

Is the sky the limit to educational improvement?

Woodrow Wilson Center Conference
Washington, D.C., 16 July 2009

Prof. Andreas Schleicher
Head, Indicators and Analysis Division
OECD Directorate for Education

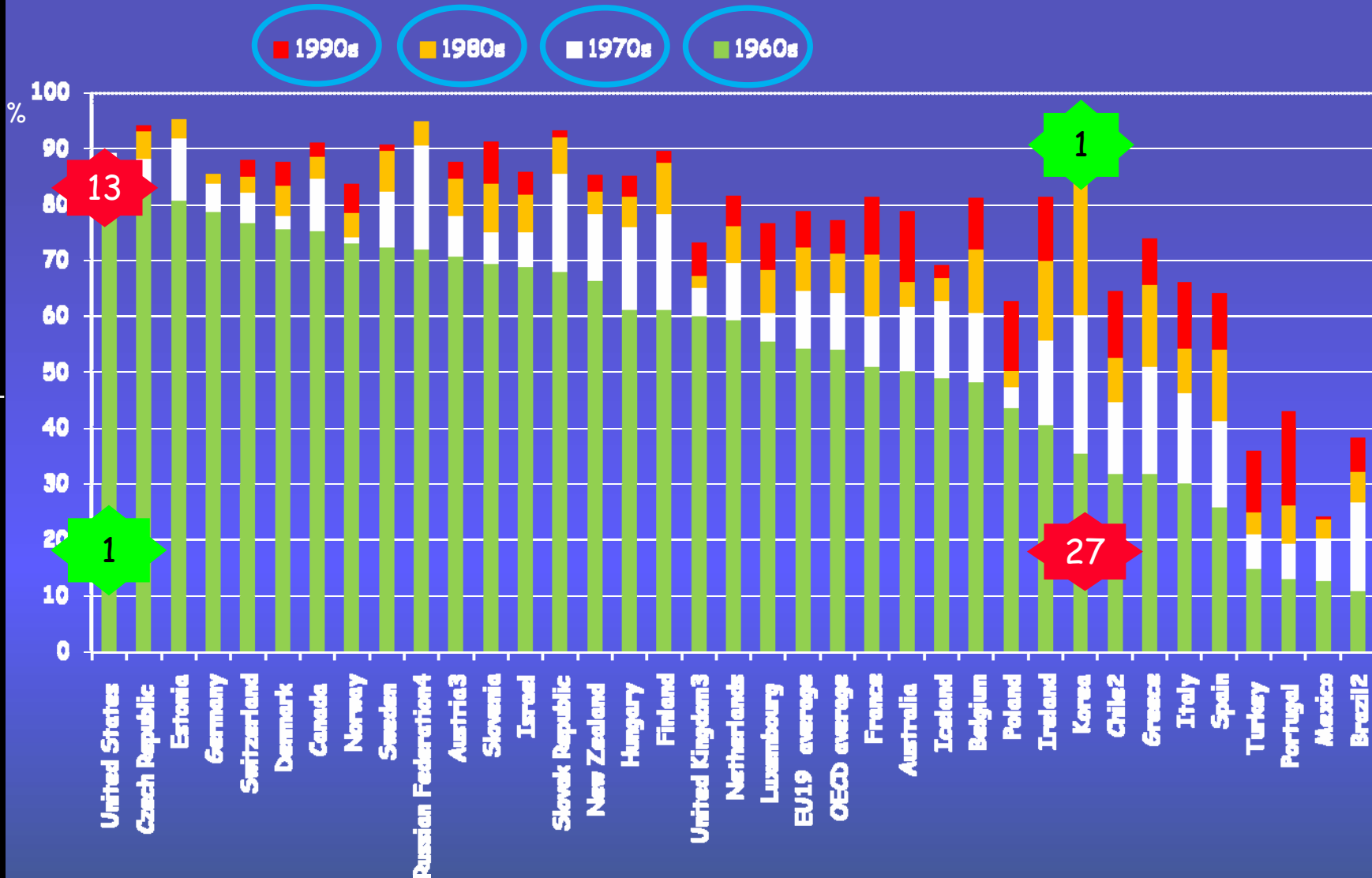
A man in a wetsuit is surfing inside the barrel of a large, curling wave. The water is a vibrant turquoise color, and the surfer is crouched low on his board, looking towards the camera. The wave's crest is curling over him, creating a tunnel-like effect.

