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# Academic Credit Bank System in Korea

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# Contents



1

Concept & Necessity of ACBS

2

Current Trends & Analysis of ACBS

3

Completion of Accredited Courses &  
Recognition of Prior Learning in ACBS

4

Conclusion

# 1. Concept & Necessity of ACBS

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**Concept of ACBS in Korea: An educational system that accredits various learning experiences and prior learning.**

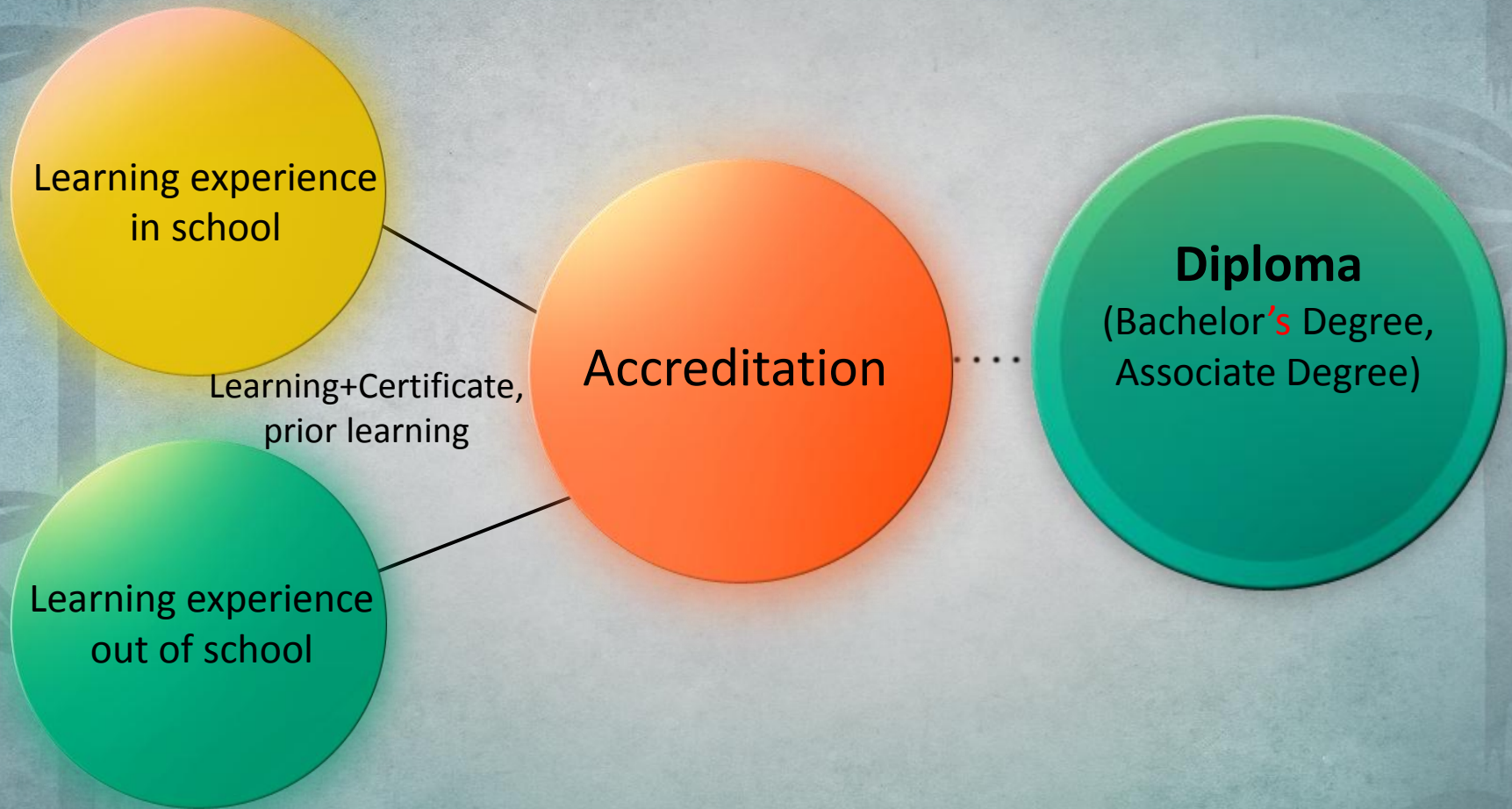
E.g., certificates, exam results inside & outside school according to the Act of Recognition of Credits, etc.

