

# Precarious futures?

*Skills for employability in an international context*

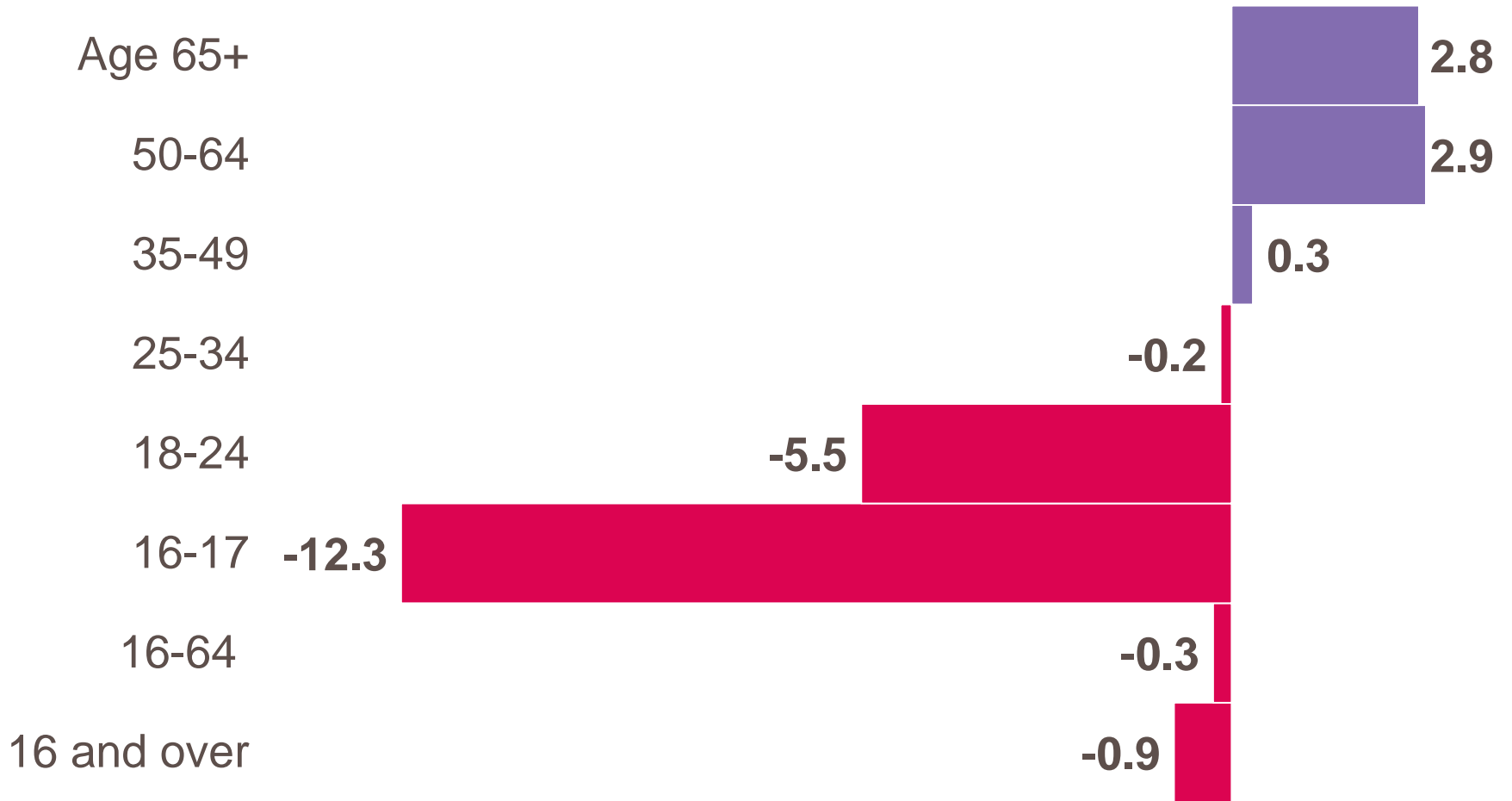
**Ian Kinder**

Executive Director

