

What future for Higher Education Internationalisation in turbulent times?

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Vienna, November, 2018

Predicting the future on the basis of the Past

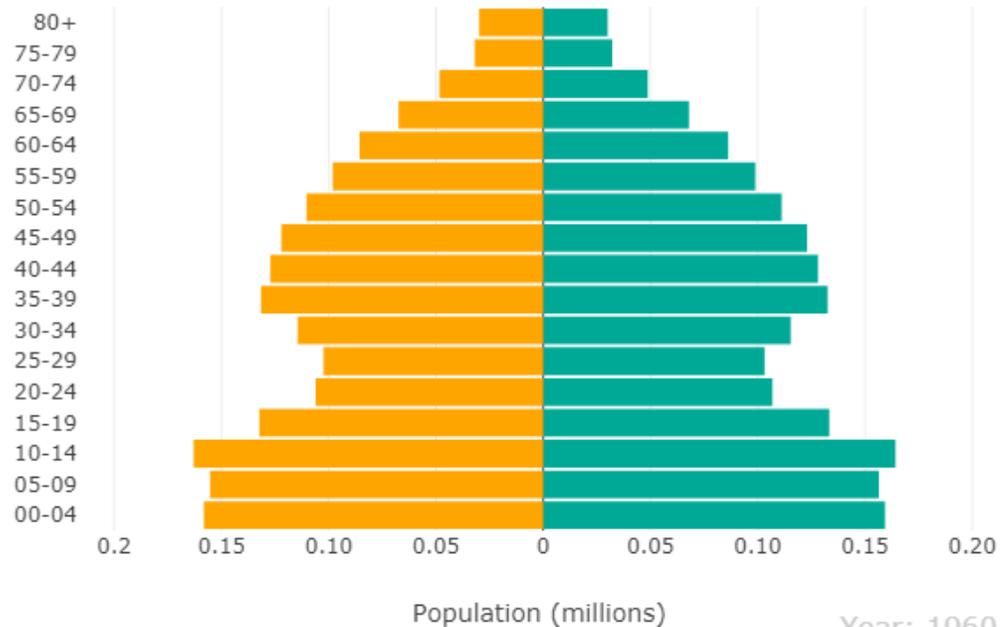
- Post World War II – turbulent political context; commitment to build peace on a foundation of international understanding through cooperation in higher education, an era of strong multilateralism - UN, UNESCO, and IAU etc.
- Initiatives such as the US Fulbright program, Title VI program and others – using international higher education to pursue national needs – domestic capacity building for security, expertise for diplomacy, outreach for strategic alliances
- In late 1950s the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship program – to build closer ties within Commonwealth in post-colonial era, Colombo Plan in Asia
- International education (not internationalisation yet): languages, cultures and traditions, human resource development for socio-economic progress and capacity building
- In Europe, academic mobility – a central building block of European integration – creating the most competitive region in the world
- International education – taking ever more diverse approaches serving to further global solidarity, enlightened self-interest, peace and understanding, becoming a value in itself

Predicting the future on what we know today – a few numbers

- ▶ The number of students enrolled in HE is forecast to double globally by 2025 to more than 260 million.
- ▶ Over the next decade, there will be more than 8 million internationally mobile tertiary students compared with 5 million today, and only 0.8 million in 1975.
- ▶ The number of branch campuses has increased from approximately 84 in 2000 to 300+ today;
- ▶ 13 million students study in online cross-border arrangements (Mok et al, 2017, 6)
- ▶ In 2012 a 3% or more average annual growth in demand for international higher education was predicted for the years between 2005 and 2025 in Africa, the Middle East, Asia, Central America and South America (Bob Godard, 2012)
- ▶ The demographic outlook is significantly different in various nations

