



TIME FOR

ACTION!

**HOW POLICY CAN STRENGTHEN (MULTI-EMPLOYER)
COLLECTIVE BARGAINING IN EUROPE**

Stan De Spiegelaere



Problem

Solution

Action



Actors

Opportunity

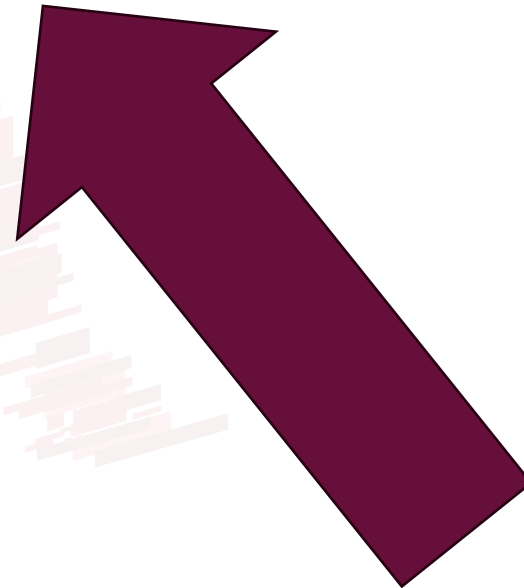


Solutions

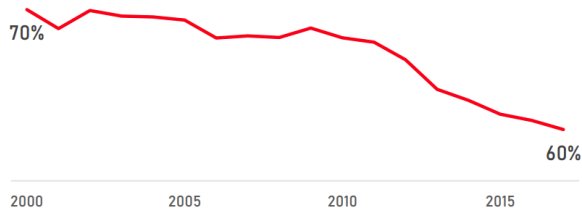
Problem

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Estimated collective bargaining coverage in EU



Data: ICTWSS for Collective bargaining coverage, Eurostat (LFSI_EMP) for employment in countries

Figure 1 - Estimated collective bargaining coverage in the EU (2000-2017)

Proposition 1:

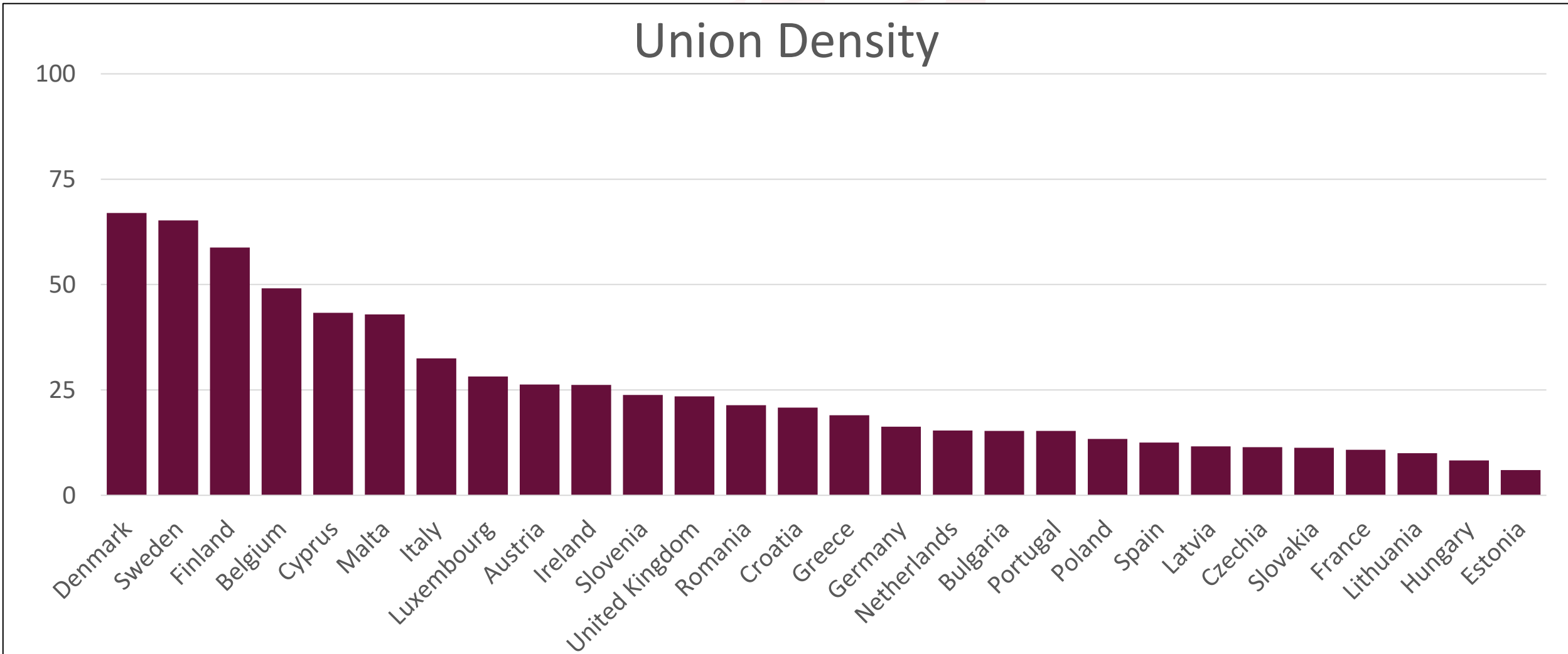
There is no escape
all countries will have to act in transposing
the Minimum Wage Directive

