حكومة دبي
GOVERNMENT OF DUBAI

هيئة المعرفة والتنمية البشرية
KNOWLEDGE & HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Developing a workforce for the knowledge society in Dubai: higher education challenges

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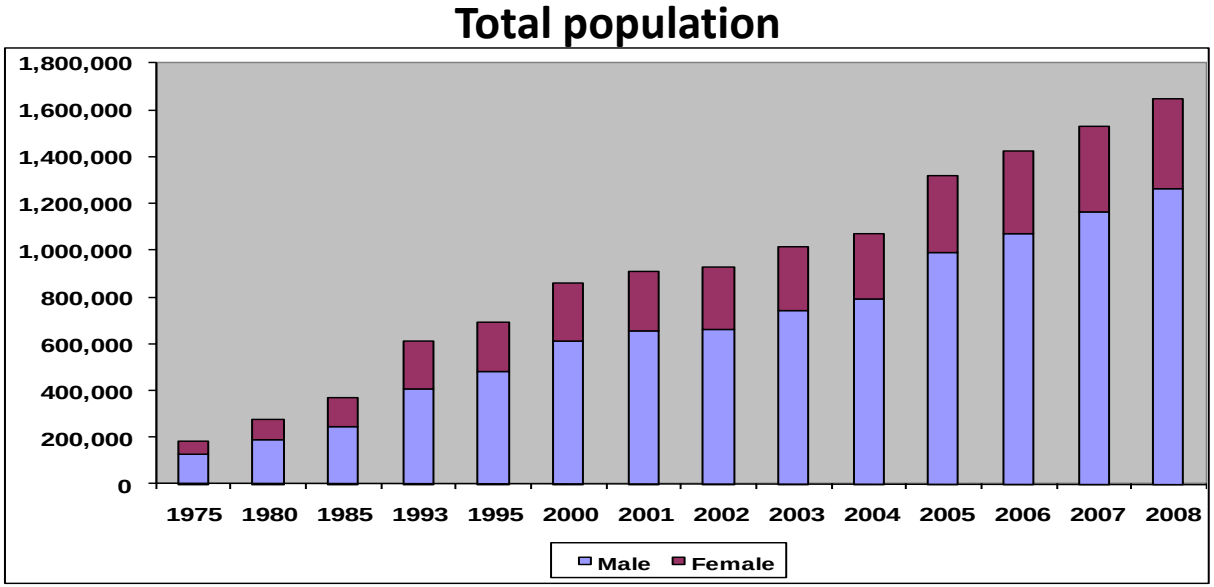
Developing a workforce for the knowledge society in Dubai

- Dubai in 2010
- Importance of education in human capital development
- Dubai’s unique model for educational development
- Higher education in Dubai
- Future challenges

