

# *Higher Education in the EU 2020*

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# A note of caution...

- THE US military is fighting a new foe.
- It is an enemy renowned for boring its opponents into submission in a hail of bullets.
- Forget the war on terror, the American army has declared war on Microsoft PowerPoint.

– Metro Herald, Dublin Edition, 29<sup>th</sup> April 2010, p.3



# General Stanley McChrystal

(leader of US and Nato forces in Afghanistan)

*“When we understand that slide,  
we’ll have won the war!”*

# Brig Gen HR McMaster

(Co-ordinator of a 2005 military campaign in Iraq)

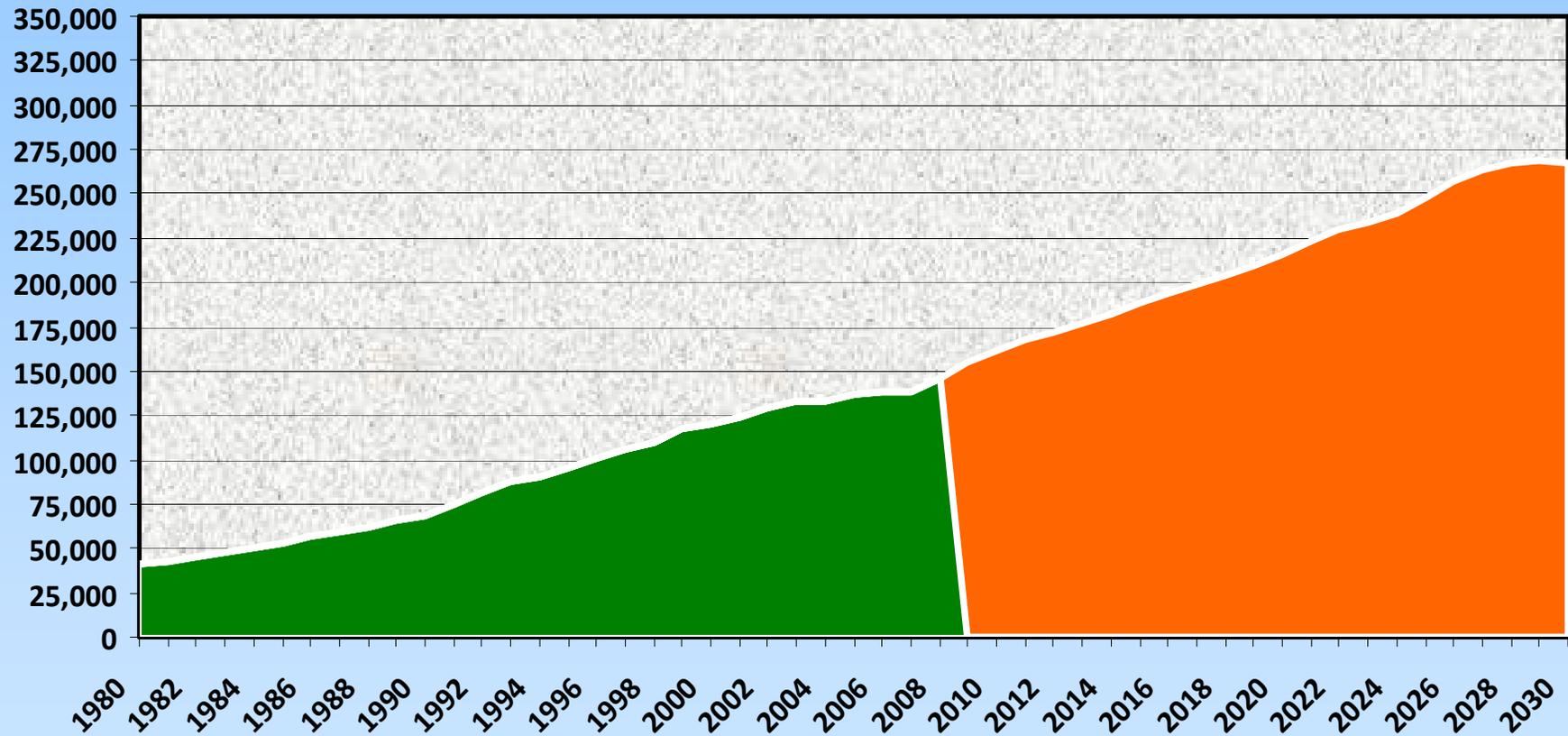
- banned PowerPoint presentations
- compared the programme to an internal threat.
- *“It’s dangerous because it can create the illusion of understanding and the illusion of control,” he said...*
- *‘Some problems in the world are not bullet-isable.’*

# Economic renewal

- *“Knowledge is the new currency of the innovation economy and our long-term economic success is tied inextricably to human and knowledge capital”*  
(Innovation TaskForce Report (2010) p.25)
- *“Encouraging creativity and entrepreneurship throughout the learning process is fundamental for future growth. The crisis, and the recovery from it, is also accelerating the pace of economic restructuring, with a lasting structural effect on the volume and types of skills needed.”*  
(European Commission (2010) *New Skills for New Jobs: 2010*, p.4)

# Growth

Full-time enrolment in Irish higher education - 1980 to 2030



■ Actual up to now ■ Likely future scenario

# Quality and relevance

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- Relevance to the future  
= innovation
  - Job shapers  
not just  
job seekers

# Adaptability

- *“The pace of change renders the future increasingly unpredictable and the key characteristic that we desire of graduates, and of the system from which they graduate, is responsiveness, or adaptability to change...*
- *This refers to the internal responsiveness of the academy to the needs of learners and researchers....*
- *and also to the external responsiveness of the system to the key challenges of our time – social, economic, environmental and civic.”*

– (HEA Submission to the Higher Education Strategy)

# Learning our way forwards

- The levels of participation, to which we now aspire, are unprecedented
- New and innovative approaches will be needed to bring increasing numbers of citizens up to the skill levels and competence levels associated with high levels of educational achievement
- *“Complex adaptive problems require adaptive leadership”* (Heifetz)

# New skills for a new era

- Growing emphasis on foundational skills such as quantitative reasoning, critical thinking, communication skills, team-working skills and the effective use of information technology. The creation and application of knowledge
- Nurturing creativity and the enthusiasm and skills required for continual engagement with learning
- These challenges are obviously best addressed collaboratively
- Increasing focus on the system of higher education and on the coherence and quality of the education system as a whole

The future is coming...

