

# Migrant children and educational challenges

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## **EQUOP data set (ERC funded research project)**

Data collection beginning school year 2014-2015

2<sup>nd</sup> year of Secondary education, Francophone schools in Belgium

Sample of 164 secondary schools contacted (=1/3 of total number of schools),  
106 participated

12570 pupils

620 classes

398 mathematics teachers

106 schools

Merged on individual level with test scores on national tests CEB (end of primary school) and CE1D (end of 2<sup>nd</sup> year of secondary education)

Integrated (and usable) dataset:

10395 pupils

589 classes

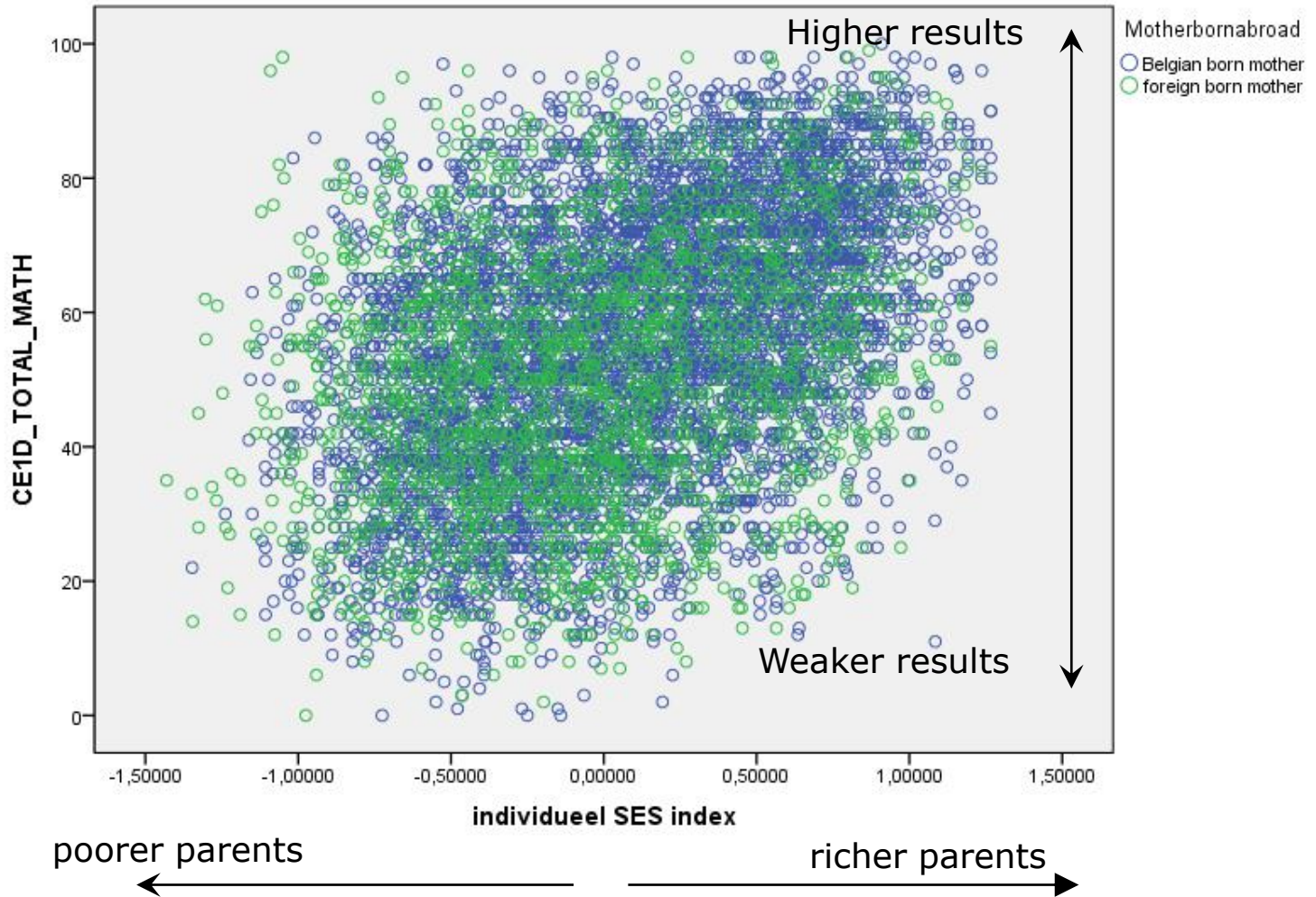
388 mathematics teachers

103 schools

Procedure of opt-out by parents and pupils (570 did so)

