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The Institute for Policy and Strategy on National  
Competitiveness (IPSNC)

**Press Release** <https://www.ipsnc.org/>

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National Competitiveness (IPSNC)**

## **Innovative Universities: The WURI Ranking 2021**

The World's Universities with Real Impact (WURI) ranking 2021 was presented at 3 pm (CET)/10 pm (KST), on June 10, 2021, in both Switzerland and South Korea.

This ranking for innovative universities is designed to highlight and appreciate the efforts of universities to produce a future workforce aligning with the growing demands among entrepreneurs in contemporary society.

This innovative universities ranking is organized by the Institute for Policy and Strategy on National Competitiveness (IPSNC) and sponsored by four organizations: Hanseatic League of Universities (HLU) in the Netherlands; the Institute for Industrial Policy Studies (IPS) in Seoul, South Korea; UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) in Geneva, Switzerland; Tailor Institute of Franklin University (FUS) in Lugano, Switzerland.

This event announced the top 100 universities for the WURI ranking, "Global Top 100." Alongside there was also the unveiling of the top 50 universities in each of the five criteria: Industrial Application, Entrepreneurial Spirit, Ethical Value, Student Mobility and Openness, and Crisis Management. What is special about the WURI ranking is that it adds a new criterion every year. This year, the new criterion, is Crisis Management, which evaluates to what extent universities are effectively and flexibly coping with the external disruption such as the COVID-19 global pandemic and technology breakthroughs (e.g., Artificial Intelligence).

For the "Global Top 100," Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Stanford University ranked in first and second place, respectively. The next places were taken by Minerva School at Keck Graduate Institute (3<sup>rd</sup>), Arizona State University (4<sup>th</sup>), and Hanze University of Applied Sciences (5<sup>th</sup>). Ecole 42 was also ranked in the Top 10.

Looking at the regional distribution of the "Global Top 100," 33 universities were from North America, 33 from Asia, 25 from Europe, 7 from Oceania, and 2 from Africa and South America each. Speaking of the country distributions, there were 32 US, 9 Korean, 7 Australian, and 6 Chinese universities.

As there are many innovative cases presented by these universities, other than those ranked in "Global Top 100," they also present the universities in the rank between 101-200 and 201-300 without indicating their rank. Next year, they plan to announce 300 innovative universities and 500 for the following year.

In the criterion of Industrial Application, Minerva School was ranked in first place, followed by Massachusetts Institute of Technology (2<sup>nd</sup>), California Institute of Technology (3<sup>rd</sup>), Stanford University (4<sup>th</sup>), and Arizona State University (5<sup>th</sup>). In this category,

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universities from the United States took all Top 5 spots.

In the criterion of Entrepreneurial Spirit, Hanze University of Applied Sciences was ranked first, followed by Aalto University (2<sup>nd</sup>), Simon Fraser University (3<sup>rd</sup>), Princeton University (4<sup>th</sup>), and Deggendorf Institute of Technology (5<sup>th</sup>). In this category, European universities showed a strong performance.

In Ethical Value, Ecole 42 was ranked first, followed by the University of Pennsylvania (2<sup>nd</sup>), Harvard University (3<sup>rd</sup>), Florida State University (4<sup>th</sup>), and Franklin University Switzerland (5<sup>th</sup>). In this category, universities from the US and Europe dominated the Top 5.

In Student Mobility and Openness, Boston University ranked first, followed by the National University of Singapore (2<sup>nd</sup>), Seoul National University (3<sup>rd</sup>), Peking University (4<sup>th</sup>), and the University of Copenhagen (5<sup>th</sup>); the performance of Asian Universities was distinguished in this category.

In Crisis Management, Burapha University took first place, followed by the Abdullah Gül University (2<sup>nd</sup>), Florida Gulf Coast University (3<sup>rd</sup>), Franklin University Switzerland (4<sup>th</sup>), and Belgorod State National Research University (5<sup>th</sup>). The universities from developing countries particularly showed strong performance in this category.



Photo 1. Keynote speech by Dong-Sung Cho, former president of Incheon National University and the 2nd president of Hanseatic League of Universities (1) / Original attached



Photo 2. Release of rankings by Hwi-Chang Moon, Chairman of the Institute for Policy and Strategy on National Competitiveness and Professor Emeritus of Seoul National University (1) / Original attached

It has been a while since the competitiveness of higher education in the rapidly changing society has been the topic of debate. In recent years, they have been encountering two major trends of change among universities.

The first one is that the boundary between the universities and business has become blurred as universities began to offer practical education that directly engages with entrepreneurs. Another development is the rise of institutions that are structured to educate students with specialized knowledge in a particular field. Ecole 42 and Singularity University, which are also known as Neo-Boutique University (NBU), are representative of this approach. Although NBUs often do not confer the degree like other traditional universities, they offer very practical education.

The traditional rankings for universities that primarily rely upon quantitative data such as the number of publications, result in the traditional large-size universities dominating the top of the rankings. As such, universities that are innovative such as Minerva School, Ecole 42, and Singularity University were not able to attain top positions in these traditional university rankings. In this respect, the WURI rankings was designed to overcome this problem of the current ranking systems and to encourage universities to embrace more useful innovation for the real world.

The WURI conference helped promote the innovations of higher education by sharing and learning the innovative programs of universities around the world.

**IPSNC (a Seoul School of Integrated Sciences & Technologies)**

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**\*WURI Ranking Homepage: <https://www.wuri.world/>**

IPSNC is dedicated to integrating different approaches from East and West that will help develop a better understanding of competitiveness. By adding Eastern experiences and wisdom to the traditions of Western academics, IPSNC aims to provide a more in-depth assessment of competitiveness. Such an approach will show economies, industries, firms, and individuals how they can strategically enhance their position as they engage with varied and complex global challenges.