

“What is Your Calling?” Soviet Students Experience and Implications for Theory and Practice

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Structure of the Presentation

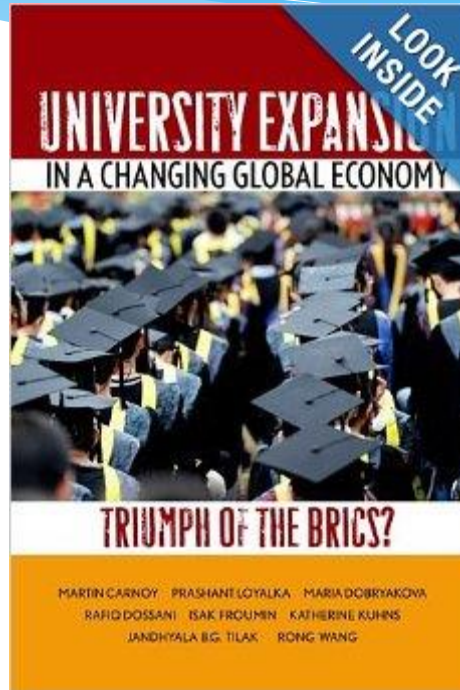
1. The Evolution of Soviet and Russian Higher Education System
2. Marxists View on Students as Junior Vanguard of New Society
3. Implications for the Research Agenda for the Research Universities Students

Main statement

Soviet students' experience as well as the experience of students from military or religious higher education institutions call to look out of the box of “homo economicus”

Research project -1

“Higher education in BRICs”



How universities adapt to new environments?

Research project -2

“Path Dependency in Russian Higher Education”

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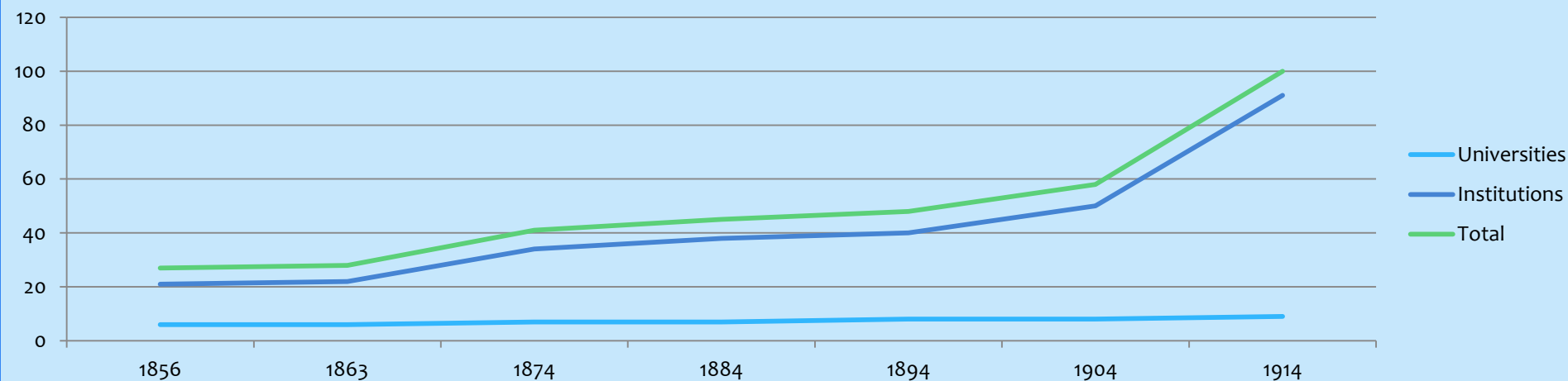
“From “Gosplan” to master-plan”

How the past defines the future of the Russian universities

Higher Education System in pre-Soviet Russia

- * First Russian universities (1724 and 1755)
- * 6 universities – centers of general education and civil service (from 1802-1814)
- * Growth of specialized higher education institutions from 1856 (mainly under the Ministry of Industry)
- * Almost no private institutions