There is nowhere to hide

The yardstick for success is no longer improvement by national standards but the best performing education systems

A world of change in baseline qualifications

Approximated by percentage of persons with high school or equivalent qualifications in the age groups 55-64, 45-55, 45-44 und 25-34 years



1. Excluding ISCED 3C short programmes
3. Including some ISCED 3C short programmes

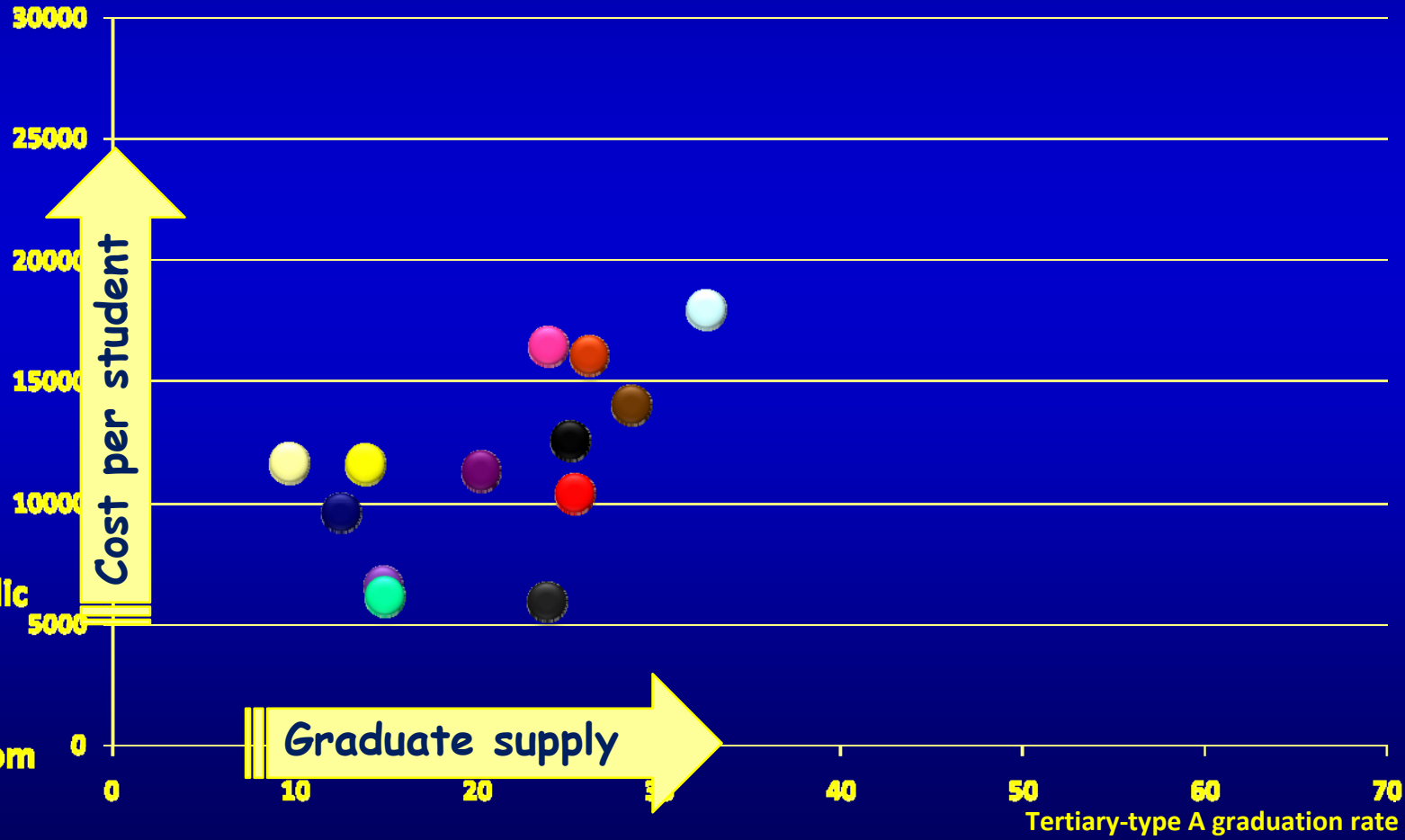
2. Year of reference 2004
3. Year of reference 2003.

