Guidance and counselling in Austrian initial education - constraints and effectiveness

Lorenz Lassnigg
(lassnigg@ihs.ac.at; www.equi.at)
Paper at the international conference
“Counseling for Life Design”
17-19 March, Inetop-CNAM, Paris

Agenda

- **Constraints for choice in the Austrian education & training (ET) system**
  - ET system as an opportunity structure of social background, selection and choice
- **Guidance and counselling (GC) system and policy**
  - Description based on comparative data (PISA 2006)
- **How 'good' are students' choices?**
  - Some empirical indications about how to assess them
- **Conclusions: Policy choices**
  - Structural problems and limits of GC

ET system vis-à-vis demand

- Proposition 1
  - Every **ET system** is structurally situated **vis-à-vis 'demand'** in a certain way
    'Demand' includes various dimensions : economic, social, political, cultural
    These dimensions are somehow institutionlised and ‚weighted' in the system
  - To understand the role and position of GC, we have to **analyse this structure**
    One aspect is the shape of the programmes in the ET system
    Another aspect is how the relationship between ET and society is institutionalised
- Proposition 2
  - Policy has to deal with **two basic interrelated functions'** of agency
    *First, the **construction of ET-supply** vis-à-vis demand*
    *Second, the **allocation of young people** to the supply*
  - In the reasoning about GC a certain **asymmetry** prevails
    The second function is addressed and the first is somehow ‚taken for granted'
    However, the first function is the more important by setting the scene for GC
- Proposition 3
  - In the Austrian system the ET **system structure is setting constraints** for GC
    *Certain **limits of GC** can only be overcome by changes of structure*
  - Those constraints are **not considered sufficiently** in GC policy
    *Therefore GC policy might work as a **camouflage of systemic** problems*

System structure

- **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 and specialisation

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

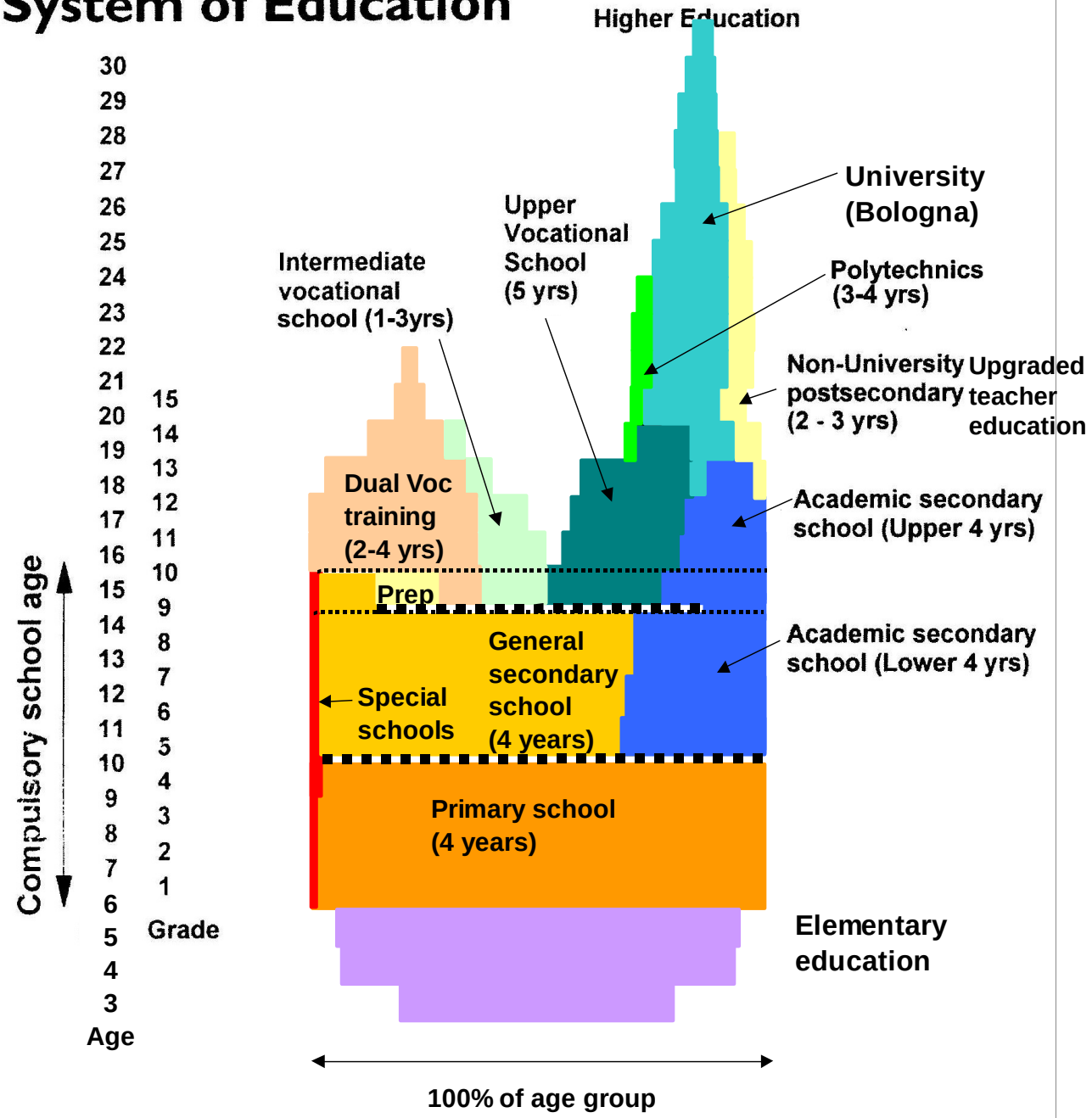
    Craft and industry, business services, personal services, agriculture, preprimary education, health occupations
  - Simultaneous choice of specialisation

    ~200 apprenticeships occupations

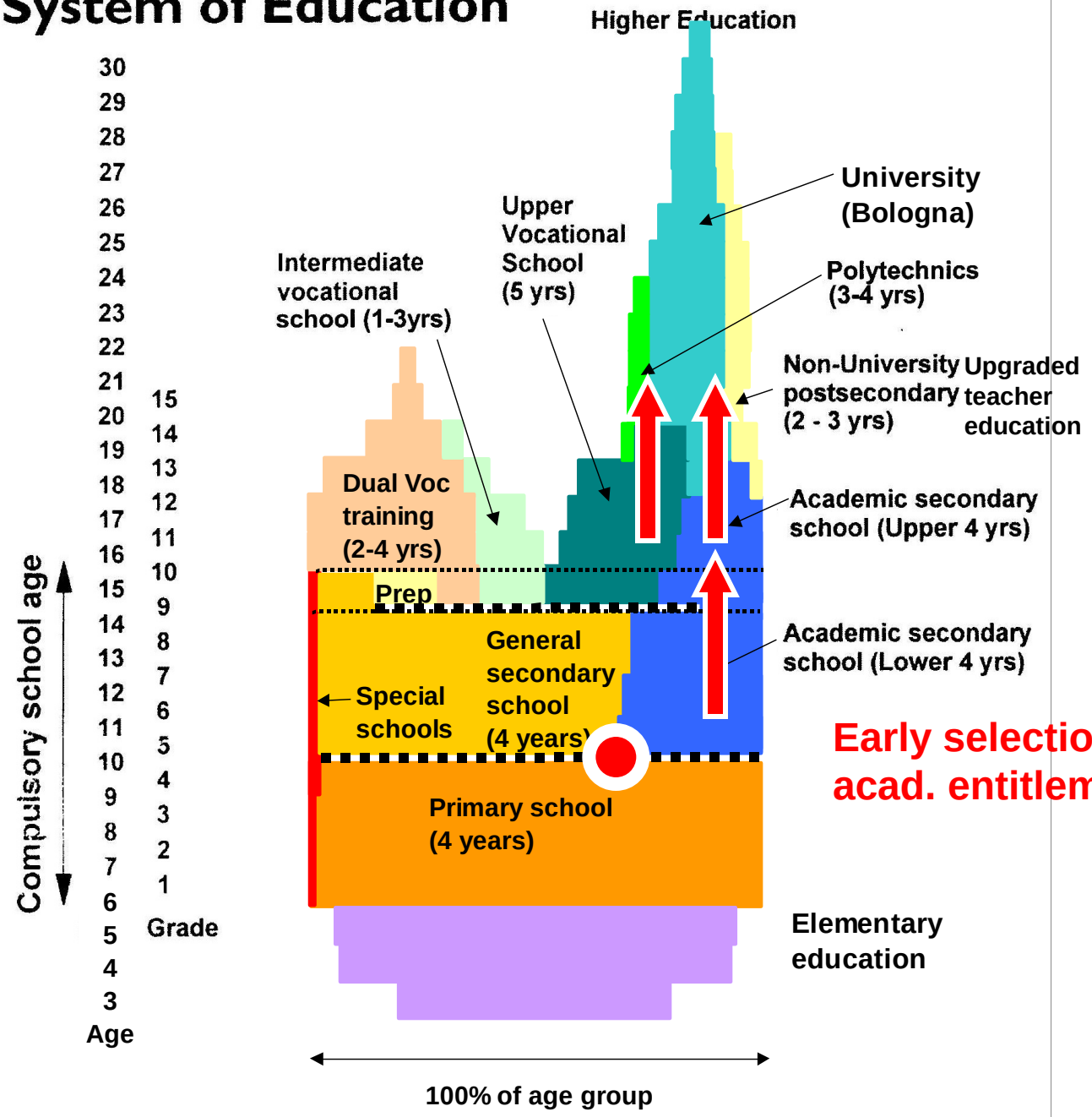
    ~50 VET school programmes

    ~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)

