

Education at a Glance 2026

Highlights for Croatia

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15 October 2026

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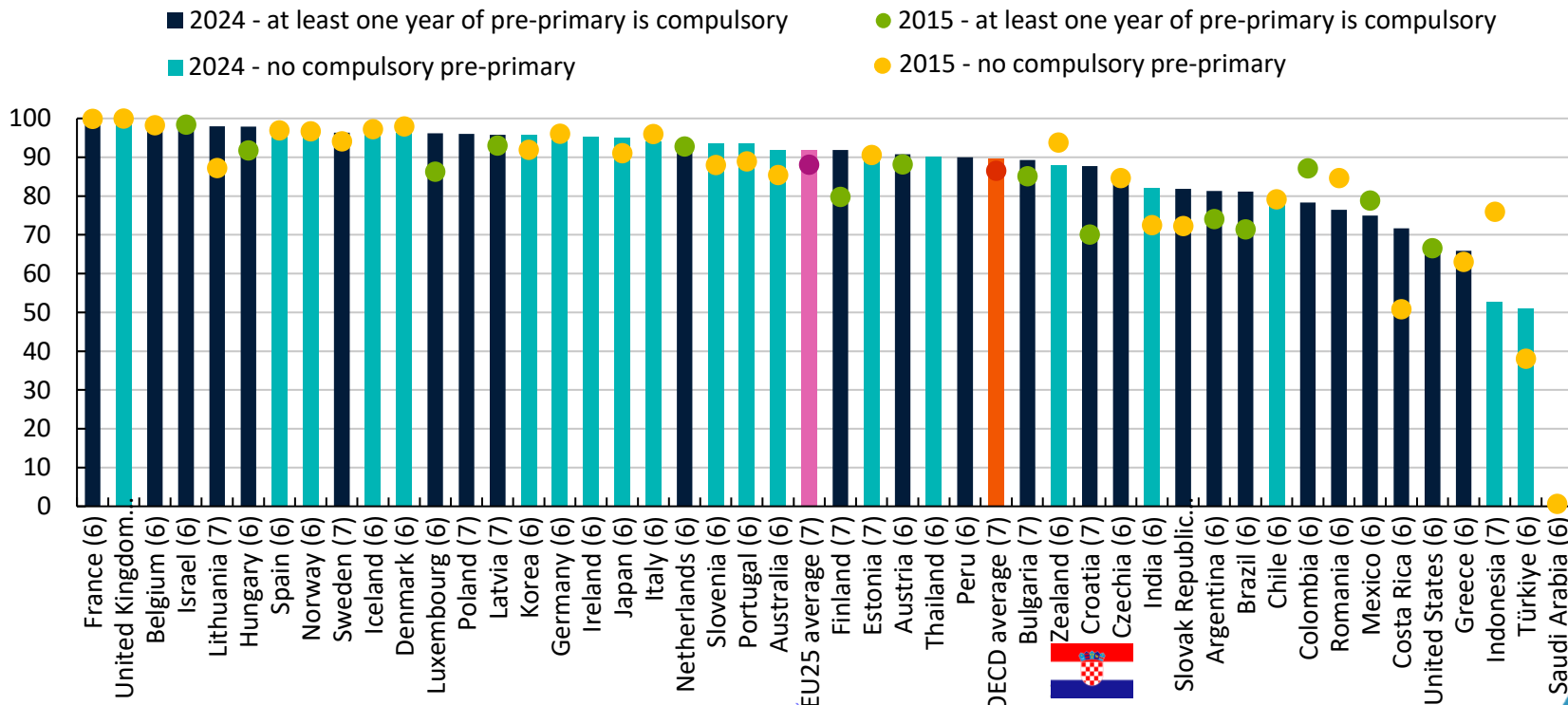
From early childhood to adult learning





Enrolment in pre-primary education significantly increased

Trends in enrolment rates from the age of 3 to the start of compulsory primary education (2015 and 2024)





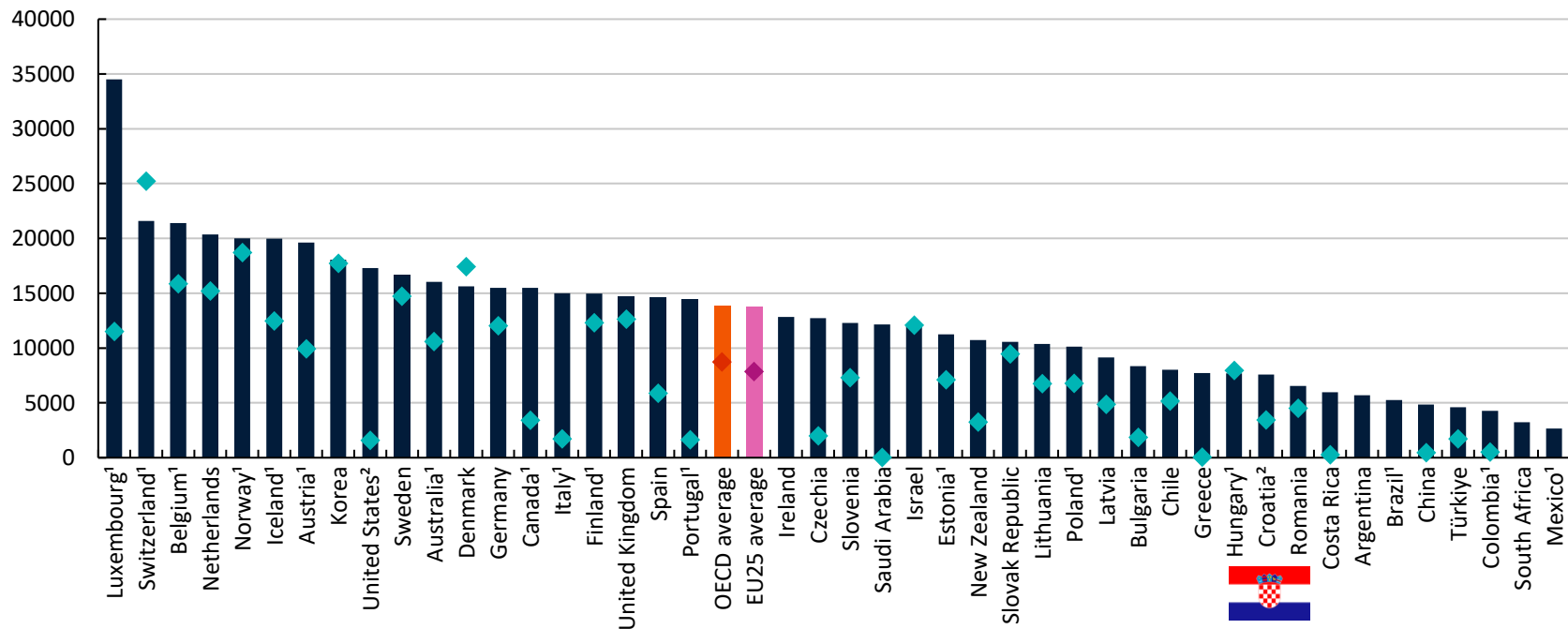
Croatia's government spends comparatively little per student

Government expenditure on educational institutions per full-time equivalent student, by type of institution (2023)

