

ROTARY CLUB OF CANTERBURY

Millennium Scholarship Fund Trustees Meeting held at the Kent & Canterbury Club at 6.00pm on 7th February 2018

MINUTES

Attendance and Apologies

Present:

Sharon Jordan (SJ)
Lewis Norris (LN)
Neil Fraser (NF)
Martin Ward (MW)
Peer Le Fleming (PLF)

1. Treasurer's Report

- (a) The Trustees noted the Treasurer's Report of the Millennium Fund (copy annexed)
- (b) The Trustees noted that the payments made to the Mini Group Exchange are to be refunded to the MSTF from the Mini Group Exchange budget.
- (c) The Trustees noted the need to apply the income for charitable purposes.

2. Grant Applications 2016/17 and 2017/18

- (a) The Trustees noted the summary of grant applications for 2016/17 and 2017/18. An updated summary is attached.
- (b) The Trustees noted the changing nature of the applications for grant aid.
- (c) PLF raised the difficulties of organising presentations to the Club by grant recipients. Grant recipients returning in September 2017 were offered presentation slots in February/March 2018. SJ said that requests for presentation slots for returning grant recipients should be addressed to her and she would ensure that arrangements were made for presentations to be made at the next available evening meeting – even if that meant starting the meeting slightly early.

3. Trustees

- (a) The Trustees noted the terms of the Trust Deed. PLF will provide consent forms to be signed by the current Trustees to be retained with the Minutes of the Trustees Meetings.
- (b) PLF advised as to the power of appointing Trustees which is vested in the Club President. The power of removing Trustees is vested in the Club at a duly authorised meeting. Any Trustee who ceases to be a member of the Club also ceases to be a Trustee. Otherwise the Trust Deed is silent as to the administrative procedures required for the appointment and retirement of Trustees. PLF will advise as to changes/improvements required for the administrative arrangements.
- (c) The Trustees considered that the number of Trustees should be increased so as to include the President Elect and the immediate Past President and a Club Member. PLF advised as

to how extra Trustees could be appointed as Trustees and will prepare advice to the Trustees which can be presented to the Club at a suitable business meeting. PLF advised that the Trust Deed was silent as to a quorum of Trustees and that it would be appropriate for any amendments to the Trust Deed to provide for a quorum. There is administrative guidance as to a quorum to award grants but the authority for that administrative provision is not clear.

(d) In summary, the options are:

- i. for additional Trustees to be appointed ad hoc at a Special General Meeting once a year;
or
- ii. for the Trust Deed to be amended by the Club at a Special General Meeting (clause 7(ii)).

4. Criteria for a Grant

- (a) The Trustees discussed at some length the criteria presently applied to applications for a Grant from the Millennium Scholarship Trust Fund. The current administrative guidance is as set out in the summary prepared by Rtn Leslie Stephenson dated 20th October 2008 available on the Club website. The focus then was on young people aged 18 to 25 years undertaking charitable work abroad during a gap year. The Trustees considered the Report prepared by Martin Ward on the changing nature of volunteering in 2016/18 and also the changing nature of the grant applications.
- (b) The Trustees noted the very large pool of young people attending the two universities in Canterbury, some of whom are interested in undertaking shorter periods of volunteering through charities abroad than contemplated by the traditional “gap year” model.
- (c) The Trustees also noted that there had been some applications for grant support from younger applicants still at school and undertaking charitable work abroad through charities organised through their school.
- (d) The Trustees considered that the administrative guidelines should be amended so as:
 - i. to include all young persons in the age range of 25 years or under (but limited to UK passport holders for regulatory and compliance reasons);
 - ii. the connection with Canterbury should be enlarged to include qualifying young persons who “live, work or study in the Canterbury area”.

5. The Changing Nature of Volunteering

- (a) The Trustees considered the helpful report prepared by Martin Ward on the changing nature of volunteering 2016/18 annexed.

6. Promotion of the Millennium Scholarship Trust Fund

- (a) The Trustees considered that there should be a greater emphasis on promoting the trust fund through social media as well as through the Club’s website, Facebook and Twitter feed. Traditional flyers sent to local schools could also include the two universities (e.g. through the colleges and JCRs) and advertising at the Beaney Institute.
- (b) The Trustees noted that Brian Dobinson had good connections with local schools and might well assist in promoting the Millennium Scholarship Trust Fund to the schools. Martin Ward will liaise with Julie Resa regarding improving a social media campaign.

7. MSTF Investments

- (a) The Trustees felt that the investment policy guidelines for Trust funds should be to maintain the capital value of the fund but not to reinvest income which should be specifically earmarked and expended for charitable purposes. If income is underdrawn in one year, such income should be carried forward to be available the following year
- (b) The Trustees will give further consideration to investment strategy and the possible need for review of investments with financial advisers.

