



FACES OF JOBLESSNESS

A PEOPLE-CENTRED PERSPECTIVE ON EMPLOYMENT BARRIERS AND POLICIES

Moving from Welfare to Work
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www.oecd.org/social/faces-of-joblessness.htm



Faces of Joblessness

Premise and rationale

- The circumstances of jobless people are often “messy”
- But this is not systematically reflected in how we approach policy, or the statistics that feed into policy design and delivery
- There is a need for good-quality information that captures the complexity of the employment difficulties that people face
- People-centred info on employment barriers would help to:
 - ✓ facilitate a cross-sectoral perspective on policy challenges
 - ✓ **targeting & tailoring** policy interventions
 - ✓ **integrating services** in a way that works for policy “clients”
 - ✓ consider **priorities** among competing challenges
 - ✓ understand **why** different policy approaches work (or not)
 - ✓ move from **general principles** of what works, to conversation on **specifics** and **implementation**
 - ✓ **Broaden out policy options** that are “on the table”



Faces of Joblessness

Objectives

Provide a systematic view on complex circumstances

Align statistics & indicators with real-world experience of joblessness

- **Map** of “disadvantaged”, “vulnerable” groups. Who are they ?
- What **employment barriers** do they face ?
- What **policy levers** to tackle those barriers ?



Faces of Joblessness

Linking policy debates with circumstances “on the ground”

activation & employment
support policies



Large group of jobless,
complex & ‘messy’
circumstances



Faces of Joblessness

Linking policy debates with circumstances “on the ground”





Gaps in existing information

Existing **high-level** labour-market indicators contain little information on relevant employment barriers...

- ⚠ standard breakdowns (age, sex, ...)
- ⚠ no clear link with problems to be addressed
(*“being young is not a barrier”*)
- ⚠ largely individual-based, little family context

Existing **in-depth** profiling systems designed for needs of specific process / institution (e.g., PES)...

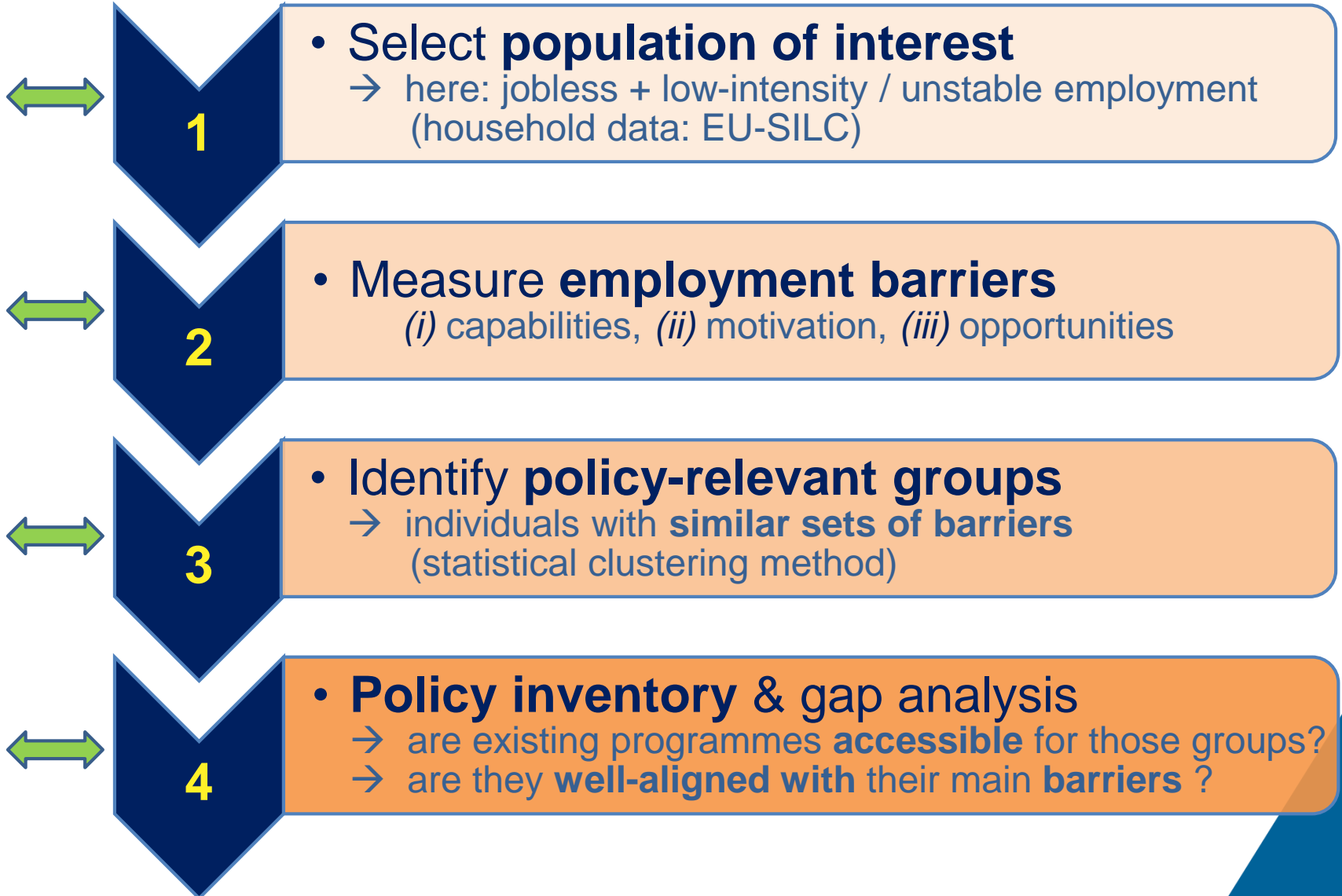
- ⚠ generally not used for higher-level policy dialogue
- ⚠ may not capture circumstances relevant for key policy areas, eg. care responsibilities, incentives
- ⚠ miss big parts of jobless, eg. only registered unemployed



Filling the gap: Main steps

People-centred, “bottom-up” approach

Country dialogue





A joint effort

- Initially a 2-year project 2016/2017, innovative partnership:



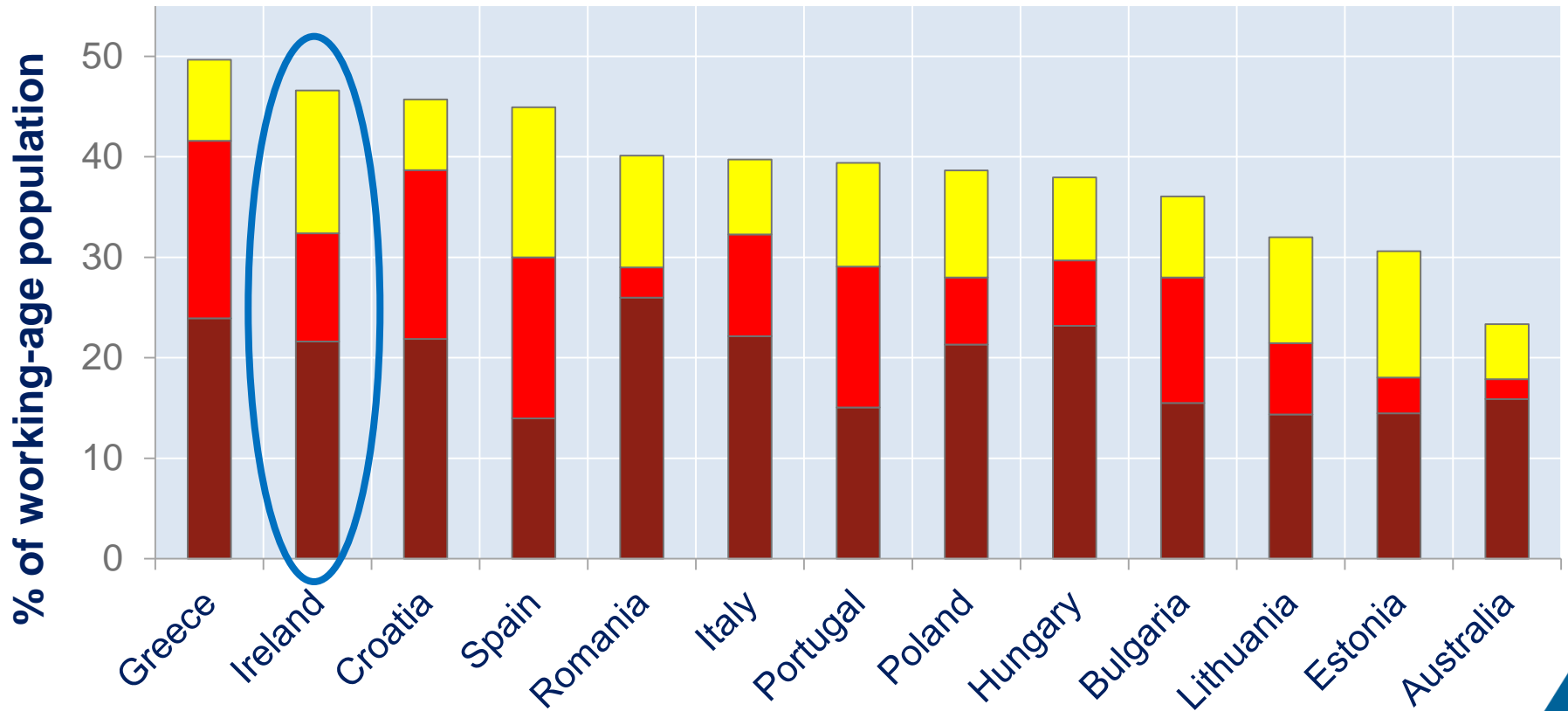
- Unified method and broadly similar process / outputs
- Extensions @OECD:** eg Australia, Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania
- Main findings**
 - ✓ employment difficulties **very** different across countries & groups
 - ✓ indicates **different needs for support**, even in demographically similar population segments (“older workers”, “youth”, “mothers”)
 - ✓ traditional ways of presenting LM statistics cannot capture this
 - ✓ large majority face **multiple barriers**
 - ✓ existing programmes sometimes of right type but **poor access, coordination**
 - ✓ input into **OECD country policy reviews, European Semester**



Scope for labour-market integration measures

Untapped sources of employment growth

■ Inactive ■ Persistently unemployed ■ Weak labour market attachment



Sources: Australia, Estonia, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Portugal, Spain: OECD project “Faces of Joblessness”.
Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Romania: World Bank project “Portraits of Labor Market Exclusion”.
Links to all studies are in final slide.

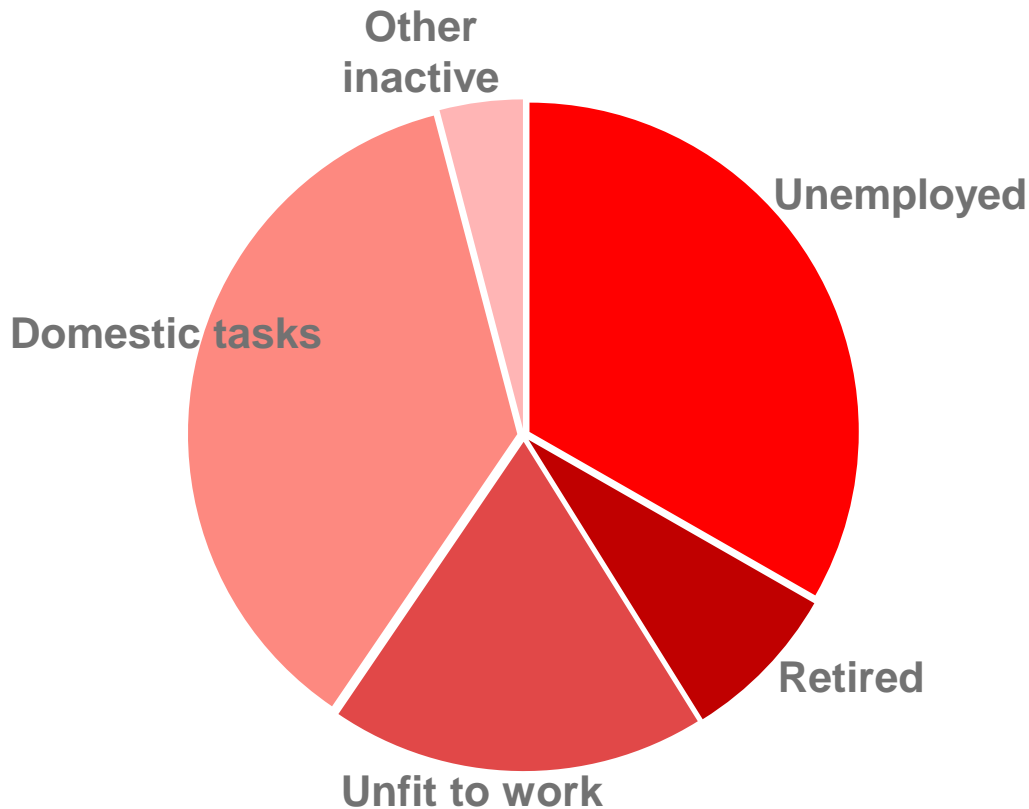


Individuals with potential employment difficulties



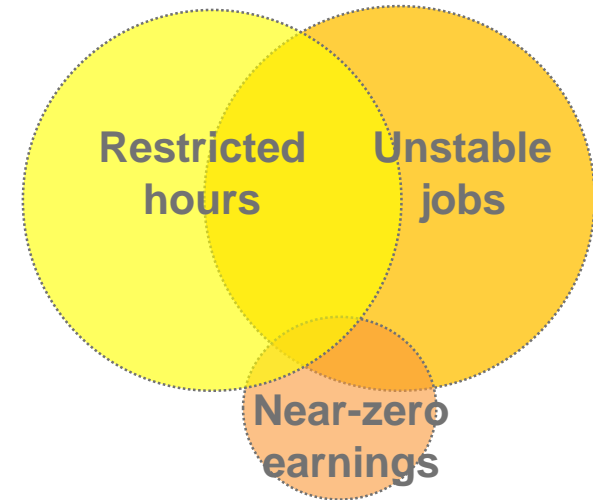
Out of work

32% of working-age individuals



Weak labour-market attachment

14% of working-age individuals





What difficulties?