Predicting the future on what we know today – tracking demography

Norway population by age and sex composition

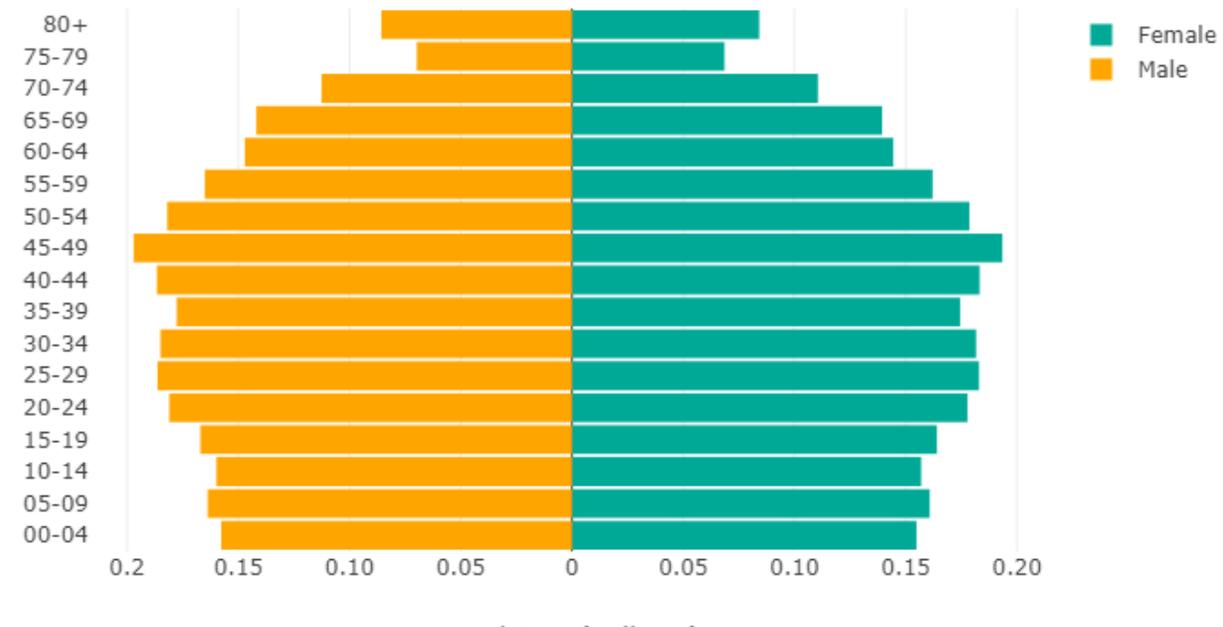


Year: 1960

Play

