



Do Adults Have the Skills They Need to Thrive in a Changing World?

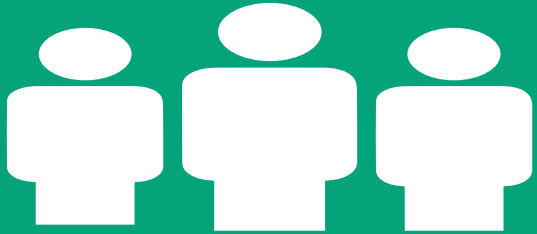
SURVEY OF ADULT SKILLS 2023





2023 Survey of Adult Skills (Cycle 2)

In brief



160 thousand adults...

representing 673 million 16-65 year-olds in 31 countries and economies

Assessment of literacy, numeracy and adaptive problem solving.



The survey collects a range of other information such as on social and emotional skills, skill use at home and work and adult learning.



The assessment was administered via tablets.





Proficiency in key information-processing skills

Across all domains:

- **Five** countries achieve the highest mean proficiency scores across all domains.
- **Eleven** countries consistently perform below the OECD average in all skills domains.
- **Socio demographic** differences mostly confirmed

* Adults who were administered the doorstep interview are included in all analyses.

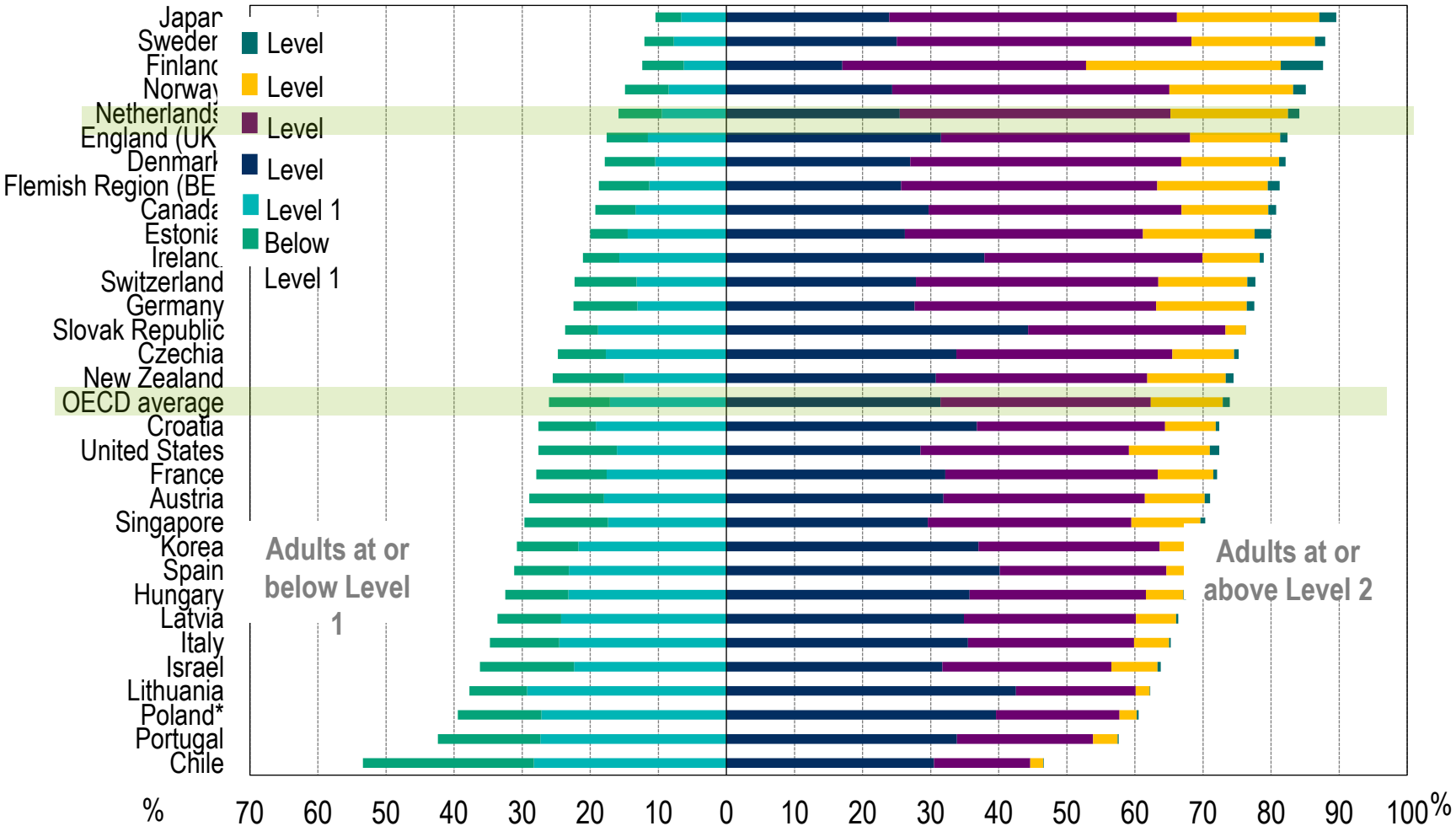
** Adults who were administered the doorstep interview are excluded from some analyses.