System of Education

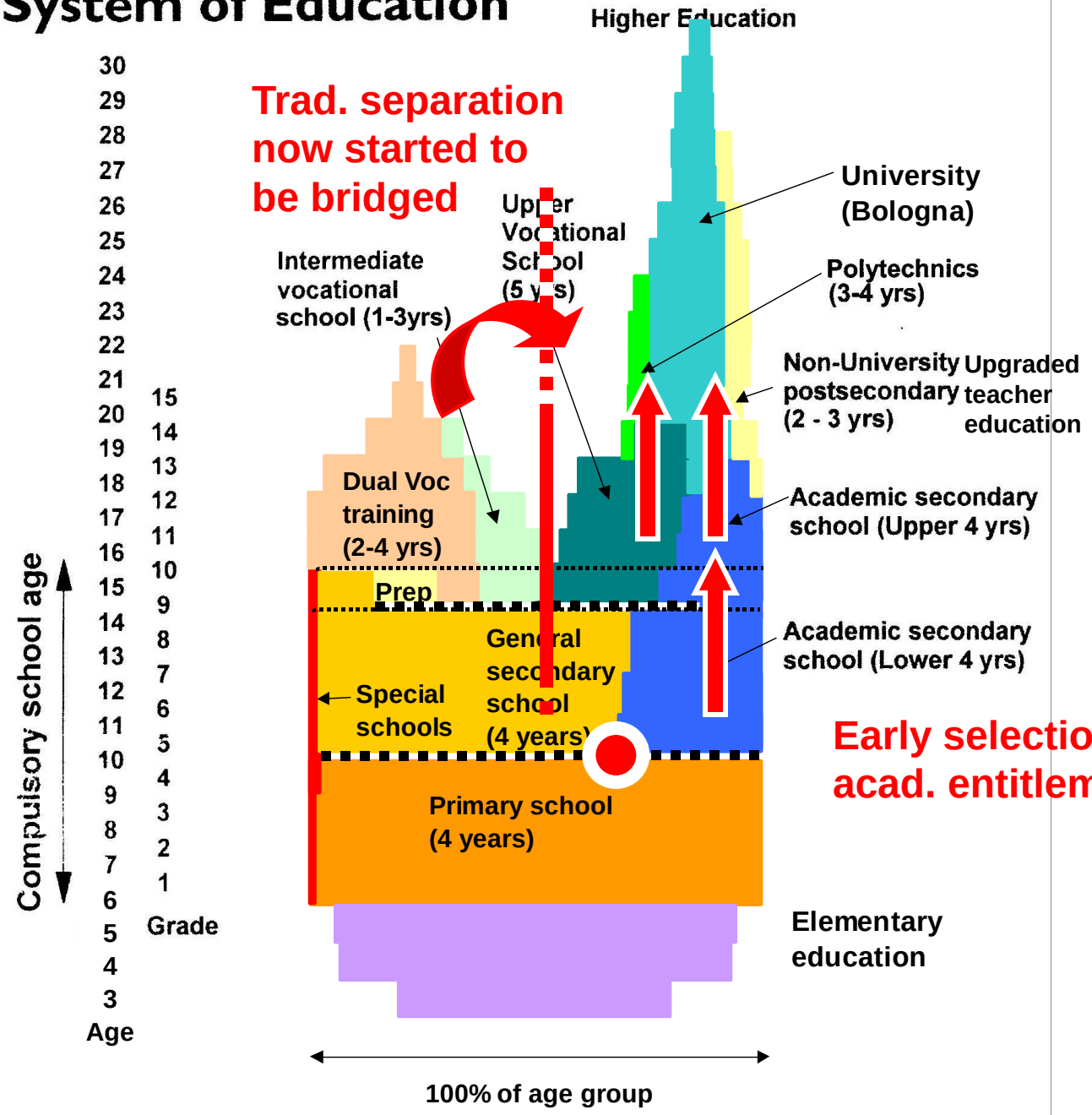


System of Education

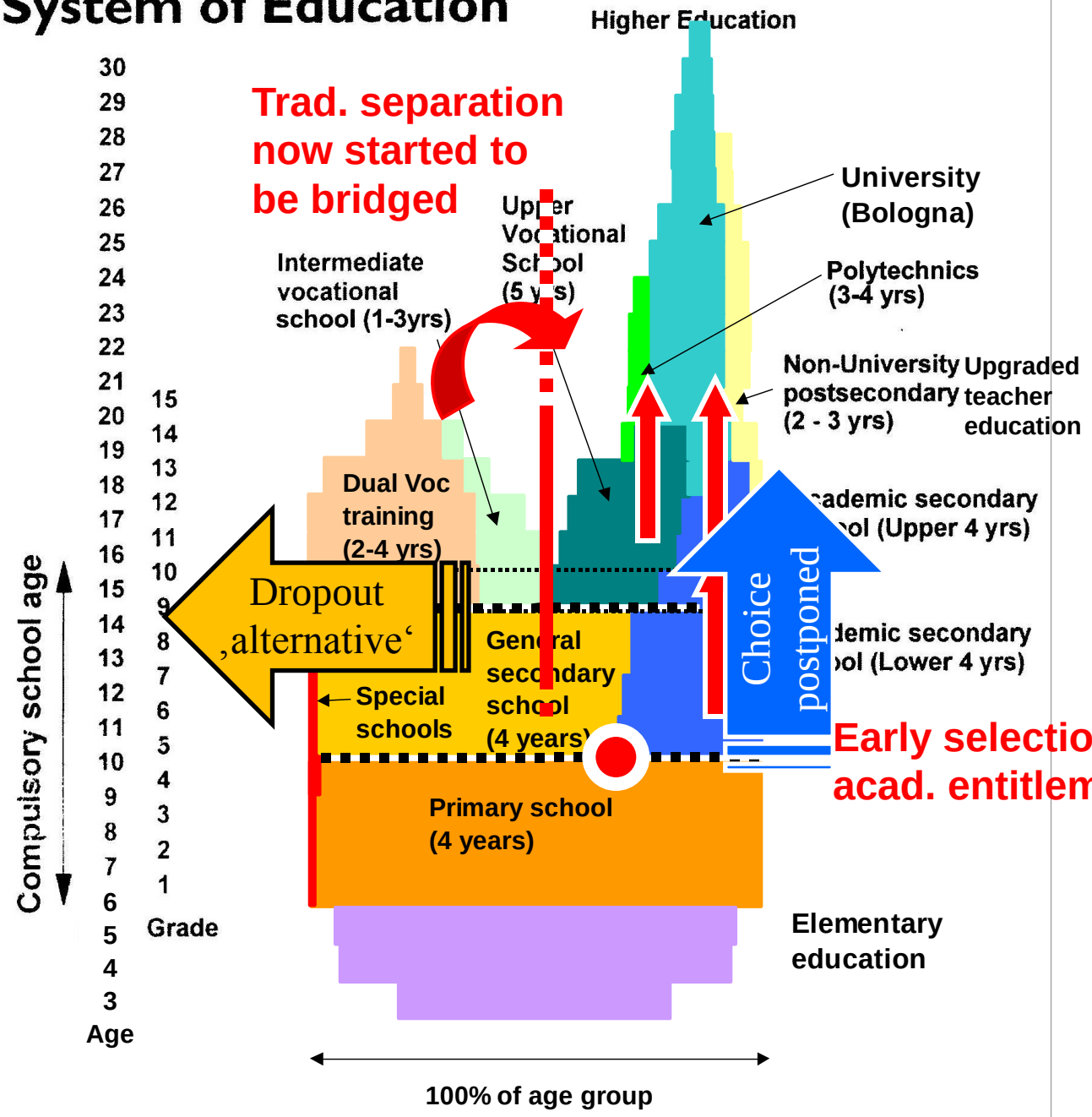


Early selection & acad. entitlement

System of Education



System of Education



Systemic deficiencies according to choice

- Proposition 4
  - The propensity for choice of different tracks is predetermined by social background and ET structure until age 15 (‚**social reproduction**‘)
  - **The ability and resources for choice are distributed among individuals**

    Some have clear preferences at early age, others reach their preferences at later age
  - **Age 15 is too early** in the life-course to demand that kind of long-lasting choices

    Sufficient room to postpone and/or legitimately correct choices should be given for those who don not have clear preferences at an early age
  - Specific **problems arise for girls** in this structure, as their choices are systematically biased towards ‚traditional‘ choices
- Proposition 5
  - The **potential to postpone choice** is unjustly differentiated between the priviledged students in the academic track and the others

    *From **academic track** choice is required at **age 18** for higher education specialisation*

    *For **others there is no alternative to postpone choice**, they have to take a specialisation or drop out (trial-and-error also in fact means drop-out from started programme)*
- Proposition 6
  - As choice is required too early, and above 50% take their first choice at 15 **we can expect many ‚erroneous‘ choices** with respect to individual predisposiitons
  - It might be **neither feasible nor possible** to improve early choice by GC

Agenda

- **Constraints for choice in the Austrian education & training (ET) system**
  - ET system as an opportunity structure of social background, selection and choice
- **Guidance and counselling (GC) system and policy**
  - Description based on comparative data (PISA 2006)
- **How 'good' are students' choices?**
  - Some empirical indications about how to assess them
- **Conclusions: Policy choices**
  - Structural problems and limits of GC

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

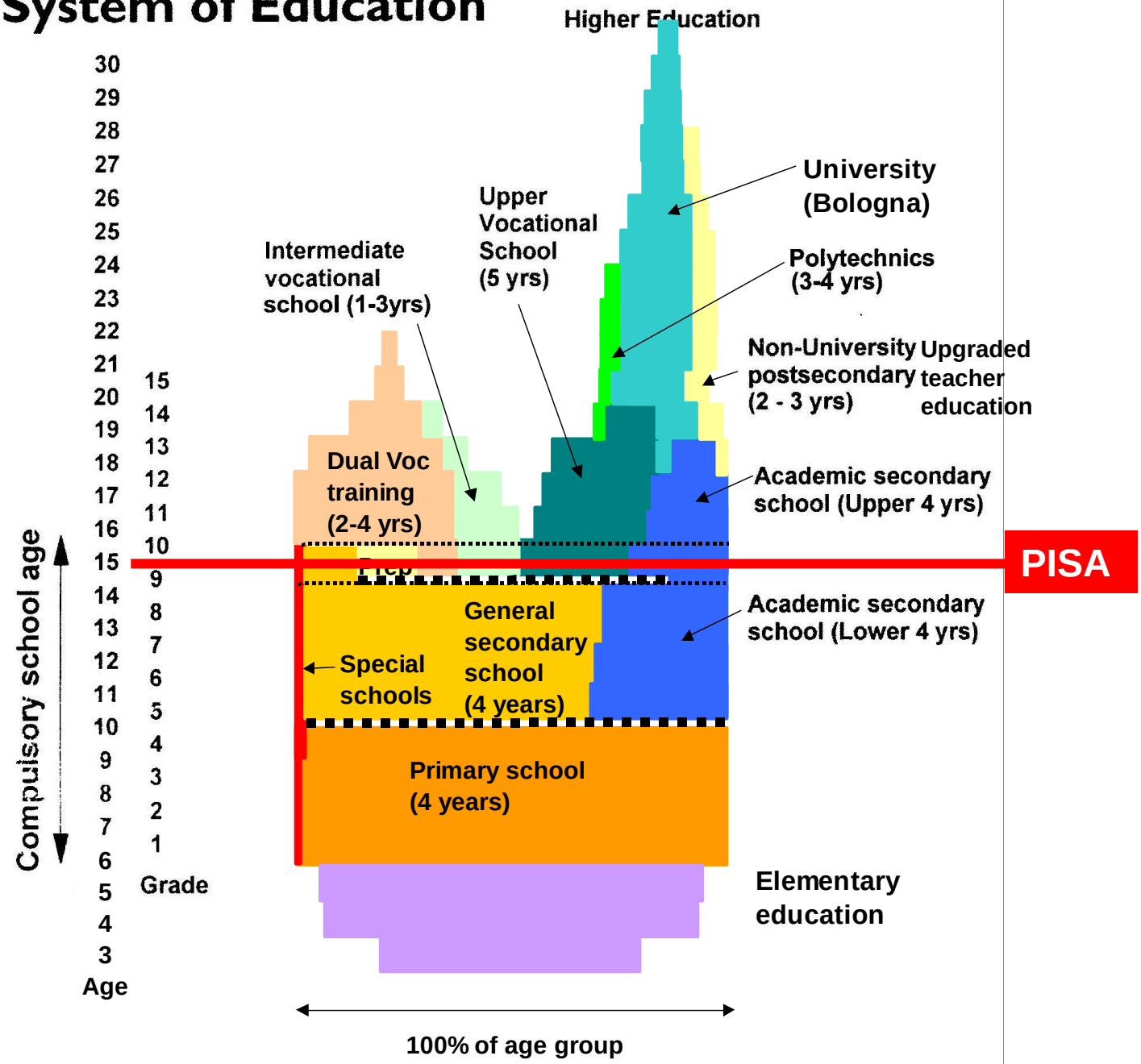
    *by providing additional **GC services** for unsuccessful young people*

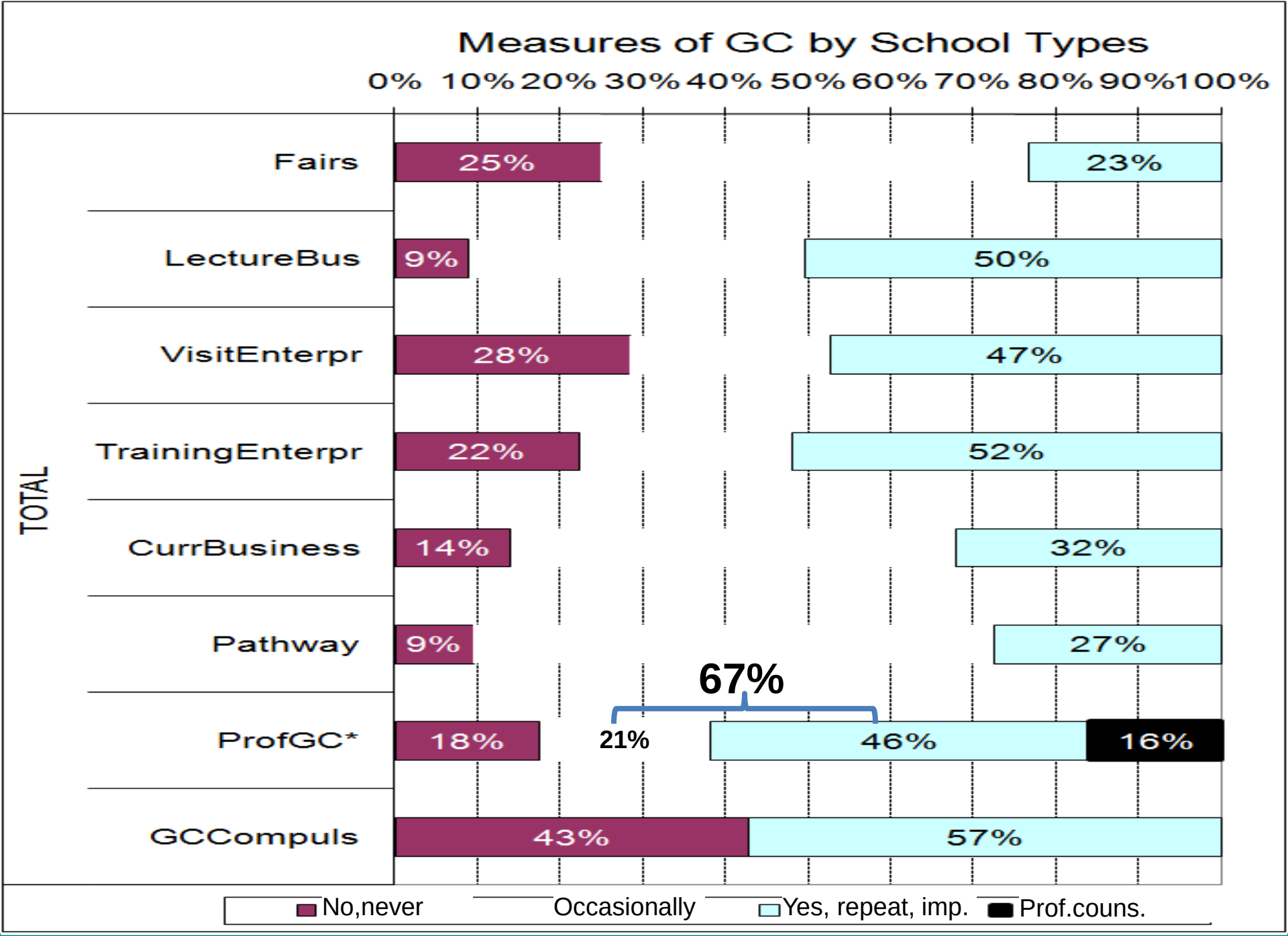
    *by providing corrective and supplementary **programmes in labour market policy** (LMP)*
  - In LMP an **additional selection mechanism** for the ‚selected out' is established

