

# Rankings and Principals

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**RISIS COURSE – Universities, research organizations, and rankings**

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Universiteit  
Leiden

# University Rankings

- New rankings are being created
- Extensive press coverage and attention
- Increasingly influential
- Universities respond to them

## Why this attention to university rankings?

- **Knowledge** as foundation for economic, social and political power has influenced development of economies
- Most important knowledge producers: **universities**
- Changing perception of universities: from social expenditure to **valuable asset of society**
- Demographic developments force the Western world into a global race for **brainpower**

*Ellen Hazelkorn, Rankings and the reshaping of Higher Education, 2011*

# Rankings

- Prolific global rankings:
  - ARWU University Ranking (Shang Hai Jao Tong University)
  - Times Higher Education Supplement (THE University Ranking)
  - QS University Ranking (*Quacquarelli Symonds*)
  - U-MultiRank
  - CWTS Leiden University Ranking
  - Scimago Institutions Ranking
  - Webometrics Ranking of World Universities
- Rankings based on various elements
  - Metrics and survey information
  - Research and education information
  - Global or field-specific information

# Practical Exercise



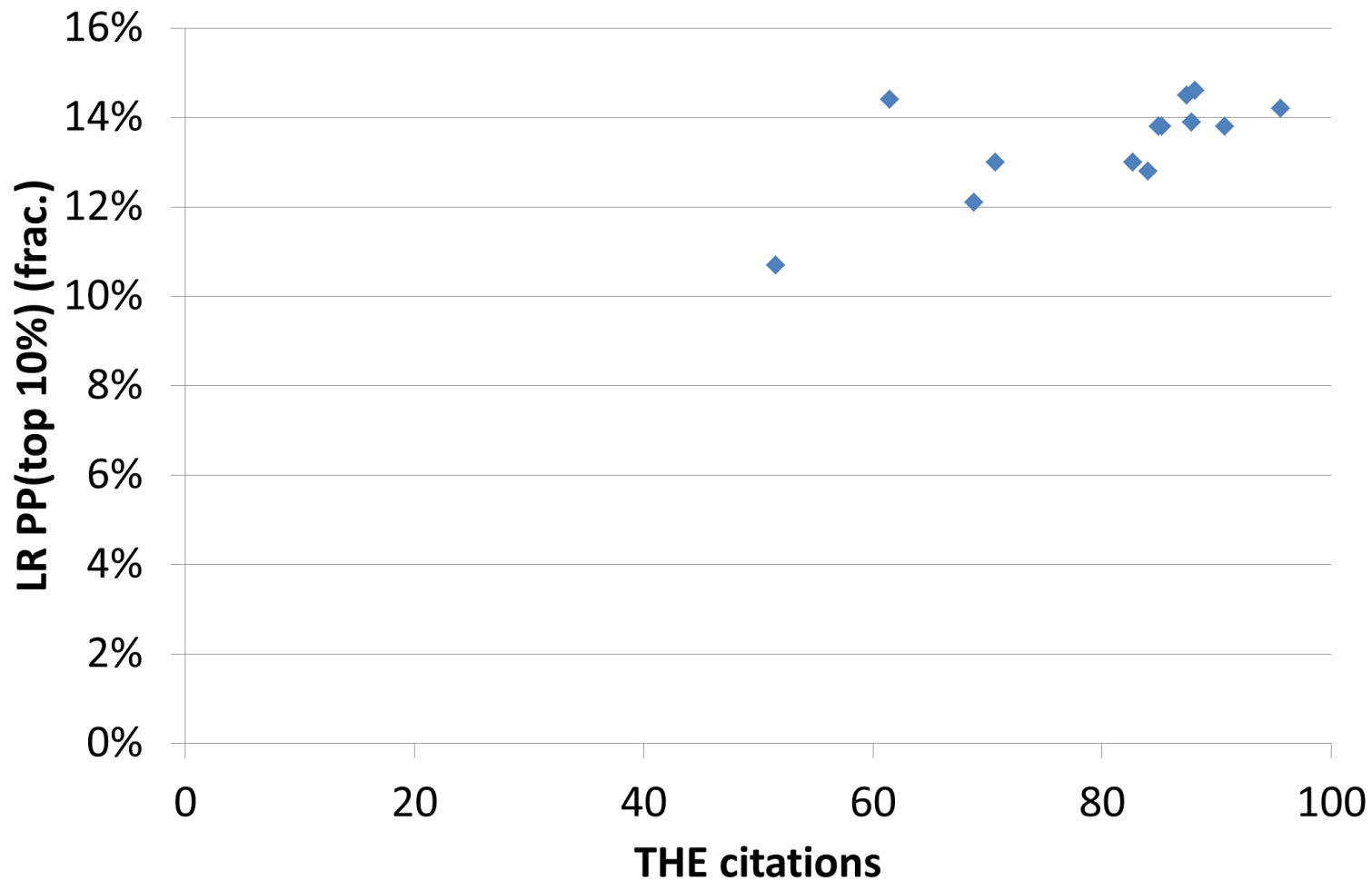
# 1. Choice of country

- We choose the Netherlands, which has 13 universities that are covered both in the THE ranking and in the Leiden Ranking

## 2. Collection of citation statistics

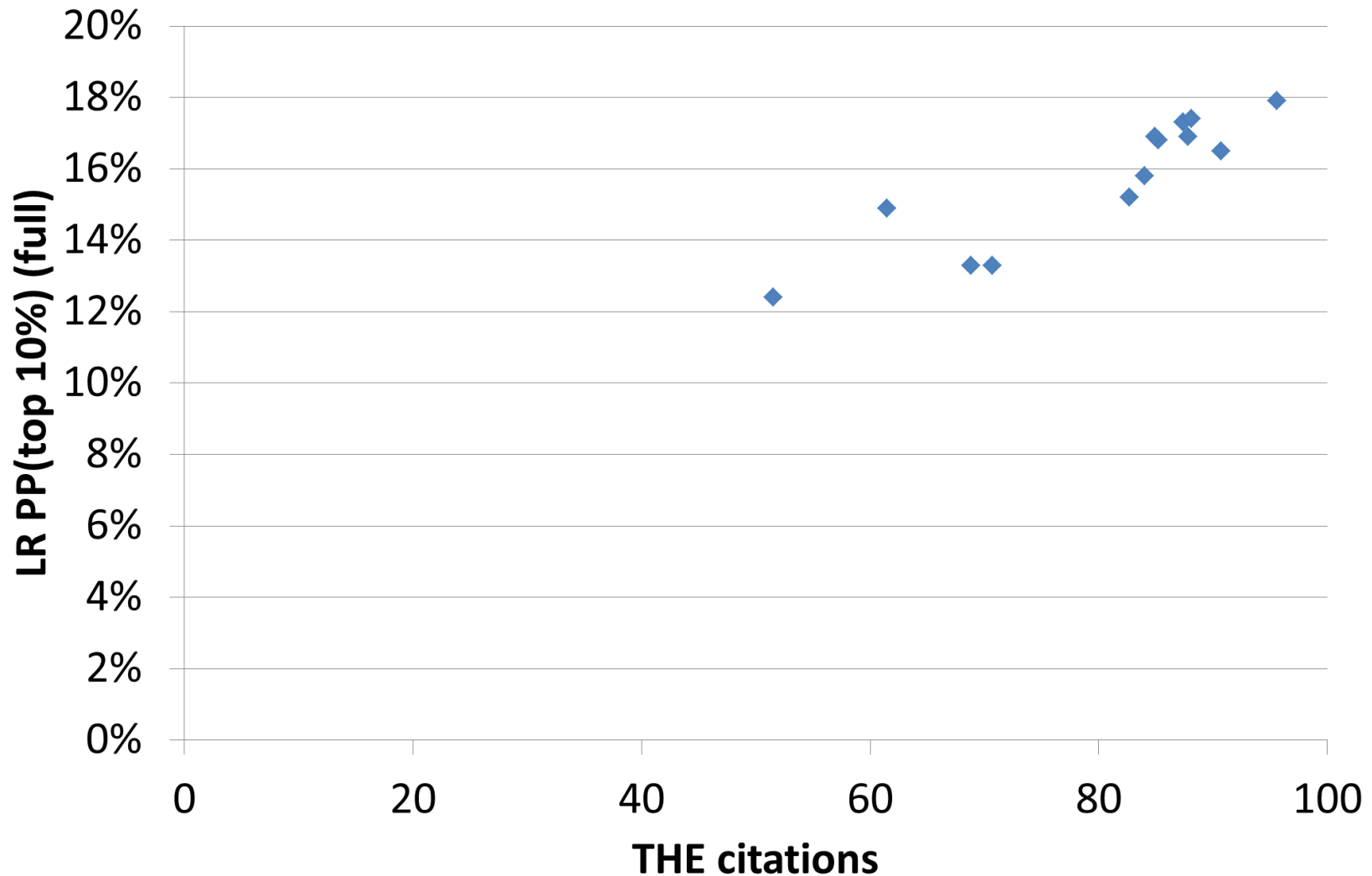
- THE ranking:
  - Citations
- Leiden Ranking:
  - PP(top 10%) (fractional counting)
  - PP(top 10%) (full counting)