8. AOB

- (a) The Trustees confirmed that the application by Amy Scott should go forward.
- (b) PLF to contact Girlings to see whether the original Trust Deed is held by Girlings and if it is for the Trust Deed to be forwarded so as to be retained by the Club.
- (c) PLF to prepare a Briefing Note on the issues raised by the Trustees Meeting for approval by the Trustees with a view to the Briefing Note, once approved, being submitted to the Club with the target date of the April 2018 business meeting.

9. Date of Next Meeting - To be advised

Rotary Club of Canterbury Millennium Scholarship Trust Fund (MSF)

Report to MSF Trustees Meeting, 7th February 2018

Why has there been a decline in applications for MSF funding?

Martin Ward, former Trustee and Immediate Past-President, Rotary Club of Canterbury

1. Background

2018 is the first year the Millennium Scholarship Trust Fund (MSF) will be available to 'Millennials' - people born in the year it was founded to mark. Since 2000, Society has seen huge changes. Neither the banking collapse of 2007 with its ensuing austerity, nor the dramatic increase in university tuition fees, nor growth of the internet, nor the way Society communicates with itself could have been foreseen at the Millennium.

For several years the MSF Trustees have seen a significant tail-off in applications to the fund for travel grants. This is in spite of contacts being maintained with local secondary schools and, more recently, the use of Social Media¹.

Whilst the Trustees have a duty to ensure funds are disbursed effectively, they also have a duty to adapt to changing conditions and to ensure there isn't an unwarranted build-up of funds. This report, whilst not designed to provide a blueprint for the future, is nonetheless intended to contextualise the downturn in applications and offer some suggestions as to how best the constituency of young people who may wish to take part in volunteering projects overseas can be reached.

This report uses publicly available research data and references are provided accordingly.

2. Objective

The objective of this report is two-fold:

1. To identify why there has been a tail-off in MSF applications
2. Using that knowledge, to identify how potential applicants can be reached in the future to ensure the spirit of the Millennium Scholarship Trust Fund is maintained.

In short, to ensure the MSF is still relevant to young people as it approaches the third decade of the 21st Century.

3. Changes since 2000

Since the inception of the MSF in 1999, there has been a seismic change in Higher Education. Today thousands more students attend university, but tuition fees have gone up too. In 1999, fees were capped at £1,000. Today some universities are advertising fees of £9,250 – an increase of 825%. Looking to the future, legislation is in place allowing further increases in line with inflation.

¹ Using the Club's Twitter and Facebook feeds and onward copying messages to local community Facebook pages such as 'Canterbury Now', 'Canterbury Residents Group' and 'Canterbury Today – Have Your Say'.

The way society communicates with itself has changed significantly since 1999. People wrote letters, rather than emails and there was no social media then.

4. Has the number of 18 to 25-year-olds in the population changed since 2000?

As people live longer, the proportion of 18-25-year-olds as a proportion of the of the population has been falling steadily since the mid-1970s. This is borne out by data published by the Office of National Statistics:

Year	0 to 15 years (%)
1976	24.5
1986	20.5
1996	20.7
2006	19.2
2016	18.9

Source: ONS, Overview of the UK population: July 2017

5. Has the number of students going-on to Higher Education changed since 2000?

There were 1,268,000 students aged 18-24 in all sectors of full-time education at the start of 1999. This rose to 1,873,000 at the end of the 2016 academic year, an increase of 47.7%². See Fig.1 for year-on-year increases. In the Higher Education (University) sector, 2017 saw a fall in the total number of students entering higher education from the 2016 peak of slightly over 535,000. See Fig. 2.

6. What's the picture locally?

Whilst there are regional statistics showing the numbers of 18-year olds that go on the Higher Education, a more locally relevant measure is that which shows the take-up by each of the 650 UK Parliamentary Constituencies. The constituencies are ranked against the percentages of 18-year olds in the constituency going on the Higher Education³. The MSF catchment area is covered by the three constituencies of Canterbury, North Thanet (Herne Bay and villages), and Faversham and Mid-Kent (Boughton, Selling and villages). The relevant figures are: Canterbury (29.9%, 345 out of 650), Faversham and Mid-Kent (29.4%, 361/650) and North Thanet (25.9%, 491/650). The highest percentage in the UK is 63.2% in Wimbledon, the lowest is Bristol South with 14.3%. In Kent, Tunbridge Wells has the highest percentage (44%) and is ranked 49/650, the lowest is Dover (22.4%) ranked 587/650. Canterbury is just below both the local and the national averages. Faversham and North Thanet are lower⁴. **Note: Seven out of ten 18-year olds from Canterbury do not go on to Higher Education.**

7. Gap Year Statistics?

There are no official statistics available that show the numbers of young people taking either a traditional Gap Year or a vacation (regardless of length) which includes an element of volunteering. The Year Out Group⁵, the umbrella organisation of the student travel industry offering voluntary

² Office of National Statistics (ONS)

³ UCAS (the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service): Various reports.

⁴ See Fig.4: Percentage of UK 18-Year-olds entering Higher Education by Parliamentary Constituency.

