Systemic constraints of ET choices in Austria and the contradictory potentials of guidance/counselling

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Input: to ECER 2014 symposium
“Determinants of VET-Decisions in an international comparison”
Porto, Sept 2-5, 2014

questions

- How do **educational structures** interact with **guidance practices**?
  - Choices heavily tracked/restricted by **structural constraints**, **high demand GC**
  - 3 main **problems**: drop-out-production; sex/gender segregation, unjust distribution of opportunities to manage choice
  - **Fragmented guidance** structure, deficiencies very much criticised
  - **Questions**: how to find the limits of guidance vis-a-vis structural constraints? how much would improvement of choice need a change of structures? how could these questions be supported by evidence? which kind of evidence needed?

- What is the **role of policy** in this relationship?
  - Guidance a very high political priority in general, however, contested in detail

    *Paradox: Focus on **improved individual choice** (instead of structural constraints)*
  - Some policy discourses about moderately modifying the structure

    Diversity of opportunities commonly perceived as strength, some trend towards reduction of tracking
  - Overall very contradictory picture

- Interpretation: ‚**Cooling out**‘ as a plausible explanation for the contradictory, seemingly paradox constellation

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overview
system structure as frame for choices

- **Early selection at age 10** between general and academic track
- Strong **differentiation at age 15** between academic and vocational track, and between three levels of vocational (VET) programmes
  - Apprenticeship, medium VET schools, upper level VET colleges
- Very **high number of specific VET programmes** that must be chosen at age 15
  - Simultaneous choice of **level, sector, & specialisation**

    Easily reversible downwards, difficult to reverse upwards
  - Choice of programme **sectors**

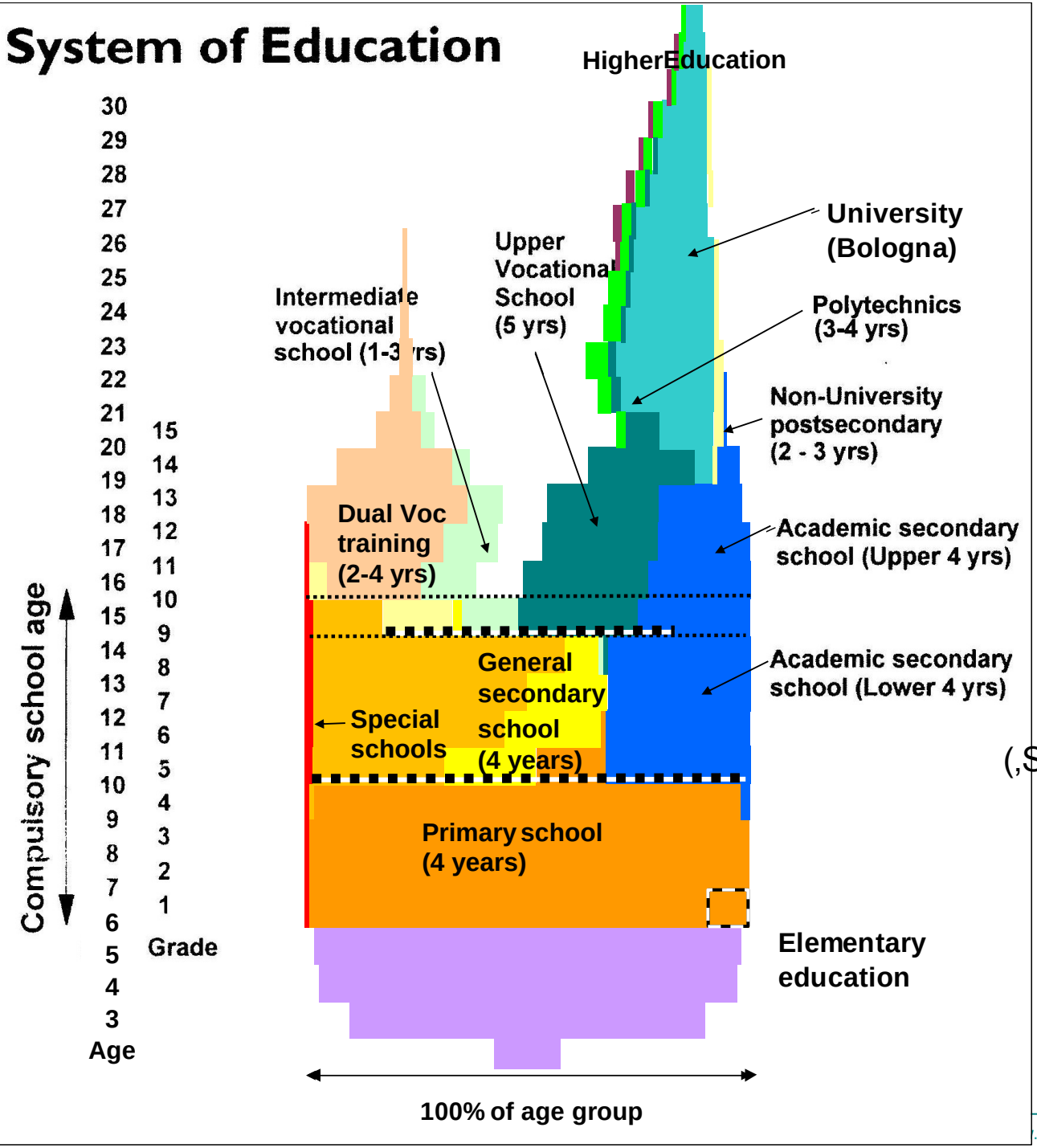
    Craft and industry, business services, personal services, agriculture, preprimary education, health occupations
  - Simultaneous choice of **specialisation**

    ~200 apprenticeships occupations

    ~50 VET school programmes

    ~50 VET college programmes
- Differentiated **higher education** (HE)
  - **Automatic access to university** from academic track and VET colleges
  - **Selective Polytechnics** (and probably education of general school teachers)

STRUCTURE



- …driven by **diversification** & **homogenisation**
- …children and young people selected into many small homogenous units (‚**Eintöpfe**‘)…
  - starting already with access to primary school (‚Schulreife‘ & Vorschulstufe)

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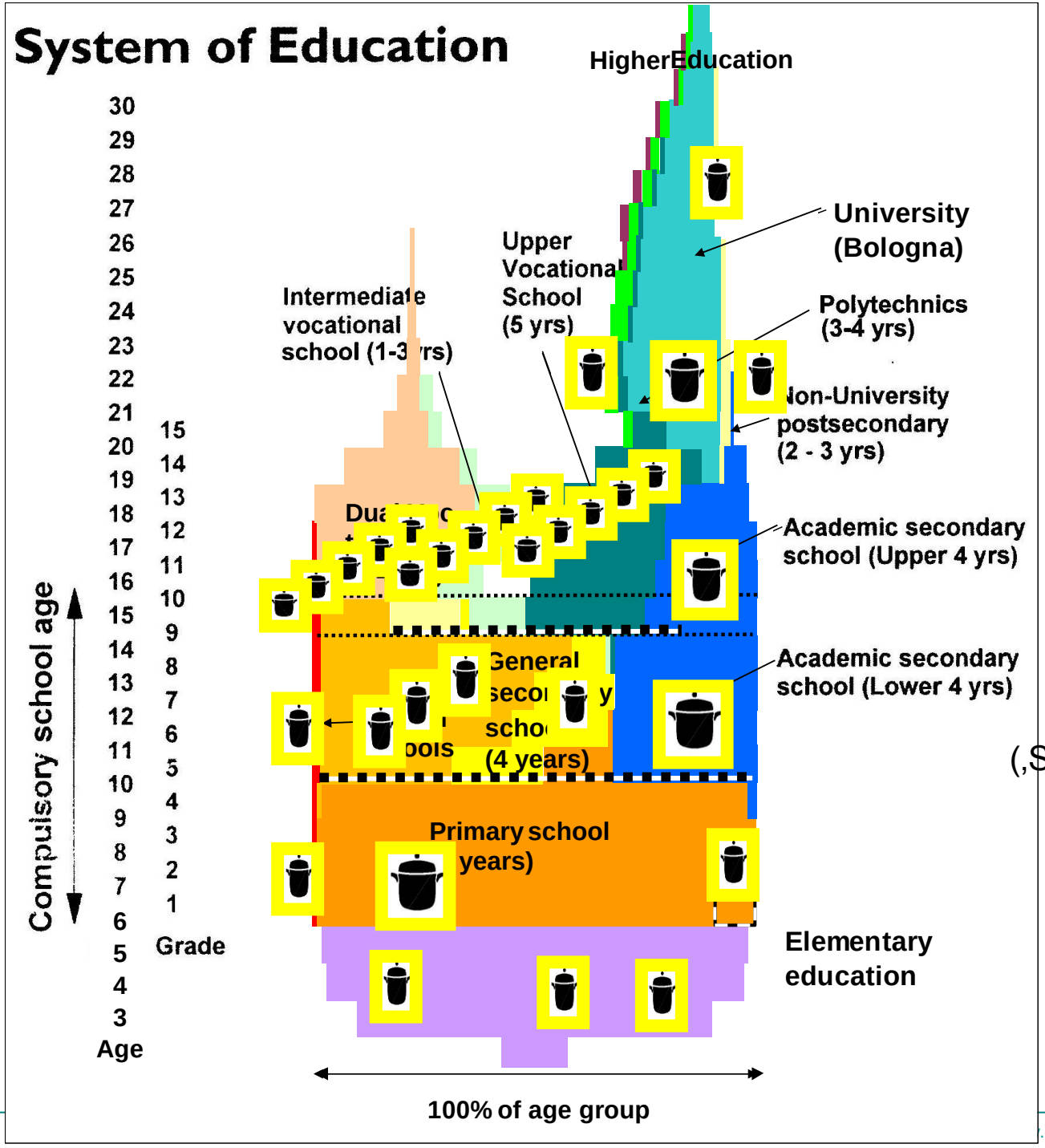

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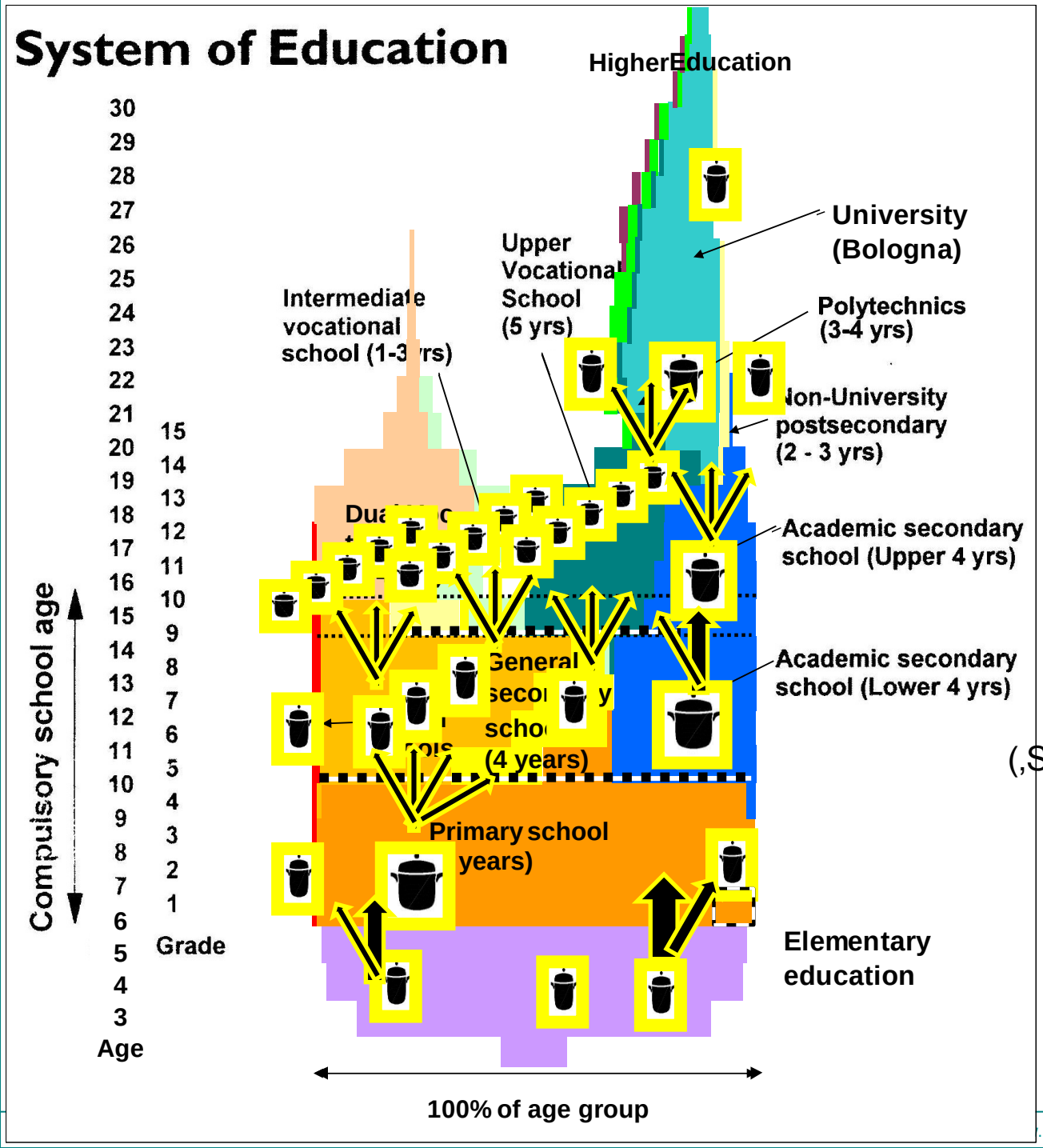

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- Structure produces many **transitions and choices**…

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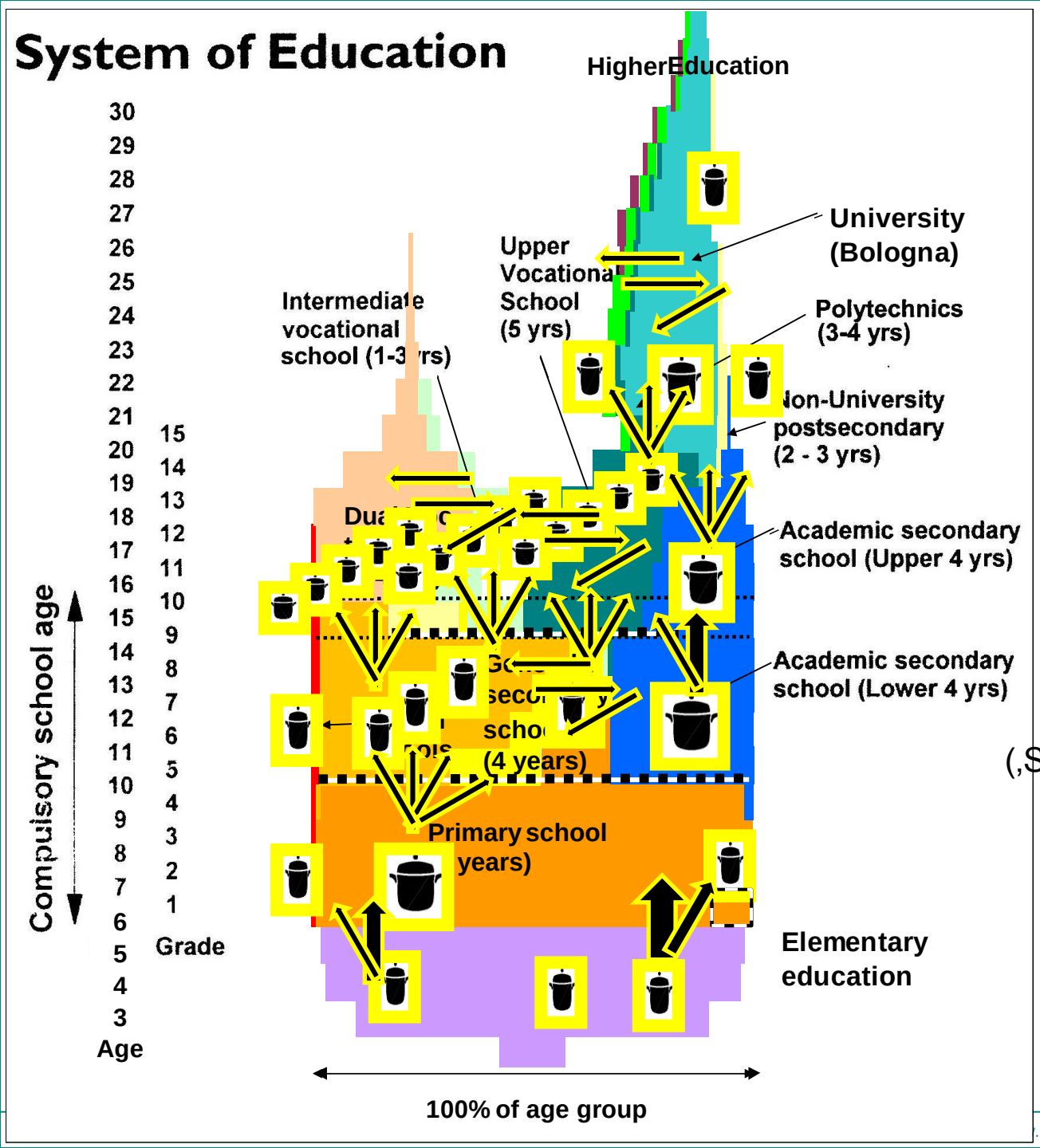

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basic logic of career process: contradictions of controlling and guiding an ‚upward drive‘

