

A strategic cultural change through the use of university rankings

Opinion and advice by members of the University Rankings expert group

Members of the expert group



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Disclaimer



The opinions do not necessarily reflect the official position nor viewpoints of the experts' organisations



Pending administrative response from UNL's Education and Research Steering Group (SOO)



Kaiser and Waltman are involved in producing university rankings



All sorts of university rankings



GLOBAL UNIVERSITY
RANKINGS

League tables



SUBJECT/TOPICAL
RANKINGS



REGIONAL
RANKINGS



REPUTATIONAL
RANKINGS

Why focus on league tables?

1. High impact – serving the largest group of users
2. One-dimensional – suggesting that it is possible to summarise a university's performance
3. Incompatible with the strategic objectives of a university – hindering institutional profiling and diversity



Society with its political & economic climate

- Pandemic
- Climate collapse
- Labour market

Stakeholders:



- What is the quality of a university?
- Which university should I go to? (Study/work/collaborate etc)

Core tasks

- Research
- Education
- Social mission (impact)



University

Mission

- Open Science
- Reward & Recognition
- Internationalisation
- Sustainable Development Goals
- ...

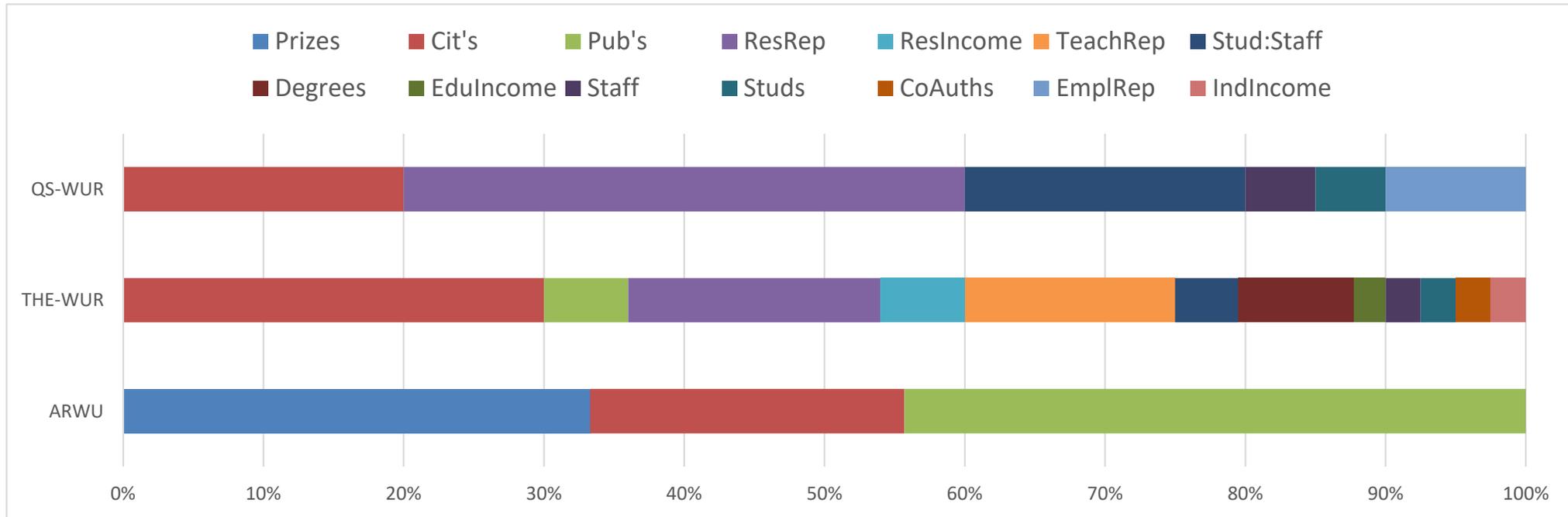


Rankings

- Global ranking
- Topical ranking
- Subject ranking
- Impact ranking

An instrument that provides limited, incomplete information on the contribution of university

Types of indicators per league table as per Dec 2022



While methodological outlines are provided, details are often unclear. Lack transparency. THE and QS rely heavily on reputation surveys, with weights of 33% and 50% respectively. ARWU is mainly (67%) determined by bibliometric data. All three have random approaches.