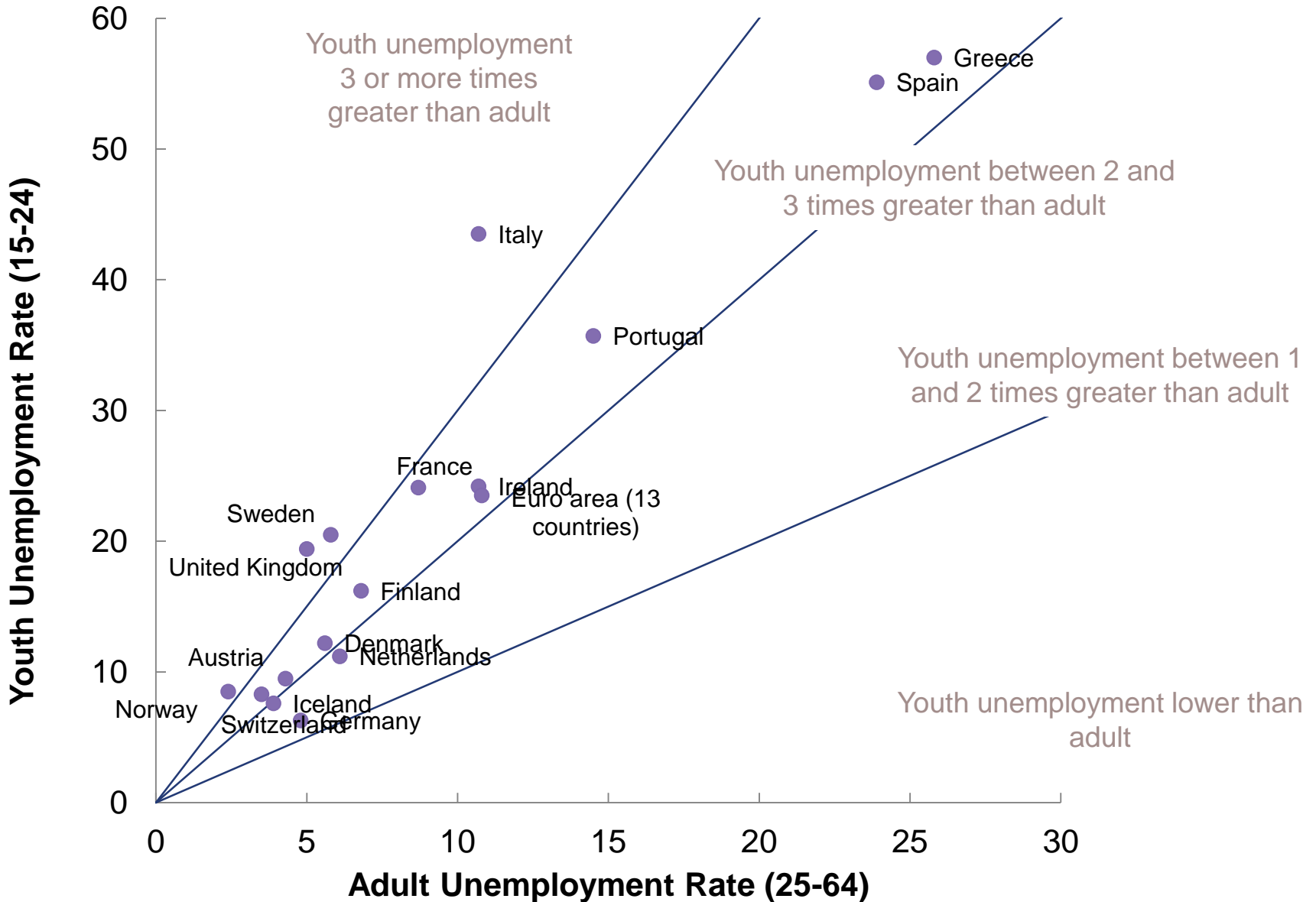
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# Context: Young people left behind?