On average, across participating OECD countries, a quarter of adults are considered low performers in literacy, scoring at or below Level 1

Figure 2.2

Literacy proficiency among adults Share of 16-65 year-olds scoring at each proficiency level in literacy



OECD average:

Below Level 1 & Level 1: 26%
Level 2: 31%
Level 3: 31%
Level 4 & Level 5: 12%

Netherlands

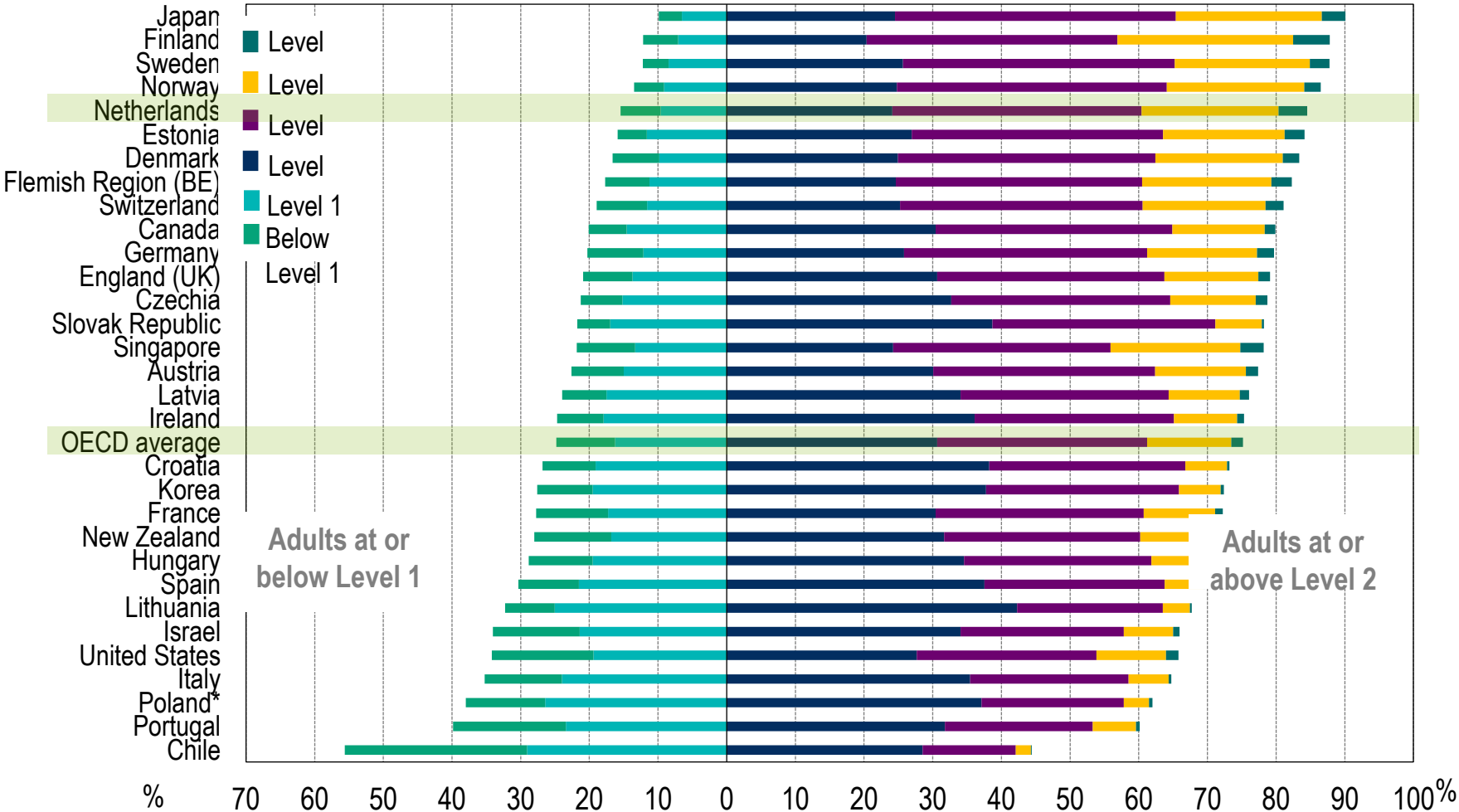
Below Level 1 & Level 1: 16%
Level 2: 26%
Level 3: 40%
Level 4 & Level 5: 19%



On average, across participating OECD countries, a quarter of adults are considered low performers in numeracy, scoring at or below Level 1

Figure 2.3

Numeracy proficiency among adults Share of 16-65 year-olds scoring at each proficiency level in numeracy



OECD average:

Below Level 1 & Level 1: 25%
Level 2: 31%
Level 3: 31%
Level 4 & Level 5: 14%

Netherlands

Below Level 1 & Level 1: 16%
Level 2: 24%
Level 3: 36%
Level 4 & Level 5: 24.2%

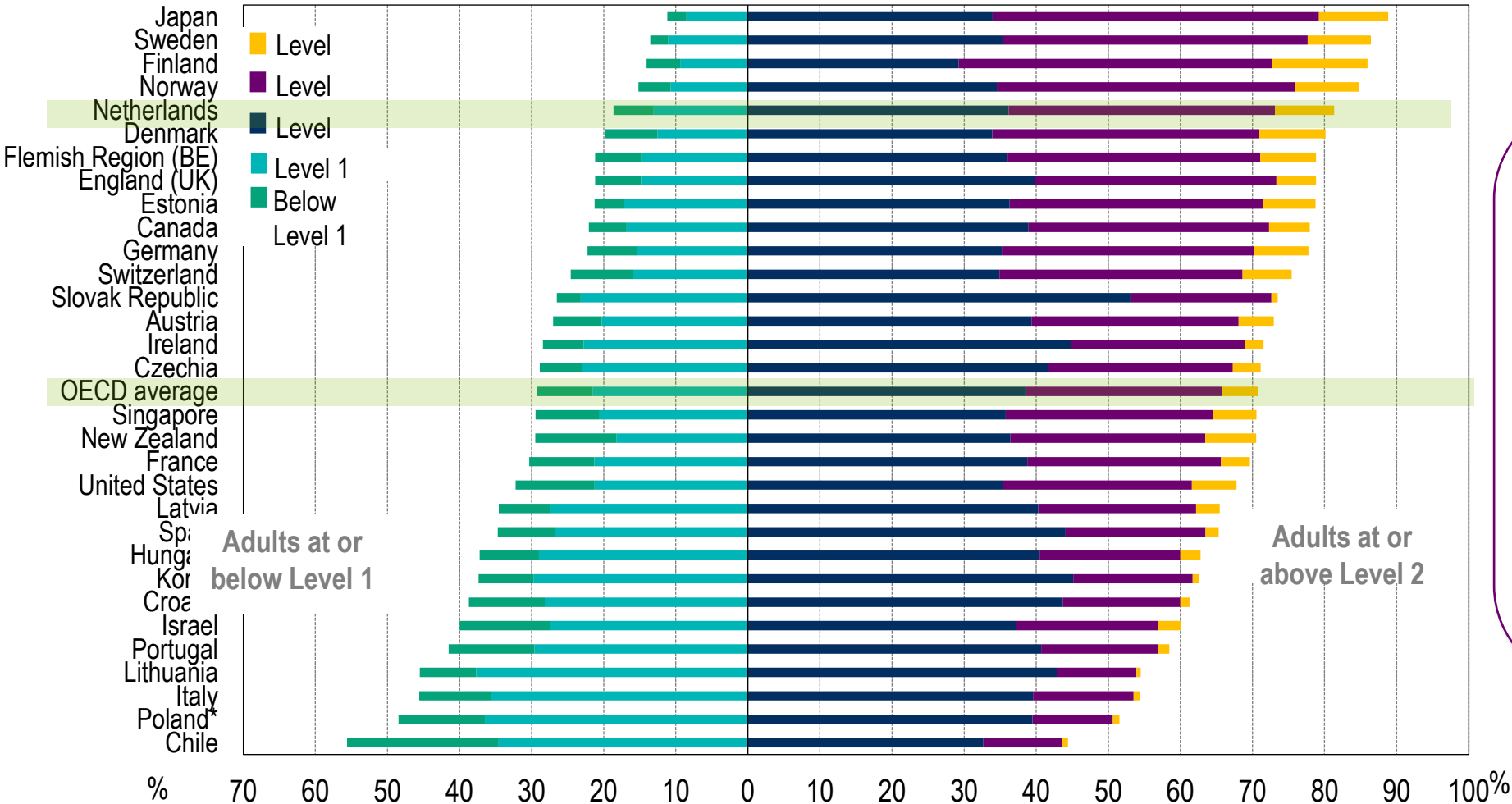


On average, across participating OECD countries, nearly one-third of adults are considered low performers in problem solving, scoring at or below Level 1

Figure 2.4

Proficiency in adaptive problem solving among adults

Share of 16-65 year-olds scoring at each proficiency level in adaptive problem solving



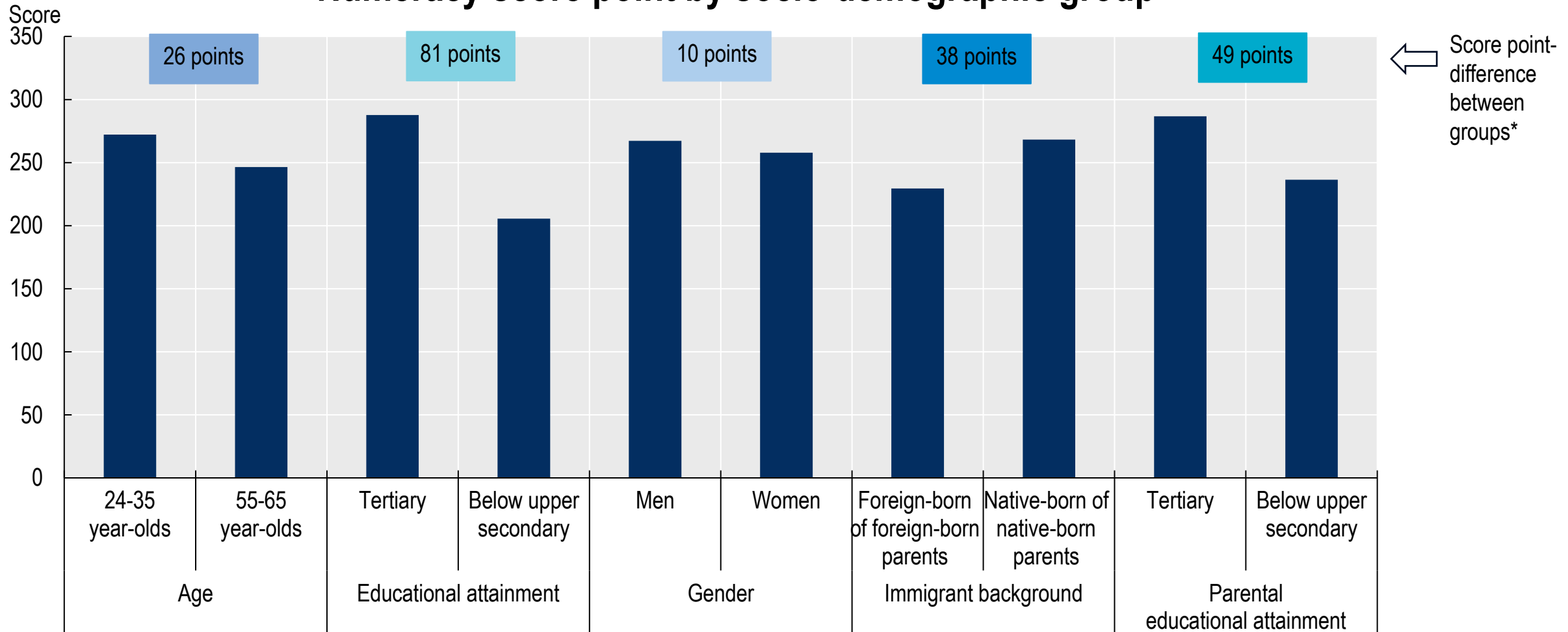
OECD average:
Below Level 1 & Level 1: 29%
Level 2: 39%
Level 3: 27%
Level 4: 5%

Netherlands
Below Level 1 & Level 1: 19%
Level 2: 36%
Level 3: 37%
Level 4: 8%



Some socio-demographic groups have higher numeracy proficiency than others (OECD average)

Numeracy score point by socio-demographic group



* All score-point differences are significant.