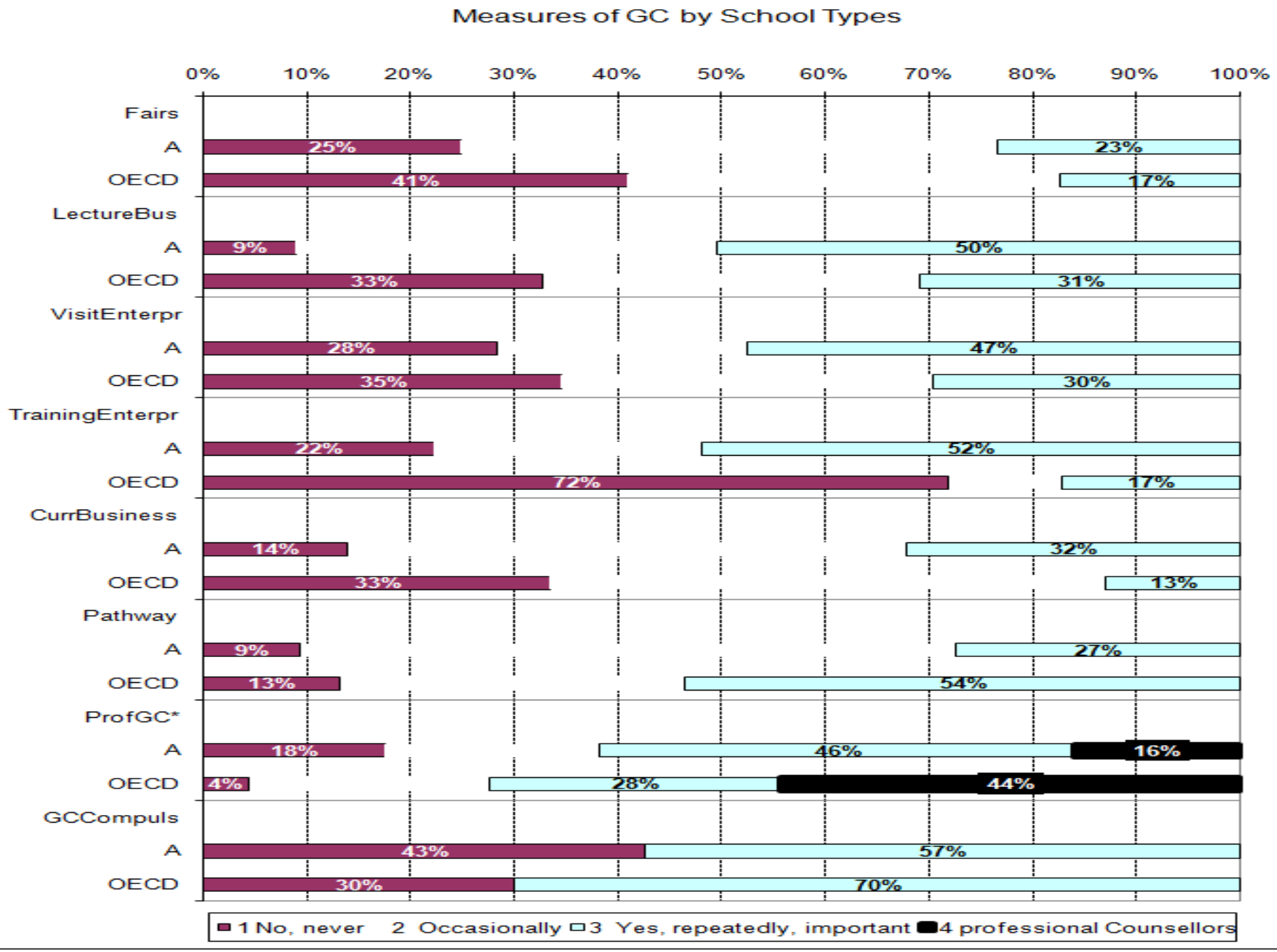
Guidance and counseling in PISA-data

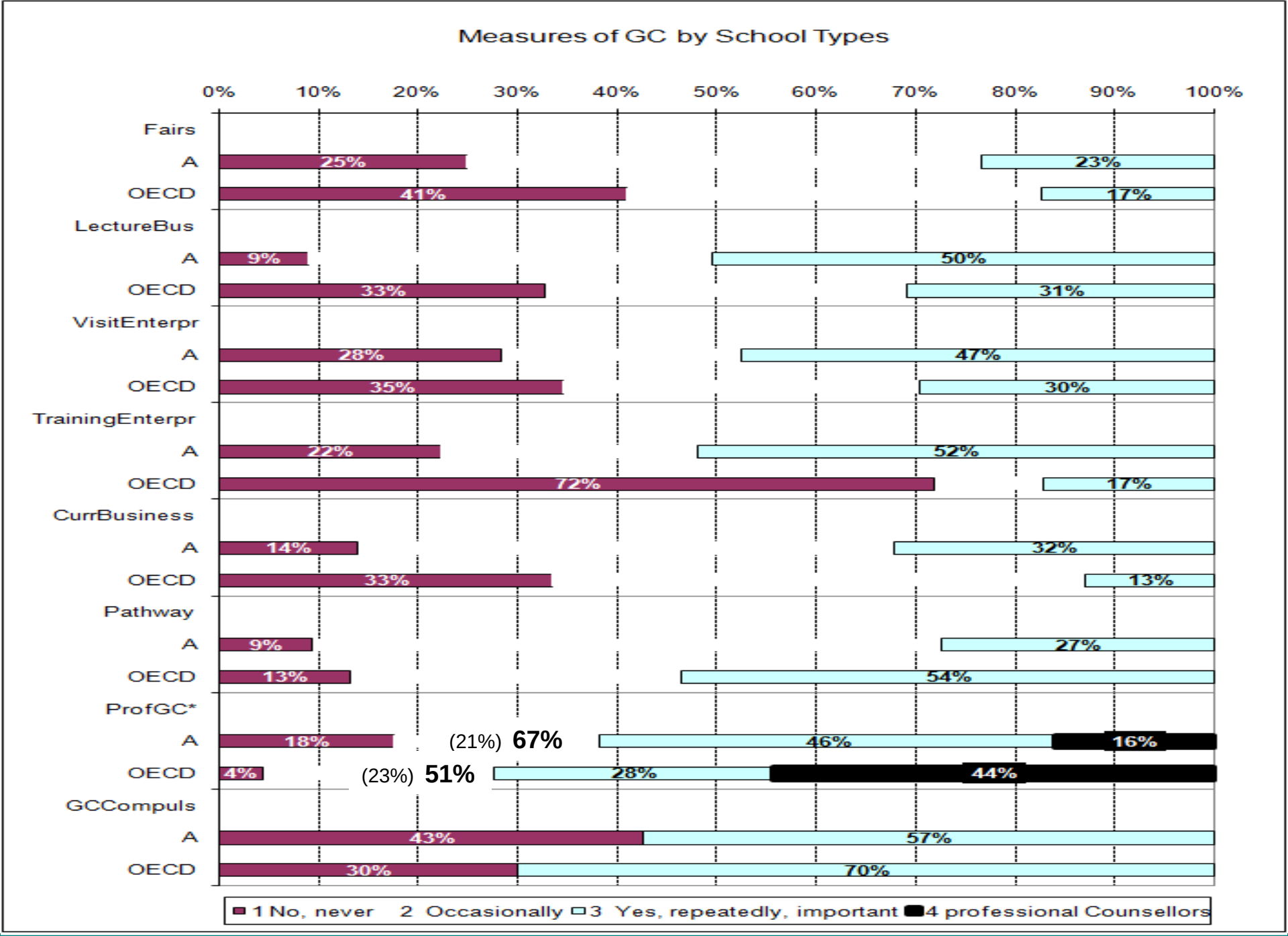
- Measurement: school principals estimated the proportion of pupils covered by different measures of GC
  - Fairs
  - Business lectures
  - Visits in Enterprises
  - Training periods in enterprises
  - Influence of business on curricula
  - Preparation for tertiary studies
  - Responsibility for GC
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

System of Education




Measures of GC by School Types
0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%
TOTAL
Fairs
25%
23%
LectureBus
9%
50%
VisitEnterpr
28%
47%
TrainingEnterpr
22%
52%
CurrBusiness
14%
32%
Pathway
9%
27%
67%
ProfGC*
18%
21%
46%
16%
GCCompuls
43%
57%
No,never
Occasionally
Yes, repeat, imp.
Prof.couns.


Measures of GC by School Types
0%
10%
20%
30%
40%
50%
60%
70%
80%
90%
100%
Fairs
A
25%
23%
OECD
41%
17%
LectureBus
A
9%
50%
OECD
33%
31%
VisitEnterpr
A
28%
47%
OECD
35%
30%
TrainingEnterpr
A
22%
52%
OECD
72%
17%
CurrBusiness
A
14%
32%
OECD
33%
13%
Pathway
A
9%
27%
OECD
13%
54%
ProfGC*
A
18%
46%
16%
OECD
4%
28%
44%
GCCompuls
A
43%
57%
OECD
30%
70%
1 No, never
2 Occasionally
3 Yes, repeatedly, important
4 professional Counsellors


Measures of GC by School Types
0%
10%
20%
30%
40%
50%
60%
70%
80%
90%
100%
Fairs
A
25%
23%
OECD
41%
17%
LectureBus
A
9%
50%
OECD
33%
31%
VisitEnterpr
A
28%
47%
OECD
35%
30%
TrainingEnterpr
A
22%
52%
OECD
72%
17%
CurrBusiness
A
14%
32%
OECD
33%
13%
Pathway
A
9%
27%
OECD
13%
54%
ProfGC*
A
18%
(21%) 67%
46%
16%
OECD
4%
(23%) 51%
28%
44%
GCCompuls
A
43%
57%
OECD
30%
70%
1 No, never
2 Occasionally
3 Yes, repeatedly, important
4 professional Counsellors