A typology of employment barriers



Work-related capabilities

- Education / skills
- Work experience
- Health problems
- Care responsibilities



Motivation / Incentives

- Out-of-work benefits
- Tax burdens on in-work earnings
- Non-labour incomes
- Earnings of other family members



Opportunities

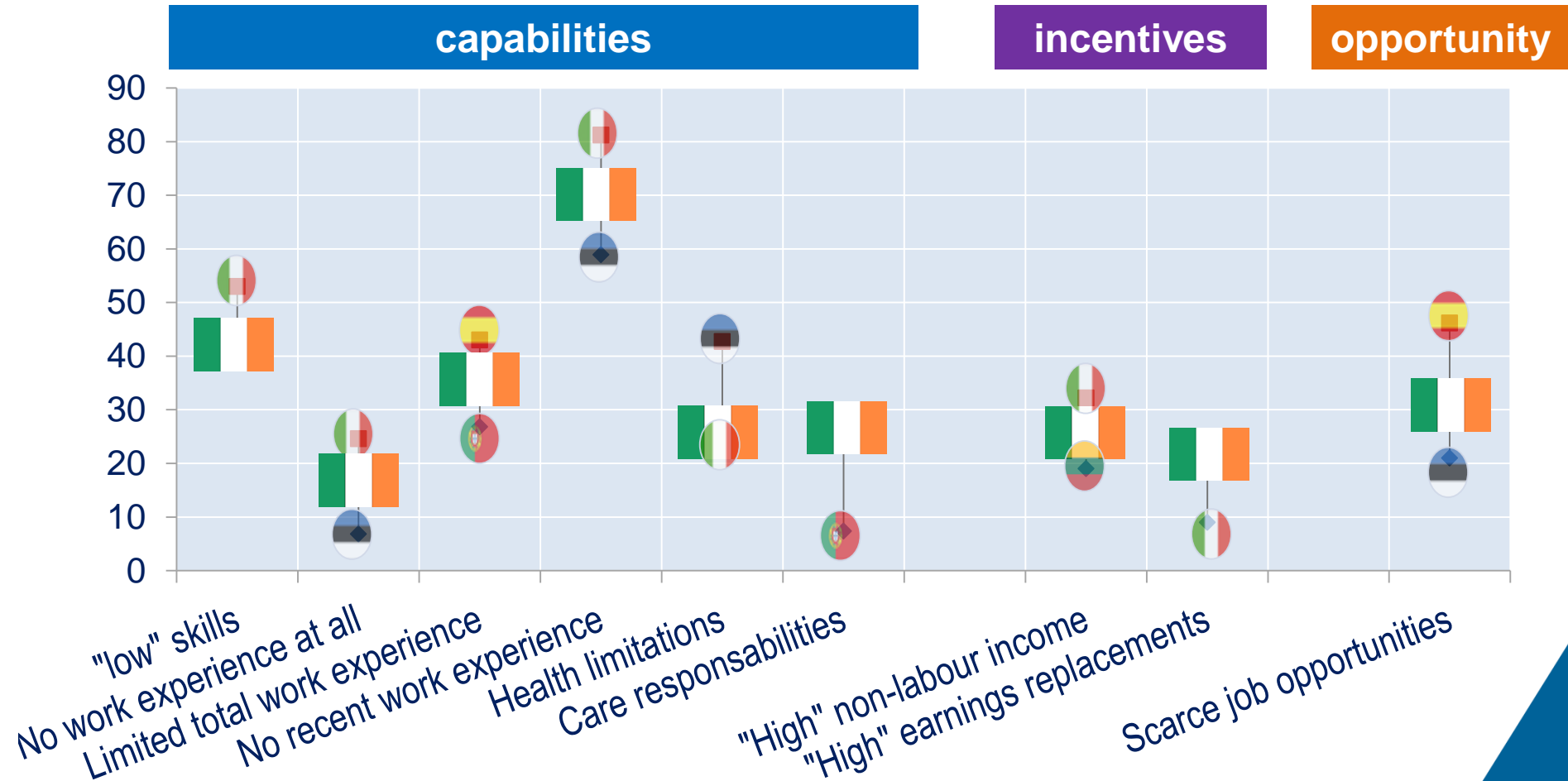
- Cyclical labour-market weakness
- Limited hiring in relevant labour-market segment (eg, region, education)



Employment barriers

Incidence across countries

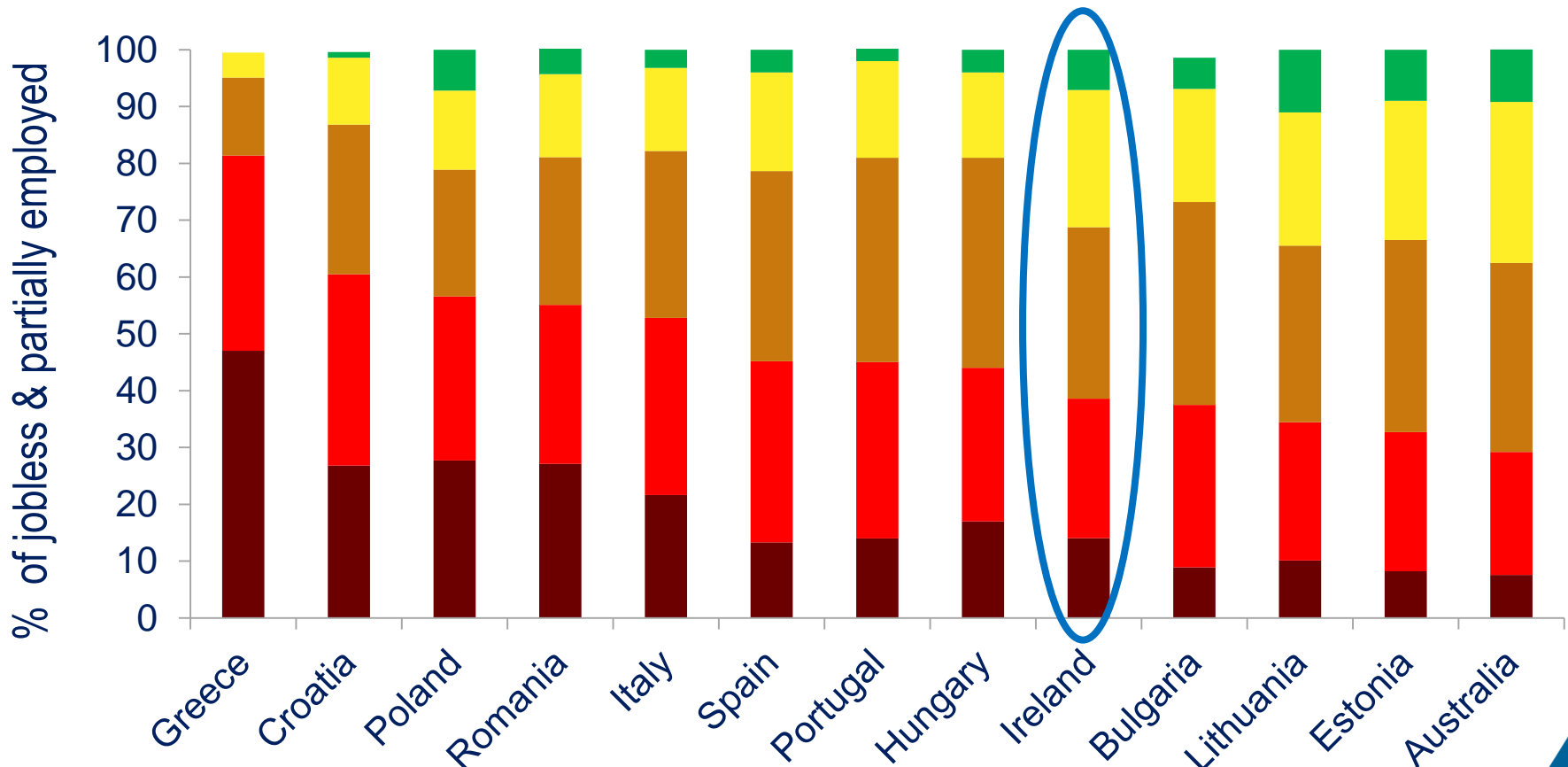
% of individuals with potential labour market difficulties





