

Higher Education, Lifelong Learning and the Achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)



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Sustainable Development Goals: a potential stimulus to revisiting core values in higher education and lifelong learning?

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SDGs (AMBITIOUS) GOALS... TO BE ACHIEVED BY 2030?

- 2.1 Goal 1: No Poverty
- 2.2 Goal 2: Zero Hunger
- 2.3 Goal 3: Good Health and Well-being
- 2.4 Goal 4: Quality Education
- 2.5 Goal 5: Gender Equality
- 2.6 Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation
- 2.7 Goal 7: Affordable and Clean Energy
- 2.8 Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
- 2.9 Goal 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
- 2.10 Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities
- 2.11 Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
- 2.12 Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production
- 2.13 Goal 13: Climate Action
- 2.14 Goal 14: Life Below Water
- 2.15 Goal 15: Life on Land
- 2.16 Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
- 2.17 Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals

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EDUCATION target 4.7

By 2030, ensure that **all** learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non- violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

So...achieving Sustainable Development Goals for education by 2030 presents a 'major challenge for all countries' (OECD 2016)...

And, particularly in the context of enormous national and global inequalities...

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CAPITAL

in the Twenty-First Century

THOMAS
PIKETTY

TRANSLATED BY ARTHUR GOLDHAMMER

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

JOSEPH E. STIGLITZ

WINNER OF THE NOBEL PRIZE IN ECONOMICS

"A searing read." —Nicholas Kristof

THE PRICE OF INEQUALITY

HOW TODAY'S DIVIDED SOCIETY
ENDANGERS OUR FUTURE

WITH A NEW PREFACE

The Spirit Level

Why Equality
is Better for Everyone

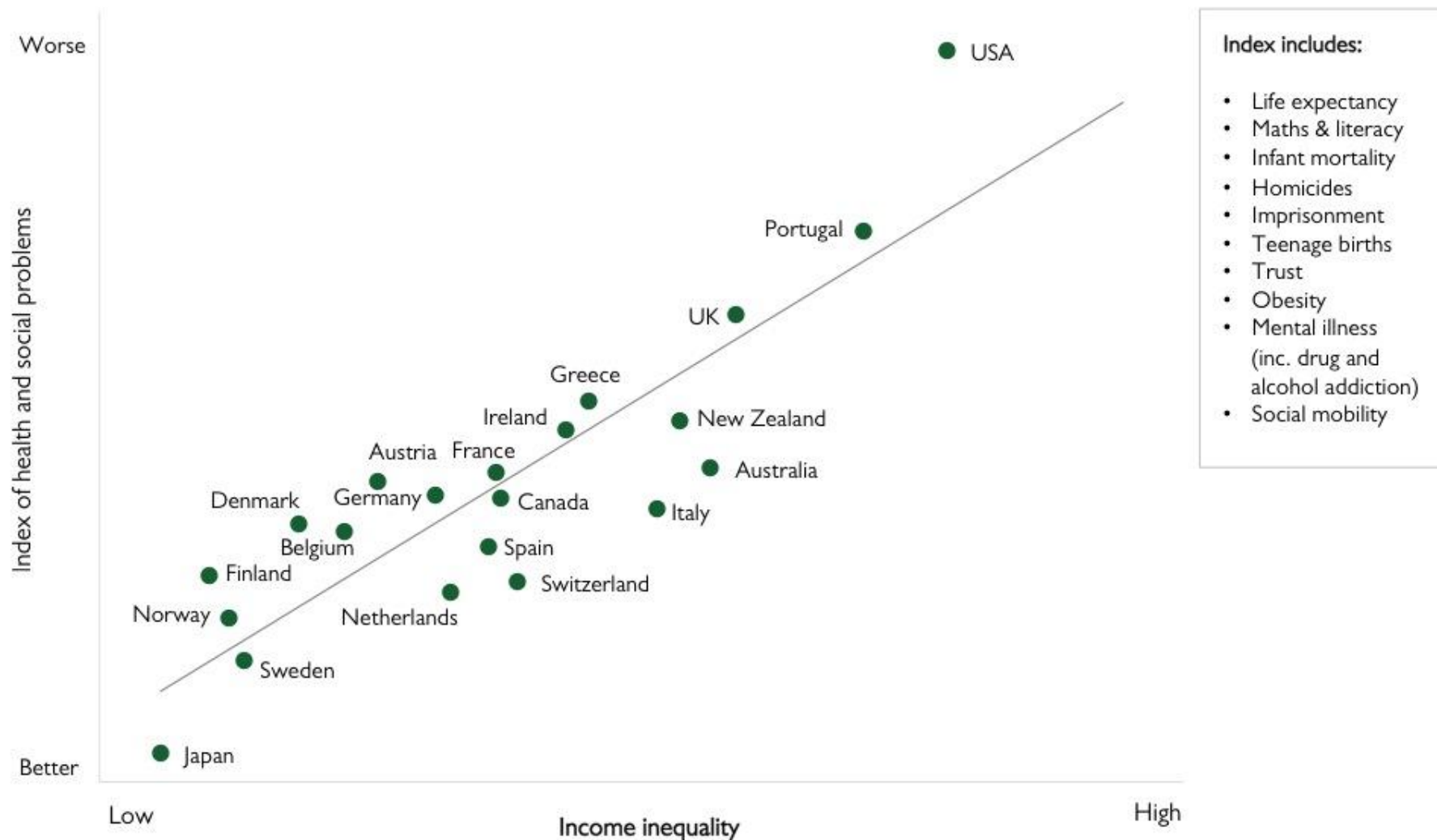
Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett