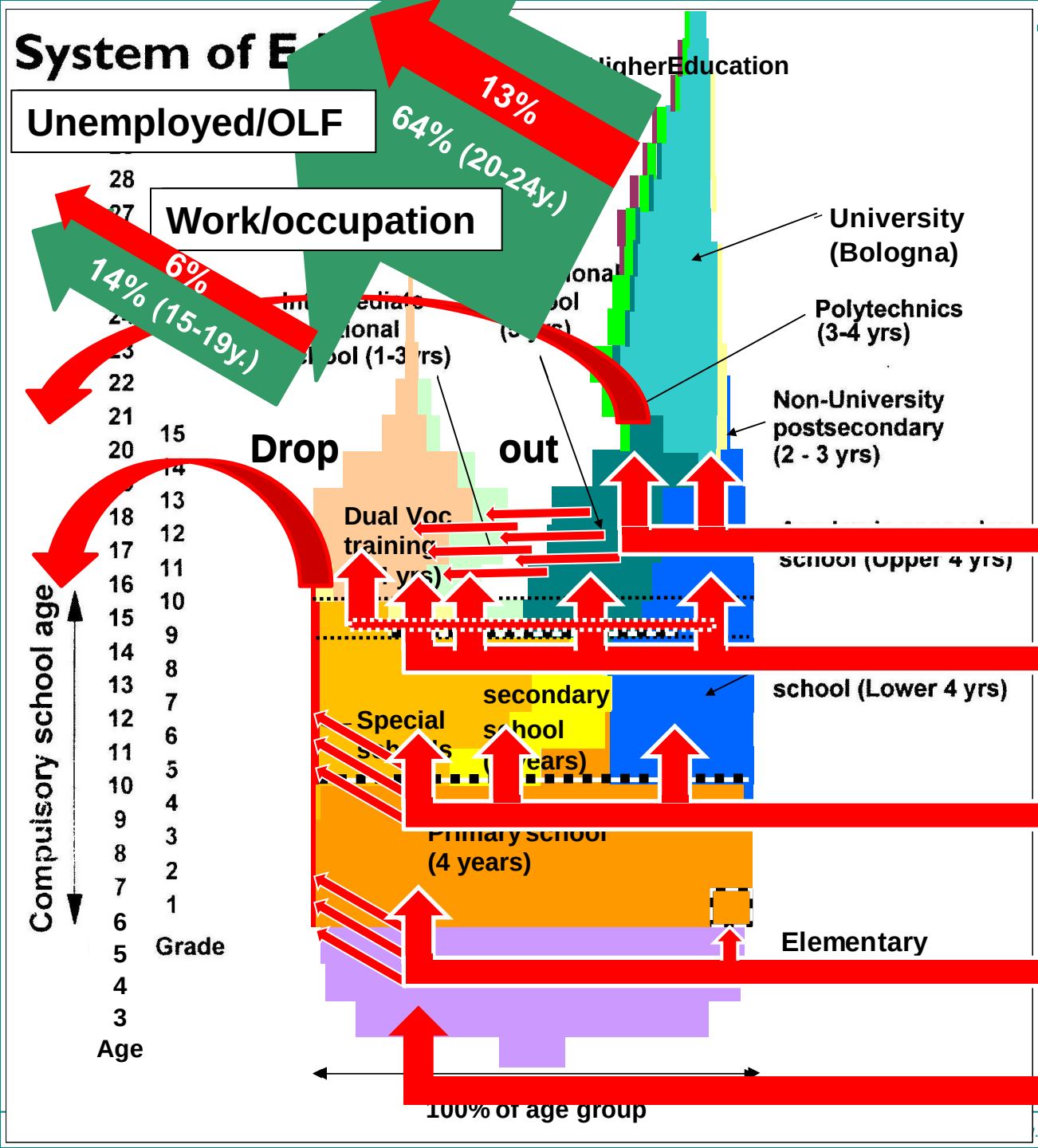
- hierarchically tracked system produces ‚upward drive‘ of aspirations

- this drive **must be inevitably managed**, which can be done differently, as a combination of active and passive selection
  - **active selection** (control of access points, requirements, tests, exams…)
  - **passive selection** (self selection during process)
  - intensity, quality of **support/threat mechanisms mediate** between active and passive selection

- **guidance/counselling** is a complement to selection, however, might seem as a separate acitivity, as the linkage might be hidden through organisation and rhetoric (*selection ‚bad‘, guidance ‚good‘*)
  - separate actors/identities, with specific perspectives
  - rhetoric of providing ‚positive‘ services of information, explanation, intermediation, brokerage, etc.

- but guidance/counselling can only be done **within given structures**, cannot transcend them (what can proper analysis do?)

TRANSITIONS



Tertiary education

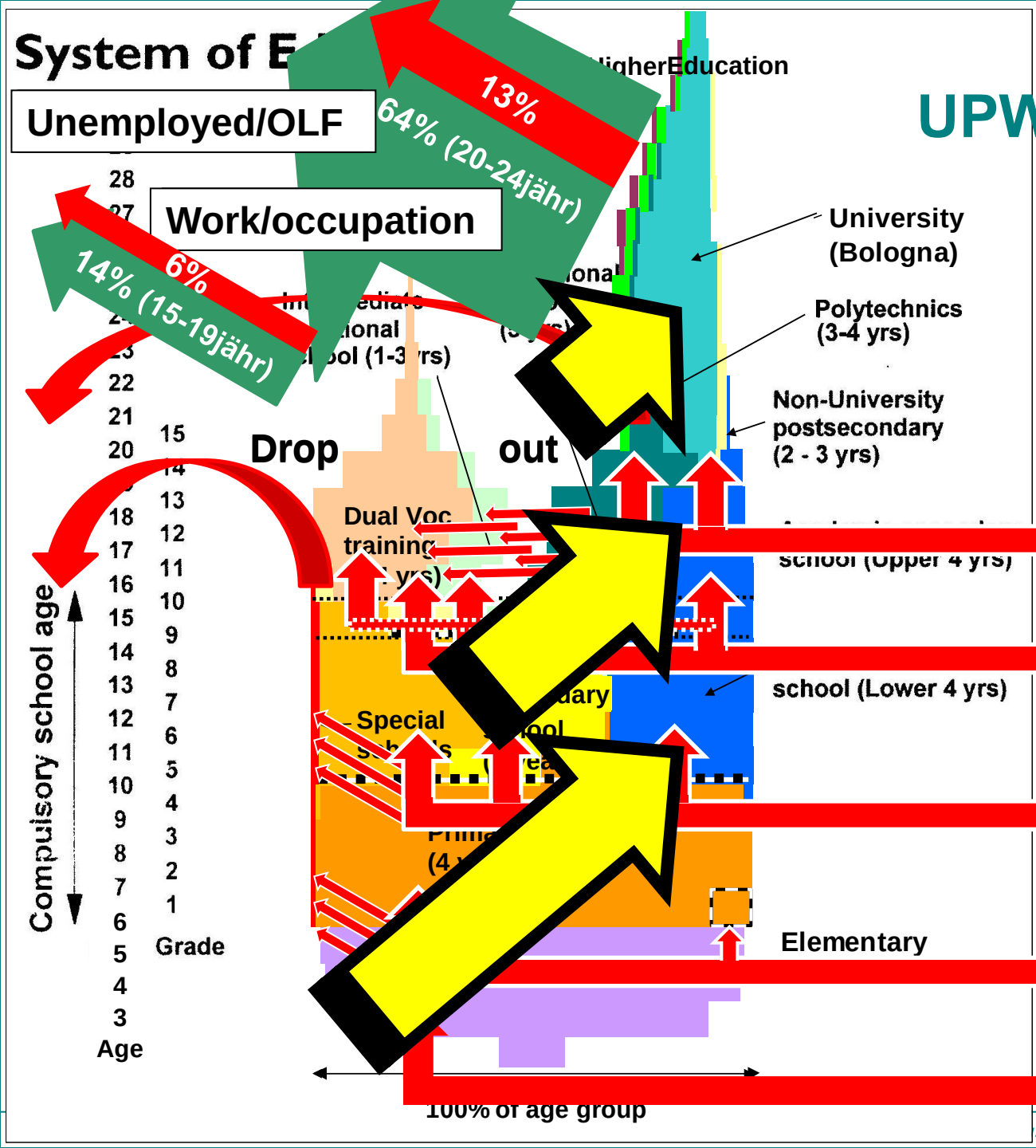
Upper secondary

Lower secondary

Primary education

Pre-school education

TRANSITIONS UPWARD DRIVE…



Tertiary education

Upper secondary

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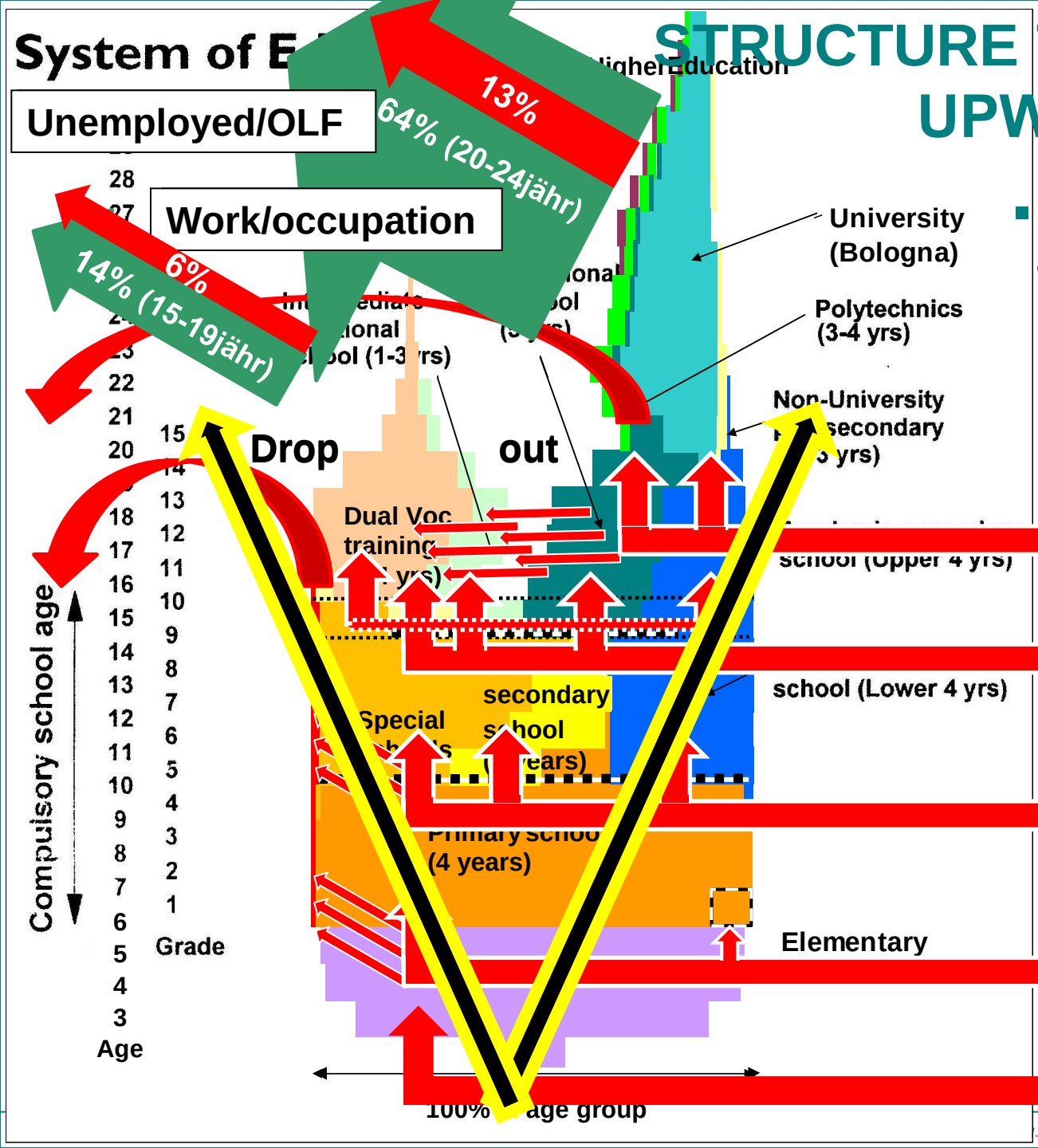
Primary education

Pre-school education

STRUCTURE TRANSITIONS UPWARD DRIVE…

- …multiplying points of decisions/choice…



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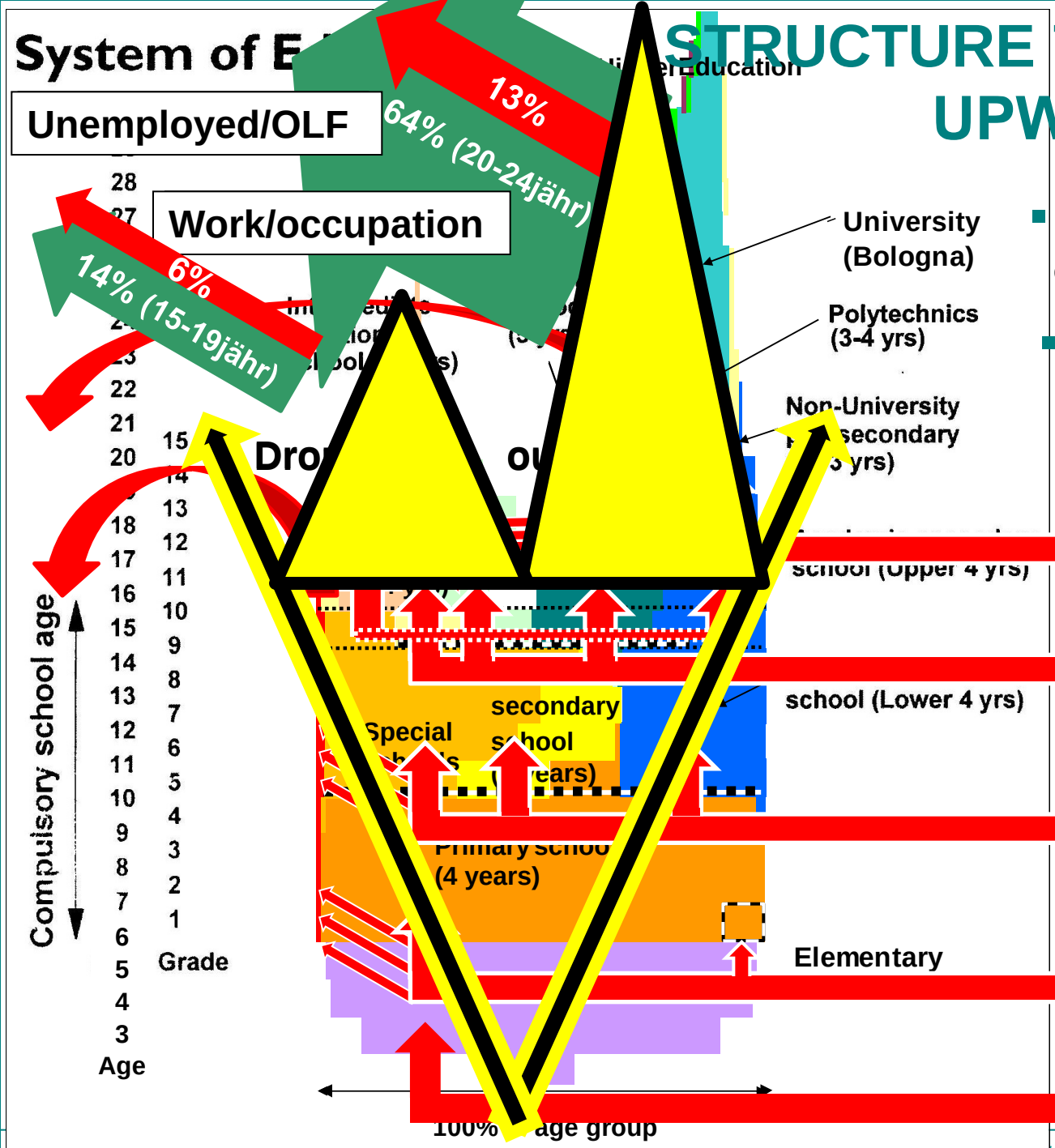


- …multiplying points of decisions/choice…
- …and narrowing of choosing population

Tertiary education

Upper secondary

Lower secondary

Primary education

Pre-school education

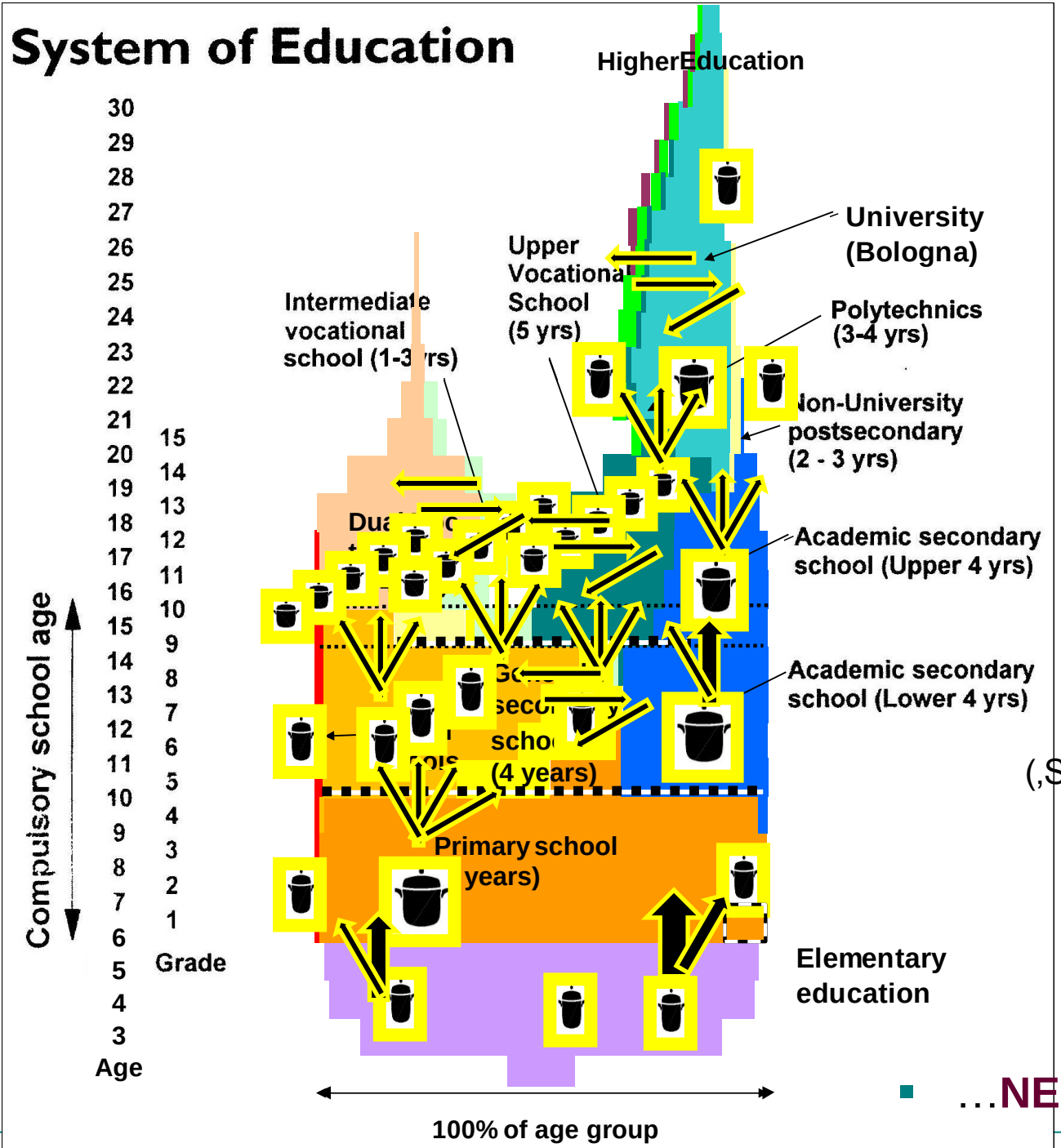
basic logic of career process: contradictions of controlling and guiding an ‚upward drive'