Most face multiple barriers

■ 4 or more barriers ■ 3 barriers ■ 2 barriers ■ single barrier ■ No major barrier



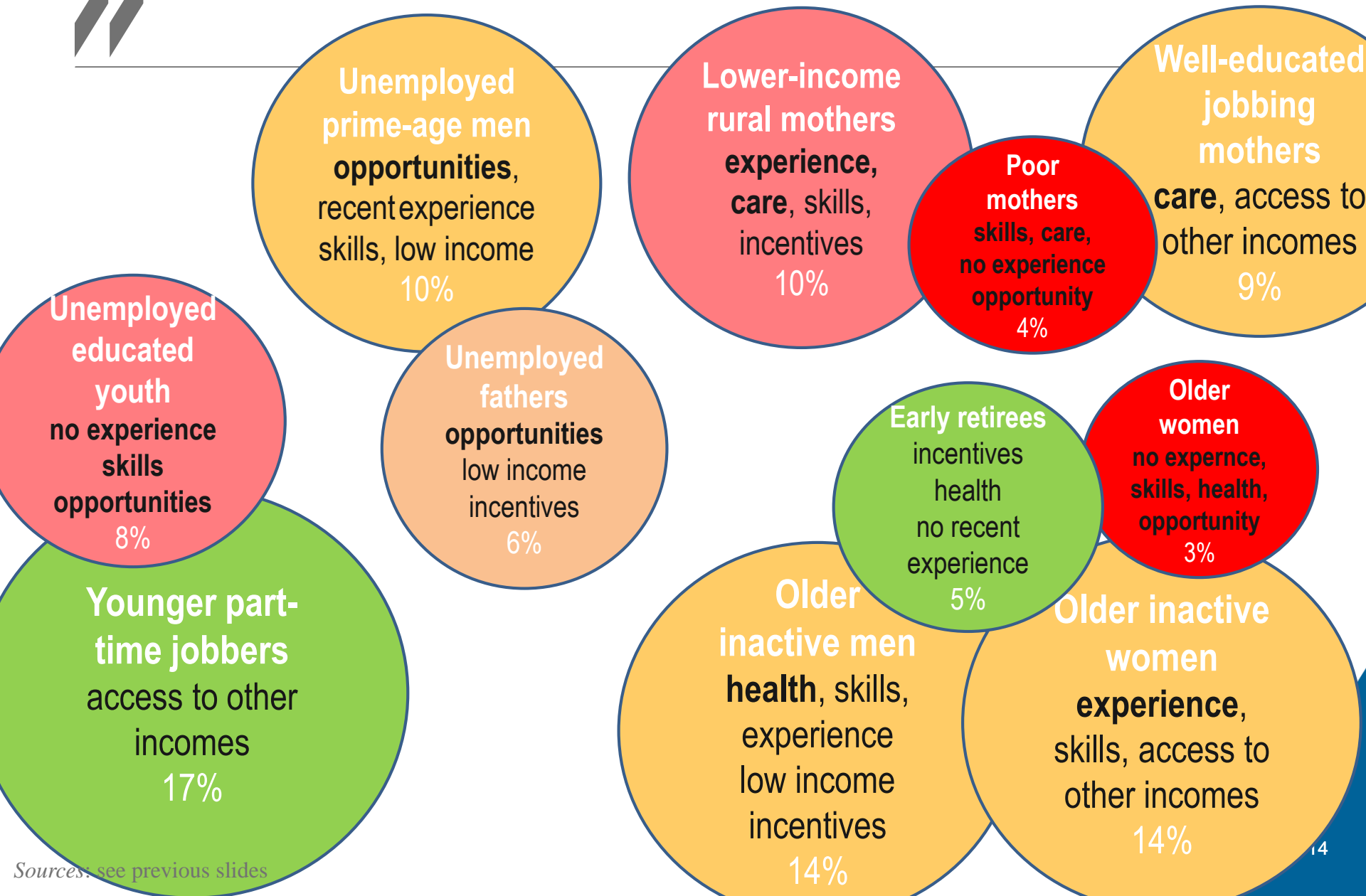
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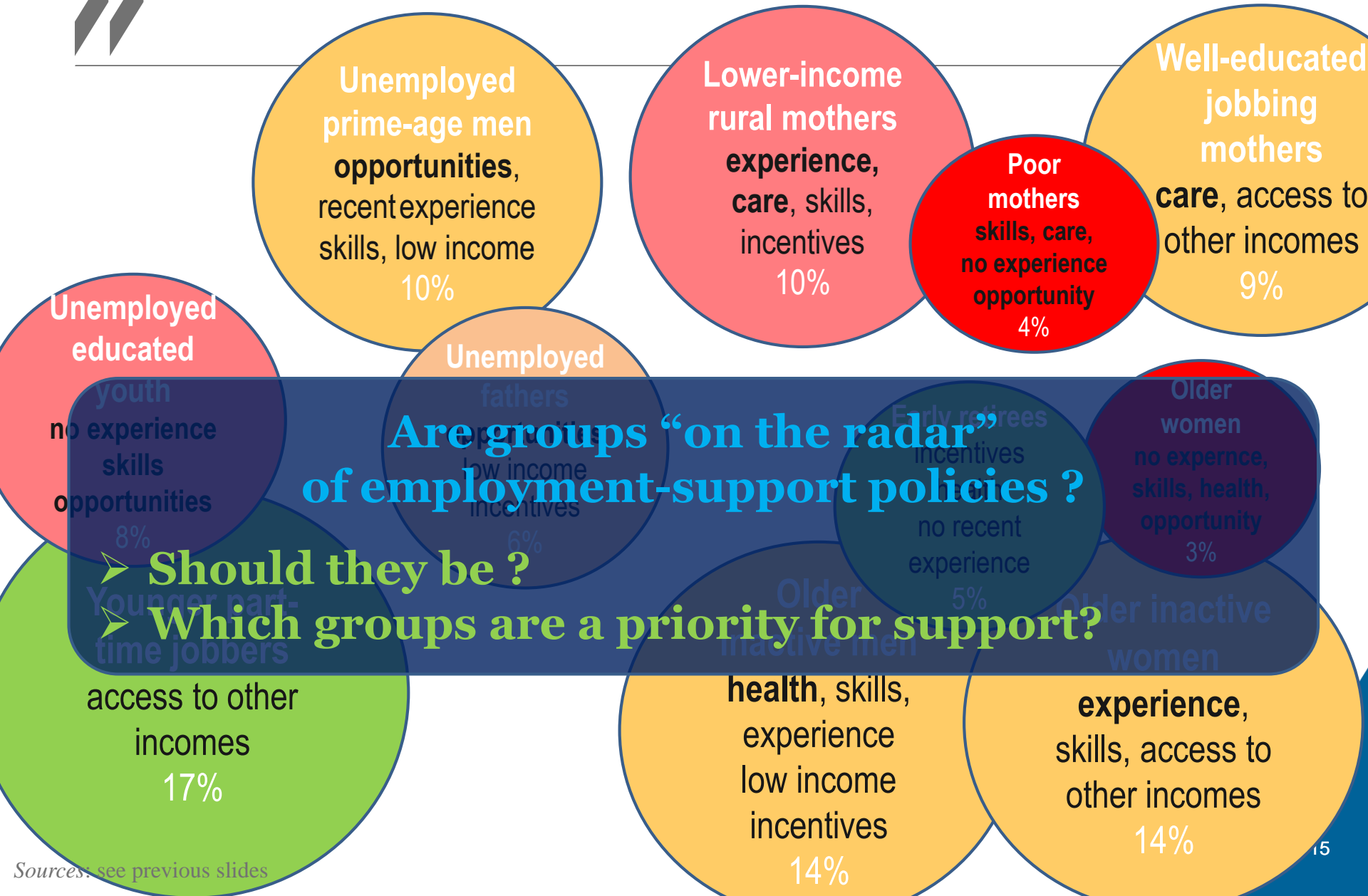