Transposition

- **General obligation to promote**

- *All countries need to ensure **bargaining capacity** and facilitate sectoral bargaining*
- *All countries need to take action on protection of employee reps.*
- *All countries need to ensure sufficient enforcement, particularly through inspection services*
- *All countries need to ensure **public procurement** doesn't collective bargaining*

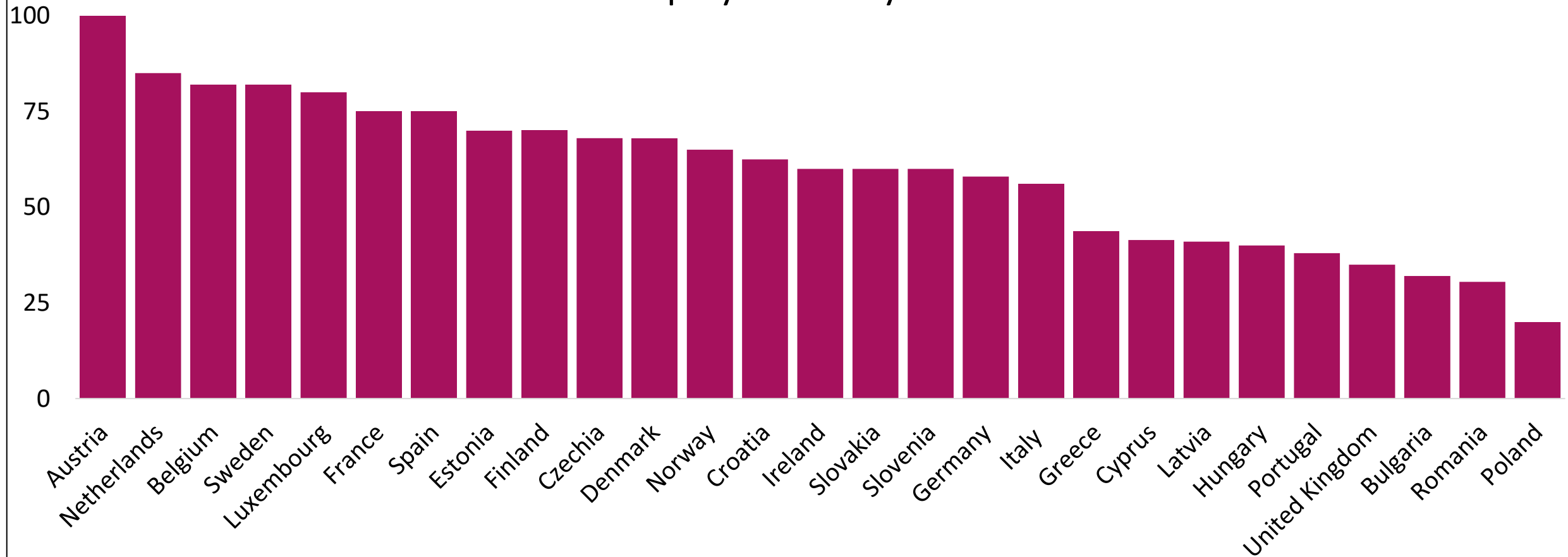
Bargaining capacity



Source: ICTWSS (2024) Figures for latest year available

Bargaining capacity

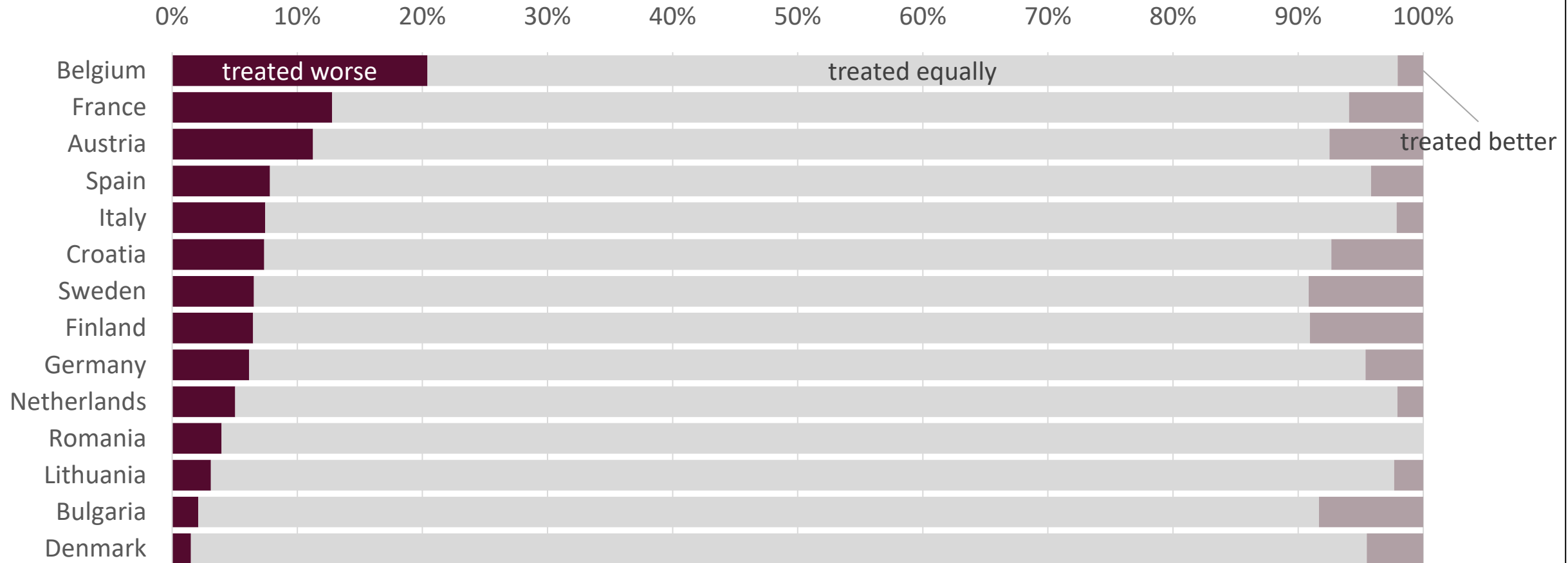
Employer density rate



Workers in firms organised in employers' organisations as a proportion of all workers in employment
Source: ICTWSS (2019). Figures for latest year available