A world of change - college education

1995

- Australia
- Austria
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
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- Germany
- Greece
- Hungary
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Expenditure per student at tertiary level (USD)



Cost per student

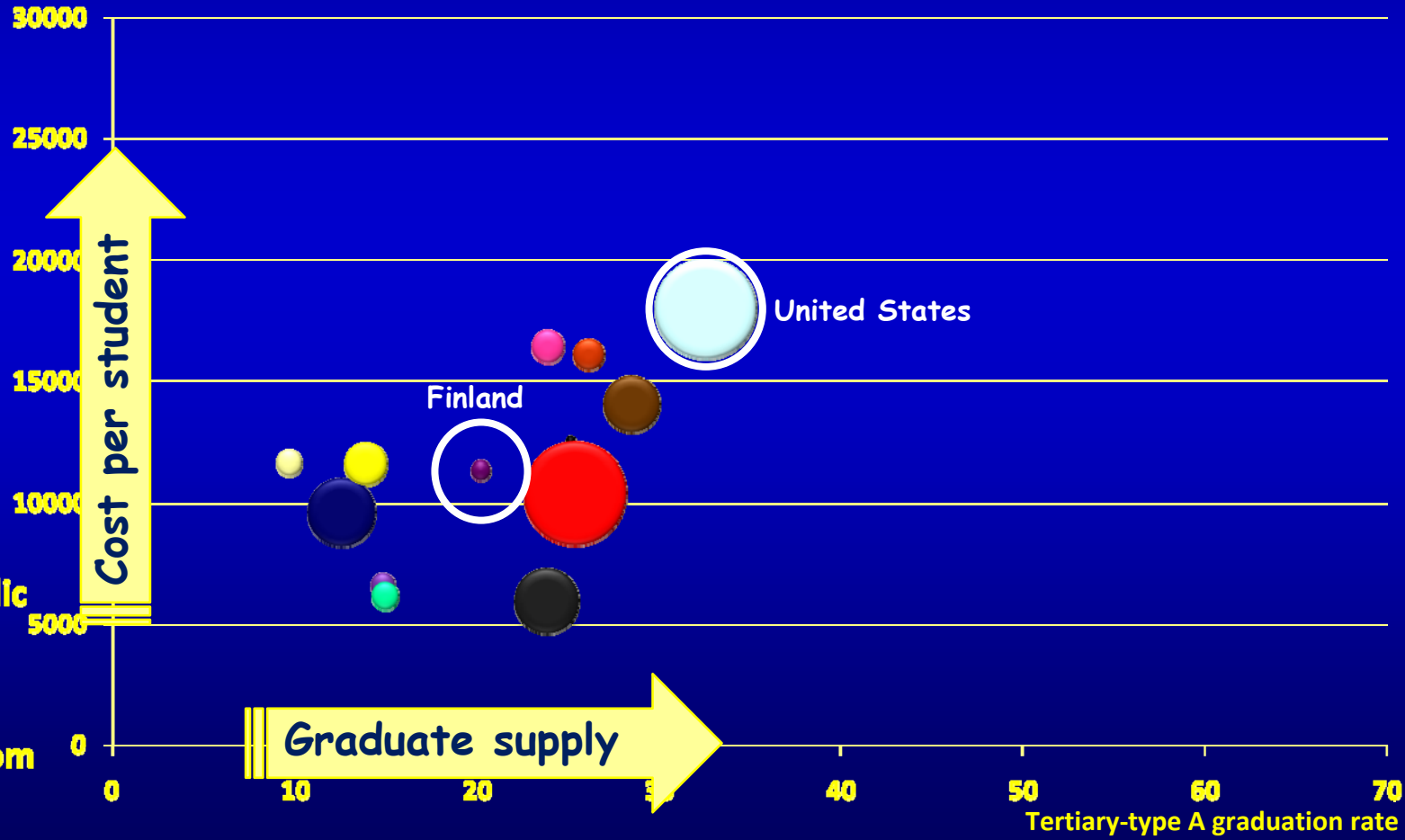
Graduate supply

A world of change - college education

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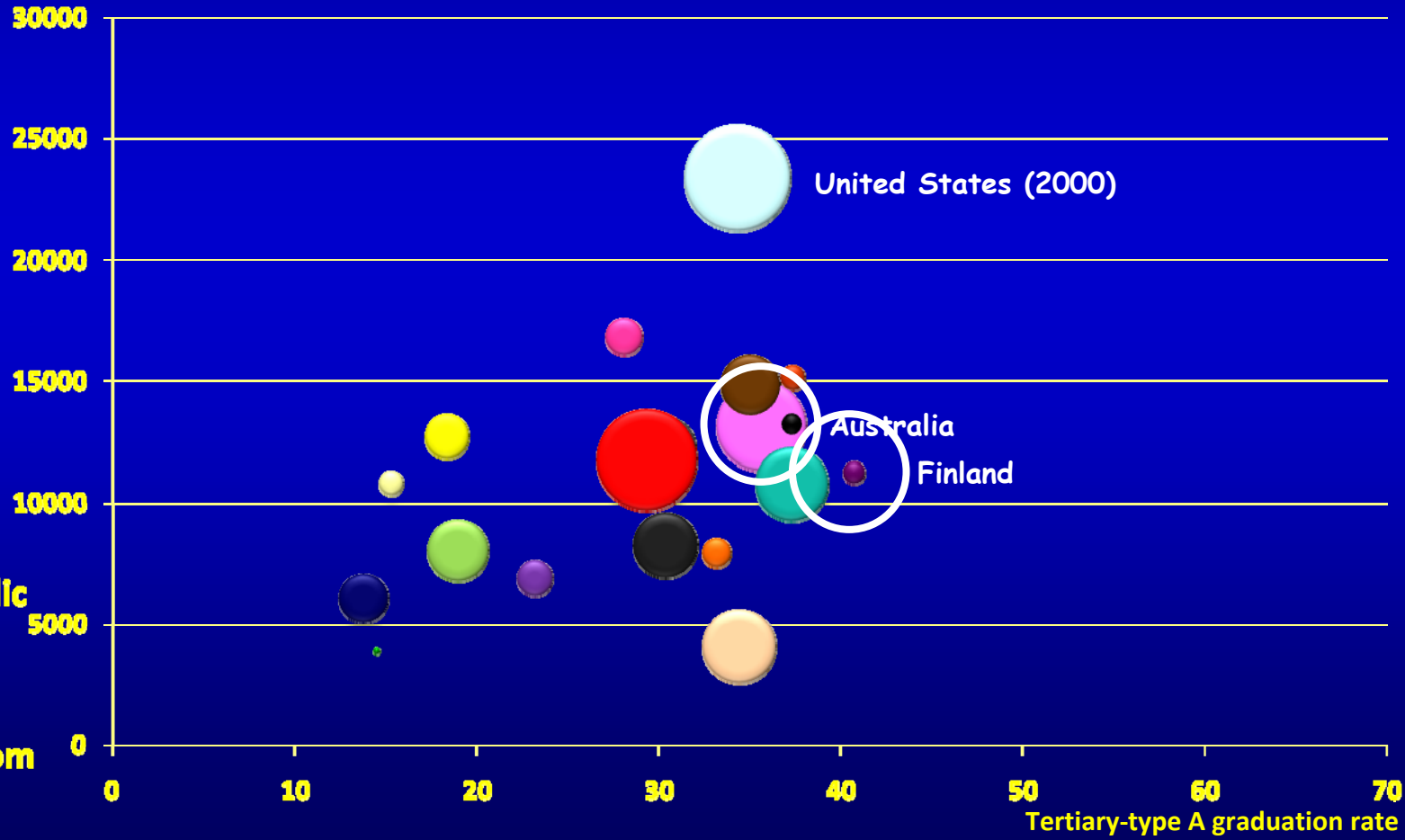


A world of change - college education

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Expenditure per student at tertiary level (USD)