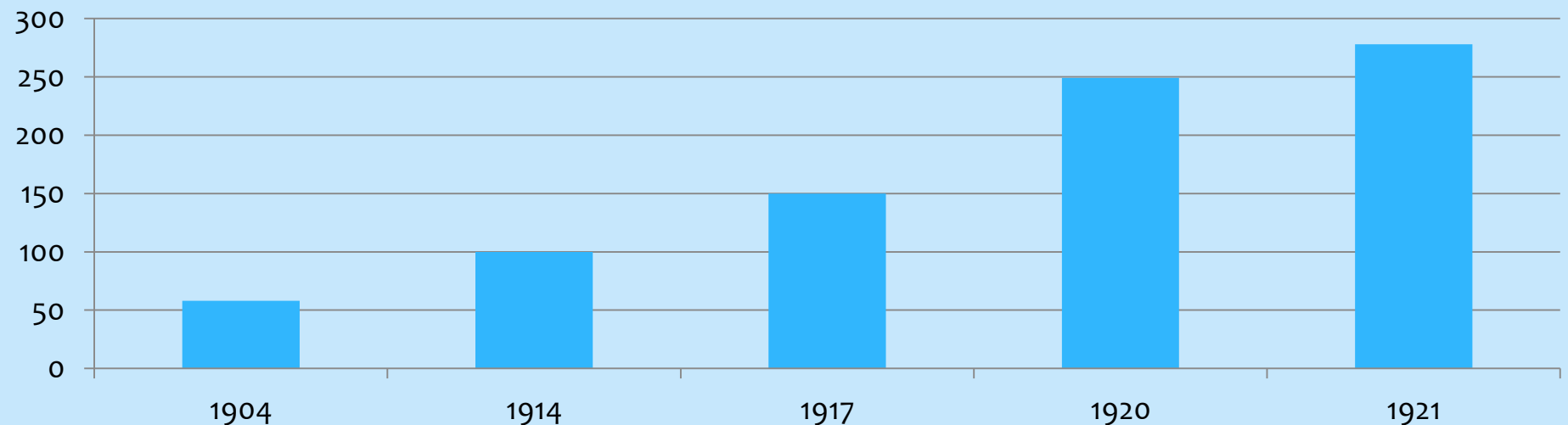
Total number of universities and specialized institutions



Post-revolutionary Higher Education (from 1917 to 1921)

1. Explosion of public demand for higher education
2. Absence of government regulation
3. Private initiative

Number of HEIs



Soviet invention – “quasi-corporate” higher education

V. Lenin: “USSR economic and social system as an one single unified factory”

HE - part of the enterprise as a manpower supply machine

- * Horizontally:
 - * Territorial distribution: all regions have nearly similar institutions
 - * Industrial distribution: HEIs are located near production facilities)
- * Vertically:
 - * HEIs are usually ruled by particular branch ministry
 - * Key functions are centralized: curricula, graduates, job placement
- * Key function in “corporation” – workforce production
 - * Research separated from teaching (industrial research institutes and Academy of Sciences)

THE PURPOSE OF THE CORPORATION – TO BUILD THE PERFECT SOCIETY

The Types of the HE Institutions

1. Regional Economic and Social Infrastructure HEIs

- * Workforce production for regional economy
- * Several universities (usually in Moscow or St.Petersburg performed methodological leadership and staff support of other universities
- * Profiles: Polytechnic, Culture and Arts, Economy and Cooperation, Pedagogical, Agricultural, Medical

2. Industry-specific HEIs (e.g. water transport, oil industry, etc.)

- * focused on labor market of specific industry and often incorporated into the production process (completely in “zavod-vtuz” model)
- * 3 subtypes: (a) **Specialized HEI -parts of soviet-type industry clusters** (Kazan Aviation Institute, Moscow Industrial University-Plant), (b) **Central specialized HEI** (Gubkin Russian State University of Oil and Gas; Moscow Institute of Steel), (c) **Network industrial HEI** (Railway Universities, branch offices of Nuclear University)