« Messy » circumstances ...





« Messy » circumstances ...



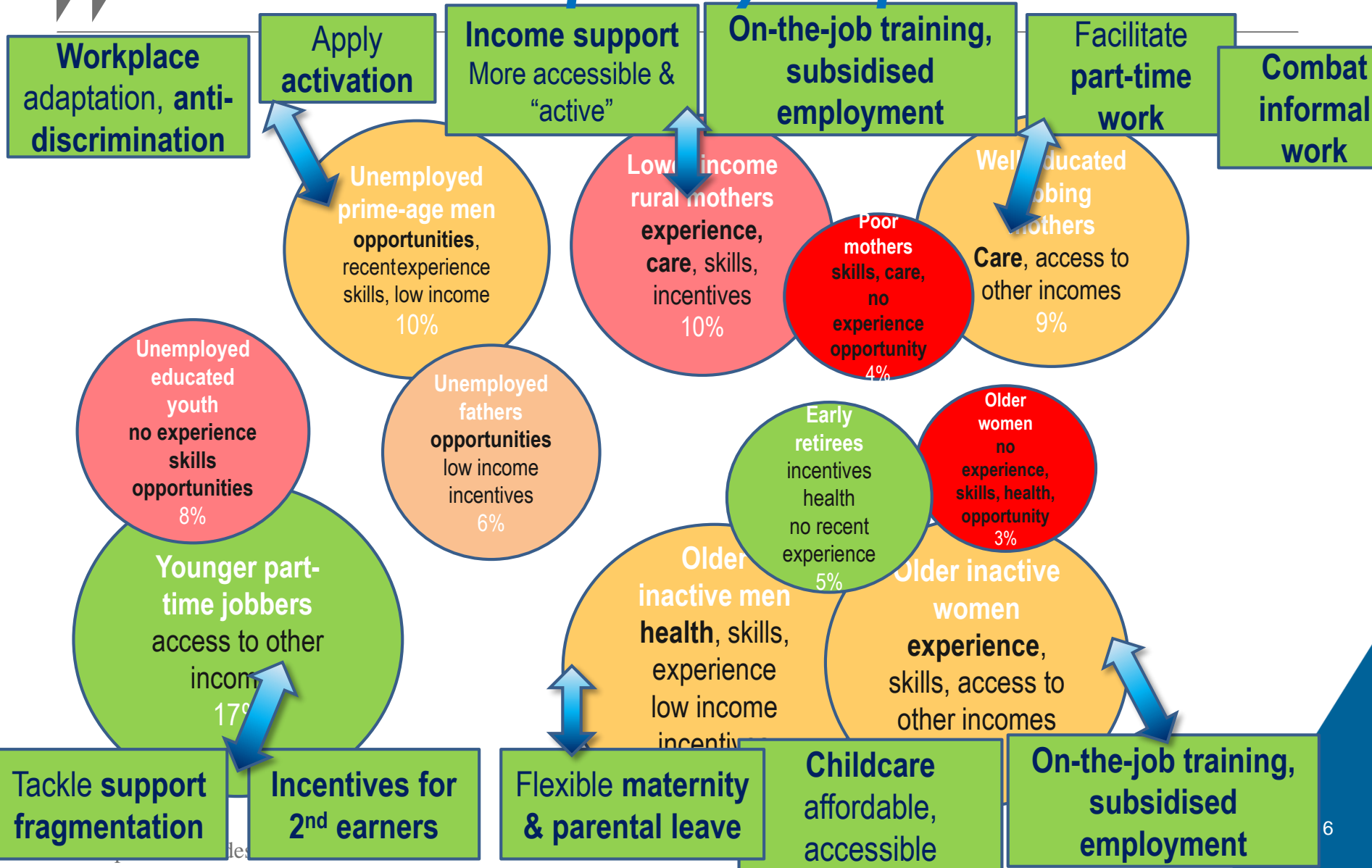
Are groups “on the radar” of employment-support policies?

➤ Should they be?

➤ Which groups are a priority for support?



« Messy » circumstances and their policy implications





« Messy » circumstances ...

