



IMMIGRANTS' MASTERY IN THE HOST-COUNTRY LANGUAGE : CHALLENGES AND POLICY RESPONSES IN OECD COUNTRIES

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from values to policy and practice
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Outline

- **Measurement:**
What do we mean by linguistic integration and what do we (want to) measure?
- **Links with labour market outcomes:**
Does proficiency in the host-country language make a difference?
- **Policy responses:** what do we want to achieve and what works best?



1. Statistical tools on immigrants languages

1. Mother tongue and language spoken at home (PIAAC 2012)

- **Native speakers:** have learned as a child the “official” language spoken in the host country and still understand that language
 - Monolingual
 - Multilingual
- **Foreign speakers:** have learned another language as a child
 - Speak the host-country language **at home**
 - Speak another language at home

2. Proficiency in the host-country language

- Self assessment from 2008 and 2014 LFS ad-hoc module
“Need to improve host-country language skills to get an appropriate job”
- Literacy score from PIAAC
Mix of language and cognitive skills (level 1 to 5)







What do we measure with PIAAC?

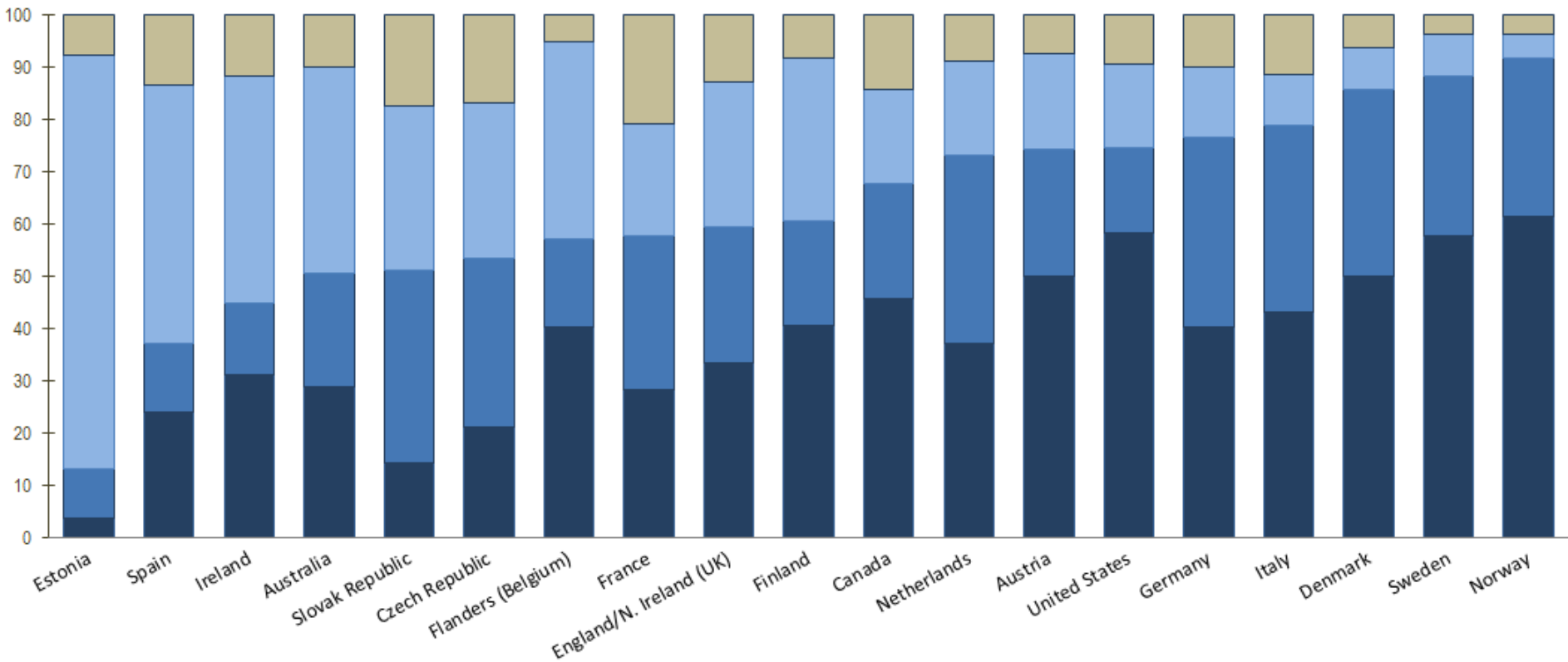




Two third of immigrants are foreign speakers in OECD countries

Main language learned as a child and language spoken at home by immigrants, 16-64