Protection of employee representatives

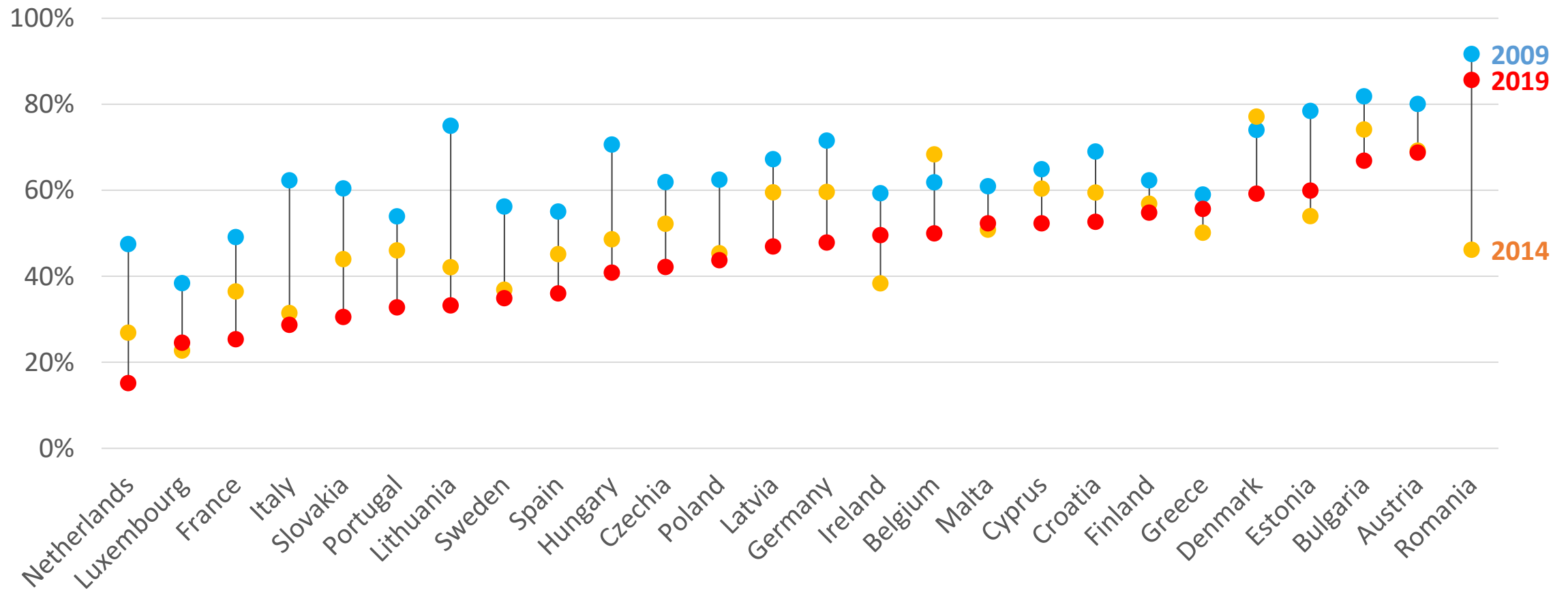
Employee representatives treated differently



Source: European Company Survey 2019 [ERTREAT], unweighted data. Only countries with more than 50 observations included