⁵ The Year Out Group, represents volunteering/travel groups/charities such as Latitude (sic.) Global Volunteering, Raleigh International and Project Trust.

placements overseas, uses the measure of the number of students who defer their entry for a year having received an offer of a place. See Fig. 3

8. Has the nature of student travel changed?

According to Stefan Wathan, the CEO of the Year Out Group⁶ there was a big dip in entry deferrals in 2011, and this is borne out by official data published by UCAS. See Figs 2 and 3., for numbers of acceptances and deferments between 2008 and 2017.

Wathan states that the numbers deferring their university place peaked in 2008 and then fell away gradually until 2011 when there was a big dip. The reason for this dip is widely regarded as a consequence of the latest increase in tuition fees. The number of deferrals, nearly eight years on, has only just recovered to its pre-2011 level.

If the overall numbers of students deferring places has been hit hard, the proportion of those seeking deferrals has suffered even more. Whilst Figs. 1 and 2 show a growth trend for both all full-time education for over 18s and those specifically entering Higher Education, the numbers of deferrals (Fig. 3) show the latter has not kept up.

Wathan attributes this to greater post-school opportunities for young people including internships, apprenticeships, training programmes etc., as well as university. Increasing student debt is also an issue with anecdotal evidence point to increasing numbers of students working alongside their studies to make ends meet.

Against this evidence, it's not unreasonable, therefore, to conclude that with a smaller percentage of students opting for a deferred place, fewer students are embarking on the traditional Gap Year.

9. Is the age of volunteering over?

Wathan thinks not - although it must be recognised he is a mouthpiece for a segment of the student travel industry which supports Gap Year projects. He says, that whilst traditional Gap Years are in decline, there is evidence young people are opting for shorter periods of travel/volunteering - although he has no official data to back this up. He does concede there are many more opportunities for young people in the market place which makes it harder for gap year organisations to maintain their market share. He offers the following to support his case that volunteering overseas is still viable:

- Volunteering is still high on young peoples' to do lists.
- Many opt for shorter programmes, which means they can be achieved in vacation time rather than taking a whole year out.
- Volunteering is still the most likely activity for a young person looking to do a structured activity - though many are also looking for paid work or internships.

Wathan, however, admits there are challenges to the traditional model:

- It's becoming harder to distinguish between gap year programmes (which might be described as being structured and purposeful in some way) and independent travel, adventure/culture/lifestyle 'holidays'.
- Providers, offering both types of travel experiences, have similar looking online marketing.

⁶ Various correspondence between Stefan Wathan, CEO, Year Out Group and MW

- Cost and time play a big factor in decision making. Young people have less of both.
- Young people, because we are in the mobile digital and social media age, are more likely to want an experience that encompasses 'doing good' (however brief that may be), combined with something adventurous (e.g. bungee jumping) and socialising/partying with their peers. It appears that those organisations that can package these elements successfully are attracting customers. Some of the participants may, in an earlier time, have opted for a more traditional gap year).
- Perhaps traditional smaller providers are struggling disproportionately to compete.

10. Communication: How the MSF connects with its target audience

As part of my correspondence with Stefan Wathan I was keen to sound-out his observations on how we contact potential MSF candidates. He made the obvious statement that during the life of the MSF, electronic communication and the use of social media has become the norm. Today's applicants will not have known a time of no internet⁷, email or Facebook⁸.

Having looked at the MSF section of our website, Stefan Wathan made this observation: "I understand why you ask people to request an application form and it isn't hard for young people to email you, but you might consider providing an online form and give more details about how decisions on your grants are made and state the average grant. Young people are very quick to leave a website so the more information you can give them upfront and preferably a form they can fill out on a phone, the more likely they might be to submit their application."

Note: The MSF section of the website now contains downloadable copies of the application form in both MS Word and PDF formats⁹.

11. Conclusion: What does all this tell us about why fewer young people are applying for MSF grants and what should the trust do to meet the challenge?

- There is clear evidence which shows the established measure of Gap Year participants – acceptance deferrals - plummeted in 2011 and, whilst overall student numbers increased, deferral numbers are barely back to pre-2011 levels.
- Finance is clearly an issue. The exponential increase in tuition fees has had a major impact on students' finances and that is taking its toll on additional activities.
- The 'Gap Year Industry' has become fragmented with more companies offering a greater variety of options and experiences to the traditional model.
- Young people are opting for 'volunteering-lite' expeditions, not necessarily with recognised charities. They want adventure and fun as well as having something to put on their CVs.
- We need to examine how we promote the MSF. Society as a whole - and young people in particular - no longer write or receive letters. Communication is electronic and massively uses Social Media. Letters can still be written to local schools, as can an annual letter to the local paper from the President promoting the fund, but a clear strategy needs to be developed which includes Facebook and Twitter - and any future Social Media platforms yet to appear.
- The club website must be promoted as the one-stop-shop for further information and an application form.