The skills proficiency of the adult population has declined in many countries and economies

What the data tell us

- **Literacy:** two countries with positive trends, 14 countries with no change, 11 countries negative trends
- **Numeracy:** eight countries with positive trends, 12 countries with no change, seven countries with negative trends

Changes by level and distribution

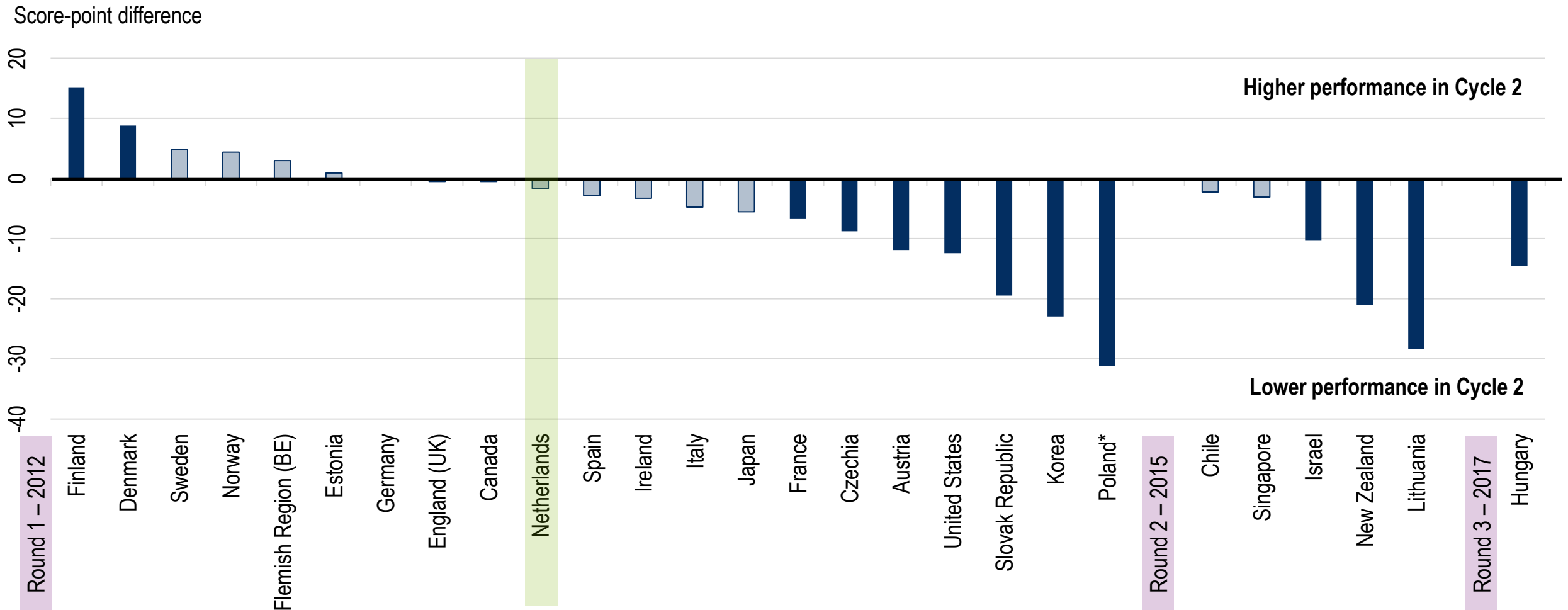
- Declining proficiency at the bottom of the distribution
- Increase in the share of adults with literacy at Level 1 and below in half of the countries
- Increase in the share of adults with numeracy at Level 1 and below in a third of countries
- Falls in literacy proficiency among tertiary-educated adults in 13 countries, increases in only one country
- Widening gap between the top and bottom 10% of adults in 17 countries for literacy and 13 countries for numeracy



Average literacy proficiency has stagnated or declined in most countries/economies

Figure 3.1 (L)

Change in average literacy proficiency between cycles, before and after accounting for demographic changes