'A big idea, big enough to change political thinking'
Sunday Times

'A sweeping theory of everything' *Guardian*



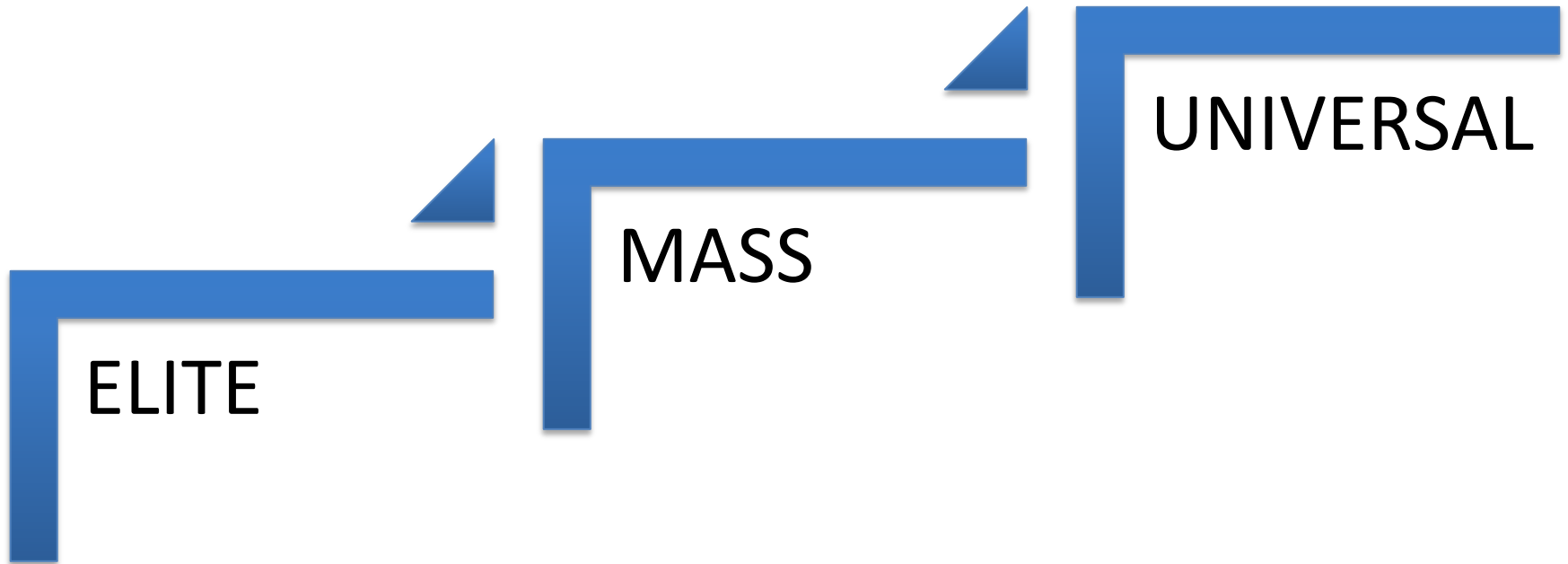
Health and social problems are worse in more unequal countries