After the accumulation of a certain amount of credits, a diploma can be earned & treated as equivalent to that of regular university or college.

**In 1995, the Presidential Commission for Educational Reform suggested ACBS as a means to achieve an open learning society, to build a lifelong learning society, and to expand the opportunity for higher education.**

**MEST commissioned the Setting & Implementing to Korean Educational Development Institute in 1997, managed by NILE since 2008, when NILE was newly established according to the revised Lifelong Edu. Act.**

# 1. Concept & Necessity of ACBS

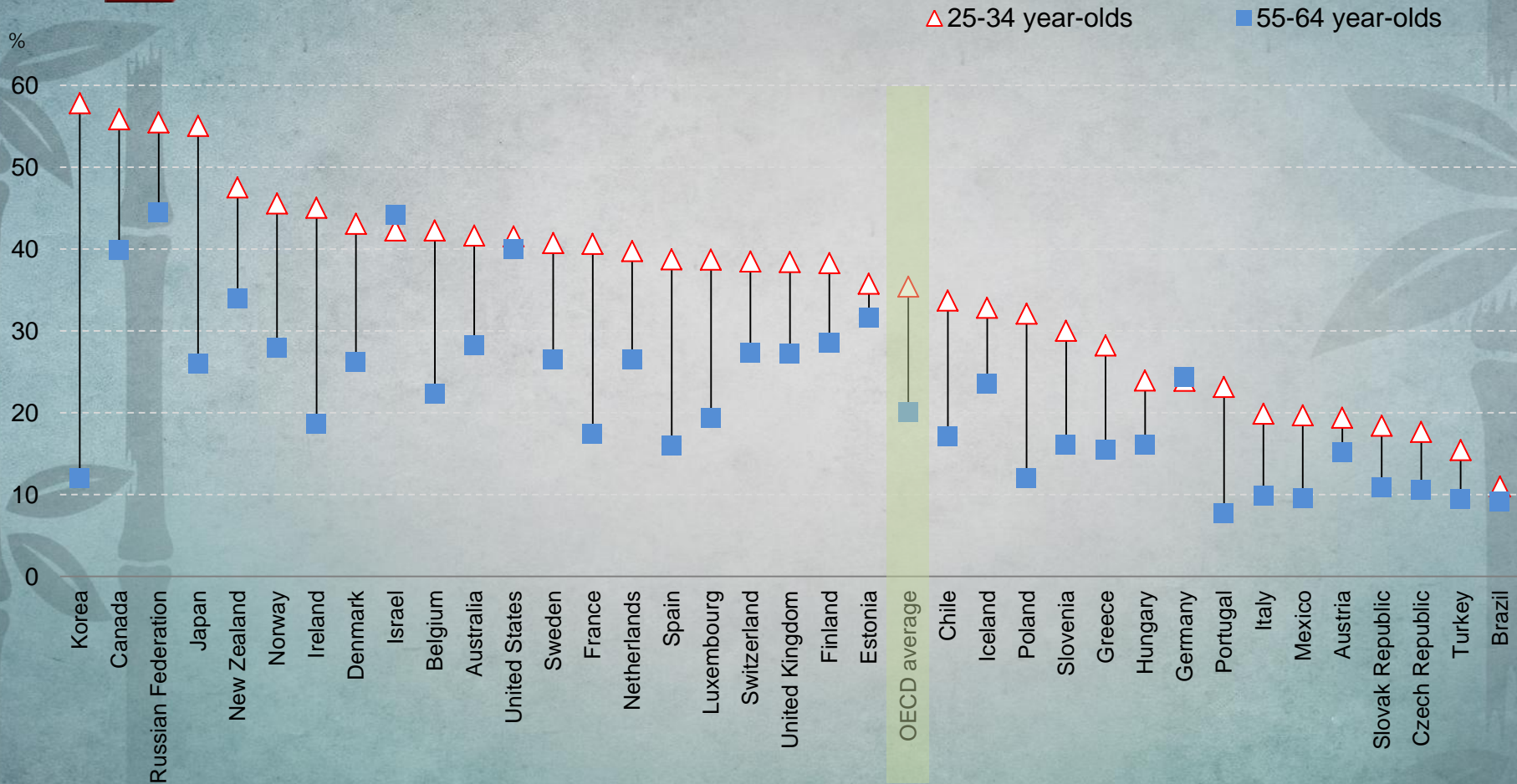


# 2. Current Trends & Analysis of ACBS



1

## Earning Rate of Higher Education Diploma by Age Cohort



**Source : OECD(2010), Education at a glance**

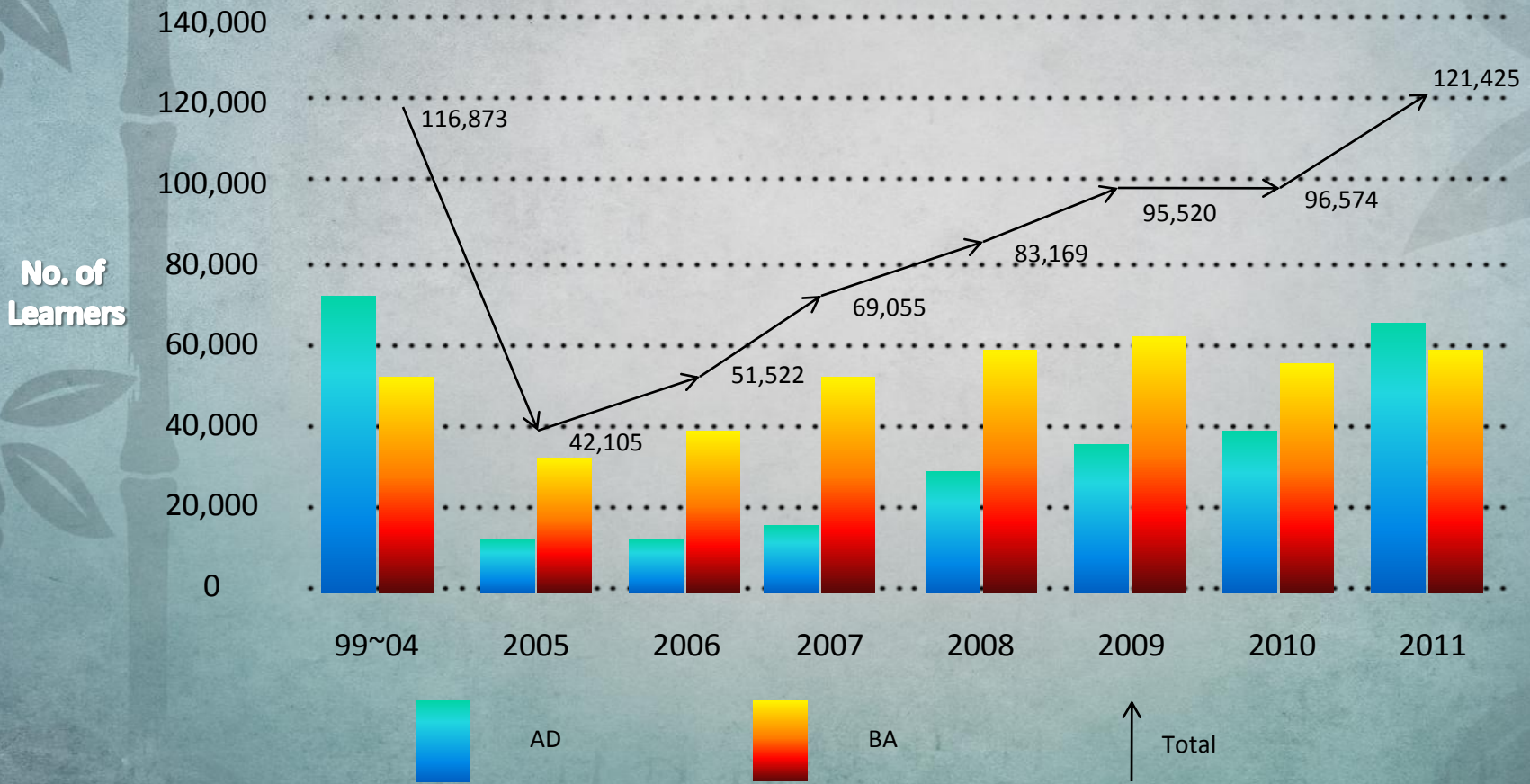
# 2. Current Trends & Analysis of ACBS



2

## Number of Registered Learners in ACBS

(1998-2011: 676,243, Associate Degree: 267,962, Bachelor's Degree: 408,281)