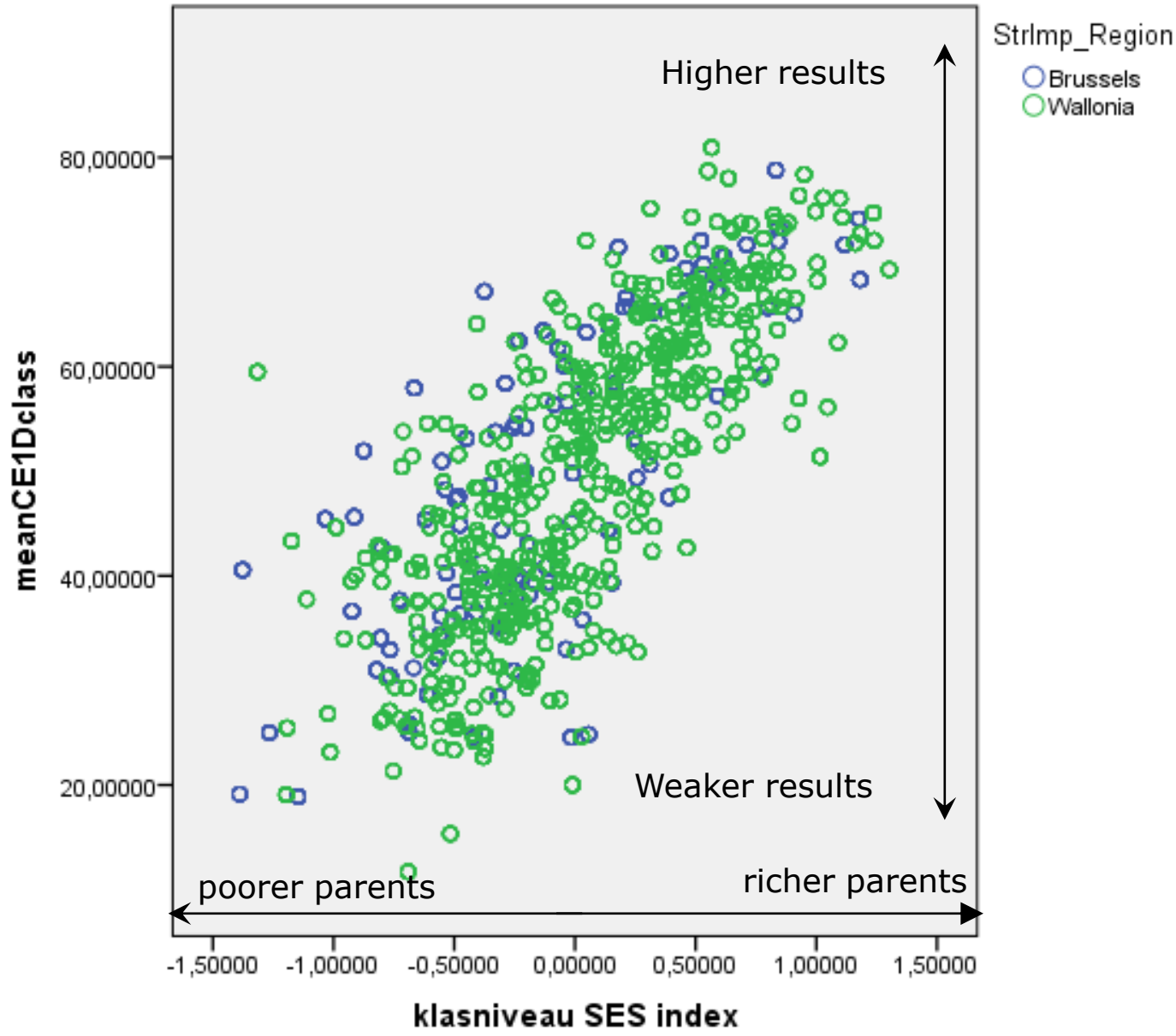
Results on standardized national mathematics test at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of secondary education (n=10.395)

$R=0.406^{***}$   
 $R^2=0.165$



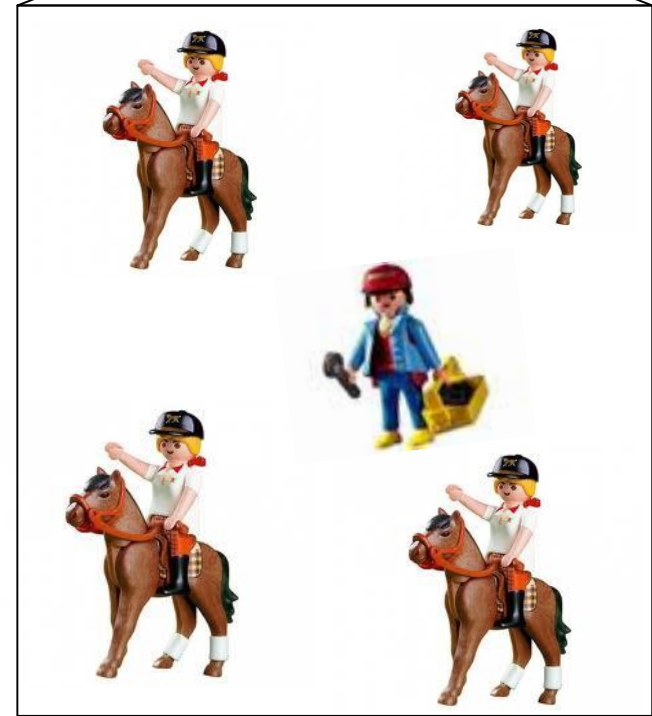
Index Socio-Economic Position, calculated in a factor analyses using the variables: highest educational level parents, highest professional status parents, home possessions and number of books at home

Results on standardized national mathematics test at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of secondary education, Class mean result (n=608)