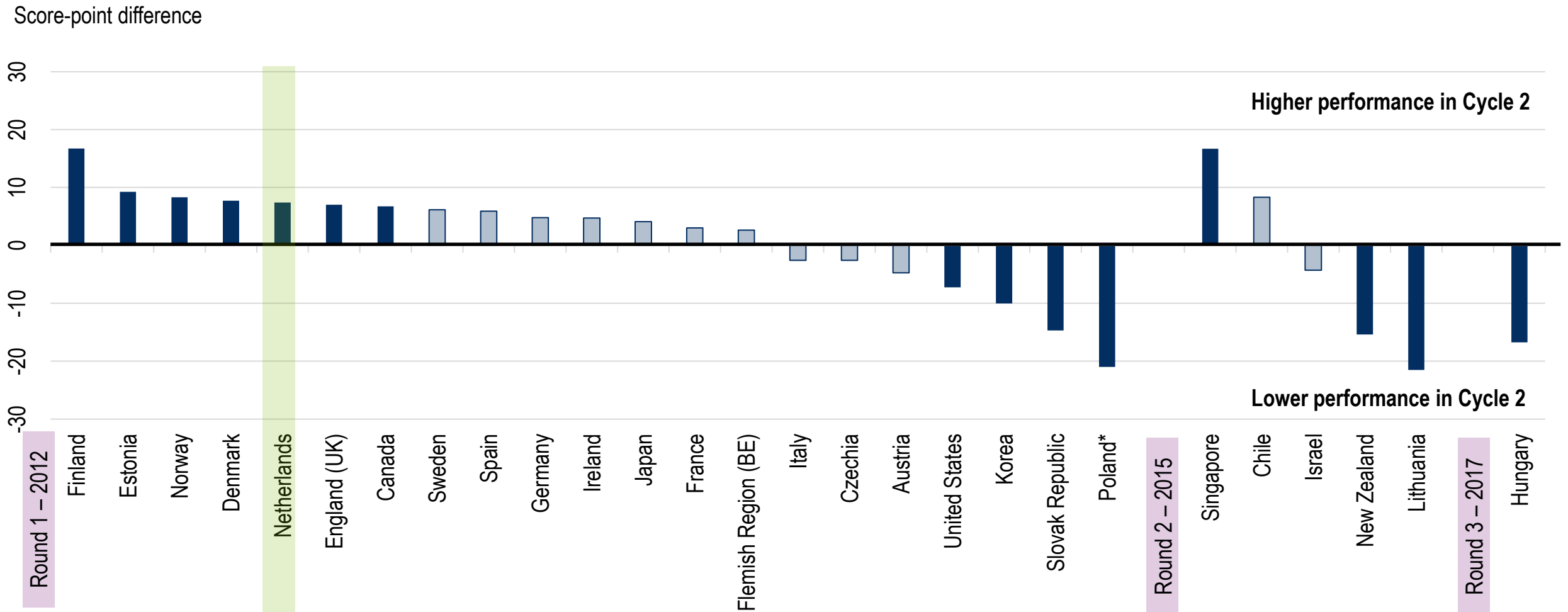




Changes in numeracy proficiency over time have been more favourable

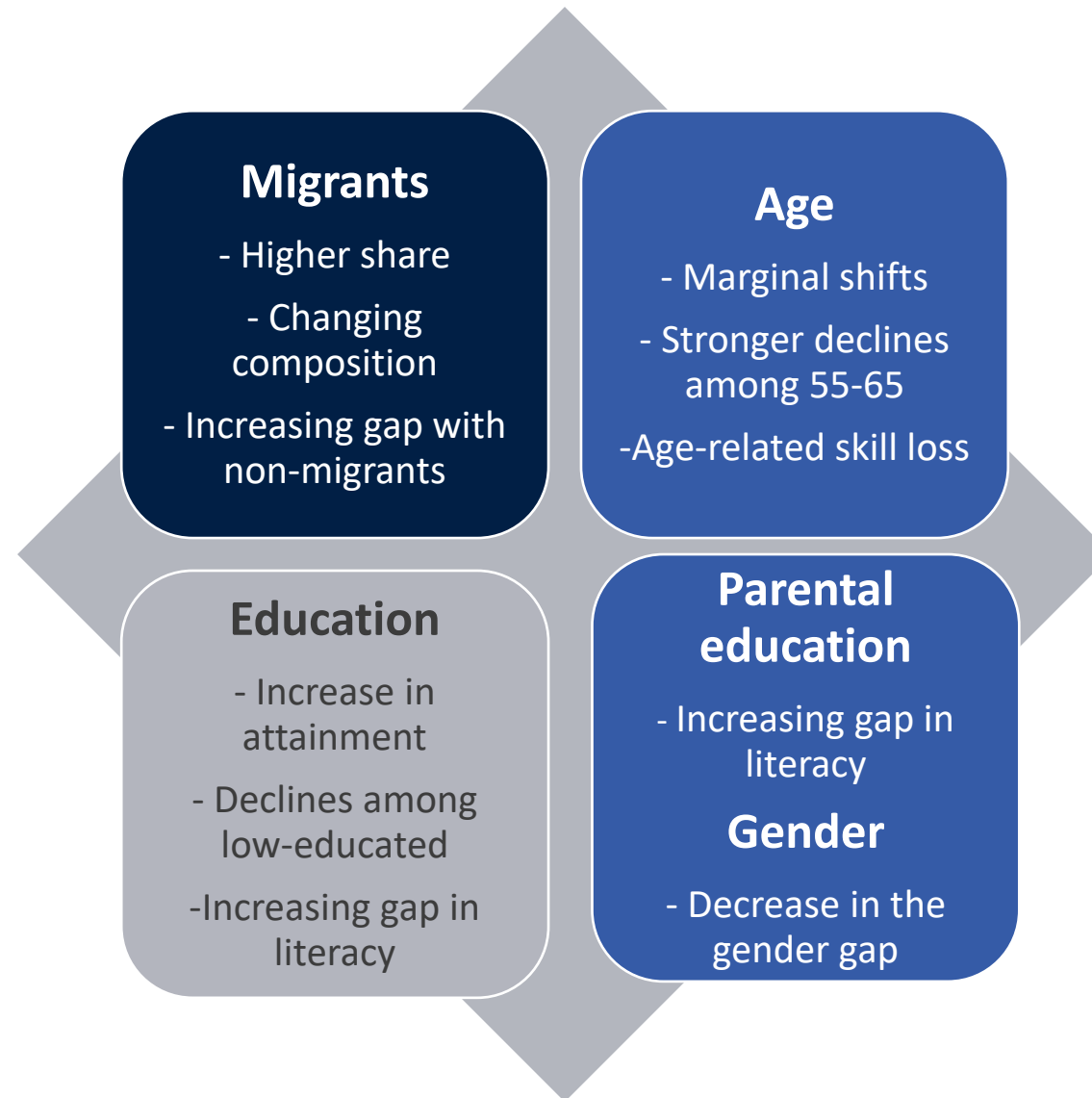
Figure 3.1 (L)

Change in average numeracy proficiency between cycles, before and after accounting for demographic changes





The declines have been most pronounced among the most vulnerable groups in society