1960 1965 1970 1975 1980 1985 1990 1995 2000 2005 2010 2015

Norway population by age and sex composition



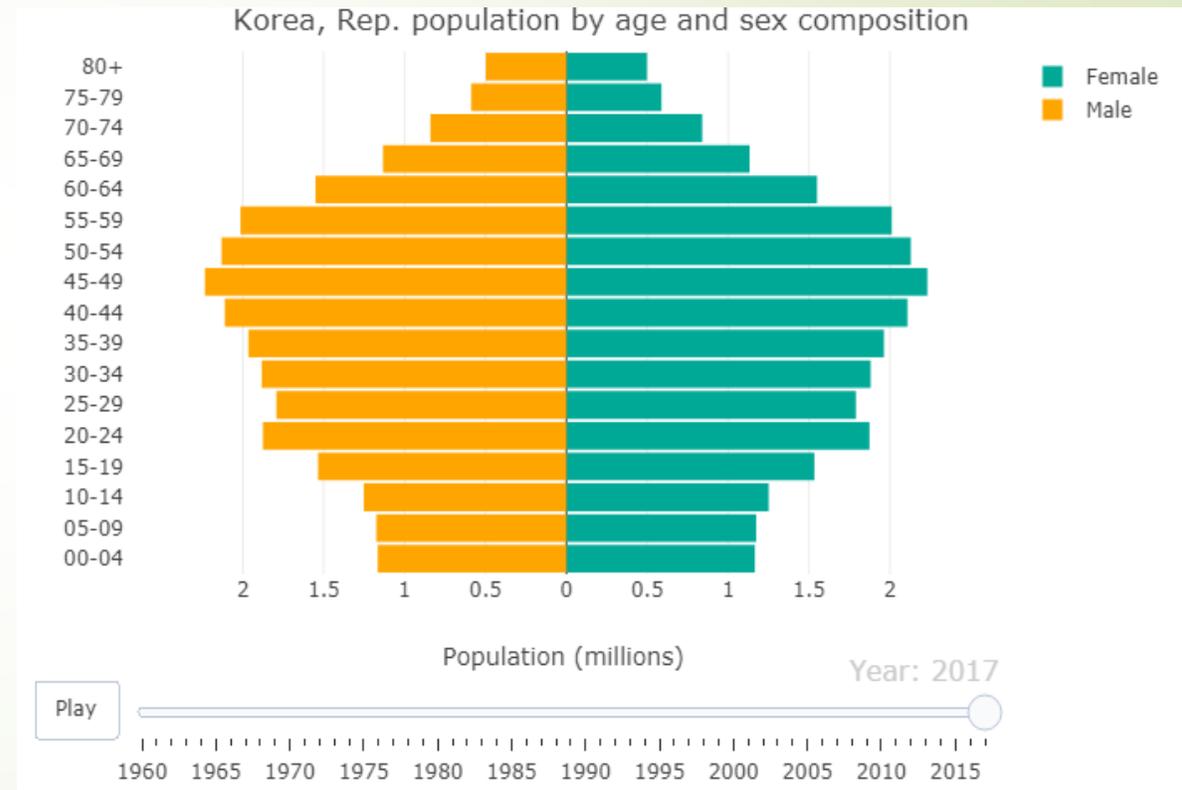
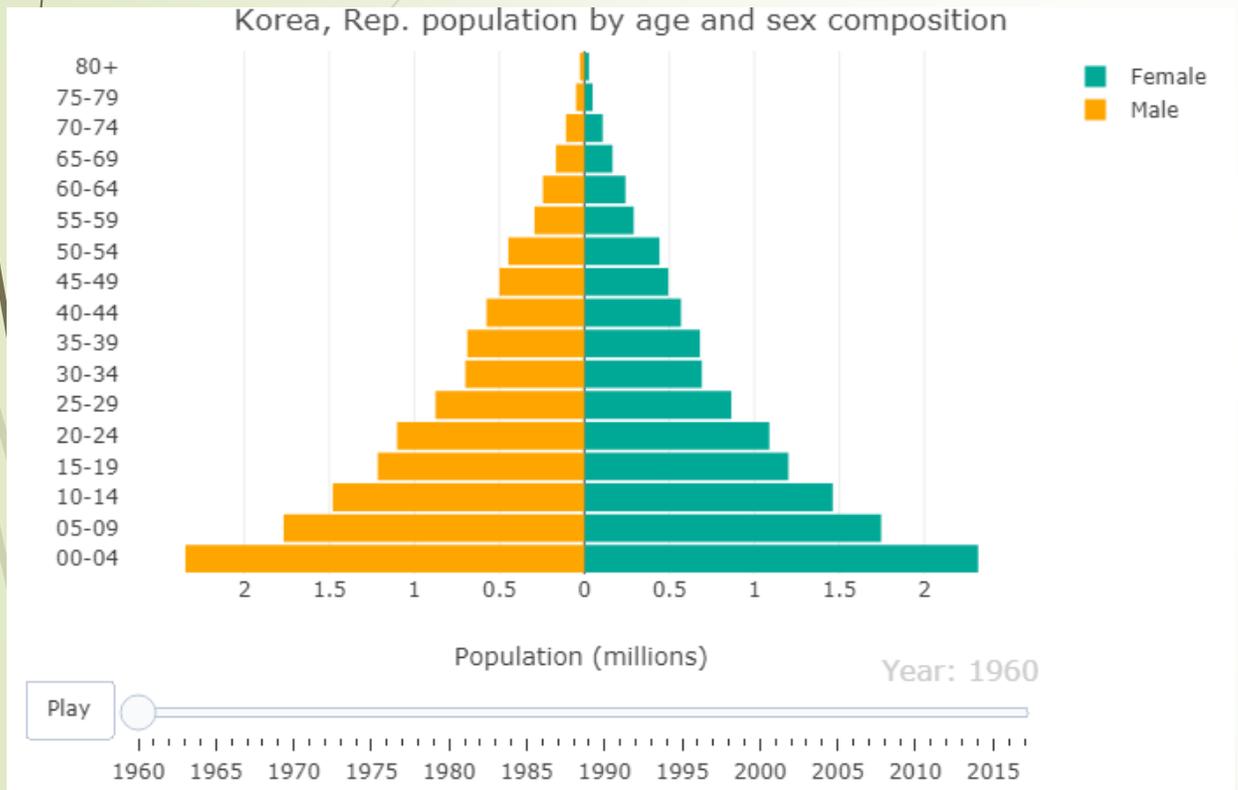
Population (millions)