Population of Dubai

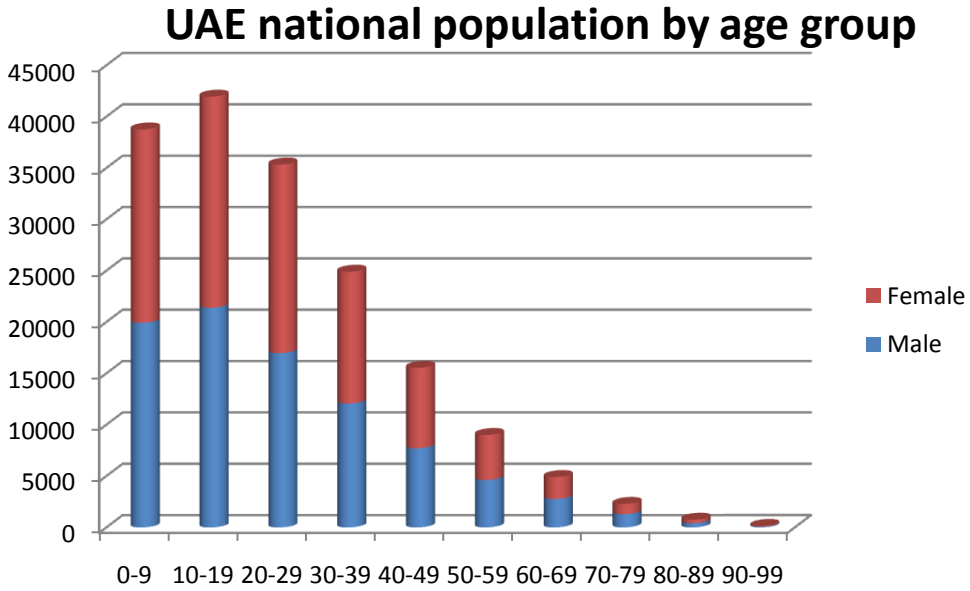


Source: "Population by Sex - Emirate of Dubai," <http://www.dsc.gov.ae/DSC/webreports/-231890734OSI1-1.pdf>. "Dubai Statistics Center"

Total population has doubled in a decade mostly through expatriate labour migration

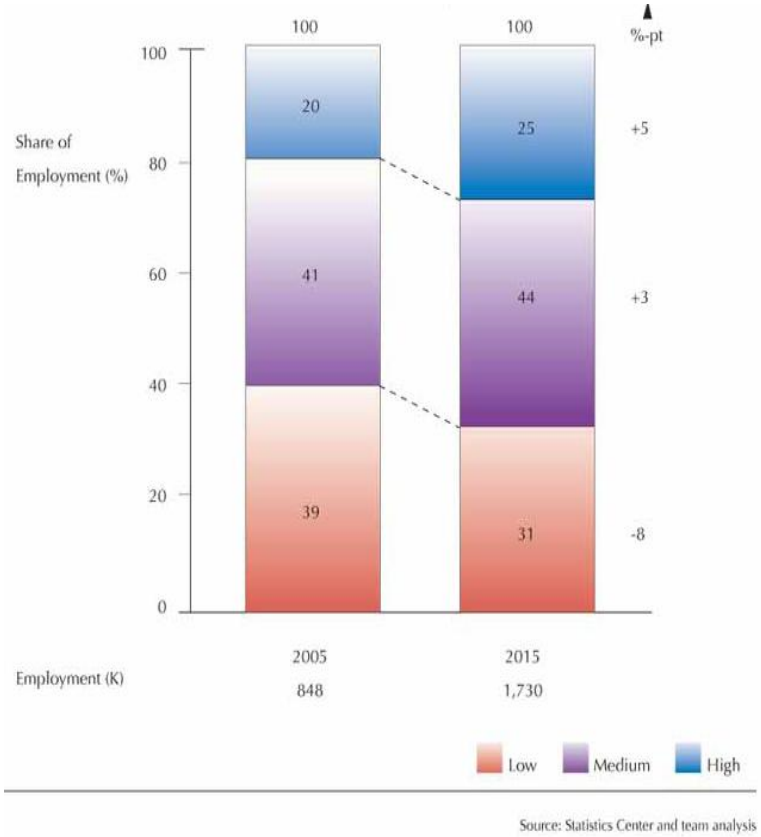
Emirati population is growing rapidly, 50% of the Emiratis are below the age of 25.

Social and economic development: World ranking of 35 in Human Development Index (UNDP)