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**

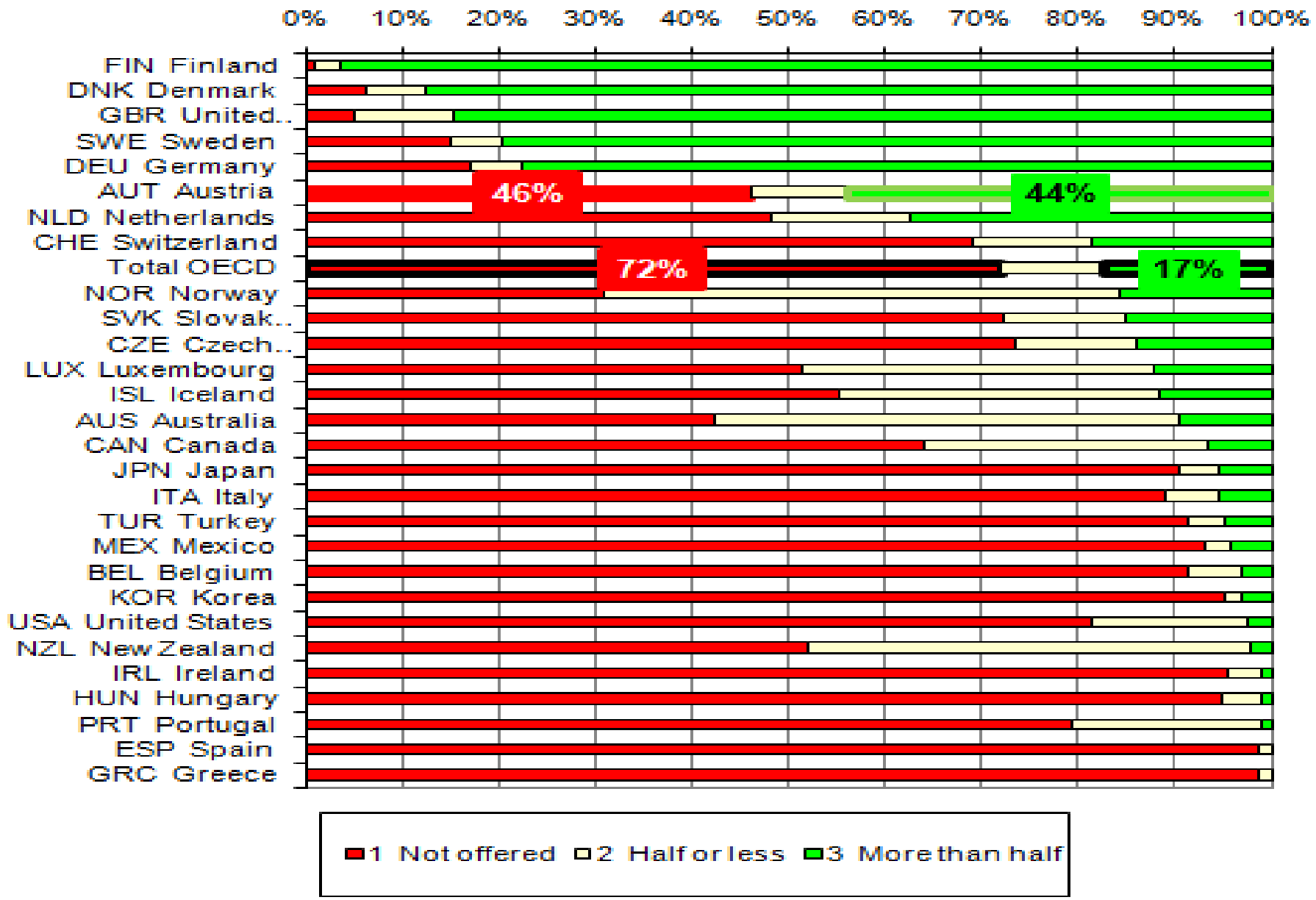
	profcouns	teachcoun	compulsc
fairs3	(neg.06)	(pos.08)	(no.03)
lectures3	(no.04)	(no.03)	**no.00**
visits3	(no.03)	(no.04)	(no.03)

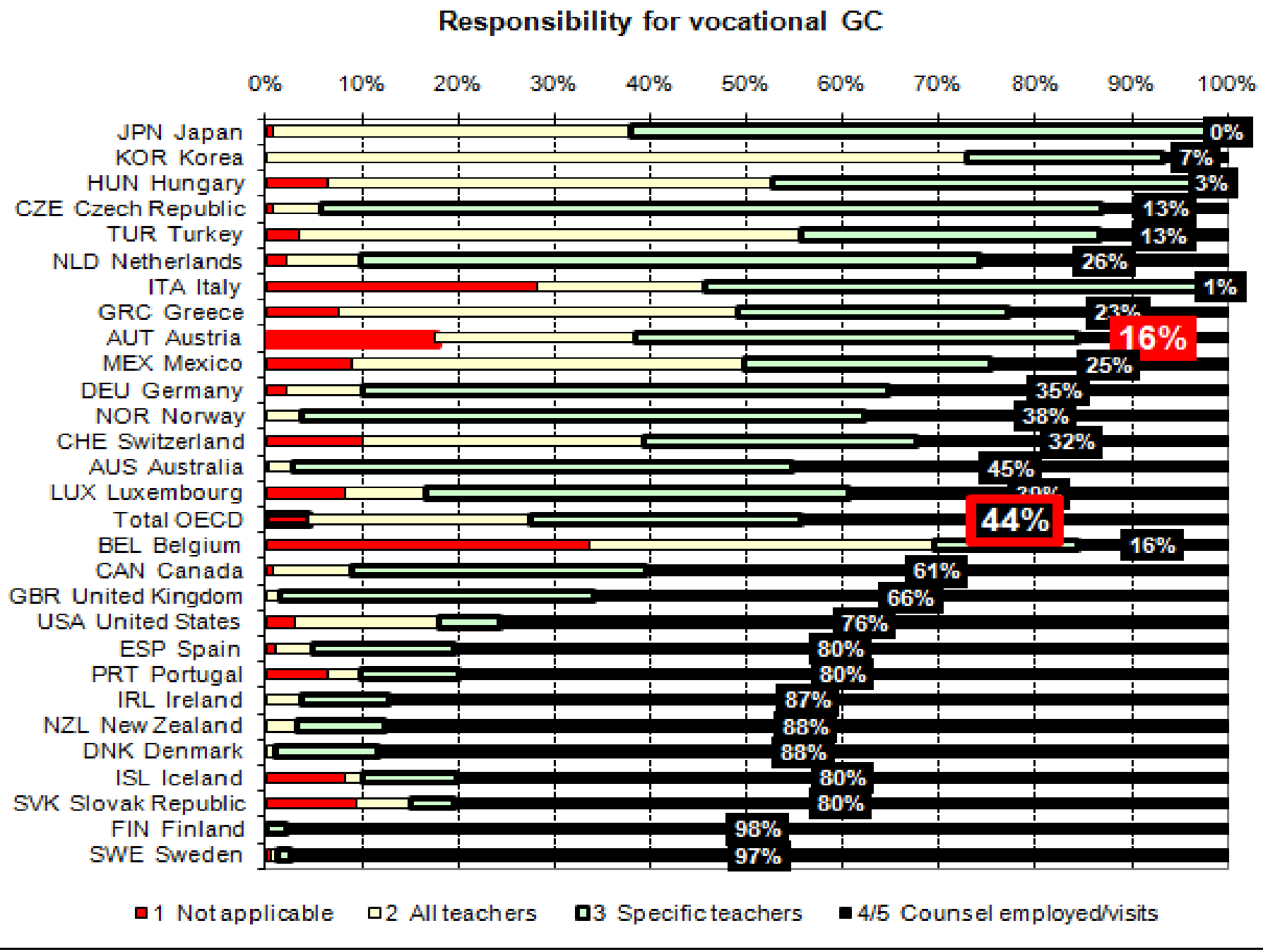
	entprtr3	bucurric3	tertprep3
entprtr3	x	(no.02)	**neg.10**
bucurric3		x	(no.02)
tertprep3			x

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

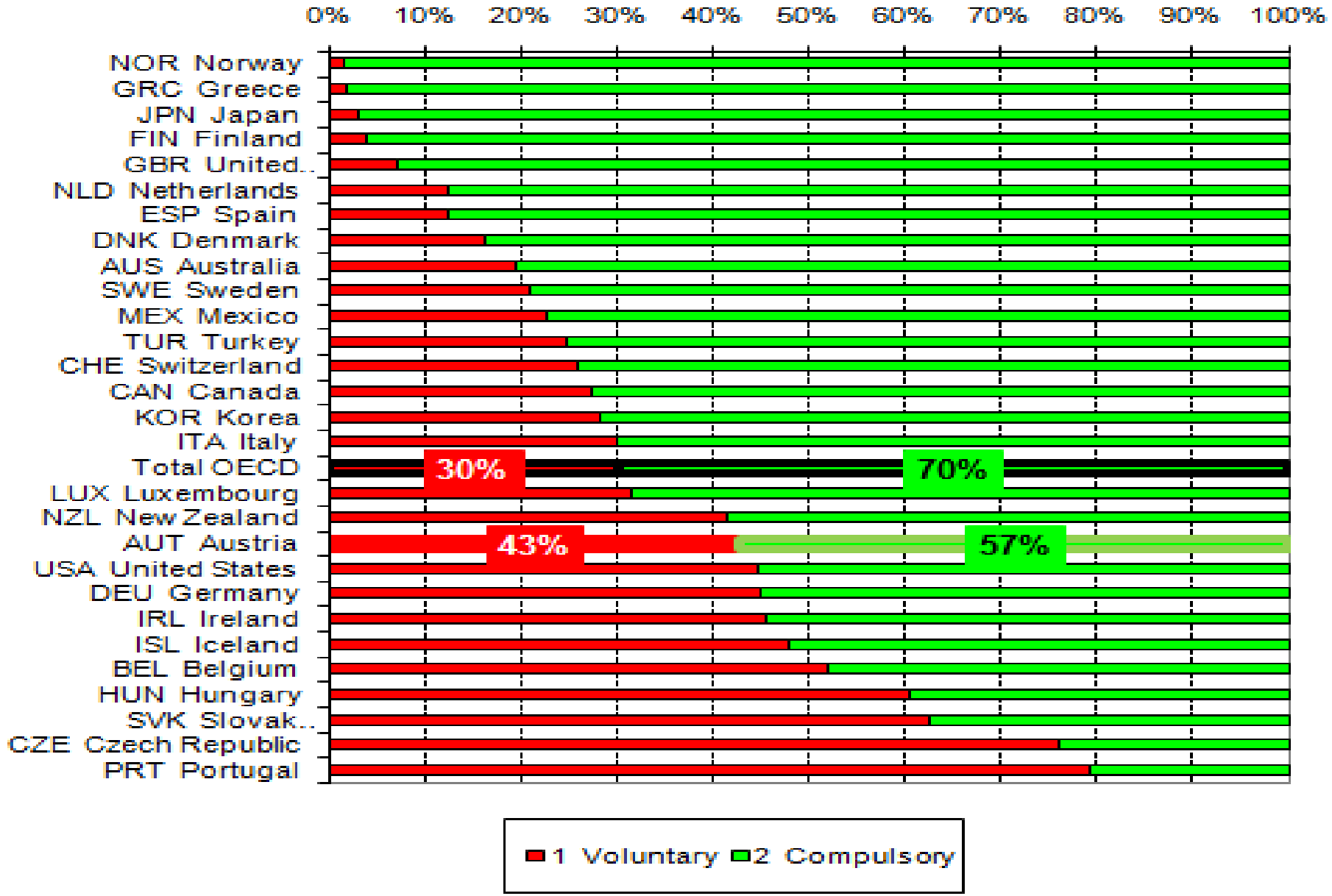
	profcouns	teachcoun	compulsc
profcouns	x	**!defneg.94**	**no.00**
teachcouns		x	**no.00**
compulsc			x