... and their policy implications





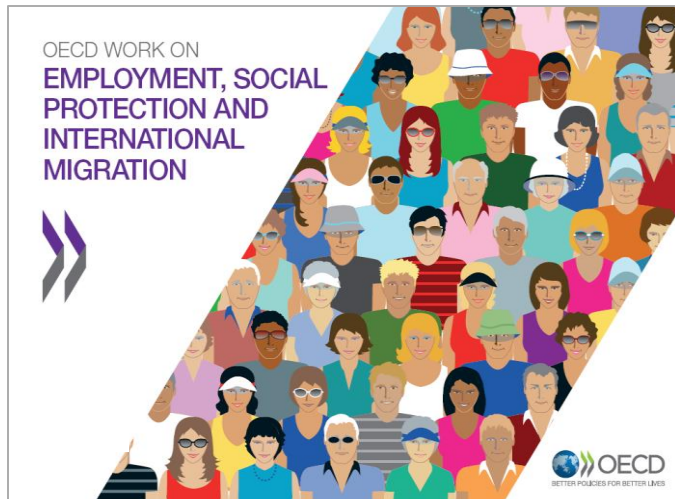
What next? Summary and outlook

- Patterns of LM problems both **heterogeneous** and **evolving**
- **Need** for high-level **monitoring on a regular basis**
- A **people-centred perspective** helps to
 - assess potential **sources of employment growth**
 - complement existing institution/sector-specific profiling
 - identify **policy gaps, access problems**
 - highlight incidence of **simultaneous barriers**, and need for coordination, suitable sequencing
- **“Bird’s-eye” or “microscope”?**
- Need both: Additional **insights from qualitative data**
 - What personal and family **histories** precede joblessness?
 - What **quantitative information** do we need to collect systematically ?
 - What are **subjective perceptions** of support services?
(Why) do they **differ between service providers & clients?**



Thank you

Contact: Herwig.Immervoll@oecd.org



Links & further information:

All country studies on the project website:
<http://www.oecd.org/social/faces-of-joblessness.htm>.

[Connecting People with Good Jobs](http://www.oecd.org/social/benefits-and-wages.htm)

www.oecd.org/social/benefits-and-wages.htm

[Skills and Work](#)

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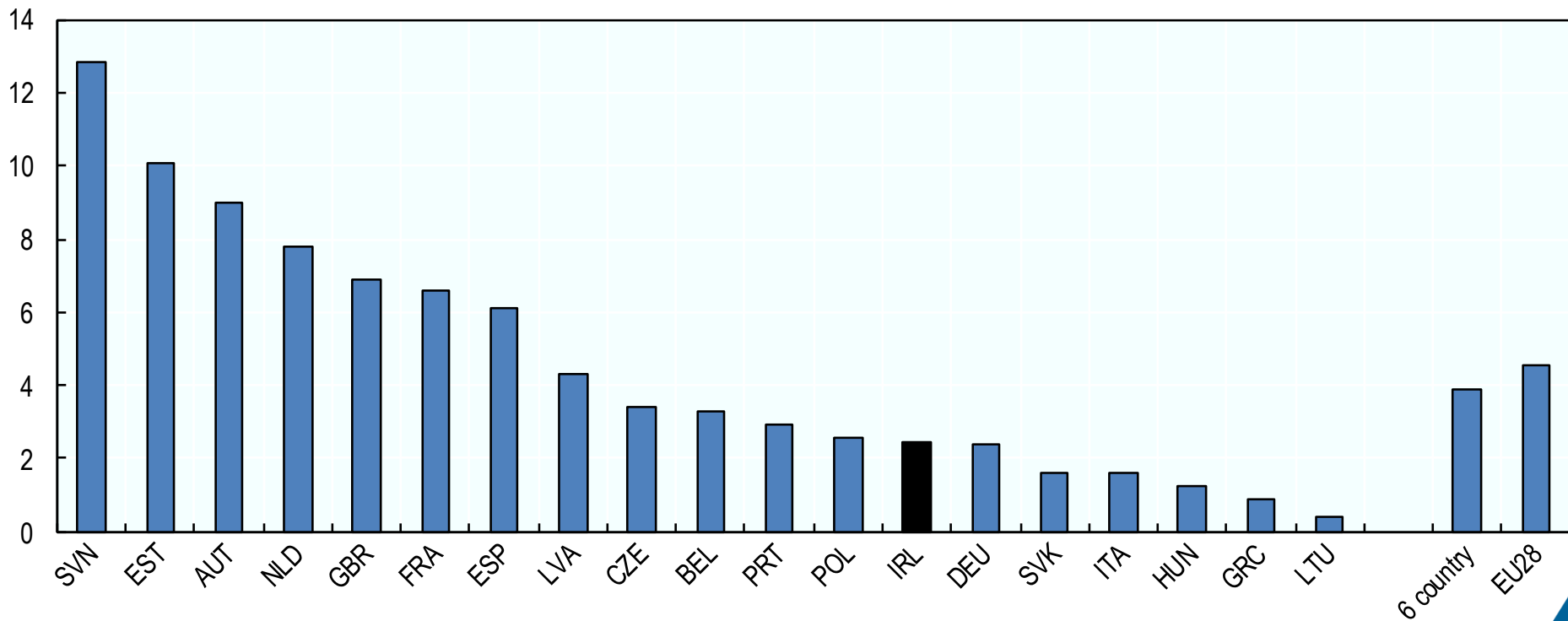
Additional slides