USD converted
using PPPs

■ Public

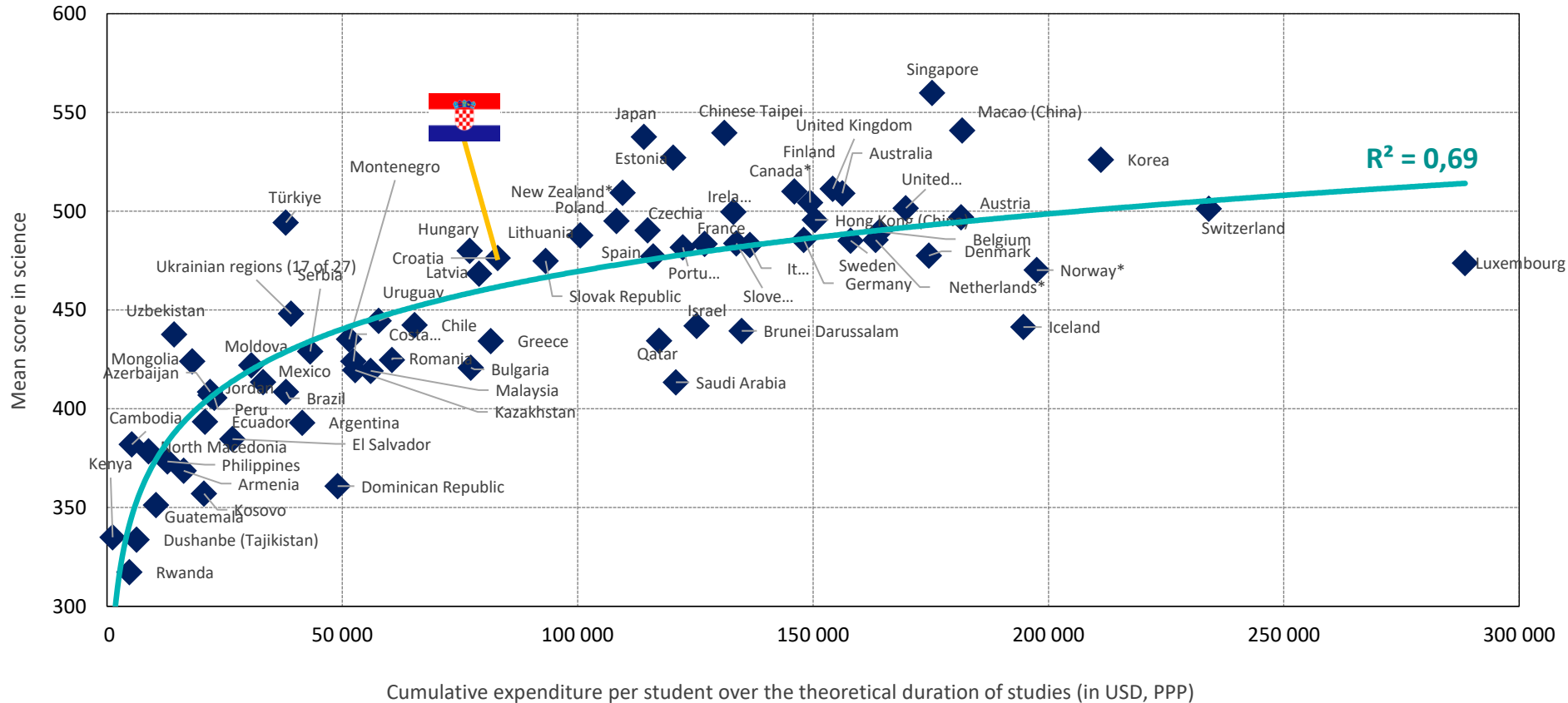
◆ Private





... but students score relatively well in PISA Science

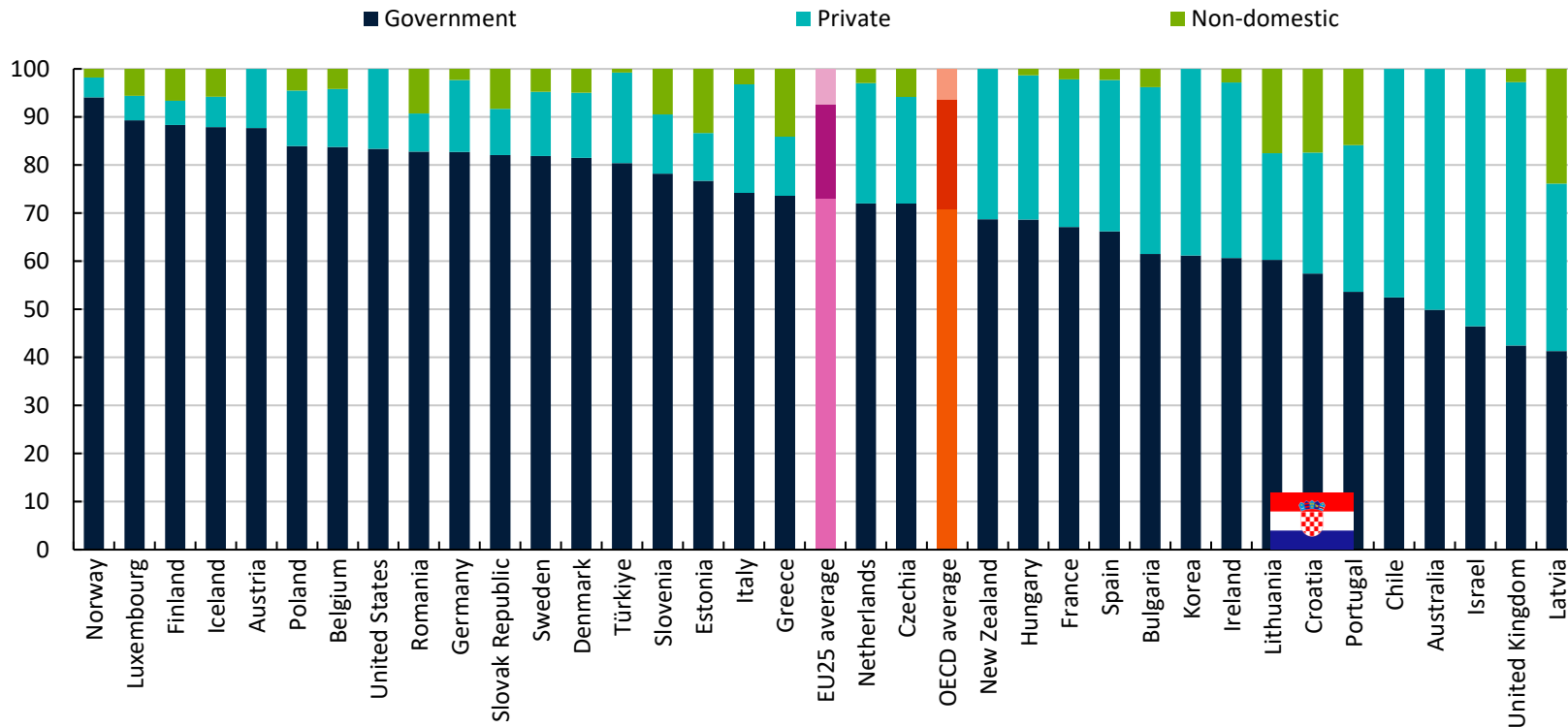
Figure I.1.3





... and education is significantly funded by sources other than the government

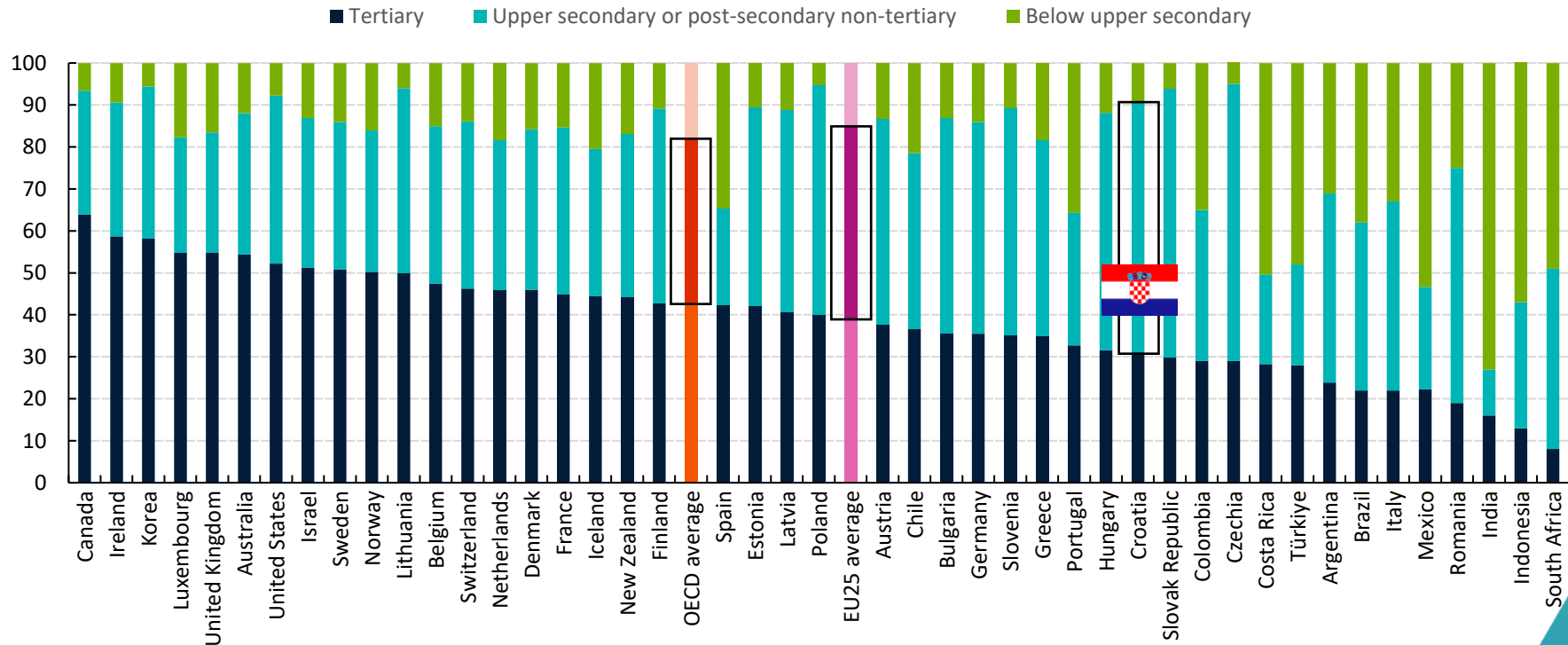
Distribution of expenditure on educational institutions, by source of funds before transfers (2023)





High share of Croatian adults have attained upper secondary level

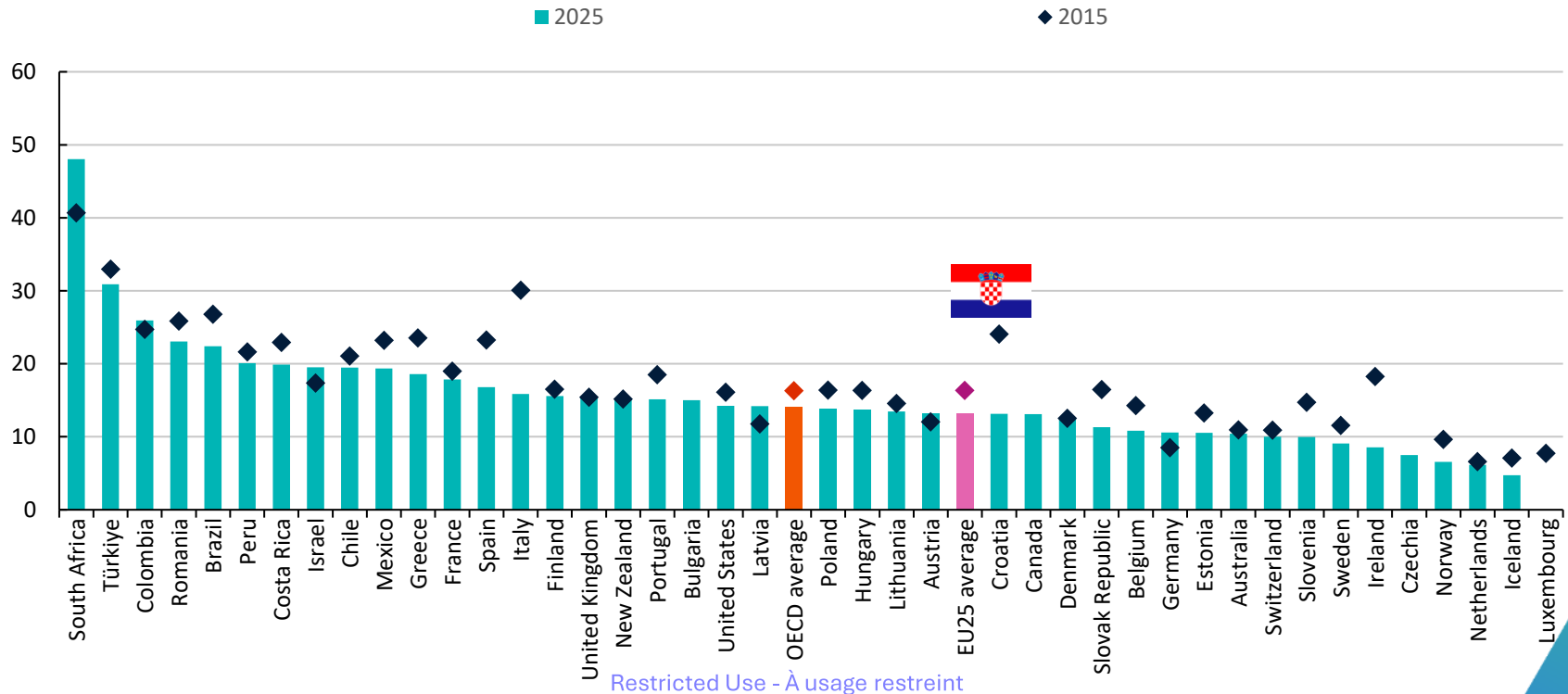
Distribution of educational attainment of adults (2025)