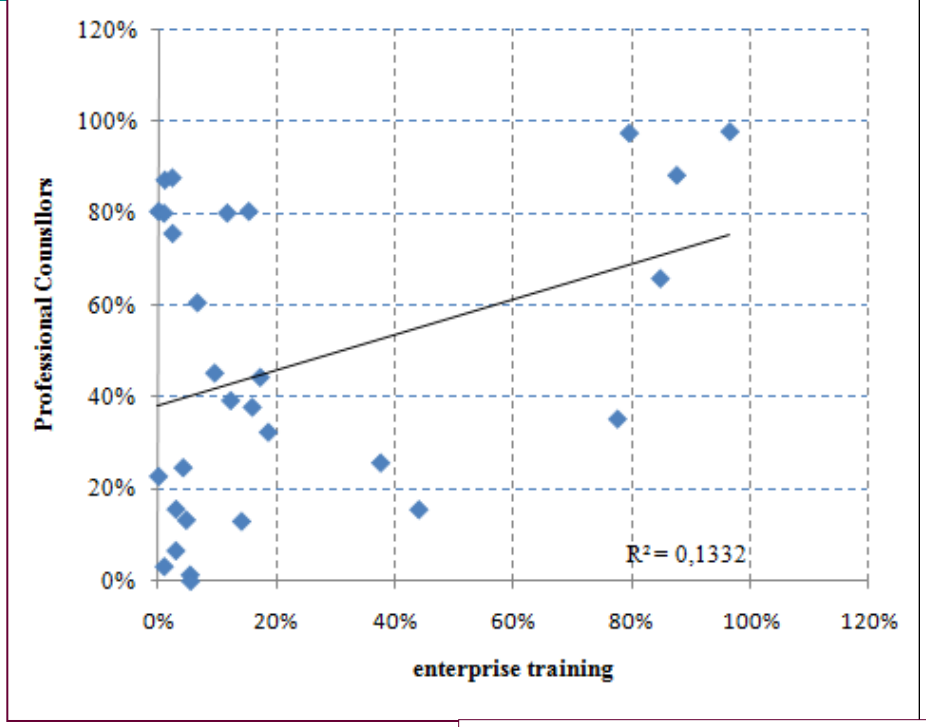
Training in local enterprises



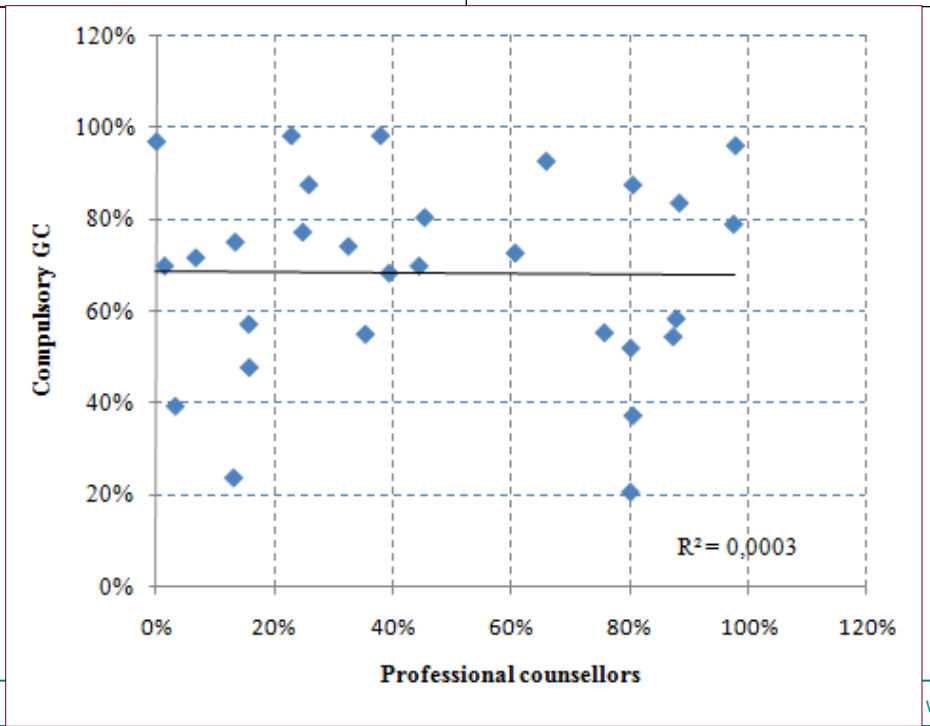

Responsibility for vocational GC
0%
10%
20%
30%
40%
50%
60%
70%
80%
90%
100%
JPN Japan
KOR Korea
HUN Hungary
CZE Czech Republic
TUR Turkey
NLD Netherlands
ITA Italy
GRC Greece
AUT Austria
MEX Mexico
DEU Germany
NOR Norway
CHE Switzerland
AUS Australia
LUX Luxembourg
Total OECD
BEL Belgium
CAN Canada
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

Opportunities for vocational GC




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

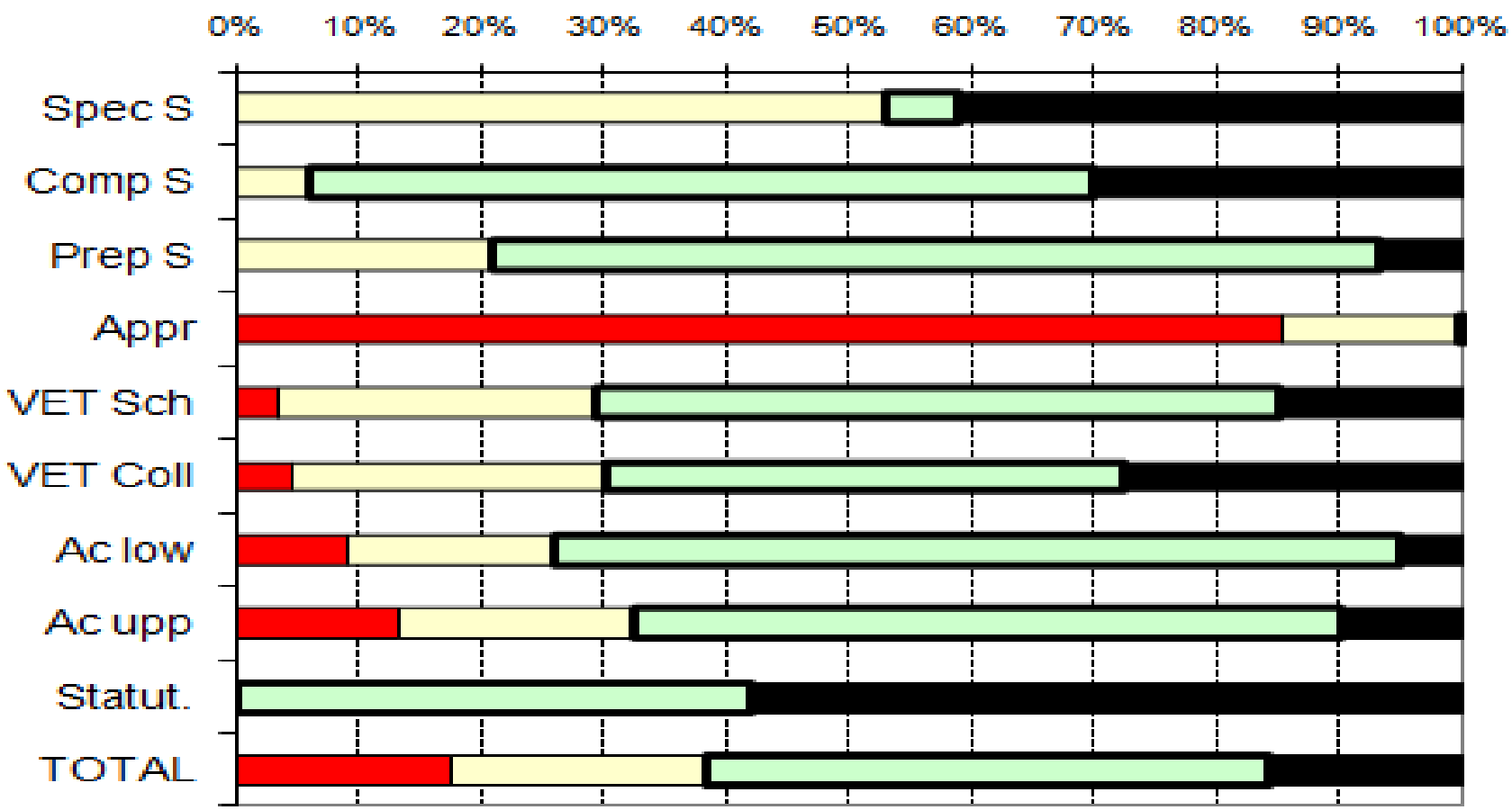

Compulsory GC
120%
100%
80%
60%
40%
20%
0%
0%
20%
40%
60%
80%
100%
120%
enterprise training
R² = 0,093


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

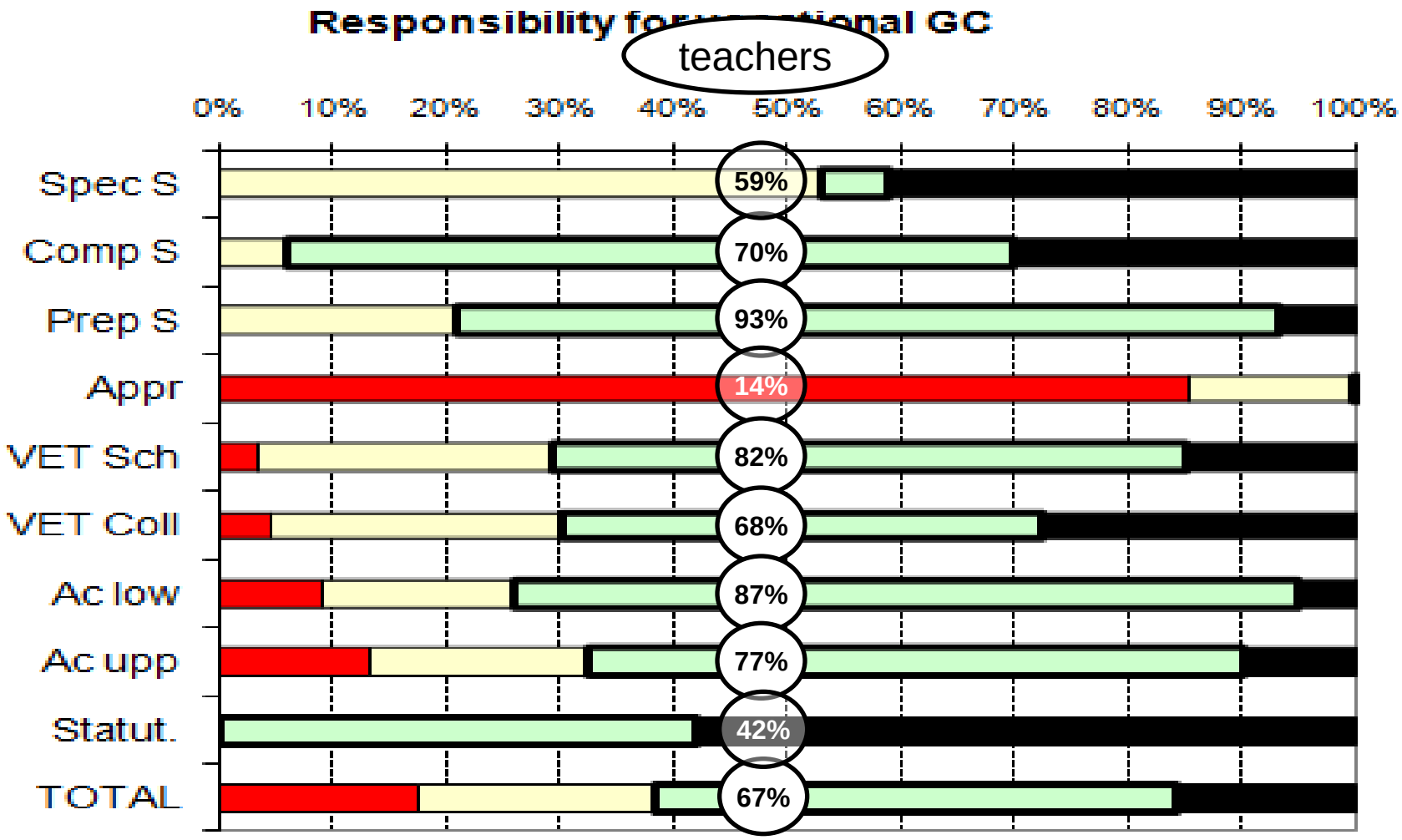
Is Austrian GC „typical“?