Change in employment rates (2008 Q1 to 2014 Q1)

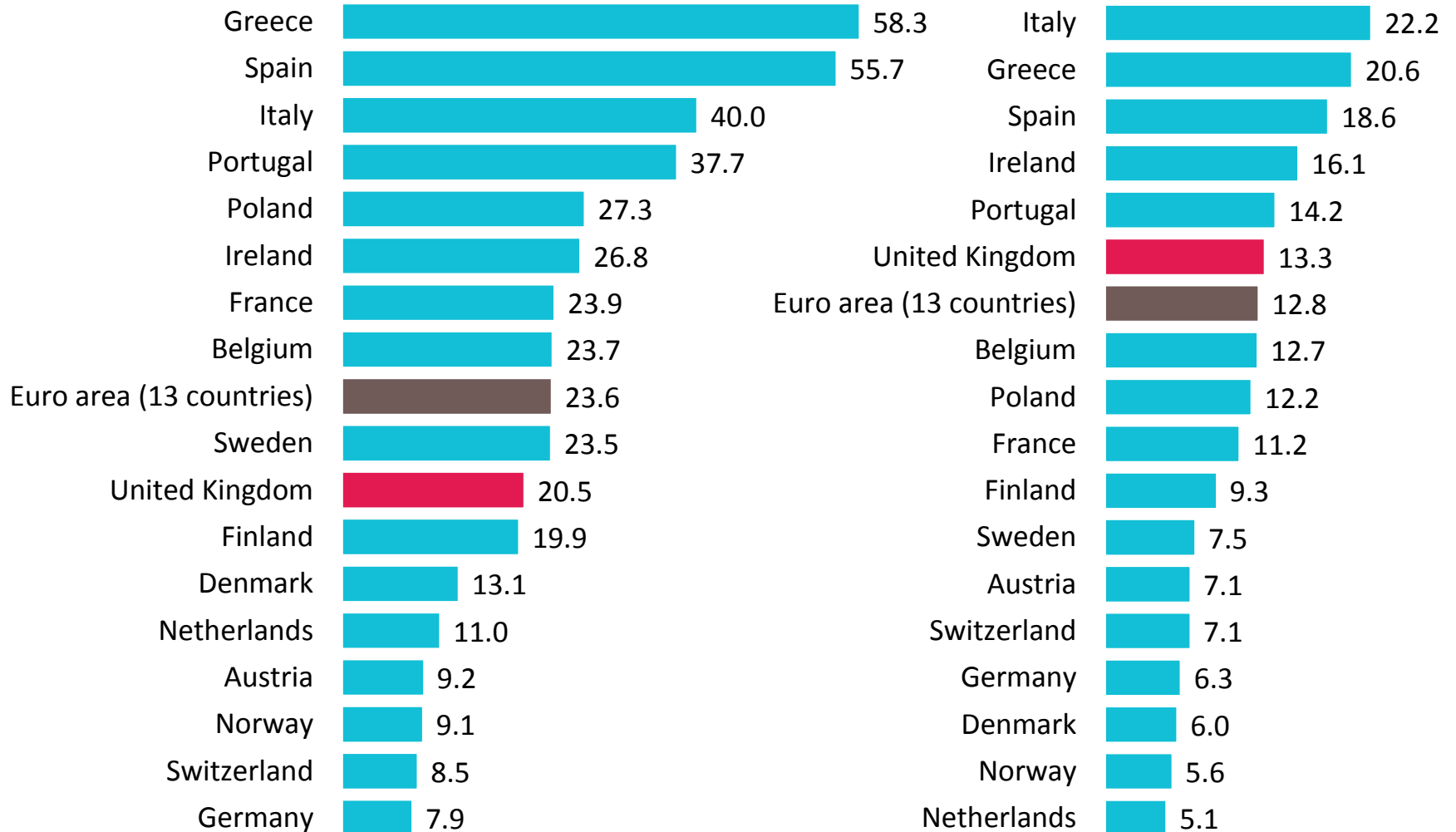


# Is the UK's youth unemployment challenge unique?



# Context: measures of youth “worklessness” rates across Europe

Youth (15-24) unemployment rate (2013) Share of 15-24 population who are NEET (2013)