⁷ See Fig.5: Internet Users Worldwide

⁸ See Fig.6: Growth in number of Facebook users

⁹ See <http://www.rotarycanterbury.org.uk/activities/millennium-trust-details.html>

- Greater thought must also be given to promoting the fund to the post-18 age group. Those who have moved-on from 6th form school education and those working or who are not in full-time education.
- Perhaps the MSF should contact directly volunteering charities such as Latitude, Raleigh International, Project Trust etc., asking that they direct any Canterbury applicants to us for possible consideration?

12. Further reading

- End of Cycle Report 2017 by UCAS Analysis and Research. It's a very dry academic document, but it does provide a useful guide to those entering Higher Education.
<https://www.ucas.com/corporate/data-and-analysis/ucas-undergraduate-releases/ucas-undergraduate-analysis-reports/2017-end-cycle-report>
- State of the Nation 2017 - Social mobility in Great Britain, The Social Mobility Commission
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/state-of-the-nation-2017>
- Social mobility: The worst places to grow up poor. BBC Online item on the State of the Nation 2017 report
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/amp/education-42112436>

Fig 1. Total students in full-time education: Jan-Mar 1999 to Jan Mar 2016. Source: ONS

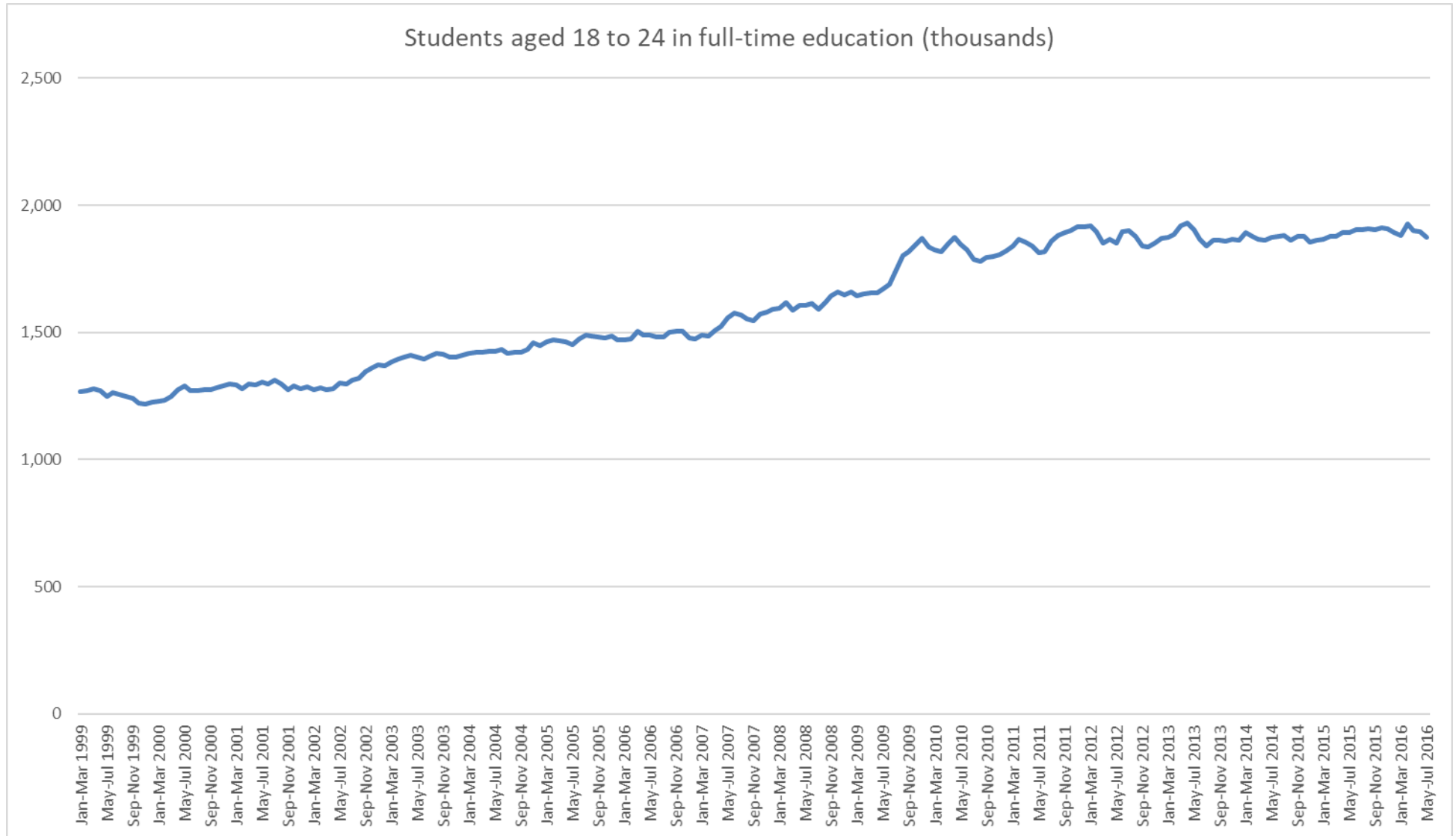


Fig 2. Total of UK Higher Education Acceptances
Source: UCAS End of Cycle Report 2017