Year: 2017

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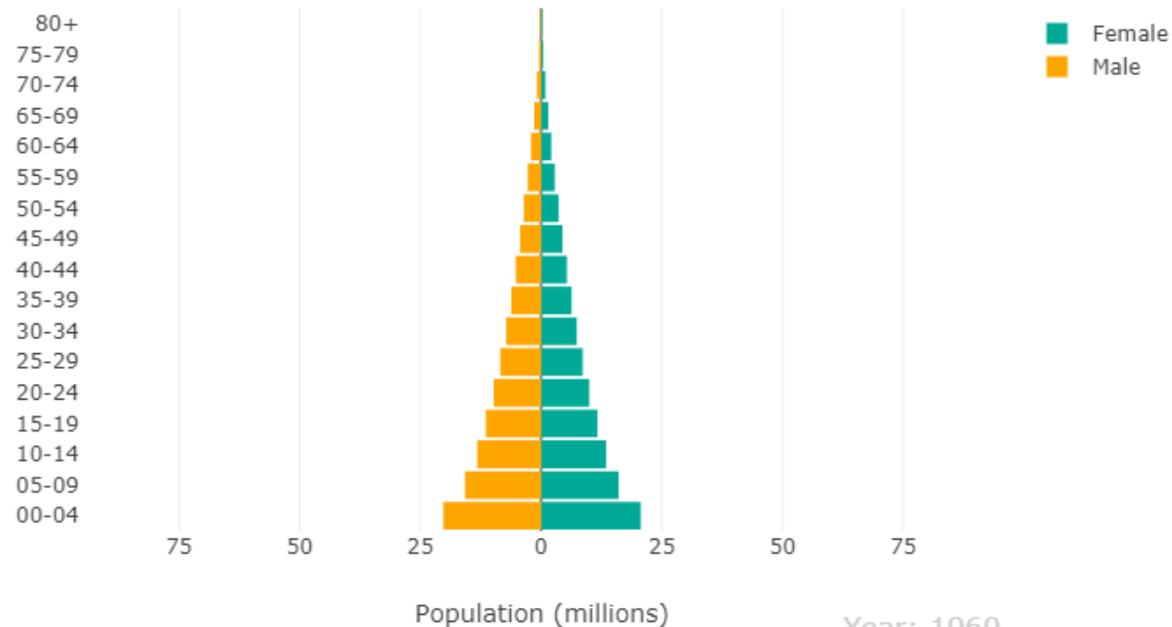
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Predicting the future on what we know today – tracking demography