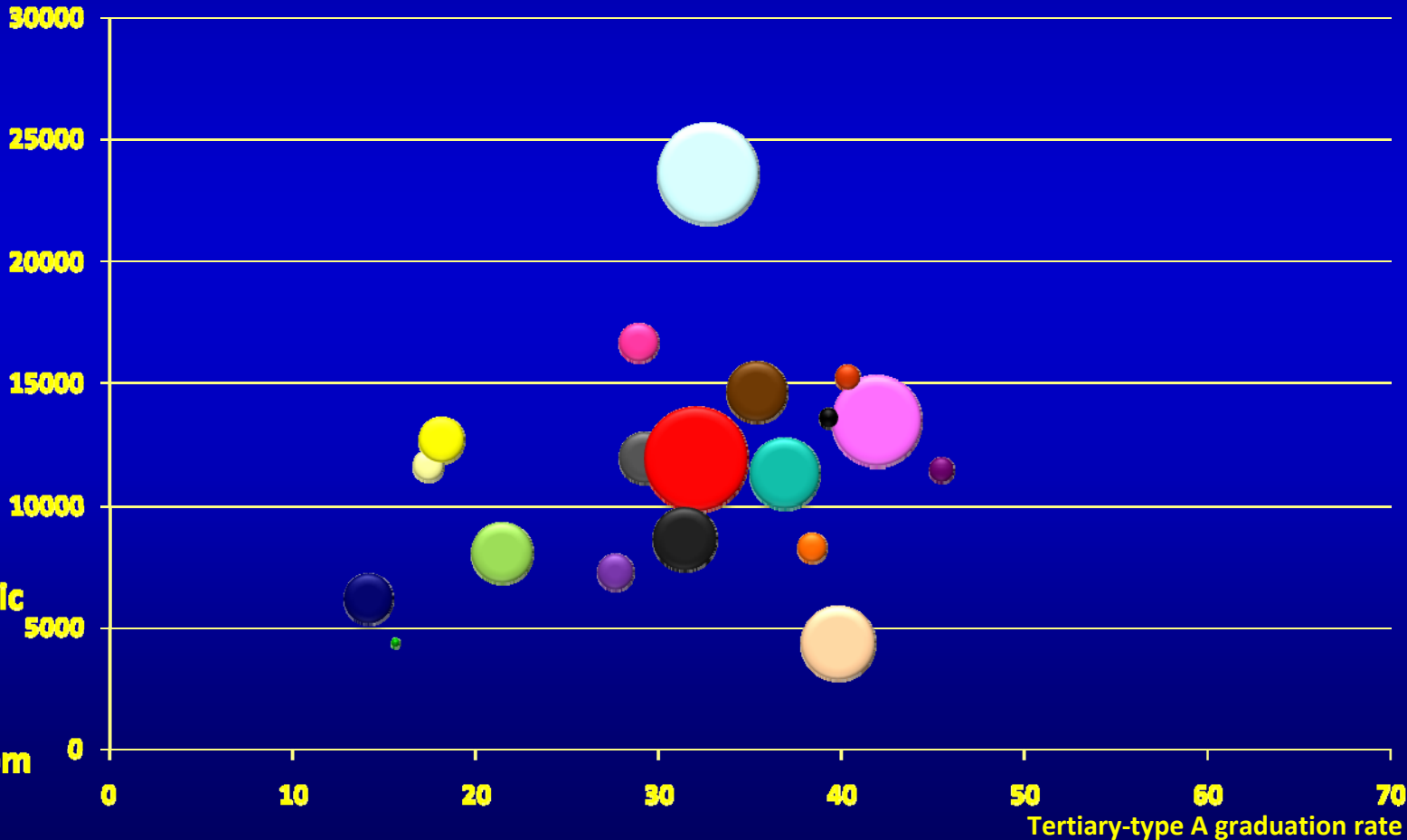


A world of change - college education

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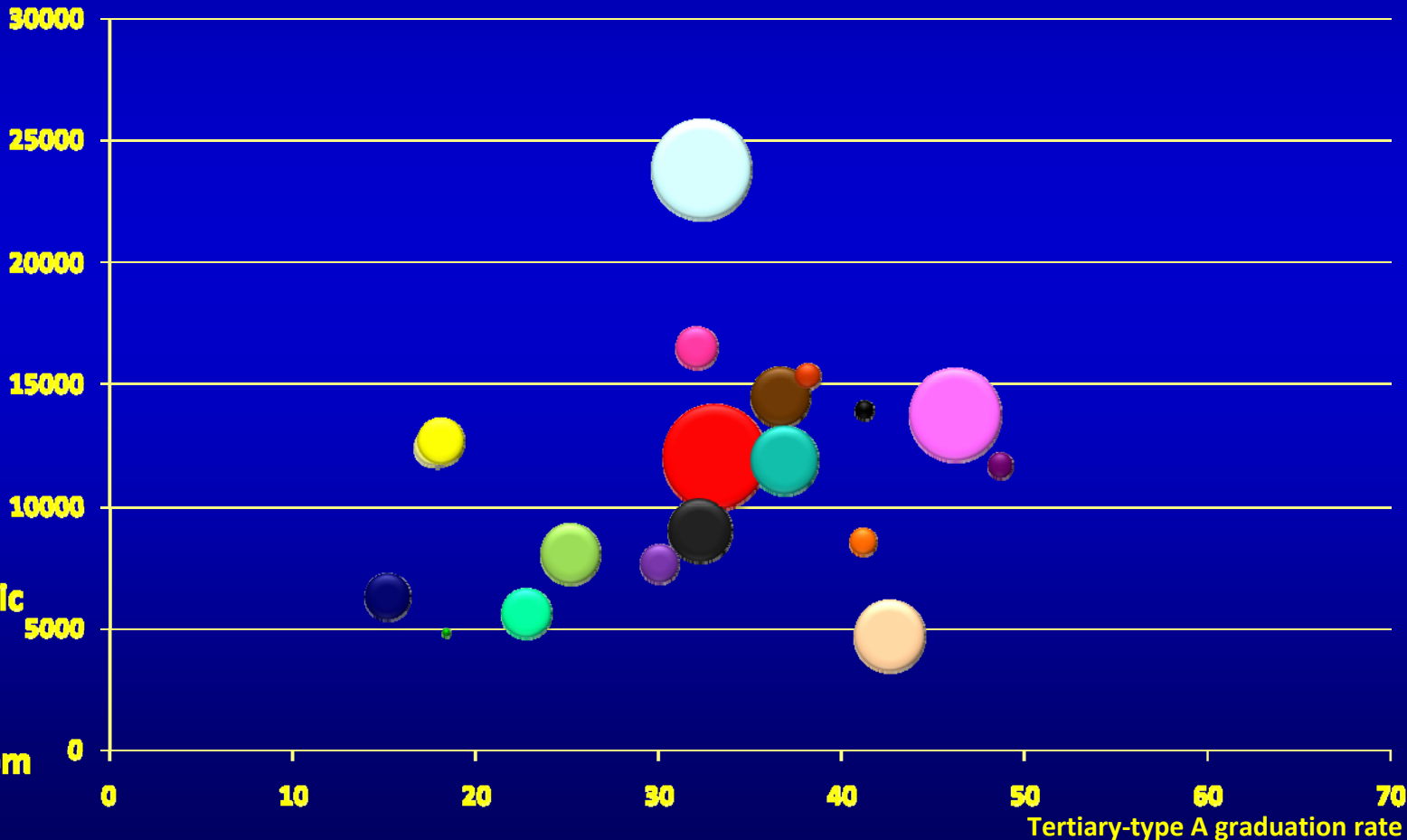