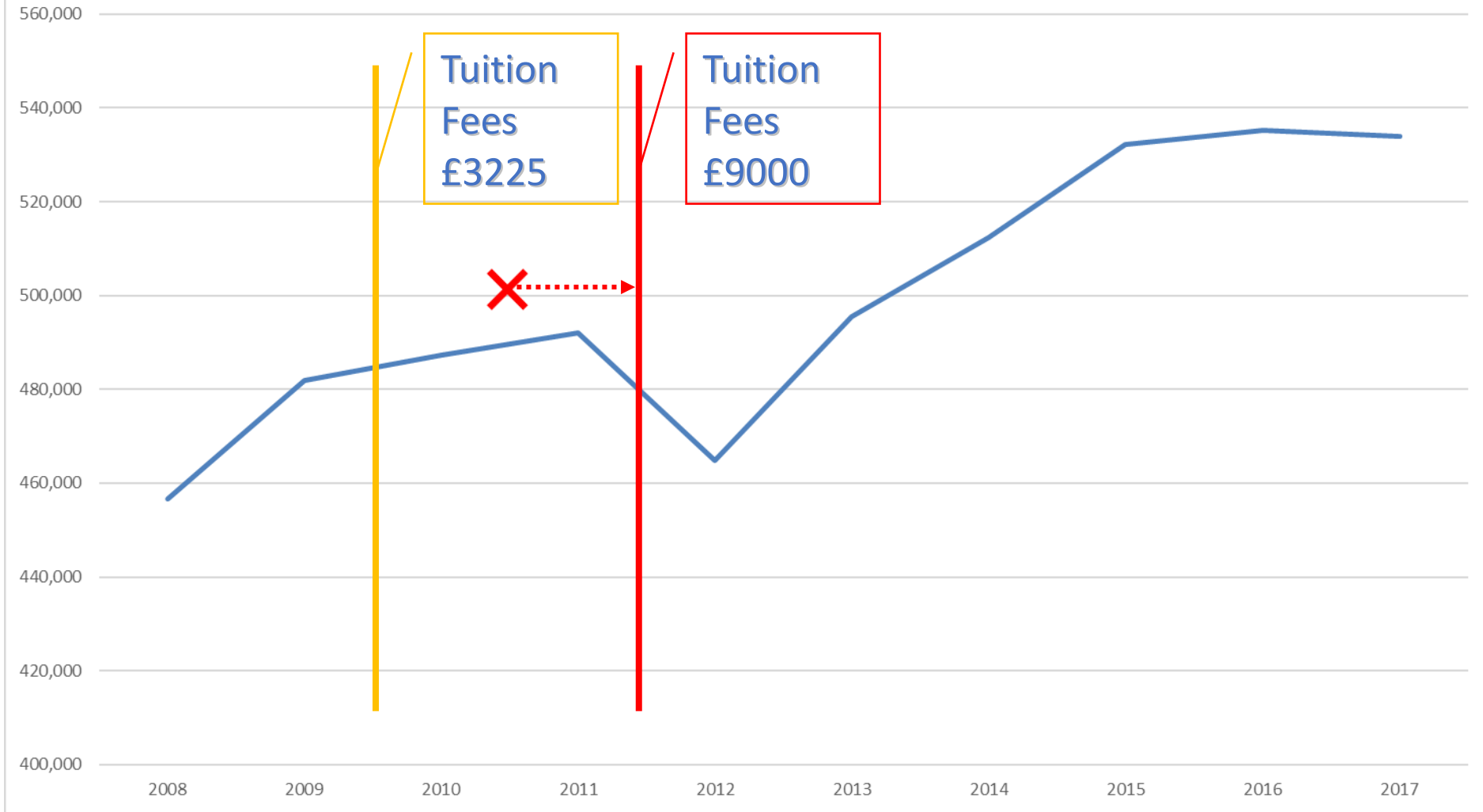


Fig 3. Deferred Acceptances by year/age-group. Source: UCAS End of Cycle Report 2017