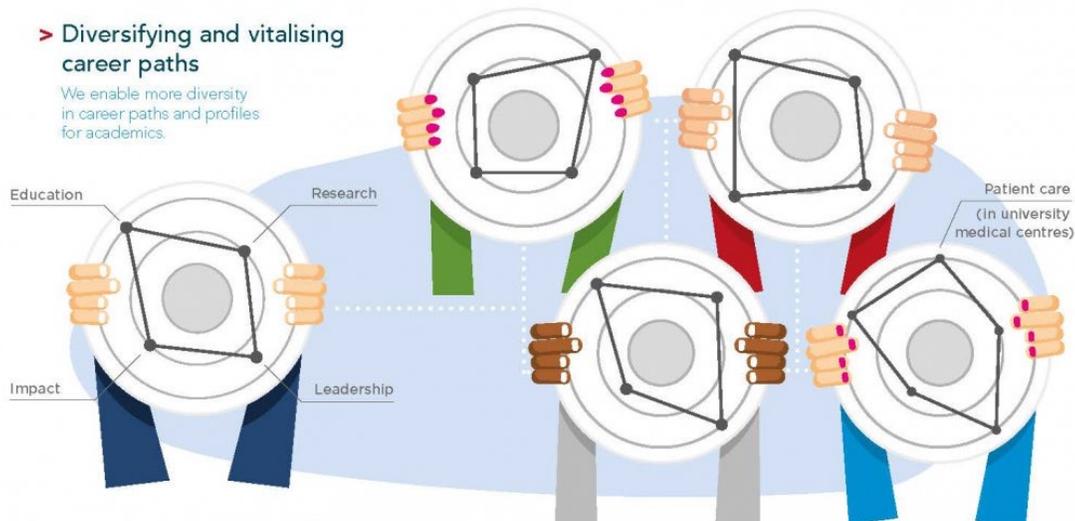
League tables in relation to Recognition & Rewards

Room for everyone's talent

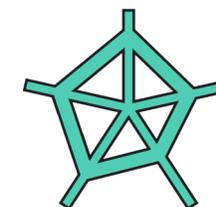
towards a new balance in the recognition and rewards of academics

> Diversifying and vitalising career paths

We enable more diversity in career paths and profiles for academics.

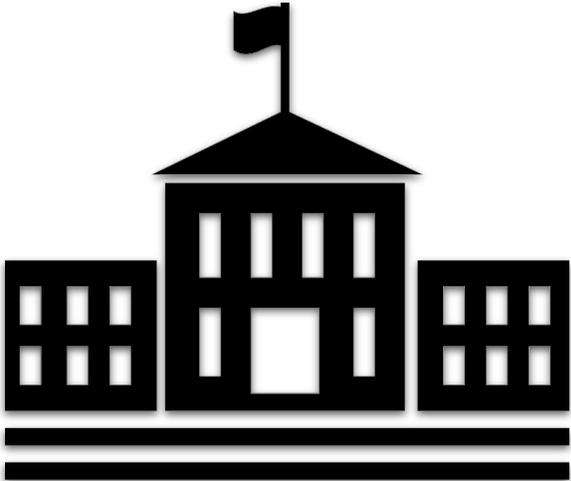


an inorms initiative



- Reducing emphasis on bibliometric indicators, especially publication and citation statistics.
- Moving from the logic of comparison and competition to contextualisation and customisation.
- R&R's effect (positive/negative) is small on the ranking position of Dutch universities.

Proposed strategies for cultural change



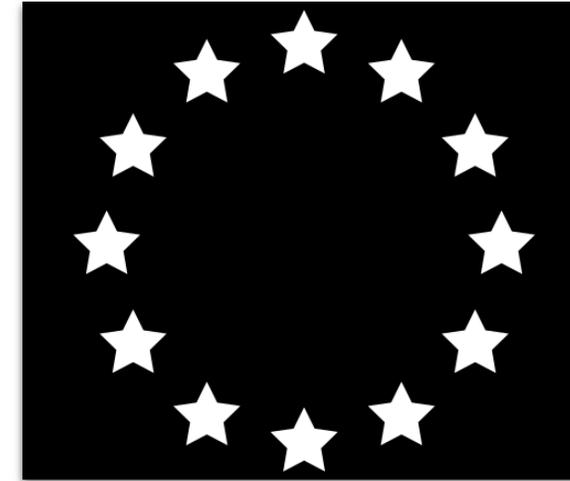
Institutional level

Short term



National level

Medium term



International (European) level

Longer term

Institutional level (Short term)

Use of league tables

Use for marketing purposes only, and be explicit about their limitations

Do not use it for evaluations, budget allocation purposes and in other policy contexts (in line with CoARA)

Communication about league tables

Support the More Than Our Rank initiative and actively promote it both within your own university and externally

Collaboration with league table publishers

Make sure that data supplied to league tables are openly available (in line with Open Research Information Agenda)

Alternatives to league tables

Contribute to alternatives such as U-Multirank by providing data and exploring opportunities to use these alternatives, e.g., for marketing purposes