Three themes

1. Factors shaping contemporary higher education.
1. Lifelong learning and higher education.
2. Sustainable Development Goals: a potential stimulus to revisiting core values in higher education and lifelong learning?

Global expansion of higher education



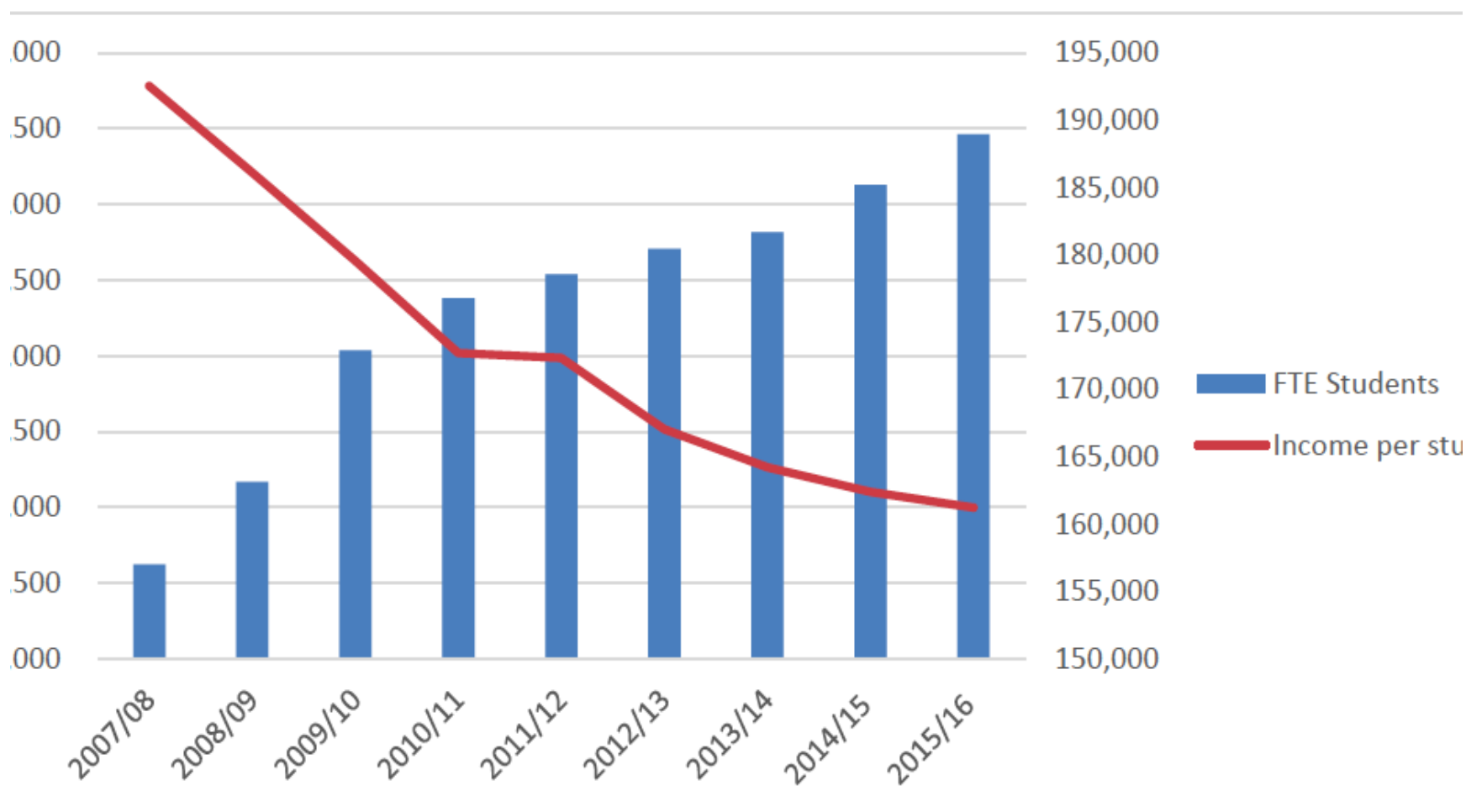
‘Pull’ factors impacting on contemporary HE