Participation in education and training

Economically inactive mothers with young children, %



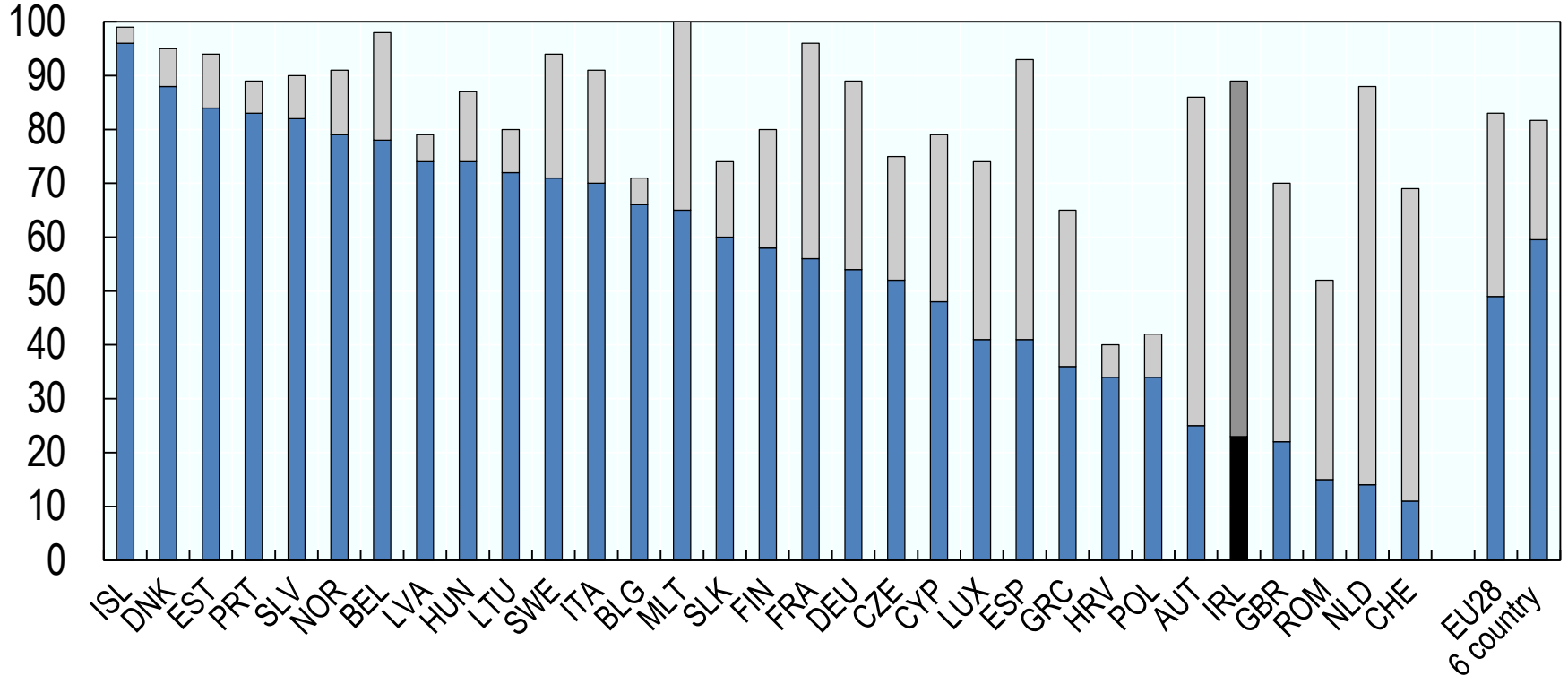


Pre-school coverage

2014, %

Less than 30 hours

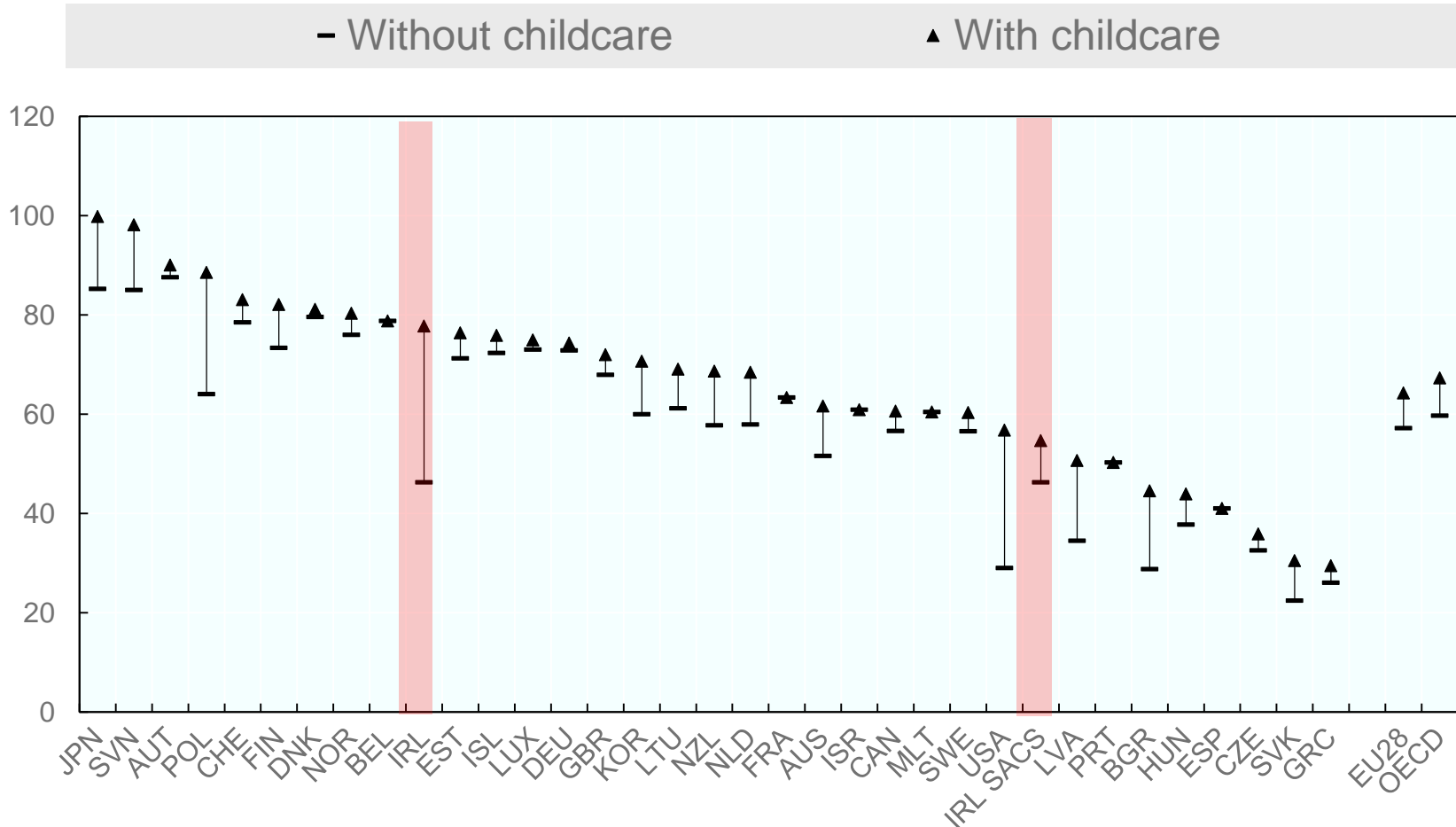
30 hours or over





Participation tax rates with and without childcare costs

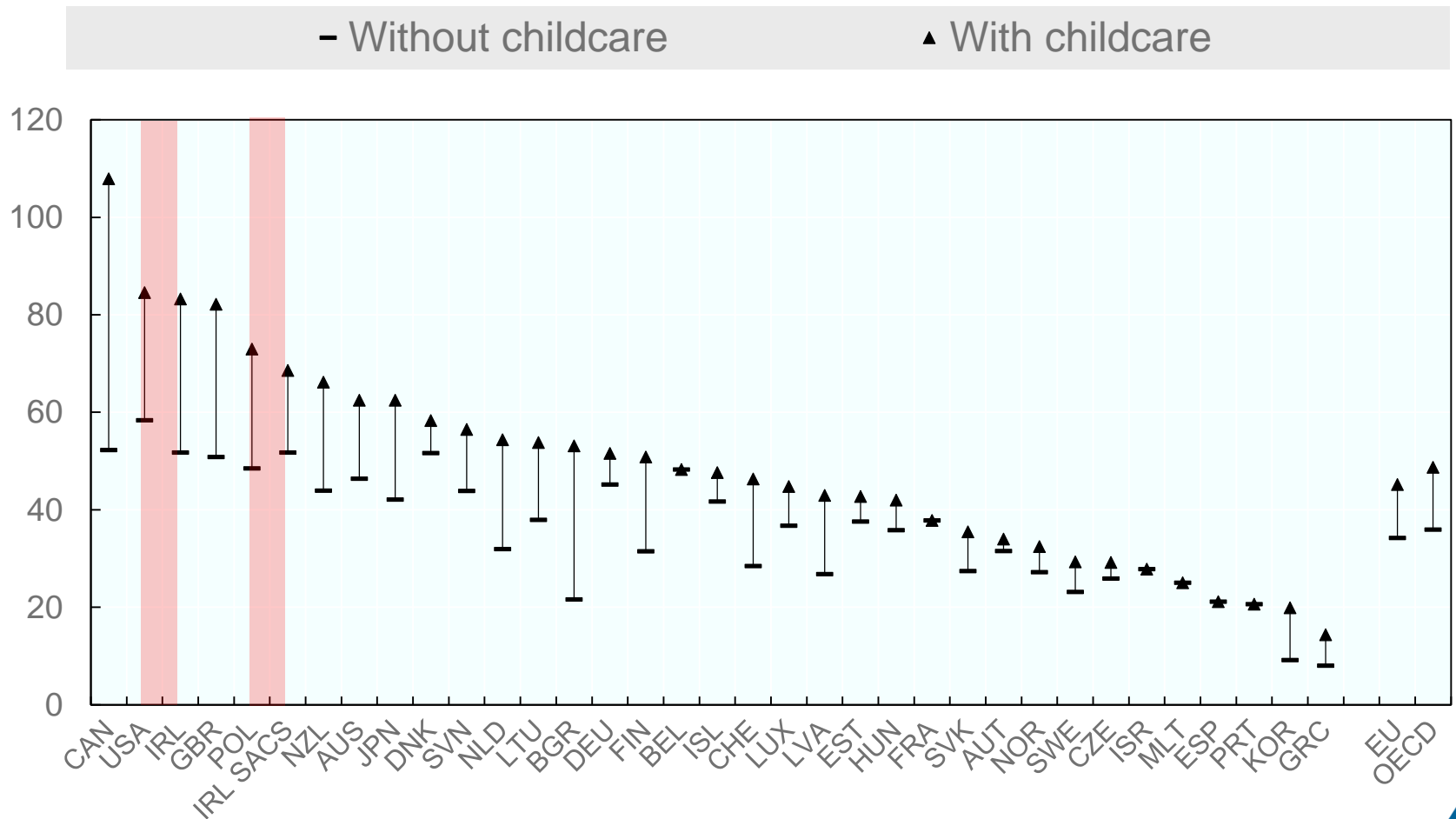
Lone parent, 2015, %