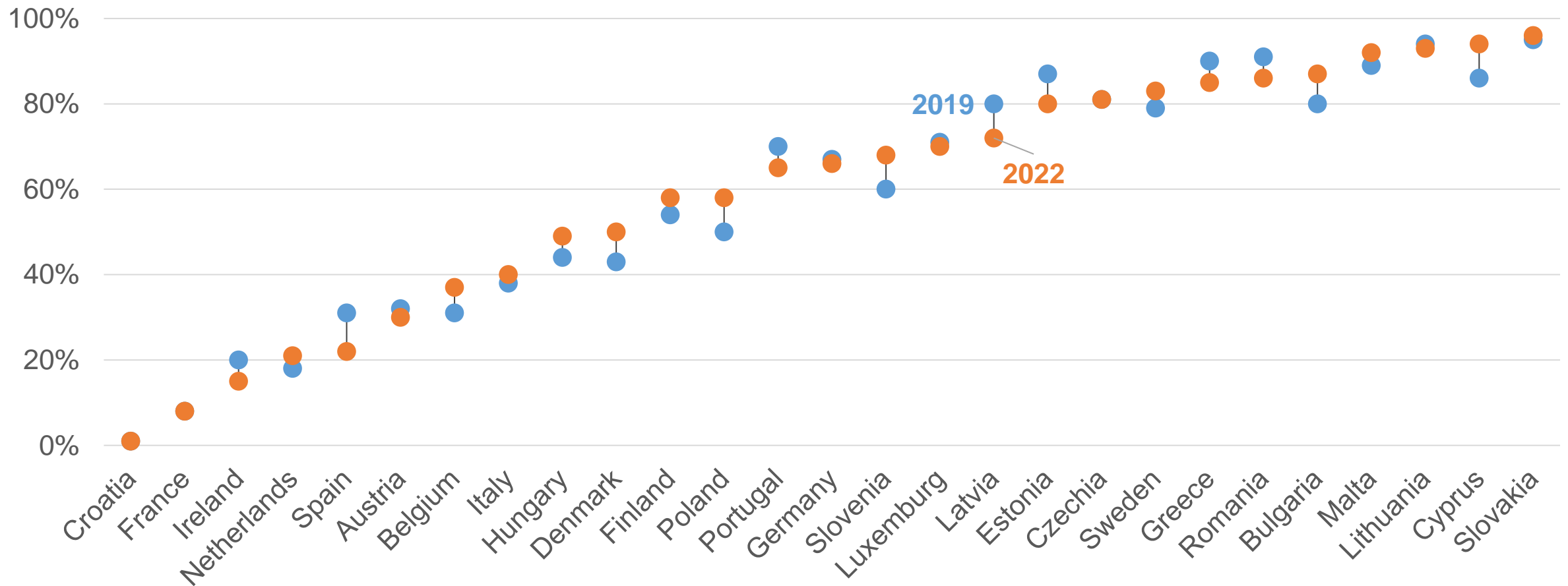
Inspection services

% establishments visited by labour inspection in the last three years in 2009, 2014 and 2019



Public procurement