3. Classical universities

30-s: the Struggle for Perfect Machine

Year	1929/30	1930/31	1931/32
Number of higher education institutions	152	579	701

- Establishing specialized institutions: (Moscow Animal Technicians Institute was divided into Institute of cattle, Institute of Horse Breeding, Institute of Sheep Breeding, Institute of veterinary)
- Decomposition of multi-profile universities (classical universities) (medical schools became medical universities)
- Curricula reform
 - “*otraslirovanie*” – creating narrow specializations (more than 5000) under 70 sectoral ministries
 - “*vtuzirovanie*” – creating links with the industry (corporate universities)
(David-Fox, 2012)
- Detachment of the *basic* and *industrial* research from universities (Four aviation industrial research institutes were detached from Bauman technical university)

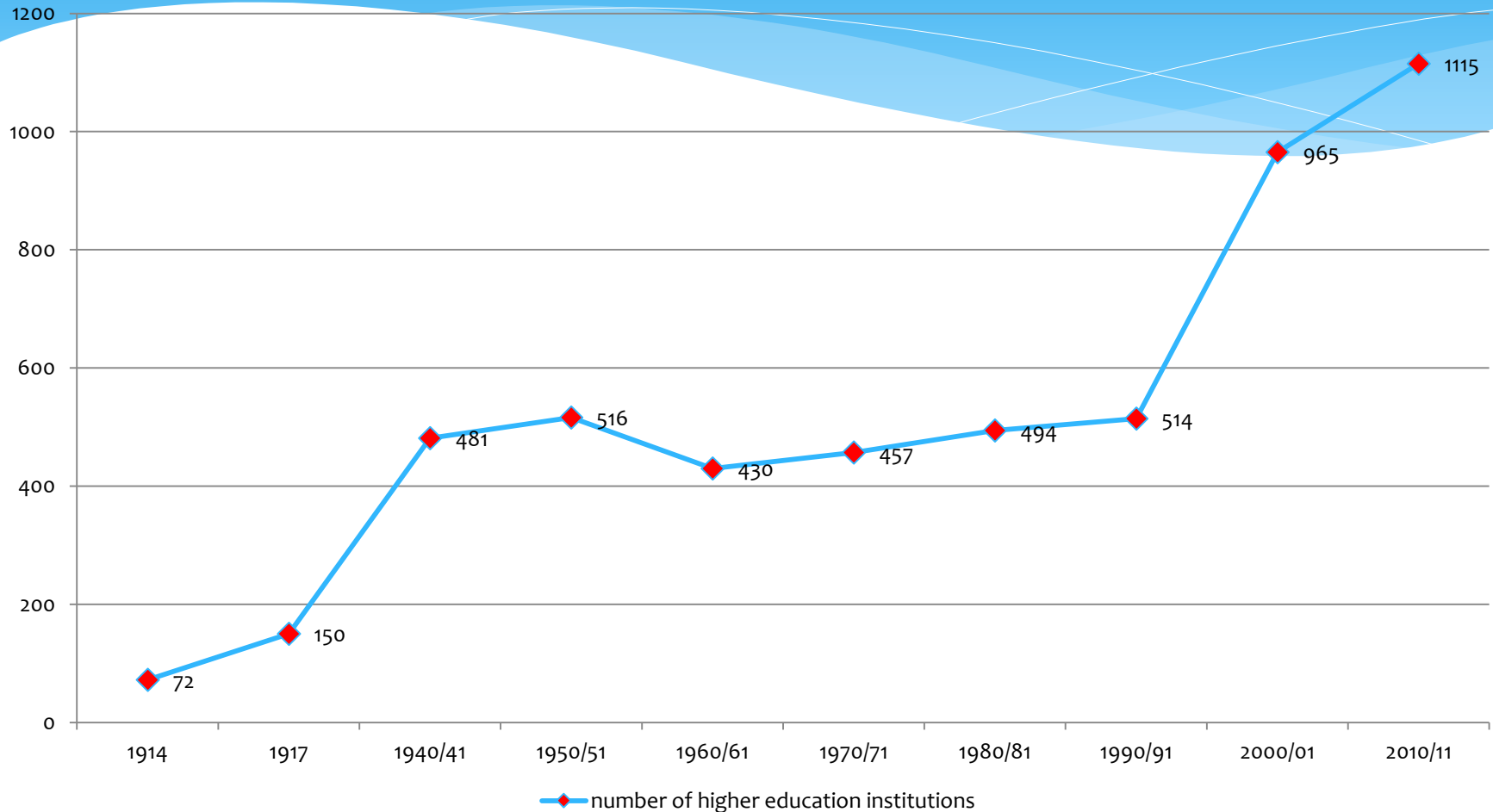
Ideal corporate university model

Specialized universities associated with a single big enterprise:

- * First year – low skilled workplace practice and basic courses
- * Second-third year – middle skilled workplace practice and specialized courses
- * Fourth year – engineering practice and specialized courses
- * Fifth year – industrial project



The structure of higher education in Russia was set up in the late 30's



50s: post-war tuning of the Machine

Start of the Cold war and arms race

- * - significant increase in student numbers: from 797k. to 1497k.
- * - launch of new training areas related primarily to the need of technological advance of defense industry.
- new departments and specialized universities (in Moscow, Tomsk, Novosibirsk, Taganrog) : *wireless engineering, automation, electronics, nuclear technologies, space.*

Targeted development of some regions (e.g. Siberia)

- * → relocation of a number of central universities closer to major production facilities in the late 50-s

How the Machine worked?

Complete state control model, market is completely absent

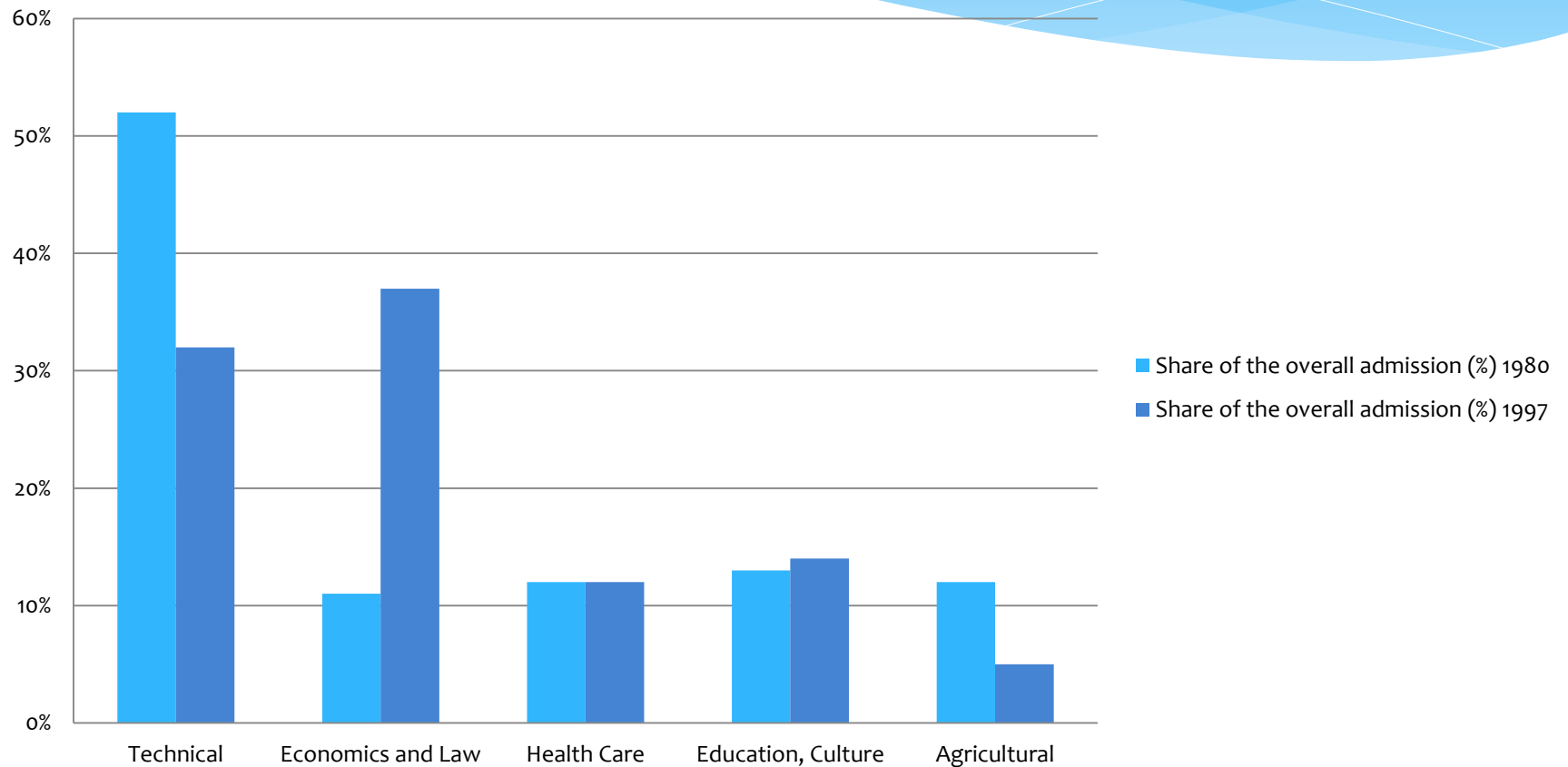
- * Restricted access (no more than 20% of school graduates go to universities)
- * Part-time evening programs only for those who work
- * **Mandatory placement and regulated labor market**
- * State-regulated curriculum (ideology component)
- * Managed interaction with the industry and Academy