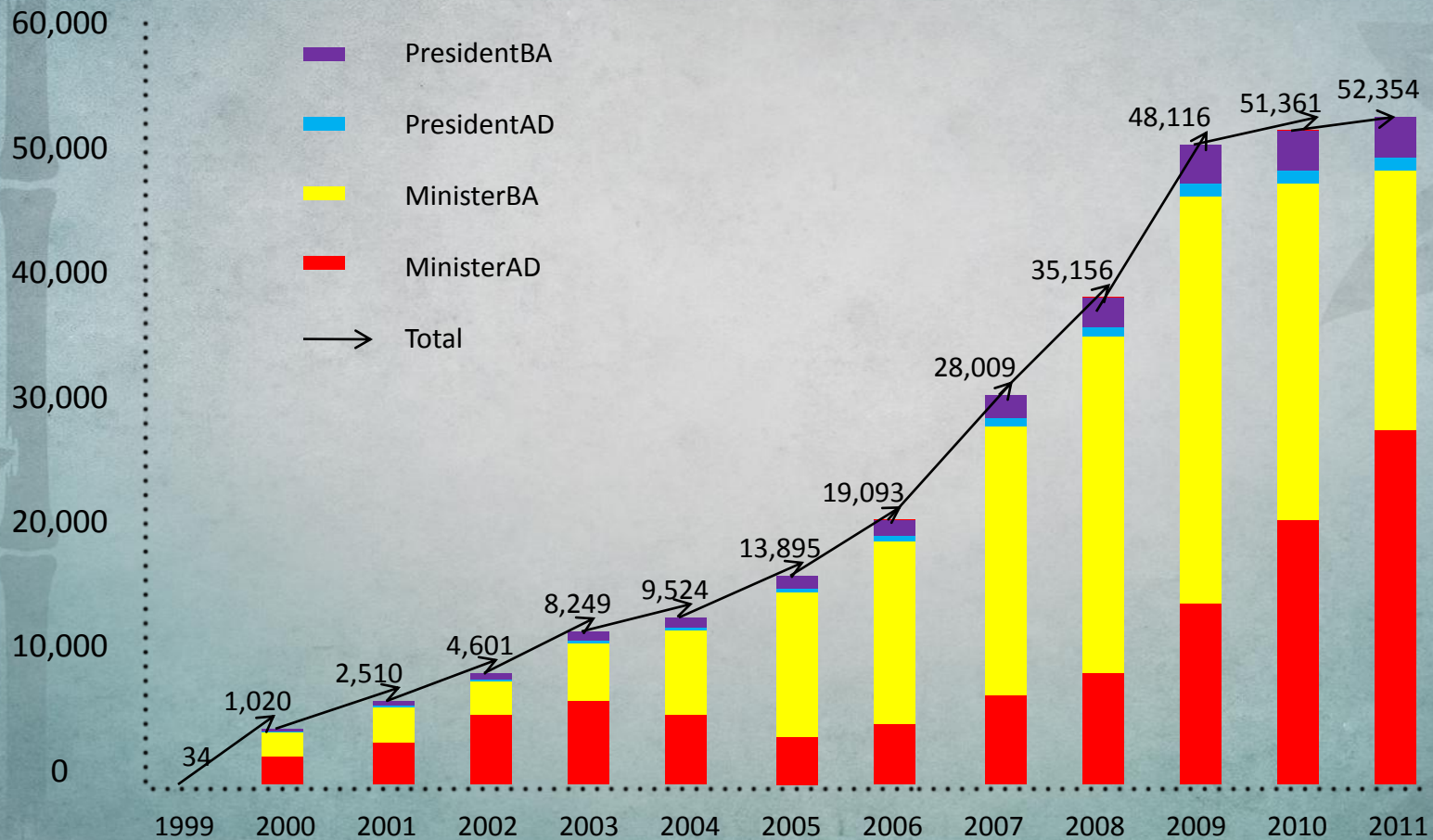


# 2. Current Trends & Analysis of ACBS



3

Number of Degree Holders at ACBS per year  
(Total: 273,922/ Minister: 255,350, President: 18,572/  
Associate Degree: 105,150, Bachelor's Degree: 168,772)