- 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 with „prediction“
- …however uses **more teachers** and less professionals, and GC is slightly **less compulsory** than average…
  - not consistent with „prediction“
  - a question for understanding
- …and a substantially **higher proportion** of students are served neither by teachers nor by professionals
  - 18% in Austria vs. 4% OECD average
  - in particular in apprenticeship very small coverage
  - in academic school low coverage

Responsibility for vocational GC



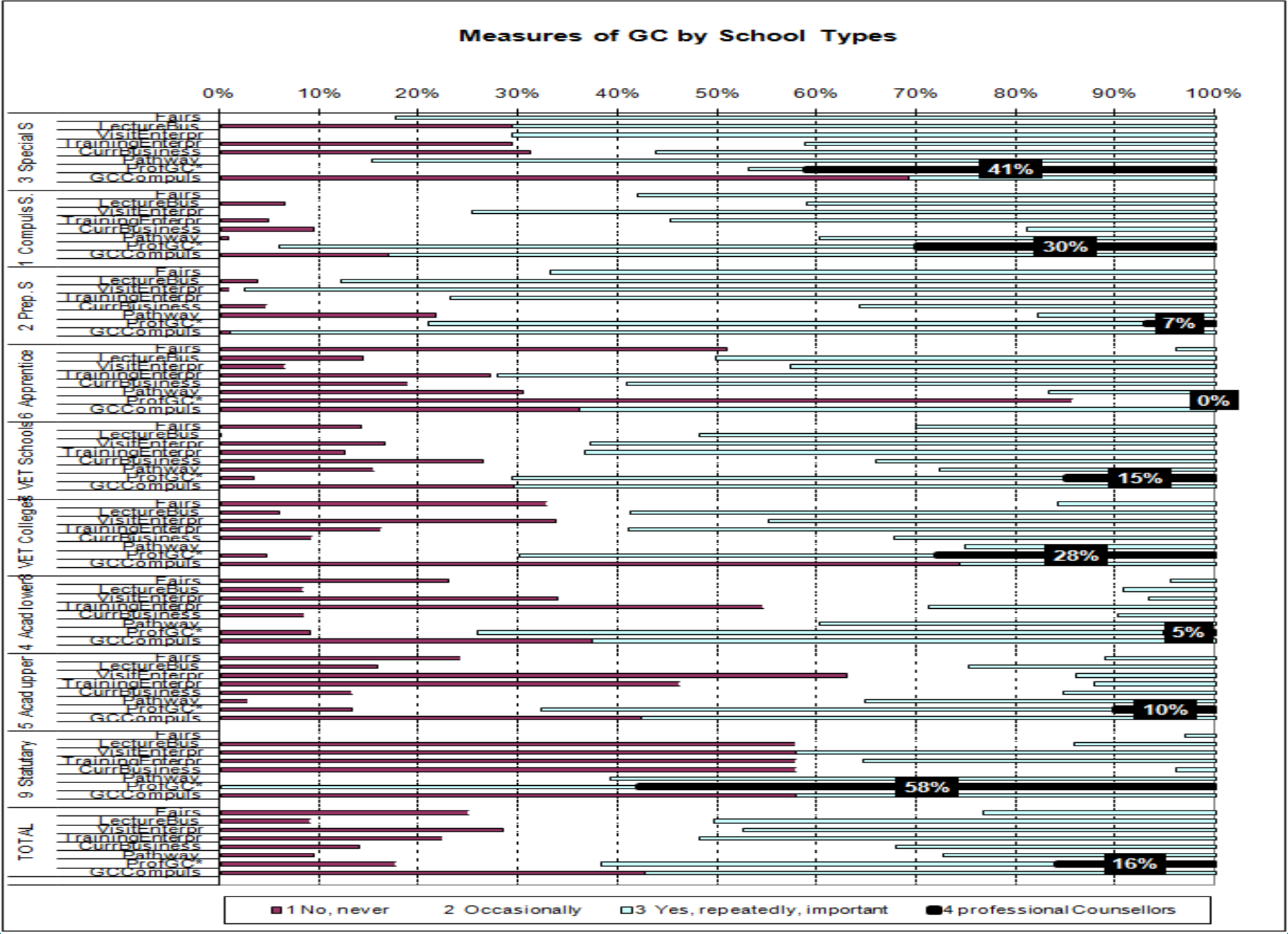
	TOTAL	Statut.	Ac upp	Ac low	VET Coll	VET Sch	Appr	Prep S	Comp S	Spec S
Not applicable	18%	0%	13%	9%	5%	3%	86%	0%	0%	0%
All teachers	21%	0%	19%	17%	26%	26%	14%	21%	6%	53%
Specific teachers	46%	42%	58%	69%	42%	56%	0%	72%	64%	6%
Counsel employed	16%	58%	10%	5%	28%	15%	0%	7%	30%	41%

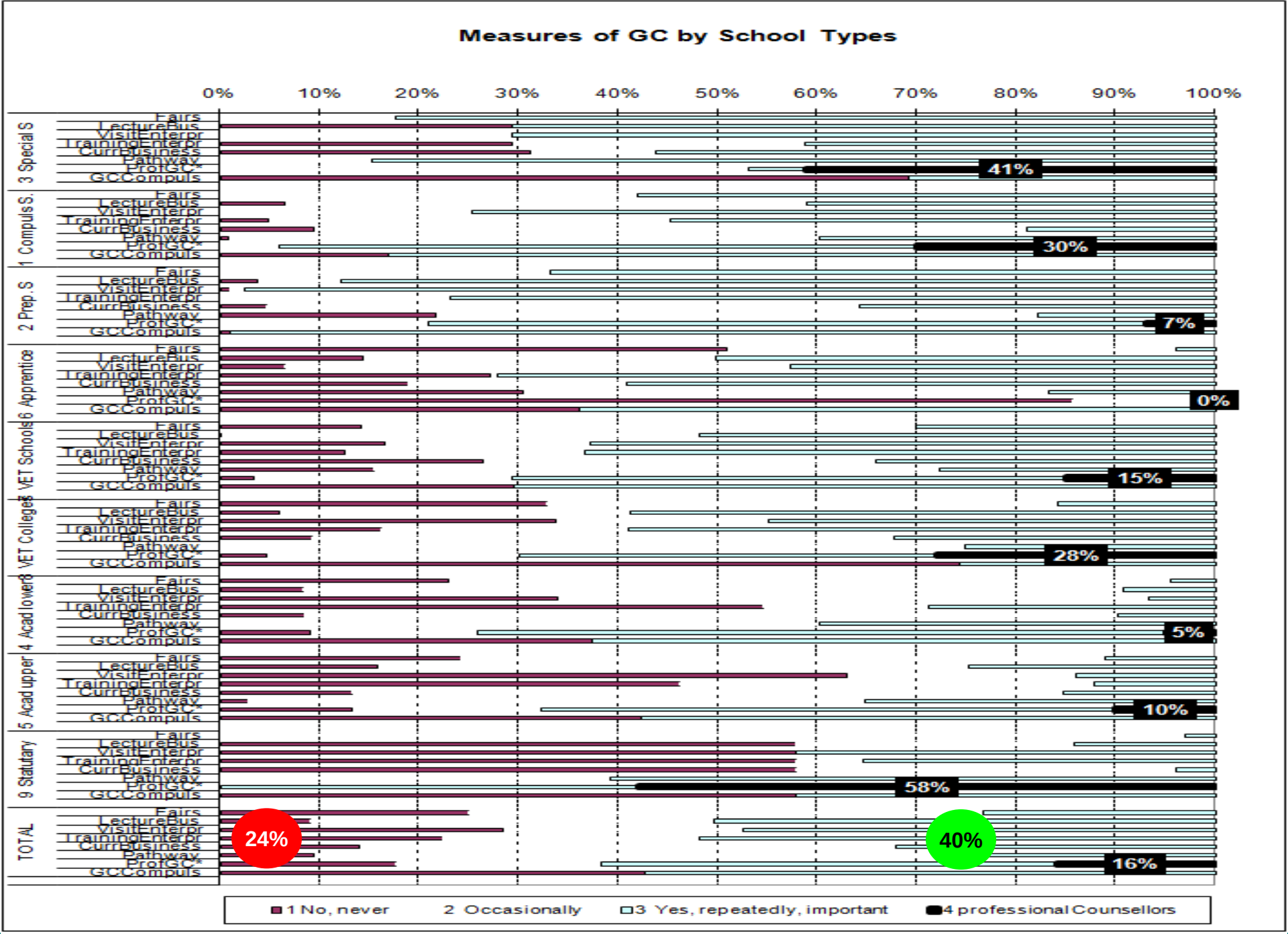


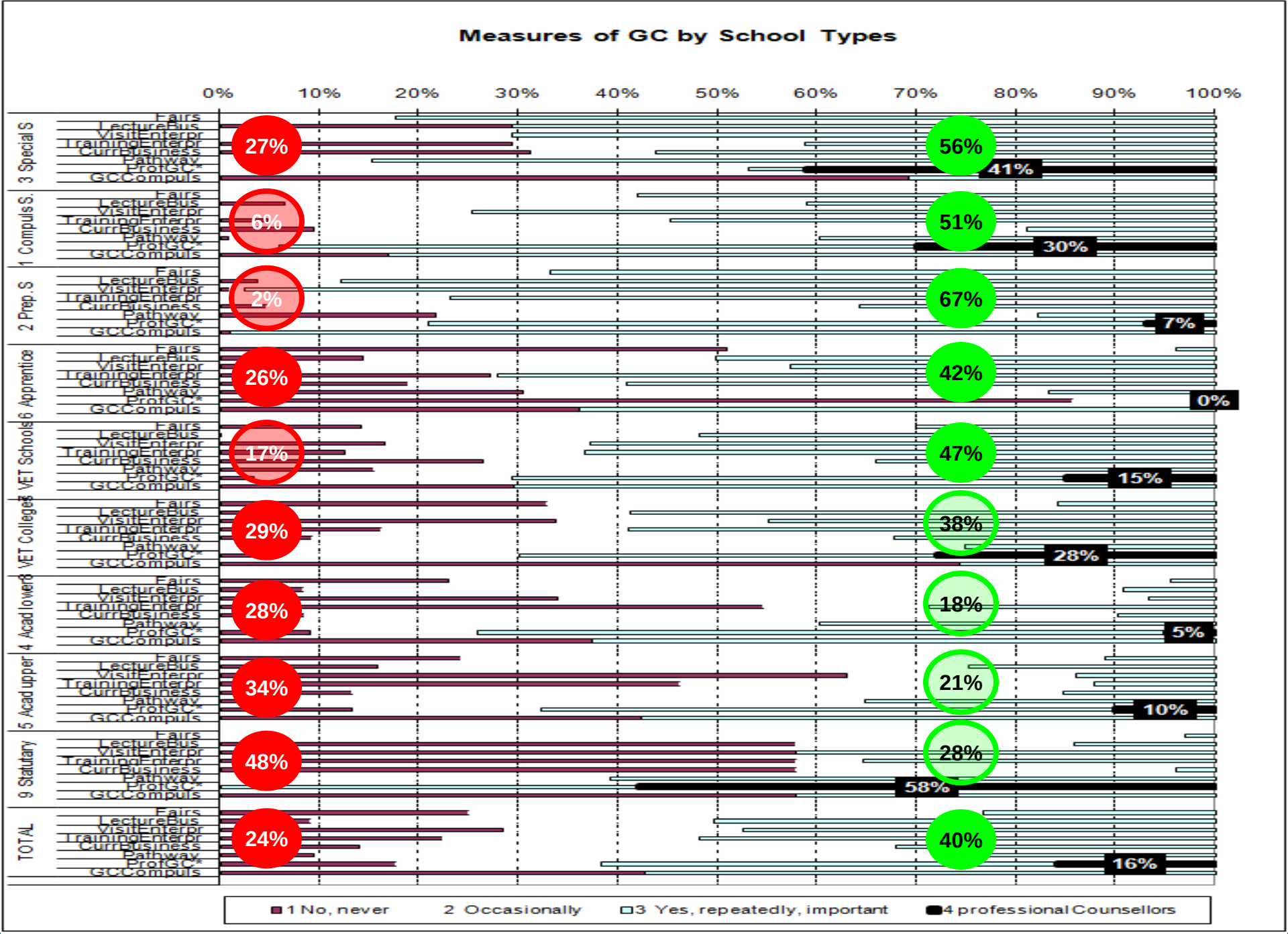
	TOTAL	Statut.	Ac upp	Ac low	VET Coll	VET Sch	Appr	Prep S	Comp S	Spec S
Not applicable	18%	0%	13%	9%	5%	3%	86%	0%	0%	0%
All teachers	21%	0%	19%	17%	26%	26%	14%	21%	6%	53%
Specific teachers	46%	42%	58%	69%	42%	56%	0%	72%	64%	6%
Counsel employed	16%	58%	10%	5%	28%	15%	0%	7%	30%	41%

Is Austrian GC „typical“?

