

P O R T U G A L 2 0 0 7



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The Netherlands

Dutch debates, Czech concerns, South African shifts in policy and Portuguese priorities:
a reflection on the development of effective polytechnic policies

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Disclaimers and definitions

- 1. The choice of the four countries is idiosyncratic.**
- 2. The aim of the presentation is limited: to develop a perspective that may be useful in thinking about policies and programmes to strengthen polytechnic sectors**
- 3. On terminology:**

The relationship between university and non-university higher education originated from classical distinctions along the binary line such as theory vs. practice, academic vs. vocational education and full-time degree vs. part-time short cycle education. Most of these distinctions were founded upon faulty assumptions and most of them appear to be untenable.

(Egbert de Weert, 2006) (JF: As are more recent attempts!)

For the purposes of this presentation I will use the following terms, recognising that none of them are able to precisely demarcate fields of activity within higher education:

- polytechnics**
- career-focused education (CFE)**
- applied research and development**



Points of departure

National higher education systems that enrol or aim to enrol 50% (or more) of the traditional age cohort and to make a significant contribution to life long learning need a substantial proportion of their students studying in career-focused programmes if the systems are to make their expected contribution to knowledge-based economies

National higher education systems that are only able to enrol much less than 50% of the traditional age cohort **also** need a substantial proportion of their students studying in career-focused programmes if the systems are to make their expected contribution to socio-economic development



CFE: the goal

Career-focused education should consist primarily of short- and first-cycle programmes:

- where the “curriculum design logic” is to prepare students for a career in a field of employment
- where the curriculum is designed in consultation with relevant employer groups/professions
- where a substantial part of the programme is taught by staff who have had direct working experience in the field
- that include a significant component of work integrated learning (or in-house alternatives with the same learning objective)
- offered by a programme team that is active in applied research and development in the field



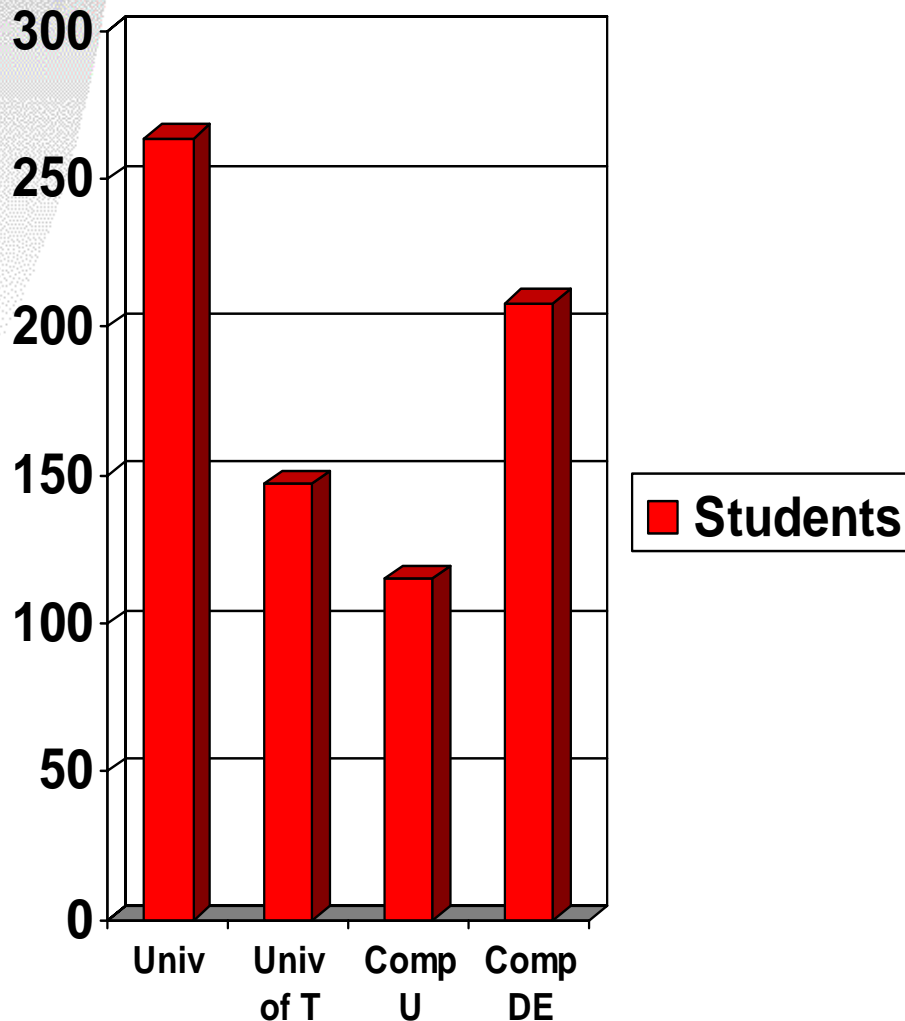
Polytechnic policies and current policy issues in four higher education systems:

A very brief overview

South Africa

Policy highlights

- ❑ 1970s: Colleges of Advanced Technical Education upgraded to Technikons, others developed in 80s & 90s
- ❑ Parallel but equal. Primarily Diplomas but with M&D equivalents and limited “product related” R&D. Technikon movement, national qualifications, own QA system.
- ❑ B, M & D in Technology and professors introduced in 90s
- ❑ 1997 Act: single system, pragmatic but flexible continuation of 2 types of HEIs. Single Gov, Finance and QA.
- ❑ 2004: Mergers (incl. cross-binary), Universities of Technology and “comprehensive” Univs. New single funding model
- ❑ 2007: Single qualifications framework (no explicit career focused qualifications)



2005 total enrolment: 735,000

Current polytechnic policy issues: South Africa

Universities of Technology: only a change of name or a change of mission/status?

Creating “comprehensive universities”

Developing mission-specific funding, QA/accreditation and HRM – for the UoT sector, and *within* comprehensive institutions

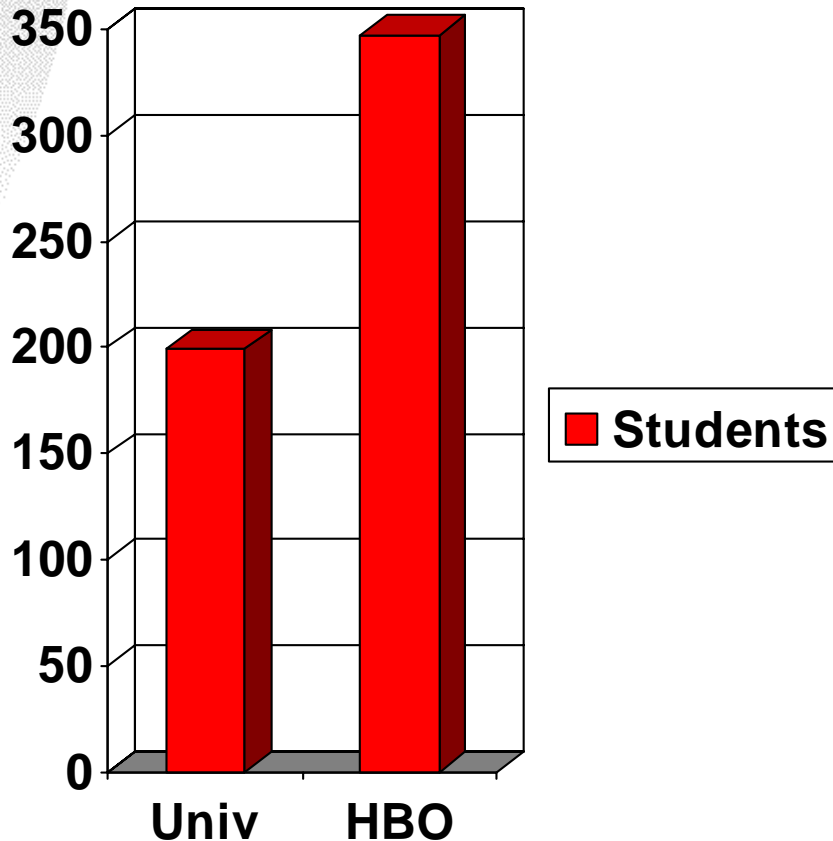
A new Higher Education Qualifications Framework (draft doesn't distinguish CFE qualifications and makes diploma-degree articulation complex)