## 2. Current Trends & Analysis of ACBS

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4

### Recognition of Educational Institutes as ACBS

Recognition of ACBS-affiliated institutes: Initially, these institutes are not regular universities. Through strict evaluation, they become ACBS institutes/facilities with educational programs incorporating subjects, instructors, consulting systems, etc., which are all evaluated by MEST & NILE. After they are recognized, subjects can be managed; all subjects would be identified with those of notified Standardized Curriculum by MEST/NILE.

When learners enroll and complete recognized subjects at ACBS-affiliated institutes, credits are earned and accredited the same as those of regular universities or colleges, i.e. having an equivalency of formal credits.

In 2012, recognized ACBS-affiliated institutes amounted to 547. Half of them belong to universities or colleges. This shows us why universities and colleges do not oppose the growth of ACBS, even the number of regular students have been decreasing with the advent of a lower fertility society.



## 2. Current Trends & Analysis of ACBS



4

### Type & Number of ACBS-recognized Institutes

Total 547

- \*Lifelong learning centers affiliated with universities or colleges: 226
- \*In-depth courses in college: 17
- \*Special schools & advanced technical training schools: 5
- \*Public vocational training institutes related to MOEL: 2  
(MOEL: Ministry of Employment & Labor)
- \*Recognized private vocational training institutes related to MOEL : 74
- \*Private vocational & training institutes: 22
- \*Private social studies institutes: 12/ \*Private arts institutes: 10
- \*Central governmental or local governmental educational institutes: 20
- \*Military educational institutes: 28
- \*Lifelong educational facilities: 120
- \*Institutes for important intangible cultural heritage: 11

## 2. Current Trends & Analysis of ACBS



Comparison between ACBS and Regular Universities & Colleges (2011)