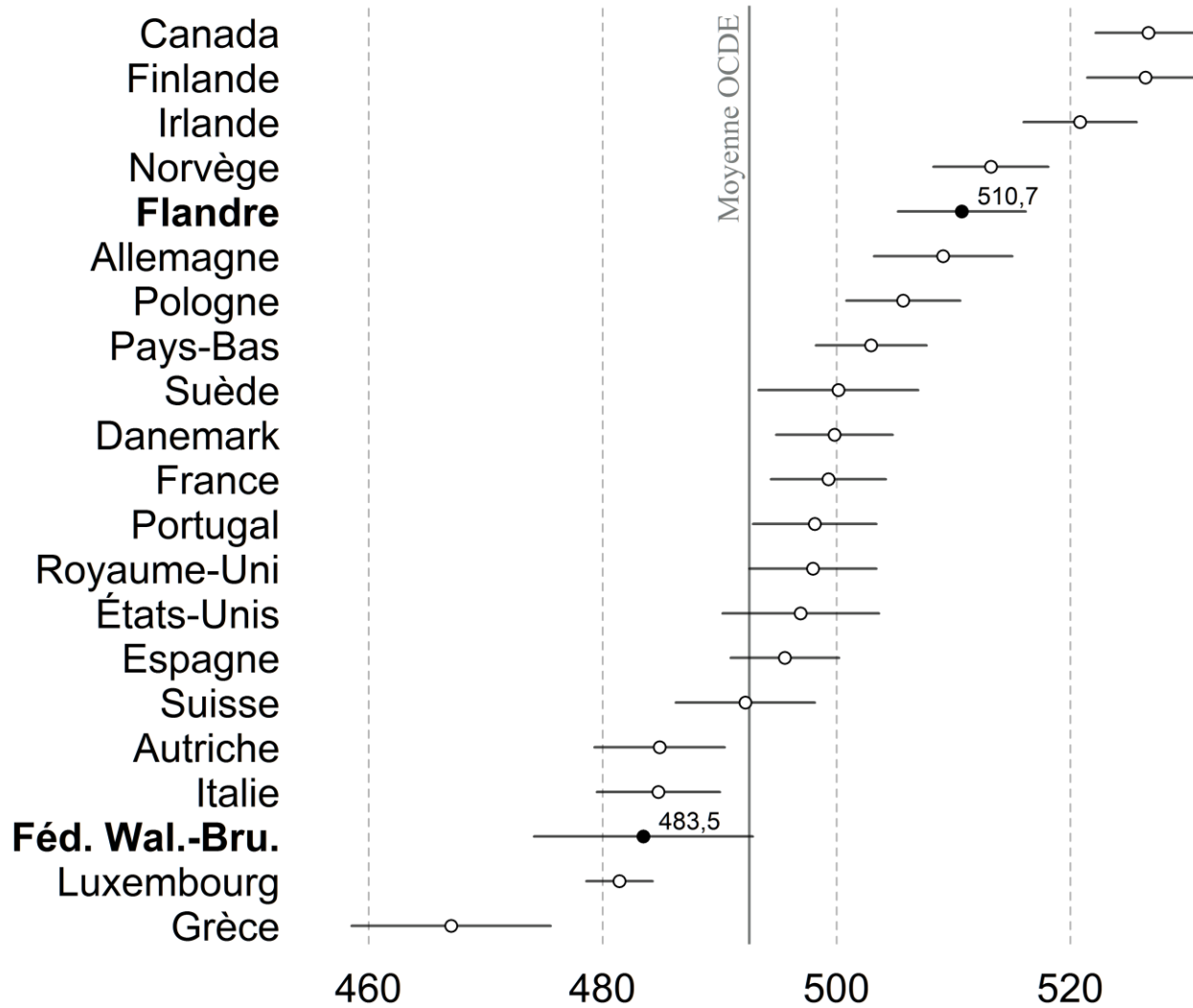
Index Socio-Economic Position, class means, calculated in a factor analyses using the variables: highest educational level parents, highest professional status parents, home possessions and number of books at home

- In schools with high numbers of at-risk (migrant) students, weaker school team resources (high teacher turnover, lower effectiveness, lower collective teacher efficacy)

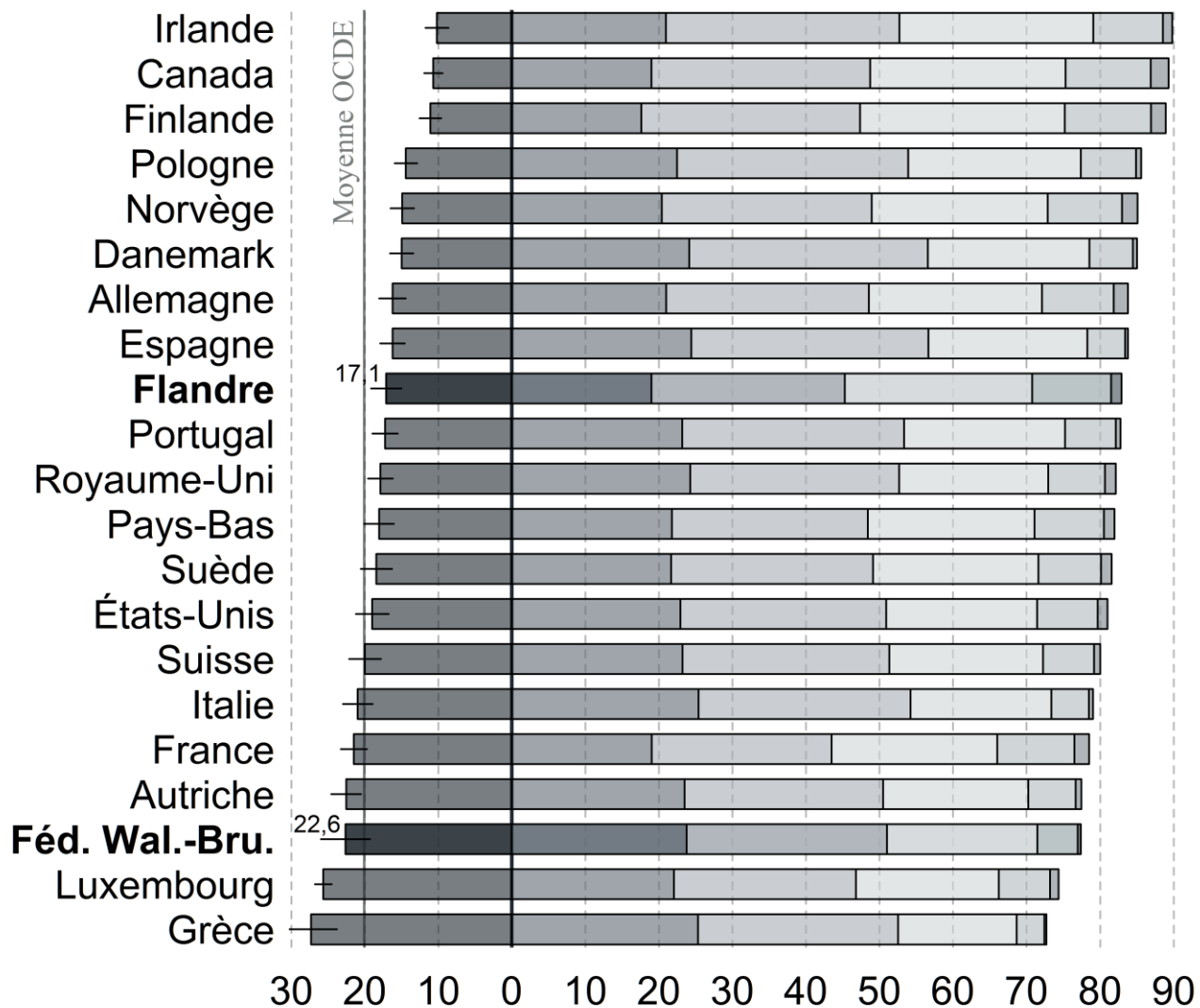


- In schools with low number of at-risk (migrant) students, stronger school team resources (low turnover, higher effectiveness, higher collective teacher efficacy)