Developing an educated workforce

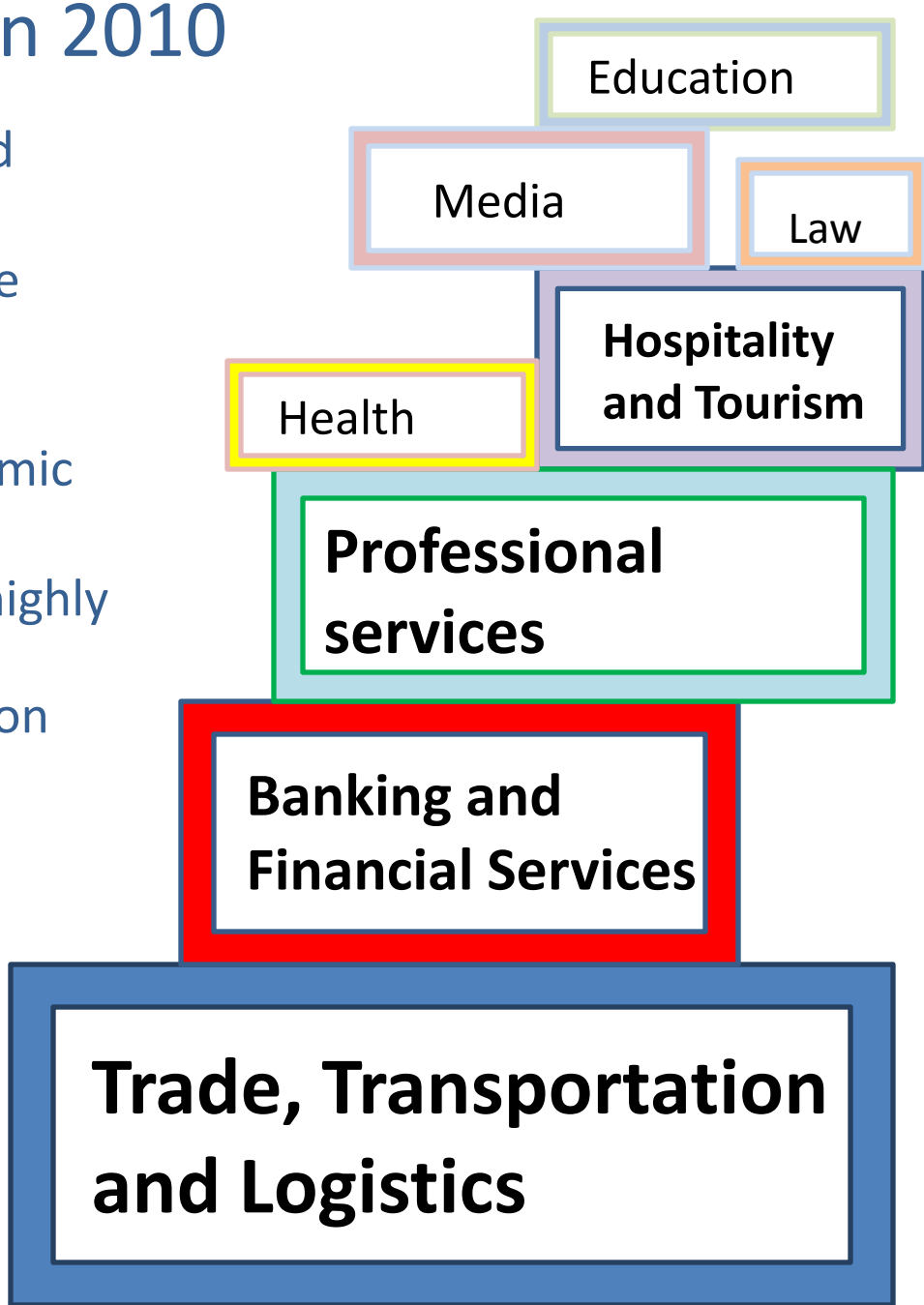
- Increasing numbers of young people entering the workforce each year
- Vital that Emiratis have the skills to participate in future economic development
- Greater economic integration and rapid technological change have led to demand for a more skilled workforce.
- Higher education has an important role in preparing new graduates for employment and providing skill upgrading.
- Highly specialized knowledge required to meet development needs (Arab Knowledge Report 2009)



31% of Emirati men and 38% of Emirati women aged 25-29 have a tertiary educational qualification

Dubai in 2010

- Decade of tremendous growth and development of city infrastructure
- Important geographical hub for the region
- Move to balanced and sustainable development, and strategic economic sectors have been identified
- 'Knowledge economy' requires a highly skilled workforce, with focus on problem solving and communication skills
- Plan to increase the number of Bachelor graduates (both Emirati and expatriate)
- Plan to provide post-graduate opportunities for the working population