Participation tax rates with and without childcare costs

Low-earning couple 2015, %



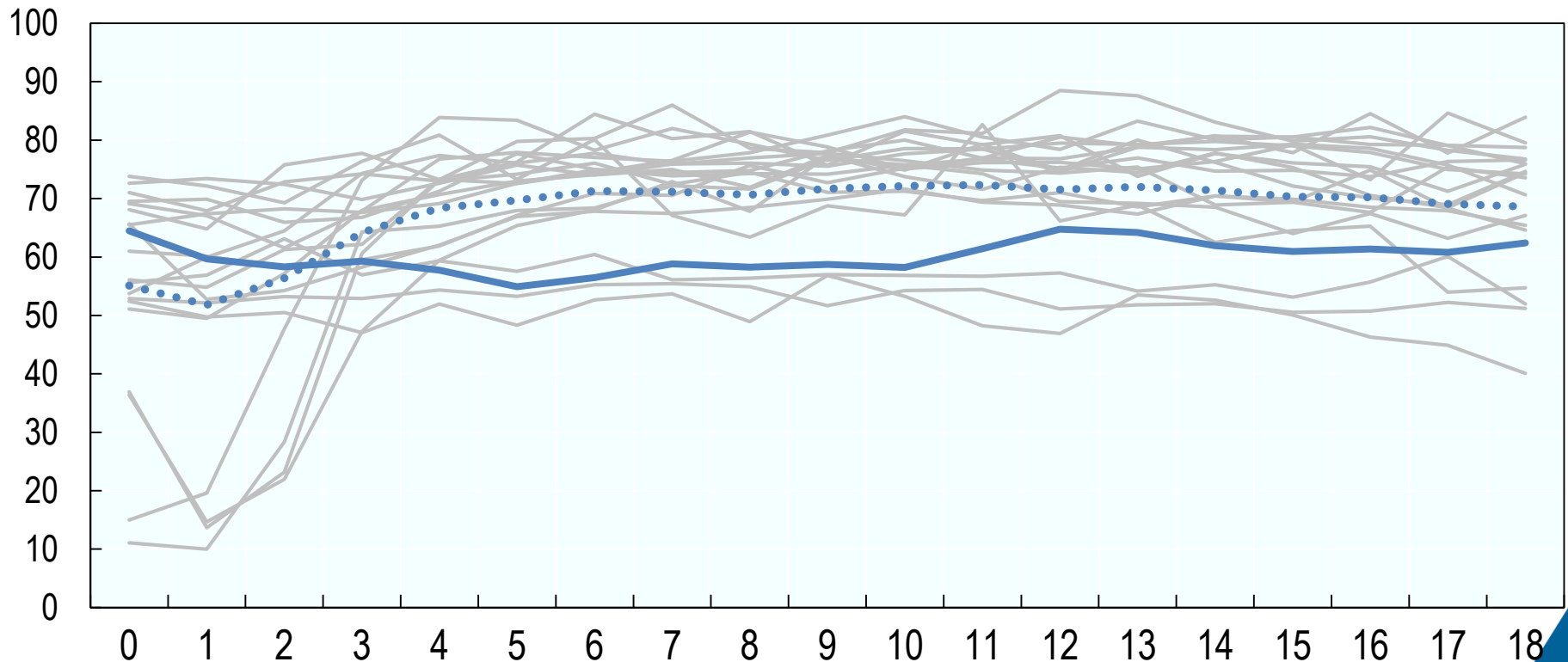


Low employment rates for mothers continue throughout childhood

Employment rate of mothers by age of youngest child
Ireland and other EU countries, 2014

— Ireland

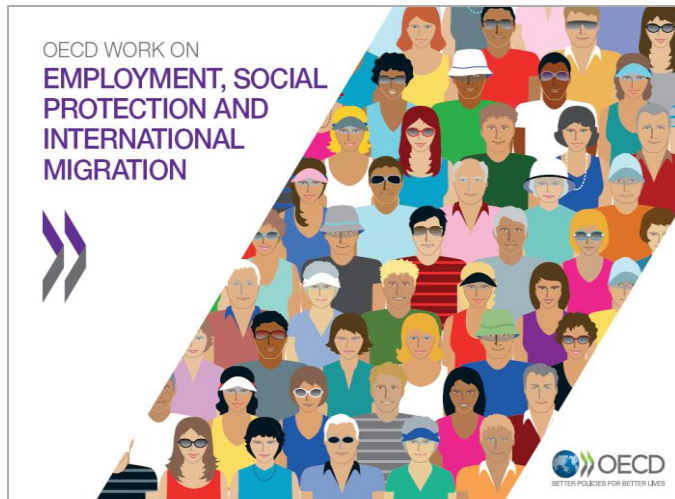
····· EU average





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