### 3. Comparison: THE vs. PP(top 10%) (fractional counting)





### 3. Comparison: THE vs. PP(top 10%) (full counting)



# 4. Methodological differences

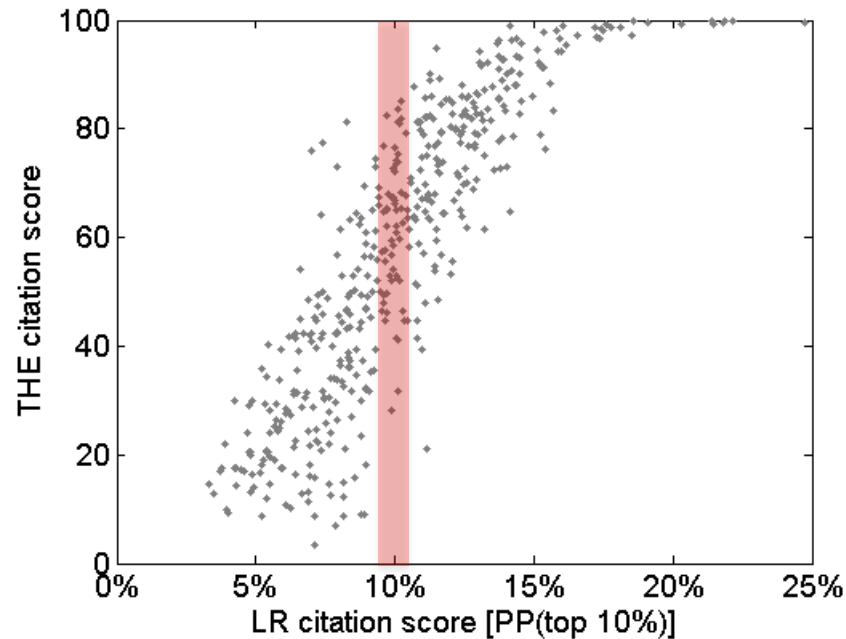
## THE ranking

- Scopus
- All publications
- 2011–2015
- Elsevier data cleaning
- MNCS
- Document type normalization
- Country normalization
- Full counting

## Leiden Ranking

- Web of Science
- Core publications only
- 2012–2015
- CWTS data cleaning
- PP(top 10%)
- No document type normalization
- No country normalization
- Fractional counting

# Overall comparison of THE ranking and Leiden Ranking (all countries)



- Weak correlation between THE and Leiden Ranking citation statistics
- PP(top 10%) of 10% corresponds with THE citation statistics between 30 and 85



# What do these University Rankings capture?

- Academic reputation
- University resources/size
- Learning environment
- Career perspectives (completion & graduation)
- Research output and impact
- *Fashion? Marketing?*

# Main criticisms on university rankings

- Monodimensionality
- Differences may be not statistically robust
- Dependence on university size and subject mix
- Lack of consideration of the input-output relation
- Local differences and characteristics

Thanks for your attention!