



Cross-national patterns associated with adult learning systems: Patterns of participation, outcomes and coordination

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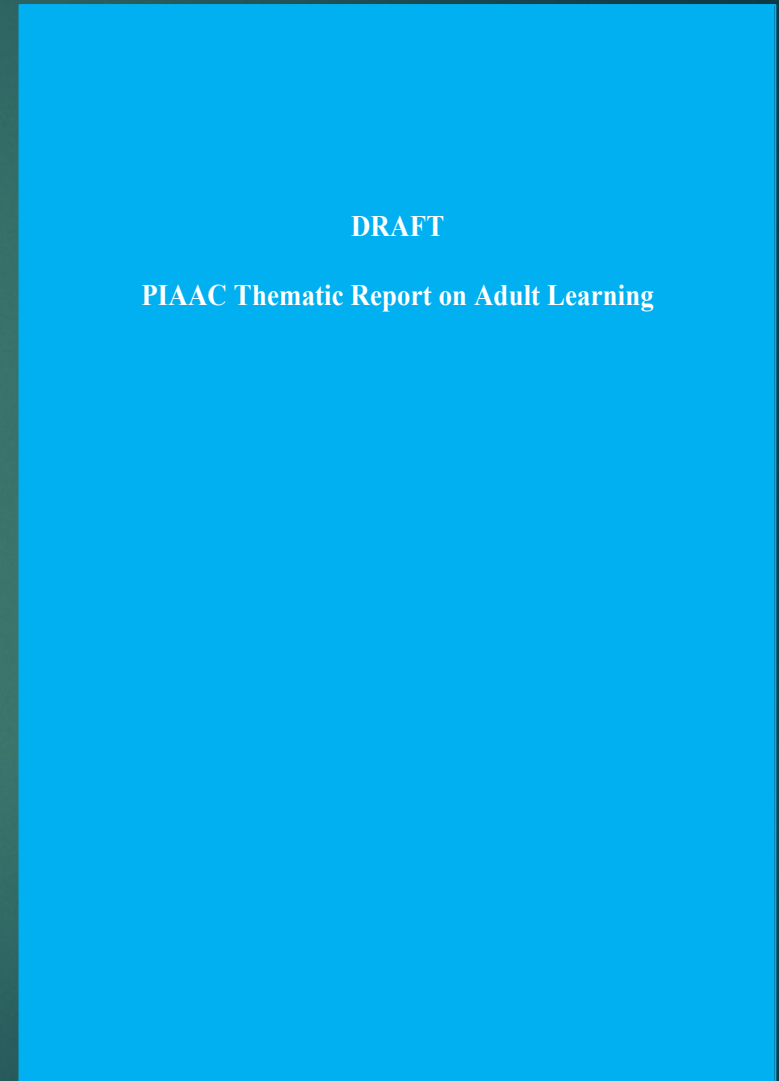
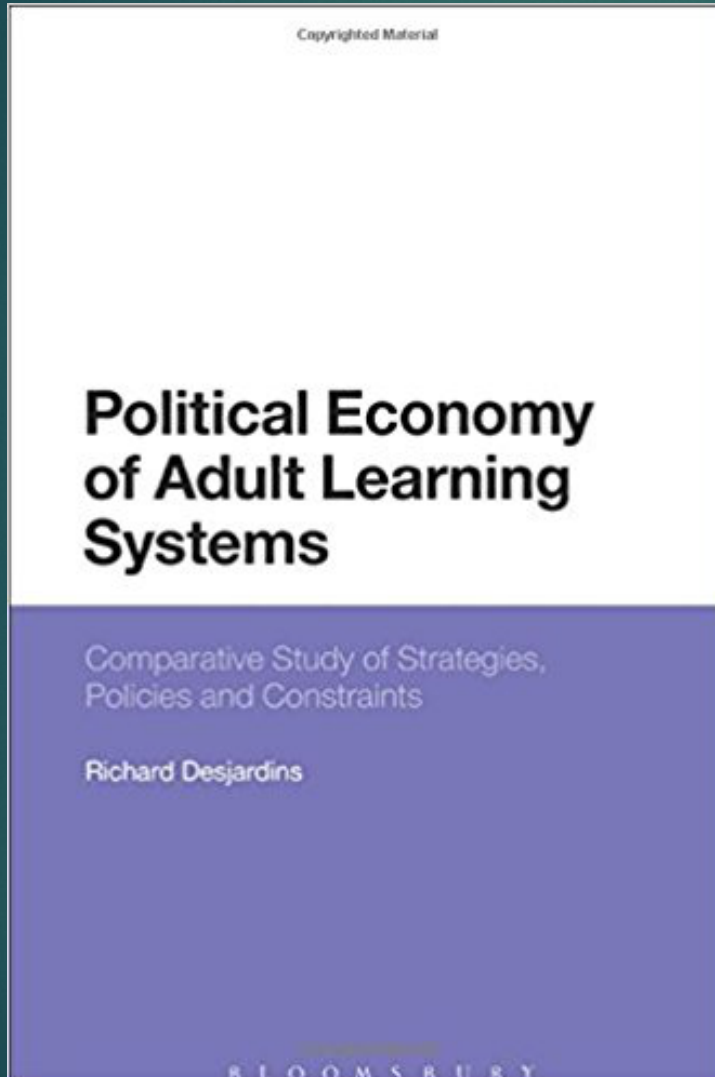


Overview

- **What is meant by Adult Learning Systems?**
- **Cross-national patterns of participation**
 - The flow of adult learning
 - Its impact on the stock of qualifications
 - The growth of adult learning
- **Cross-national patterns of outcomes**
 - Relationship to labour market outcomes: employment and earnings
- **Cross-national patterns of coordination**
 - Coordination of the demand and supply of AE
 - Role of qualification systems in fostering AE
 - Role of selected economic and social policy instruments in fostering AE



Two related products





An adult learning system perspective

- **Adult learning/education are age related concepts**
Lifelong learning includes all learning cradle-grave (holistic)
Adult learning is age-related (second chance/delayed, continued for work/societal/personal reasons)
- **Distinguishing adult vs regular students in FE difficult**
FE can be exclusively for either type
... can include both but with adaptations to accommodate adults
... can include both with no adaptations (differs by country)
- **ALS are the mass of organized learning opportunities available to adults...**
... along with their underlying structures and stakeholders that shape their organization and governance
- **Organized learning includes...**
FE qualifications attained by non-traditional students
Non-formal education activities
- **Non-formal provisions (may be linked to qualifications)**
Directly or indirectly job-related (on-the-job training, basic skills)
Non-job related (basic skills, community involvement, leisure)



Major types of organized adult learning

- **Types:**
 - Remedial (compensatory, second chance, basic skills)
 - Liberal (community, leisure, basic skills)
 - CTVET (initial vs continuing - age of students)
 - AHE (regular/traditional vs adult/non-traditional)
- **Formal vs non-formal not very useful as a distinction**
 - Increasing links between the two in flexible manner
 - PIAAC does not reflect this reality
- **...Adult Basic Education (ABE) (may lead to ISCED: 1,2 for 19+)**
 - Mostly formal, but non-formal modules may lead to equivalent qualification
- **...Adult General Education (AGE) (may lead to ISCED: 3 for 21+)**
 - Typically formal - usually high school equivalence (e.g. GED)
- **...Adult Vocational Education (AVE) (may lead to ISCED: 4 for 21+, 5b for 26+)**
 - Formal and non-formal - extent of formal depends on how well country's VET system is developed
- **...Adult Higher Education (AHE) (leads to ISCED: 5b,5a for 26+; 6 for 30+)**
 - Formal type
- **...Adult Liberal Education (ALE)**
 - Non-formal type, can be linked to ABE, AGE, AVE or AHE in certain countries



Features of ALS

- **General features of ALS concept**
 - Comprises governance, financing & provision structures related to AE
 - Beyond the responsibility of any given ministry or institution
 - Difficult to pinpoint
 - Views AE systems as overlapping with E&T and other systems
 - Embedded in society at intersection of E&T, LM, Welfare systems
 - Not seen as a system per se, but some countries feature more coordination and integration of key elements (common language and vision)
- **Distinguishing factors of advanced ALS in different countries**
 - Degree of openness of FE systems to non-traditional students
 - Level of integration of ABE-AVE-AHE and ALE
 - Flexible and open qualification systems linking to AE and non-formal provisions (e.g. greater integration among ABE-AGE-AVE-AHE provisions)
 - High and widely distributed participation in AE & foundation skills
 - Diverse provision catering to diverse needs
 - Targeting and outreach to socially disadvantaged adults



Extent of AE: Stock vs flow

- **Stock**

Past Formal AE → qualifications

Adults participated in credentialed (degree or diploma) programs

Including: Basic skill courses → ISCED 1, 2, 3

Apprenticeships → ISCED 4, 5b

Higher education → ISCED 5a, 6

Qualifications attained at older ages = past AE activity

- **Flow**

Current (last 12 mths) Formal and non-formal AE → future qualification?