Move to all HEIs being universities with less clarity on sectoral missions is accompanied by more detailed regulation by Ministry (programme mix, enrolment planning)

The Netherlands

Policy highlights

- ❑ Early 1980s: >300 small often single discipline regionally focused institutions
- ❑ 1985 onwards: brought into HE system by process of mergers (now 44 polytechnics)
- ❑ Own QA system, different funding models, some governance differences. No D programmes, funded M, professors or research funding. (U of PE, links to UK)
- ❑ 2002 onwards: Lectorships introduced
- ❑ 2004: B – M structure in both Univ. and Polytechnics
- ❑ Cross-binary cooperation (even mergers) permitted



2005 Total: 546,000



Lectors in Dutch polytechnics

- ❑ Position established in new polytechnic staff structure in 1993
- ❑ Targeted funds provided by government and allocated by a national body on a competitive proposal basis since 2002: now over 300 lectors
- ❑ A Lector has a highly qualified profile with much expertise in the subject field and in the professional domain. The leading idea is that lectors will not be appointed as isolated staff members but as leaders of a “knowledge circle” consisting of 10 – 15 staff members that aims to enhance contacts and knowledge exchange with industry (Egbert de Weert, 2004)
- ❑ Initial evaluation of the scheme was positive
- ❑ OECD 2007 suggests more concentration of lectors to increase synergy



Current polytechnic policy issues: The Netherlands

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Will universities take Bologna idea of Bachelor also providing entry to labour market seriously, and what will be impact on HBO sector?

HBO Council a signatory to 2005 **Declaration on professional oriented higher education.** (With Denmark, Ireland, Germany, Switzerland, Finland, Austria)

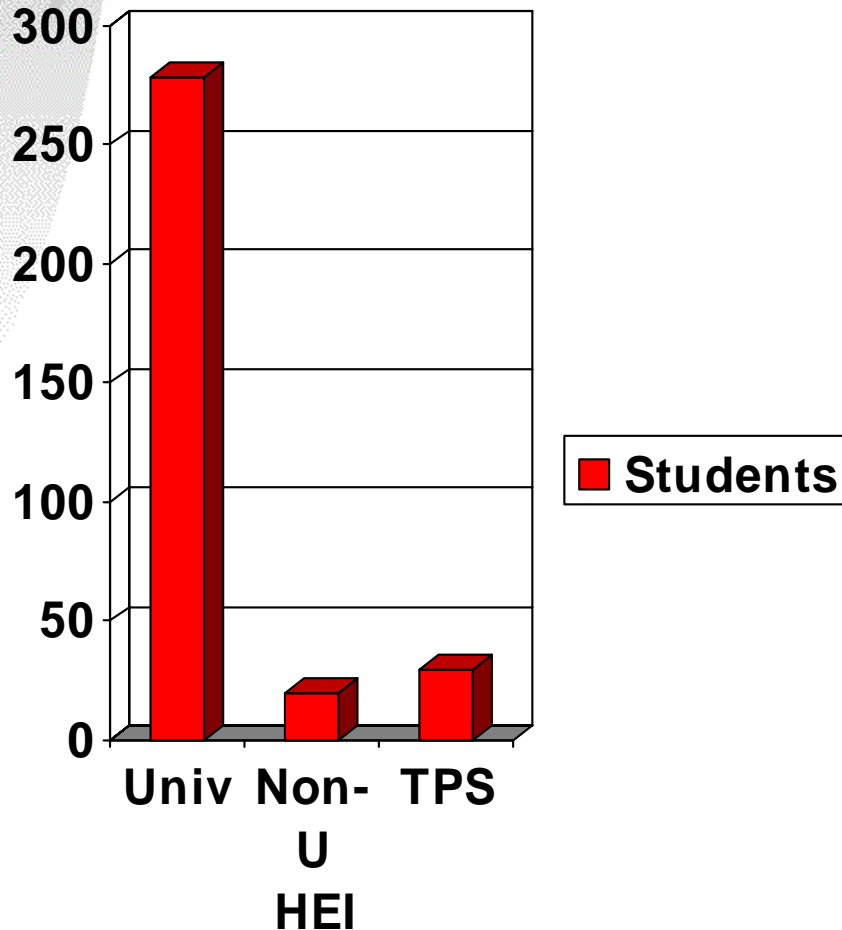
- CFE profile within EQF and equal status for CFE qualifications
- Professional 2nd and 3rd cycle (and funding thereof)
- Existing and new EU programmes on research should combine the support of both fundamental and applied research
- More financial support and better regulations for life long learning schemes

