

# In the Shadow of Celebrity

*World-class university policies and the higher education system*

Presentation for the ASHE Special Interactive Session 1: Dimensions of Quality

Leon Cremonini, CHEPS  
Paul Benneworth, CHEPS  
Don F. Westerheijden, CHEPS

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## THE WCUP RHETORIC

- Building world-class universities has been the dream of generations of Chinese ...
- ...not only for pride, but also for the future of China
- The government wants a national innovation system in which universities and research organisations attract the best minds to conduct world-class research, fuelling the innovation system with new knowledge and ideas
- Top level research to make Germany a more attractive research location
- Aalto University is born to be one of the leading institutions in the world [...] by 2020
- Place France among the highest ranking international universities

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## WHY WORLD-CLASS UNIVERSITY POLICIES?

- More investment in research
- More research output
- Better educated labour force
- Promote knowledge transfer

*It is about being globally competitive as a system and improving national wellbeing*

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### REFLECTING ON THE EFFECTS OF WCUPs

- World-class universities owe their status to high private paybacks of higher education and are thus very attractive
- Governments invest in WCUs, expecting high public returns and externalities
  - In a global context

*Do world-class universities make the higher education system better?*

- HEIs may produce more outputs which benefit the nation (e.g. knowledge, infrastructures, talent etc)
- WCUPs can change the relationship between HEIs within the system
  - The policies have effects on the resources for other providers

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### POSSIBLE SPILL-OVER EFFECTS ON THE SYSTEM (II)

- Increased exogenous resources
  - Additional staff, students and research funding from outside the country/ higher education system which spill-over to other higher education institutions
- Increased private endogenous resources
  - Resources that would have either not been spent in the country's universities, or gone to other universities, go into the sector, which spill-over to other higher education institutions

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### POSSIBLE SPILL-OVER EFFECTS ON THE SYSTEM (II)

- More efficient use of public resources
- New products (e.g. Graduate School trajectories)
- Reputational benefits
  - All national universities benefit from a higher external awareness/ reputation from the presence of one or more world-class institutions in the system

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### POSSIBLE EFFECTS OF EXCELLENCE POLICIES

Countries	Dimensions				
	More exogenous resources	More endogenous resources	System improvements (i.e. more efficient use of public moneys)	New products (e.g. Graduate Schools)	Reputation
China	√√		√√		√
Finland	√√	√		√√	√
France		√	√√	√√	√
Germany		√√	√√	√√	√

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### DISCUSSION

About a world class higher education system?

- About horizontal diversity and pathways within the system
  - System permeability
  - Heterogeneity of student body
- About antecedent conditions
- Does money do it all?
- Does reputation do it all?
- About aligning optimally private and public returns of higher education
- ...

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### THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION !

#### Contact Information

Leon Cremonini : l.cremonini@utwente.nl  
 Paul Benneworth : p.benneworth@utwente.nl  
 Don Westerheijden : d.f.westerheijden@utwente.nl

University of Twente  
 Center for Higher Education Policy Studies (CHEPS)  
 PO Box 217  
 7500 AE ENSCHEDE  
 The Netherlands  
 Telephone: +31.53.489.3263  
 Web: http://www.utwente.nl/cheps

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