- Elements (building blocks) of the logic of the career process I: **PROGRESSION**
  - diverse structure of hierarchially distributed programmes/programme types
    originally/historically unrelated (parallel), embedded in different cultures/strata;
    increasingly moving nearer to earch other, creating relationships, increasingly competing;
    finally integrated within one system, structured by levels
  - basically provides incentive for families/students to try the (subjectively experienced) highest (most valuable) alternative (intrinsic interests potentials-extrinsic income-status)
    issue of perception (information, experience); external (signals of income, demand…) + internal (feedback, assessment, success-failure)
    issue of opportunities (accessability, transparency, treatment)
    issue of resources (absolute wealth, relative to costs)
  - provides also opportunities for access (dynamic of restrictions-opportunities)
    primary school orientation towards credentials for access to ‚elite' track
    lower secondary orientation towards acceptance by ‚elite' track (A-track, 1st achivement group…)
    upper secondary vocational upper level institutions competing with ‚elite' track by effectively providing university access
    9th grade transition machinery: choice of full-time school within compulsory education, choice of apprenticeship 1 year later

basic logic of career process: contradictions of controlling and guiding an ‚upward drive'

- Elements (building blocks) of the logic of the career process II: **GC**
  - governance rather through **achievement/assessment** than **accessability-restriction**
    - *accessability mostly driven by entitlements from ‚sending , institution, receiving institution has to accept (exception: polytechnics in HE; at other stages tests/eams widely cancelled or loosened)*
    - *tracked system politically under conflict, assessment procedures are main instrument of steering/governing careers, therefore seem deeply compromised:, very little correlation between marks and external testing*
    - *contradictory signals concerning assessment: on the one hand socially upward bias, on the other hand support of socially disadvantaged persons (probably reflect different political stances in the system)*
  - in effect **loose empirical relation between progression and achievement**, positive bias towards access, however, subsequently high drop out
    - *roughly only half of beginner in vocational schools complete in time*
  - drop outs do not leave the system, but step down the hierarchy, mostly from upper level vocational schools into apprenticeship
    - *thus in effect there is much downward mobility, but little complete drop out without any credentials*
  - **task charged from guidance in this system**
    - *reorientation of choices towards apprenticeship to increase supply and to reduce drop out*

GUIDANCE



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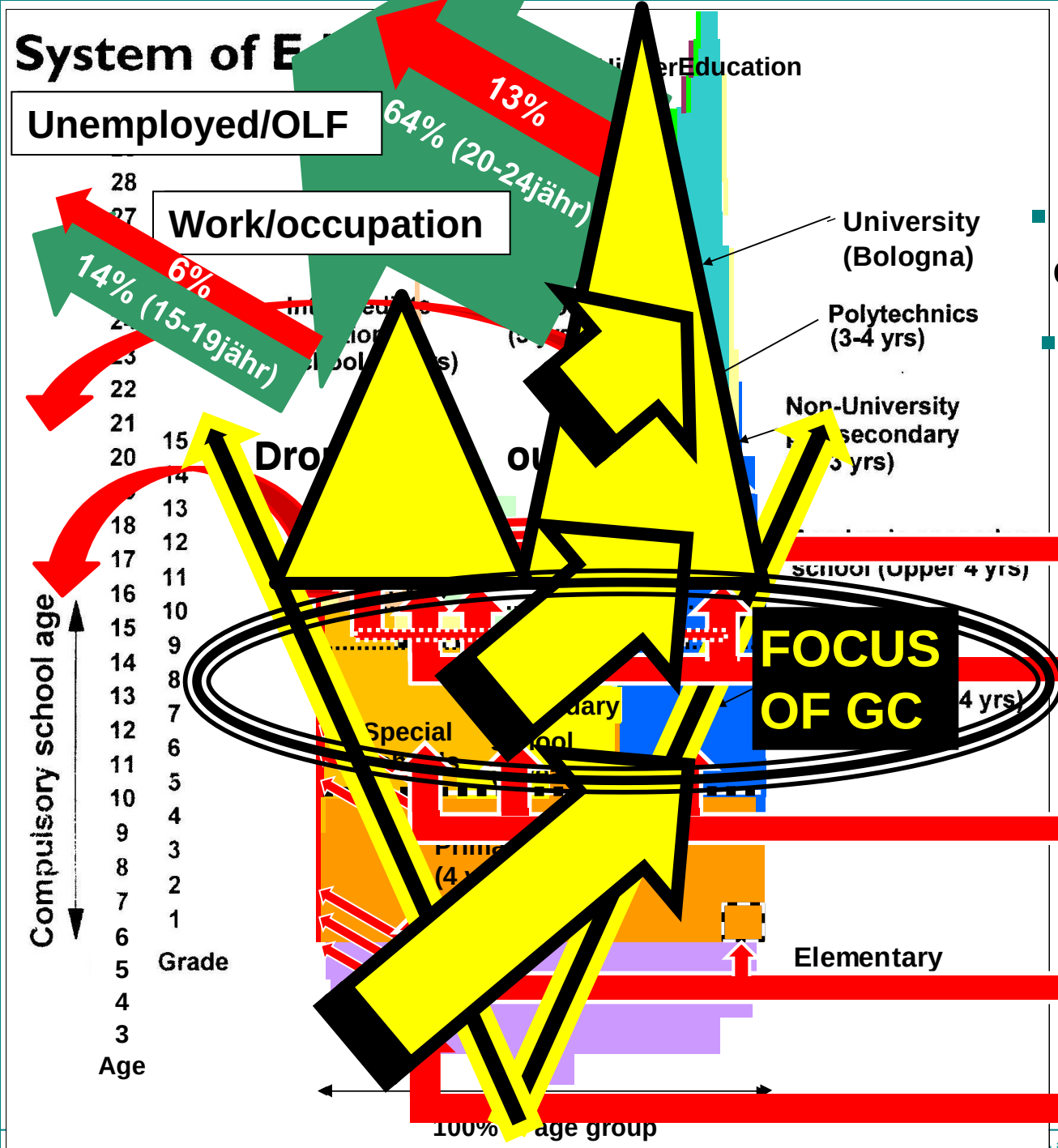
- Structure produces many **transitions and choices**…
- …**NEED FOR GUIDANCE**

GUIDANCE



- …multiplying points of decisions/choice…
- …and narrowing of choosing population

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Upper secondary

Lower secondary

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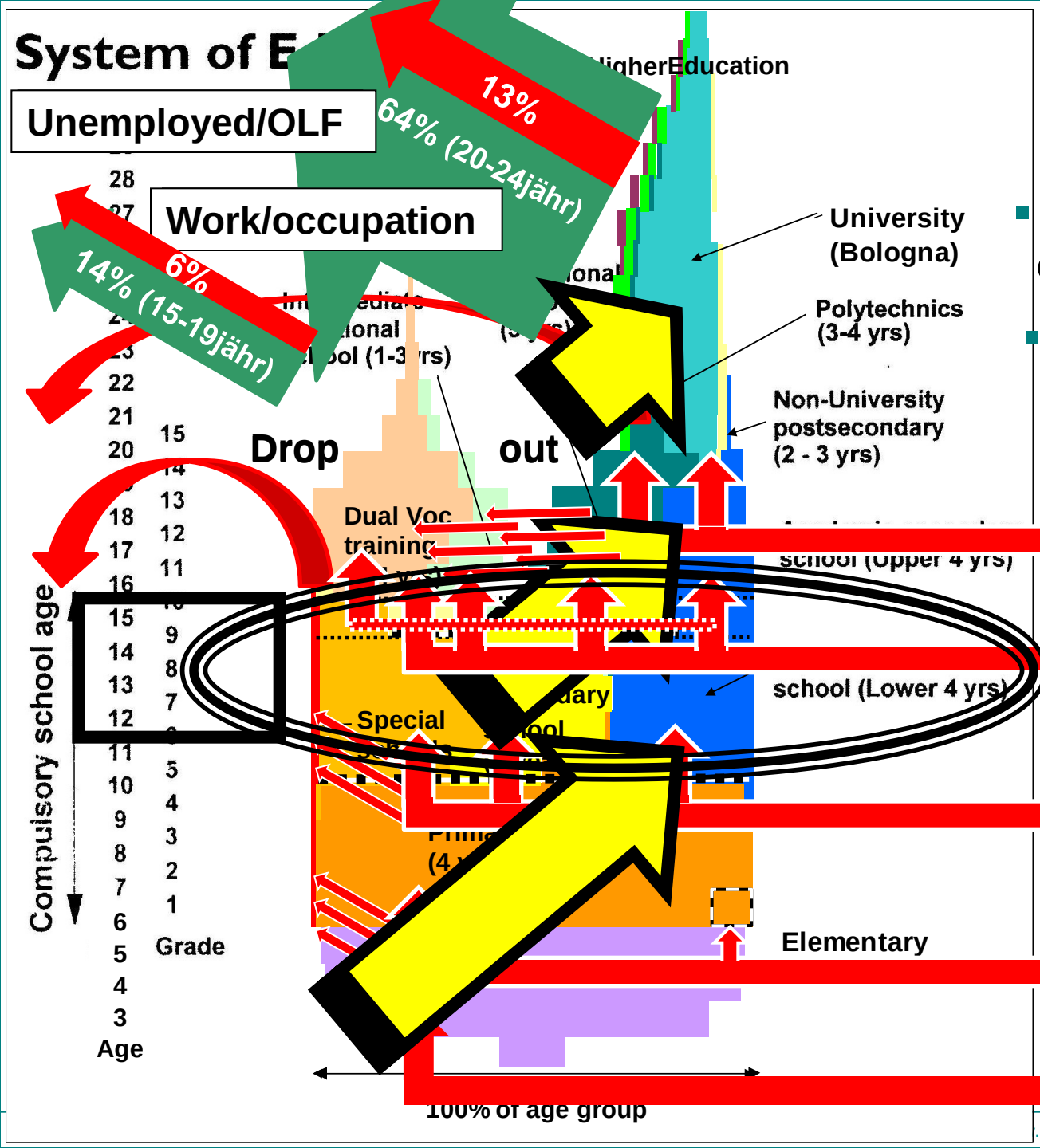
GUIDANCE



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overview
guidance and counseling (GC)

- Traditionally two different approaches of GC
  - **School-based: teachers** with special responsibilities, and partly training, and school psychologists
  - **Out-of-school**: differentiated and fragmented supply by public employment service (PES), social partners, and professional services
  - Those **‚systems' are separate**, the second correcting ‚errors' of the first
- The school-based system is comprehensive on paper, but questionable in practice
  - Empirical indications
- **GC policy is led by the stakeholders of the school-based system**, in particular by school psychology
  - A ‚lifelong guidance strategy' is creating illusions about the potentials of GC
- **Out-of-school GC** has mainly supplementary & corrective functions
  - To supply sources of information
  - To correct erroneous choices made during the school career

    *by providing additional **GC services** for unsuccessful young people*

    *by providing corrective and supplementary **programmes in labour market policy** (LMP)*
  - In LMP an **additional selection mechanism** for the ‚selected out' is established

comparative analysis
is Austrian GC „strong“ according needs?

- **ANALYSIS**
  PISA-data include information about guidance by principals

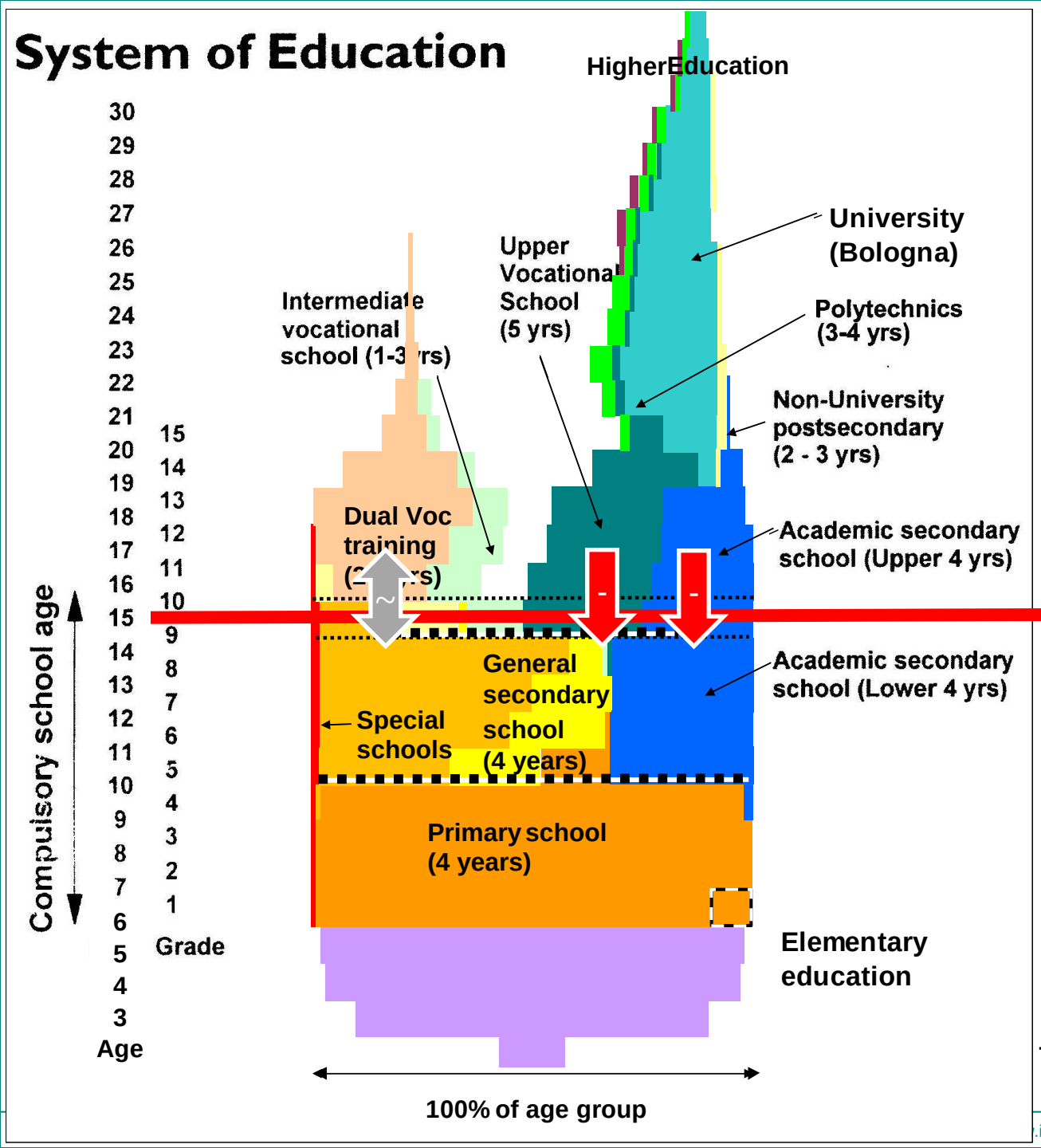
- **RESULTS**

- quantitatively: average+

- qualitatively: less compulsory, less professionalised

- In sum: does not reflect high degree of needs produced by structure

ANALYSIS



- PISA 2006 comparative information
  - about GC-practices
  - quality of choice
- Quantitative GC by school types
  - apprenticeship verage
  - upper level schools low

comparative analysis
is Austrian GC „typical“?

- The Austrian ET model comprises…
  - …more **enterprise training (apprenticeship)** and more **business dominated curricula** (VET schools and colleges)
  - …less preparation to tertiary pathways
- Austria uses **all** GC instruments **slightly above average** …
  - consistent in quantitative terms with a „prediction“ that the system would need much GC because of its high ‚choice intensity‘
- …however uses **more teachers** and less professionals, and GC is slightly **less compulsory** than average…
  - not consistent with „prediction“ in qualitative terms
  - poses a question for understanding
- …and a substantially **higher proportion** of students is served neither by teachers nor by professionals
  - 18% in Austria vs. 4% OECD average
  - 1 out of 4 students is not served by any instrument…1 out of 4 students is not served by any, and 40% are served well
  - in particular in apprenticeship gc on average
  - in academic schools and upper level vocational schools low gc intensity

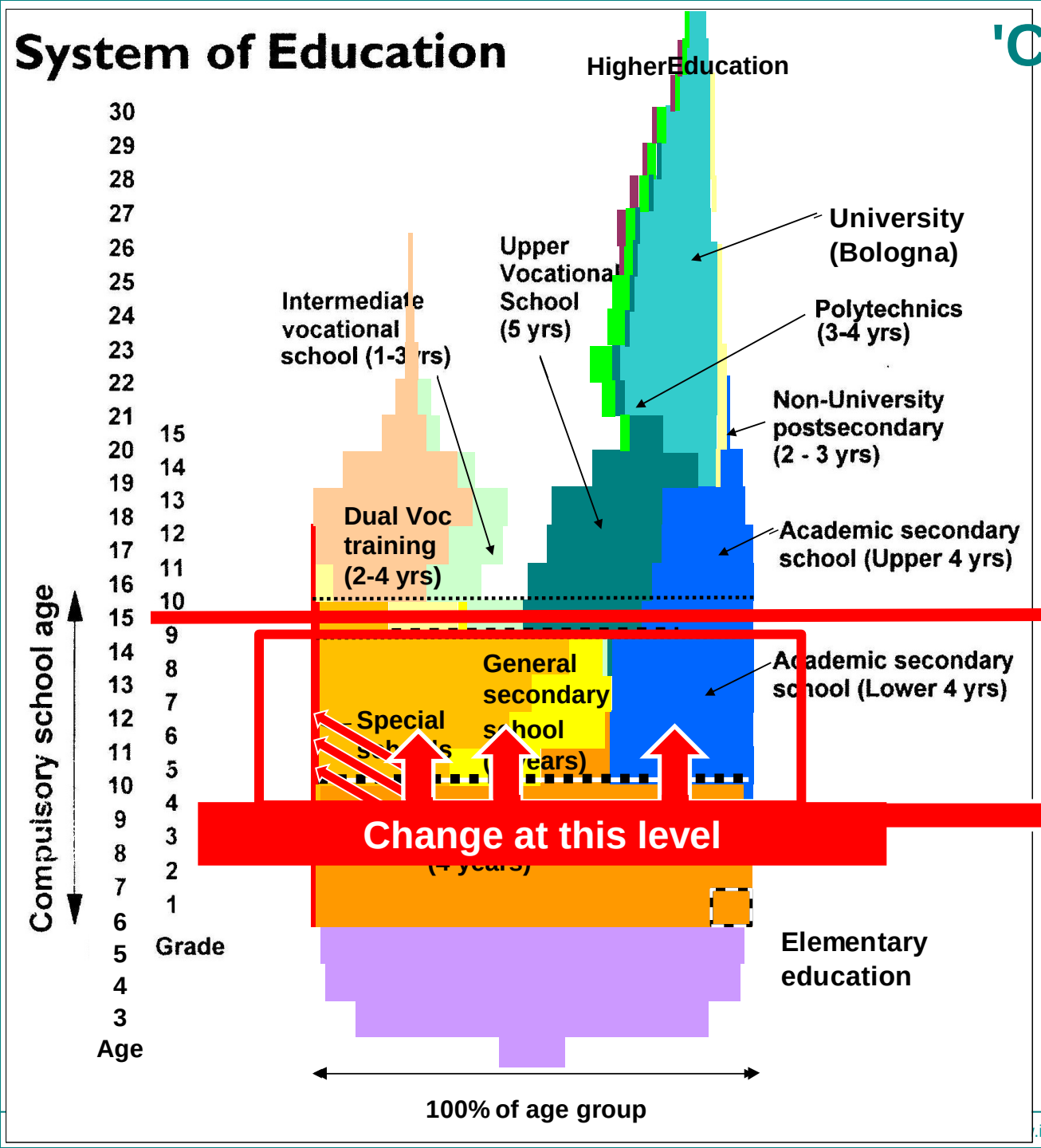
contradictory picture and policy response