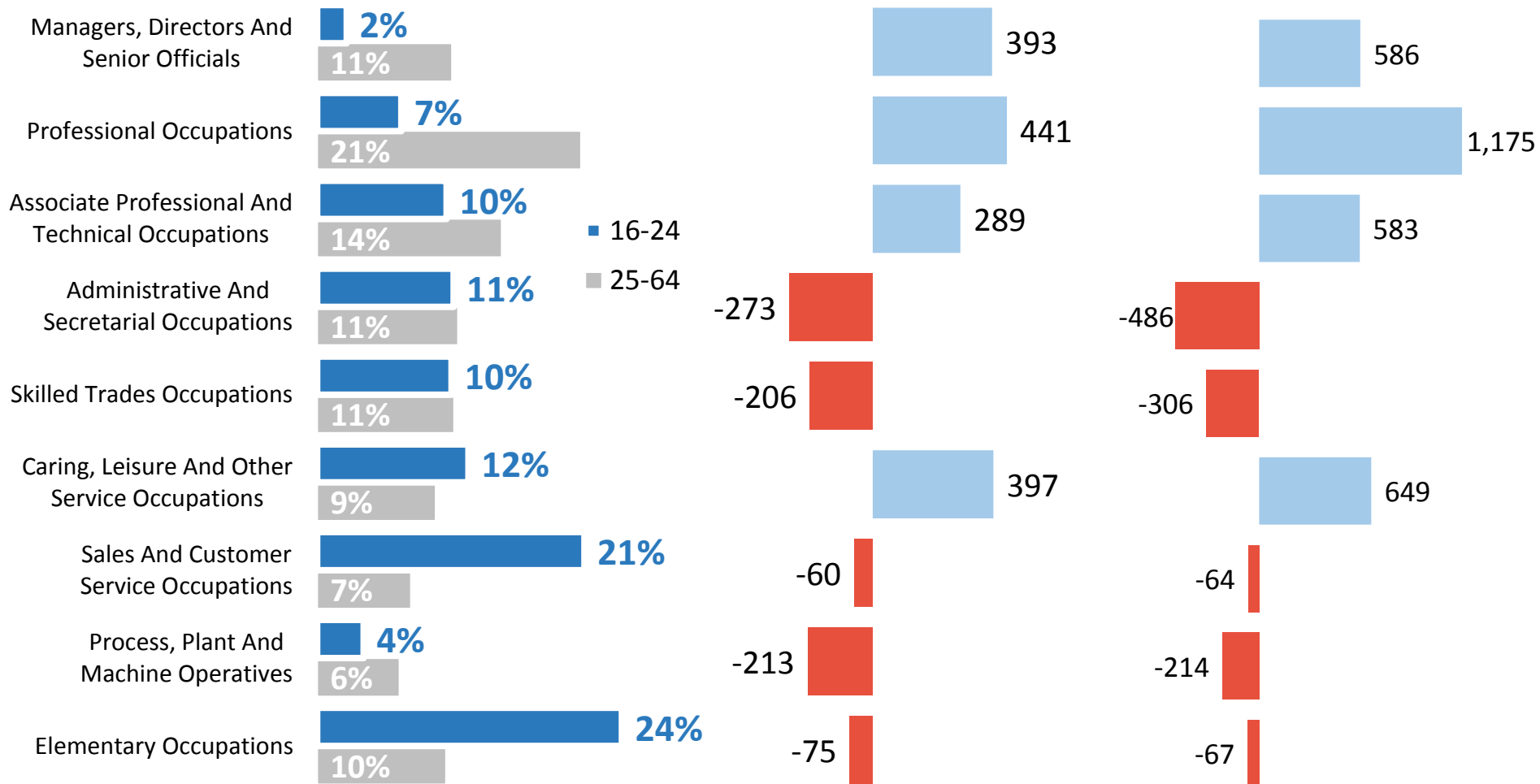


# Structural causes of the youth employment challenge

Breakdown of youth and adult workers by occupation (2013)  
(base: all employed workers in each age group)