 Multilingual native speakers
  Monolingual native speakers
 Foreign speakers: host-country language most often spoken at home
  Not speaking the host-country language at home

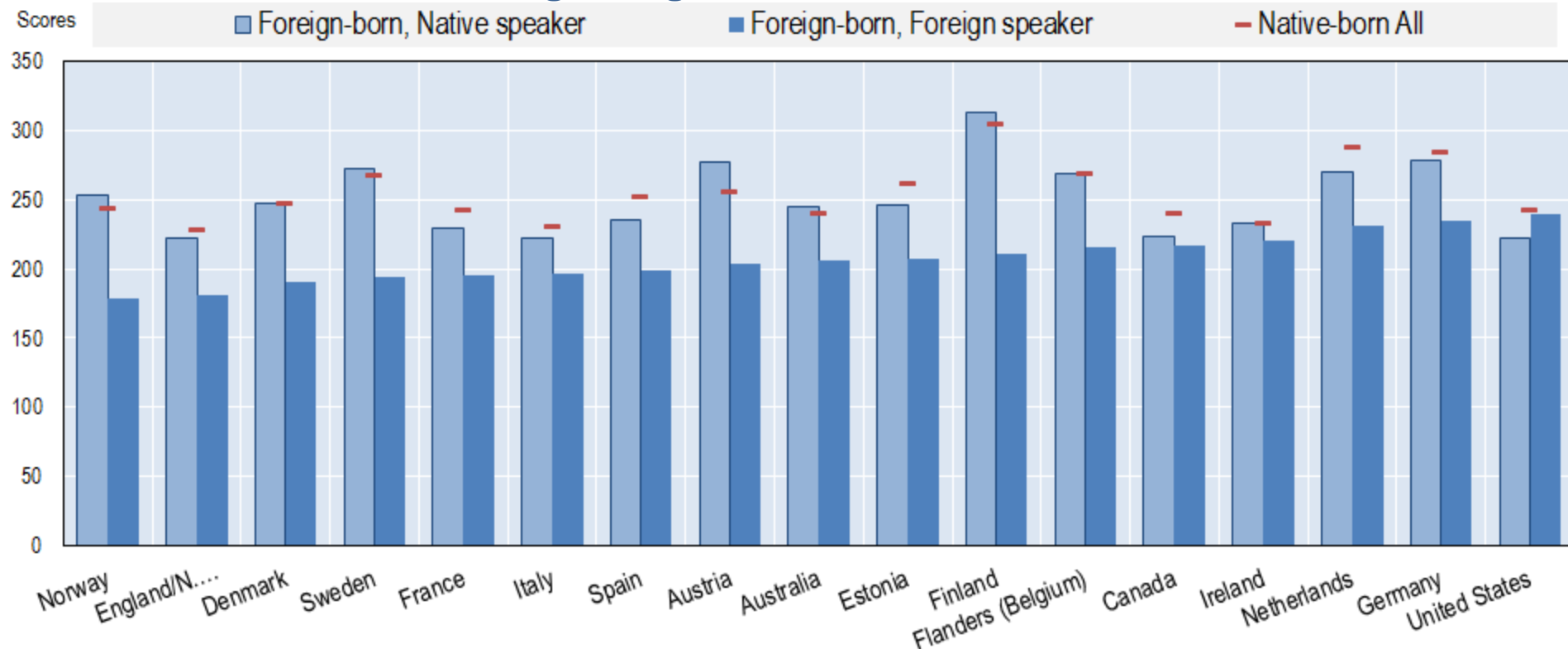


Source: OECD Survey of Adult Skills 2012.



On average, foreign speakers have lower literacy scores than the native-born

Literacy scores by place of birth and mother tongue, 16-65, 2012, controlling for age, sex and level of education



Source: OECD Survey of Adult Skills 2012.