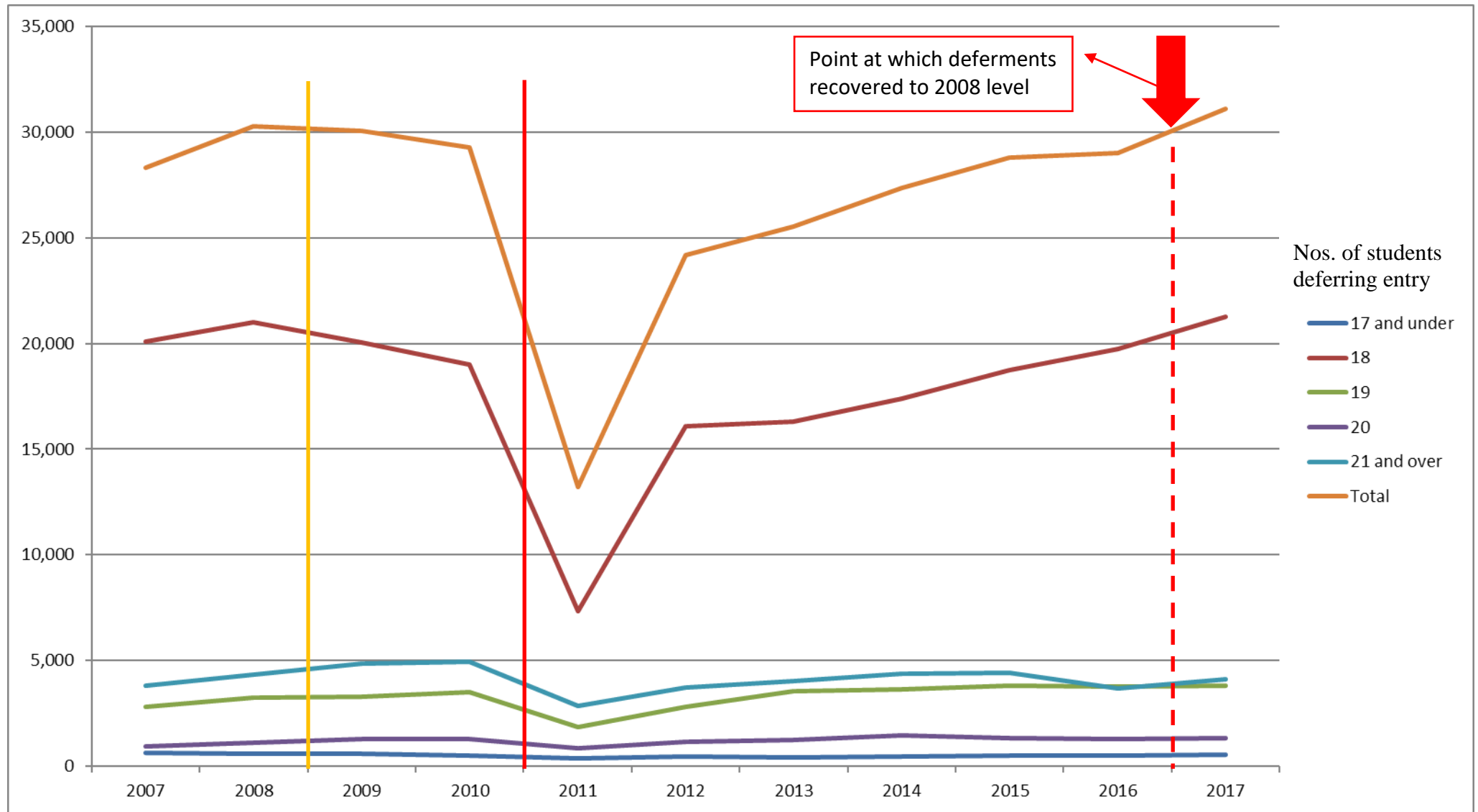


Fig 4. Percentage of UK 18 Year-olds entering Higher Education by Parliamentary Constituency. Source: UCAS End of Cycle Report 2017