National level (Medium term)

Use of league tables

Discourage the use of league tables by government organisations such as the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW), Immigration and Naturalisation (IND)

Communication about league tables

Join forces with other universities in communicating about league tables instead of competing

Approach media organisations to create more awareness of the problems associated with league tables

Collaboration with league table publishers

Do not make email addresses available to league tables for the purpose of their surveys

Do not use tools and consultancy services that offer league tables

International level (Longer term)

Use of league tables

End the use of non-transparent league tables, including for marketing purposes; use league tables only if they are fully transparent

Communication about league tables

Publish a joint, broadly supported statement on the problems associated with league tables, for example in the European University Association (EUA) context

Collaboration with league table publishers

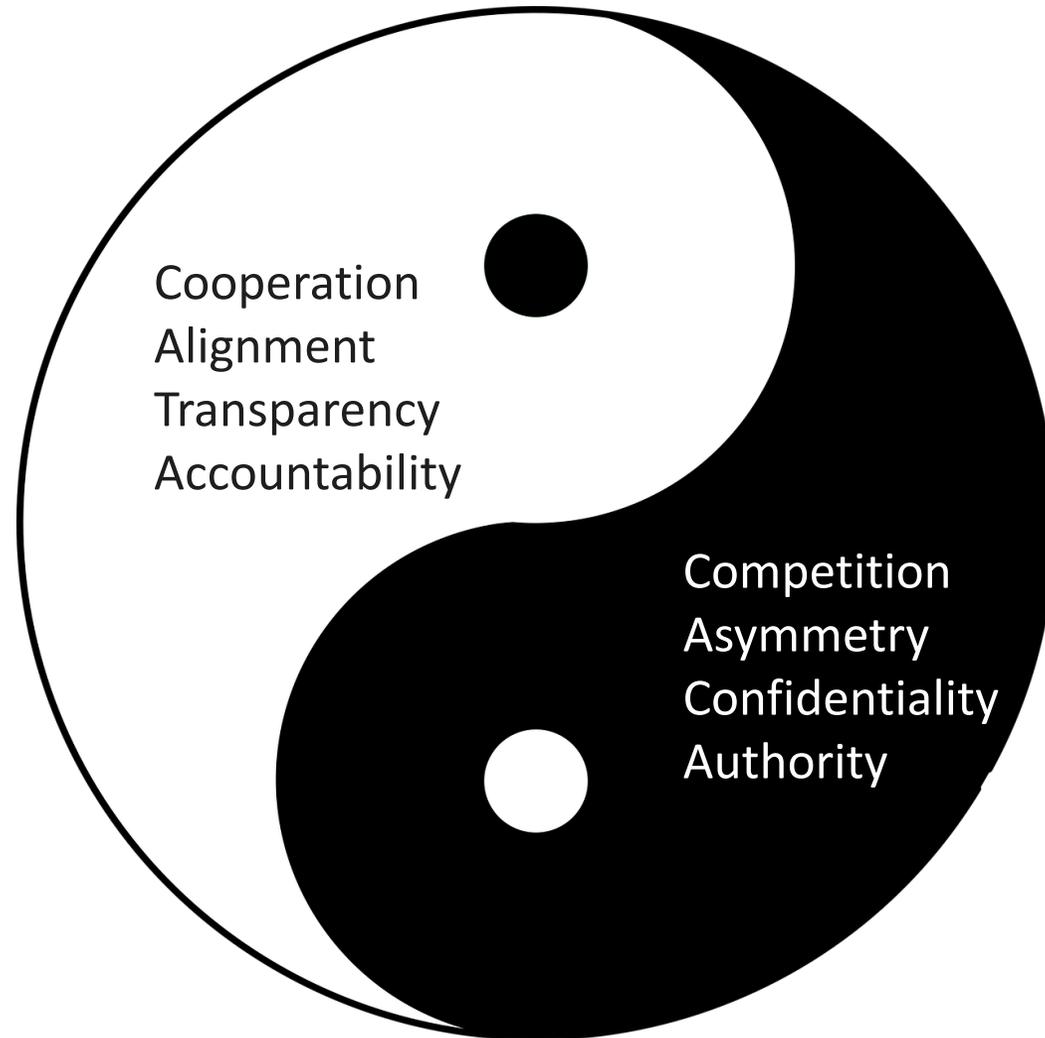
Stop supplying data to non-transparent league tables; only supply data to league tables that are fully transparent

Alternatives to league tables

Support the development of open multidimensional alternatives to league tables, e.g., in a European context

Cultural change at universities as a collective

Tipping the balance through the strategic use of university rankings



Thank you!
Questions?