90th - Collapse of the Soviet System and New Rules

- * Several industries decline and growth of new industries – changes of labor market demand
- * Elimination of mandatory placement
- * 30% decrease of higher education funding (same number of students)
- * **New stakeholders: private business, households**
- * New rules for higher education institutions:
 - * Relative autonomy in opening new education programs
 - * Right to enroll fee-paying students into public universities
 - * Establishing private universities (rapid growth of private institutions in 90-s)

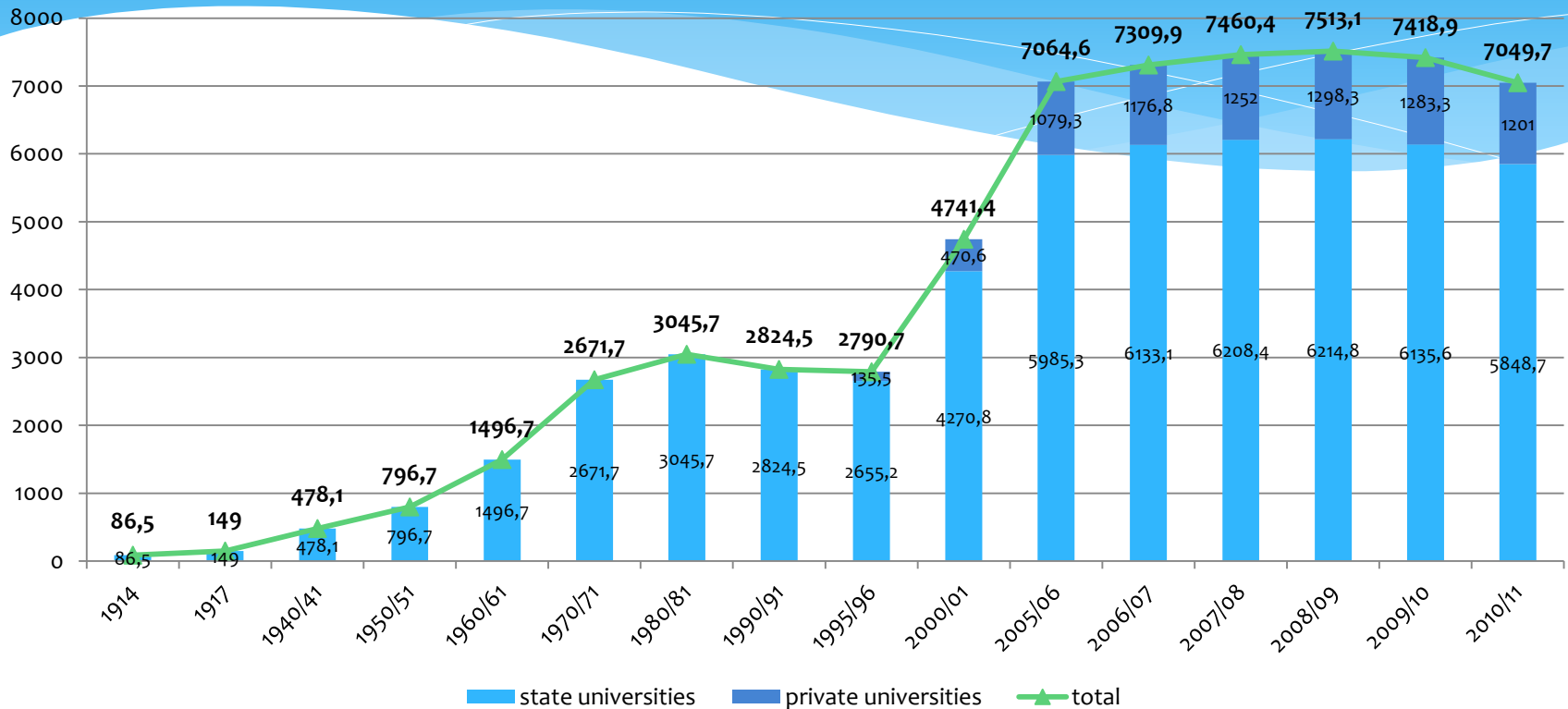
Change in Educational and Professional Preferences