OECD 2007: HBO too regionally focused, needs more internationalisation, staff PhDs, short-cycle programmes and R&D capacity

The Czech Republic

Policy highlights

- ❑ 1990 Higher Education Act: Univ offer both academic and professional programmes
- ❑ 1992 Pilot project establishes 20 Tertiary professional schools offering 3 year vocational certificates (now 170 TPS with 30k students but not HE)
- ❑ 1998 Act allows private HEI. All 40 currently non-univ HEIs. Offer B, M not D.
- ❑ 2004: B – M structure in both Univ. and non-Univ (not TPS)
- ❑ Difficult to measure numbers in CFE as no formal distinction made outside TPS. OECD review suggests diversity insufficient and major focus remains on traditional M exit level



2005 Total: 328,000



Current “polytechnic” policy issues: The Czech Republic

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Will universities take Bologna idea of Bachelor also providing entry to labour market seriously, and will this lead to more CFE programmes within them?

OECD 2006: integration of TPS into HE sector as new university colleges within universities with a CFE mandate, plus associated HRM, QA, funding and governance changes

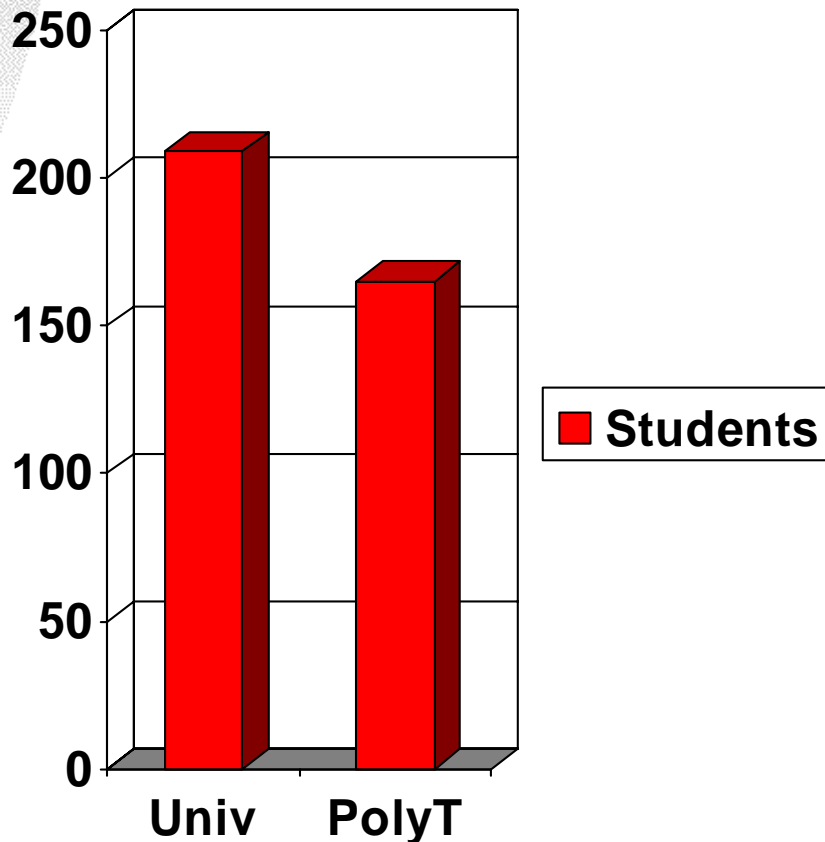
Establishing public and labour market support for the two-cycle structure