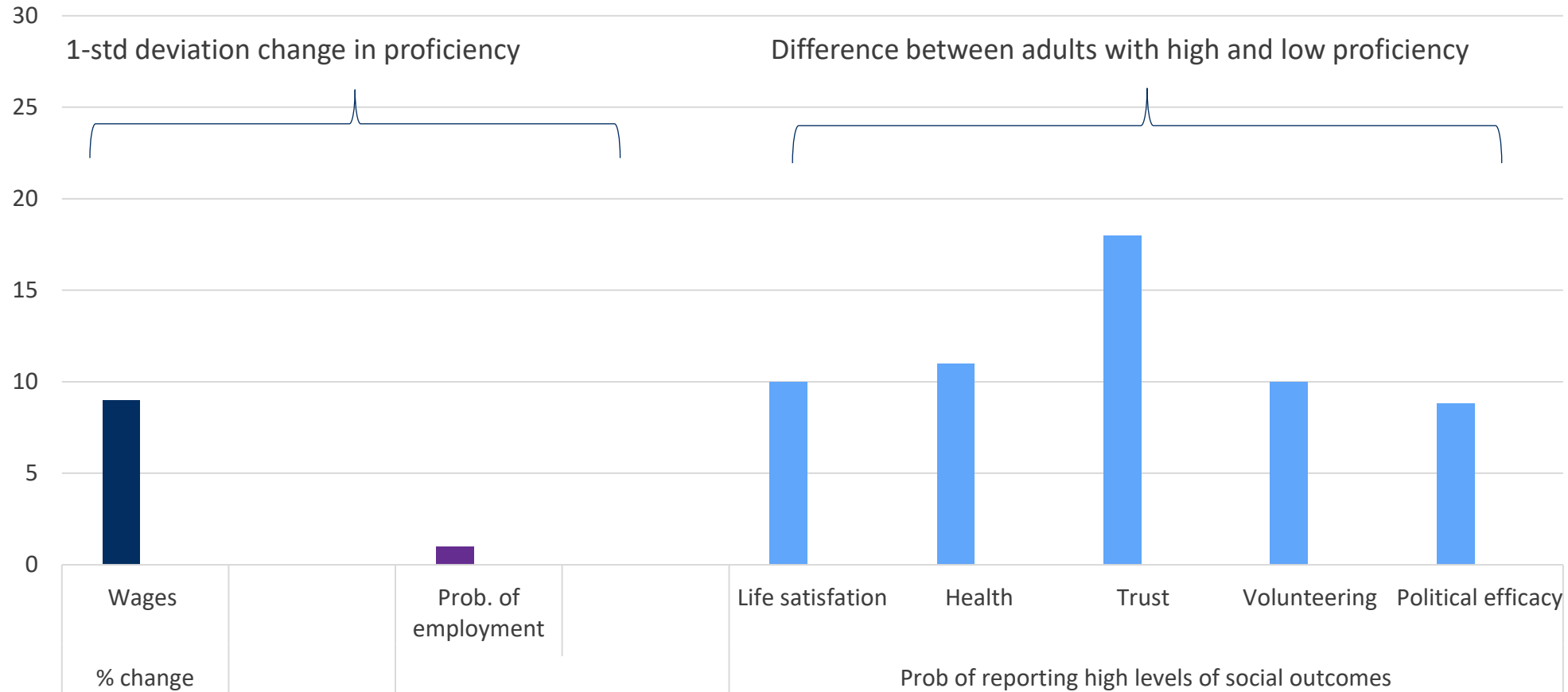




How do skills relate to social and economic outcomes?



Average effect of numeracy proficiency on social and economic outcomes



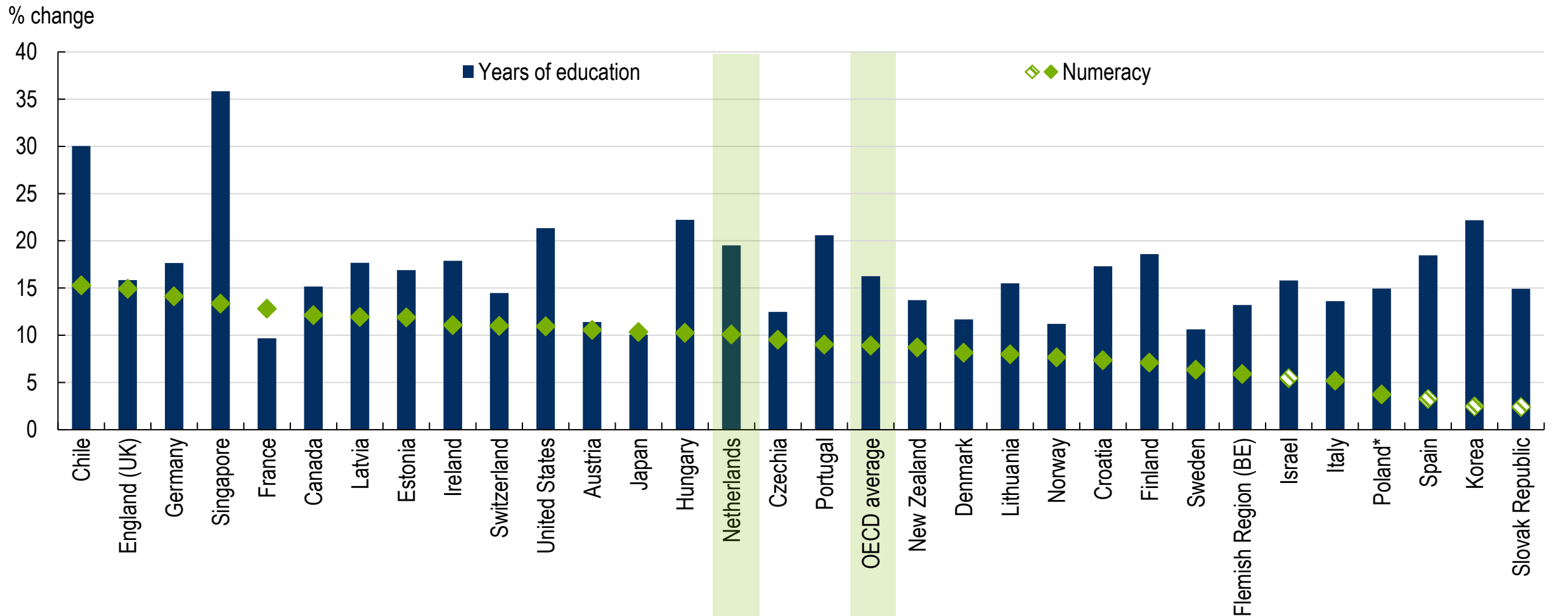
* Averages refer to the participating OECD countries and economies.