Admission to HE Institutions by Speciality



Changes in higher education *increase of access*

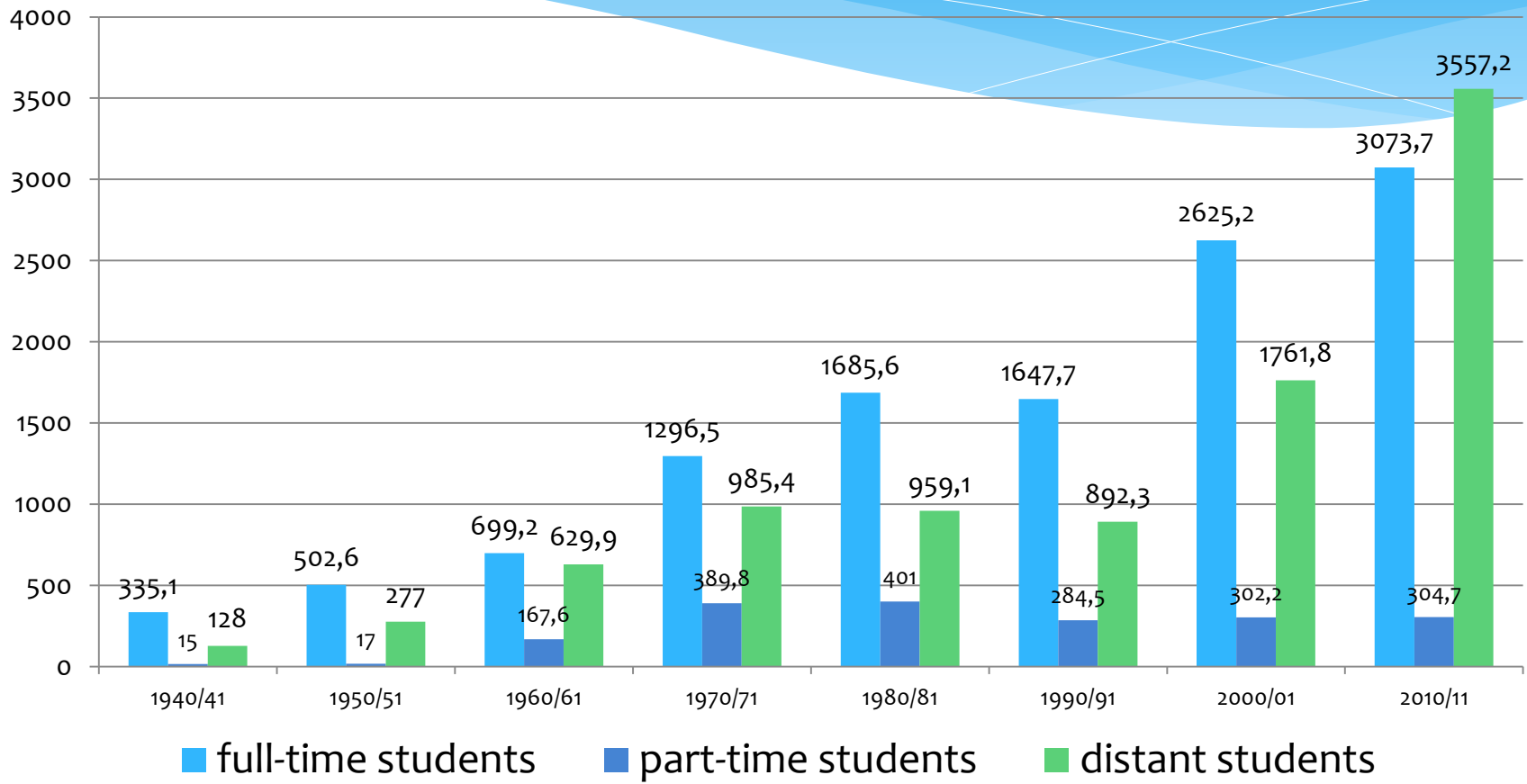
Student population in Russia



And: huge growth of universities local branches
By 2010/11: Total number of branches - 1668

Changes in higher education *growth of part-time and distant education*

Number of students



What happened with the machine after 10 years?

- * Old part continues to produce manpower for
 - * non-existing and weakened industries
 - * growing industries
- * New part serves families giving competencies or selling diplomas
- * Legacy and traditions are still strong

National Research Universities Project:

1. 18 technical universities, 10 comprehensive universities, 1 medical school
2. Each university receives a development grant around \$45 million
3. Middle size – 15 thousand students, 1300 faculty, 1500 doctoral students
4. Innovations in education aimed at the integration of education and research
5. Creation of the centers of excellence in research
6. Academic mobility and internationalization as a priority
7. IT infrastructure for education and research

NRUs Achievements in 2009-2012

- Volume of R&D increased by **3.5** times
- Number of articles in indexed journals: **15%** increase annually
- The share of PhDs increased up to **74%**
- The number of professors and students trained in the world's leading research universities increased by **3.6** times
- **127** laboratories were modernized
- Number of international students increased twofold



progress as global research universities

-----Unsatisfactory

New “Excellence 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 for institutional strategy implementation in 2013-2015 (expected increase in 2016-2020)

The students in the Soviet HE machine

Two concepts of students' role

1. Students as consumers:

- Contractual relationships between students and university
- Total quality management procedures apply
- Focus on faculty performance measurements and student satisfaction

2. Students as stakeholders:

- Students are partners of teachers
- Students representatives participate in university governance
- Learning is the students' part of the university work