Predicting the future on what we know today – tracking demography

Sub-Saharan Africa population by age and sex composition

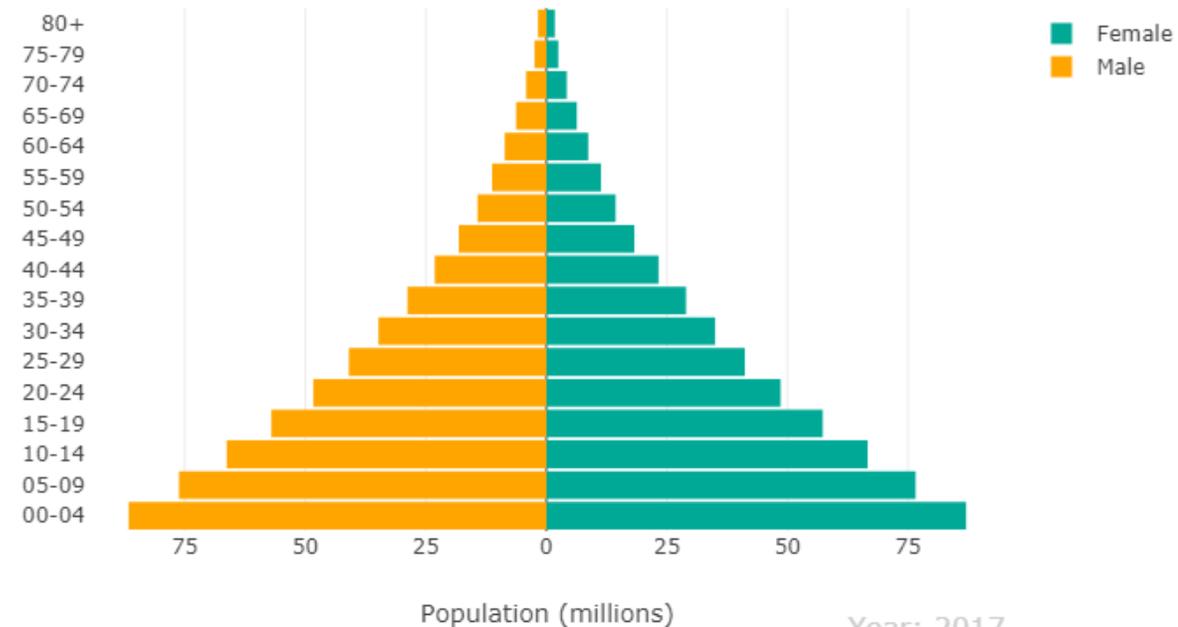


Year: 1960

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1960 1965 1970 1975 1980 1985 1990 1995 2000 2005 2010 2015

Sub-Saharan Africa population by age and sex composition



Population (millions)

Year: 2017

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1960 1965 1970 1975 1980 1985 1990 1995 2000 2005 2010 2015

Predicting the future on the basis of **Today**

- Again, a shifting landscape in geopolitical, economic, and cultural terms – no longer a bi-polar or unipolar system, a highly interdependent and fast changing multilateral and globalized world
- A political climate in disarray – nationalism, authoritarianism, protectionism, populism, anti-western sentiment, rise in xenophobia and racism, unprecedented migrations of people, religious fanaticism
- New 'actors' wielding major political and economic power, instant and uncontrolled communications, value of knowledge, expertise and thus higher education increasingly questioned and denigrated
- Technological advances (AI, robotics) making future of work and the labour market uncertain and unpredictable
- **Nature and rationales of international education / internationalization – transformed - more central 'instruments' in international relations among nations and regions – a trade industry, a tool for exerting political will, soft power, a means to assert national interests, a path to economic competitiveness, a way of securing the best brains - a scarce resource for knowledge creation capacity in the future, a sign of excellence and prestige**

Predicting the future on the basis of **Today**

- Simultaneously, a questioning of internationalization – is it failing to achieve its goals?
- Criticism that internationalization is only international student recruitment and mobility, export of international programs or branch campuses – a commercially driven set of transactions and processes
- Concern with dominance of English language and related hegemony of the Anglo-Saxon model of HE, fear of loss of cultural identity, too much competition rather than collaboration, fear of piracy and cyber stealing including by international students and researchers
- **Hence, a renewed emphasis on internationalization of the curriculum, on inclusive internationalization to avoid 'elitism' and to broaden access to all; more focus on preparing domestic students for societal diversity**
- **A growing concern with fairness and the protection of fundamental academic values such as academic freedom and autonomy, but also integrity and ethics and ethical conduct including in all internationalization activities**

Predicting tomorrow for internationalization – future is too unpredictable and turbulent

- Post WWII – international education = response to or prevention of threats to security
- Current pressing threat to humanity's security = failure to narrow gaps, create more equity, solve global challenges; failure to achieve the 17 UN Millennium Development Goals
- This is a global responsibility and higher education must be a central actor
- International education brings context and expertise, demonstrates that learning from others has no boundaries; raises awareness that we are all neighbors sharing a single planet
- SDGs are highly inter-connected, cross all boundaries – and offer a new global framework for international education to again build bridges and act as the glue between knowledge systems and disciplines both in teaching and research



Higher Education Internationalisation of tomorrow?

- **More central to learning, research and outreach than ever – internationalization as service to society as well**
- **Not a luxury for the few, but a necessity for all**
- **A greater focus on what and how students learn - curriculum and the academic rationale at the centre of the efforts**
- **Diversification of partner countries and institutions, focus on emerging and soon to be emerging regions**
- **New forms of collaboration (without mobility) using technology to broaden access, orientated to solving global challenges and while not ignoring the challenges of local diversity and its potential as an intercultural resource at home**

Higher Education Internationalisation of tomorrow?

- Orientating international cooperation to solving global challenges, while not ignoring the challenges of local diversity and its potential as an intercultural resource at home (rather than a source of division)
- Set aside fierce competition; in higher education others are not rivals or enemies
- Contribute, at home and internationally, to narrowing gaps between rich and poor, those who know and those who do not
- By learning, analysis and a dialogue in higher education - a safe space - help avoid 'Us and Them' feelings that bring fear and hate at home and globally.

Thank you for listening

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