Adults participate in: Basic skills courses; Credential (degree or diploma) programs; Apprenticeships; Work-related courses; Informal learning at work; Personal interest/personal development courses

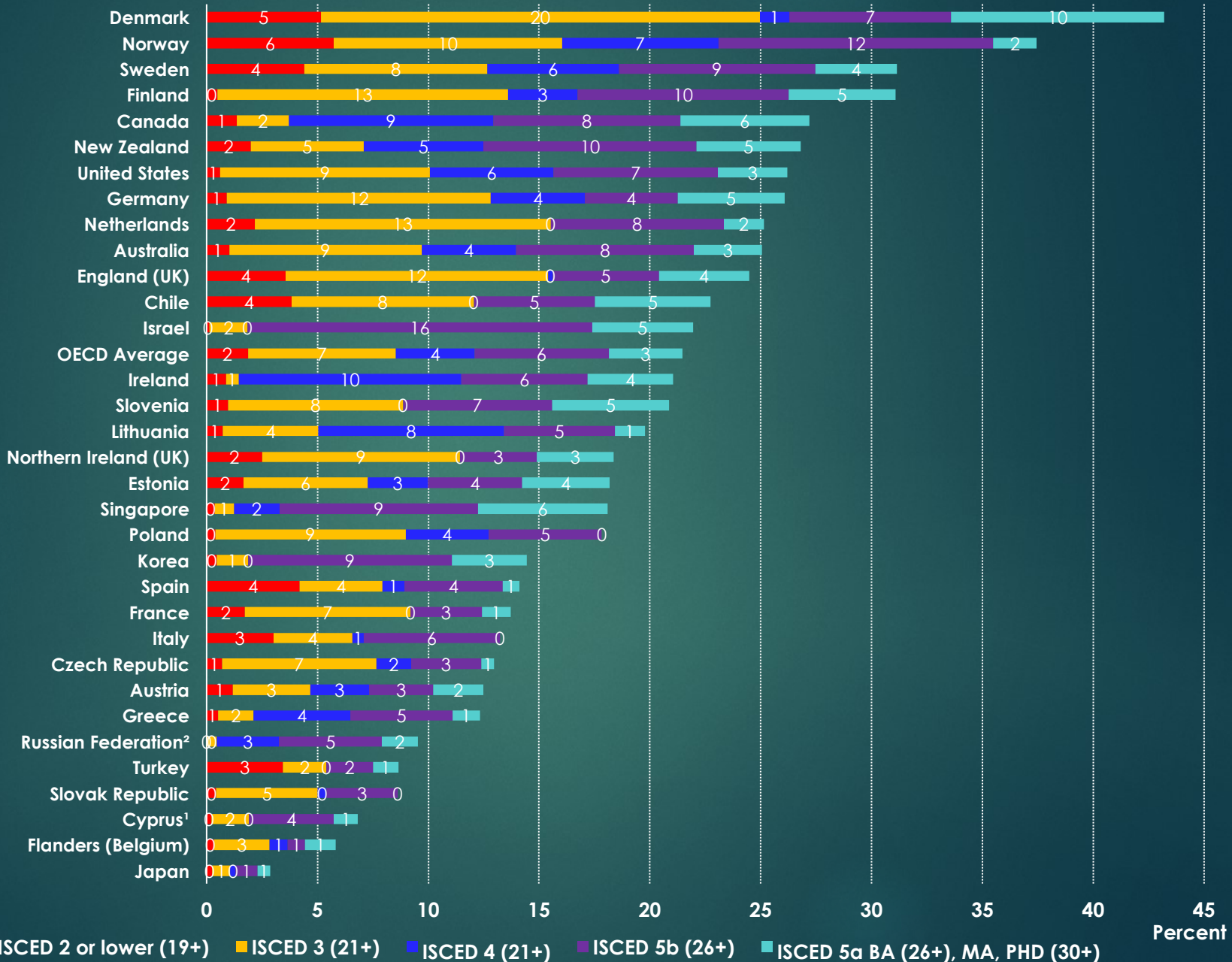
Excludes students in regular initial cycle (those following normative path to qualifications)