Higher skills drive earnings over and above formal education

Figure 4.5

Effect of a one-standard-deviation increase on hourly wages



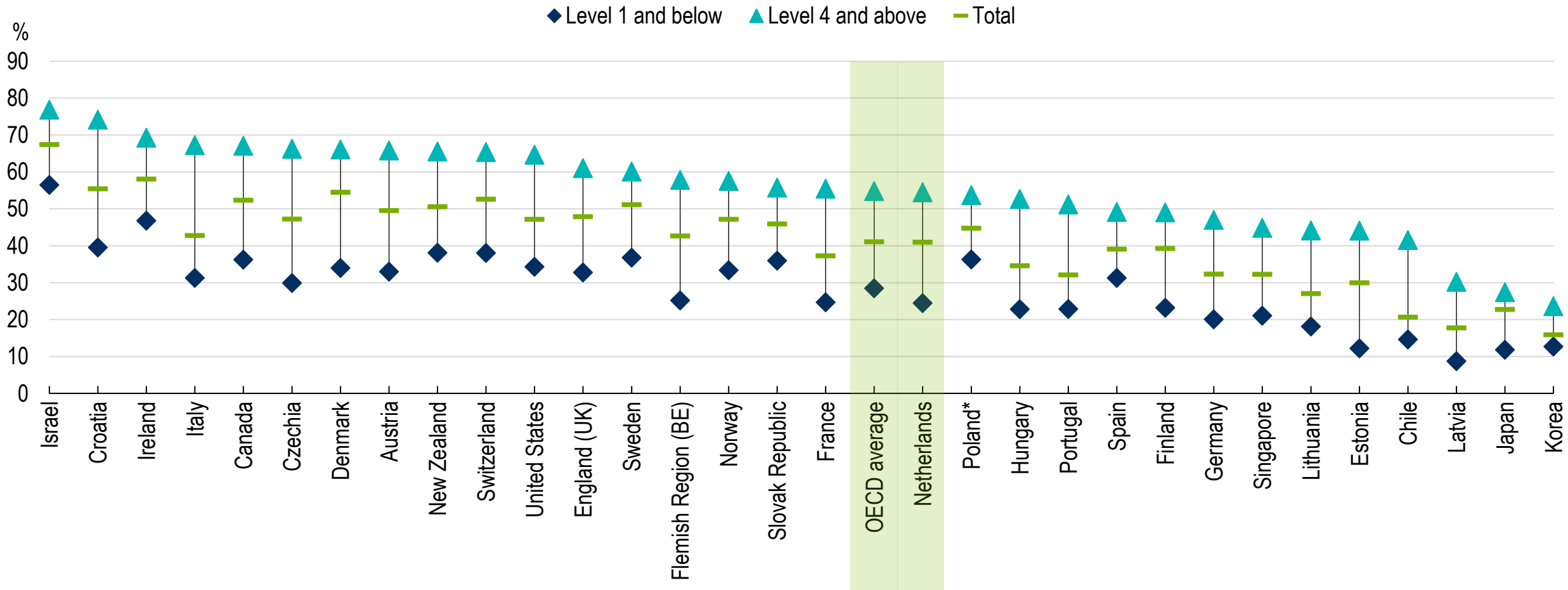
Employed adults aged 25-65 not in formal education



High-skilled adults report better health, but there are big differences across countries