- Overall: high demand for GC, medium to low supply in quantitative and qualitative terms
- Consequently high political priority given to GC (‚Lifelong Guidance Strategy‘)
- Strongly directed towards improving individual competencies for choosing the right alternative
- Disputed
  - improvement of quality of voluntary activities vs. strong compulsory measures
  - teacher responsibility and enforcement vs. external (professional) interventions
  - key topic: drop out prevention or cure
  - structural proposals focused on transition between compulsory and postcompulsory education

    attempts toward external assessment + counseling and integrating transition permit/right into assessment

    belief in testing

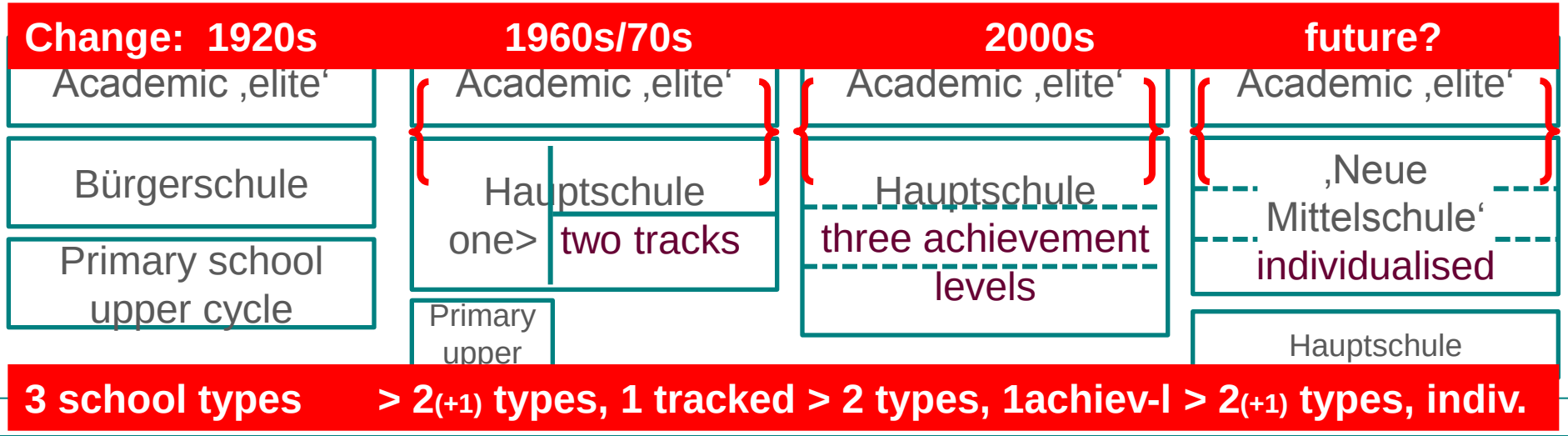
'COOLING OUT'



- Gradual change from tracking to self-selection

logic of cooling out as an interpretation?

- Cooling out: self-selection supported by guidance instead of predetermined tracking
- Long-term structural changes + priority for guidance in this direction
- Tracking at lower secondary level changed…
  - from three tracks as schooltpyes until 1920s…
  - to two (+one) schooltpyes including three tracks until 1970/80s
  - to two schooltypes including 2 tracks including 3 achievement levels until 2000s
  - to two tracks with internal differentiation currently into the future

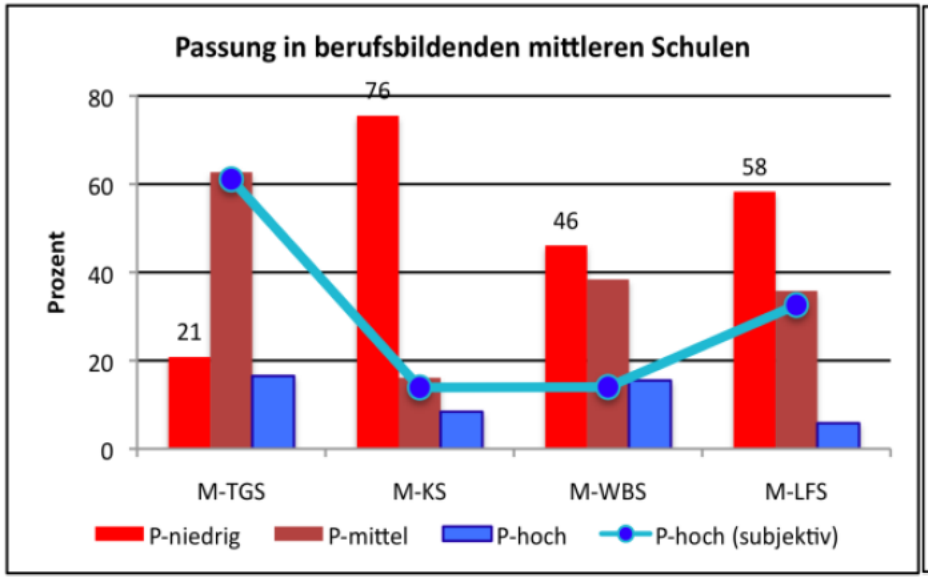


evidence for limits of guidance vis-a-vis structural constraints?

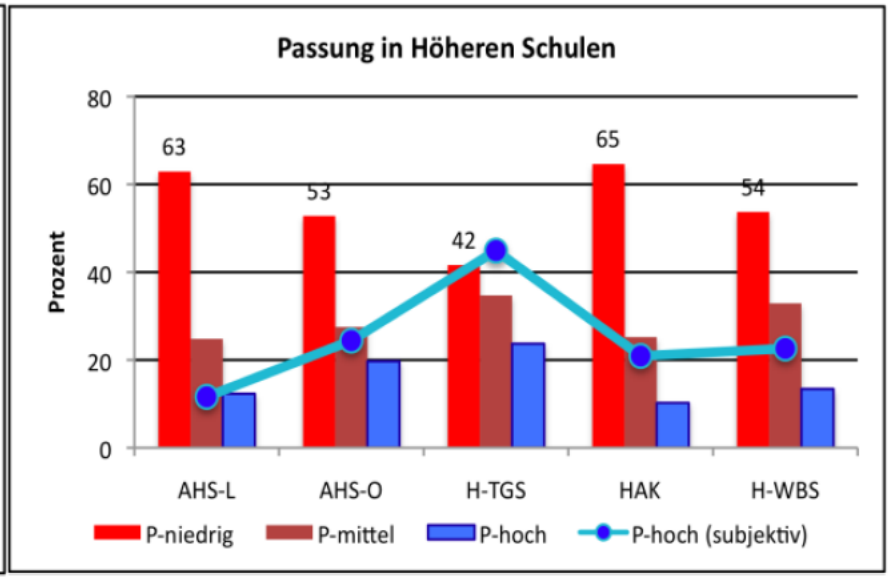
- how to find evidence for ‚good choice'? to which degree can comparative data be used for this purpose?
- attempt 1 (‚objective'): holland model of occupational-interest types confronted to choice of broad vocational school alternatives > degree of mismatch
- attempt 2 (‚subjective'): young people ‚grade' their choices in retrospect
- question: which proportion of ‚mistakes' can be expected?

Eder, fit in objective terms (Holland Model of interest-profiles)

- Medium level schools



upper level schools



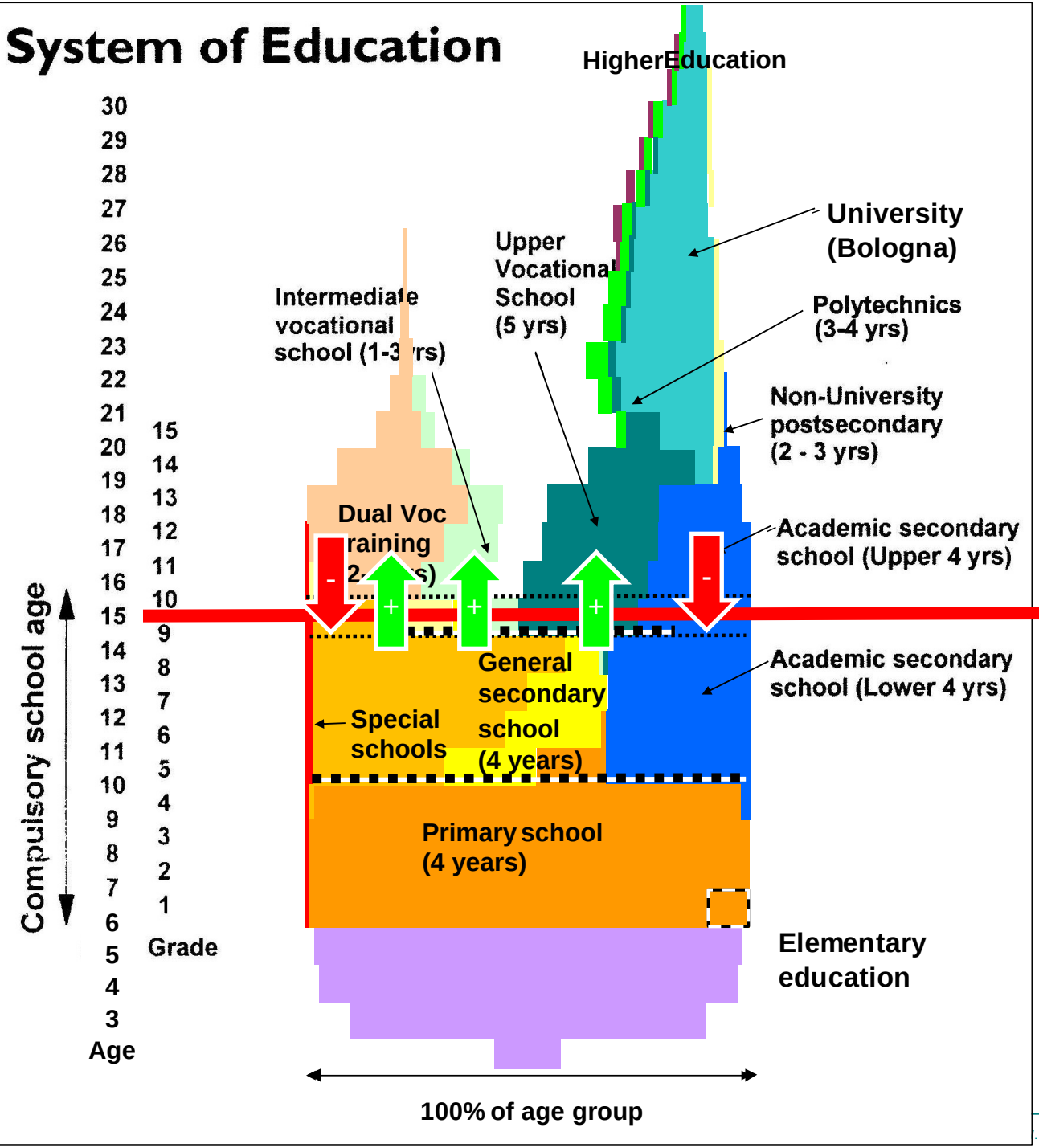
Anmerkungen: Eingetragen ist der Prozentsatz der Schüler/innen, der auf die unterschiedlichen Kongruenzstufen (P-niedrig, P-mittel, P-hoch) entfällt. Zusätzlich ist der Prozentsatz der Schüler/innen ausgewiesen, die angeben, dass die Schule ihren Interessen „ganz genau“ entspricht (P-hoch(subjektiv)).

M-TGS Mittlere Technisch-gewerbliche Schulen; M-WBS Mittlere wirtschafts- und sozialberufliche Schulen; M-KS Mittlere Kaufmännische Schulen; M-LFS Mittlere land- und forstwirtschaftliche Schulen. AHS-L AHS-Langform; AHS-O HS-Oberstufenform; H-TGS Höhere technisch-gewerbliche Schulen; H-WBS Höhere wirtschafts- und sozialberufliche Schulen; HAK Höhere Kaufmännische Schulen (Handelsakademien).

subjective information about choice

- Descriptive **information based on PISA**, cross-section at age 15
  - Rating of students about four aspects: abilities, interests, right choice, repetition of choice
- Does the programme accessed corespond to **abilities**?
  - **35%++** / 53%~+ / **12%-**
- Does the programme accessed corespond to **interests**?
  - **33%++** / 52%~+ / **15%-**
- Has the **right choice** been taken?
  - **41%++** / 45%~+ / **14%-**
- Would the choice be **repeated**?
  - **37%++** / 36%~+ / **27%-**
- Index: **average of those indicators**
  - Less than 2/5 (36%) definitely good choice at age 15
  - More than 2/5 (46%) rather positive rating
  - Less than 1/5 (17%) rather negative rating or definitely bad choice
- Differences by school types
  - Prep S, academic upper sec S ⇩; Apprenticeship, VET Schools, Colleges ⇧

ANALYSIS



- PISA 2006 comparative information
  - about GC-practices
  - quality of choice
- Quality of choice
  - Prep S, academic upper sec S ⇩ apprenticeship, VET Schools, Colleges ⇧

question: how to judge the figures?

- Which proportion of ‚good choices' can we expect as a basic ‚theoretical' distribution (Benchmark)?
  - 50/50?
  - 33/33/33
- Which proportion of ‚good choices' can be taken as aim of guidance policy?
  - 100/0?
- How can the aim of a ‚good' distribution be legitimated?
  - What is a feasible distribution of responsibilities?
  - What follows, when the opportunity structure is generated by public policy?
- What does the empirical distribution indicate?
  - 36/46/17
  - What is a ‚good choice'? ‚Exactly' (36%) or also ‚somewhat' (36+46=82%)

‚determinants‘

- structural constraints
- social background
- gendered choice
- access conditions
- assessment/achievement
- guidance/counselling

- individual...
  - preferences
  - potentials
  - interests
  - abilities

How to judge relationship?

What can surveys really tell us?

‚distances‘ between groups in comparative perspective?

amount of ‚false‘ choices and corrections (‚permeability‘)

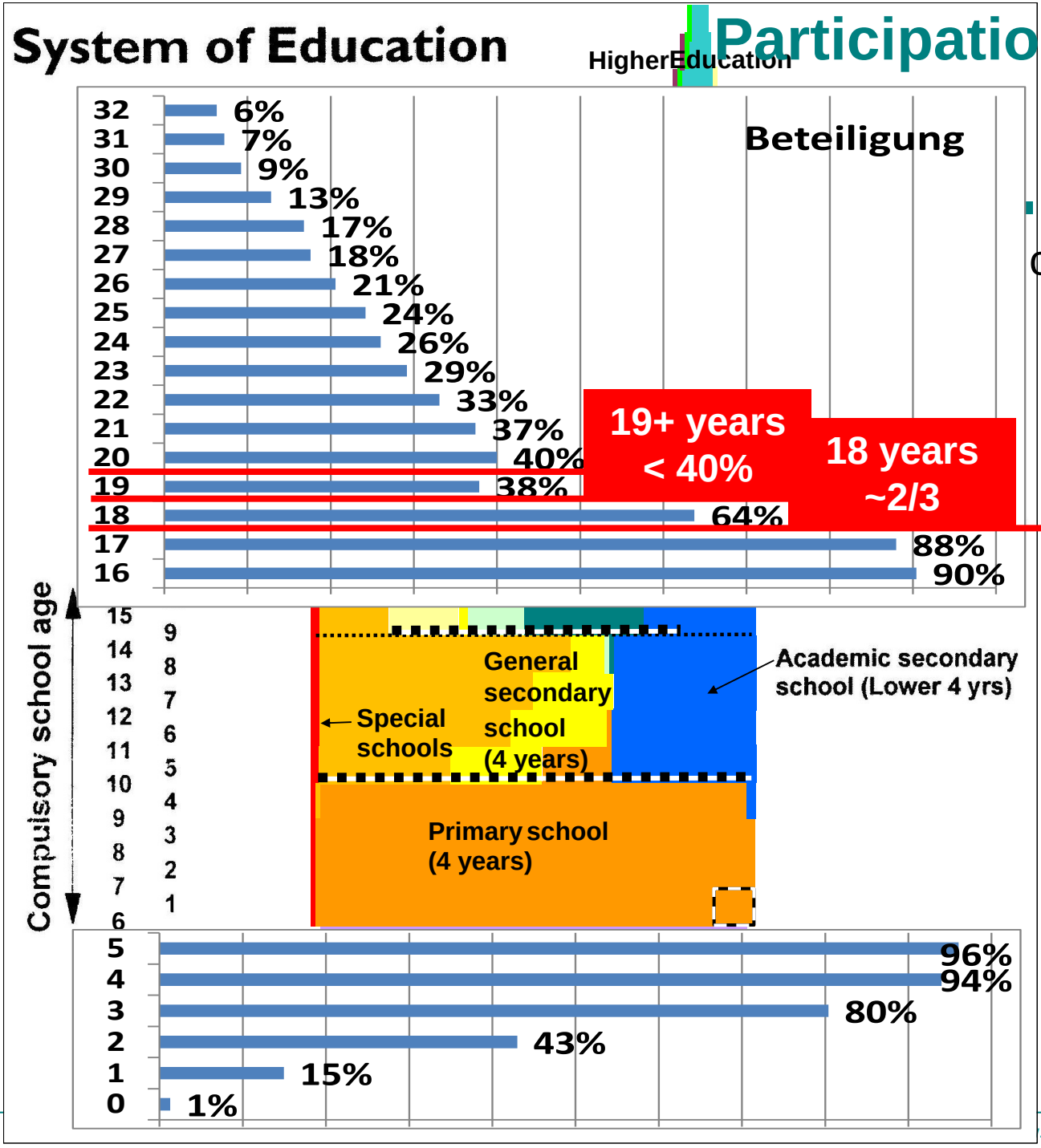
beliefs of researchers in structural vs. choice component (‘inequality‘)