While NEET rates stagnated in many countries, they dropped in Croatia

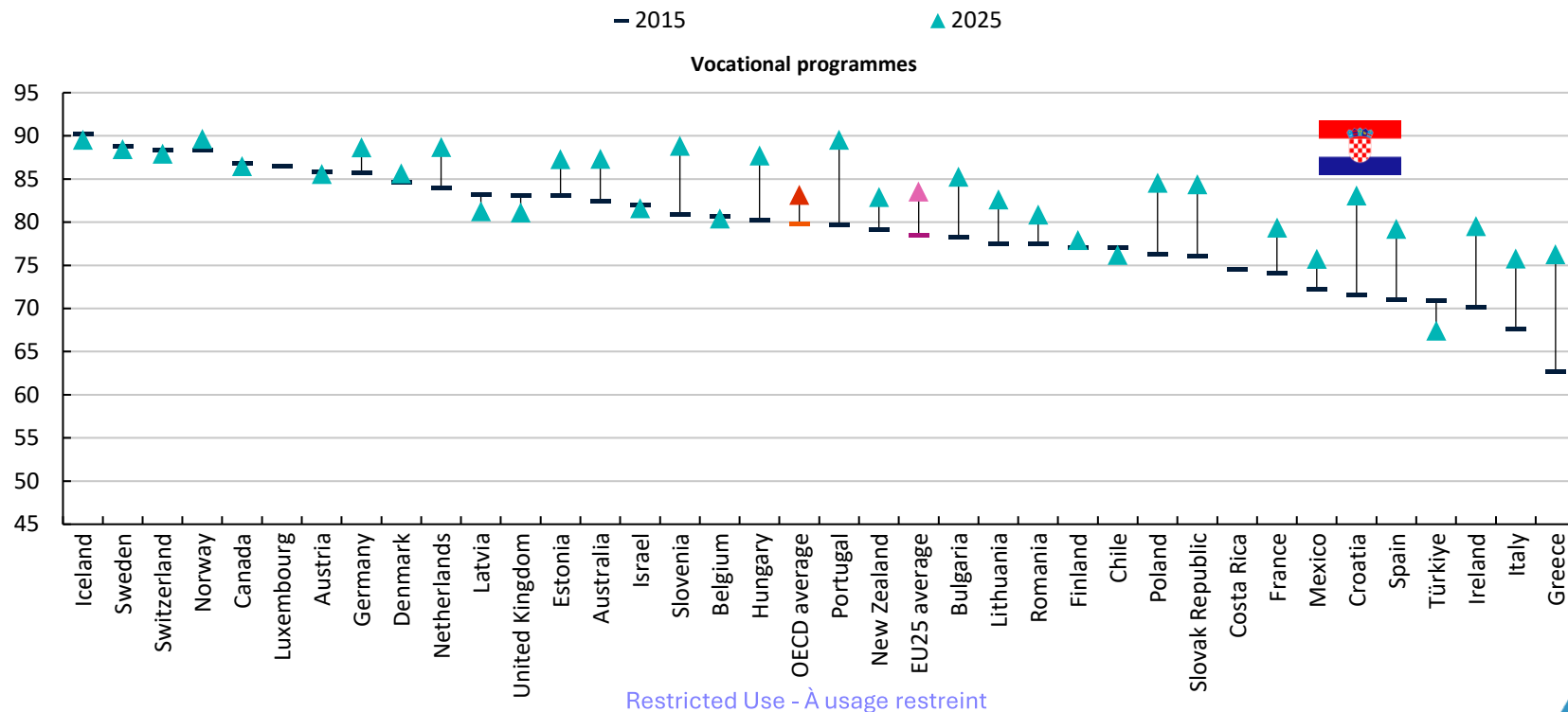
Trends in the share of NEETs among 18-24 year-olds (2015 and 2025)





Employment rates for young adults with vocational upper secondary attainment have been increasing over the last decade

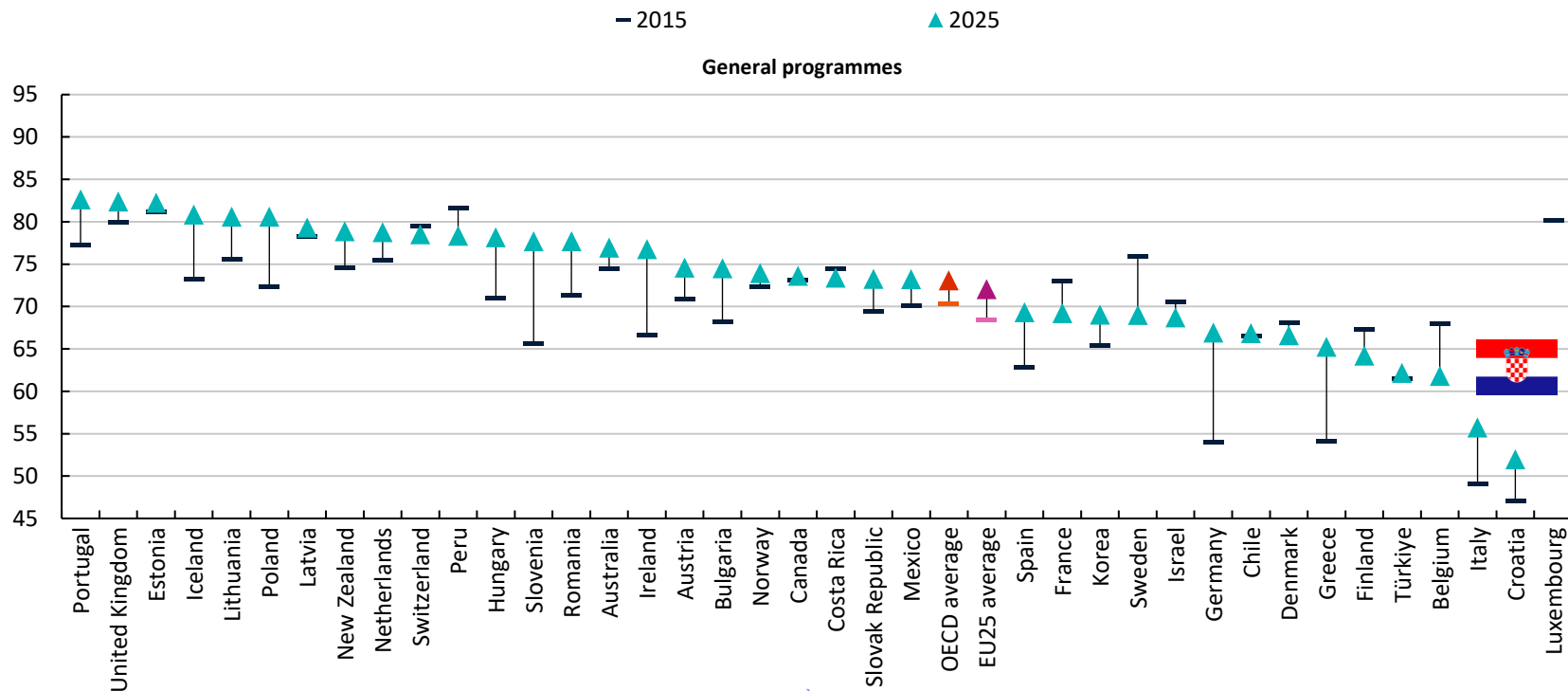
Trends in employment rates of young adults with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary educational attainment, vocational programmes (2025)





... but for young adults with general upper secondary attainment, employment have slightly risen but remain the lowest in the OECD

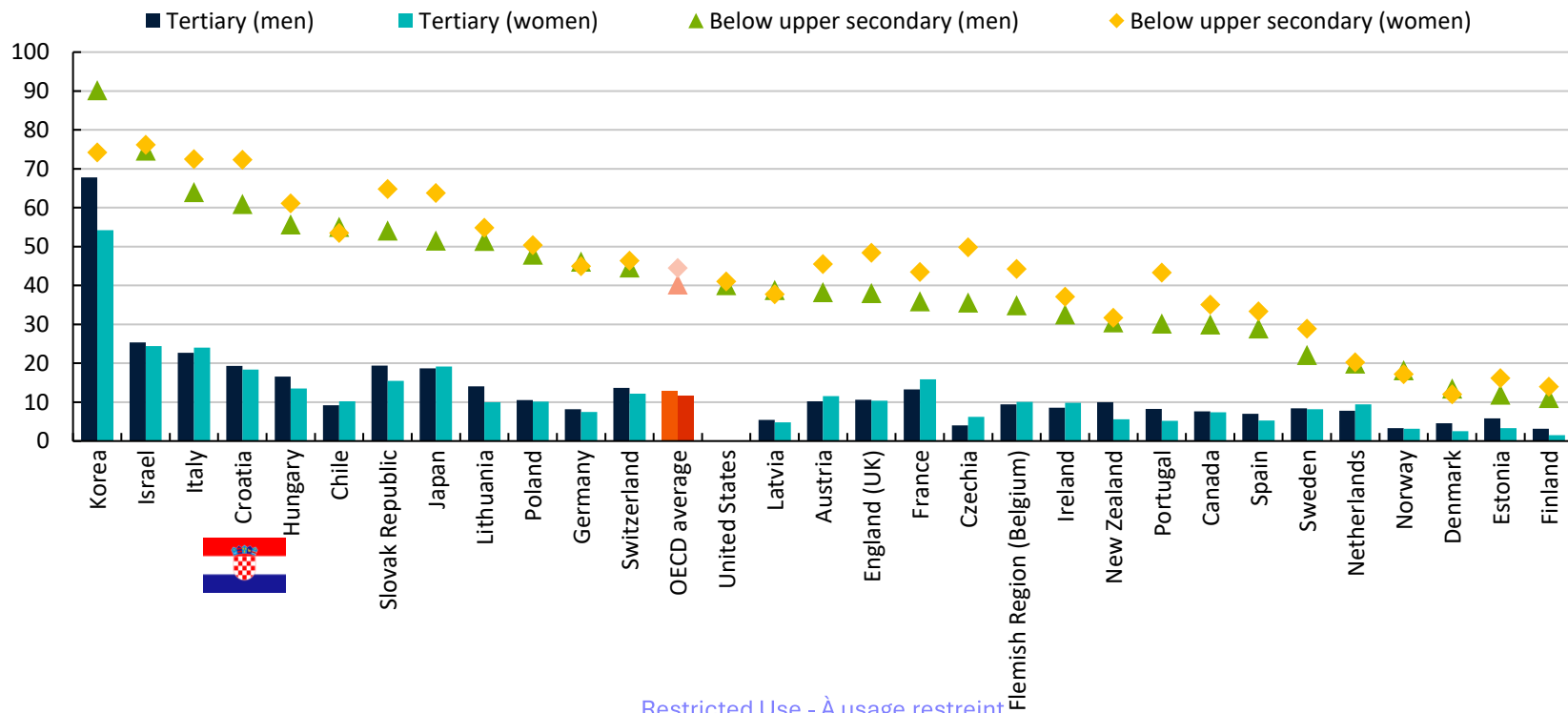
Trends in employment rates of young adults with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary educational attainment, general programmes (2025)