Cross-national patterns of participation

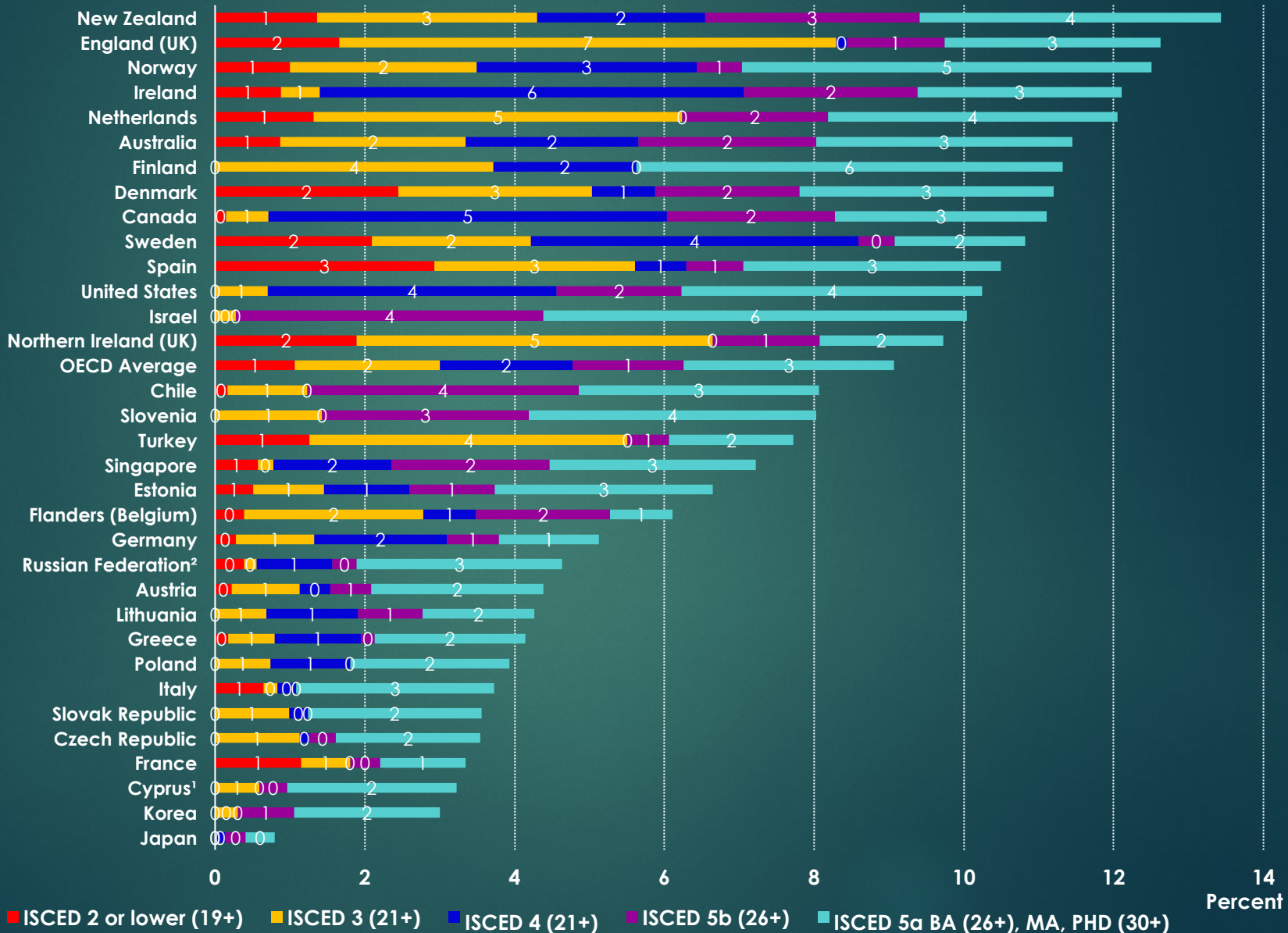


Stock of qualifications attained via AE



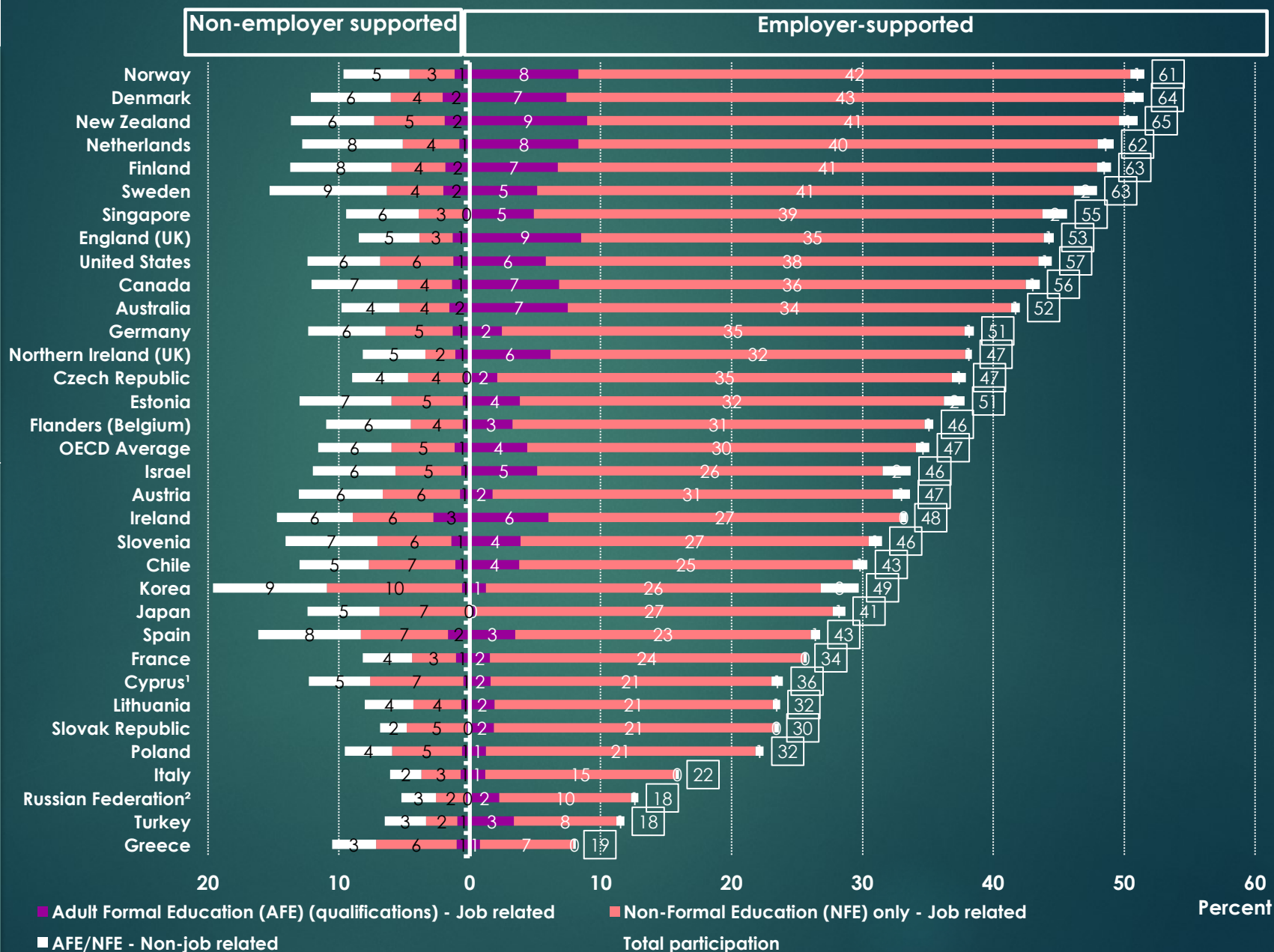


Recent AE flow in formal provisions Expected to add to stock of qualifications



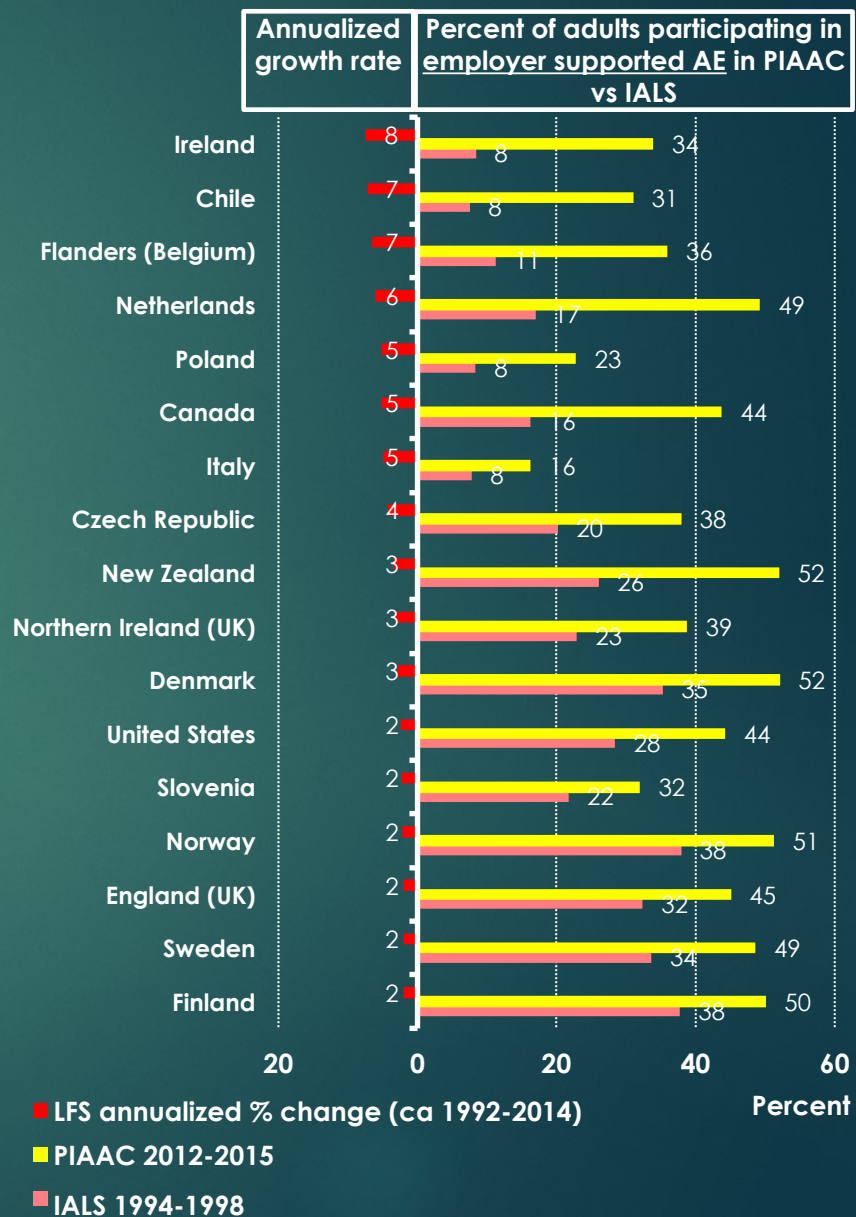
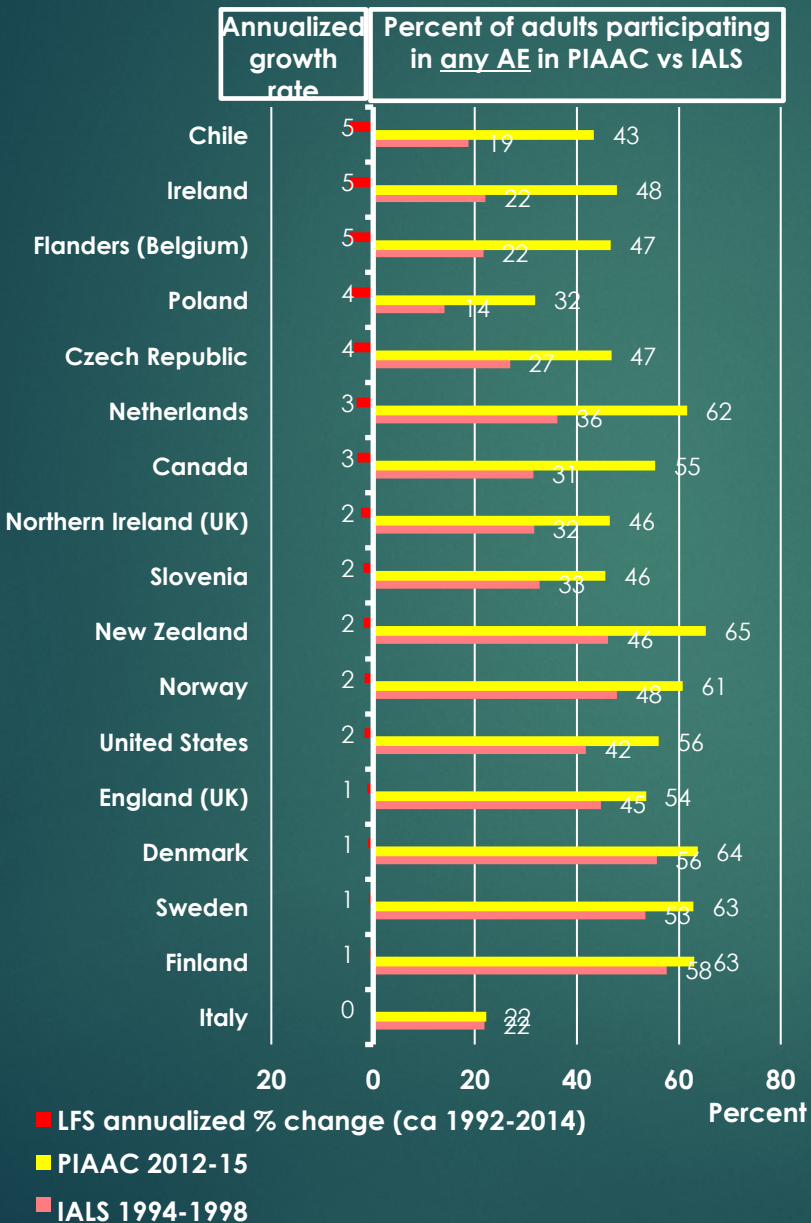