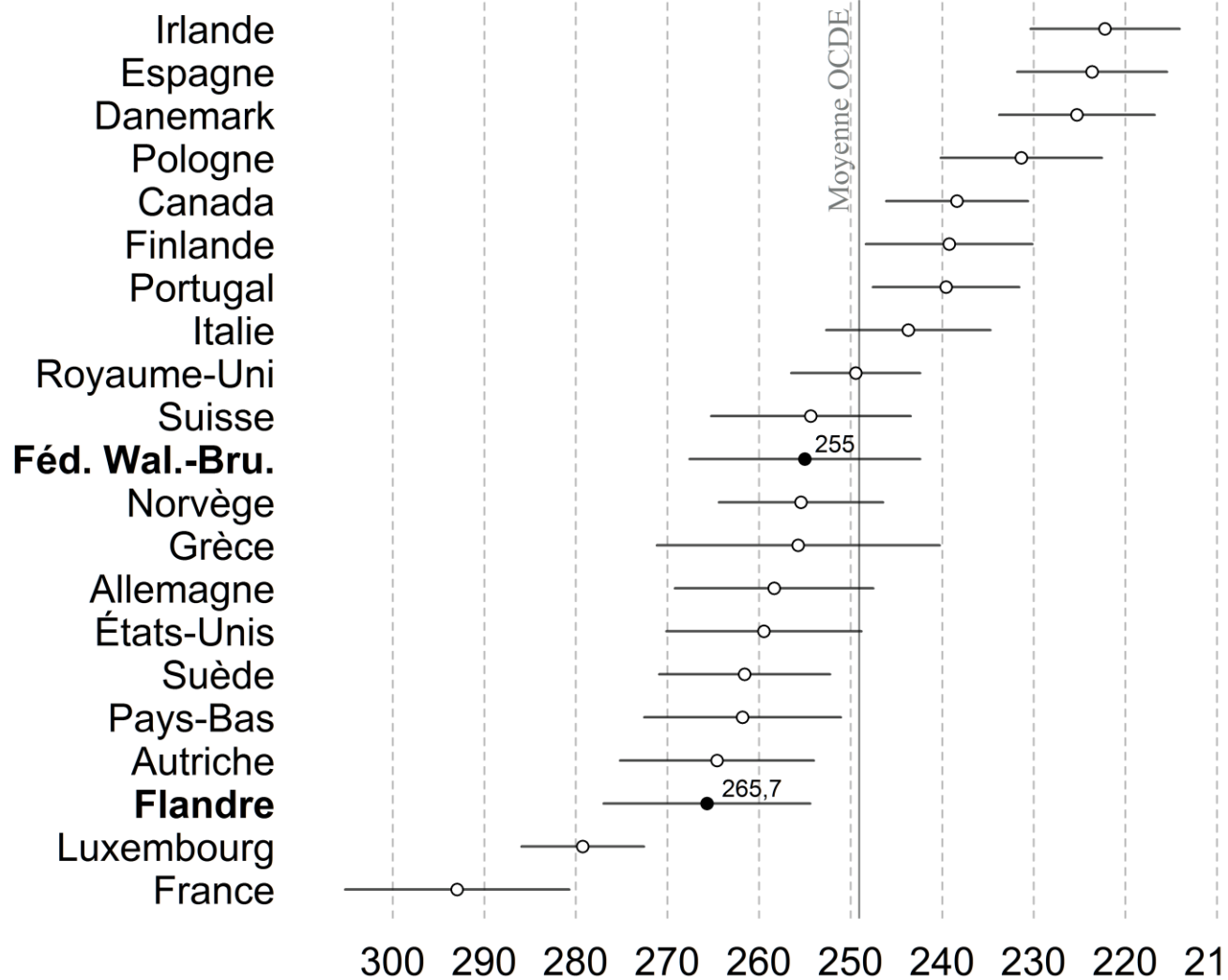
# Lecture PISA 2015



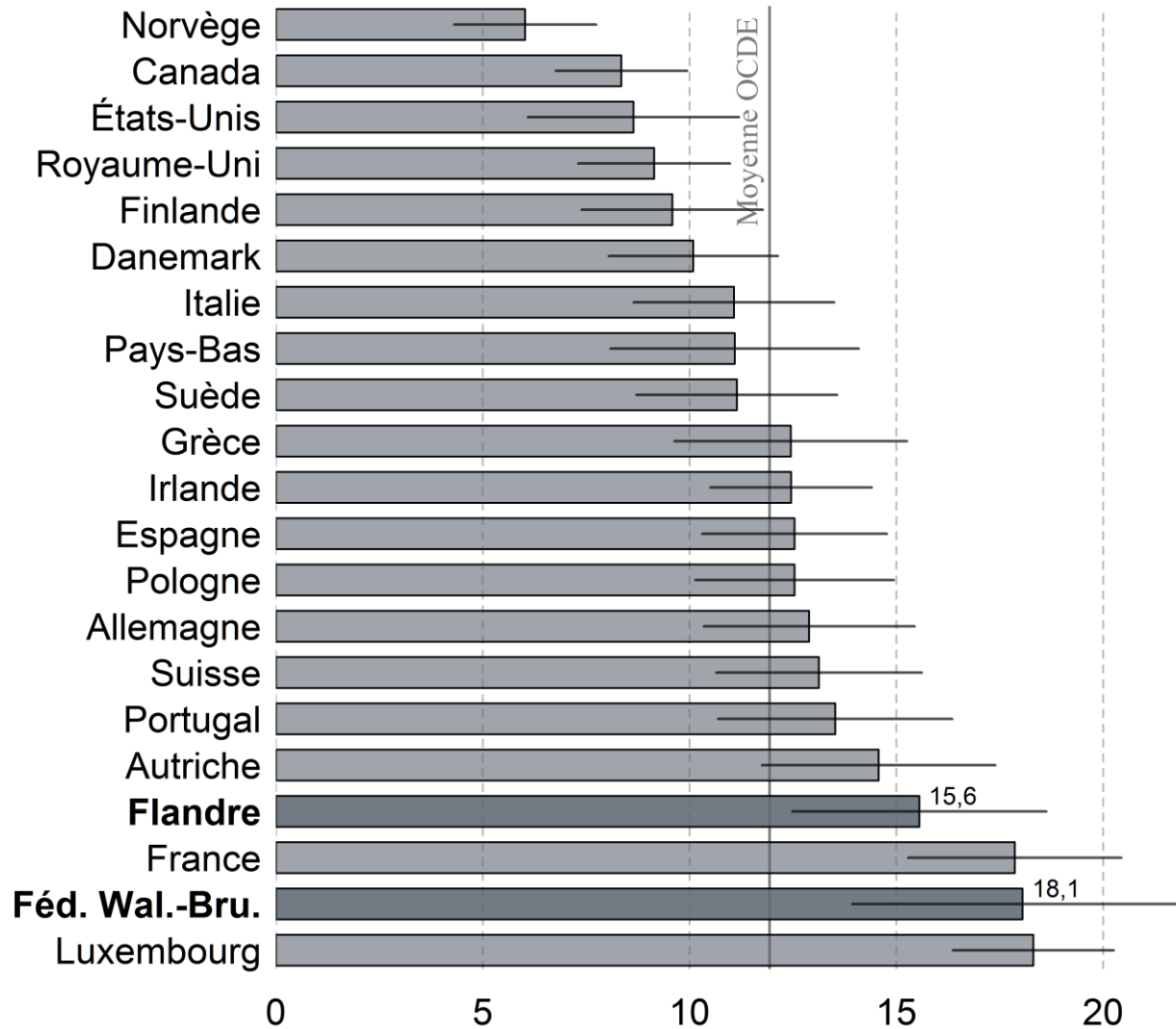
# Lecture PISA 2015: Proportion d'élèves (en pourcentage) par niveau de compétence