- High level skill requirements
- Pace of technological change
- Emphasis on accountability for public investment
- Role of HE in economic & regional development
- Social movements
- Impact of increasing educational levels
- Demographic changes...

Responding 'push' factors

- Need to diversify revenue sources
- ➔ Blurring of public/private
- Lower % tenured positions
- Audit culture
- Research competition
- Pressures of 'league tables'
- Student expectations...

Core state income for higher education by total student numbers in the Republic of Ireland (2007/8-2015/16)



Source: Expert Group on the Future Funding of Higher Education (2015) Figure 2

Paradox in many countries reduction in public investment...

but accompanied by increasing 'steering' by the state...

and consequent concerns for academic freedom and university autonomy...

European Universities Association: 'scorecard' 4 dimensions of university autonomy (2017)

1. Organisational autonomy

2. Financial autonomy

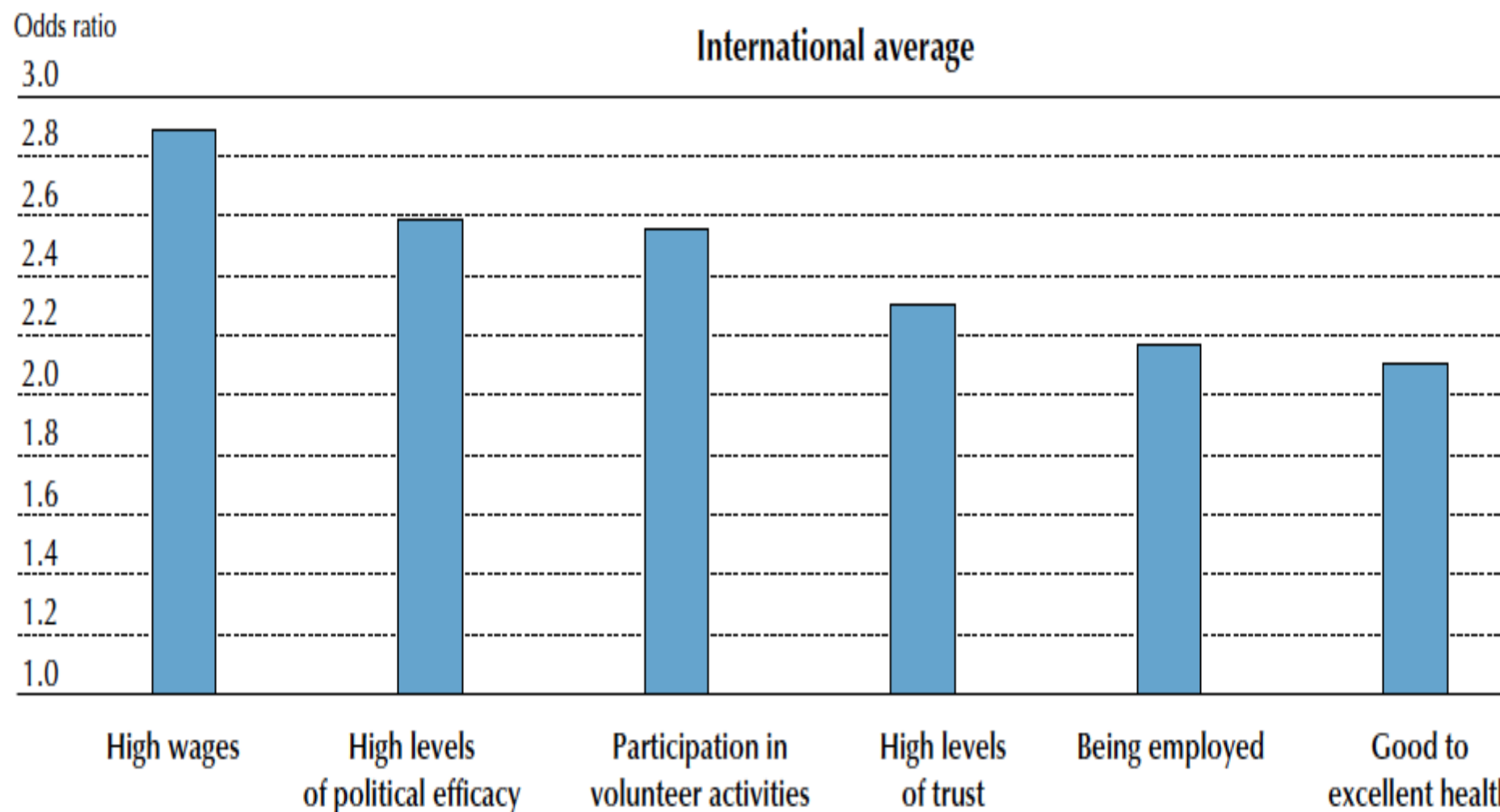
3. Staffing autonomy

4. Academic autonomy

T. Estermann, Director Governance, Funding & Public Policy Development European University Association *The state of play in 2017 and the Scorecard University autonomy in Europe* 6/04/2017

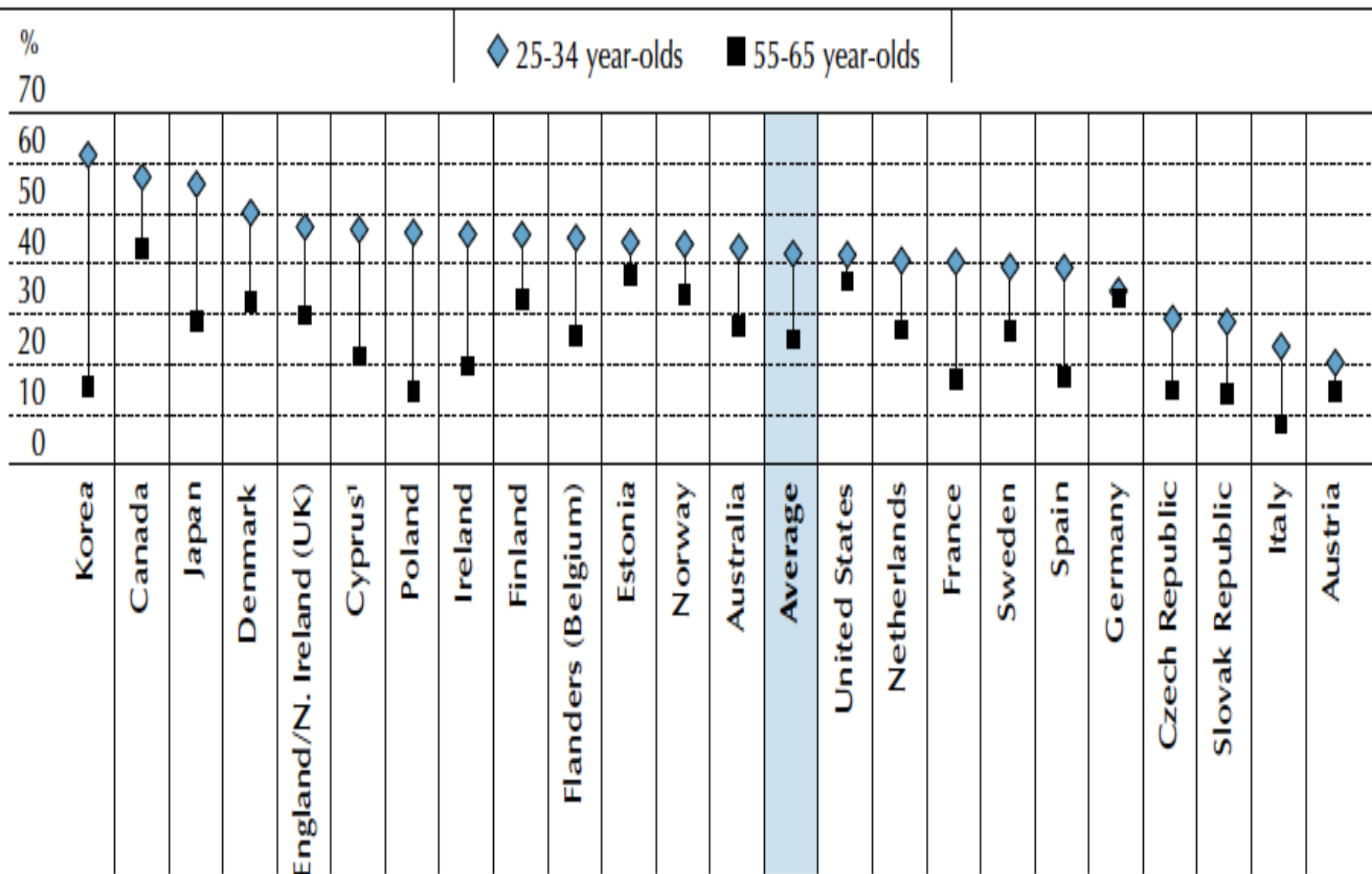
Likelihood of positive social and economic outcomes among highly literate adults