Recent AE flow in all types of provisions



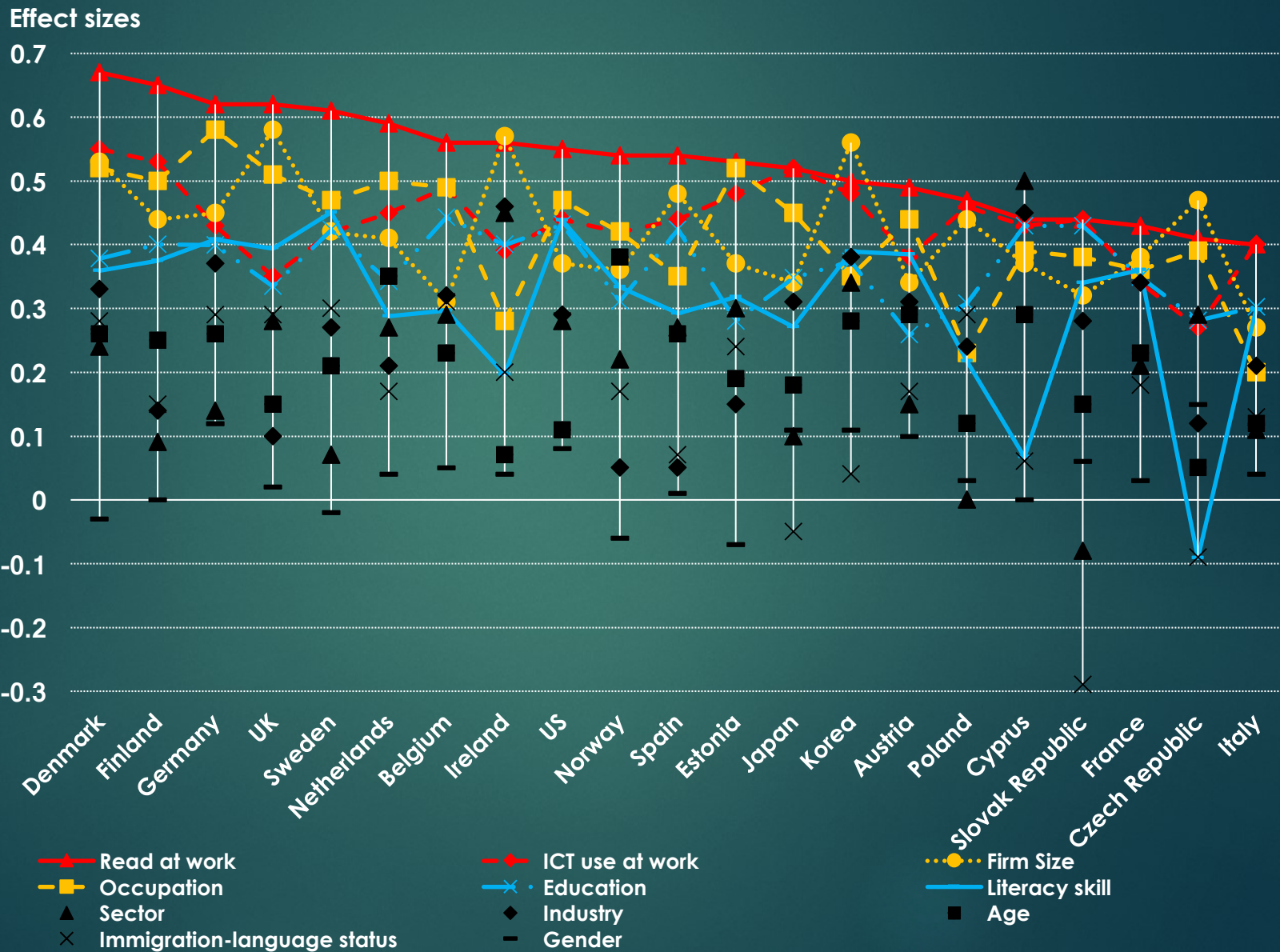


Growth of AE Since the 1990s





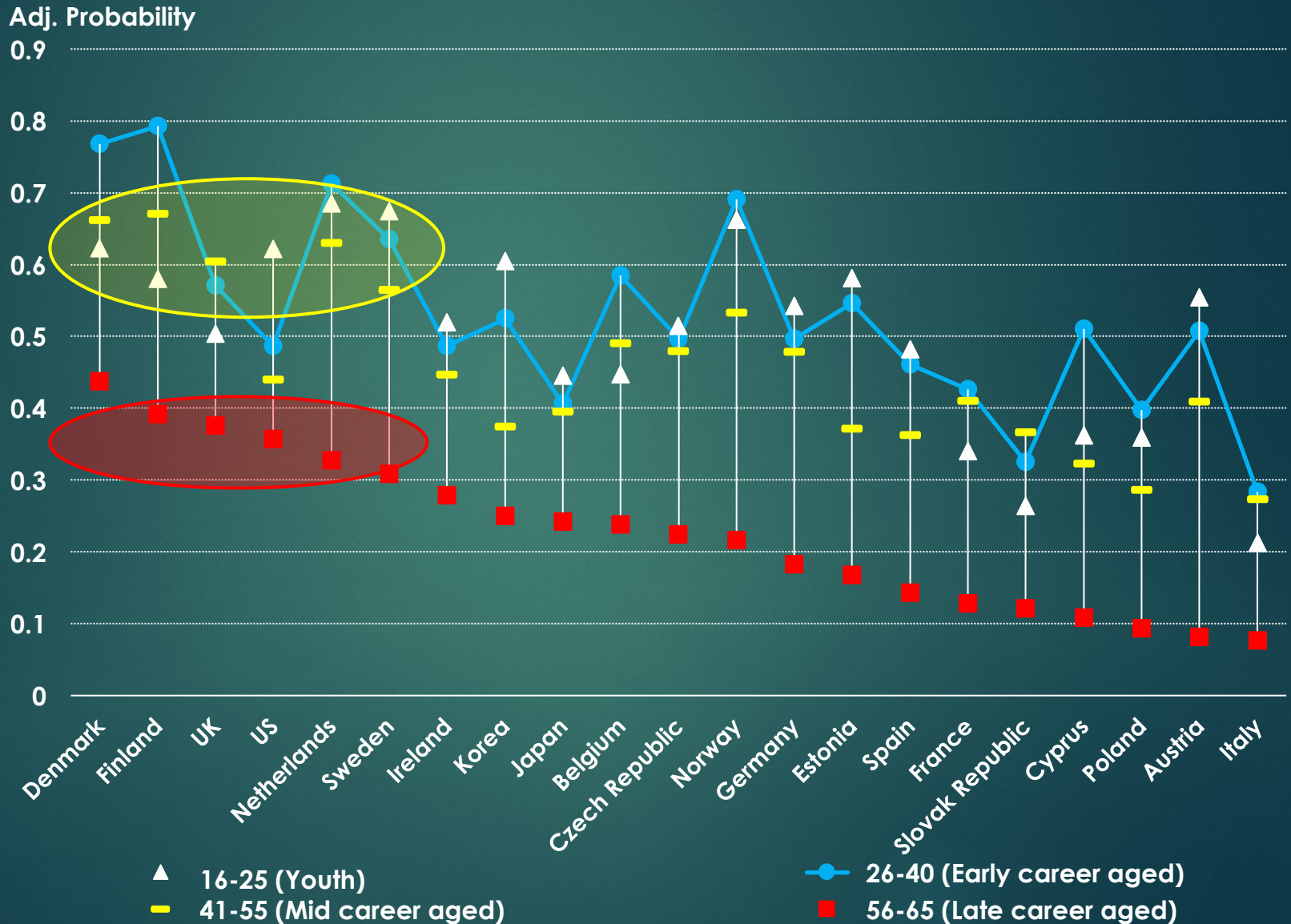
Summary of factors predicting take-up of employer supported AE





Socio-demographic factors related to AE

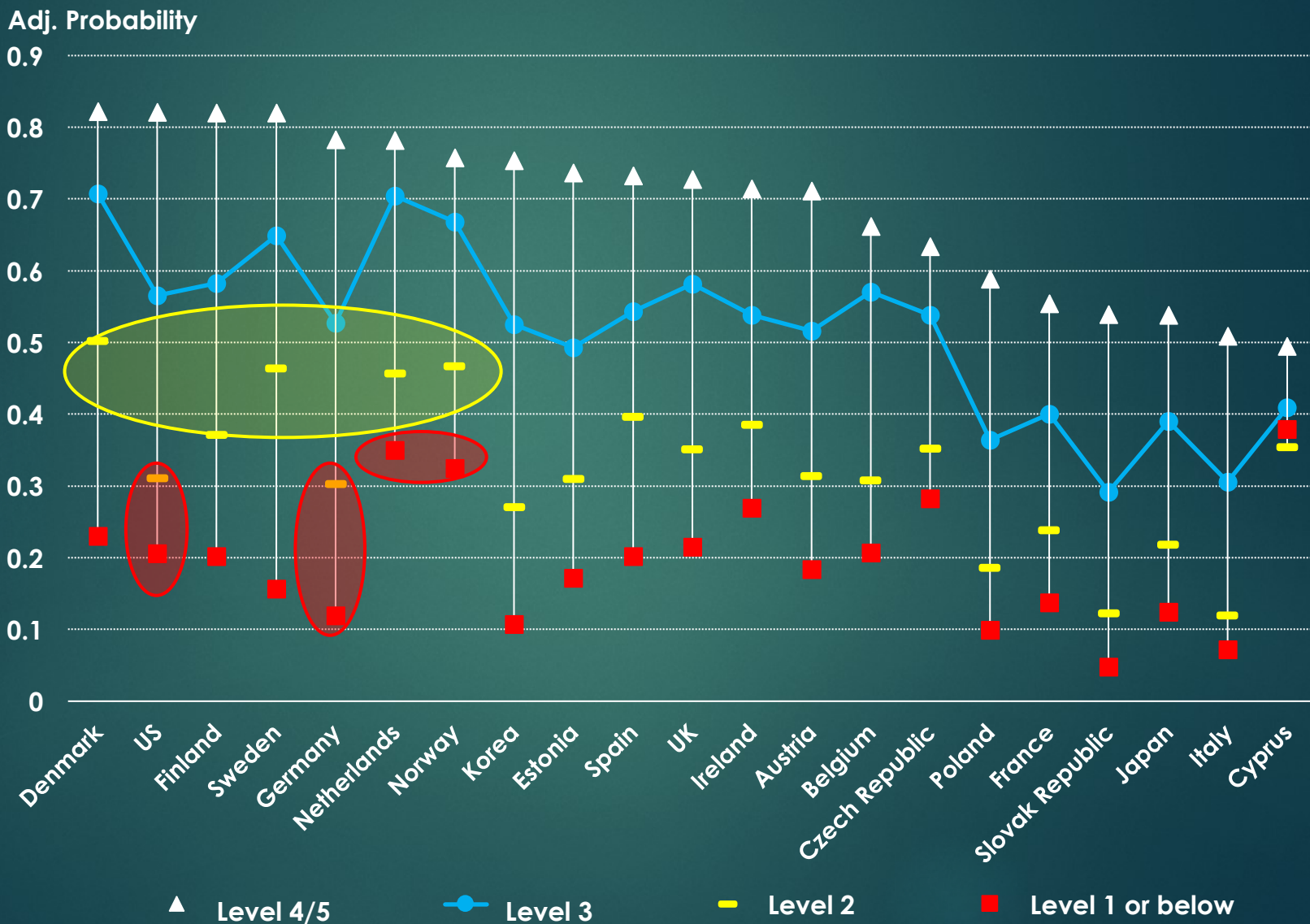
Adjusted probabilities of participating in any AE by age