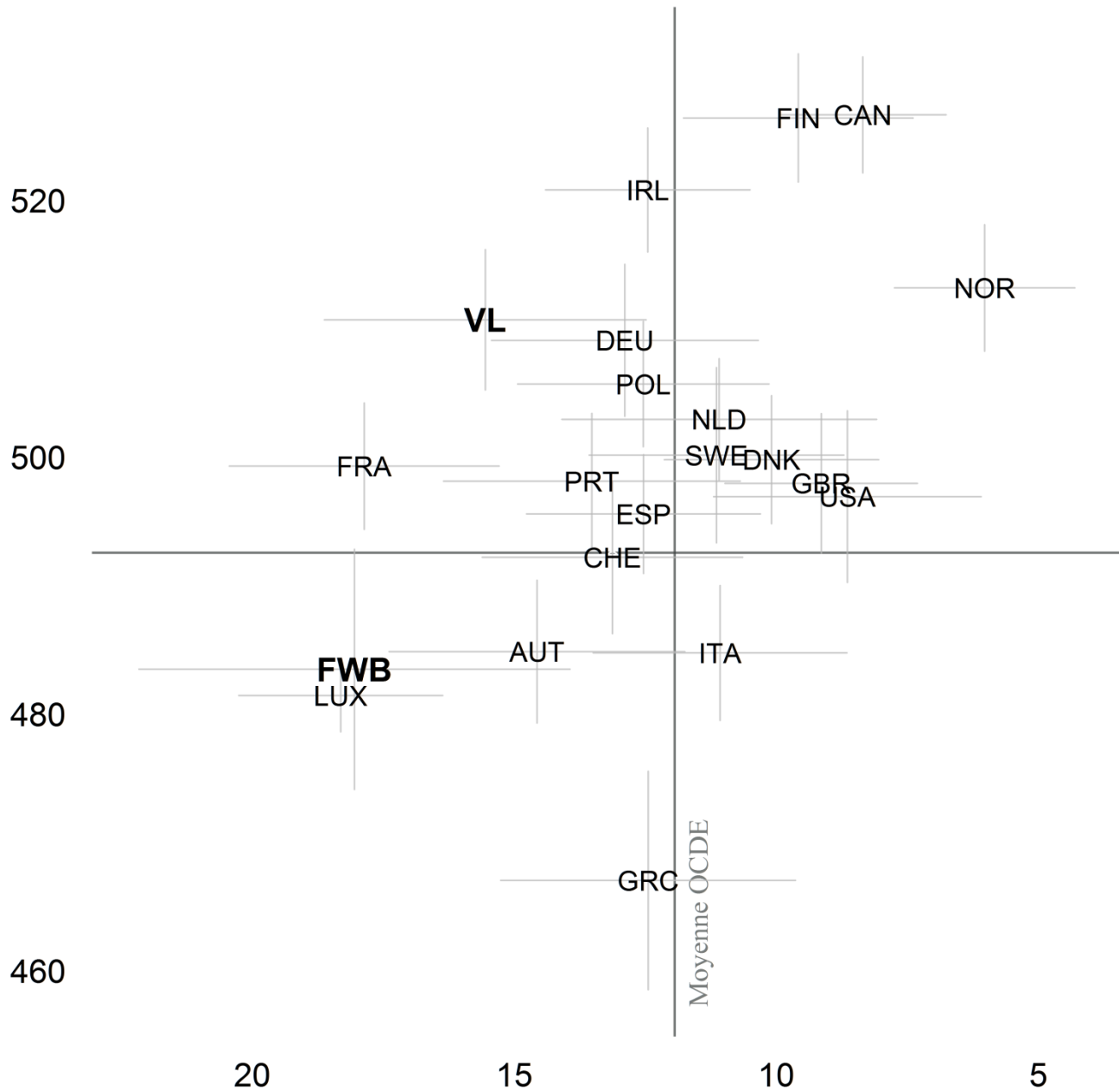


# Lecture PISA 2015: Ecart interdécile

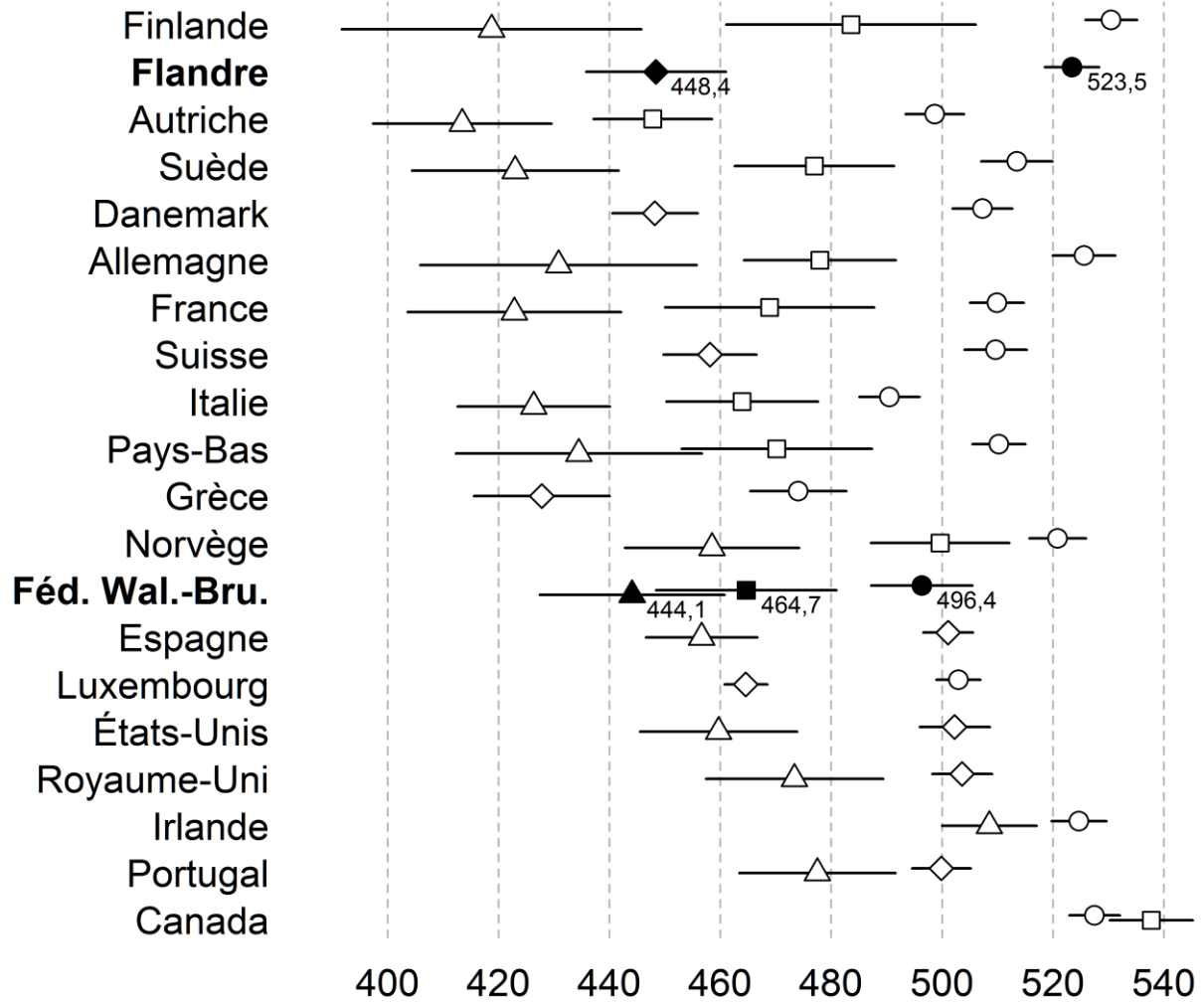


# Lecture PISA 2015: Variance expliquée par l'origine socio-économique

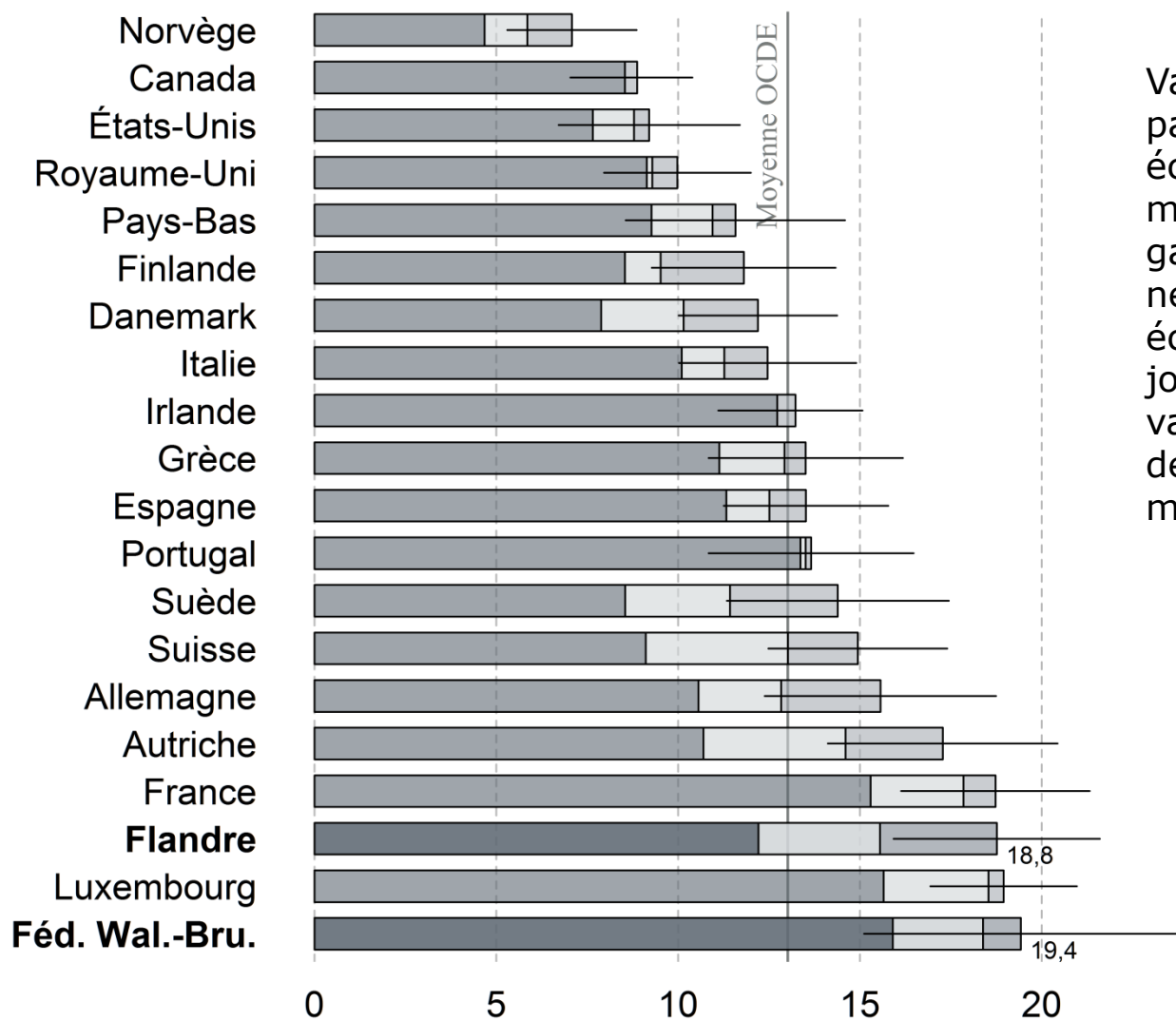




Croisement entre  
 efficacité  
 (performances  
 moyennes) et  
 équité (variance  
 expliquée) pour  
 lecture



Scores moyens en lecture selon la catégorie migratoire (boule=autochthone, carré=seconde génération, triangle=première génération)



Variance expliquée par l'origine socio-économique et migratoire (de gauche à droite, effet net de l'origine socio-économique, effet joint des deux variables et effet net de la catégorie migratoire)

## General reflections:

- Large scale international educational studies such as the *Program for International Student Assessment* (PISA) have considerably pushed the boundaries for educational research (and public debate)
- Migrant educational attainment has become a central issue of attention
- However, one should keep in mind that large scale international assessments have **not** been created to monitor educational attainment of migrant children (leading to small N issues)
- Studies focusing on migrant children are either national studies or ‘modest’ comparative studies (such as EU4CILS)
- It is good to make optimal use of what we have, but a trap to be restrained by what exists (cfr. European indicators for integration)

## Lower scores for migrants : the educational gap

- Strong correlation between scores of migrant children (1<sup>st</sup> generation) and native children
- Migrant children (1<sup>st</sup> generation) tend to have lower scores than native children (with notable exceptions in Australia, New Zealand and Canada)
- The higher the score of native pupils, the higher the results of second generation migrant children in the same country
- Native students tend to have higher scores than second generation migrant children who tend to have higher scores than 1<sup>st</sup> generation migrant children (with exceptions for Canada and Australia)
- In the EU, countries with very similar migration policies, have quite divergent results for migrant pupils (with countries as Belgium and Austria doing particularly bad)

## Reasons for the educational gap: socio-economic, language and institutional factors

- Substantial part of the differences between migrant and non-migrant pupils is related to socio-economic status and language spoken at home
- Above and beyond the impact of individual characteristics, there are school and educational system related factors:
  - Presence or absence of early tracking
  - Level of academic, socio-economic and ethnic segregation
- Limiting the performance gap is important:
  - Not waste talent of particular segments of society
  - Not trigger issues of social cohesion

... **BUT** not just focus on the gap, as the achievement level is **ALSO** crucial

- **Proportion of low achievers**

Figure 1. Proportion of second generation migrant students not reaching minimal competency level two for reading (PISA 2009)