Many adults never participate in non-formal education

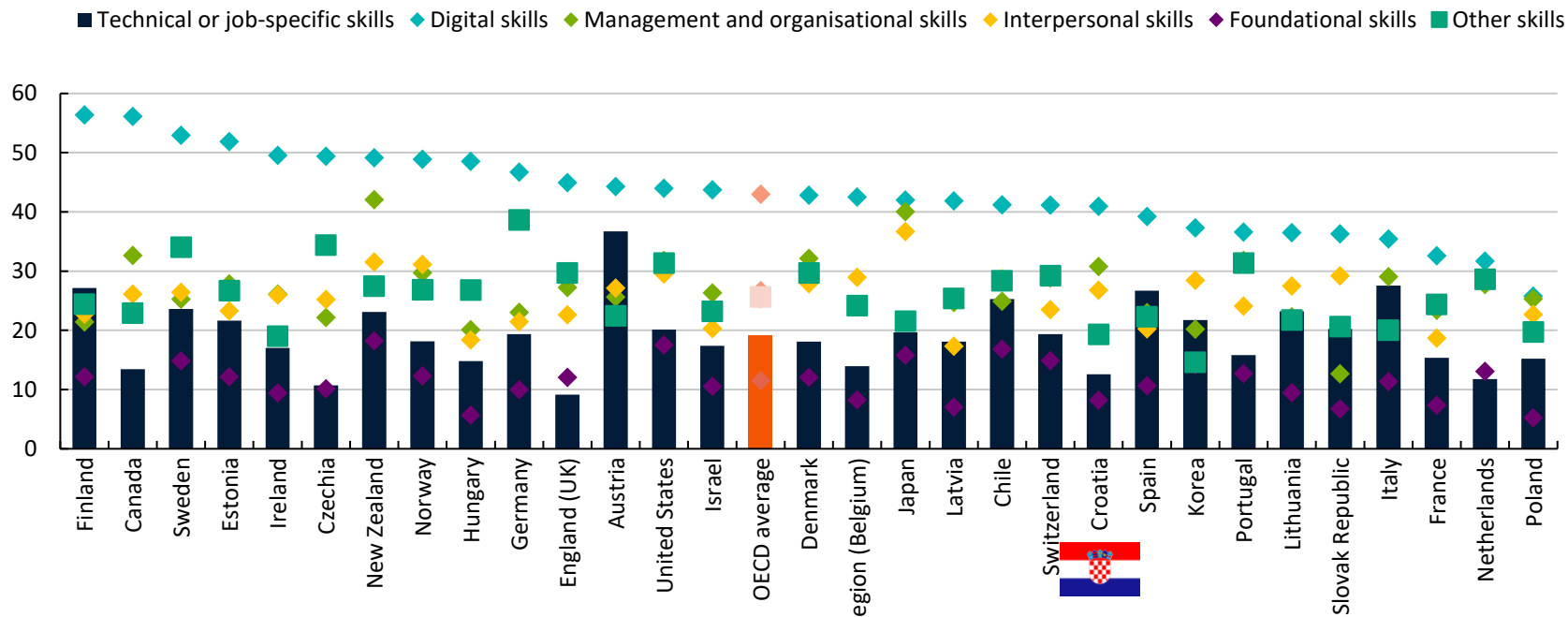
Share of adults reporting having never participated in non-formal education or training, by educational attainment and gender (2023)





Croatian workers find that they have most skills they need for their job

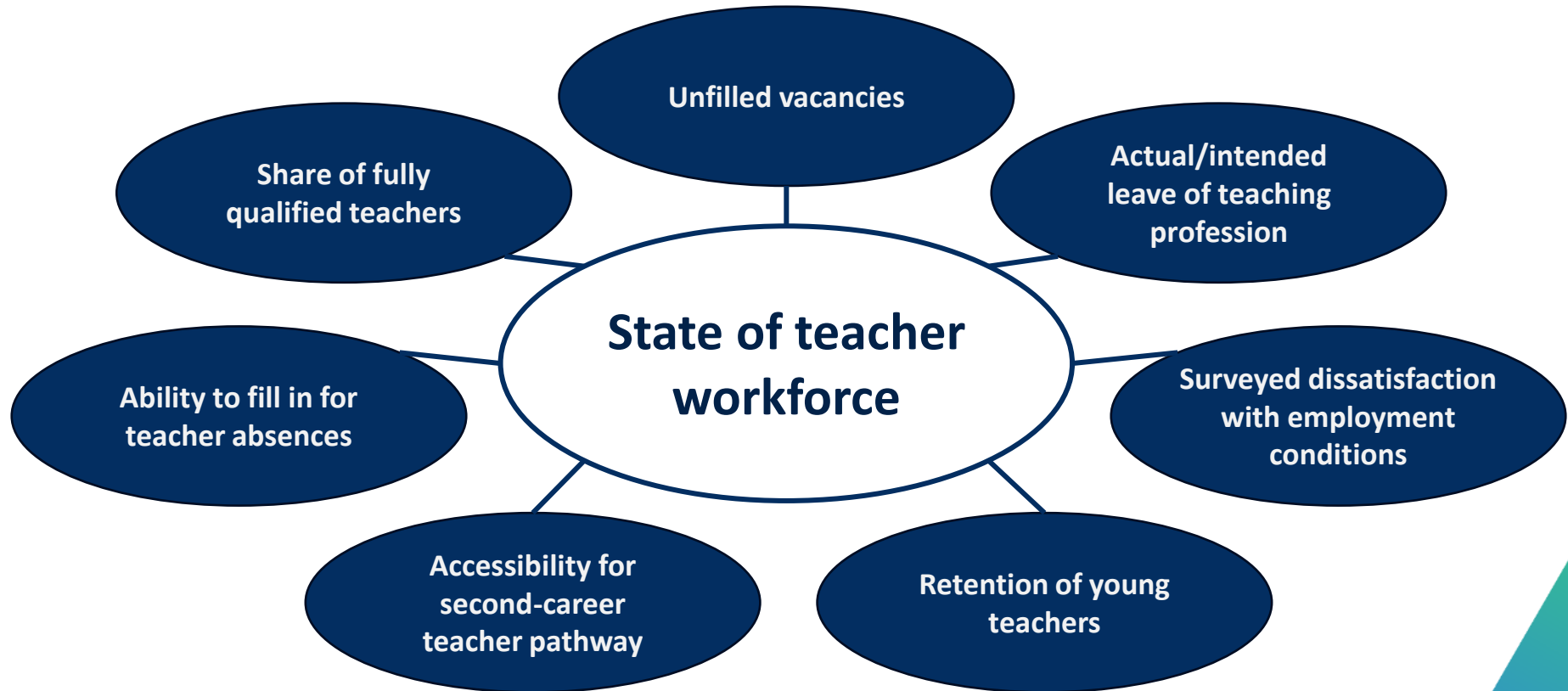
Share of adults reporting having skills less than what is required by their job, by skill (2023)



State of Croatian teacher workforce: Overview



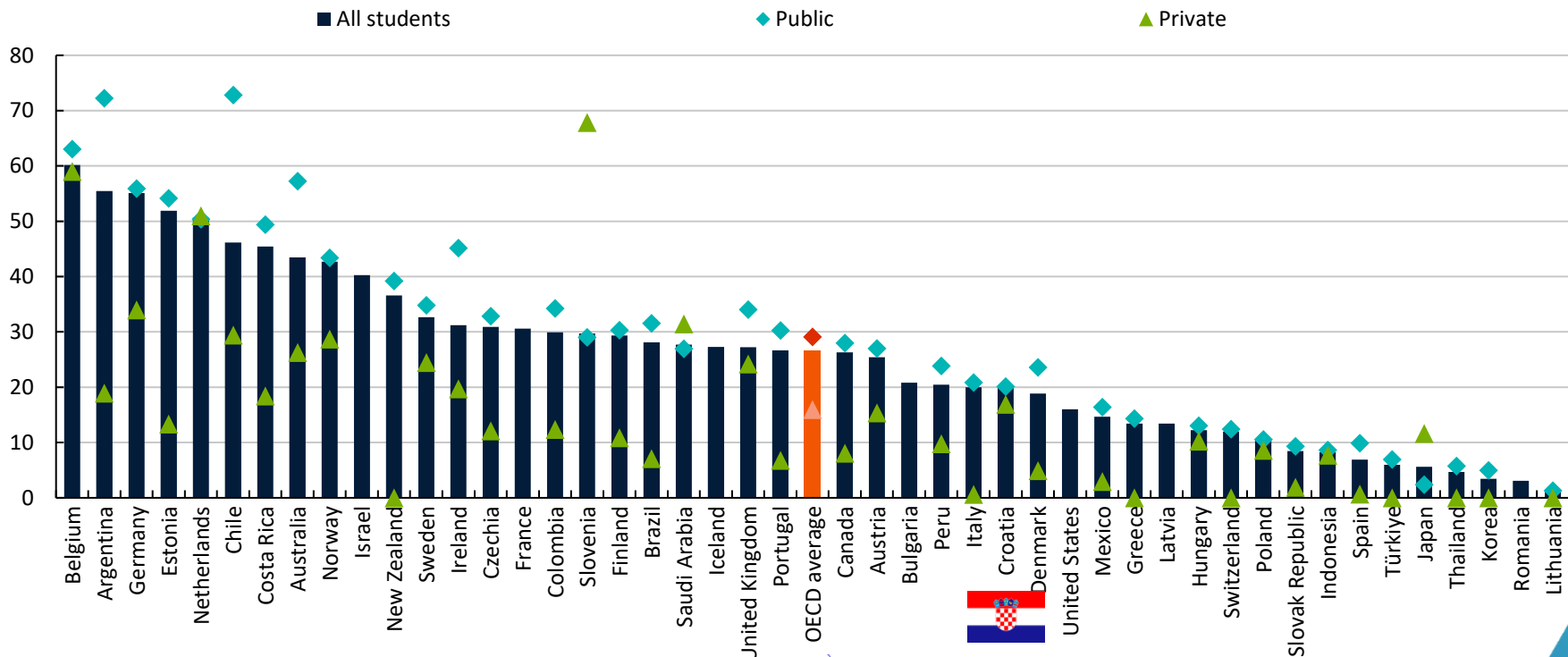
How can the state of the teacher workforce be measured?