Both concepts are based on the “homo economicus” idea

Students as vanguard of new society

- *Stalin* “Communist party as Knights Order”
- *Beruf* (Vocation): both the professionalism of and calling for a career
- “Science as a Vocation” (M. Veber): The devotion to scientific enquiry makes a good scientist.
- “If former students studied for themselves, for the diploma and comfortable job, “red student” studies for the future participation in building socialist society” (1927)

The selection of the students

Since 1921 – “proletarianization” – affirmative actions to attract working class (oppressed) into higher education - not achieving social justice but building the vanguard

1922 – “Five years after the revolution the bourgeois professors teach proletarian student the bourgeois trash” (Lenin)

1957 – preferences for the students with the working experience – to balance the social composition – discussion in Academy of Science

Role of the motivation and interest: How the students choose the university and department:

1. Most important “to get good education for the profession I like” – 70% (1973), 36% (2006), 31% (2012) compare with “to get high paid job 19% (2006), 11% (2012)”, “need of the socialist industry” 37% (1973)
2. Value of education “To be useful for the society” was in the top three values of incoming students (1973)
3. The factor of specialization is twice more important than the factor of university

The curriculum and experience

- * Highly specialized – linked with the particular industry
- * High share of ideological subjects (up to 20%)
- * Single students' organization – *komsomol* (young communists union) to assist and control leisure time, to involve into the political activities
- * Participation in industry (collecting harvest, summer “construction teams”)

Research universities as the part of the HE machine

- * Students as junior part of “research brotherhood”
- * Early specialized involvement in Academy of Science activities
- * Highly competitive selection of talents
- * Academic families

Questions

- * Role of call (devotion, purpose) in students' experience
- * Research values and students' experience