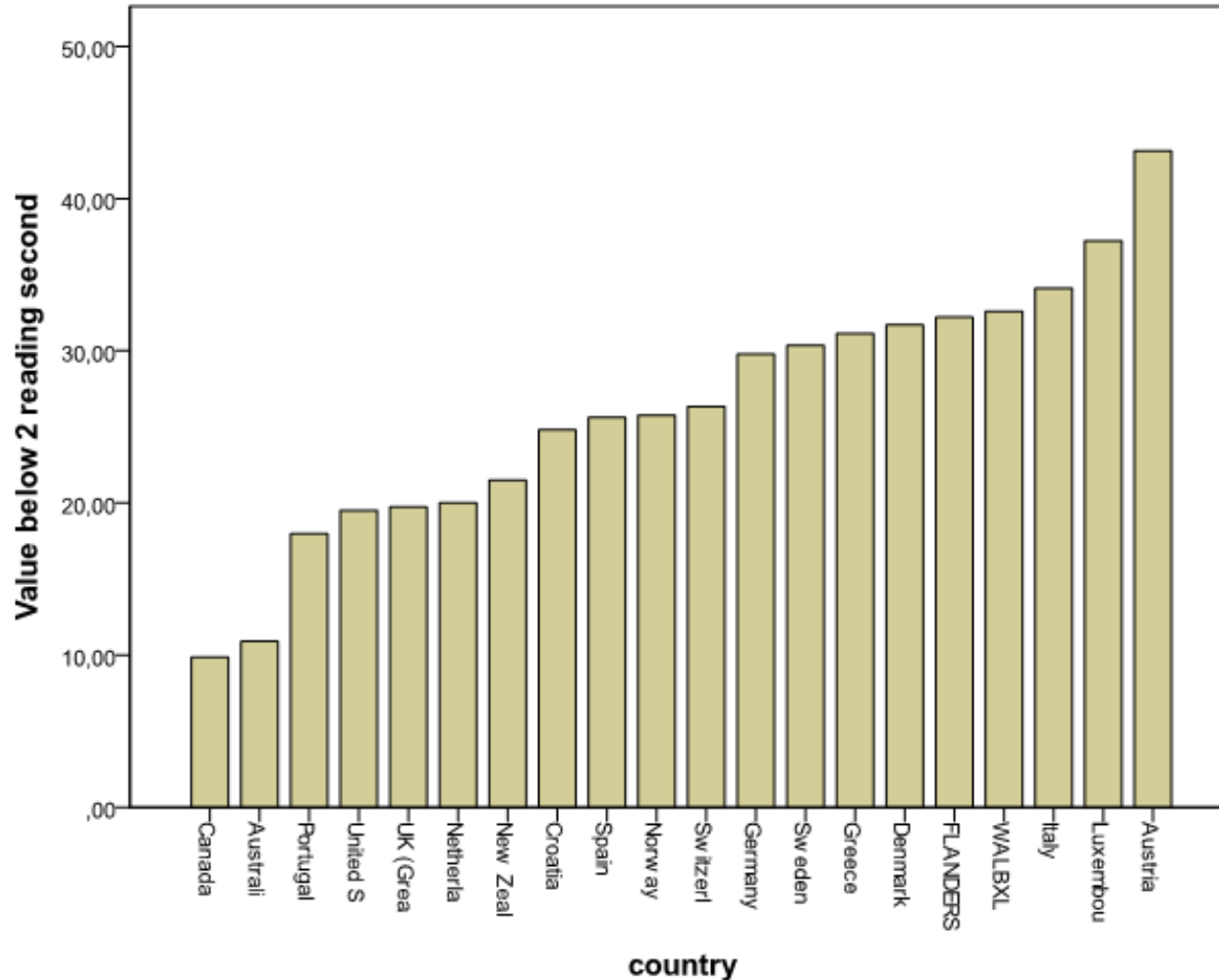
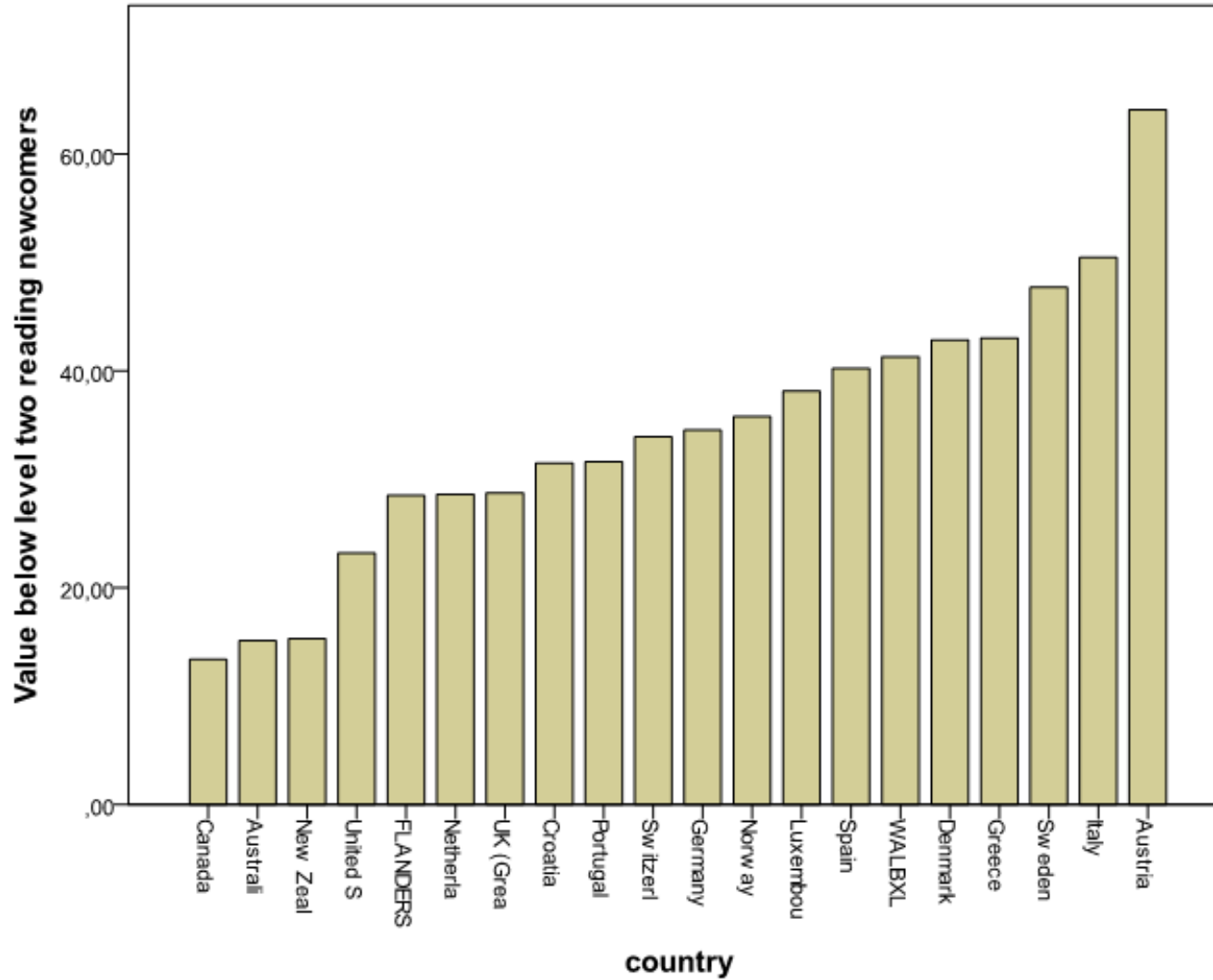


Figure 2. Proportion of first generation migrant students not reaching the minimal level two for reading (PISA 2009)



- **Determinants of the proportion of low achievers**

1) Strong significant link between percentage of GDP spent on education and the proportion of low achievers

2) The more social segregation there is, the more low achievers there are

Linking MIPEx-results to outcome results shows us that targeted inclusive policies are insufficient to overcome challenges presented by a higher presence of migrant students

**Overall:**

- Monetary investment is important but does not explain everything
- Compensatory targeted measures are insufficient
- Segregation (school composition) is a major challenge

- **Research wise reflections**

- We need studies designed specifically to monitor the situation of migrants (OR we need systematic targeted oversampling)
- Serious investment for quantitative research at high standards (and preferably longitudinally) **BUT** this should NOT crowd out qualitative research
- Need for more multi method research, combining the strengths of different methodological traditions
- Promote interdisciplinary research with a long term agenda (avoiding crowding out effects or “fads”)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BuN\\_w48I0\\_k&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BuN_w48I0_k&feature=youtu.be)