Increased likelihood (odds ratio) of adults scoring at Level 4/5 in literacy reporting high earnings, high levels of political efficacy, good health, participating in volunteer activities and being employed, compared with adults scoring at or below Level 1 in literacy (adjusted)



Population with tertiary education

Percentage, by age group



Comparative analysis of lifelong learners and higher education across fourteen countries - exploring the ways in which universities and other institutions of higher education are adapting-or, not- to meet the needs of adult learners at different stages of the lifecourse.

M. Slowey and H.G. Schuetze (eds) (2012) *Global Perspectives on Higher Education and Lifelong Learners*, Routledge: London and New York.

EUROPE Austria Germany Ireland Portugal Sweden United Kingdom	PACIFIC COUNTRIES Australia Japan New Zealand
NORTH AMERICA Canada Mexico USA	TWO 'BRICS' COUNTRIES South Africa Brazil

Conceptualising adult learners in higher education

Life stage of student

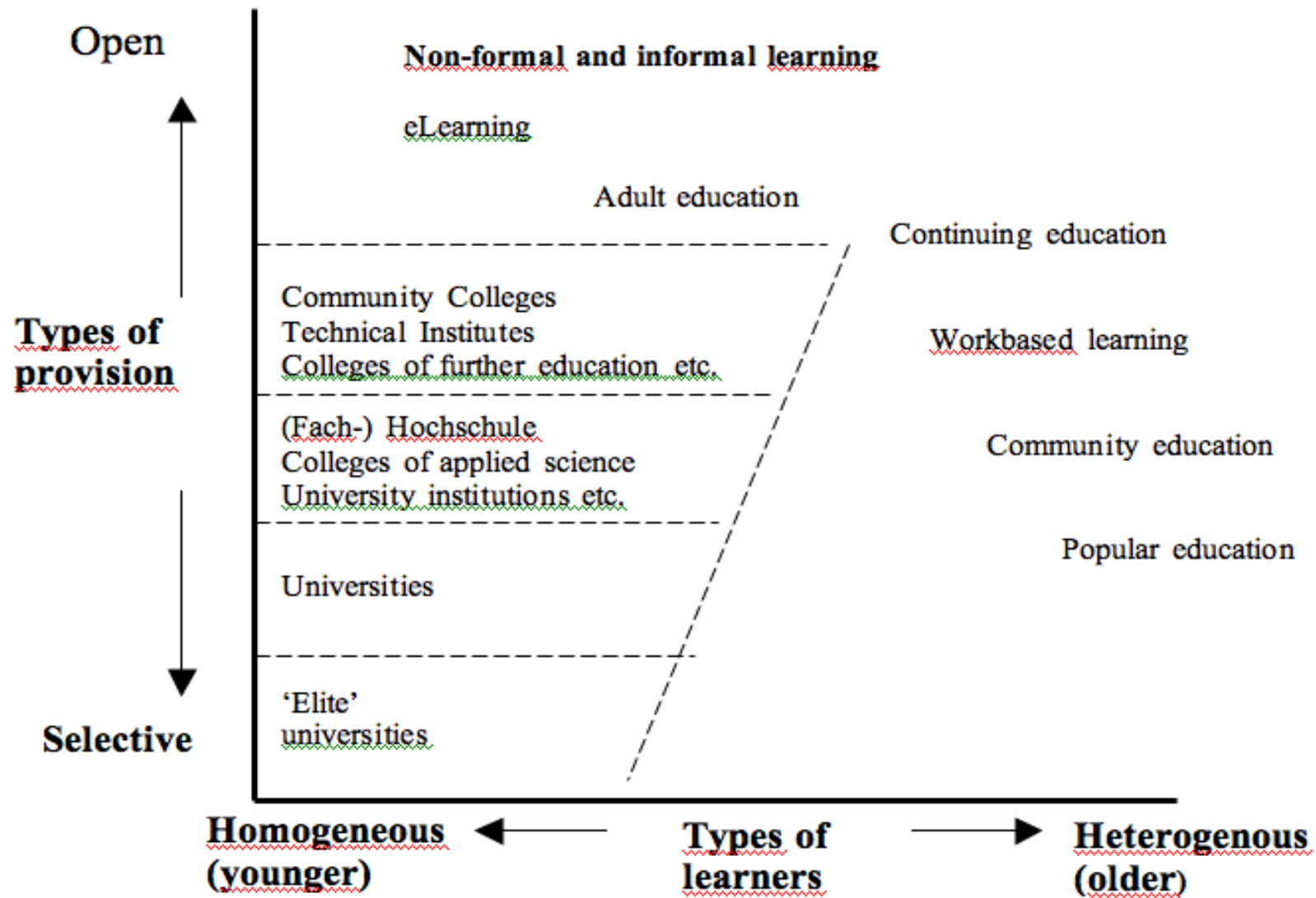
Mode of study

Types of programmes

Organisation of provision

Typology of lifelong learners in higher education

- Second chance learners
- Equity groups
- Deferrers
- Recurrent learners
- Returners
- Refreshers
- Learners in later life



M. Slowey and H.G. Schuetze (2012) Landscape of lifelong learning, adapted from Chapter 1: Global perspectives on higher education and lifelong learners. London

Yes ... but also these learners...