The End

Material

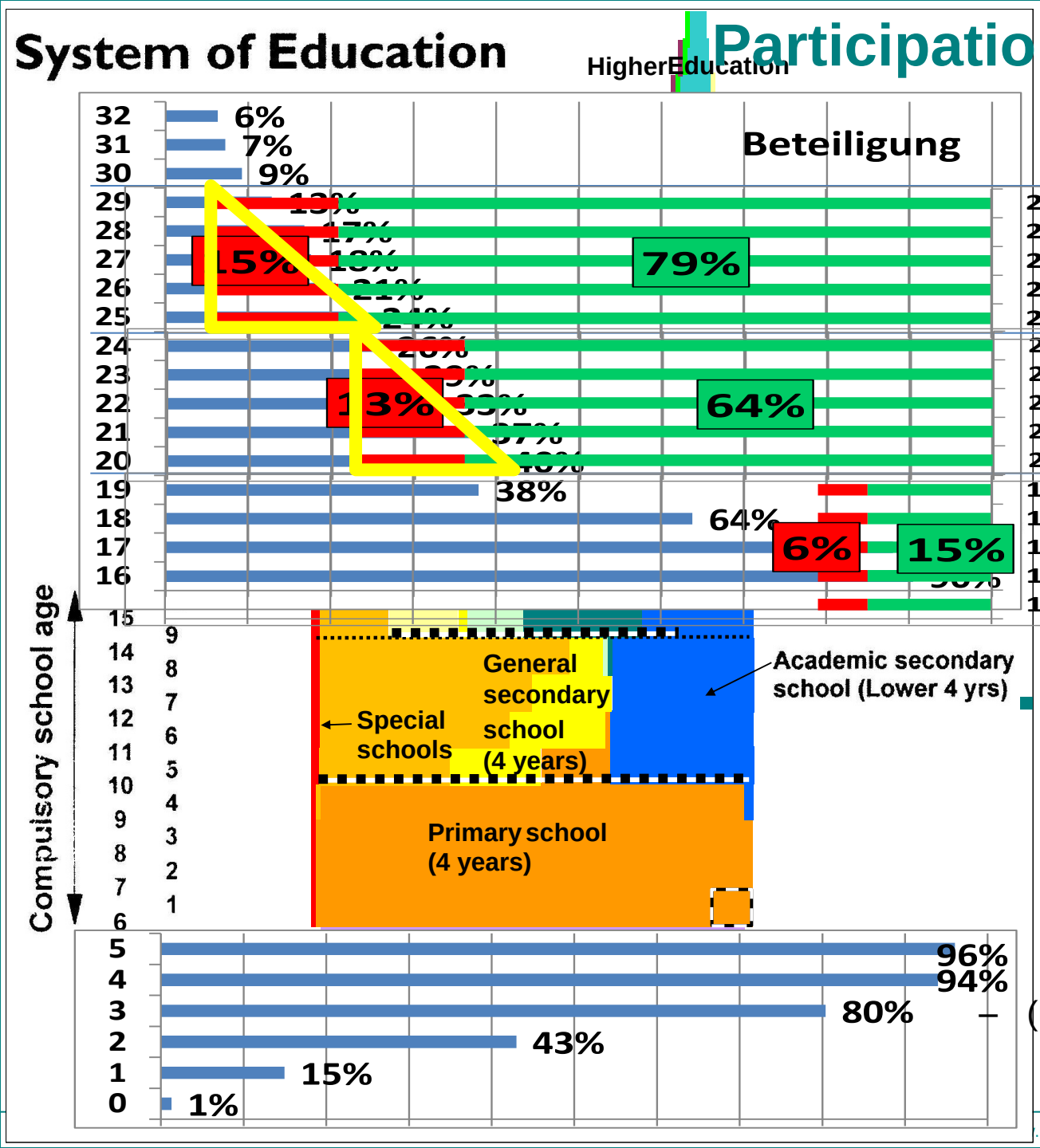
ANNEX data

Participation in education



- Quickly going down compulsory education until age 19…
  - …then slower

Participation employment



employed unemployed

25-29 years
79% 15%

20-24 years
64% 13%

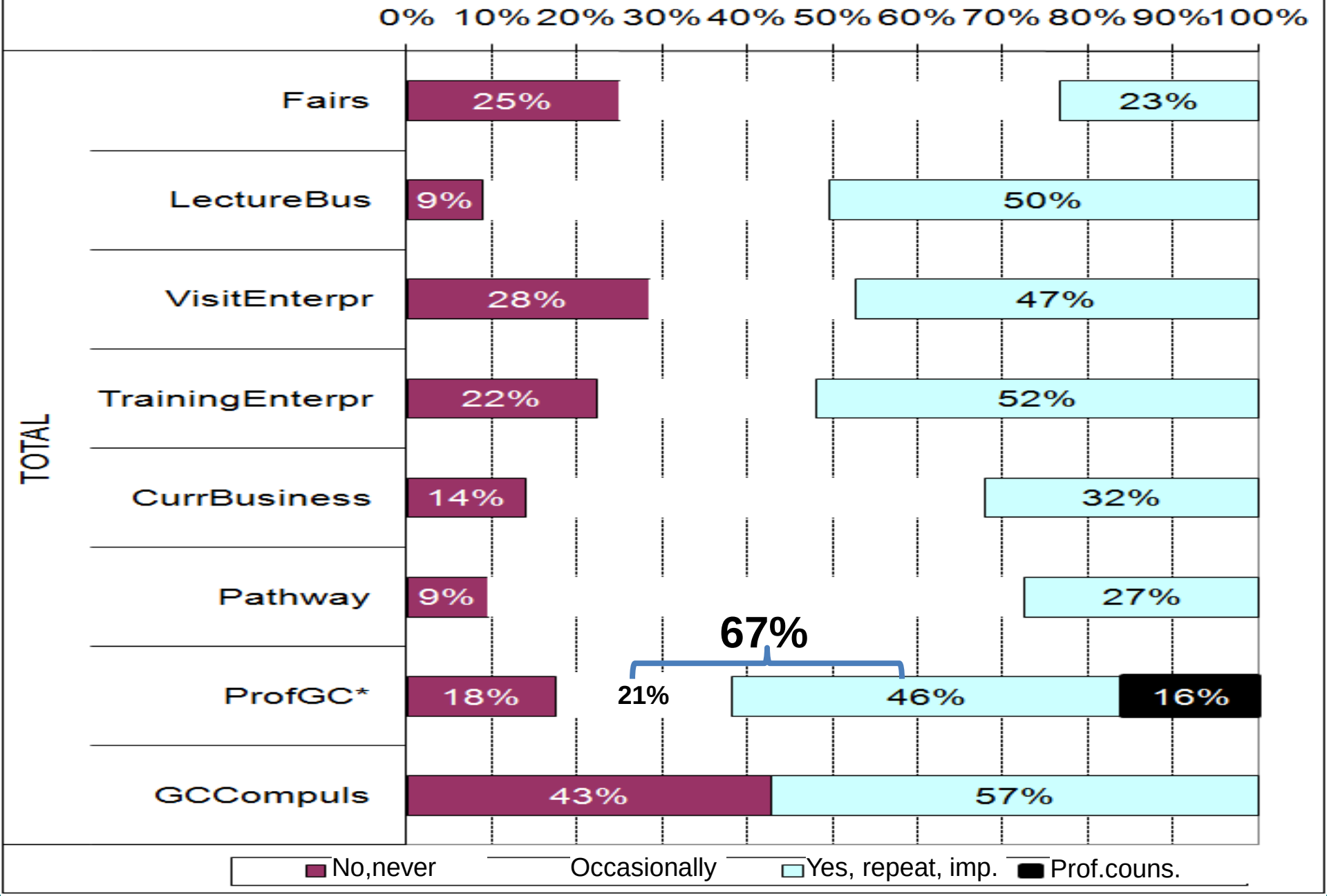
15-19 years
15% 6%

- slowly increasing…
- …to some part in combination with education
  - apprenticeship
  - (un)employment+education

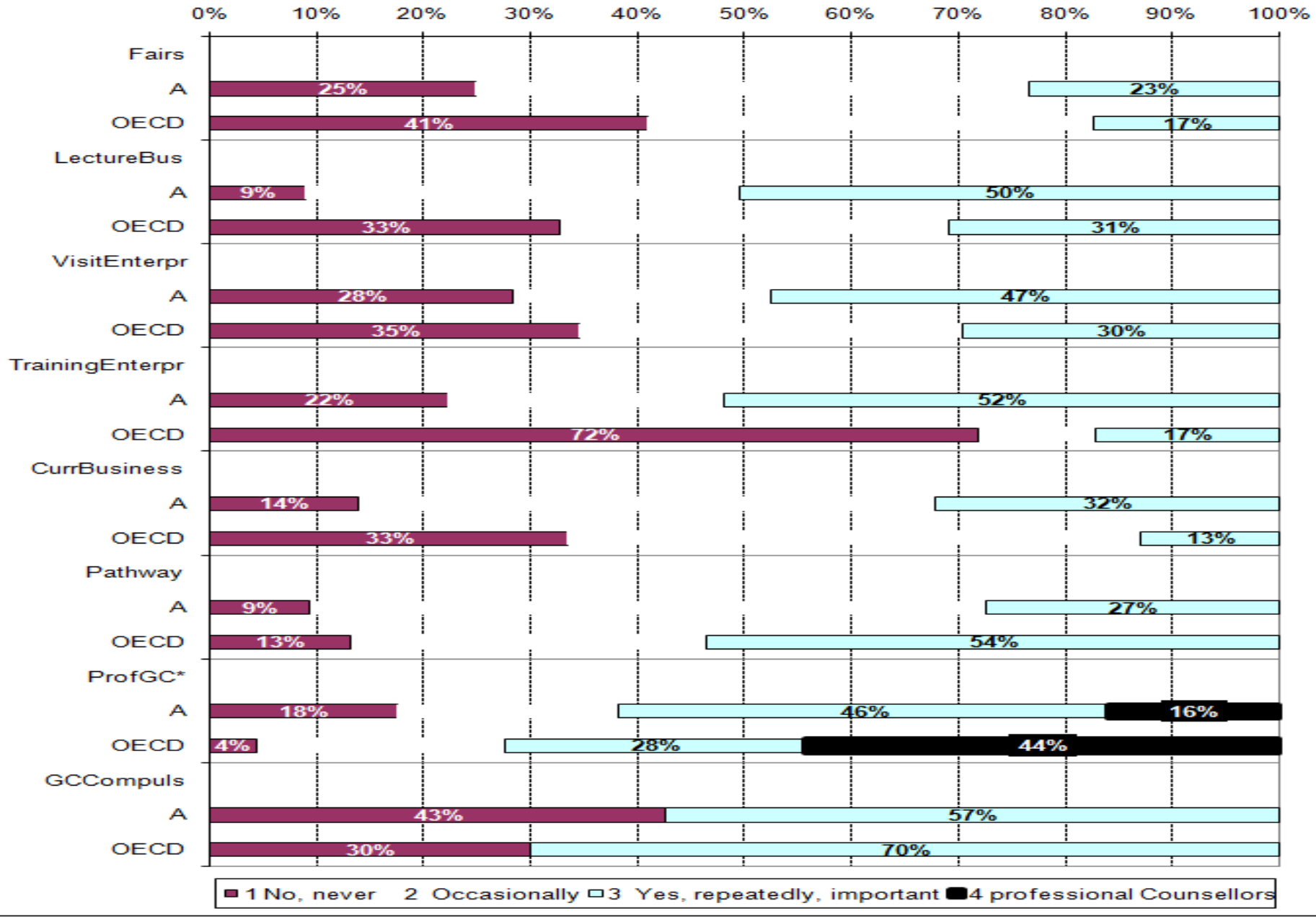
ANNEX
Guidance and counseling in PISA-2006-data

- Measurement: school principals estimated the proportion of pupils covered by different measures of GC
  - Fairs
  - Business lectures
  - Visits in Enterprises
  - Training periods in enterprises
  - Influence of business on curricula
  - Preparation for tertiary studies
  - Responsibility for GC
  - Provision of GC voluntary/compulsory
- Overview
- Comparison OECD
- By schooltypes

Instruments of GC in Austria, % of pupils covered due to principals



Instruments of GC Austria, OECD % of pupils covered due to principals



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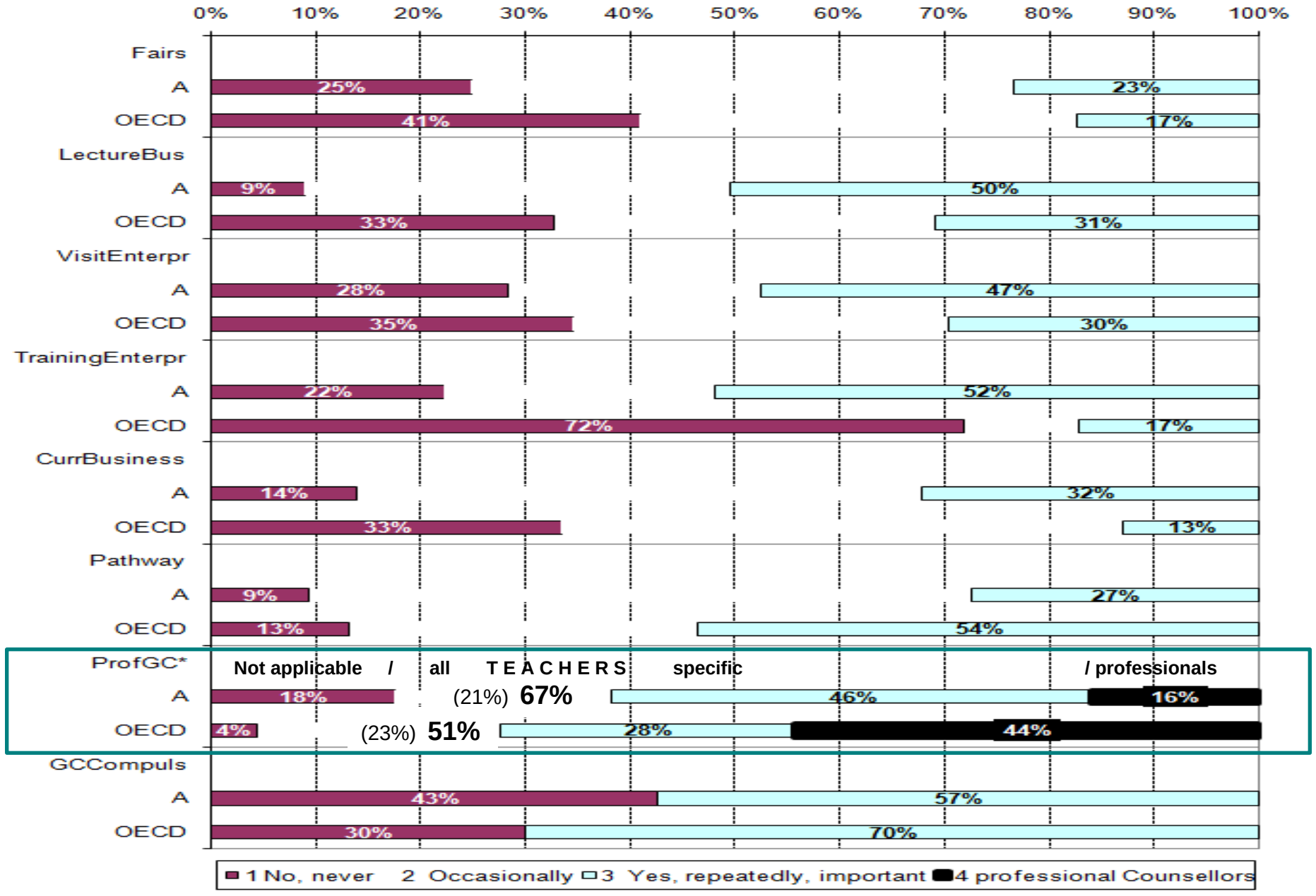
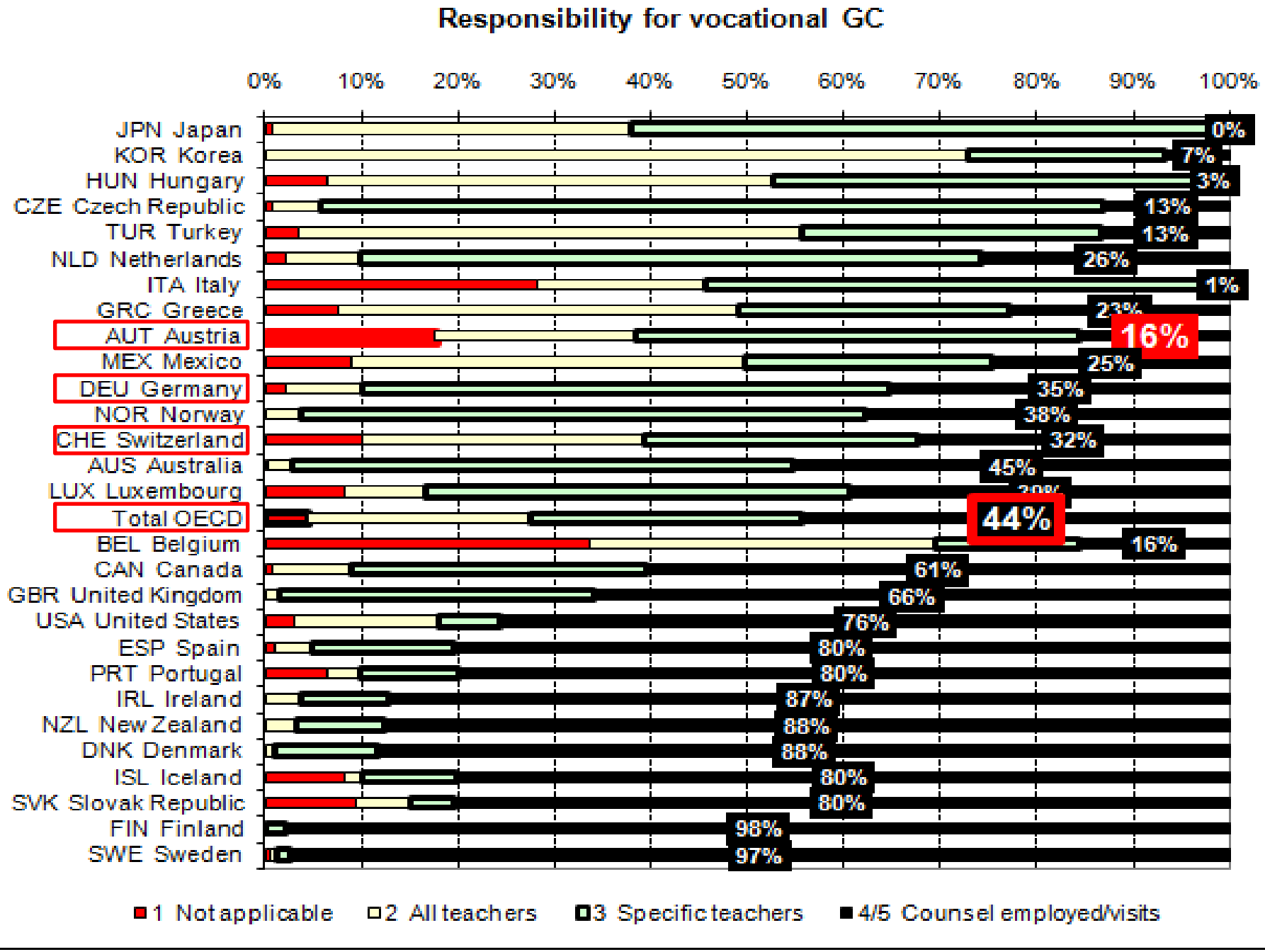



Responsibility for vocational GC
0%
10%
20%
30%
40%
50%
60%
70%
80%
90%
100%
JPN Japan
KOR Korea
HUN Hungary
CZE Czech Republic
TUR Turkey
NLD Netherlands
ITA Italy
GRC Greece
AUT Austria
MEX Mexico
DEU Germany
NOR Norway
CHE Switzerland
AUS Australia
LUX Luxembourg
Total OECD
BEL Belgium
CAN Canada
GBR United Kingdom
USA United States
ESP Spain
PRT Portugal
IRL Ireland
NZL New Zealand
DNK Denmark
ISL Iceland
SVK Slovak Republic
FIN Finland
SWE Sweden
0%
7%
3%
13%
13%
26%
1%
16%
25%
35%
38%
32%
45%
44%
16%
61%
66%
76%
80%
80%
87%
88%
88%
80%
80%
98%
97%
1 Not applicable
2 All teachers
3 Specific teachers
4/5 Counsel employed/visits

Is Austrian GC „typical“?