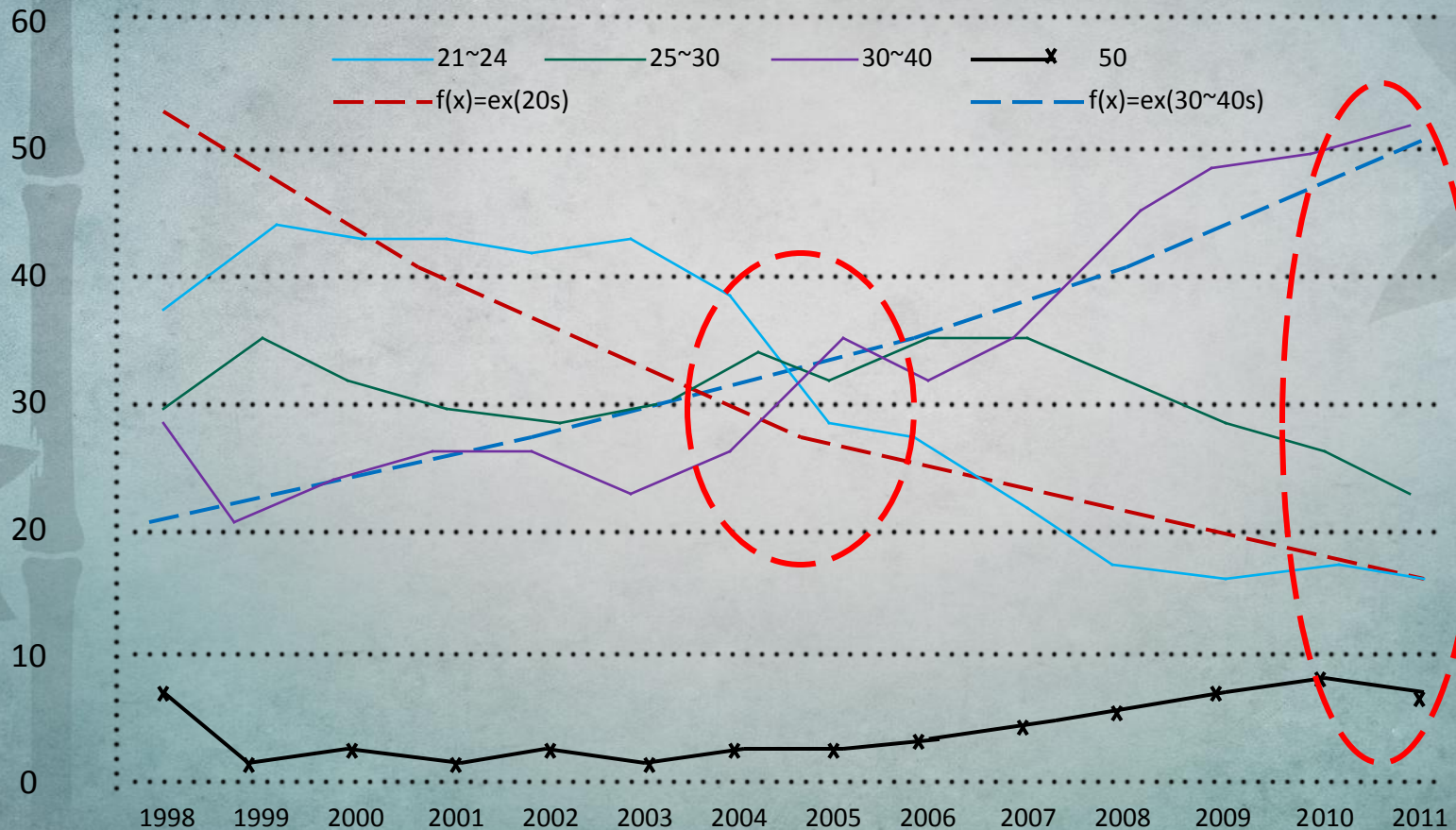
Division	ACBS (A)	Universities & Colleges (B)	A/B
Student No. (Enrolled learners)	121,425 (accumulated 676,243)	2,842,189	23.7%
Diploma earners	48,604	482,183	9.0%
No. of universities & colleges (educational institutes)	547	330	