% tenders awarded based solely on the lowest price in 2019 and 2022



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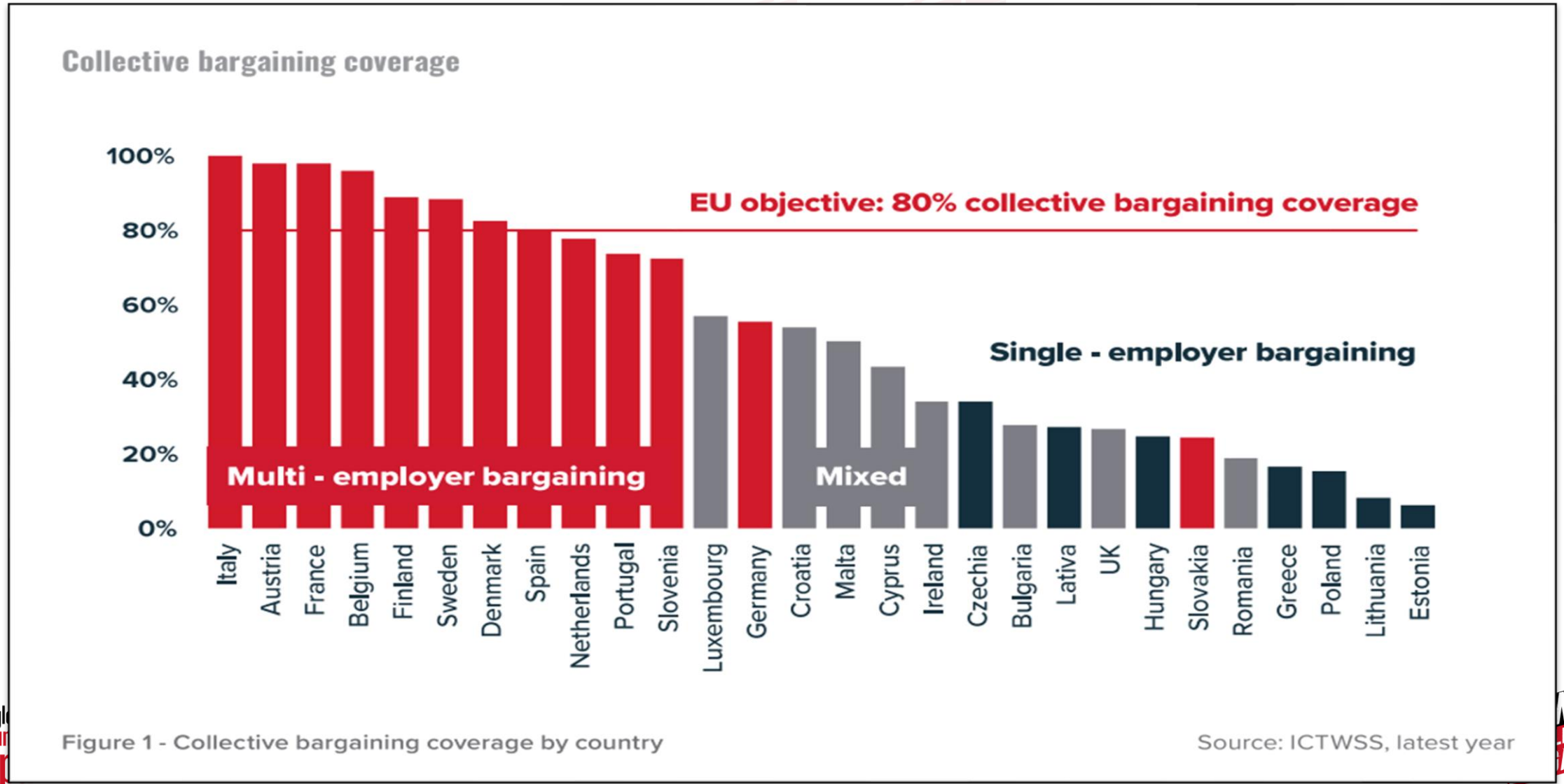
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Proposition 2:

Level-up!

Without some sort of multi-employer bargaining, 80% cannot be reached

MEB, a necessary condition



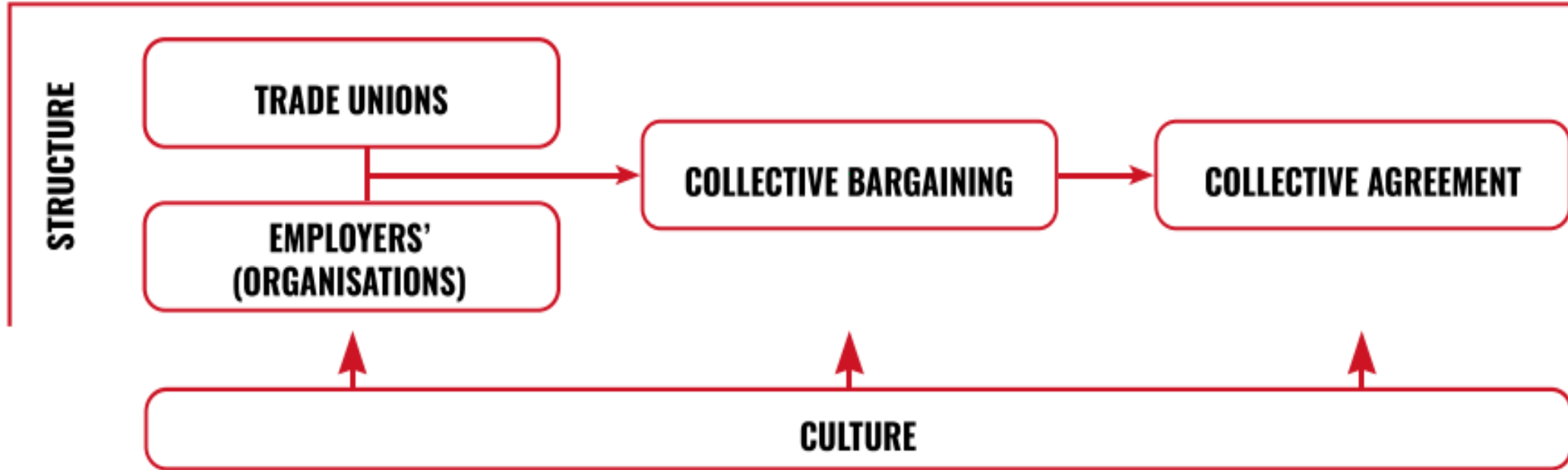
Proposition 3:

The roads to Rome

Increasing collective bargaining coverage
requires a global approach



There is no lack of ideas



Trade Unions

- Promotion of trade union capacity
 - Ghent system
 - Financial support
 - Trade union premium
 - Trade union default
 - Union only benefits
 - Solidarity fees
 - ...
 - But also: curb non-standard work



Employer Organisations

- Promotion of employer's capacity
 - Obligation to join an employer's organization
 - Financial / organizational support
 - Some advantages
 - Rules on bargaining mandate
 - ...