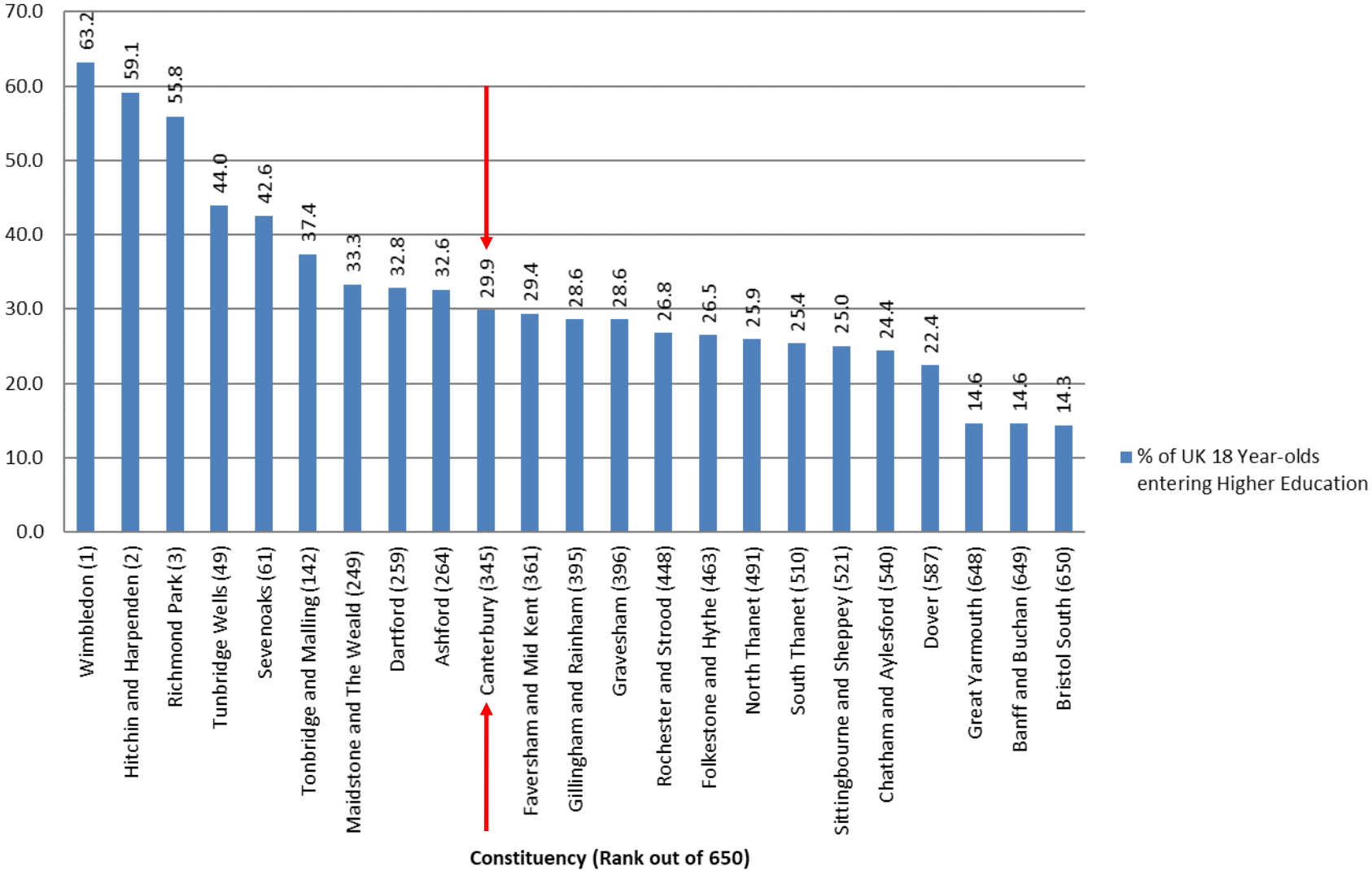


Fig. 5

Internet Users Worldwide 1995-2017

Source: Internet World Stats

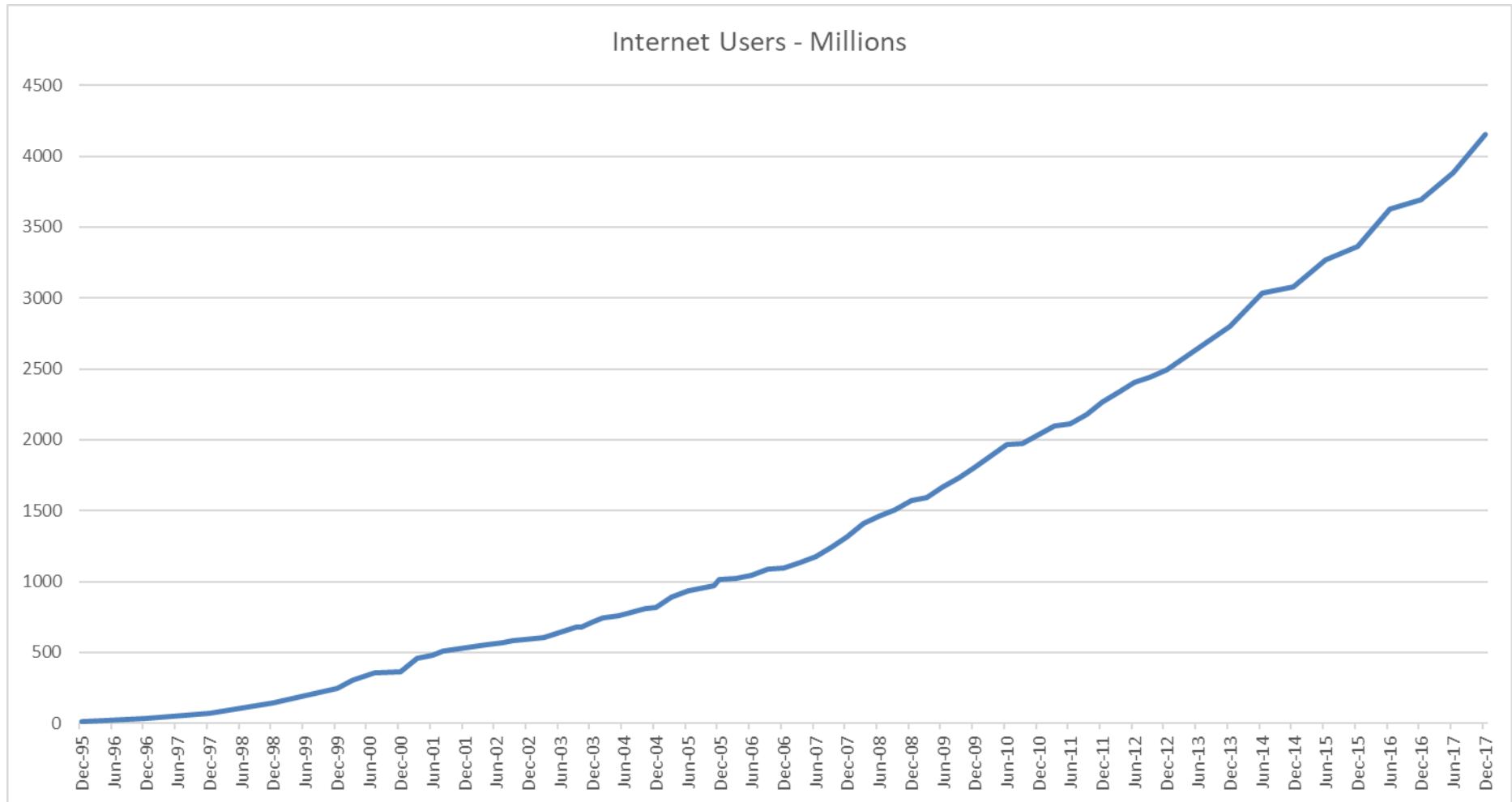
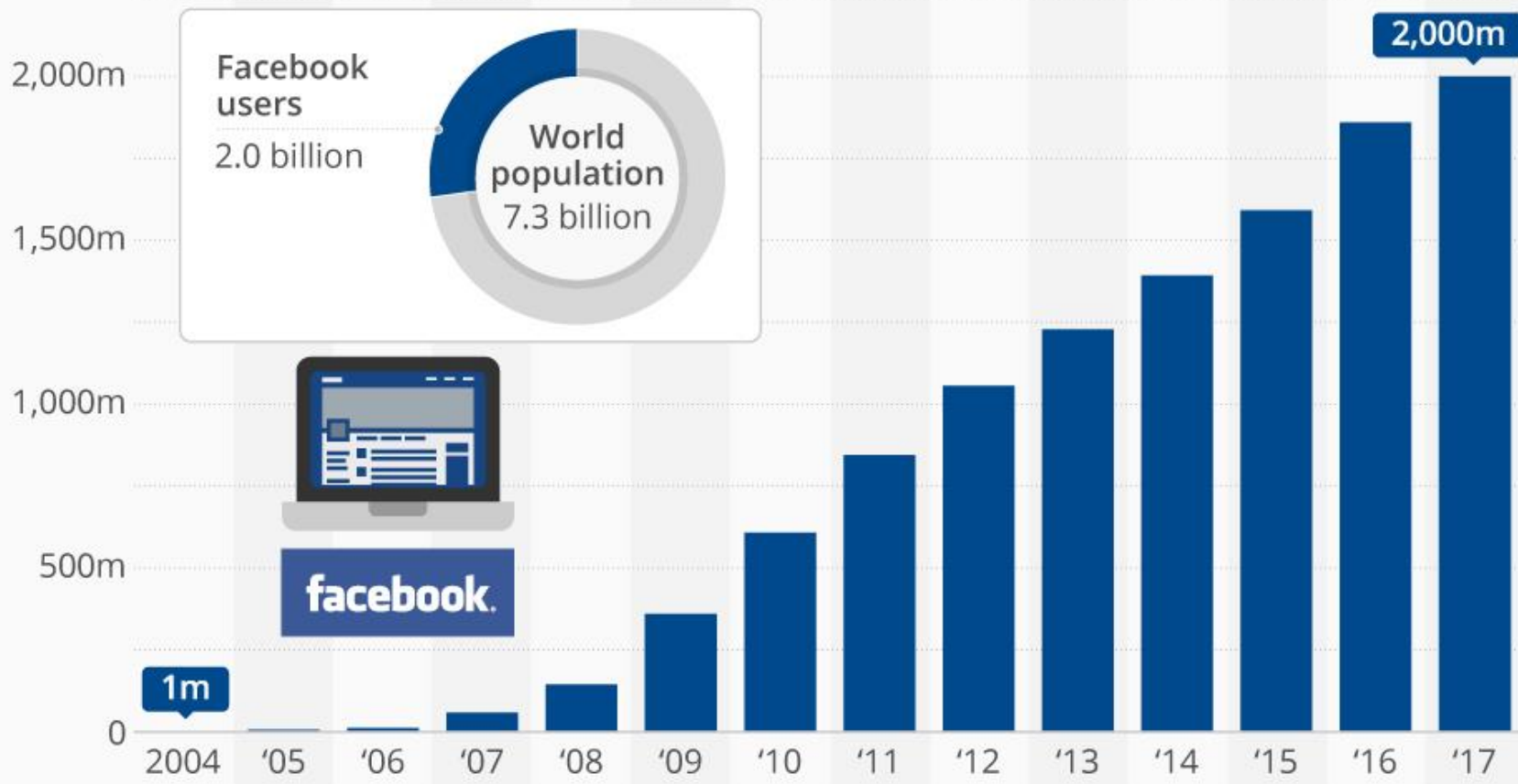


Fig. 6

Facebook's Road to 2 Billion

Number of monthly active Facebook users worldwide*



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* 2004-2016 figures as of end of the year; 2017 figure as of June

Source: Facebook

statista