Education landscape in the UAE

K-12

- Free public education has led to high participation rates
- Arabic curriculum, with separate schools for boys and girls at all levels of education

Higher Education

- 3 large Federal higher educational institutions
- International scholarship programme
- 1990s – rapid growth of private universities
- Almost all university education is in English language

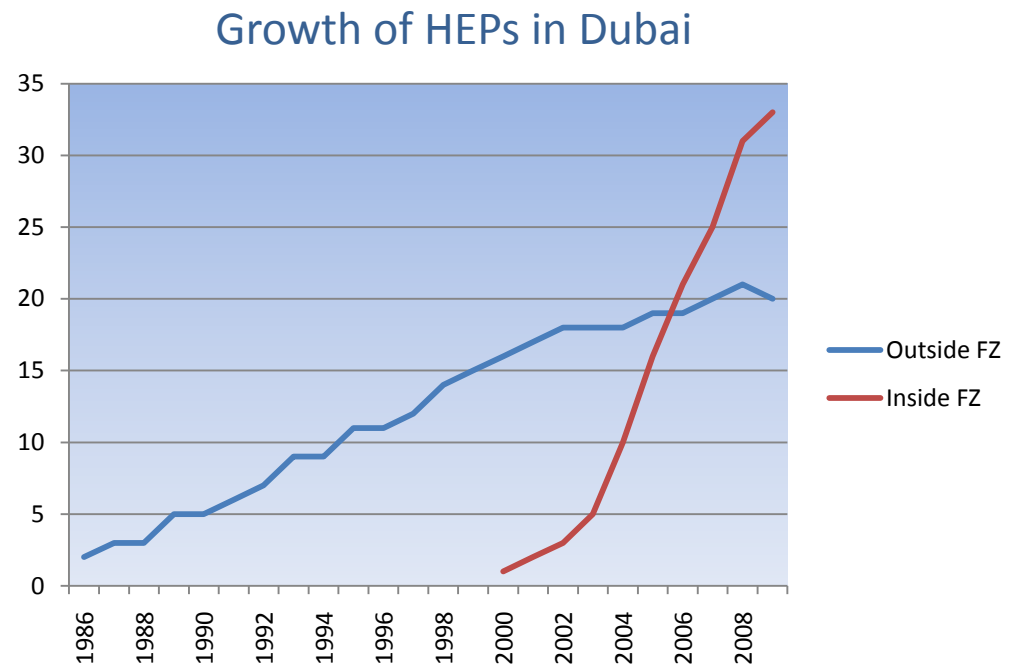
Dubai's unique model for educational development

- New, rapidly expanding, multinational
- Focus on improving quantity and quality of education at all levels
- Majority of children in private K-12 schooling, mostly taught in English language
- Better school monitoring and evaluation systems (Dubai School Inspection Bureau, TIMMS and PISA)
- International universities encouraged to establish branches / programmes in Dubai
- Establishment of Free Zones (e.g. Knowledge Village and Dubai International Academic City)
- University Quality Assurance International Board, established by KHDA in 2008

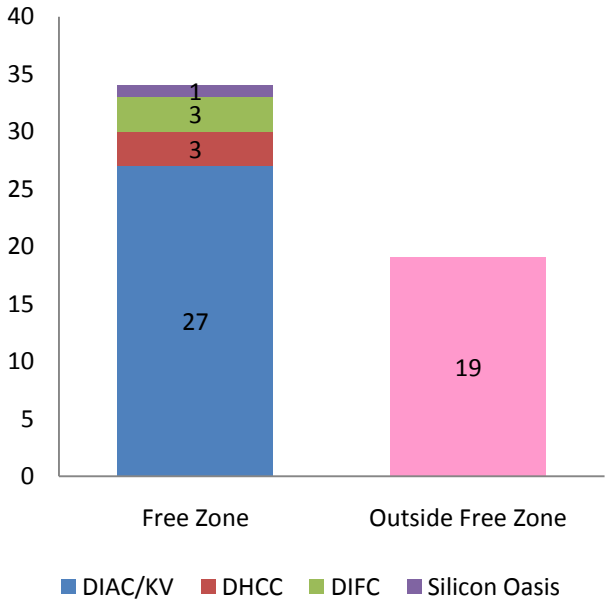
Higher Education Institutions in Dubai

53 higher education providers:

3 federal campuses
15 private universities
6 Dubai government institutions
29 international branch campuses



34 HEPs located in Free Zones

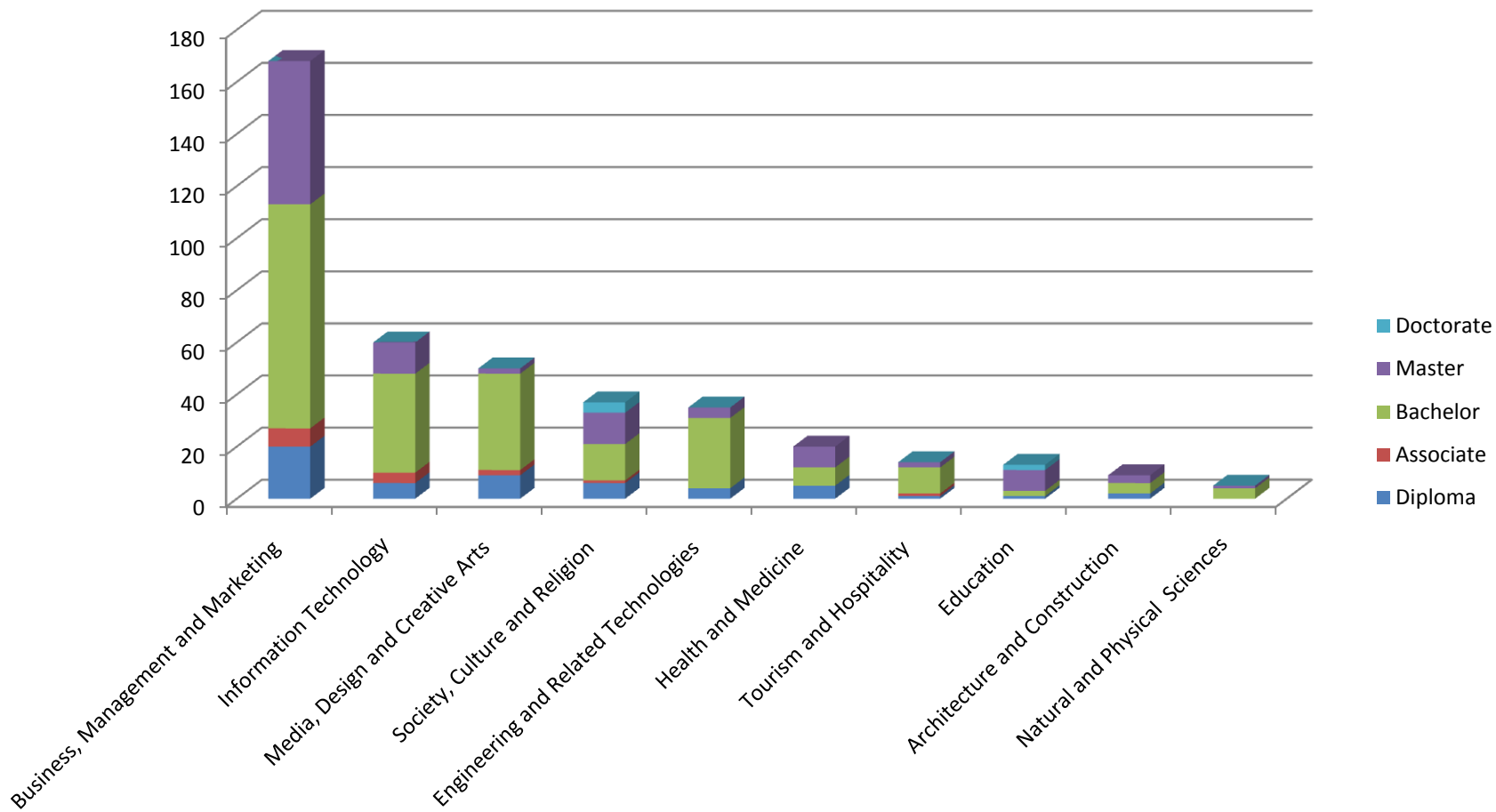


International campuses from 11 countries including:

Herriot Watt University
London Business School
Middlesex University
Michigan State University
Rochester Institute of Technology
BITS Pilani
St. Petersburg State University