Teacher absences negatively affect around 20% of Croatian schools

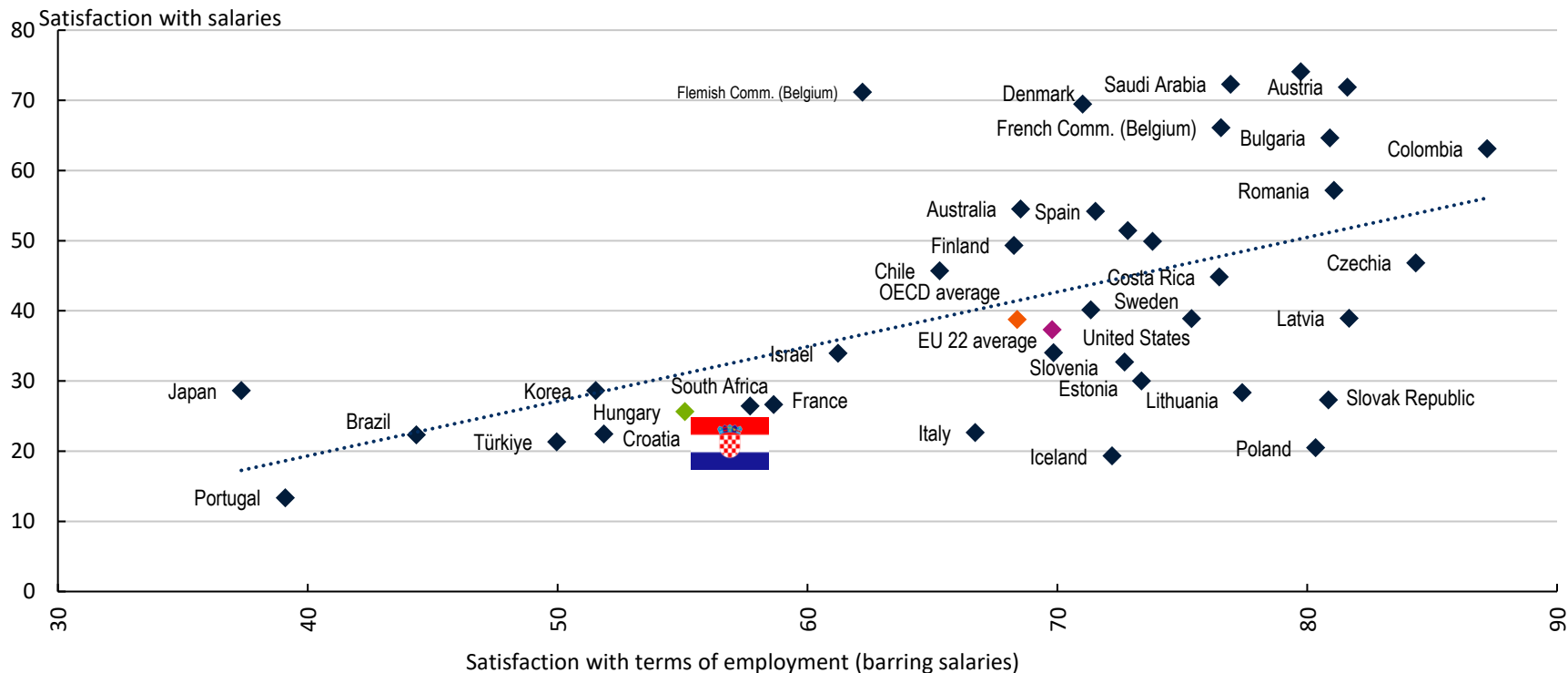
Share of 15-year-old students who attended schools whose principal reported that student learning was hindered by teacher absenteeism “to some extent” or “a lot (PISA 2022)





Croatian teachers report relatively low job satisfaction

Across OECD countries, 68% of lower secondary teachers are satisfied with their employment conditions excluding salaries, compared to only 39% who are satisfied with their salaries (TALIS 2024)



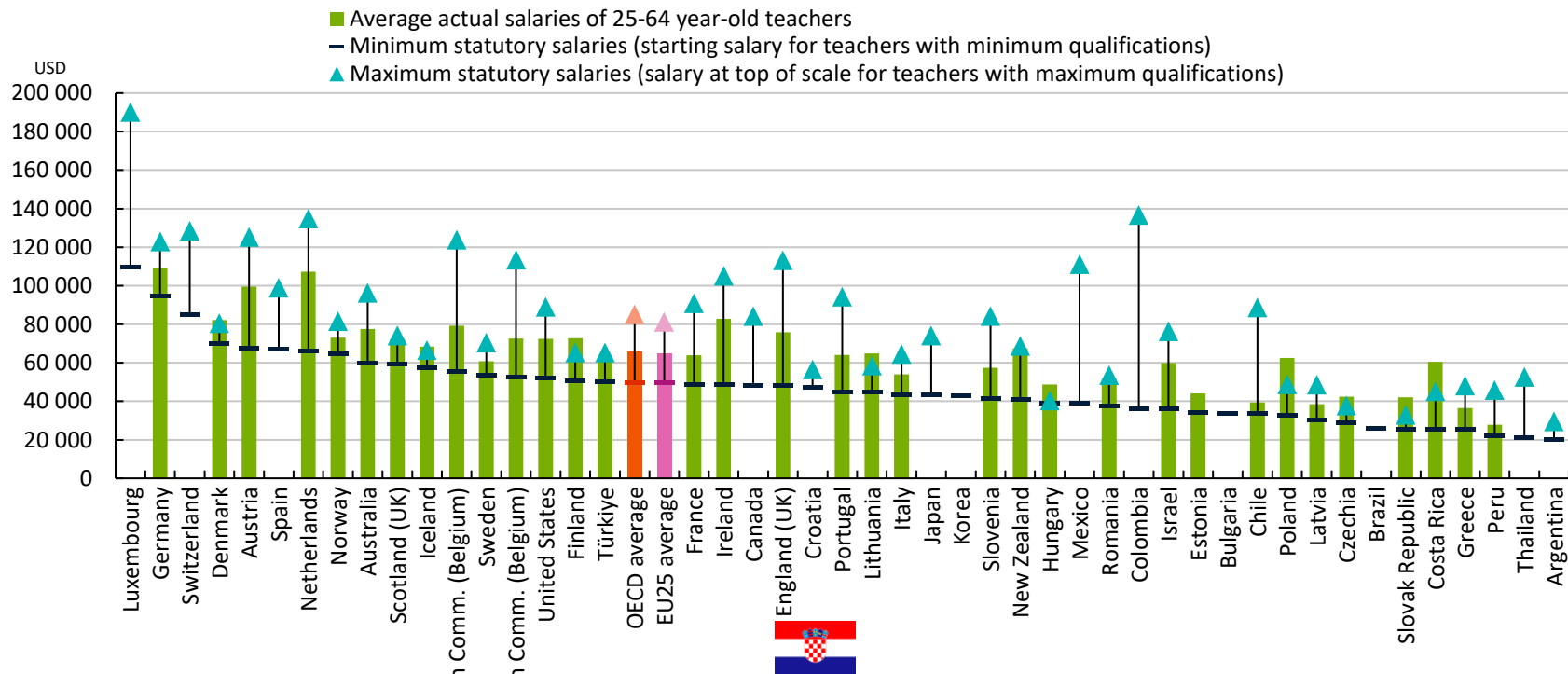
2.a

Contributors to teacher satisfaction



Teachers and school heads are offered small salary development

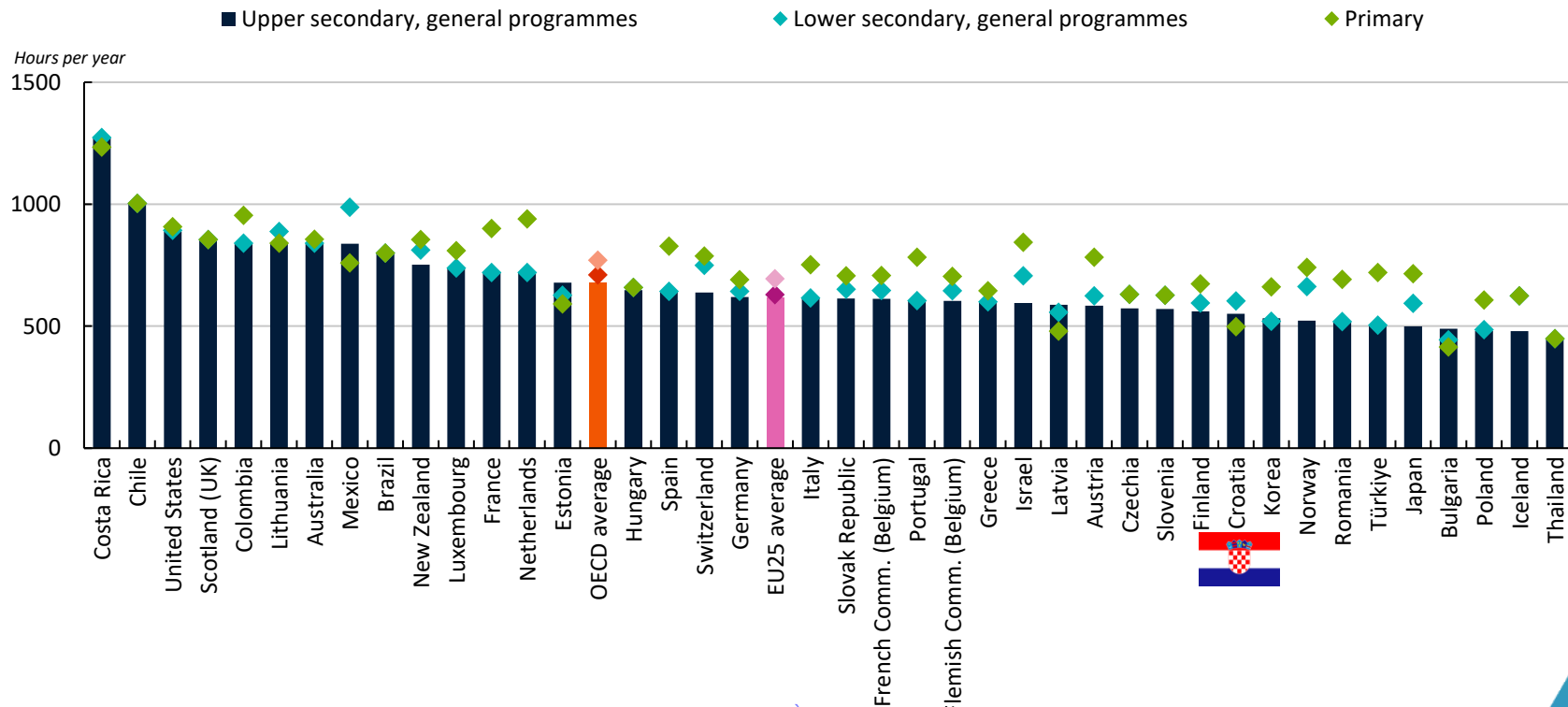
Lower secondary teachers' average actual salaries compared to the statutory minimum and maximum salaries (2025)





While less time is spent in the classroom...