Improving innovation, knowledge transfer, partnerships with business and industry and developing regional R&D capacity through networks

Portugal

Policy highlights

- ❑ 1979 Act establishes polytechnics with clear CFE mandate
- ❑ Rapid expansion in 80s/90s included major role for new public polytechnics
- ❑ Many public polytechnics in interior with important regional development role
- ❑ Polytechnics have different career, governance structures, & (some) funding and QA differences
- ❑ Since 1986 over 100 private HEIs established, including over 60 polytechnic schools.
- ❑ 2003: introduction of short-cycle CET programmes, primarily in polytechnics
- ❑ 2006 Act defines polytechnic role in post-Bologna terms (L [B] and M not D, with sectoral differences in L and M)



2005 Total: 368,000 (incl. 92k private)



Current polytechnic policy issues: Portugal

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Will universities take Bologna idea of Bachelor also providing entry to labour market seriously, and what will be impact on the polytechnic sector?

OECD 2006: binary framework should be maintained and strengthened – reforms in areas of funding, governance, HRM, QA and accreditation needed to “create a policy environment in which professionally orientated polytechnics can create a sustainable future that is distinct from traditional universities”

Managing demographic and geographical dynamics, particularly for polytechnics in the interior regions

Establishing public and labour market support for the two-cycle structure and for polytechnic qualifications in particular



Diversity in higher education

(Frans van Vught, 1996)

Proposition 1

- ❑ The larger the uniformity of the environmental conditions of higher education organisations, the lower the level of diversity of the higher education system
- ❑ (Alternatively) The more segregated the policy environments under which different types of institutions operate, the higher the level of diversity of the higher education system.

(Lynn Meek et al, 2006)

Proposition 2

- ❑ The larger the influence of academic norms and values in higher education organisations, the lower the level of diversity of the higher education system

Levels of academic drift

(Svein Kyvik, 2007 - modified JF)

Student drift

- Driver: credentialism, (perceived) labour market signals

Staff drift

- Driver: (disciplinary) reference groups

Programme drift

- Drivers: professionalisation

Institutional drift

- Drivers: status, imitation of successful institutions

Sector drift

- Drivers: symbolic values: University title/status, (perceived) financial benefits

Policy drift

- Driver: changes in goals over time

Note: similar factors may inhibit development of CFE



Levels of academic drift (contd.)

The underlying theoretical assumption is that entrepreneurial institutional leaders, programme leaders and their professional associations, cosmopolitan staff and academically oriented students, as well as non-university sector associations, state authorities and external stakeholders take part in mutually reinforcing academisation processes.

- (a) academic drift may take place simultaneously on several levels,
- (b) academic drift on one level may lead to academic drift on another level, either through chain reactions or by by-passing levels, and
- (c) academic drift on one of the levels may have a further effect on drift processes on the initial level, leading to mutually reinforcing and self-sustaining processes virtually impossible to stop in the long run.

Pulling the case studies and analytical perspectives together

CFE is likely to thrive under the following conditions:

- Academic values are balanced by employer expectations
 - Mission appropriate governance (external stakeholders)
 - Mission appropriate accreditation and QA
 - Mission appropriate HRM/career structures
 - Mission appropriate institutional and individual performance expectations
 - Joint curriculum development and work integrated learning
- A differentiated policy environment
 - Task related funding allocation model (with CFE incentives?)
 - Balance between CFE and non-CFE is carefully steered
 - Substantial public funding is earmarked for applied research and development
- High levels of public and labour-market understanding of and support for CFE

Note: Applies at sector, institution or “school” level