



Decolonising Knowledge Production and Utilisation

Global University Rankings and the Higher Education Sector

David McCoy

International Institute for Global Health

United Nations University

Colonialism

Domination – Subjugation – Exploitation

Misappropriation – Extraction

Resources - natural, human, financial, intangible

Colonialism

Domination – Subjugation – Exploitation

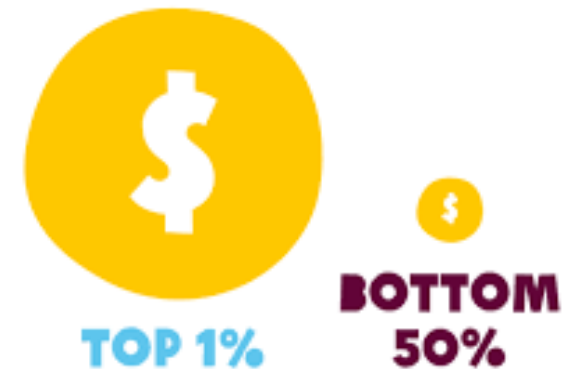
Misappropriation – Extraction

Neocolonialism

Global Financial and Corporate Colonialism



Since 1995, the top 1% have captured nearly 20 times more of global wealth than the bottom 50% of humanity.³



Global University Rankings



Several rankers

Increasing number and diversity of rankings

Increasingly influential



Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU)

Criterion	Definition
Illustrious Alumni (10%)	Number of alumni who have won Nobel Prizes and Fields Medals
Illustrious Staff (20%)	Number of staff who have won Nobel Prizes and Fields Medals
Highly Cited Researchers (20%)	Number of highly cited researchers identified by Clarivate Analytics: individuals who have published “multiple highly-cited papers ranked within the top 1% by citations” in the Web of Science from 2010-20
Publications in Nature & Science (20%)	Number of articles published in Nature and Science from 2016-20.
Citations (20%)	Number of articles indexed in Science Citation Index-Expanded and Social Science Citation Index in 2020, with some weight given to authorship
Productivity (10%)	Weighted scores of criteria 1-5 divided by the number of FTE staff.

THE World University Rankings

Criterion	Elements
Teaching Performance (30%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 15% for a reputation survey of academics (administered by Elsevier)• 4.5% for staff-to-student ratio• 2.25% for doctoral-to-bachelors ratio• 6% for number of PhDs awarded• 2.25% for the amount of institutional income per faculty member
Research Performance (30%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 18% from a reputation survey of academics (administered by Elsevier)• 6% for research grant funding• 6% for number of papers published in peer-reviewed journals
Citation Impact (30%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Average number of citations garnered by the university's published works
Industry Income (30%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Research income generated from industries divided by the number of FTE academic staff
International Outlook (7.5%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2.5% for international-to-domestic student ratio• 2.5% for international-to-domestic staff ratio• 2.5% for publications with international co-authors

200 WHERE ARE THE WORLD'S 'BEST' UNIVERSITIES LOCATED?

2021 Academic Ranking of World Universities



Two countries - the UK and US - alone make up 41% of the Top 200, compared to a combined total of 20.5% from the regions of Africa, Asia-Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean.



2021 THE World University Rankings



Two countries - the UK and US - alone make up 44% of the Top 200, compared to a combined total of 12.5% from the regions of Africa, Asia-Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean.



World-class Universities? Interrogating the Biases and Coloniality of Global University Rankings

UNU-IIGH Briefing Paper, February 2023



Statement on Global University Rankings

Independent Expert Group (IEG) convened by the United Nations
University International Institute for Global Health



Nine problems

Conceptually invalid

Flawed and non-transparent data and methods

Biased in favour of research, STEM subjects and English

Colonial and inequality-driving

Undermining of sector-wide development

Encourages short-termism

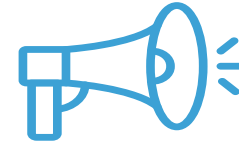
Produces unhealthy reputational anxiety

Extractive and commercially-driven

Conflicts of interest

Statement on Global University Rankings

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Raise awareness
about the problematic aspects and
negative effects of rankings



Adopt better ways
to assess the relative strengths and
weaknesses of universities



Disengage from
practices that are extractive,
exploitative, and non-transparent