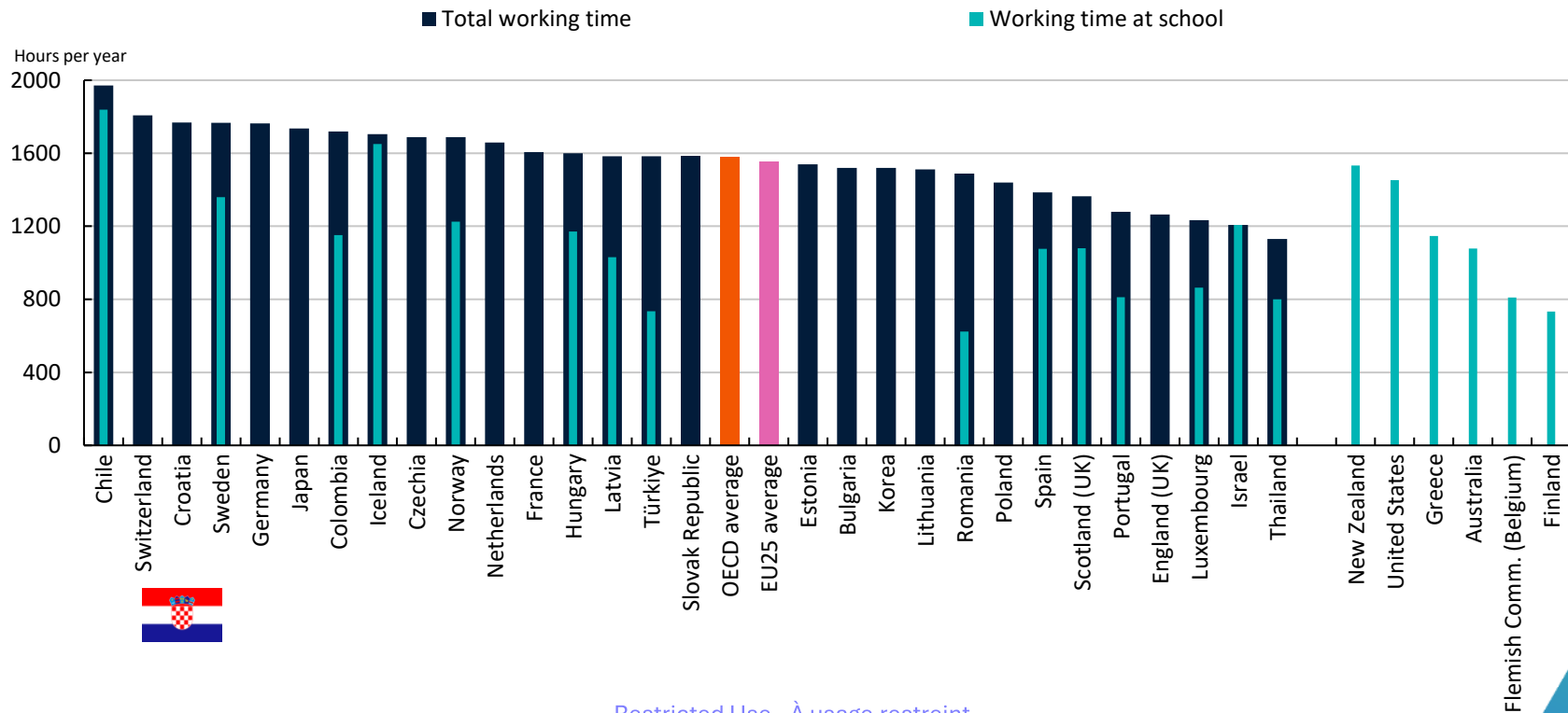
Teaching time of teachers, by level of education (2025)





Total statutory working time is very high

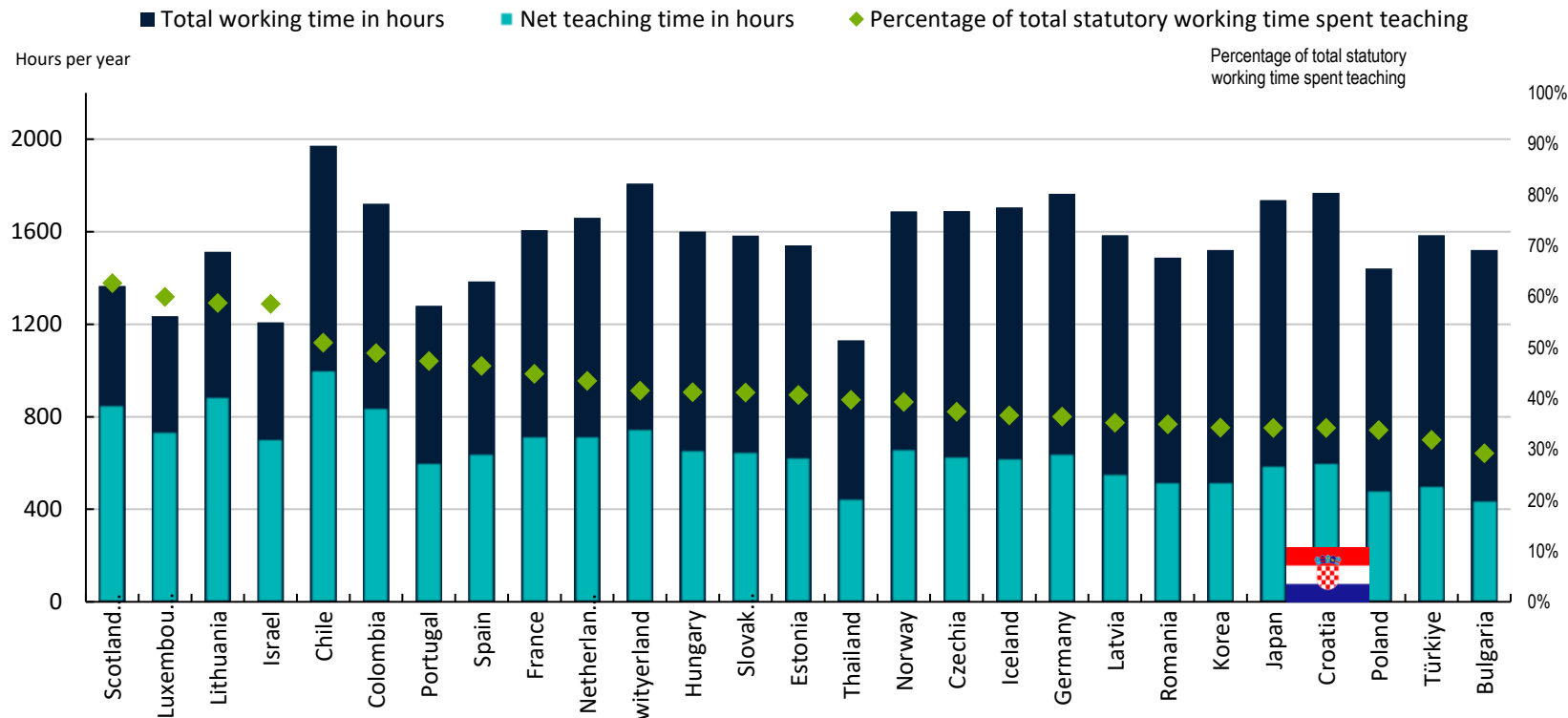
Working time of teachers in lower secondary education (2025)





As a result, Croatian teachers spent the majority of time working outside of the classroom

Number of hours of teaching and percentage of working time spent teaching for lower secondary teachers (2025)



2.b

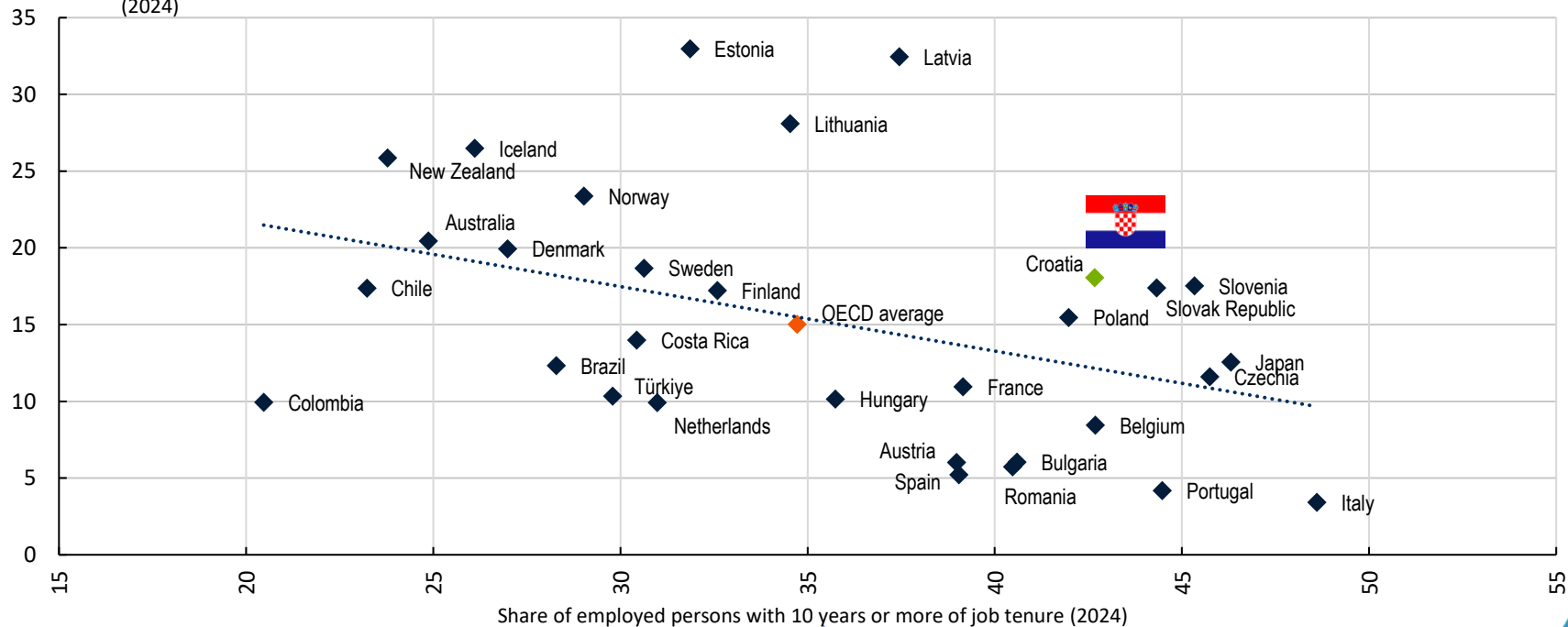
Relationship with the labour market



High share of teachers intends to leave the profession

Relationship between long-term tenure in the wider workforce and teachers' intentions to leave the profession (2024)

