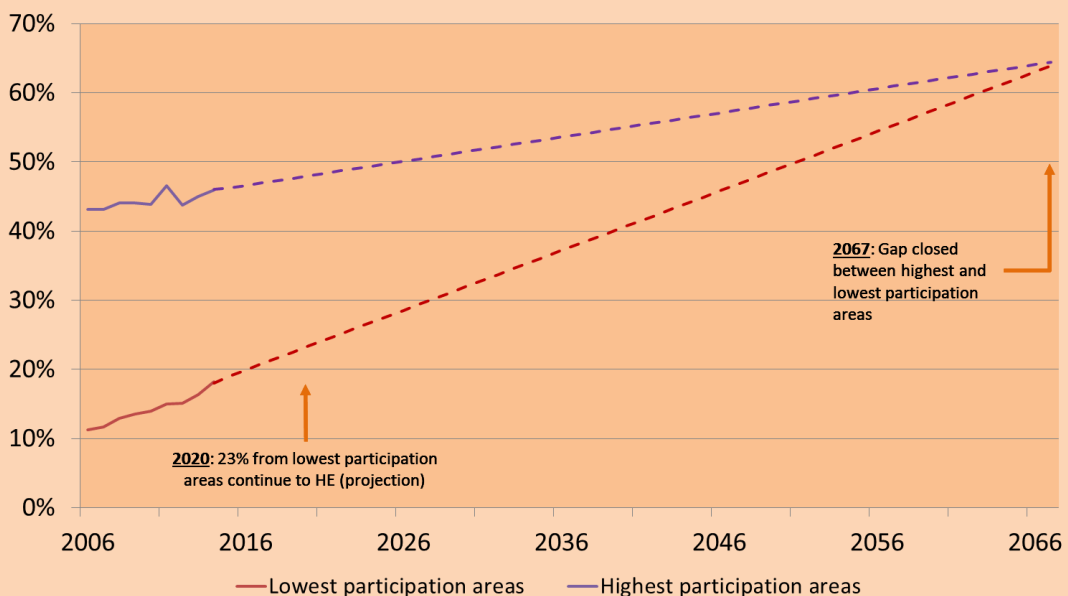


## The university participation gap remains wide

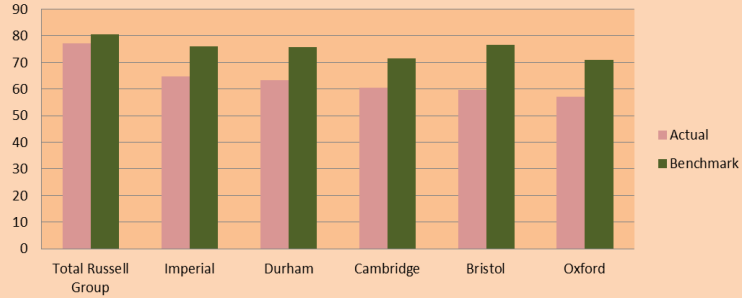
- ▶ There has been progress: young people from low participation areas were **60% more likely to attend HE in 2014** compared to 2006.
- ▶ But young people from low participation areas are **over 2 ½ times less likely to attend HE** compared to those from areas with high participation, and **young people eligible for free school meals are over half as likely to enter HE** by the age of 19 than those not eligible.
- ▶ This means the **university population does not reflect wider society**: children from working class backgrounds are under-represented and children from managerial and professional backgrounds are over-represented.
- ▶ Government has set a target to double the percentage of students from low participation areas by 2020.
- ▶ But even if this target is met, it will take **50+ years to close the gap** between low participation and high participation areas.



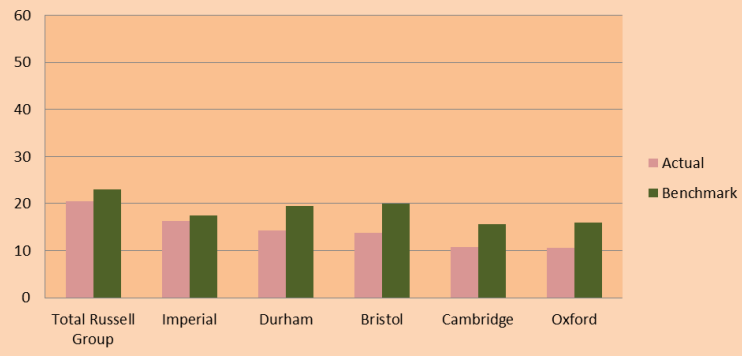
# The gap in access to highly selective universities is even wider

- ▶ **Proportion of state school students at the 24 Russell Group universities was on average unchanged at 77.2%** in 2013/14-2014/15. But progress went backwards in 9 of the 24 universities, with the largest declines at LSE, Glasgow and Oxford.
- ▶ **5 Russell Group universities need to increase intake of state students by an average 20%** – and nearly 30% for Bristol and Oxford – to achieve their fair access benchmarks.
- ▶ Oxford and Cambridge increased their proportion of state educated pupils by 5% and 2% respectively over the last decade. But their intake of independently schooled students is still 44% and 38% respectively.
- ▶ Selective universities with smaller proportions of state school pupils also have lower proportions of pupils from less advantaged social backgrounds – under 20%.

Gap between % of state school entrants and fair access benchmark



% of pupils from less advantaged social backgrounds



## Government should address these problems. The Commission recommends:

### 1. Collaboration:

- **Universities should work together** to ensure more disadvantaged kids make it to university.
- **5% of universities' widening participation funding should be ring-fenced for collaborative action.**

### 2. Evidence

- **Universities and government should work together to build the evidence base for what works** in widening participation.

### 3. Data

- **Access to data** that will help improve participation **should be fully open to researchers.**
- Government should create a **detailed measure of participation** and publish it on an annual basis.