- The Austrian ET model comprises…
  - …more enterprise training and more business dominated curricula
  - …less preparation to tertiary pathways
- Austria uses all instruments slightly above average …
  - consistent with „prediction“
- …however uses more teachers and less professionals, and GC is slightly less compulsory than average…
  - not consistent with „prediction“
- …and a higher proportion of students are served neither by teachers nor by professionals
  - 18% in Austria vs. 4% OECD average
- If we take an average of all instruments, we see that…
  - …1 out of 4 students is not served by any, and 40% are served well
- There are some differences between the school types
  - the preparatory school is served most, and lower level schools quite well
  - apprenticeship on average
  - the academic schools and VET colleges are served below average


Measures of GC by School Types
0%
10%
20%
30%
40%
50%
60%
70%
80%
90%
100%
3 Special S
Compuls S.
1
2 Prep. S
Apprentice
6
VET Schools
7
VET Colleges
8
4 Acad lower
5 Acad upper
9 Statutary
TOTAL
Fairs
LectureBus
VisitEnterpr
TrainingEnterpr
CurrBusiness
Pathway
ProfGC*
GCCompuls
41%
30%
7%
0%
15%
28%
5%
10%
58%
16%
1 No, never
2 Occasionally
3 Yes, repeatedly, important
4 professional Counsellors


Measures of GC by School Types
0%
10%
20%
30%
40%
50%
60%
70%
80%
90%
100%
3 Special S
1 Compuls S.
2 Prep. S
6 Apprentice
VET Schools
VET Colleges
4 Acad lower
5 Acad upper
9 Statutary
TOTAL
Fairs
LectureBus
VisitEnterpr
TrainingEnterpr
CurrBusiness
Pathway
ProfGC*
GCCompuls
41%
30%
7%
0%
15%
28%
5%
10%
58%
24%
40%
16%
1 No, never
2 Occasionally
3 Yes, repeatedly, important
4 professional Counsellors


Measures of GC by School Types
0%
10%
20%
30%
40%
50%
60%
70%
80%
90%
100%
3 Special S
1 Compuls S.
2 Prep. S
6 Apprentice
VET Schools
VET Colleges
4 Acad lower
5 Acad upper
9 Statutary
TOTAL
Fairs
LectureBus
VisitEnterpr
TrainingEnterpr
CurrBusiness
Pathway
ProfGC*
GCCompuls
27%
56%
41%
6%
51%
30%
2%
67%
7%
26%
42%
0%
17%
47%
15%
29%
38%
28%
28%
18%
5%
34%
21%
10%
48%
28%
58%
24%
40%
16%
1 No, never
2 Occasionally
3 Yes, repeatedly, important
4 professional Counsellors

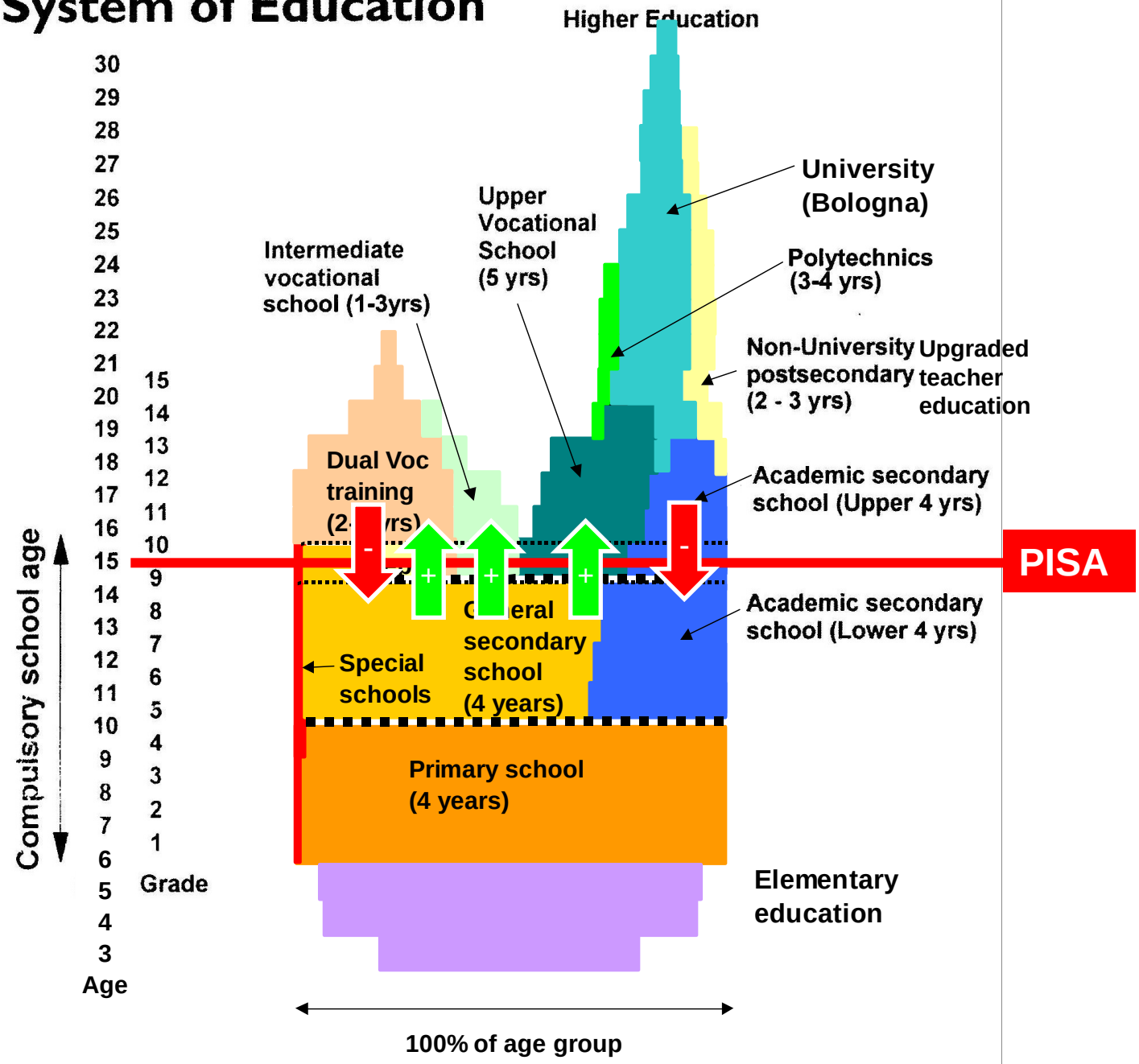
Agenda

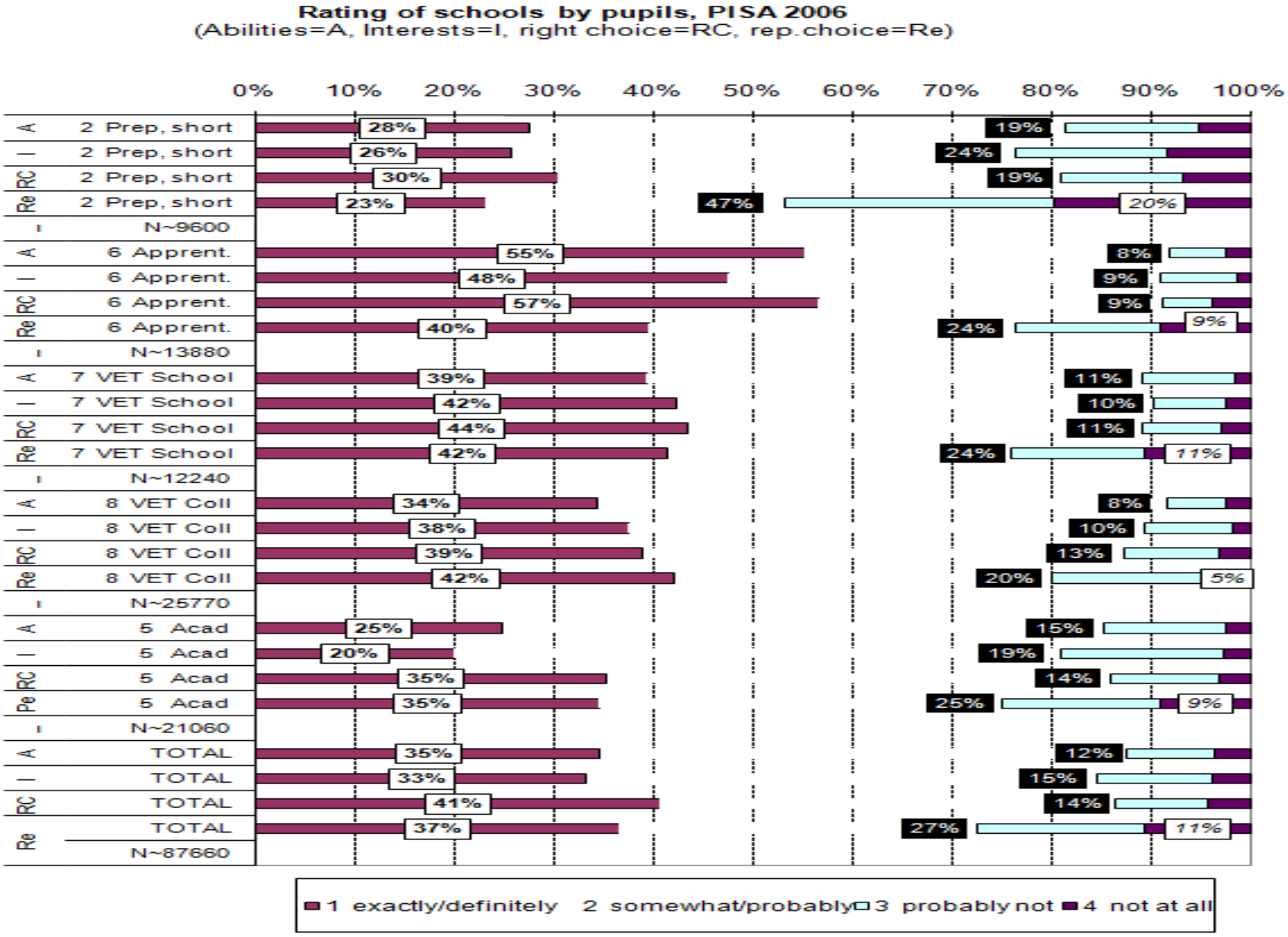
- **Constraints for choice in the Austrian education & training (ET) system**
  - ET system as an opportunity structure of social background, selection and choice
- **Guidance and counselling (GC) system and policy**
  - Description based on comparative data (PISA 2006)
- **How 'good' are students' choices?**
  - Some empirical indications about how to assess them
- **Conclusions: Policy choices**
  - Structural problems and limits of GC