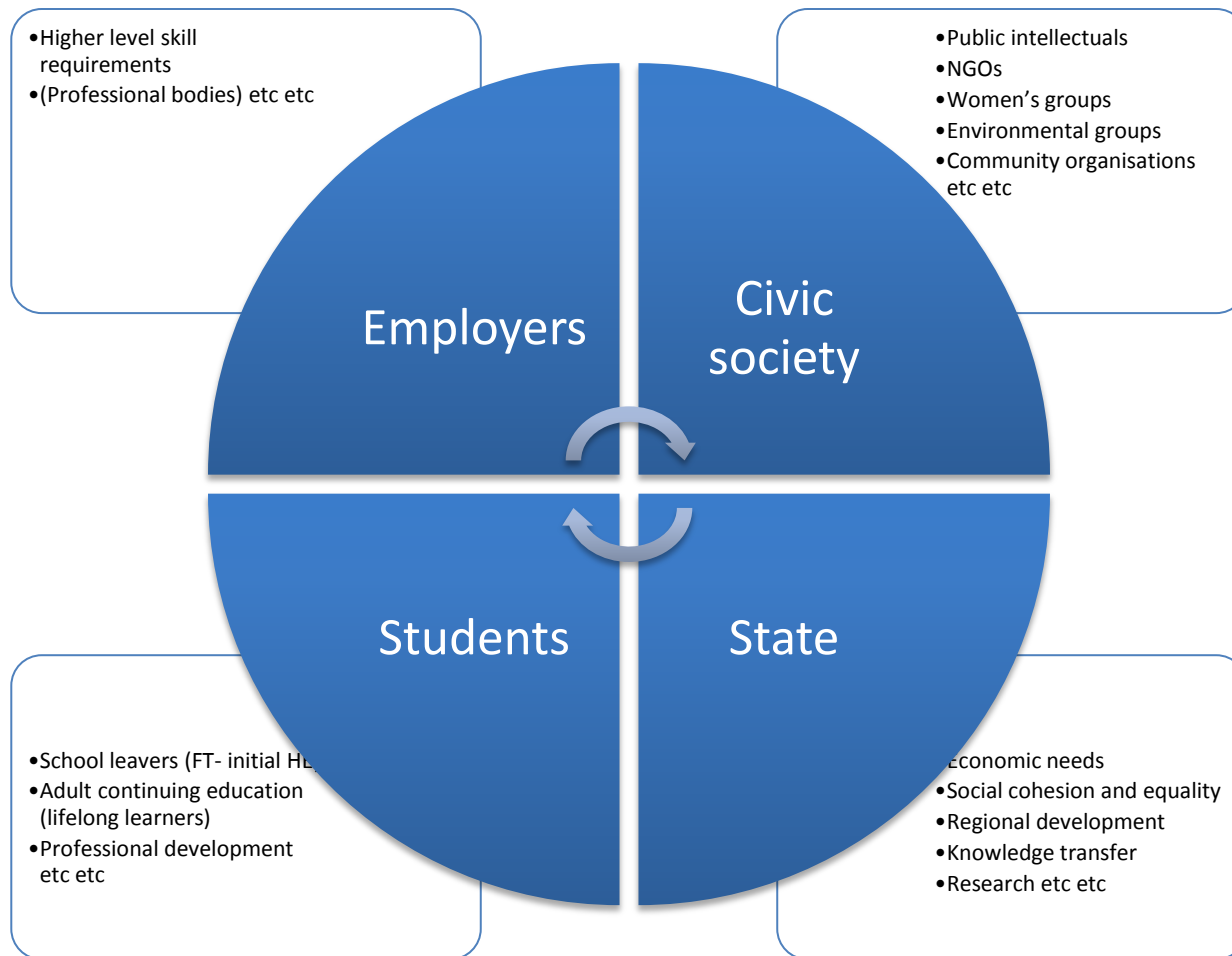
Workshop on Inclusive Technologies
27 January 2016 (Dr Emma Murphy, HERC)

And these... Masters Programme in Transformative Engagement



Increasing complexity of 'stakeholder' interests

(in addition to those of the 'academic oligarchy')



There are tensions between service function of higher education and its transformative mission.

But, the distinctive rigorous, critical and creative mode of knowledge development nurtured in higher education has an important role to play in meeting the challenges of the SDGs- and this requires the engagement of all disciplines.



Important to recognise “what is essential and timeless in the resource we possess in our universities, as social institutions and as intellectual infrastructure for future generations, rather than merely as centres for production of what are referred to as “the human resources” of an economic system of current period, a system that may be undergoing deep change, a change whose fundamental character we are missing”.

M.D. Higgins, President of Ireland (2016)

In doing so, we must first recognise that we live at a time when the language and rhetoric of the speculative market have become embedded in the educational culture and have brought some university practices down a precarious road.

We have reached a juncture which sees intellectuals challenged to recover the moral purpose of original thought and emancipatory scholarship; a time when we must seek to recapture the human and unifying capacity of scholarship.


M.D. Higgins, President of Ireland (2016)

Köszönöm!

Thank you!

Go raibh maith agat!





TOWARDS LIFELONG LEARNING IN HUNGARY

OECD,
1999