STRUCTURE



Collective bargaining process

- Good faith negotiation rules
- Data and information
 - Sectoral monitoring
 - Research calls
 - Civil servants assistance
- Bargaining infrastructure
- Mediation – arbitration
- Fair trade agreements
- Benefits conditional on collective bargaining
- Strike legislation



Collective agreements - effects

- Legal status
- Hierarchy of norms – favourability
- Extension policies
- Public procurement
 - E.g. Malta
- Inspection – labour courts



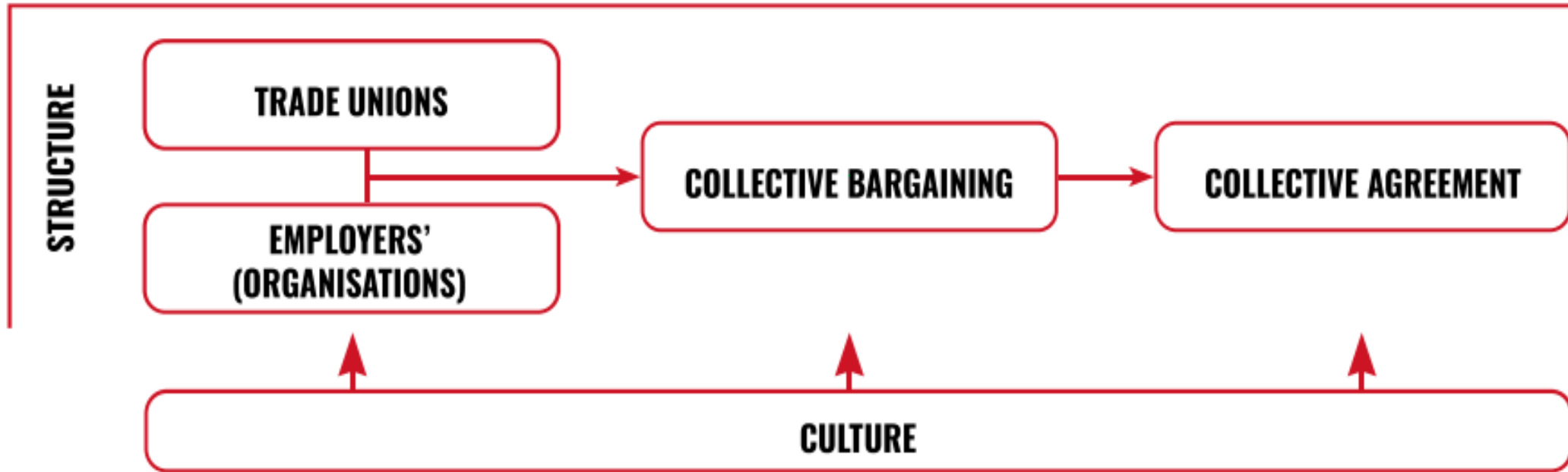
Culture

CULTURE

- Monitoring
- Campaigning
- Information
- Education
 - E.g. Slovenia



There is no lack of ideas

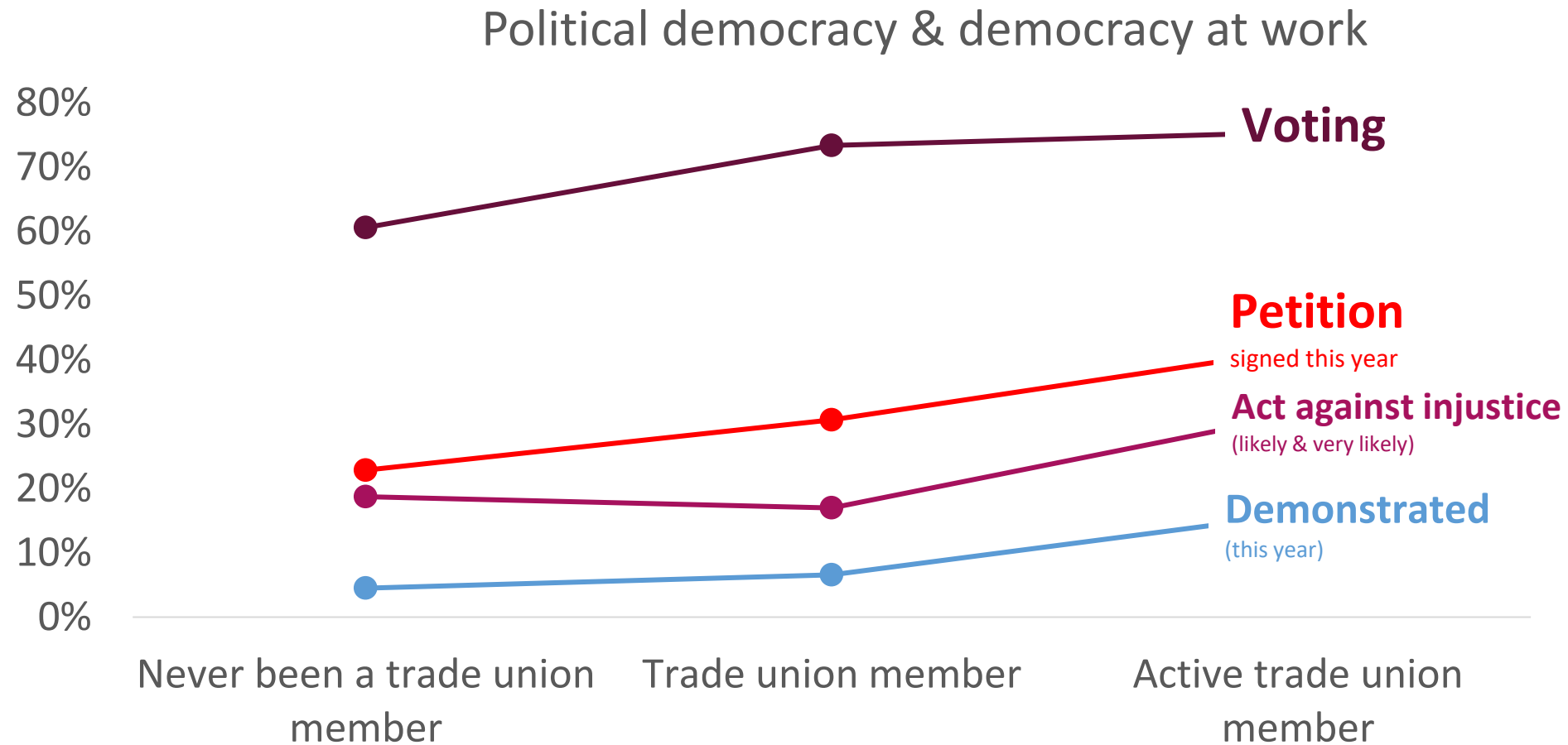


Proposition 4:

Don't be late!