# 2. Current Trends & Analysis of ACBS



## Expansion of Higher Education Opportunities for Adult Learners

### Learner's Enrollment Trends of ACBS by Age Cohort and Year

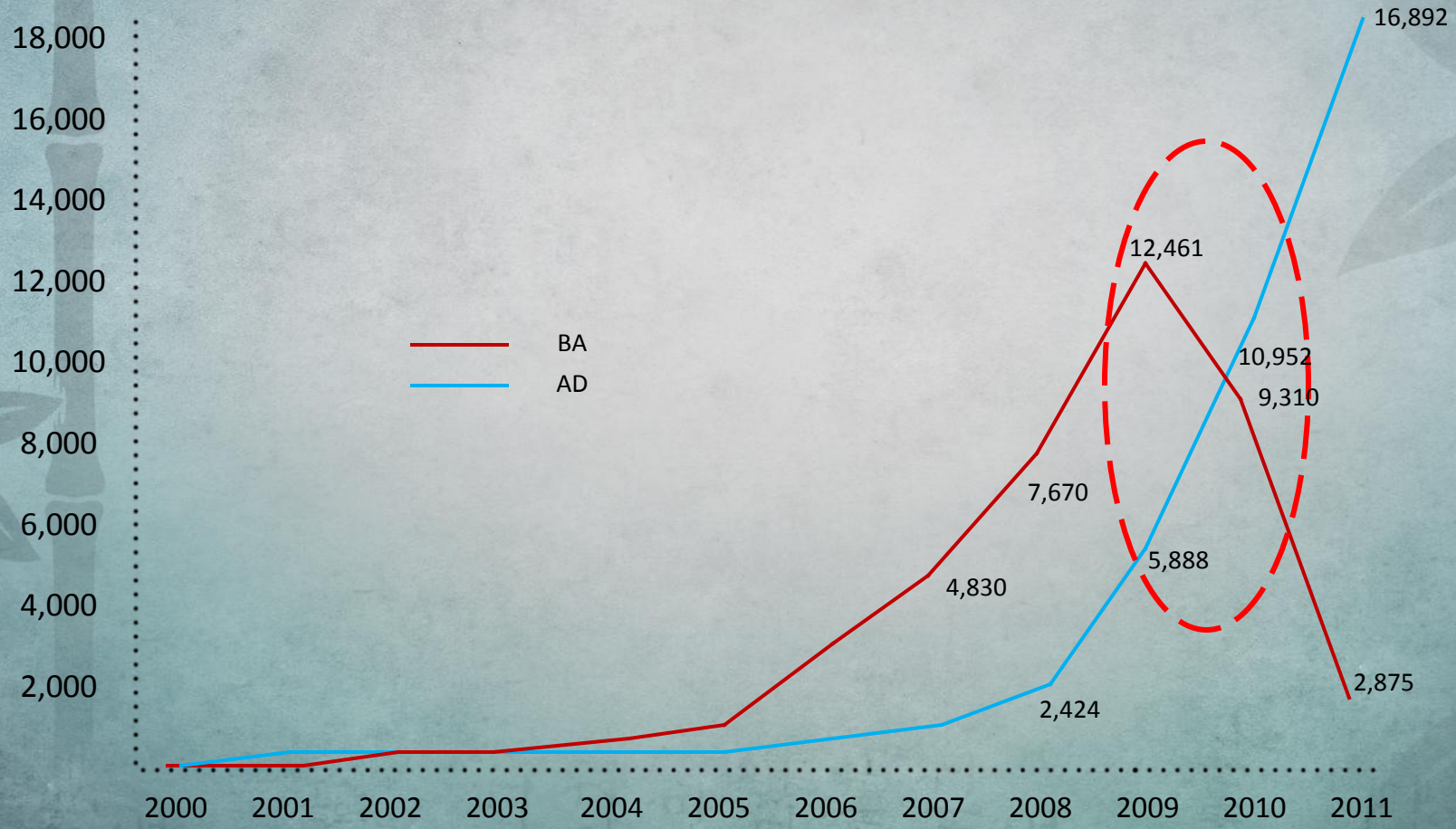


# 2. Current Trends & Analysis of ACBS



## Establishment of SCBS to Continuing Vocational Education

Number of Diploma Earners through ACBS After Graduation from Regular University or College



## 2. Current Trends & Analysis of ACBS

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### Standardized Curriculum (SC) in ACBS

**SC helps educational institutes run their courses and subjects** according to ACBS. It provides the criteria for recognition of educational institutes and for accreditation of learners' credits.

**SC suggests the categories for degrees, majors, major subjects,** liberal arts subjects, optional general subjects & the credits to be completed for each subject to determine the requisites for earning a diploma.

**SC can be managed flexibly. It is considered a labor market** with a coincidence of social needs, academic validity, feasibility, and adequacy of construction of curriculum.

**As of 2012, 109 majors in 24 categories of BA, 109 majors** in 13 associate degrees are notified by the government.

### 3. Completion of Accredited Courses & Recognition of Prior Learning in ACBS



#### Completion of Accredited Courses and Subjects by ACBS

Adult learners who want to earn a higher education diploma enroll at the MEST-NILE recognized educational institutes. They could learn at 547 online and offline institutes. In 2011, 19,919 offline subjects and 1,818 online subjects were recognized.

They had to first think about a learning plan or learning design according to the Standardized Curriculum notified officially by MEST-NILE, and choose a degree type, major and subjects (major, liberal arts, and general).

Division	Bachelor's Degree	Associate Degree	
		2-year	3-year
Total	140 credits & more	80 credits & more	120 credits & more
Major subject	60 credits & more	45 credits & more	54 credits & more
Liberal arts subject	30 credits & more	15 credits & more	21 credits & more
Optional general subject	48 credits & more	36 credits & more	42 credits & more

### 3. Completion of Accredited Courses & Recognition of Prior Learning in ACBS



#### Recognition of Prior Learning 1: Certificate Acquirements

Division	No. of Certificates	No. of Accredited Certificates in ACBS (Total 581)	Rate of Accreditation (2012)	
National Certificate	National Vocational Certificate (NVC)	512 under MOEL	356	69.5%
	National Certificate except NVC (NC)	132 under 23 Ministries	141	-
Private Certificate	Officially Approved Private Certificate	88 under 12 Ministries	84	95.5%
	Private Certificate	About 2,610	non credit	-
	Company Certificate	About 110 under 55 Companies	non credit	-

### **3. Completion of Accredited Courses & Recognition of Prior Learning in ACBS**



Recognition of Prior Learning 2: BA Degree Exam for SDL

**NEBD enables the self-directed learner to get a BA degree by passing the required exam.** NEBD aims to facilitate lifelong learning through a 4-stage process of qualifying exams.