Net change in total employment 2007 Q4 to 2013 Q4 (000s)

Net change in total employment 2012 to 2022 (000s)



# ...Experience and attitude seem to be the predominant concerns of employers, not literacy or numeracy

|   | 16 year olds from school | 17 or 18 year olds from school | 17 or 18 year olds from FE College | HE |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|----|
| Lack of working world / life experience or maturity | 23%                      | 18%                            | 14%                                | 8% |
| Poor attitude / personality or lack of motivation   | 18%                      | 15%                            | 11%                                | 5% |
| Lack required skills or competencies                | 10%                      | 9%                             | 7%                                 | 5% |
| Lack of common sense                                | 6%                       | 4%                             | 3%                                 | 2% |
| Literacy/numeracy skills                            | 4%                       | 4%                             | 2%                                 | 1% |
| Poor education                                      | 3%                       | 2%                             | 1%                                 | 1% |

**Are we measuring the skills that employers use and value? And how do we perform on these broader skills?**

**Employers use a broad range of skills including**

- **Information processing skills**

- reading
- writing
- numeracy
- ICT
- problem solving

- **Generic skills**

- learning at work
- influencing
- co-operation
- self-organising

# Work experience in Australia and the Netherlands

## 1. Netherlands:

- 20-60% of time in VET must, by law, be in the workplace
- National database of apprenticeships and work placements that is updated daily
- Employers must be accredited to offer either
- In HE none of the infrastructure but the same outcomes

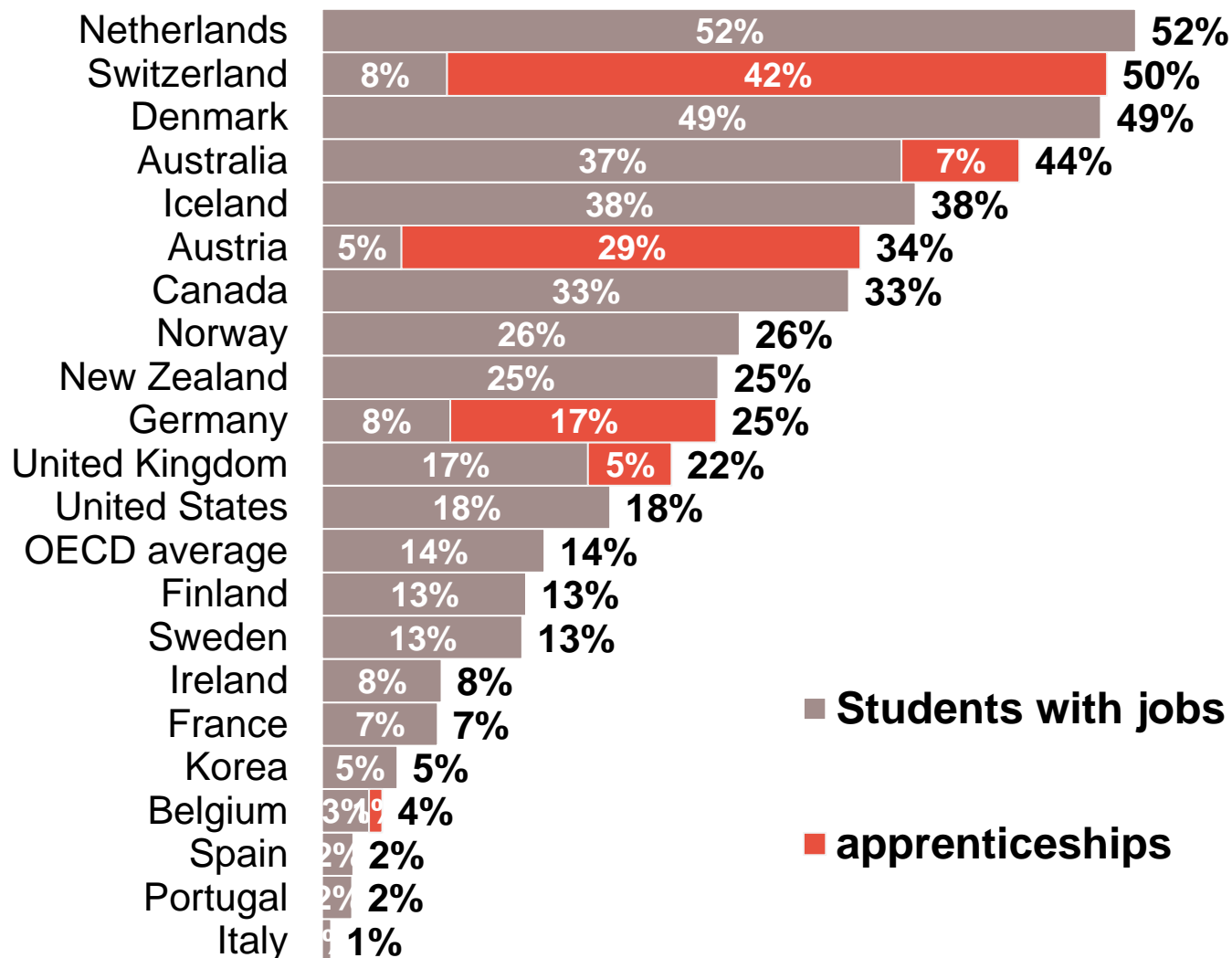
## 2. Australia:

- Work experience starts at ages 14-15 and carries on throughout post 16 and HE
- “Structured Workplace Learning” is an important element of VETiS (vocational education and training in schools)
- School / business Community Partnership Brokers Programme support the demand for placements and brokers relations
- 2/3 of VETiS do these placements
- In HE around 1/3 do

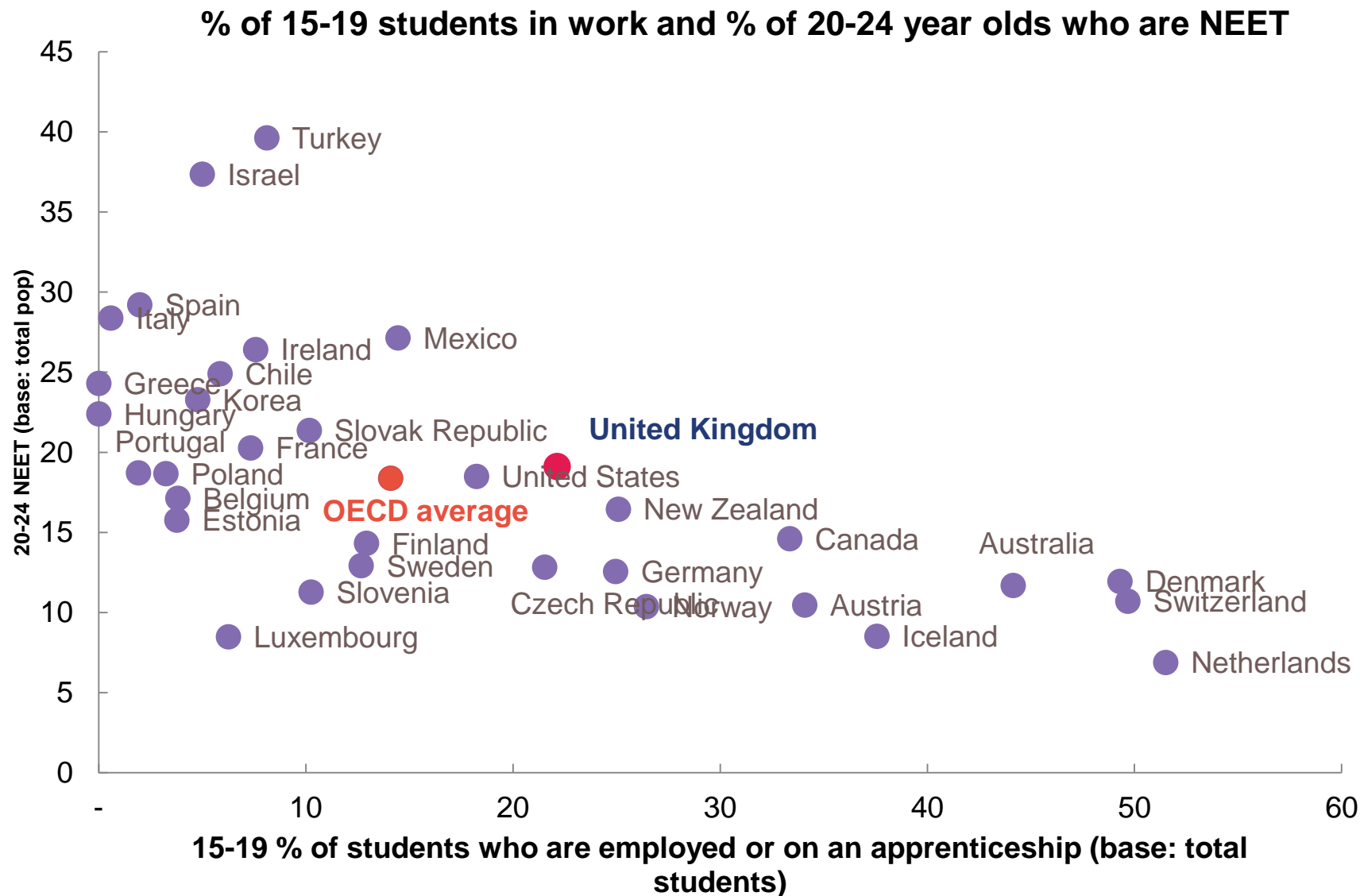


# Earning and learning in different countries

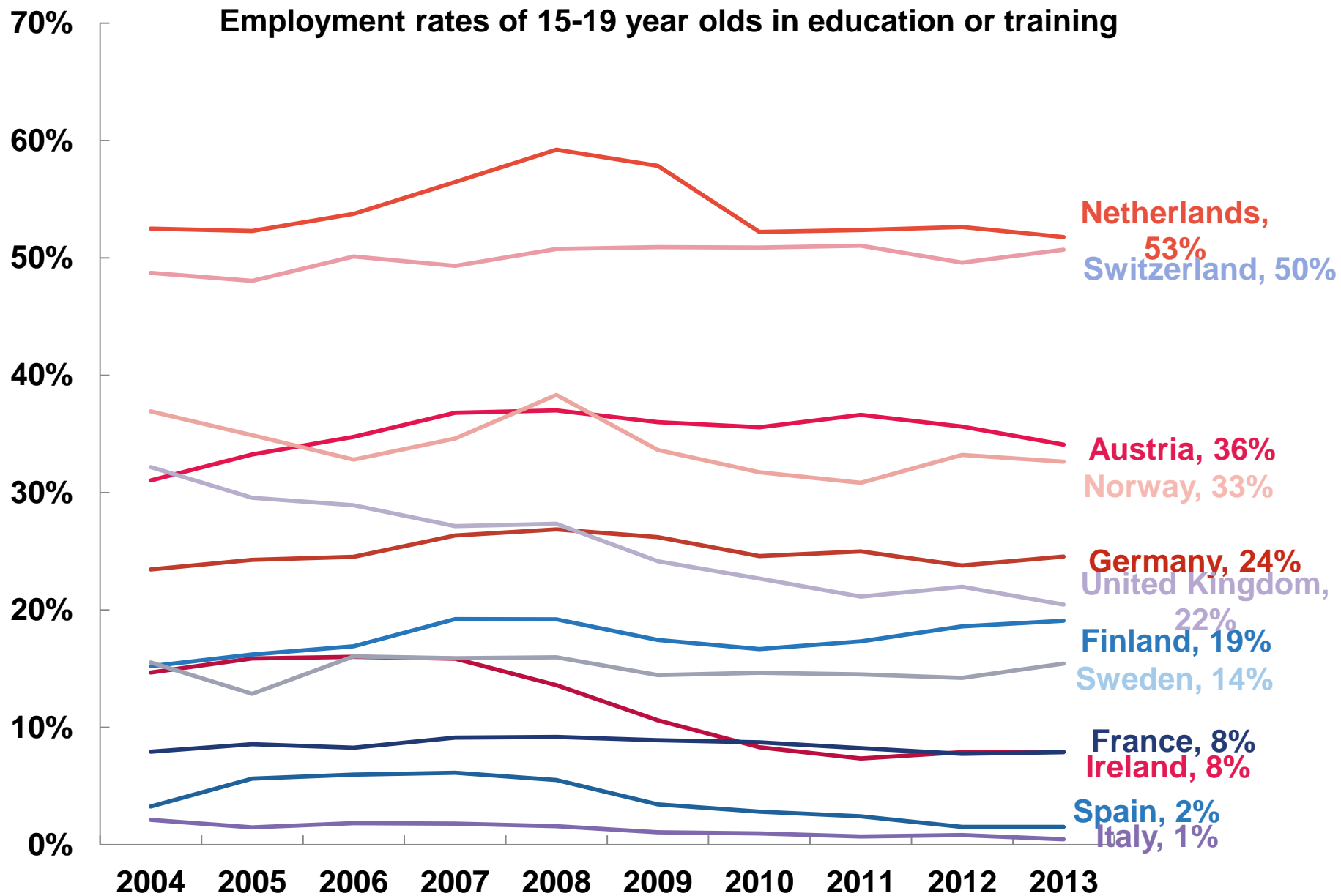
## Share of 15-19 students who have a job or are on an apprenticeship



# Earning and learning leads to lower NEET rates



# Opportunities for earning are learning are declining in the UK



## **What needs to happen?**

- 1. A balance between education and work for all young people**
- 2. An expectation of high quality work experience**
- 3. Employer leadership and networks**
- 4. Colleges to work with Employers to provide real work experience**