- Are there „typical“ relationships between GC variables?
- Three dimensions
  - **GC instruments**: Fairs, lectures from business, enterprise visits
  - **Education/training models**: enterprise training, business influence on curricula, pathways to tertiary education
  - **GC models**: professional counsellors, teachers, compulsory GC
- GC Instruments
  - Positively related

	fairs3	lectures3	visits3
fairs3	x	**pos.29**	**pos.22**
lectures3		x	**pos.27**

- ET Models
  - Enterprise training slight alternative to tertiary prep

	entprtr3	bucurric3	tertprep3
entprtr3	x	(no.02)	**neg.10**
bucurric3		x	(no.02)

- GC Models
  - Different types: professionals or teachers, voluntary or compulsory participation

	profcouns	teachcoun	compulsc
profcouns	x	**!defneg.94**	**no.00**
teachcouns		x	**no.00**

- Instruments and GC Models unrelated (unspecifically used)
- ET models and GC instruments and models
  - **Tertiary preparation** unrelated to GC models, **negatively** related to instruments
  - **Enterprise training** uses visits and professionals (compulsory), **business dominated curricula** use more instruments and different models

Correlations between variables

	fairs3	lectures3	visits3
fairs3	x	**pos.29**	**pos.22**
lectures3		x	**pos.27**
visits3			x

	entprtr3	bucurric3	tertprep3
fairs3	(no.03)	(pos.09)	(neg.06)
lectures3	(pos.07)	**pos.17**	(no.02)
visits3	**pos.32**	**pos.14**	**neg.20**

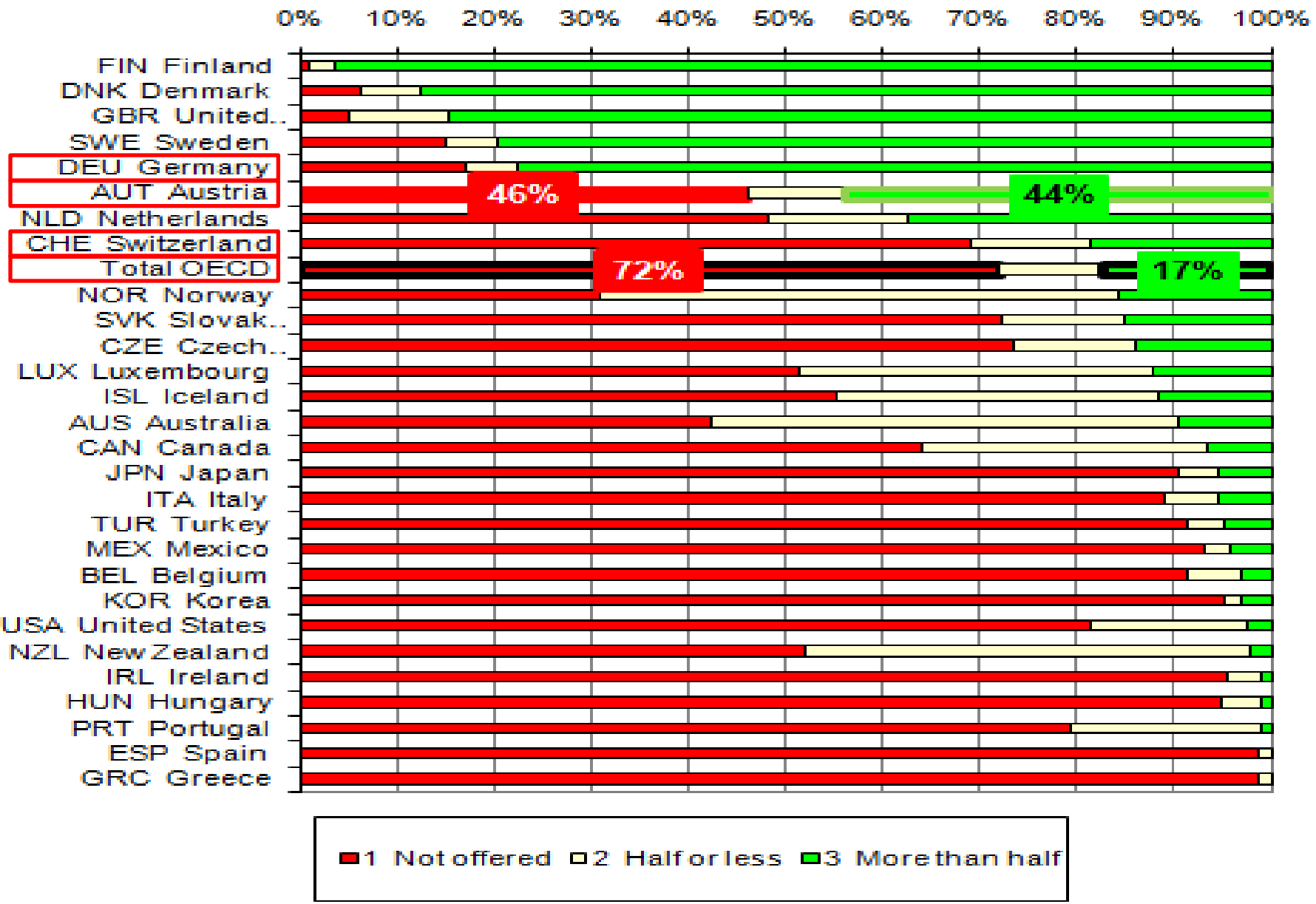
	profcouns	teachcoun	compulsc
fairs3	(neg.06)	(pos.08)	(no.03)
lectures3	(no.04)	(no.03)	**no.00**
visits3	(no.03)	(no.04)	(no.03)

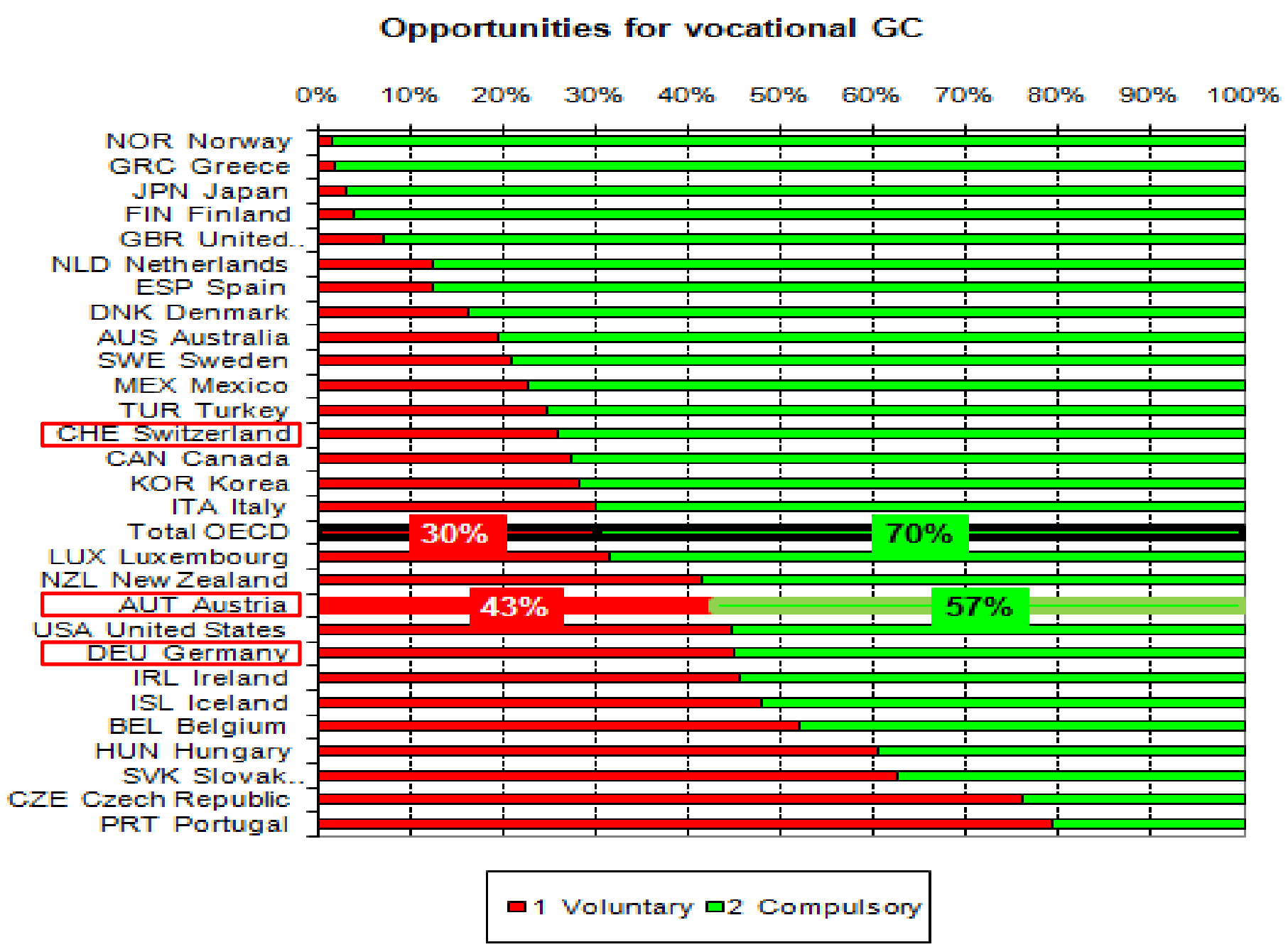
	entprtr3	bucurric3	tertprep3
entprtr3	x	(no.02)	**neg.10**
bucurric3		x	(no.02)
tertprep3			x

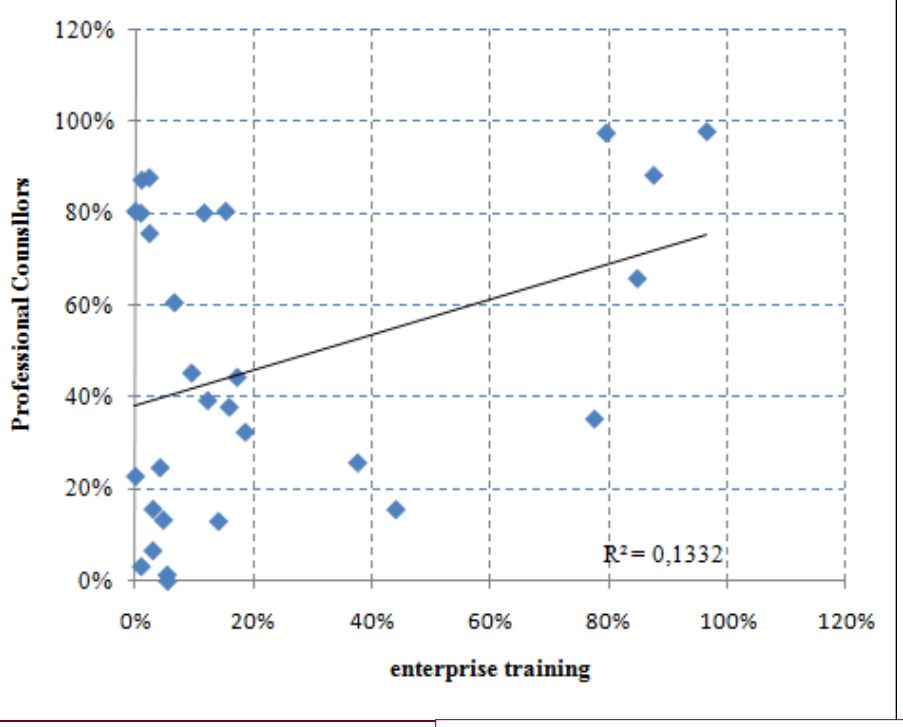
	profcouns	teachcoun	compulsc
entprtr3	**pos.13**	**neg.11**	(pos.09)
bucurric3	(neg.05)	(no.02)	(neg.07)
tertprep3	**no.00**	**no.00**	**no.00**

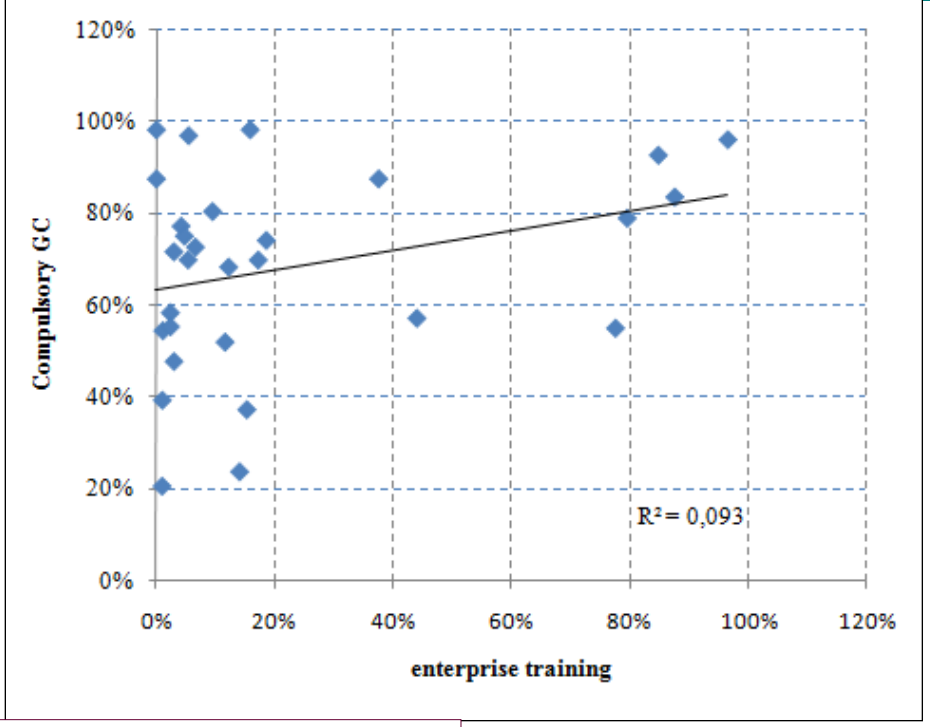
	profcouns	teachcoun	compulsc
profcouns	x	**!defneg.94**	**no.00**
teachcouns		x	**no.00**
compulsc			x

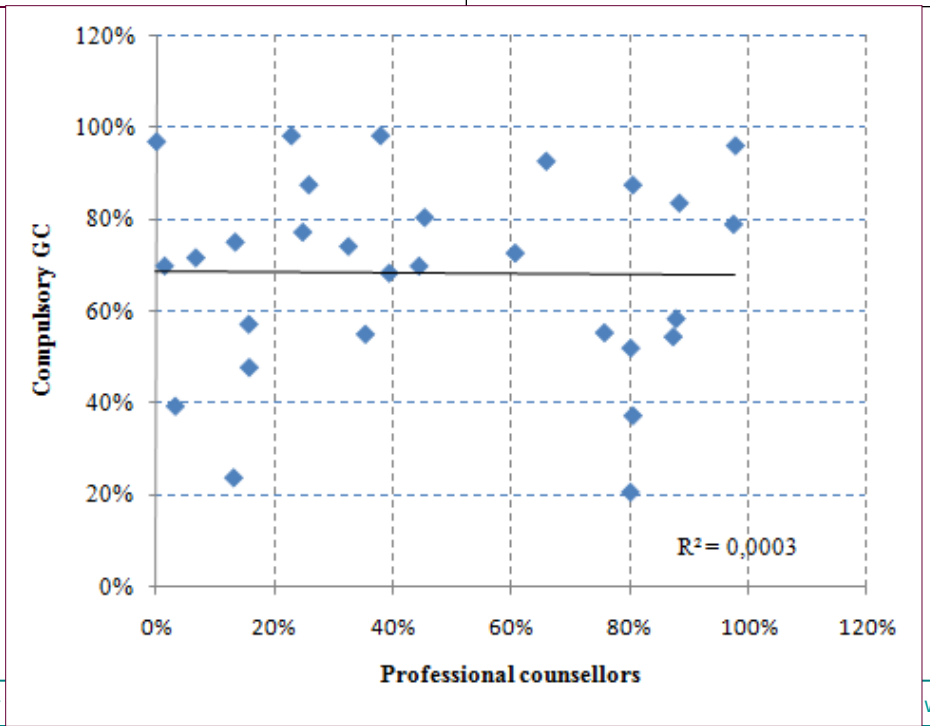
Training in local enterprises




Opportunities for vocational GC
0%
10%
20%
30%
40%
50%
60%
70%
80%
90%
100%
NOR Norway
GRC Greece
JPN Japan
FIN Finland
GBR United..
NLD Netherlands
ESP Spain
DNK Denmark
AUS Australia
SWE Sweden
MEX Mexico
TUR Turkey
CHE Switzerland
CAN Canada
KOR Korea
ITA Italy
Total OECD
LUX Luxembourg
NZL New Zealand
AUT Austria
USA United States
DEU Germany
IRL Ireland
ISL Iceland
BEL Belgium
HUN Hungary
SVK Slovak..
CZE Czech Republic
PRT Portugal
30%
70%
43%
57%
1 Voluntary
2 Compulsory