St. Josephs Law School

University programmes available in Dubai

410 programmes in 2009/2010 academic year
Ranging from diplomas to doctorate degrees



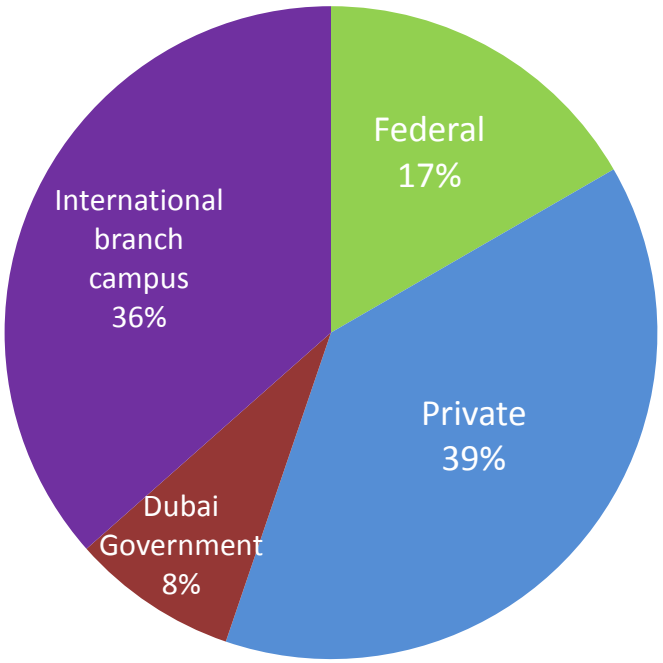
Regional study destination

38,000 students

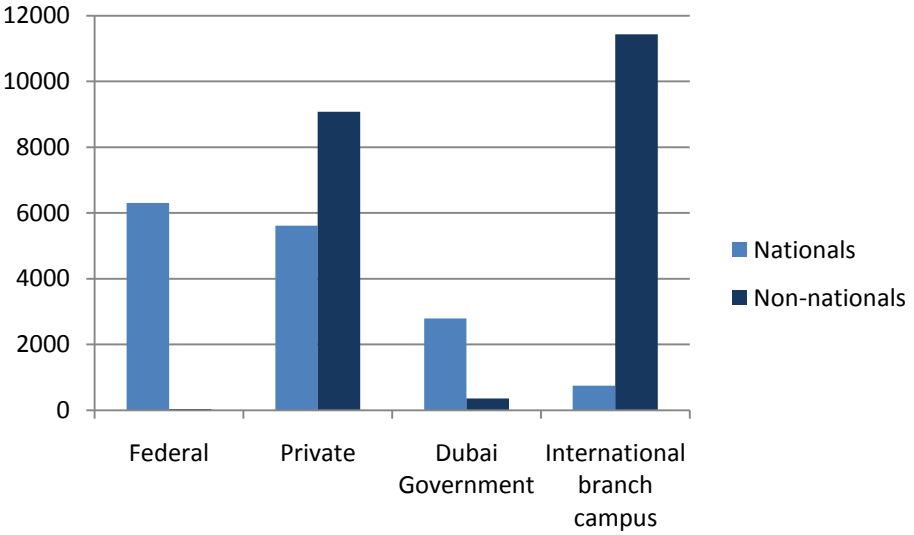
More than 60 different nationalities

12 higher education systems including American, British, French, Canadian, Australian, Indian, and UAE.