# A New Conversation. Employer and College Engagement



- ❑ Stronger relationships between colleges and employers can secure the right skills and aptitudes for today's and tomorrow's workforce.
- ❑ Colleges with strong long term relationships understand employers' needs and are best placed to equip students with skills for work.



# Key statements

- ❑ The primary purpose of a college is to contribute to its economic community
- ❑ College leaders need to develop new types of skills if they are to succeed in strategic partnerships with employers
- ❑ The credibility of colleges with employers is tied up with what they offer
- ❑ Employers need to get to know their local college and what it has to offer and engage in a dialogue

# Colleges engaged in successful strategic relationships with employers

- They **regularly engage with key local employers and stakeholders** at the most senior levels, and as a result have created 'advocates' for the college in the business community.
- They have built credibility and respect through this engagement and can **talk knowledgeably about the opportunities and challenges that local businesses face.**
- They **see themselves as a business**, talk a business language, and **drive this narrative throughout the organisation**, starting with the governing body.

# Benefits to employers in establishing strategic relationships with colleges

- ❑ Early identification of **talent, recruitment and selection.**
- ❑ Development of a local workforce that **fits business needs.**
- ❑ The experience colleges bring in **training young people** in competences and capabilities, and motivating them to learn.
- ❑ **Support** with labour market intelligence analysis, workforce planning, applied research/investigation, shared services and access to the skills system.
- ❑ **Tailormade provision:** a curriculum designed and developed to fit what employers want.



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