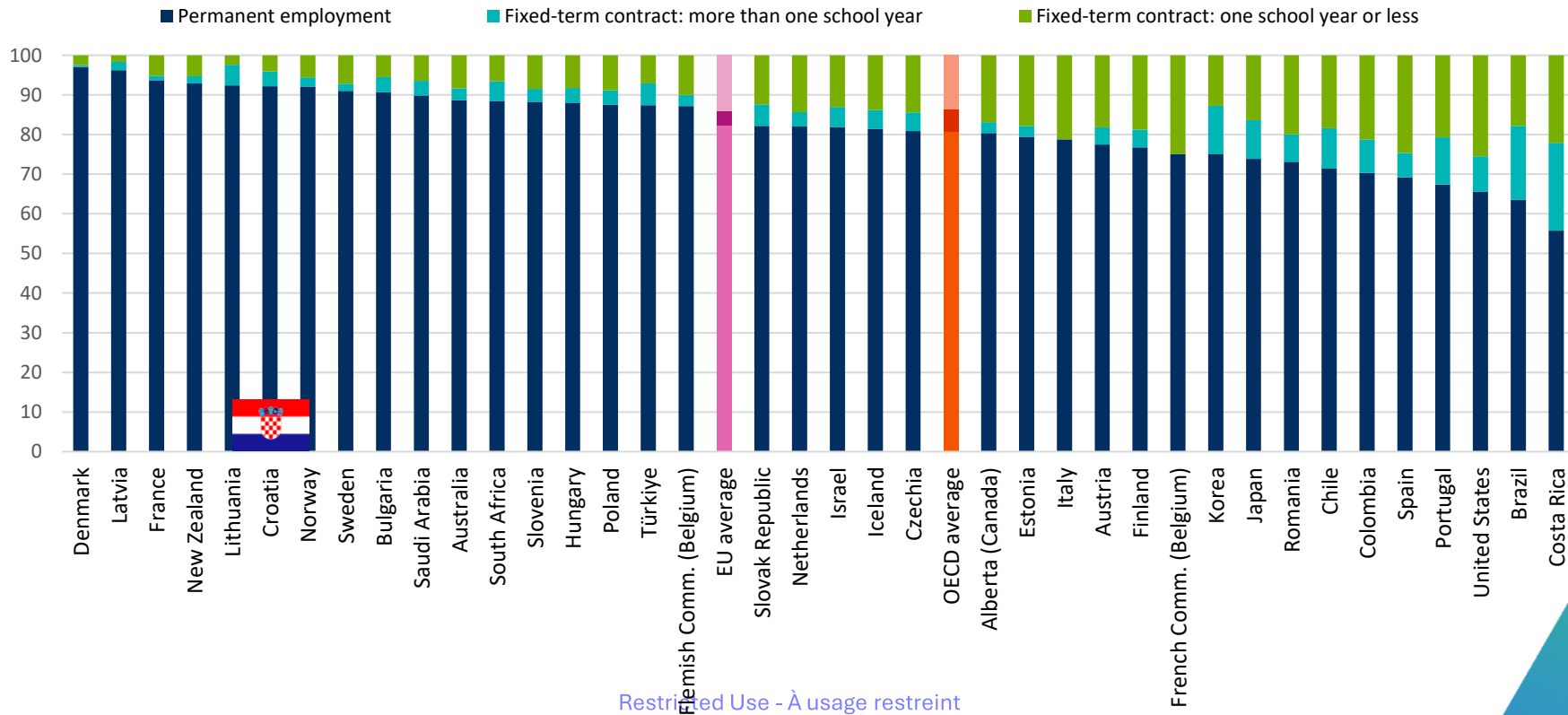
Share of lower secondary teachers aged 30–49 who intend to leave within the next five years (2024)





Reconciling this intention with many long-term tenured workers

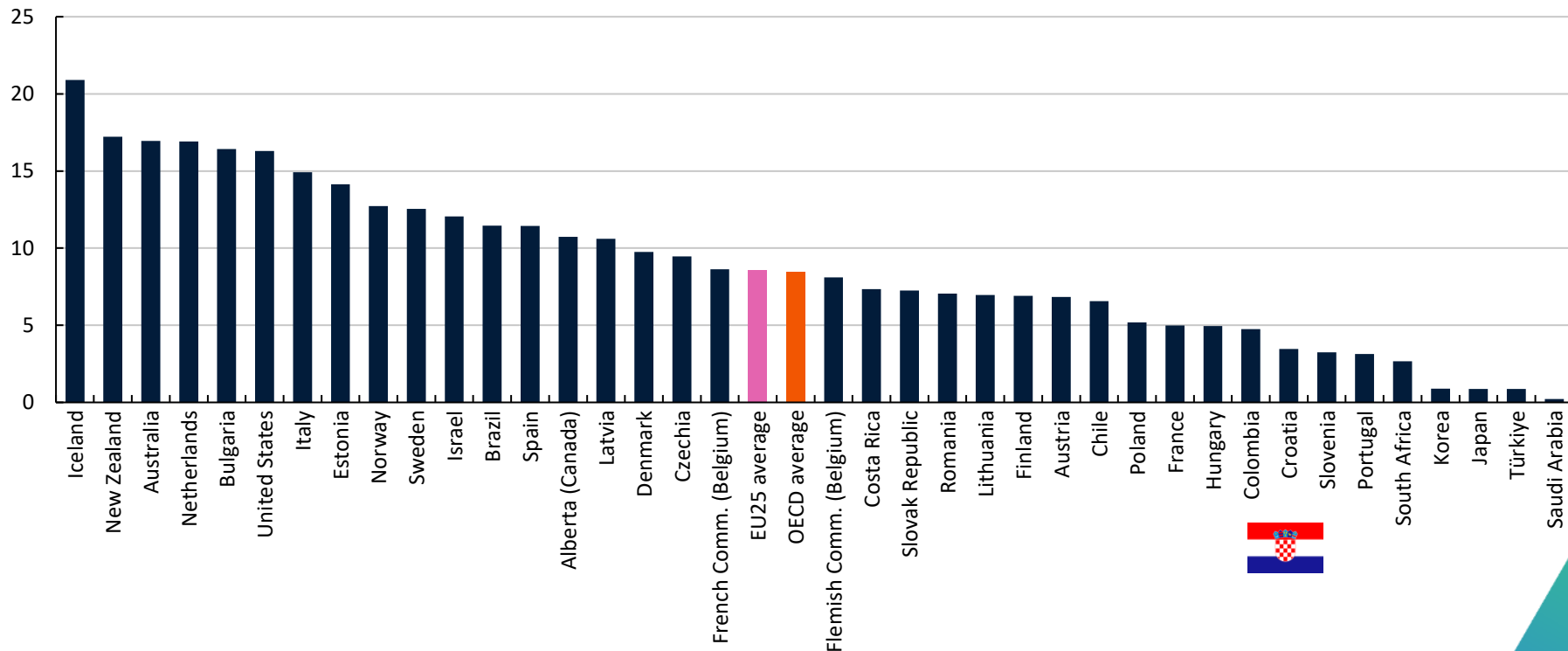
Distribution of employment status





Capacity to renew the workforce: second career teachers

Share of second-career teachers among all lower secondary teachers (2024)

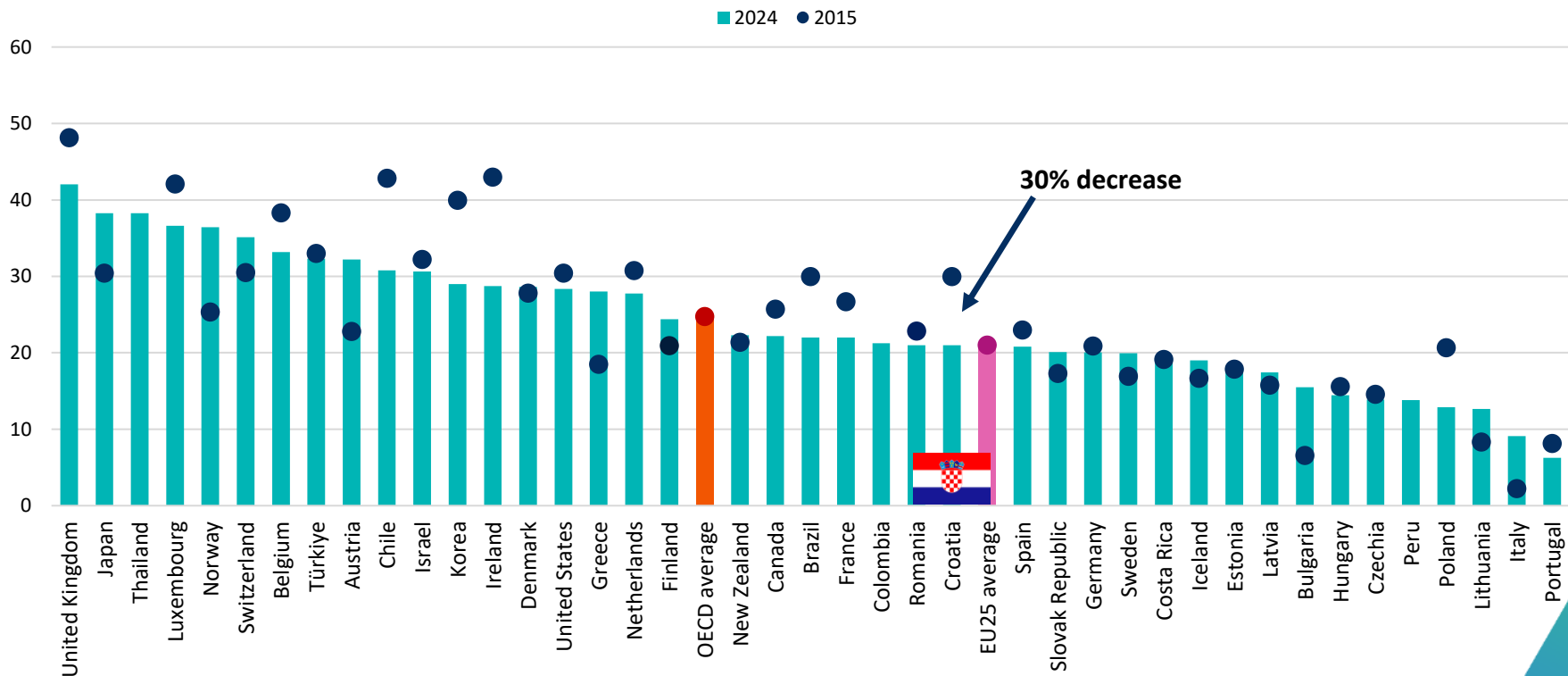


Note: Second-career teachers are defined as those with at least ten years of work experience outside teaching and for whom teaching was not a first career choice.