Socio-demographic factors related to AE

Adjusted probabilities of participating in any AE by literacy proficiency

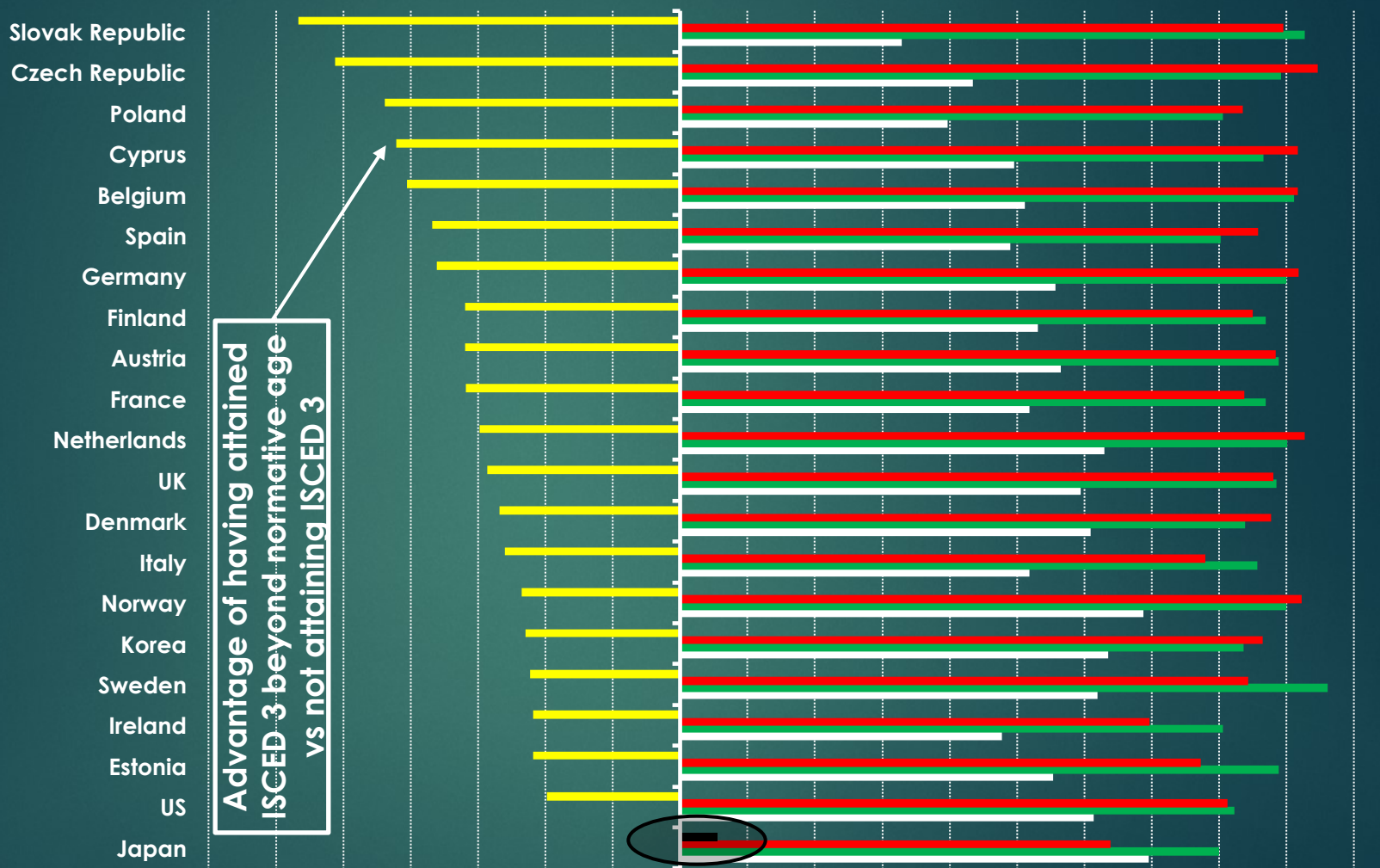




Cross-national patterns of outcomes



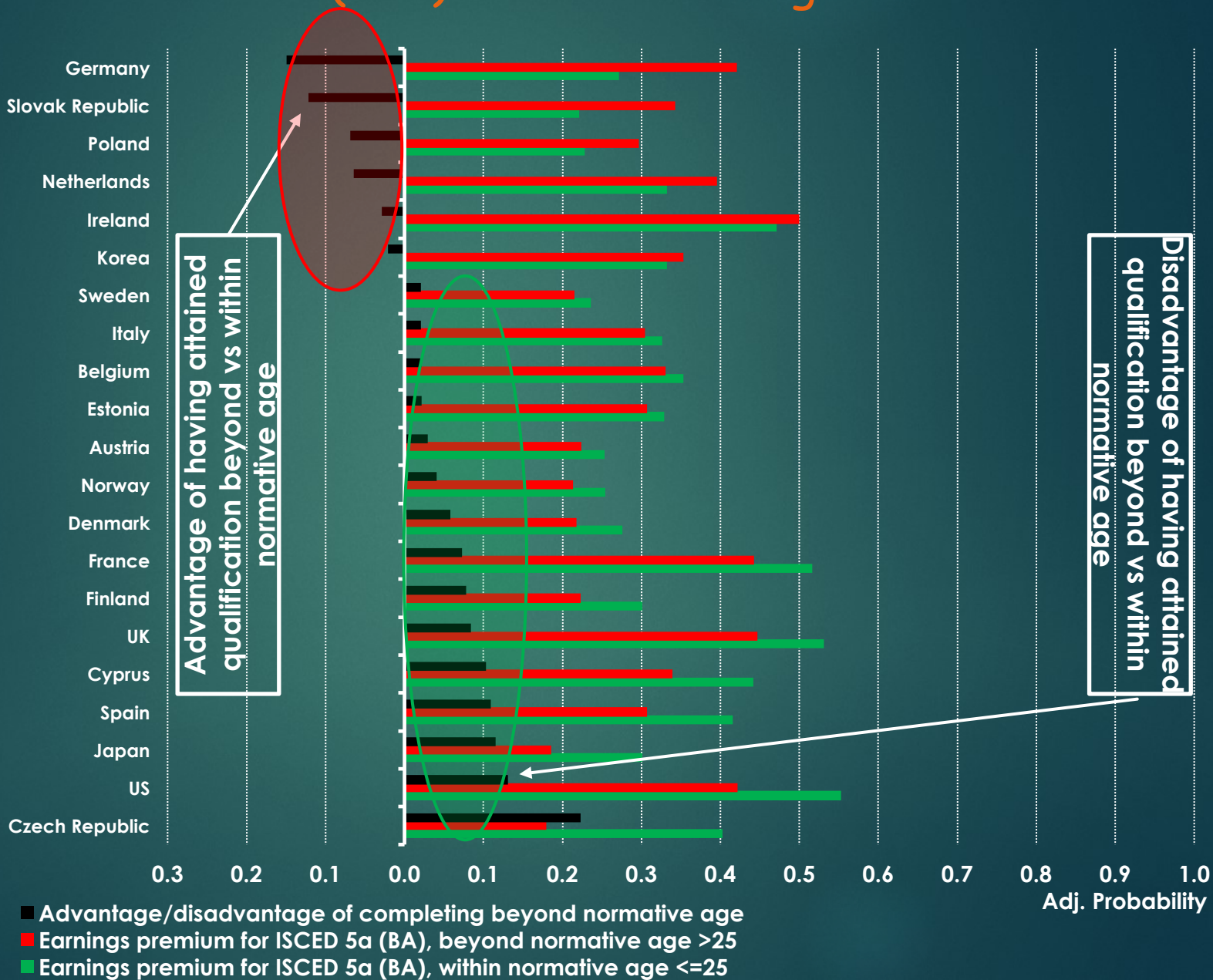
Employment advantage of having attained ISCED 3 as an adult (21+) vs not attaining ISCED 3 at all



- Advantage of having attained ISCED 3 beyond normative age vs not attaining ISCED 3
 - ISCED 3, beyond normative age >20
 - ISCED 3, within normative age <=20
 - Did not complete ISCED 3
- Adj. Probability

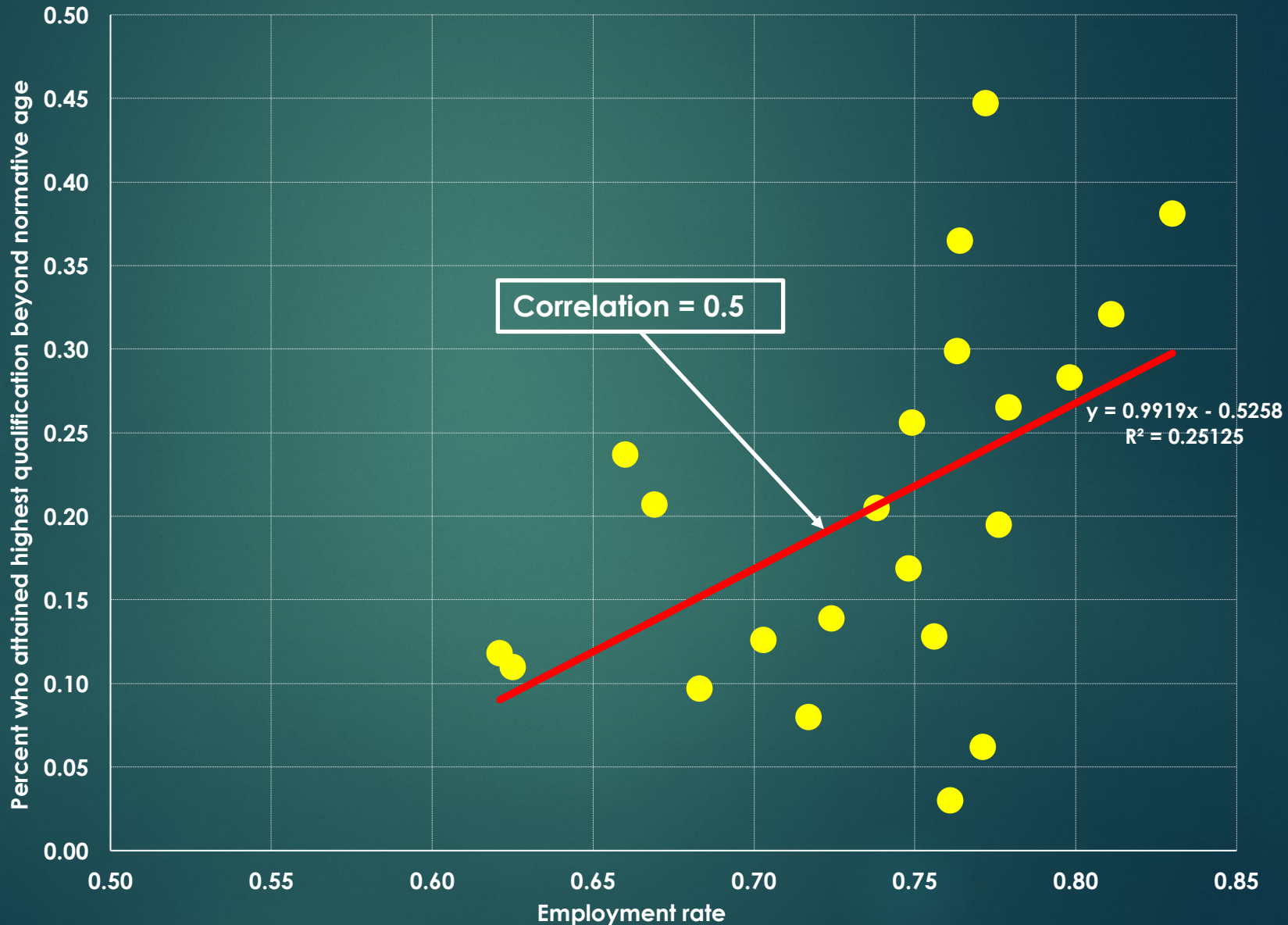


Earnings advantage of having attained ISCED 5a as an adult (26+) vs not attaining HE at all