And in most countries, literacy scores of low-educated migrants are particularly low



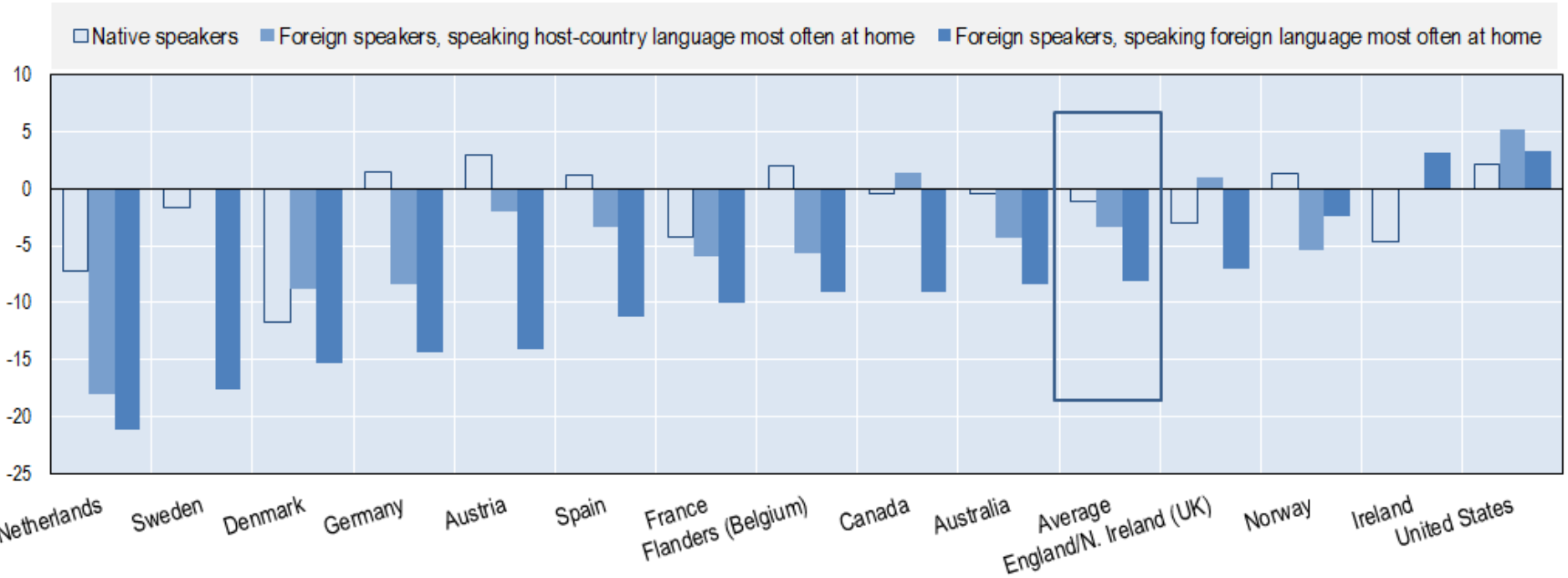
Host-country language proficiency is an important determinant of labour market outcomes

- The foreign-born who lack host-country language proficiency are a group with cumulative disadvantages (lower education levels, more likely to have foreign education and to be humanitarian migrants, etc.).
- But even after accounting for these, they face a 14%-point lower **employment rate** than other immigrants ...
...and an **over-qualification rate** that is on average 17 %-points higher.
- For labour migrants without language problems, one observes no longer a higher incidence of overqualification.



Foreign speakers who usually speak the host-country language at home are more likely to be employed than other foreign speakers

Immigrants employment rates by mother tongue and language used at home, 16-65, 2012, Difference with the native-born, in % points



Source: OECD Survey of Adult Skills 2012.



What do we want to achieve and what works best?

- Assist learners to determine the types and levels of proficiency that they need for their work and daily life and adapt the learning trajectory accordingly
- Organise different tracks by individuals educational background and language families
- Implement flexible programmes compatible with daily life (with work, caring children, ...)
- Extend on-the-job language training (co-financed by employers)



Thank you for your attention

Further reading:

<http://www.oecd.org/migration/>

<http://www.oecd.org/els/jobsforimmigrantsseries.htm>