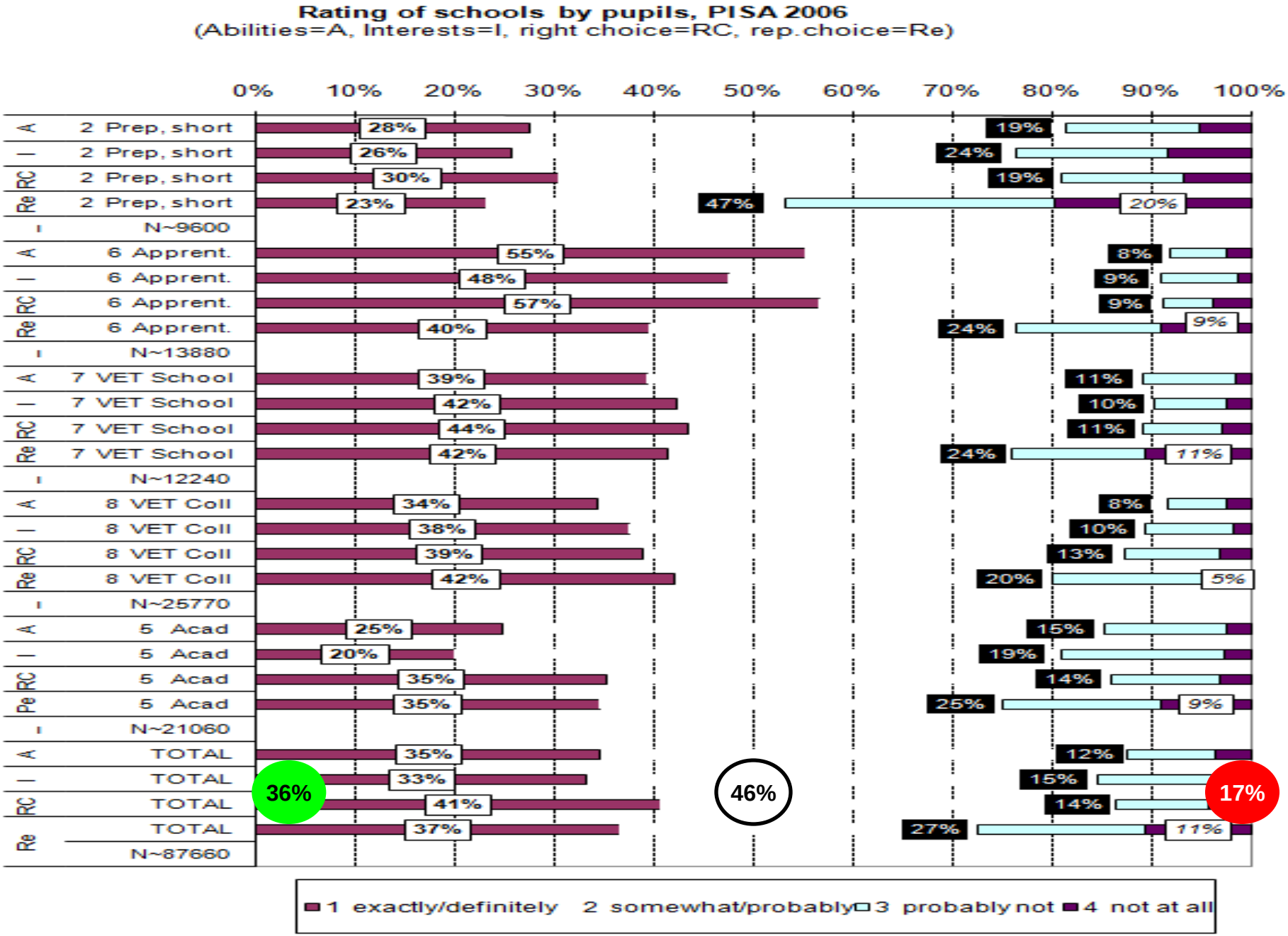
Information about choice

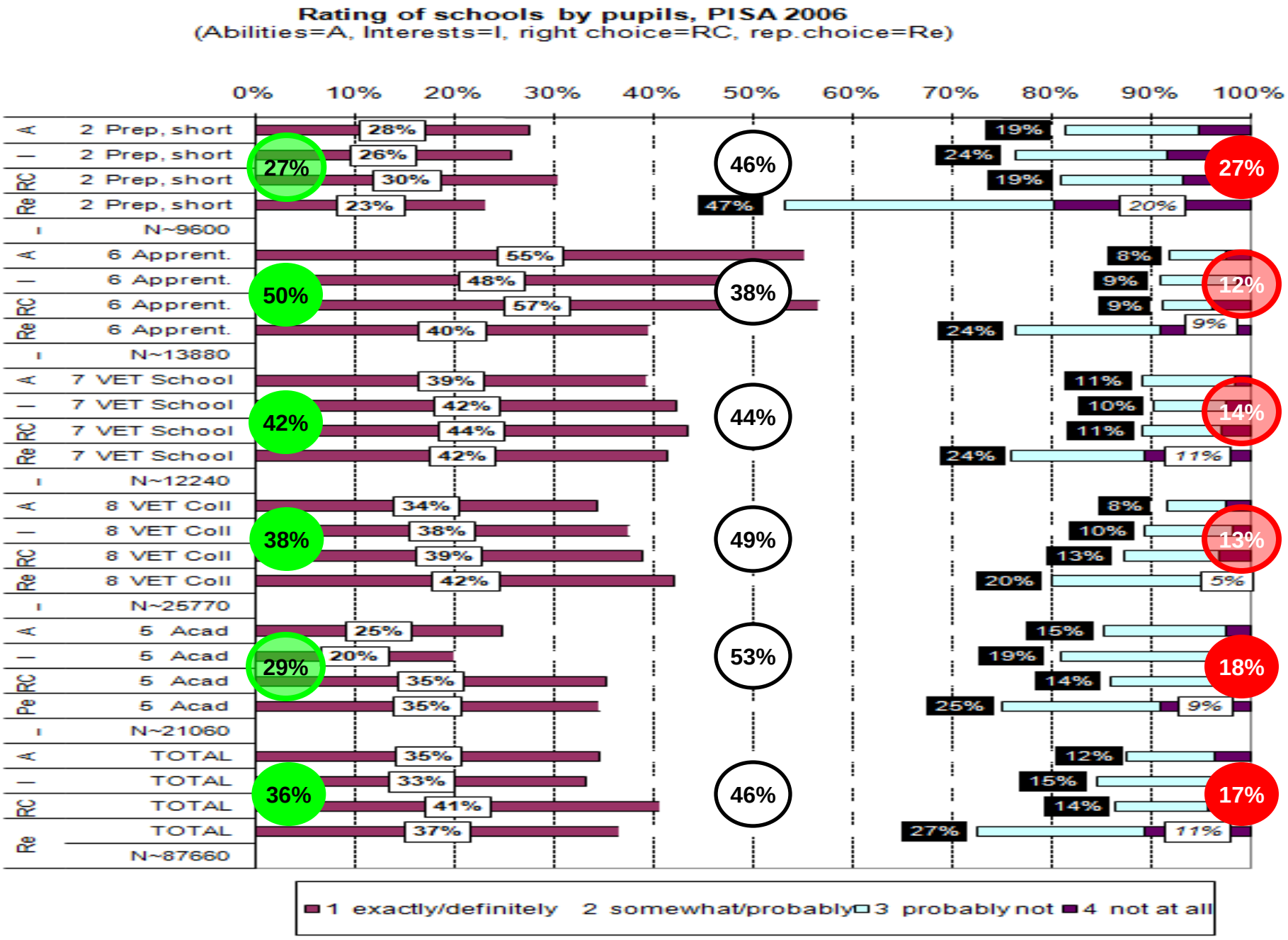
- Descriptive **information based on PISA**, cross-section at age 15
  - Rating of students about four aspects: abilities, interests, right choice, repetition of choice
- Does the programme accessed corespond to **abilities**?
  - **35%++** / 53%~+ / **12%**-
- Does the programme accessed corespond to **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 ⇧

System of Education



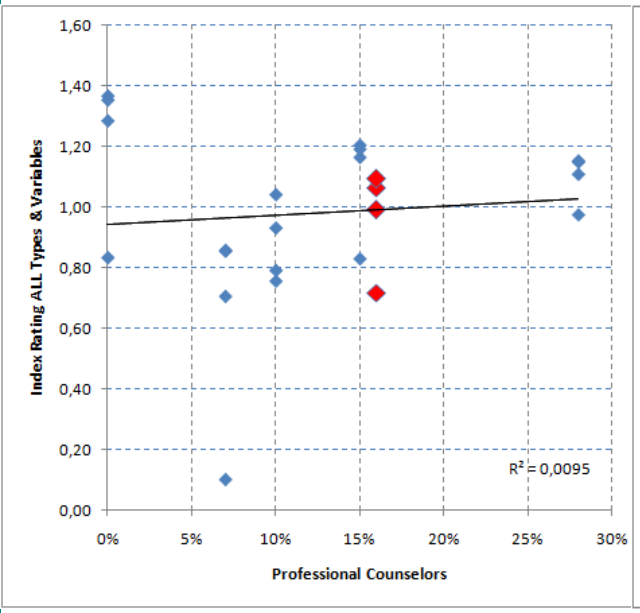

Rating of schools by pupils, PISA 2006
(Abilities=A, Interests=I, right choice=RC, rep.choice=Re)
0%
10%
20%
30%
40%
50%
60%
70%
80%
90%
100%
A 2 Prep, short 28% 19%
I 2 Prep, short 26% 24%
RC 2 Prep, short 30% 19%
Re 2 Prep, short 23% 47% 20%
N~9600
A 6 Apprent. 55% 8%
I 6 Apprent. 48% 9%
RC 6 Apprent. 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

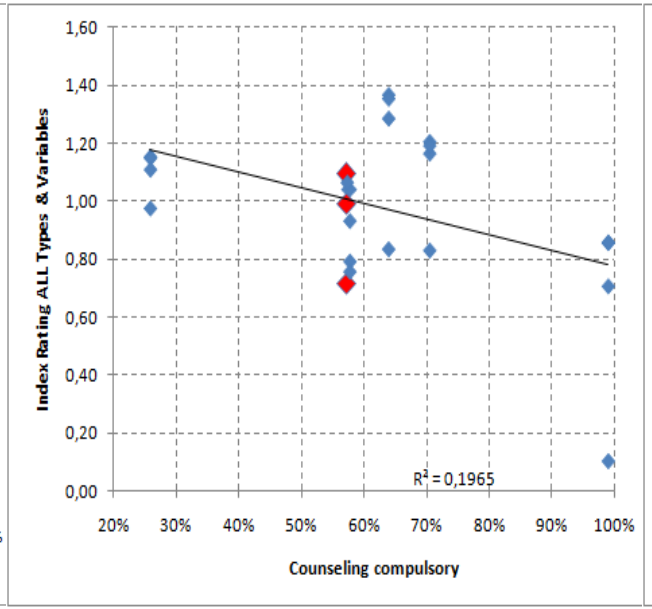

Rating of schools by pupils, PISA 2006
(Abilities=A, Interests=I, right choice=RC, rep.choice=Re)
0%
10%
20%
30%
40%
50%
60%
70%
80%
90%
100%
A 2 Prep, short
I 2 Prep, short
RC 2 Prep, short
Re 2 Prep, short
28%
26%
30%
23%
47%
19%
24%
19%
20%
N~9600
A 6 Apprent.
I 6 Apprent.
RC 6 Apprent.
Re 6 Apprent.
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%
36%
46%
17%
N~87660
1 exactly/definitely
2 somewhat/probably
3 probably not
4 not at all

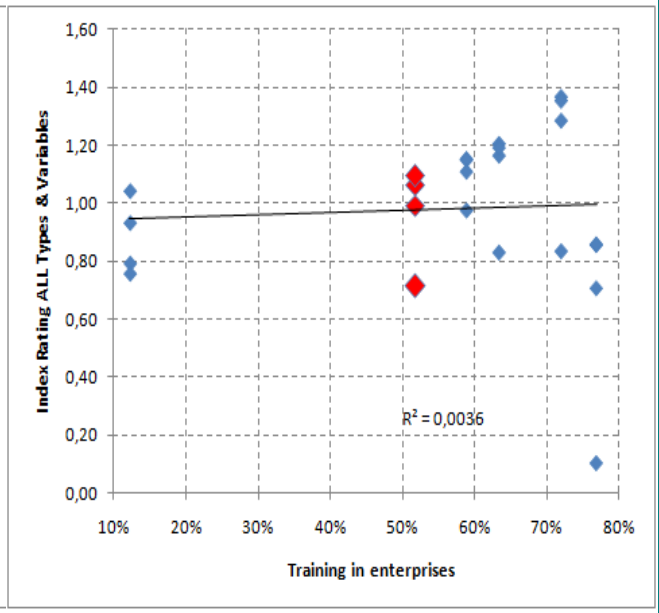

Rating of schools by pupils, PISA 2006
(Abilities=A, Interests=I, right choice=RC, rep.choice=Re)
0%
10%
20%
30%
40%
50%
60%
70%
80%
90%
100%
A
I
RC
Re
2 Prep, short
N~9600
6 Apprent.
N~13880
7 VET School
N~12240
8 VET Coll
N~25770
5 Acad
N~21060
TOTAL
N~87660
28%
26%
30%
23%
27%
46%
19%
24%
19%
47%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

Austria: Crossection GC x Rating

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







Agenda

- **Constraints for choice in the Austrian education & training (ET) system**
  - ET system as an opportunity structure of social background, selection and choice
- **Guidance and counselling (GC) system and policy**
  - Description based on comparative data (PISA 2006)
- **How 'good' are students' choices?**
  - Some empirical indications about how to assess them
- **Conclusions: Policy choices**
  - Structural problems and limits of GC

Big 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 somewhat (36+46=82%)

Summary

- ET system makes difficult choices at early age necessary
- GC system relies heavily on teachers and somewhat on voluntary access, leaves out 1 in 4
- Effects are difficult to assess
  - What should we expect?
- How should the limits of guidance be tackeled by policy?

Other empirical accounts

- Eder, F. & Reiter, C. (2003) Interessen und Schullaufbahn, in: C. Wallner-Paschon & G. Haider (Hrsg.). PISA PLUS 2000. Thematische Analysen nationaler Projekte. Innsbruck:StudienVerlag (S. 111-116).

The End

Material