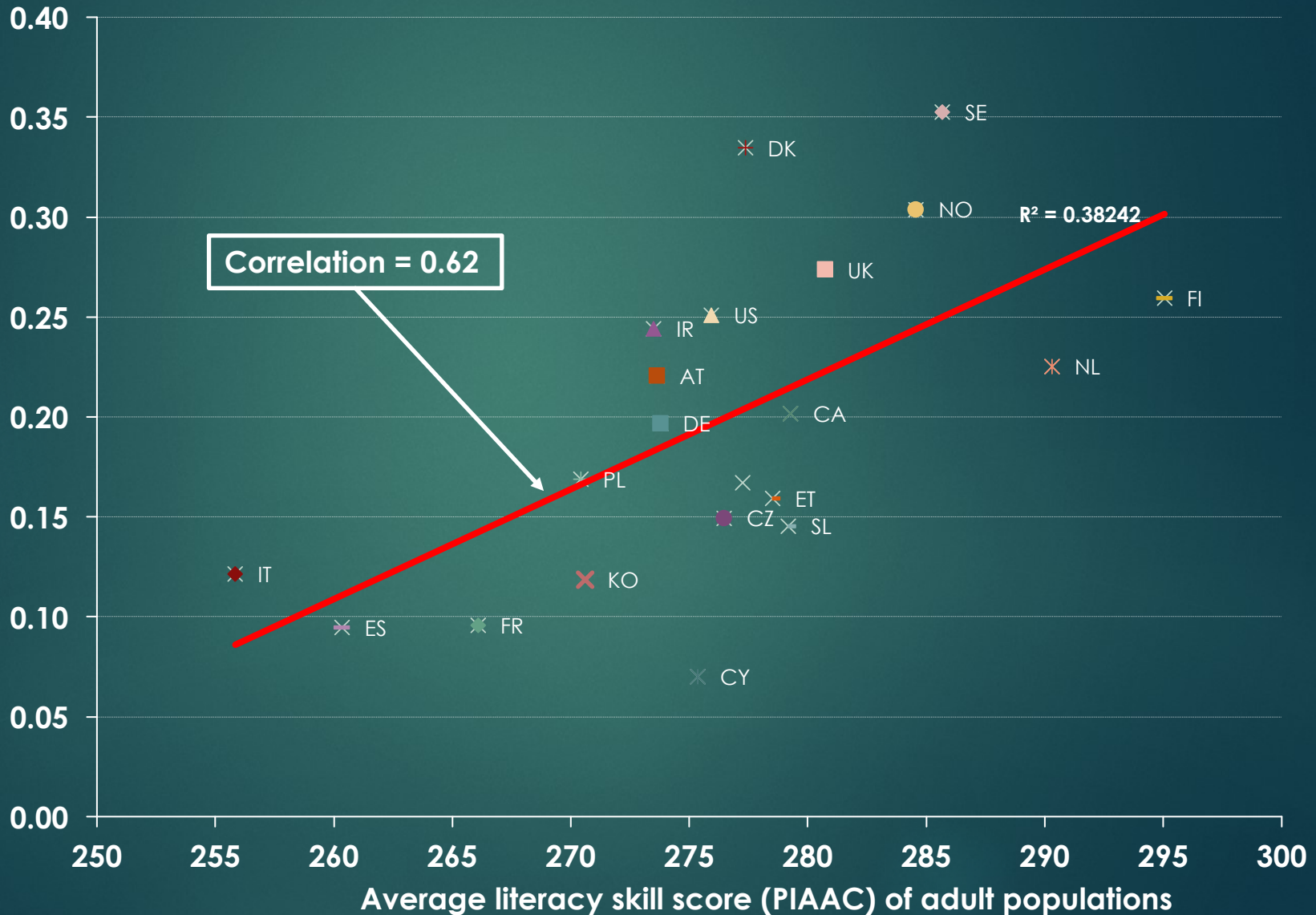
Openness of FE systems to adults students and employment rate