A world of change - college education

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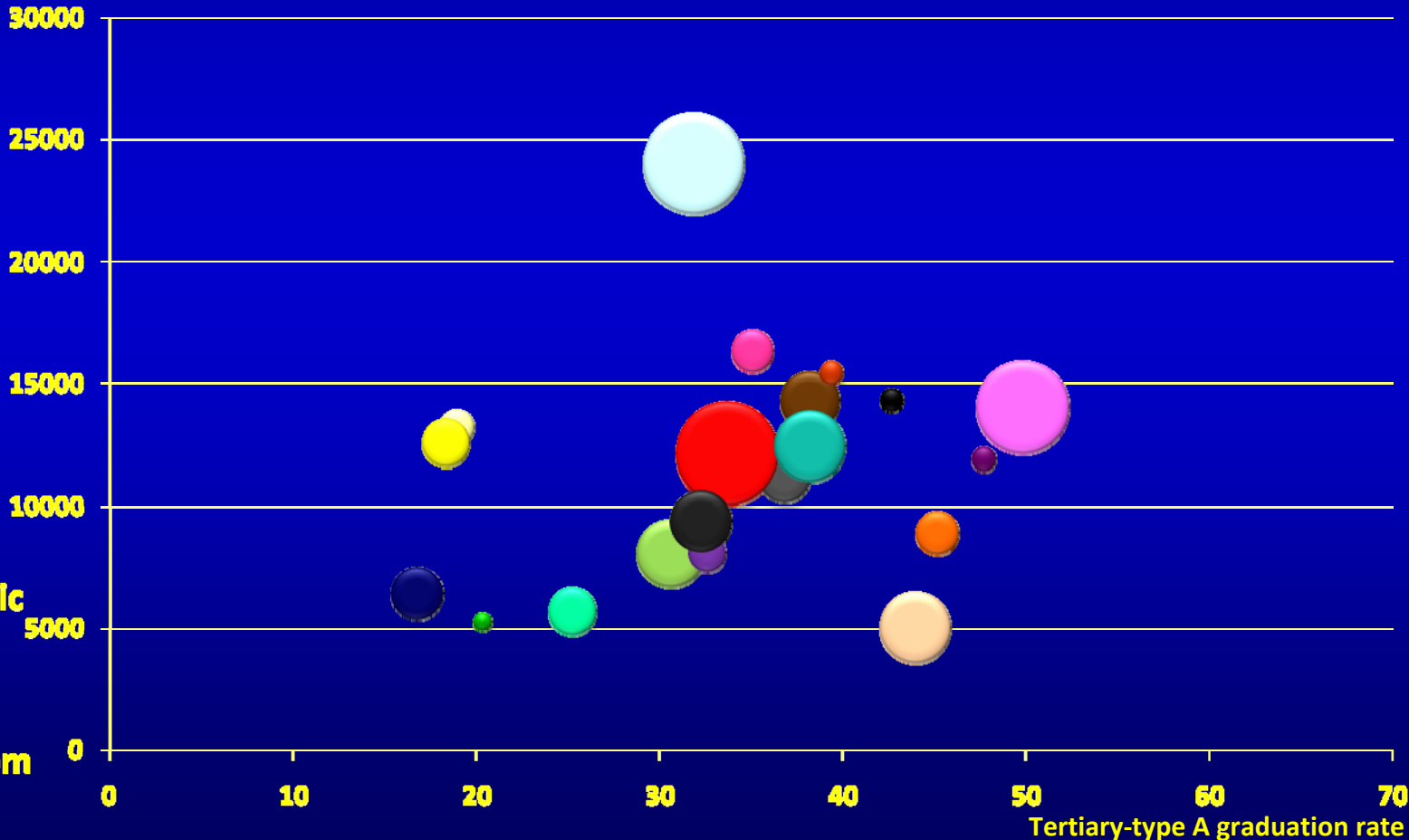