Figure 4.9

Share reporting very good or excellent health, by numeracy proficiency level

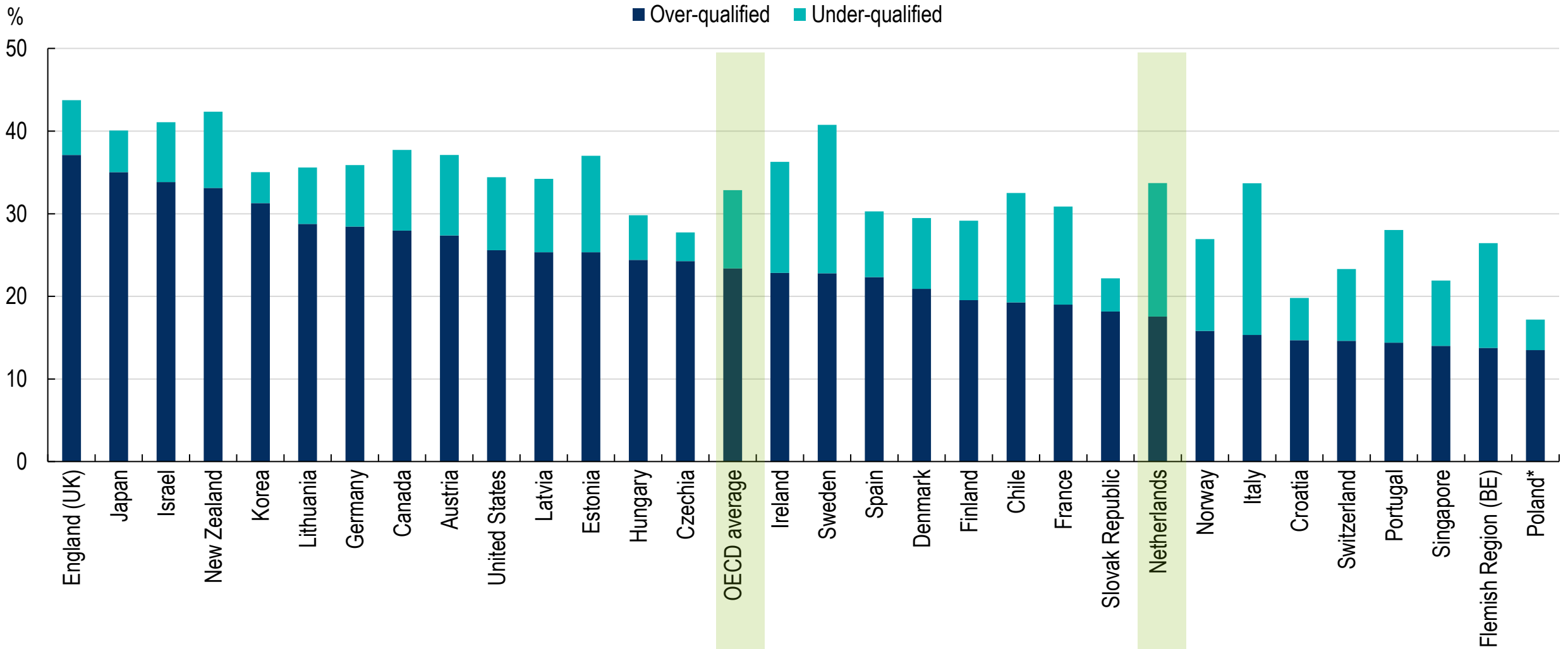




One in three workers is mismatched to their job...

Figure 4.13

Rate of qualification mismatch



Employed adults aged 25-65 who are not self-employed



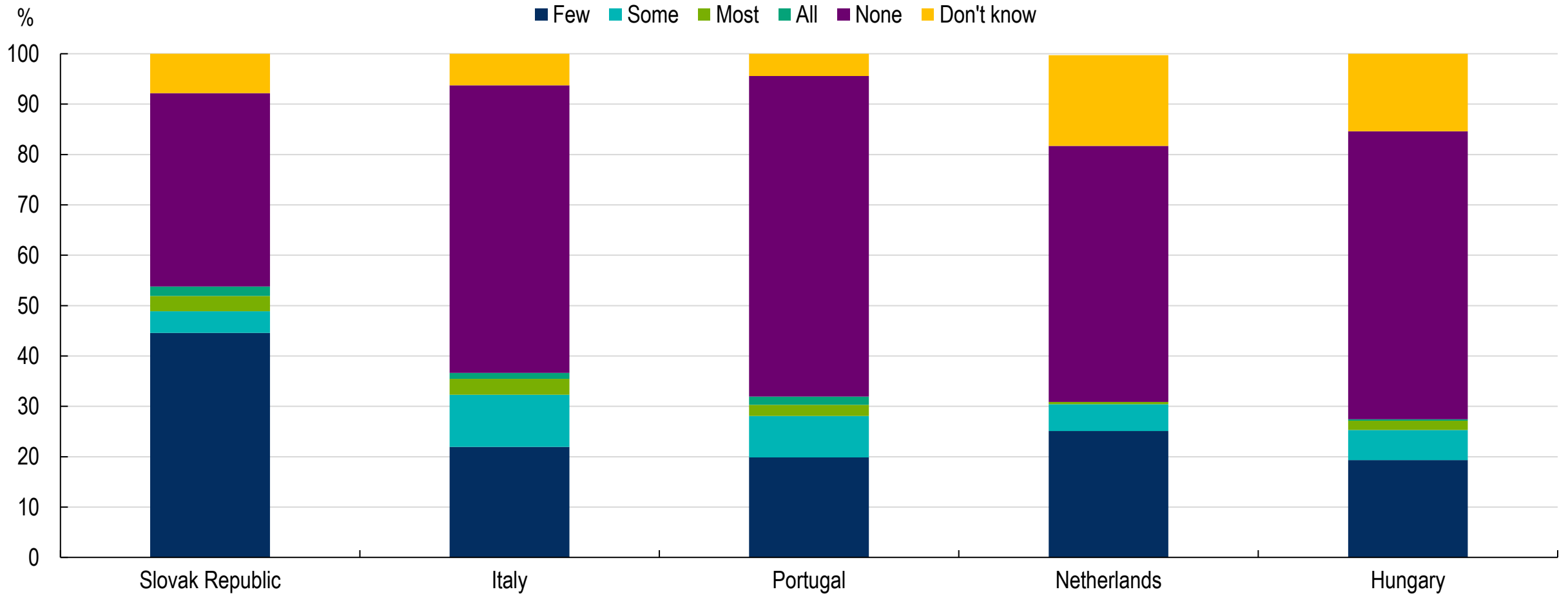
Employer module on skill gaps



Between 27% and 54% of firms report that at least a few of their employees lack the necessary skills to perform their job

Figure 4.15

Extent of skill gaps in countries participating in the PIAAC Employer Module Share of all firms reporting skill gap by intensity, by country





Skill gaps are found mostly for technical, problem-solving and people-oriented skills

Top five skill areas where countries face skill gaps


Hungary	Italy	Portugal	Slovak Republic	Netherlands
Problem-solving ✓	Communication	Technical or job-specific ✓	Technical or job-specific ✓	Technical or job-specific ✓
Technical or job-specific ✓	Teamwork ✓	Teamwork ✓	Customer handling	Customer handling
Teamwork ✓	Office admin	Problem-solving ✓	Problem-solving ✓	Management
General IT	IT professional	Other	Teamwork ✓	Problem-solving ✓
IT professional	Customer handling	Customer handling	Communication	General IT

Top three skill gap areas across countries are:

- **Teamwork**
- **Problem-solving**
- **Technical or job-specific skills**

Thank you

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