Openness of HE systems to adults students and literacy skills

Ratio of HE graduates over 30 vs under 30



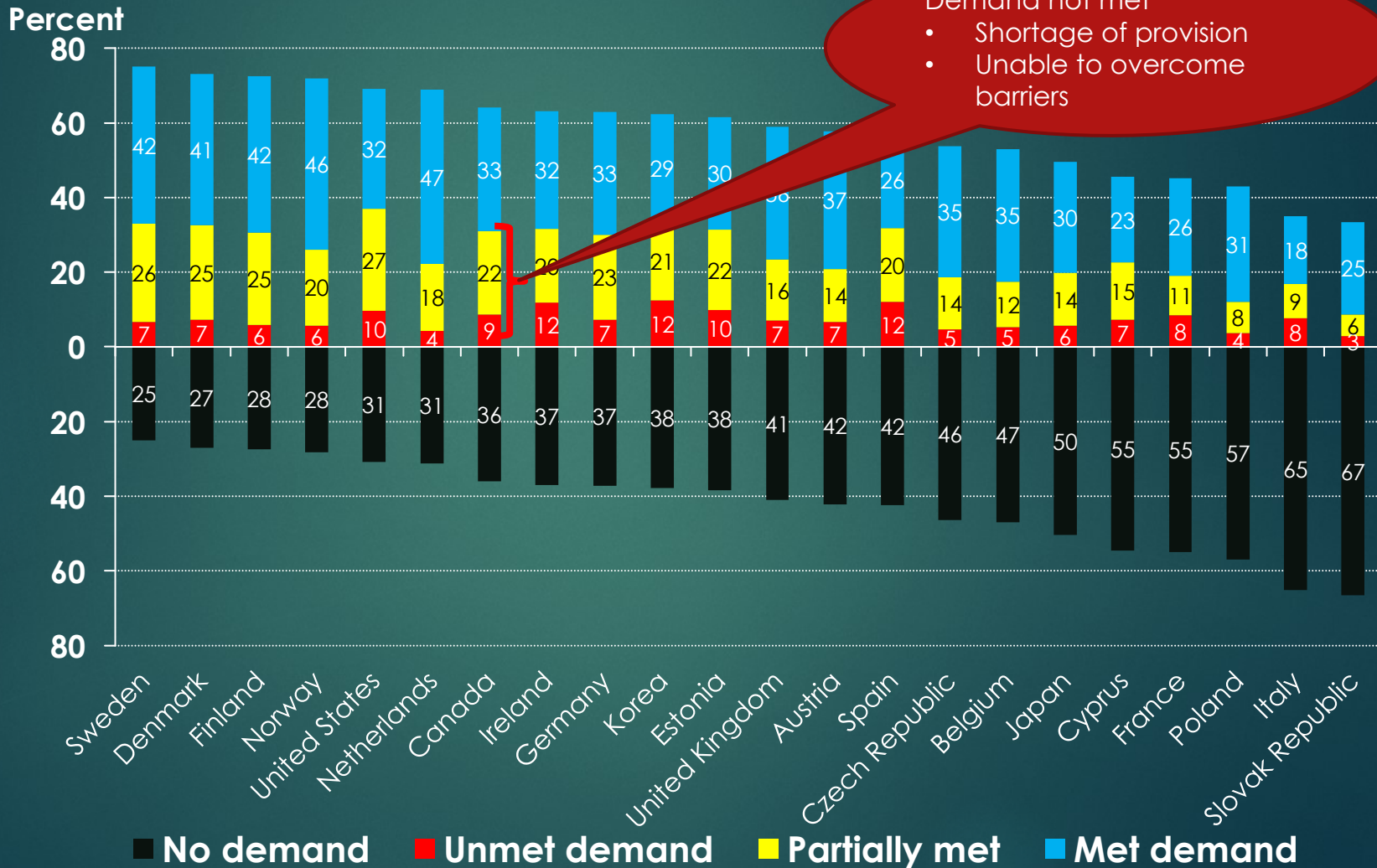


Cross-national patterns of coordination



Fostering demand is a key challenge but so is helping citizens overcome barriers

Coordinating the supply and demand for AE



Source: PIAAC, 2012



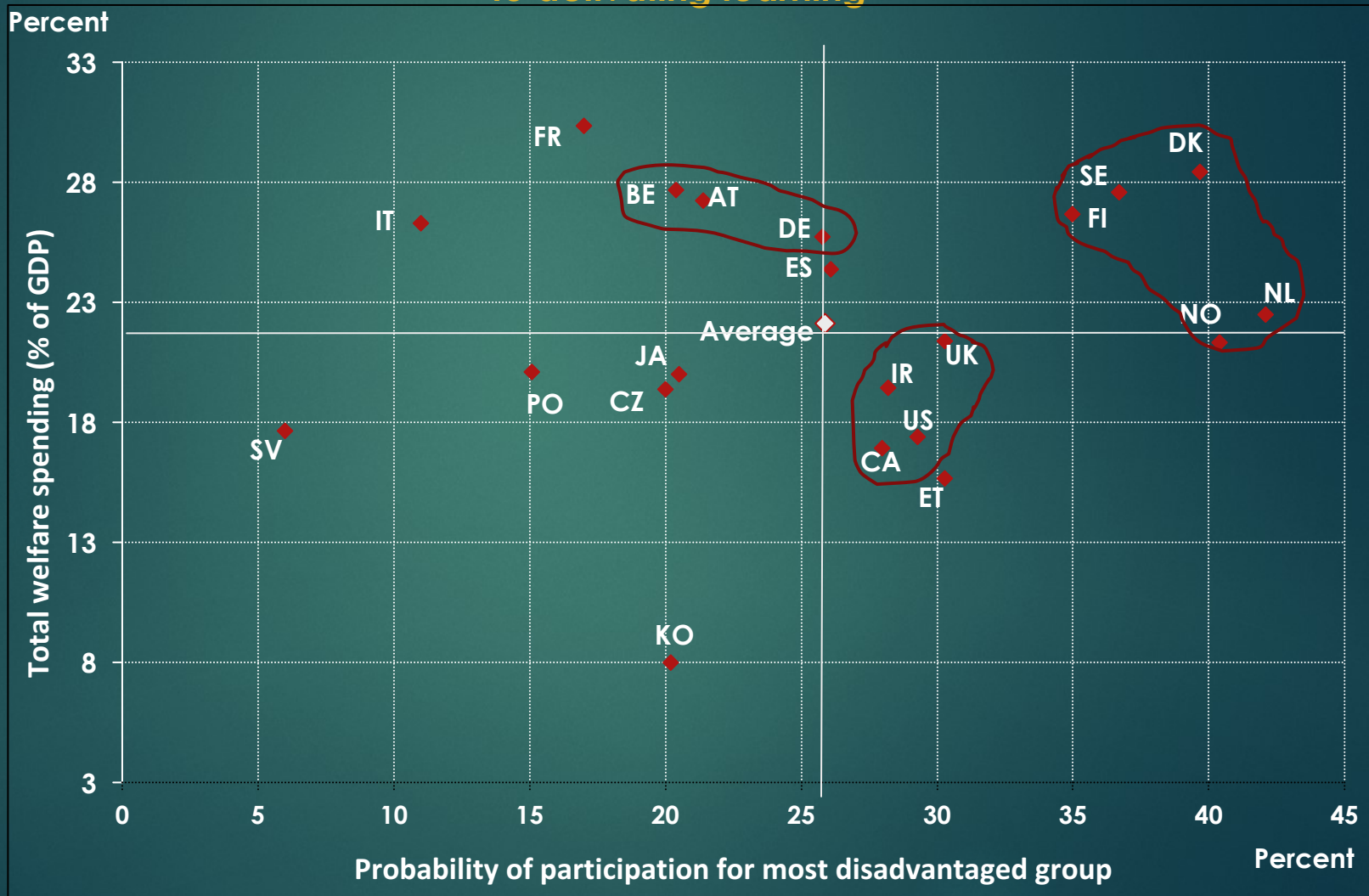
Coordinating adult learning systems

- **Qualification systems**
Open and flexible (good for motivation, reach...)
- **Public support for education**
Needs to be combined with open and flexible FE structures
- **Active labour market policies**
Needs to be connected to training, qualification attainment
Success probably related to diversified & flexible provision
- **Targeting**
Relates to progressive social policy designed to mitigate inequality and barriers of socially disadvantaged citizens
- **Stimulating 'quality' jobs**
High skill jobs
Non-routine jobs



Coordinating tools: Total welfare spending unrelated to advancedness to ALS

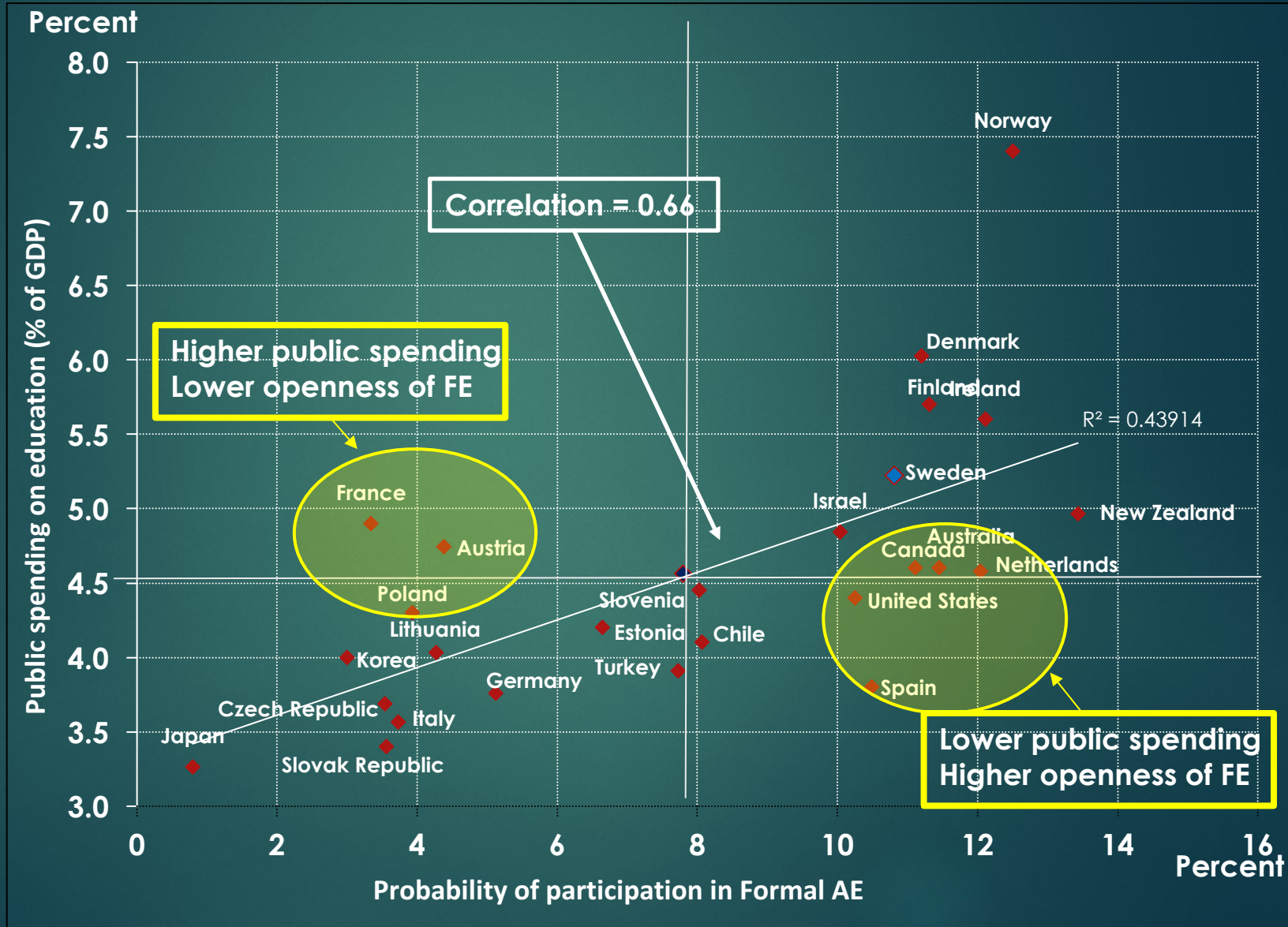
Important to distinguish between welfare expenditures that are proximal or distal to activating learning





Coordinating tools: Impact of public education spending depends on openness of FE

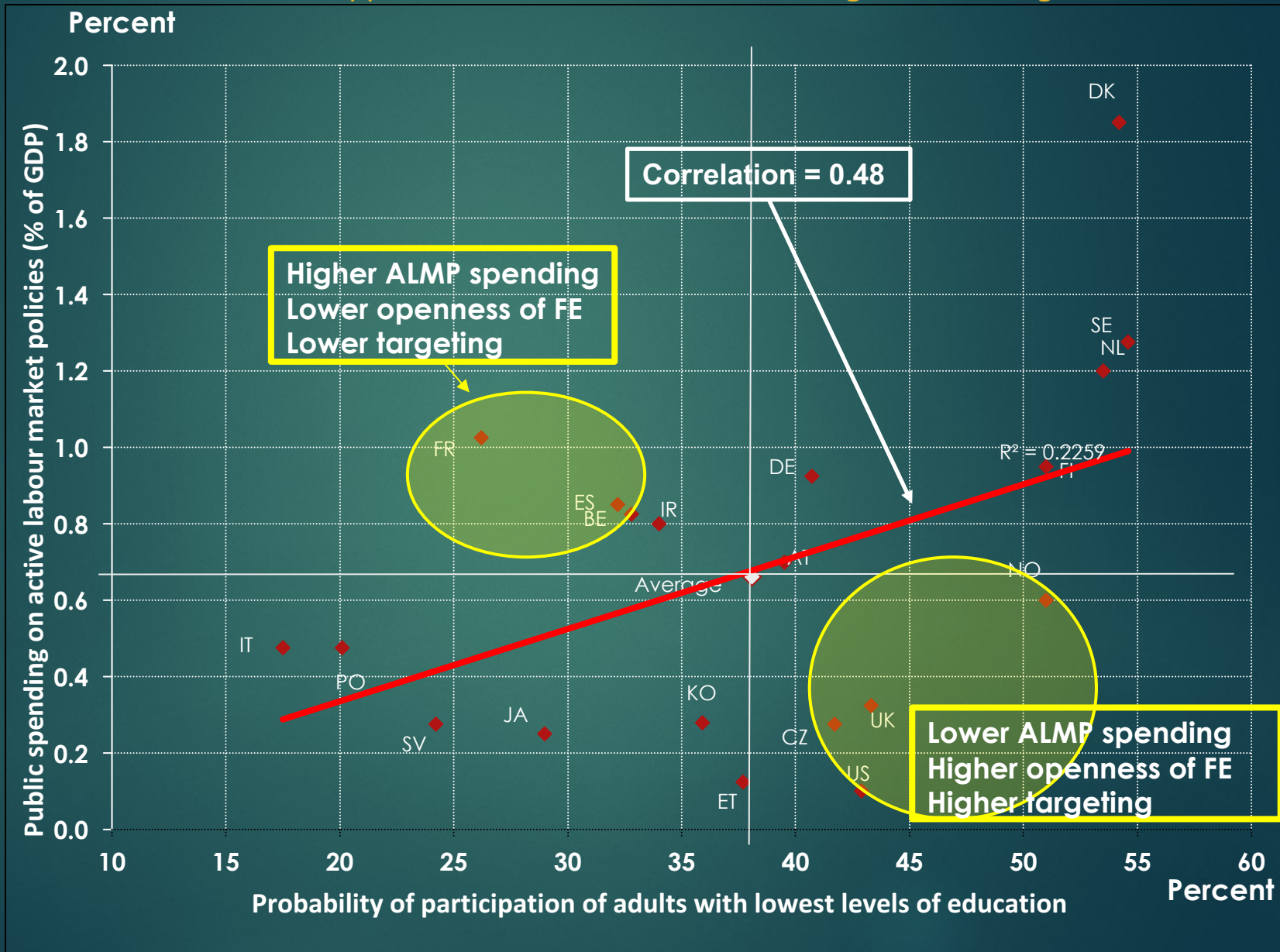
Higher public education spending does not automatically translate into opportunities for adults, particularly disadvantaged adults