A world of change - college education

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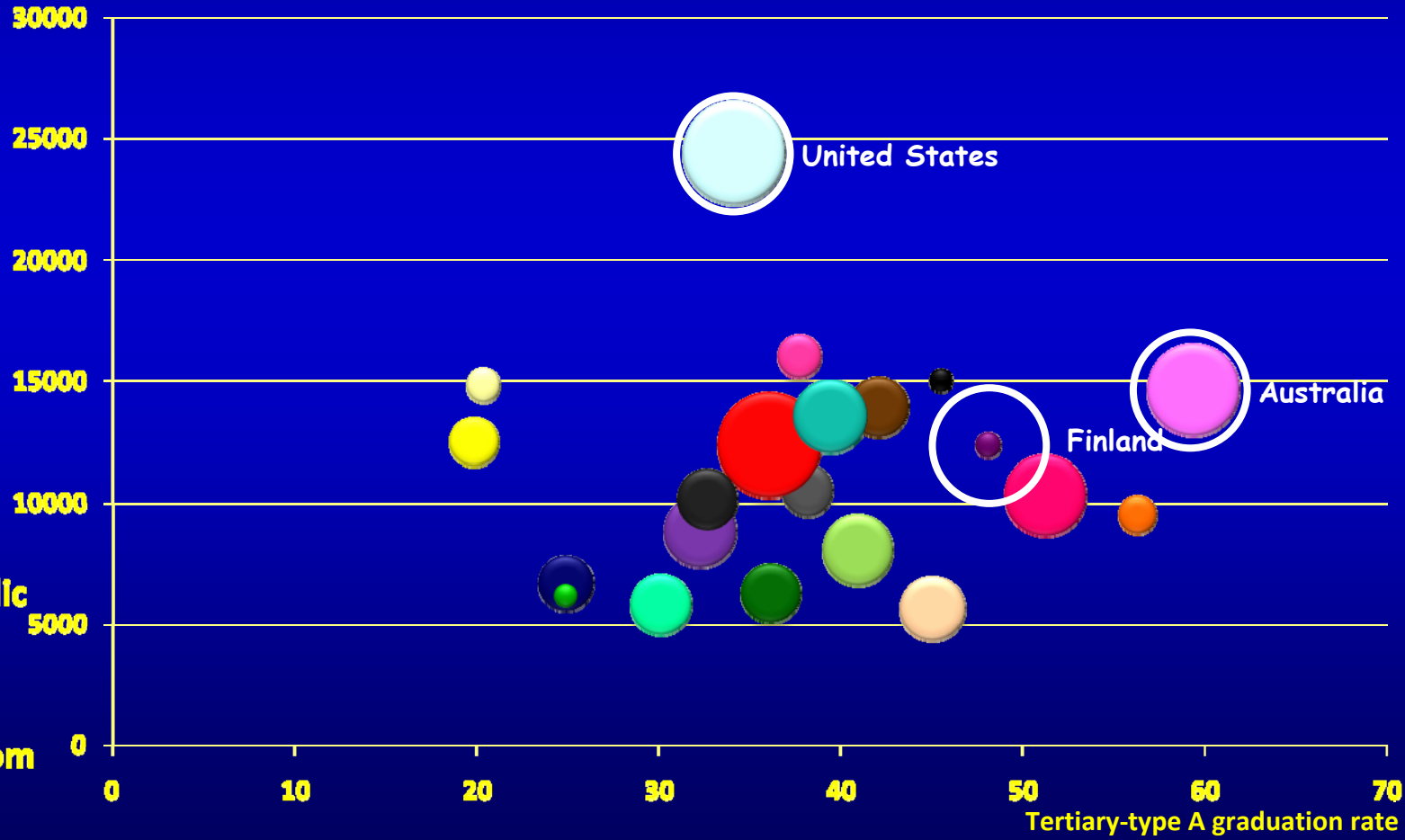


