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New numbers in mathematics in South Africa.

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Summary: This article is a follow-up of a study conducted in 2000 by the same authors on trends in numbers of mathematics majors at South African universities. Data from 12 universities for the 2000–2007 period is investigated. The previously observed trend of general and dramatic decrease in numbers of mathematics majors appears to have been reversed and an increase of numbers is observed at all but one of the universities. Diversification into applied fields such as financial mathematics has aided in increasing numbers of mathematics majors and has been largely successful at universities that have ventured this way. Universities where mathematics teacher training is situated within mathematics departments also show a noteworthy increase in numbers. Of concern is the decrease in numbers of mathematics majors over the last 2 years.

Classification: B40 B50

Keywords: mathematics majors; student numbers; trends in mathematics student numbers; tertiary education; teacher education

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