Missing this window of opportunity might be threatening our democracies

Democracy is at stake



Source: ISSP 2014. Only EU countries selected plus Norway and Switzerland. unweighted data

Conclusion

There is no escape:

- all countries will have to act in transposing the Minimum Wage Directive

Level-up!

Without some sort of multi-employer bargaining, 80% cannot be reached

The many roads to Rome

Increasing collective bargaining coverage requires a global approach

Don't be late

Missing this window of opportunity might be threatening our democracies

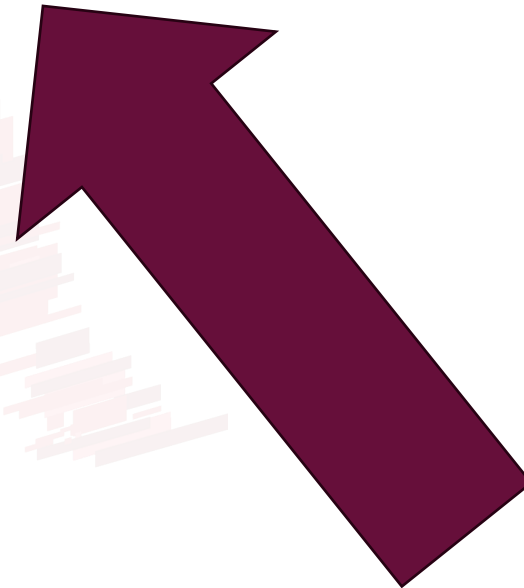


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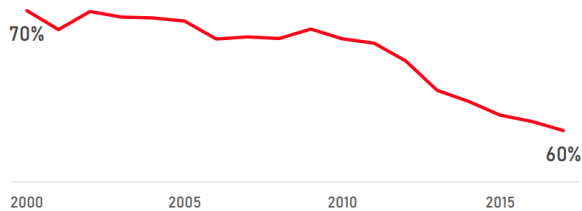
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