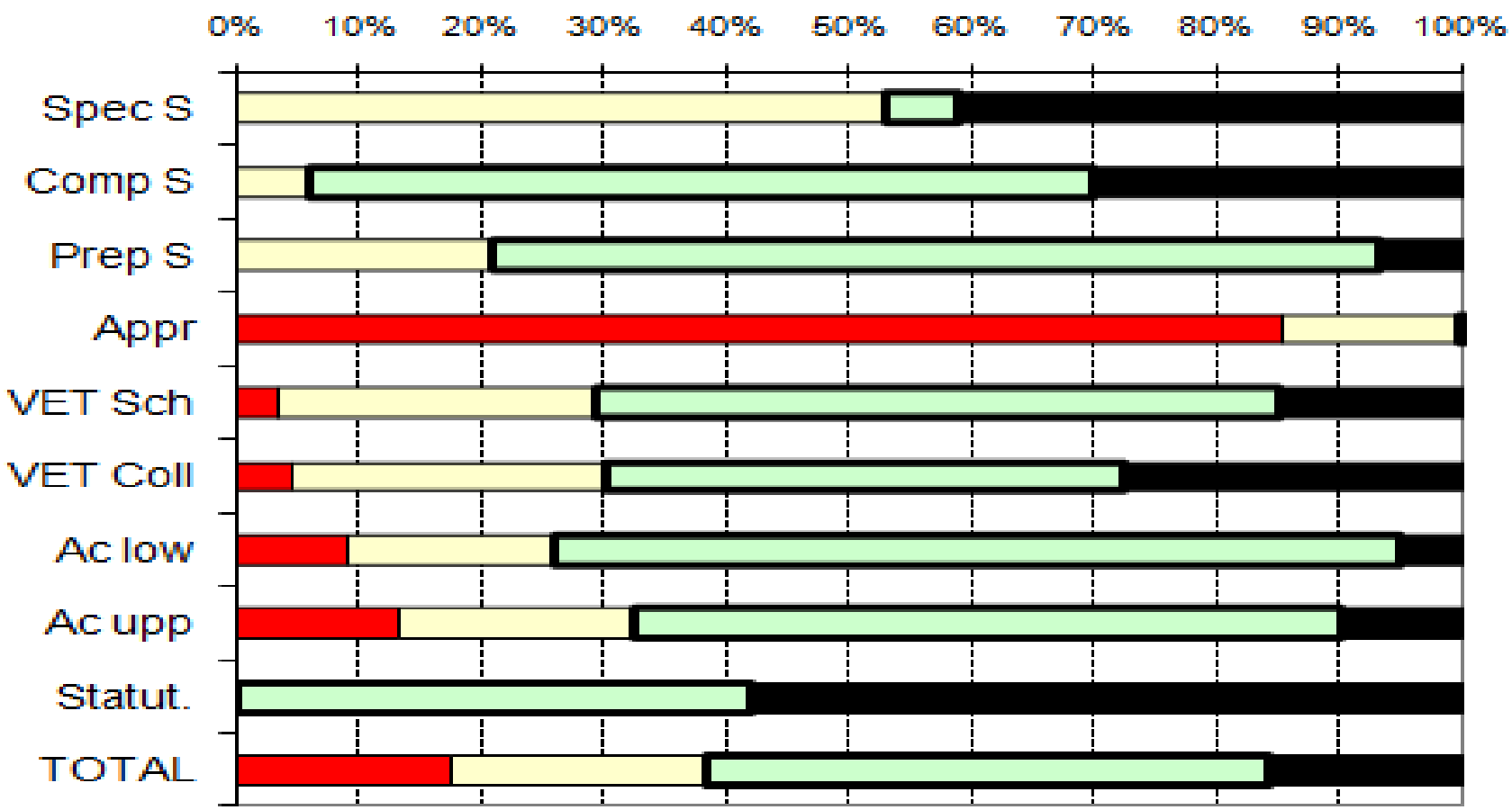

120%
100%
80%
60%
40%
20%
0%
Professional Counsllors
R² = 0,1332
0%
20%
40%
60%
80%
100%
120%
enterprise training


120%
100%
80%
60%
40%
20%
0%
Compulsory GC
R² = 0,093
0%
20%
40%
60%
80%
100%
120%
enterprise training

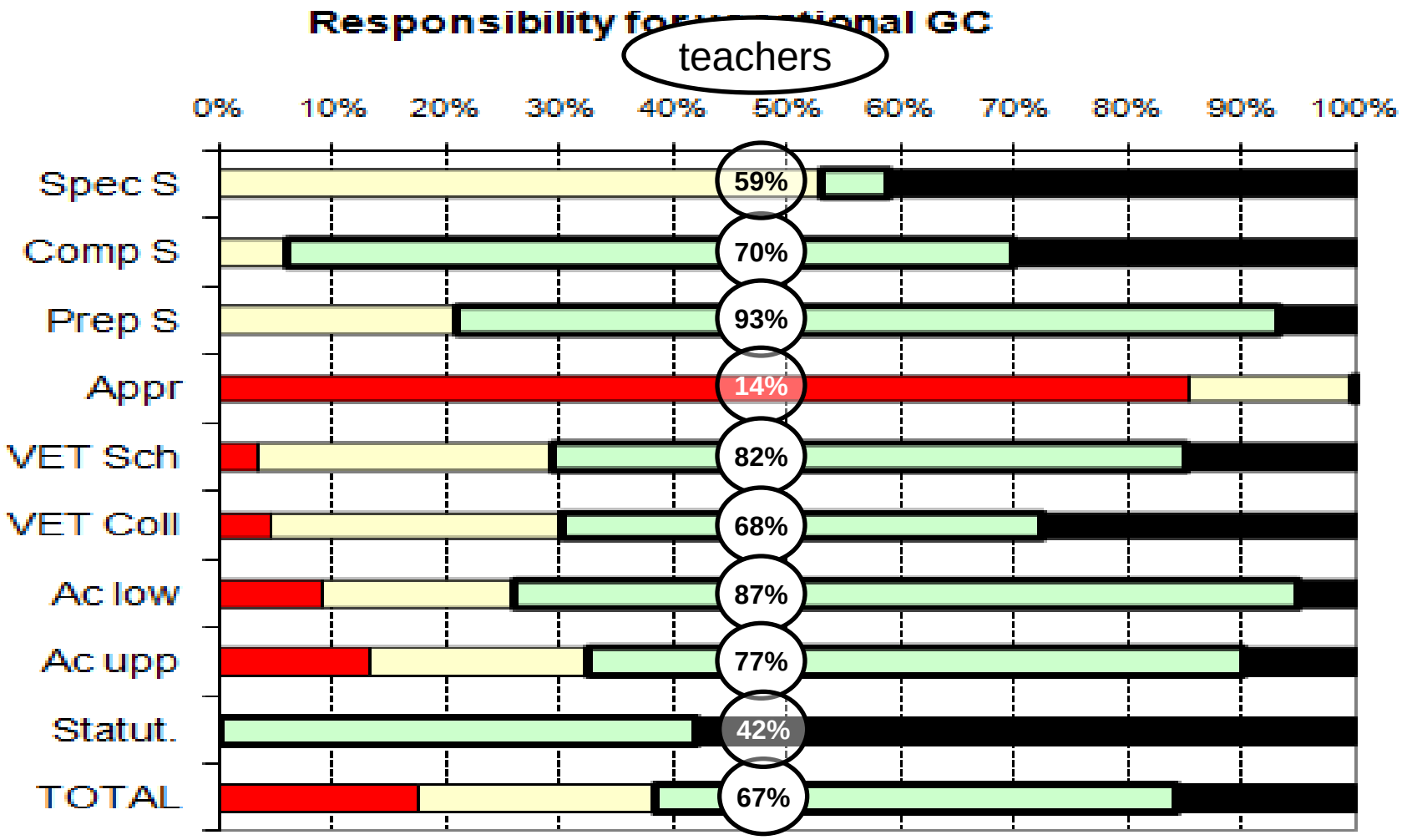

120%
100%
80%
60%
40%
20%
0%
Compulsory GC
R² = 0,0003
0%
20%
40%
60%
80%
100%
120%
Professional counsellors

School types in Austria

Responsibility for vocational GC

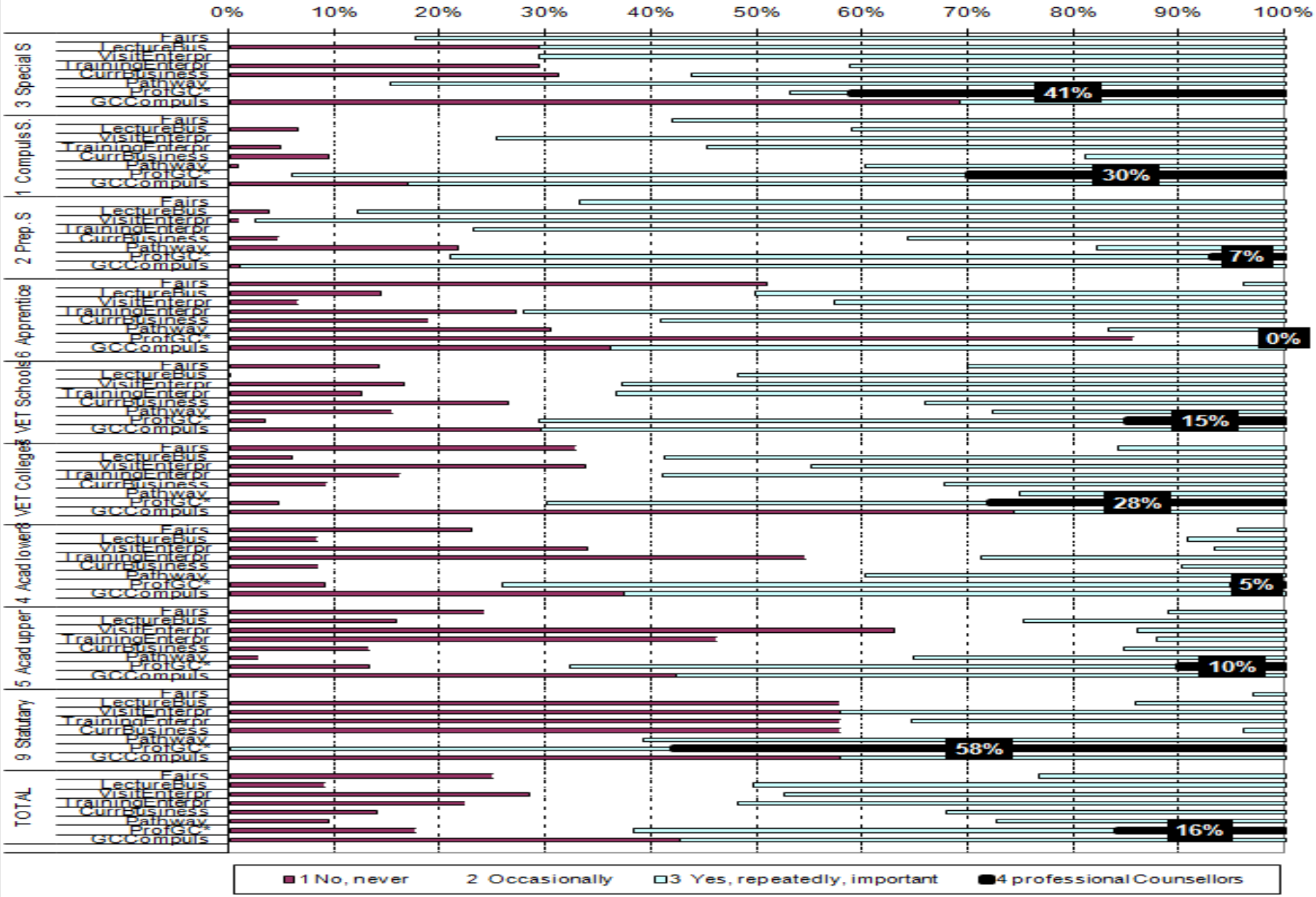


	TOTAL	Statut.	Ac upp	Ac low	VET Coll	VET Sch	Appr	Prep S	Comp S	Spec S
Not applicable	18%	0%	13%	9%	5%	3%	86%	0%	0%	0%
All teachers	21%	0%	19%	17%	26%	26%	14%	21%	6%	53%
Specific teachers	46%	42%	58%	69%	42%	56%	0%	72%	64%	6%
Counsel employed	16%	58%	10%	5%	28%	15%	0%	7%	30%	41%

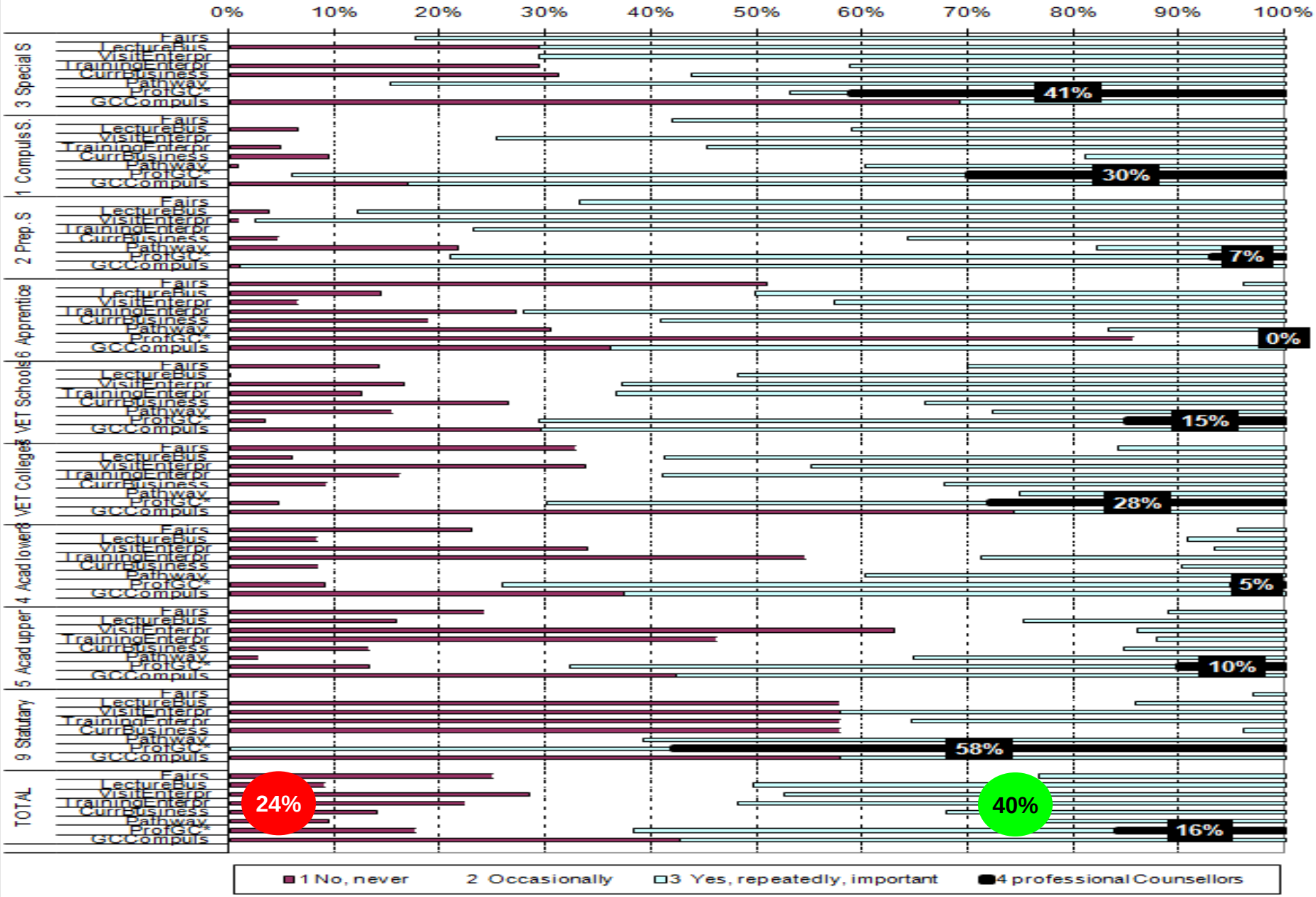


	TOTAL	Statut.	Ac upp	Ac low	VET Coll	VET Sch	Appr	Prep S	Comp S	Spec S
Not applicable	18%	0%	13%	9%	5%	3%	86%	0%	0%	0%
All teachers	21%	0%	19%	17%	26%	26%	14%	21%	6%	53%
Specific teachers	46%	42%	58%	69%	42%	56%	0%	72%	64%	6%
Counsel employed	16%	58%	10%	5%	28%	15%	0%	7%	30%	41%