Capacity to renew the workforce: the next generation of teachers

Share of primary teachers aged under 35



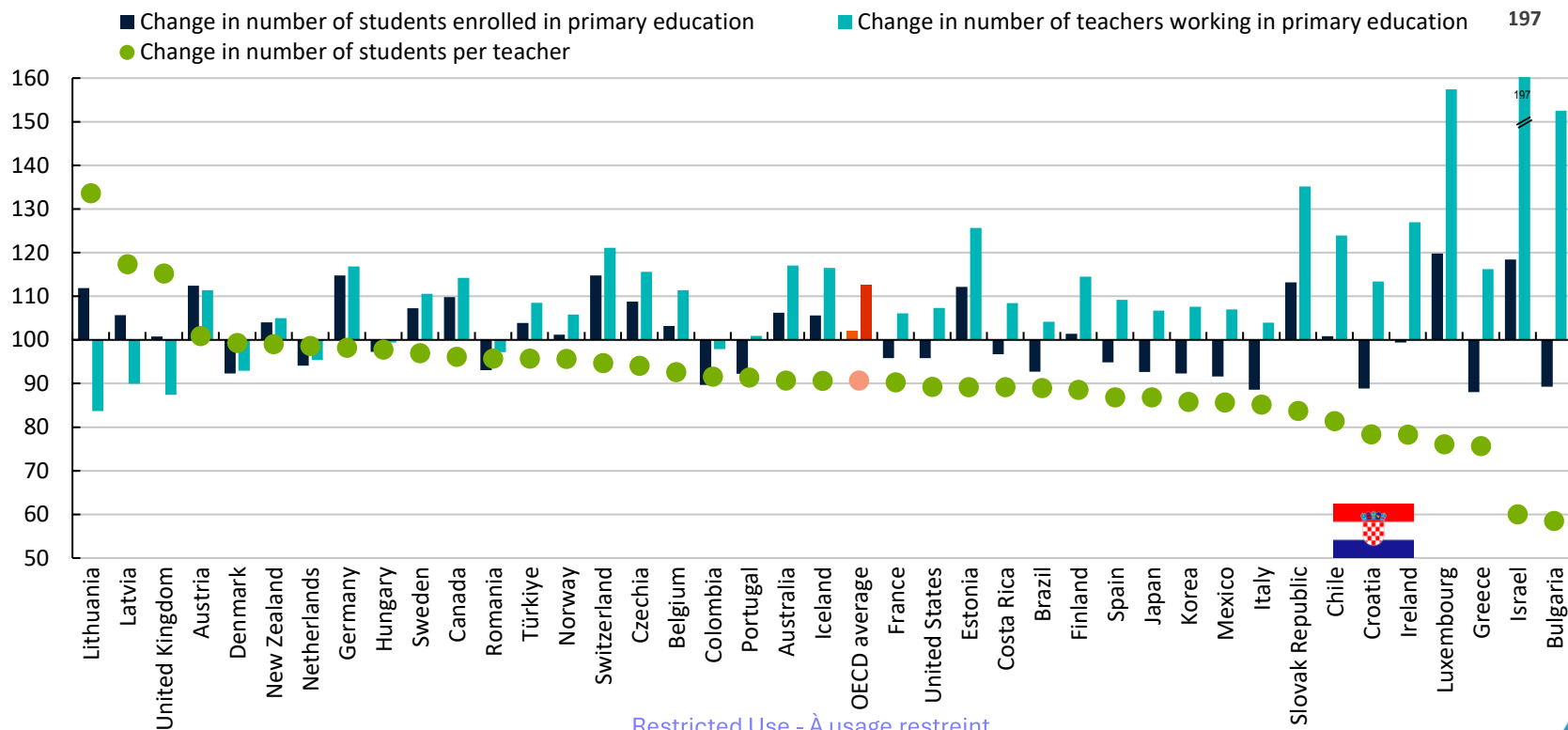
2.c

Against the backdrop of changing
demographics



Changes in student numbers do not automatically translate into proportional changes in teacher numbers

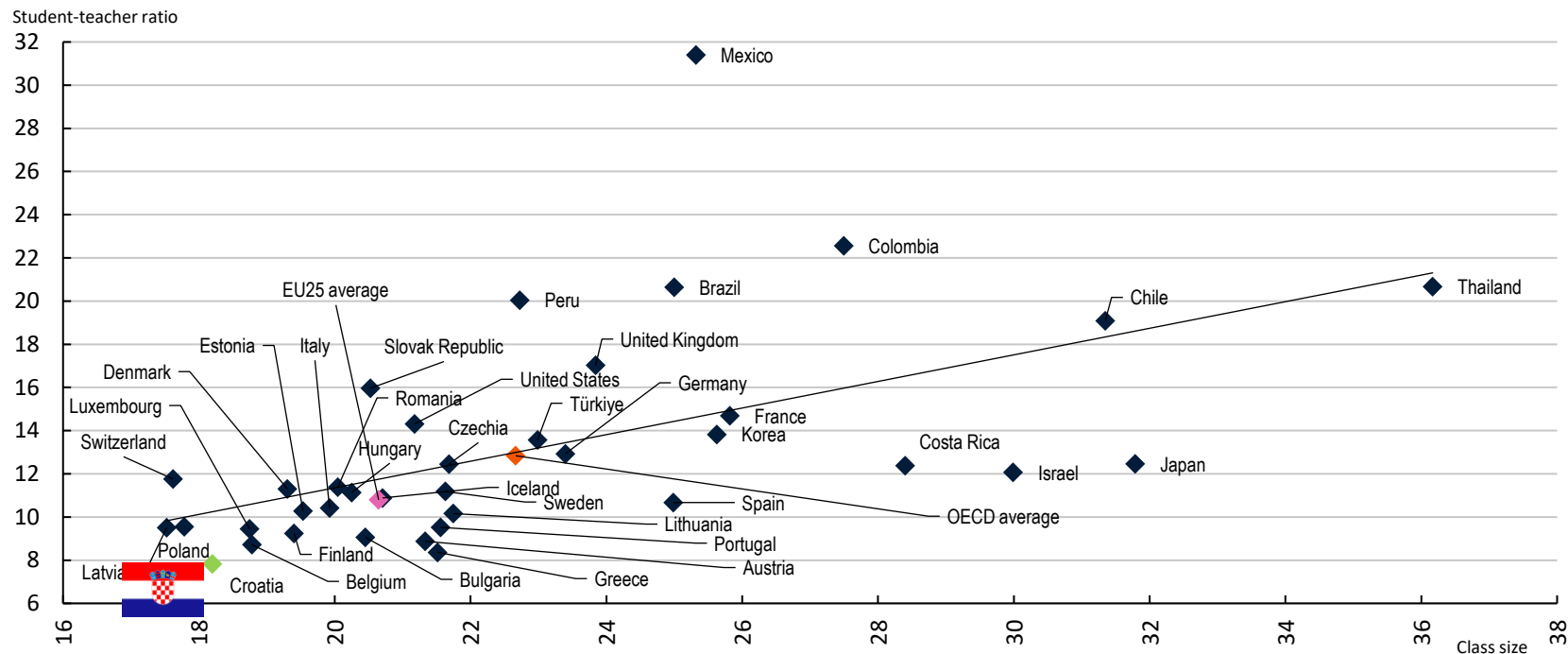
Changes in the number of students and teachers in primary education between 2015 and 2024





As a result, Croatia has small classes and student-teacher ratio

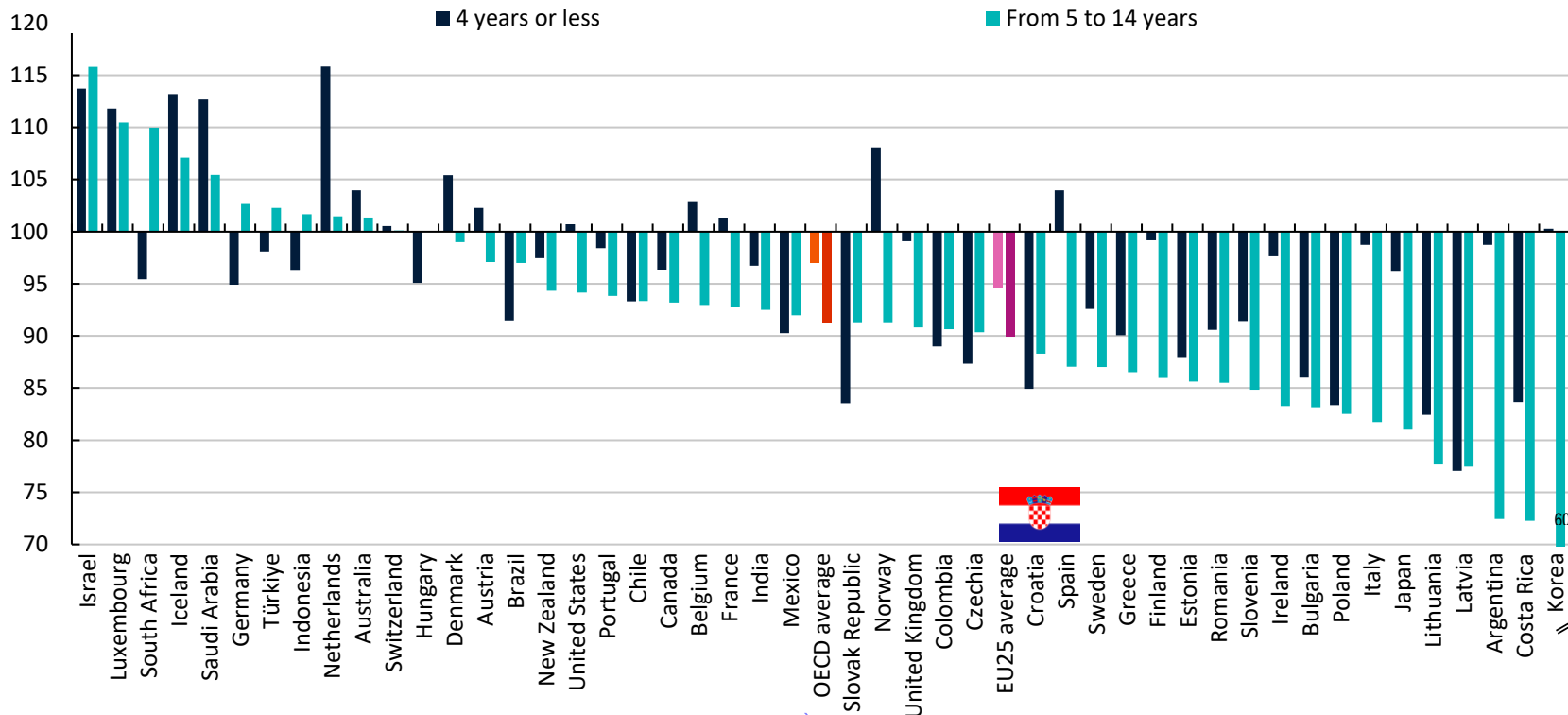
Student-teacher ratio and average class size in lower secondary education (2024)





Child populations are projected to decline further

Projected changes in the population of children between 2024 and 2033, by age group





Policy challenges

1

Strengthen investment

Spending per student and education's budget share remain comparatively low

2

Use changing demographics as opportunity to improve equity

Enrolment will continue decreasing, which allows reshuffling of resources and teachers to areas needing it most

3

Increase teacher satisfaction

Salaries and progression scales for public institutions remains limited, while working hours are high

4

Continue building support for adult learning

Adult learning participation remains quite low.



Education at a Glance 2026

OECD Indicators



Hvala !