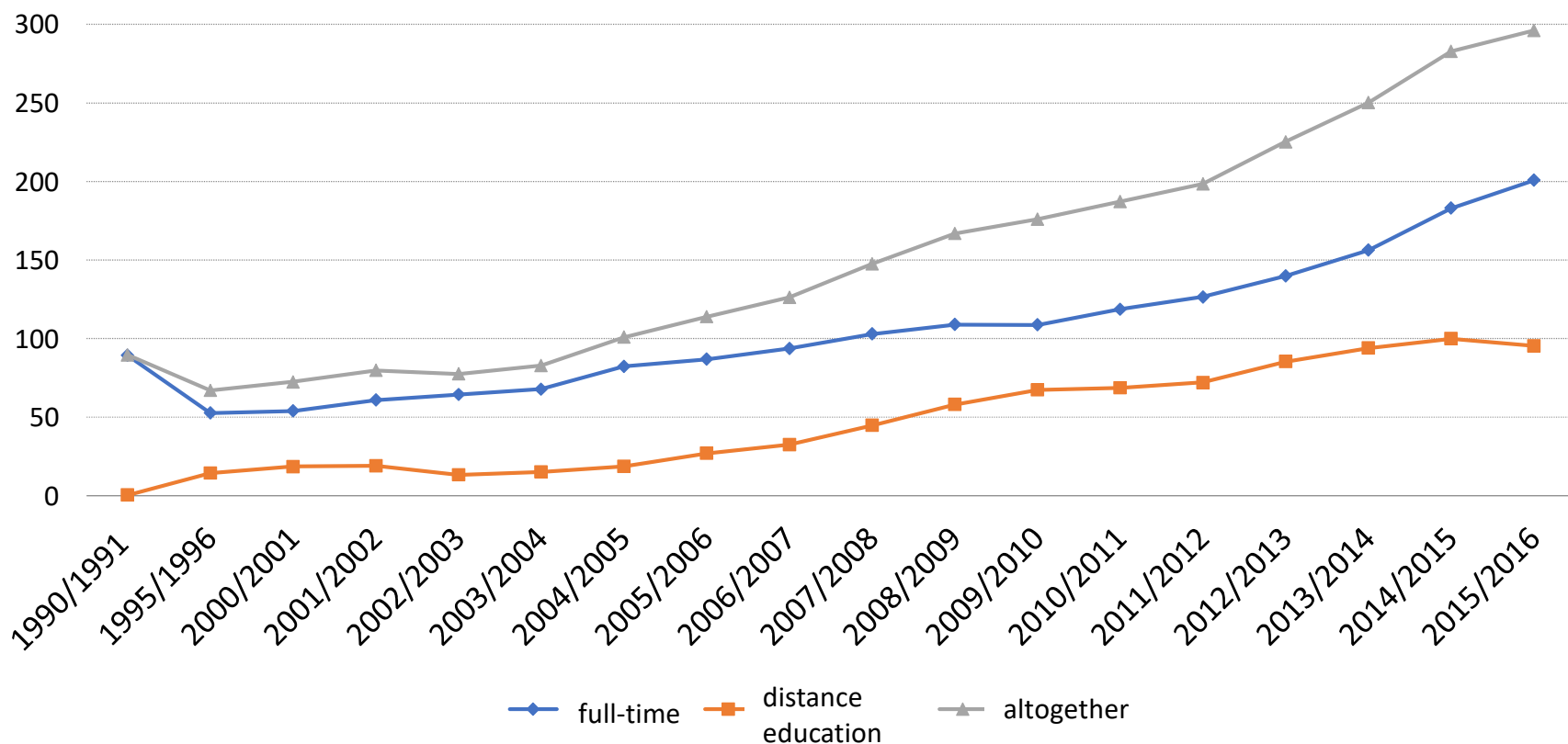


Number of positions in top 100 QS, THE, ARWU*



Export of education – government efforts

Number of international students grew twofold in 10 years



Source: IIE, Project Atlas, 2017

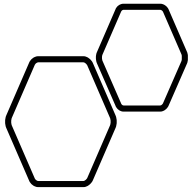
70% of international students – from post-Soviet countries

Country	2008 / 2009	2018 / 2019
1. Kazakhstan	13 848	43 318
2. China	17 046	36 466
3. Turkmenistan	2 377	30 090
4. Uzbekistan	3 722	18 557
5. Tajikistan	2 239	17 241
6. India	5 146	15 166
7. Ukraine	4 300	11 248
8. Kyrgyzstan	1 391	6 668
9. Egypt	333	5 880
10. Belarus	3 554	5 673

International branch campuses in post-Soviet countries (Chankseliani, 2020)

Table 1. Branch campuses of foreign higher educational institutions in former Soviet countries by the origin of home institution and years of establishment.

Country	Number of IBCs	Home institution located in (number of IBCs)	Years of establishment
Armenia	6	Russia (6)	1996–2015
Azerbaijan	2	Russia (2)	2008–2015
Belarus	2	Russia (2)	1998–2003
Georgia	1	United States (1)	2015
Estonia	0		
Kazakhstan	7	Russia (7)	1993–2001
Kyrgyzstan	6	Russia (6)	1996–2009
Latvia	2	Russia (1), Vatican City (1)	2009
Lithuania	1	Poland (1)	2006
Moldova	4	Russia (4)	1997–2005
Russia	2	Sweden (1), United States (1)	1991–1997
Tajikistan	3	Russia (3)	2009–2013
Turkmenistan	0		
Ukraine	3	Russia (3)	1999–2003
Uzbekistan	8	Russia (4), India (1), Italy (1), Singapore (1), South Korea (1), United Kingdom (1)	2001–2017



Soviet model restoration and development

New Links Between Universities and Industry

The Idea:

Possibility for financing projects (the amount of 100 million roubles per year + enterprise investing its own funds to the project in the amount not less than the full amount of the subsidy)

Results:

- in 2012 2488 new jobs were created, including jobs for young people - 1484.
- students and postgraduates involved in the research activities of the project amounted to 4319, among them young scientists – 1733; students – 1868; graduates - 718.
- the involvement of the employers in mobilization of curriculum

Employability in a new context

- Targeted enrollment - students enter university on condition that they will work in particular industry or even in particular organization after graduation
- Regulation of practical training
- Incentives for joint department and research groups
- Career services

Moral and civic (patriotic) education

- Vice-rectors in charge of moral and civic education
- Government programs and funding to support civic and broad extracurricular engagement
- Control students' political activism
- Selection and nurturing of future leaders
- Nation-wide students' organizations

Current conflicts between “tradition” and “western influence”

- Replace national exam with university-based exams
- Restore mandatory job-placement
- Replace dual degree system with traditional “specialist diploma”
- Reduce university autonomy in curriculum and assessment
- Replace structured “taught doctorate” with traditional apprenticeship approach
- Replace international ranking and publication with national systems

Conclusions

Inevitable conflicts between pragmatic modernization (westernization), new nationalism and traditions

Modernization based on new slogans and regulations without sufficient resources and attention to the path dependence could become fruitless cargo cult

Expansion without a focus on equality could create public distrust in the quality and impact of higher education