Instruments of GC in Austria, by school types



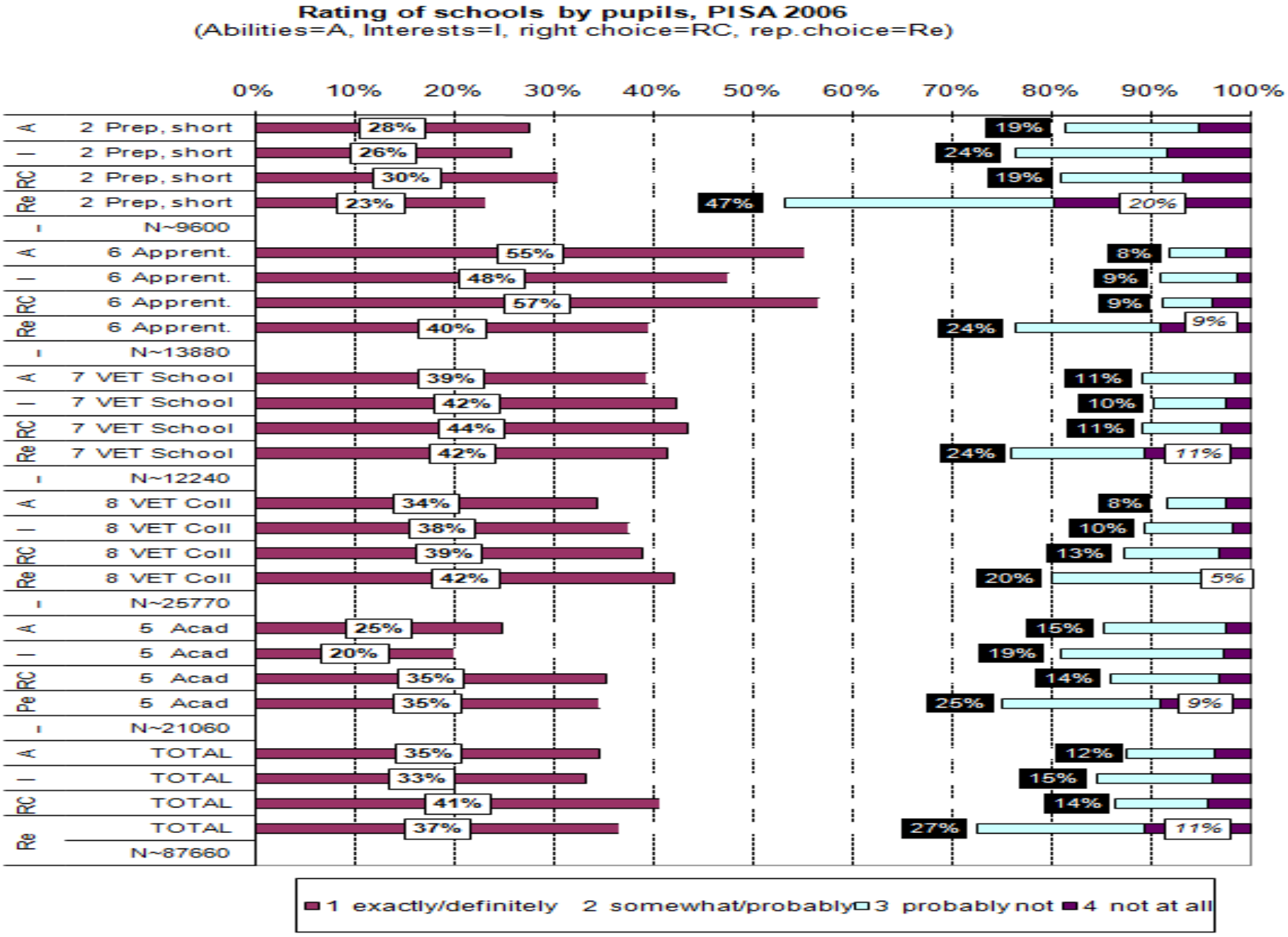
Average of instruments across schooltypes TOTAL

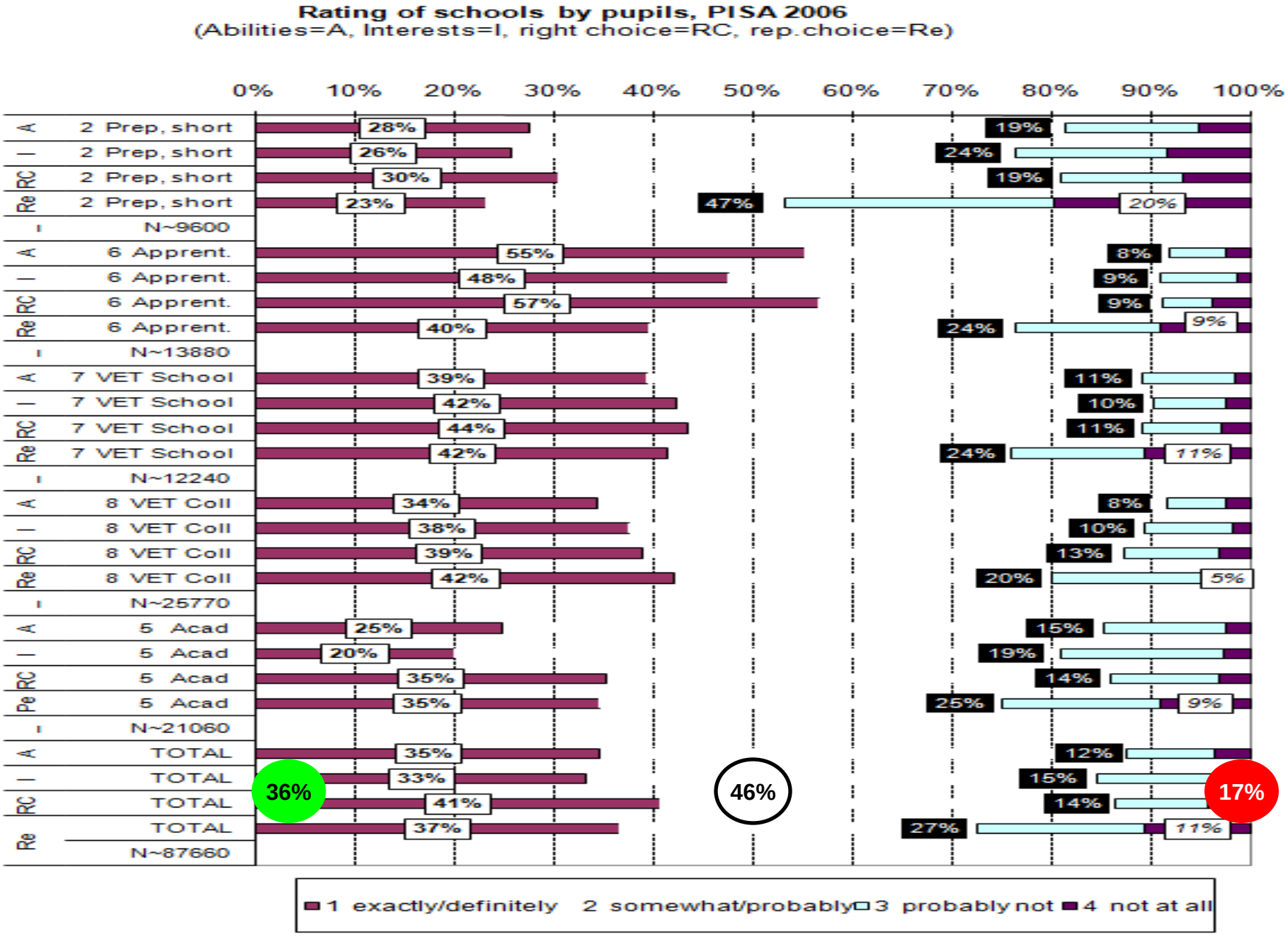


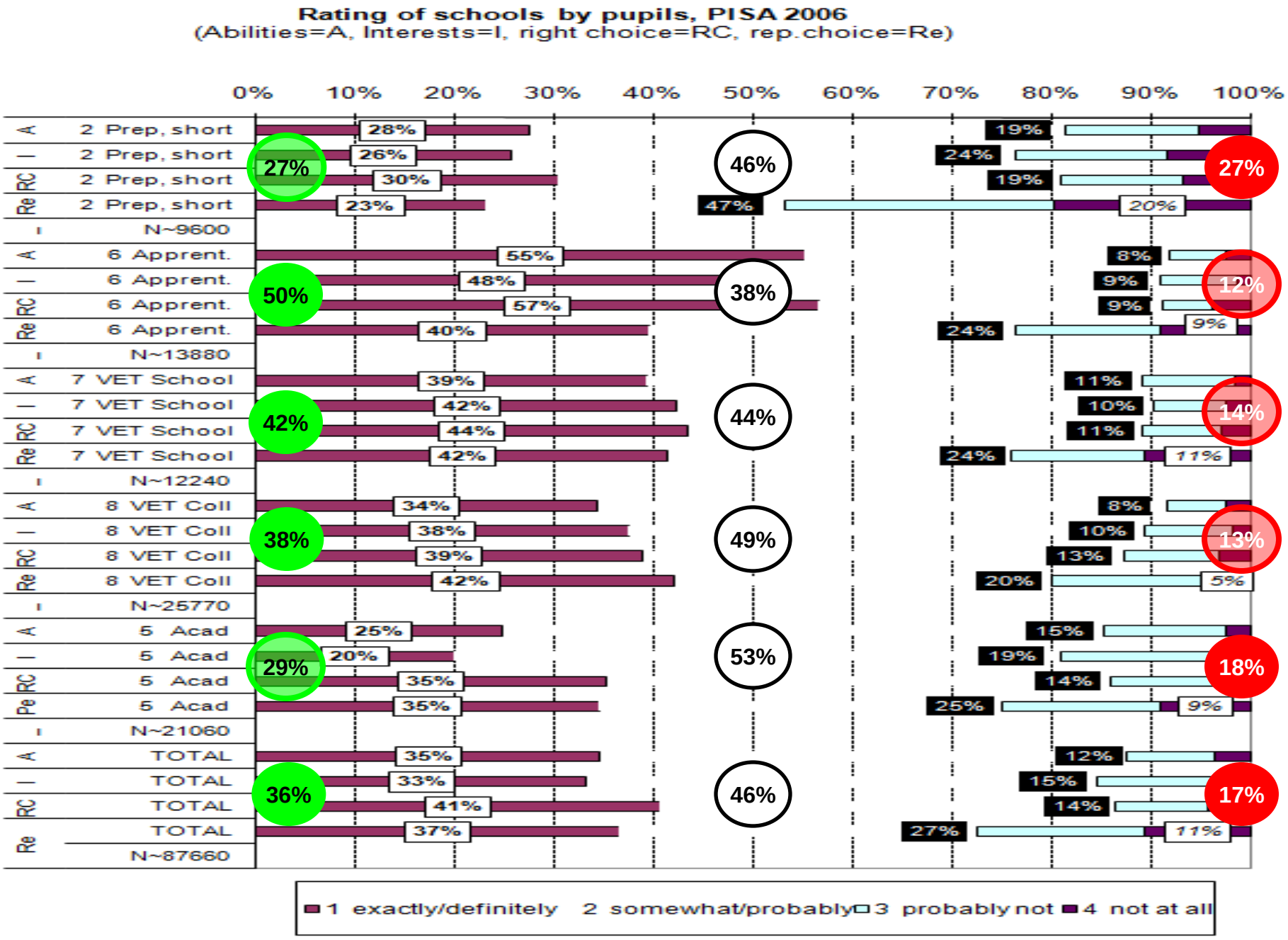
Average of instruments across schooltypes

Rating of choice by students in Austria PISA 15y.

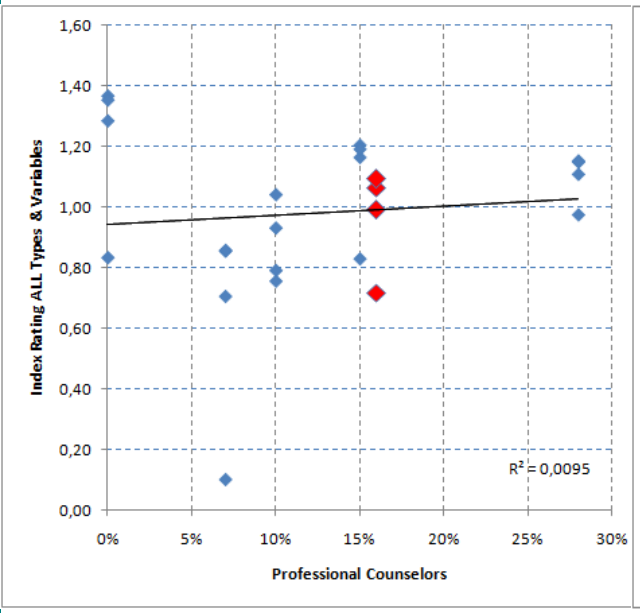
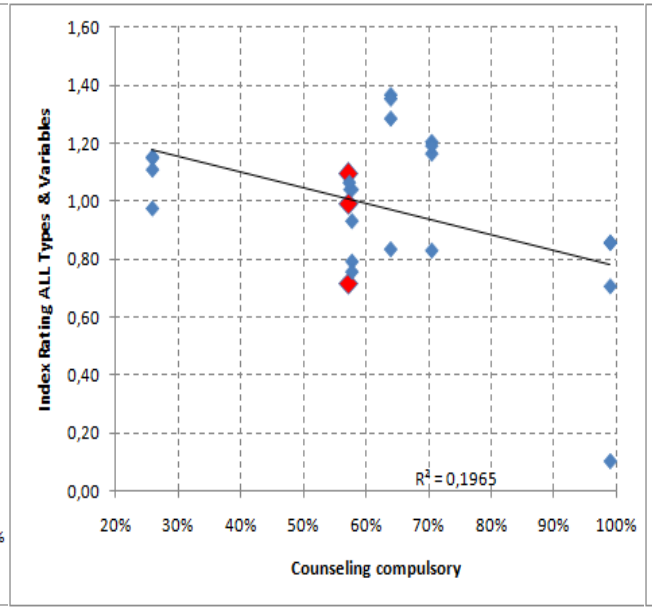
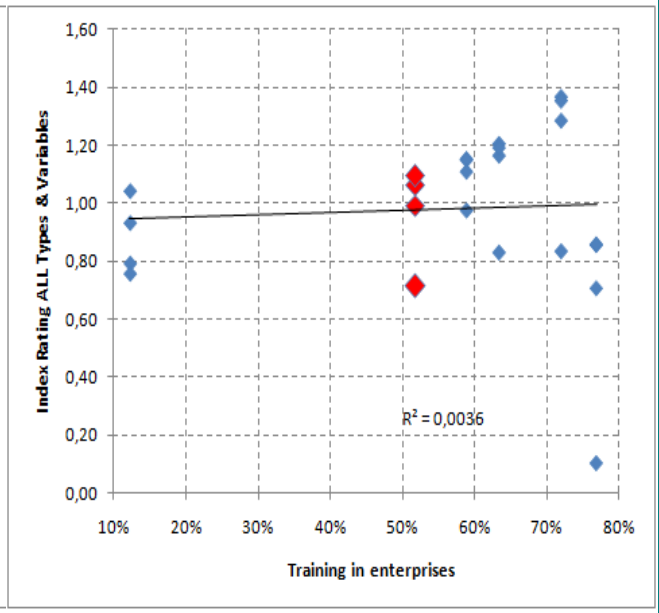
- A: corresponding to ability
- I: corresponding to interest
- RC: right choice
- Re: repeat choice


Rating of schools by pupils, PISA 2006
(Abilities=A, Interests=I, right choice=RC, rep.choice=Re)
0%
10%
20%
30%
40%
50%
60%
70%
80%
90%
100%
A 2 Prep, short 28% 19%
I 2 Prep, short 26% 24%
RC 2 Prep, short 30% 19%
Re 2 Prep, short 23% 47% 20%
N~9600
A 6 Apprent. 55% 8%
I 6 Apprent. 48% 9%
RC 6 Apprent. 57% 9%
Re 6 Apprent. 40% 24% 9%
N~13880
A 7 VET School 39% 11%
I 7 VET School 42% 10%
RC 7 VET School 44% 11%
Re 7 VET School 42% 24% 11%
N~12240
A 8 VET Coll 34% 8%
I 8 VET Coll 38% 10%
RC 8 VET Coll 39% 13%
Re 8 VET Coll 42% 20% 5%
N~25770
A 5 Acad 25% 15%
I 5 Acad 20% 19%
RC 5 Acad 35% 14%
Pe 5 Acad 35% 25% 9%
N~21060
A TOTAL 35% 12%
I TOTAL 33% 15%
RC TOTAL 41% 14%
Re TOTAL 37% 27% 11%
N~87660
1 exactly/definitely
2 somewhat/probably
3 probably not
4 not at all


Rating of schools by pupils, PISA 2006
(Abilities=A, Interests=I, right choice=RC, rep.choice=Re)
0%
10%
20%
30%
40%
50%
60%
70%
80%
90%
100%
A 2 Prep, short
I 2 Prep, short
RC 2 Prep, short
Re 2 Prep, short
28%
26%
30%
23%
19%
24%
19%
47%
20%
N~9600
A 6 Apprent.
I 6 Apprent.
RC 6 Apprent.
Re 6 Apprent.
55%
48%
57%
40%
8%
9%
9%
24%
9%
N~13880
A 7 VET School
I 7 VET School
RC 7 VET School
Re 7 VET School
39%
42%
44%
42%
11%
10%
11%
24%
11%
N~12240
A 8 VET Coll
I 8 VET Coll
RC 8 VET Coll
Re 8 VET Coll
34%
38%
39%
42%
8%
10%
13%
20%
5%
N~25770
A 5 Acad
I 5 Acad
RC 5 Acad
Pe 5 Acad
25%
20%
35%
35%
15%
19%
14%
25%
9%
N~21060
A TOTAL
I TOTAL
RC TOTAL
Re TOTAL
35%
33%
41%
37%
12%
15%
14%
27%
11%
N~87660
36%
46%
17%
1 exactly/definitely
2 somewhat/probably
3 probably not
4 not at all


Rating of schools by pupils, PISA 2006
(Abilities=A, Interests=I, right choice=RC, rep.choice=Re)
0%
10%
20%
30%
40%
50%
60%
70%
80%
90%
100%
A
2 Prep, short
28%
19%
I
2 Prep, short
26%
24%
RC
2 Prep, short
30%
19%
Re
2 Prep, short
23%
20%
N~9600
A
6 Apprent.
55%
8%
I
6 Apprent.
48%
9%
RC
6 Apprent.
57%
9%
Re
6 Apprent.
40%
9%
N~13880
A
7 VET School
39%
11%
I
7 VET School
42%
10%
RC
7 VET School
44%
11%
Re
7 VET School
42%
11%
N~12240
A
8 VET Coll
34%
8%
I
8 VET Coll
38%
10%
RC
8 VET Coll
39%
13%
Re
8 VET Coll
42%
5%
N~25770
A
5 Acad
25%
15%
I
5 Acad
20%
19%
RC
5 Acad
35%
14%
Pe
5 Acad
35%
9%
N~21060
A
TOTAL
35%
12%
I
TOTAL
33%
15%
RC
TOTAL
41%
14%
Re
TOTAL
37%
11%
N~87660
27%
46%
27%
47%
20%
50%
38%
12%
42%
44%
14%
24%
38%
49%
13%
20%
29%
53%
18%
25%
36%
46%
17%
27%
1 exactly/definitely
2 somewhat/probably
3 probably not
4 not at all

Austria: Crossection GC x Rating by school types

- GC variables and rating variables
  - no relationship with training in enterprises and professional counselling
  - slight negative relationship with compulsory counselling

- Legend:
  - Index of rating: positive school-type value / positive average value (total)
  - GC variable always the same for school types