**4 steps of the applicant's qualifications for a BA degree:**

- \*1<sup>st</sup> step: liberal arts exam; if passed, has the qualification equivalent of having taken a liberal arts course at a regular university or college
- \*2<sup>nd</sup> step: major-basic exam
- \*3<sup>rd</sup> step: major-advance exam
- \*4<sup>th</sup> step: comprehensive exam

**9 Majors at NEBD: Korean Language and Literature, English Linguistics and Literature, Business Administration, Law, Public Administration, Early Childhood Education, Home Economics, Computer Science, and Nursing**

**Even one fails or dropouts in the midst of pursuing a degree,** s/he can be accredited credits until the 3<sup>rd</sup> stage.



### 3. Completion of Accredited Courses & Recognition of Prior Learning in ACBS



#### Recognition of Prior Learning 3: Possession or Transmission Education Results of Important Intangible Cultural Heritage (IICH)

**In modern society, it is becoming more and more difficult to preserve the IICH that is easily disappearing. Transmission education does not count as a formal education. Disciples who want to a degree must attend formal universities or colleges outside transmission edu. institute.**

**ACBS accredits learning experiences from a traditional transmission education as formal credits.**

**There are 119 kinds of IICH, so 119 majors and 7 different categories of degrees were notified : traditional handicraft, traditional music, traditional performance, traditional dance, traditional liquor-making, traditional food-making, and traditional martial arts.**

**The ACBS also accredits transmission education certificates as credits unequally from masters, master assistants, completers, and to disciples or learners.**

### **3. Completion of Accredited Courses & Recognition of Prior Learning in ACBS**

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#### **Recognition of Prior Learning 4: Completion of Part-time Courses at School**

Completion of part-time courses can occur in regular universities or colleges. After part-time students learn at school, they would be accredited by the ACBS.

#### **Recognition of Prior Learning 5: Acquirement of University or College**

Acquirement of a university or college credit helps people who have dropped out of regular school. The credits they previously achieved can be accredited through the ACBS, allowing them to continue their learning process.

Also, if one desires to pursue another degree other than the one s/he has already achieved, s/he only has to take part of the courses. In such a case, there is no need to repeat any courses, thus saving time and money, allowing one to learn more advanced courses.

# 4. Conclusion



**ACBS works as a successful educational system as lifelong learning society today requires higher education, new skills, and knowledge. The reasons for success: no particular enrollment process, higher accessibility to educational institutes, a flexible curriculum, many majors.**

**Most importantly, ACBS includes recognition of prior learning** so that learners can save time and money, enabling one to learn more advanced courses.

**Recognition of prior learning as credits in ACBS: recognition of credits for various certificates, examination results of the National Examination for BA, transmission education results of important intangible cultural heritage, part-time learning results, and the credits from regular universities and colleges.**

# 4. Conclusion



**Since 2008, Accounts for Lifelong Learning (ALL) records,** accumulates, and provides the opportunity to get elementary and junior secondary school diplomas. Adult literacy education, prior learning which cannot be recognized by the ACBS due to a lower level than higher education, private certificates, author, patents, volunteer activities, and job background.

**ACBS will continue to expand by continuously corresponding** needs of the lifelong learning society, the demands of learners and institutes, and the government's request. Accreditations to Industrial masters, professional technologists, talented people in arts and sports, military career, international certificates, and prior learning from foreign countries for international migration of labor will be forecasted.

# 4. Conclusion



**Quality control is more required, institutes will be compete each other** for more learners, online classes overly expanded, degradation of ACBS and degree mills will be happened under the neo-liberalism. These kinds of expansion without quality control threatens the *raison d'être* of the ACBS.