Total student enrolment in higher education institutions in Dubai 2009

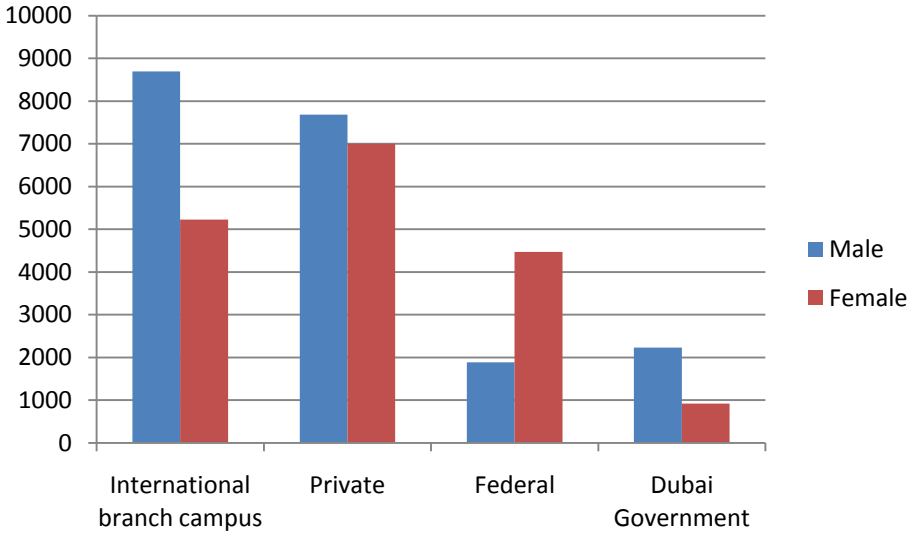


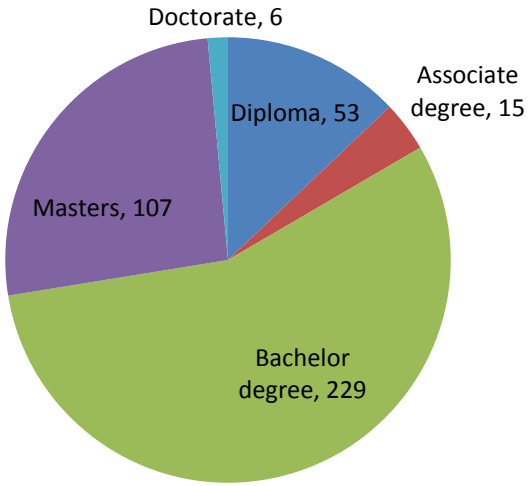
Enrolment of national and non-national students



Some successes:

- Large number of international campuses giving wide student choice
- Overall participation in Dubai's higher education is almost equal for young men and women
- Large number of Master's programmes catering to working population
- Regional hub for higher education, with large numbers of international students





Challenges in developing higher education in Dubai

- Improving educational attainment at school

  Lack of adequate preparation in schools for tertiary education

  94% of Emirati students entering a federal university require a Foundation year to improve levels of science, maths, English and ethics (Ministry of Education, 2010).
- Improving quality of higher education, including concentration of majors

  More science and engineering degrees required

  Many young university graduates still require appropriate work skills to enable them to compete in an international environment
- Gender imbalance in higher education and labour force participation

  More Emirati women than men in higher education

  Low labour force participation of Emirati women
- Social attitudes and cultural values towards types of employment
- Need for more research on education and labour force

  Data being collected and initial research: Labour Force Survey, University Census

  But no stakeholder-wide definitions of skills required or definitions of sector needs