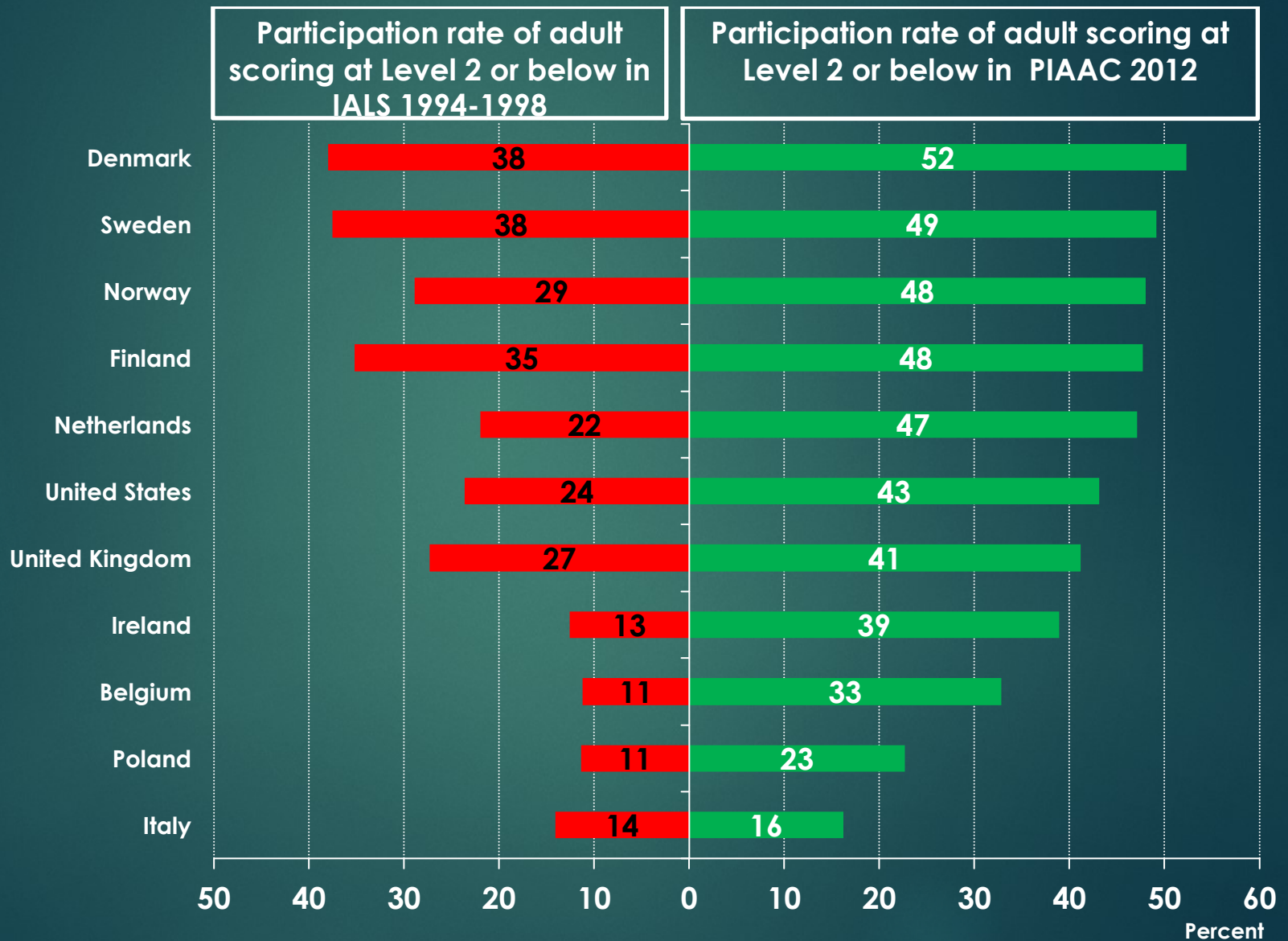
Coordinating tools: Impact of ALMPs contingent on provision structures that cater to disadvantaged adults

Not all ALMPs appear to be effective at reaching disadvantaged adults





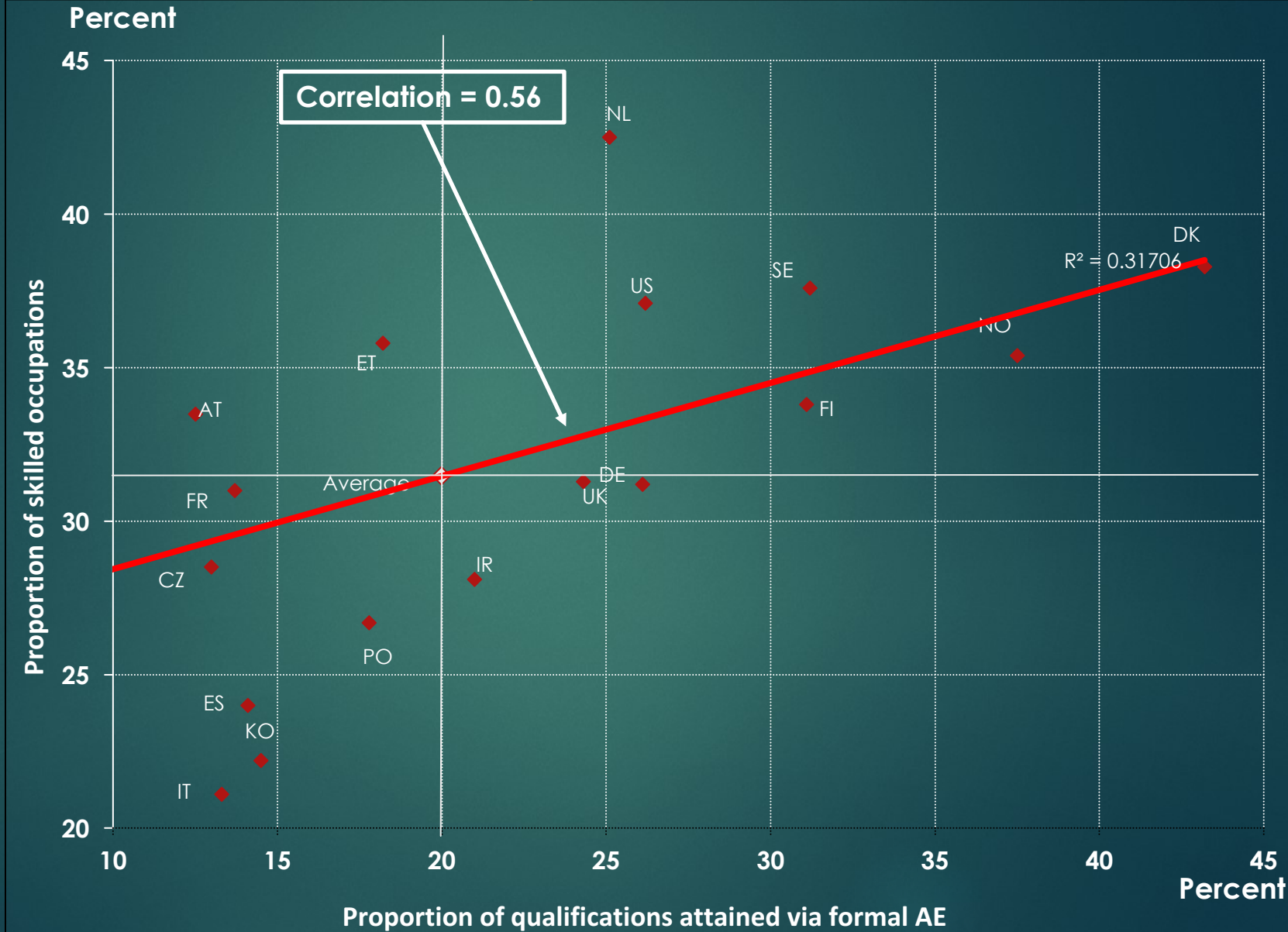
Coordinating tools: Targeting of low skilled increased since 1990s





Coordinating tools: Fostering skilled work boosts access to learning

Proportion of high skill jobs strongly related to openness of FE





Some implications for improving the coordination of adult learning systems

- **Support broad economic and social policies that**

Foster demand - *Good for citizens' perception of opportunity structure*

Help families and workers overcome situational barriers (e.g. family assistance)

Maintain affordability (welfare spending related to activation more effective)

Sustain governance and provision structures (public education spending in connection with a vibrant and flexible provision more effective)



Some implications for improving the coordination of adult learning systems

- **Foster broad stakeholder coordination that helps to**
 - Share information not so easily shared via the market mechanism and thus compensate for market failures related to information asymmetries
 - Identify local and more specific individualised needs
 - Pool risks associated with uncertainty surrounding investment in adult learning
 - Validate all kinds of learning and integrate opportunities with qualification systems
 - Develop common language to enhance coherence in governance of ALS
- **Design specific policies that target socially disadvantaged adults**
- **Promote adaptation of formal and non-formal provision that is**
 - Open, flexible, customized, and linkable to qualification systems



Summary and measurement of adult learning systems



Summary of key findings

- **Majority of AE is... employer supported, job-related, non-formal**
Employers supporting FE leading to qualifications at high rate in 10+ countries
- **Flow rates of employer supported AE/year ...**
Large variation across countries
 - at or near 50% in 6 countries (most advanced ALS, progressive social policy)
 - Between 40-50% in 5 countries
 - Between 30-40% in 12 countries
 - Between 20-30% in 7 countries
 - Below 20% in 4 countries
- **FE systems open to adult students**
Large variation across countries
Boosts qualifications
Linked to observed boost in employment for those adults and overall
Linked to observed boost in earnings for those adults
Linked to active aging and learning in late career/life
- **ALS are growing fast**
Employer supported AE growing faster than overall AE
Countries with adult learning opportunities linked to qualifications expected to experience large boost in qualifications via AE
- **Major differences across countries confirm existence of sharp differences...**
...In extent ALS are well developed and coordinated across advanced industrial nations
May signify key source of variation explaining economic success & other outcomes



Measuring adult learning systems

- **Some data on link between NFE activity and FE qualifications**
NFE activity increasingly the norm in many countries
Need more detail for policy relevant analysis
- **Better data on past AE activity that led to qualifications**
Largely ignored in prior studies and in PIAAC
At the moment, this is based on the age at which the highest qualification was attained
- **Better data on motivations and sources of support**
Government support completely ignored in PIAAC
Motivations are multi-dimensional, overlap (non-job related important)
No data on whether AE was for basic skills programme in PIAAC
- **Better data on barriers**
Inadequate data on barriers given state of art on topic
Inadequate link to social policy instruments designed to mitigate inequality
No data on why adults do not to participate (cost, time, available supply → relevant)
- **System level features**
Study and define ALS system level features to collect data
Can improve policy relevant analyses and policy learning in an international context