A world of change - college education

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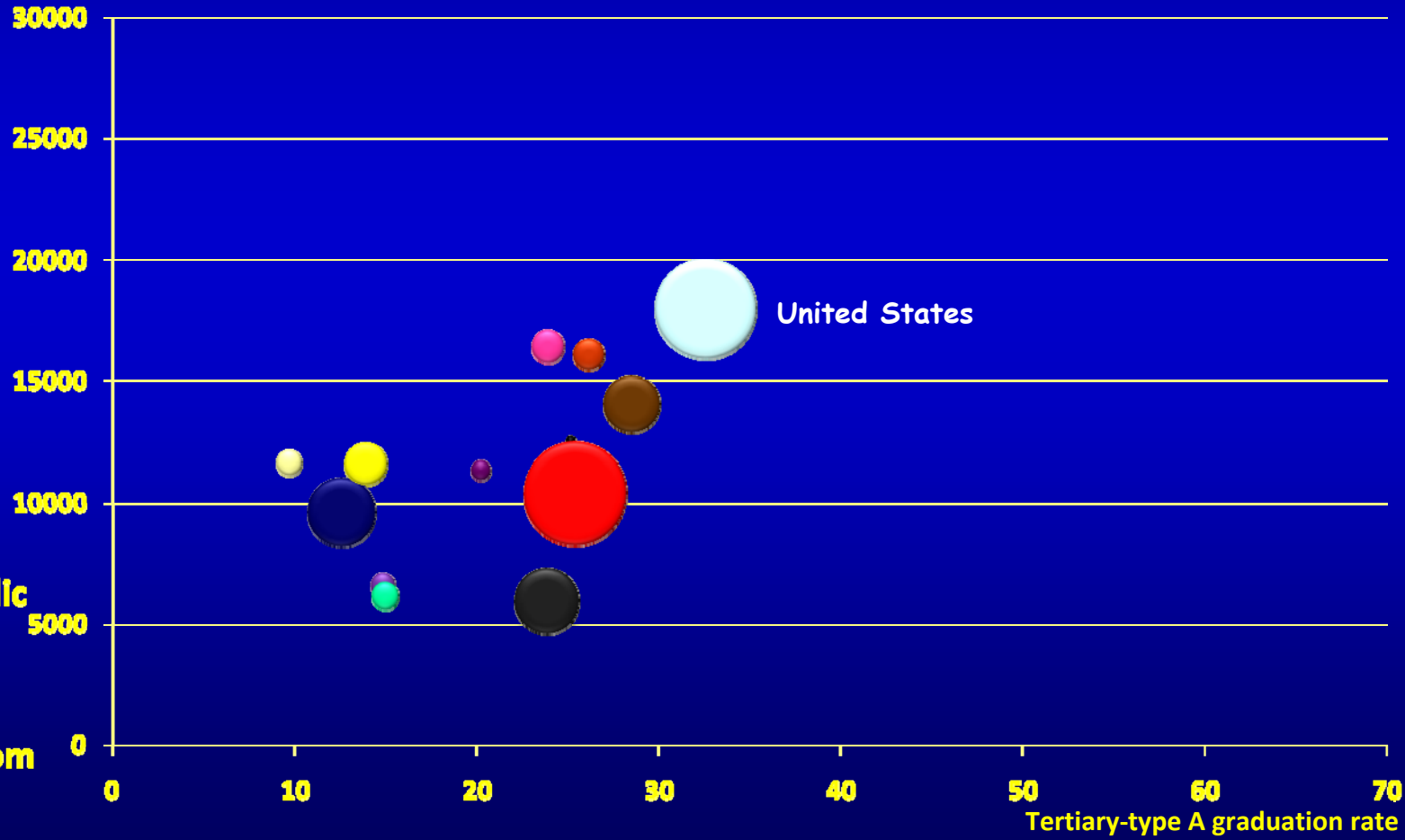


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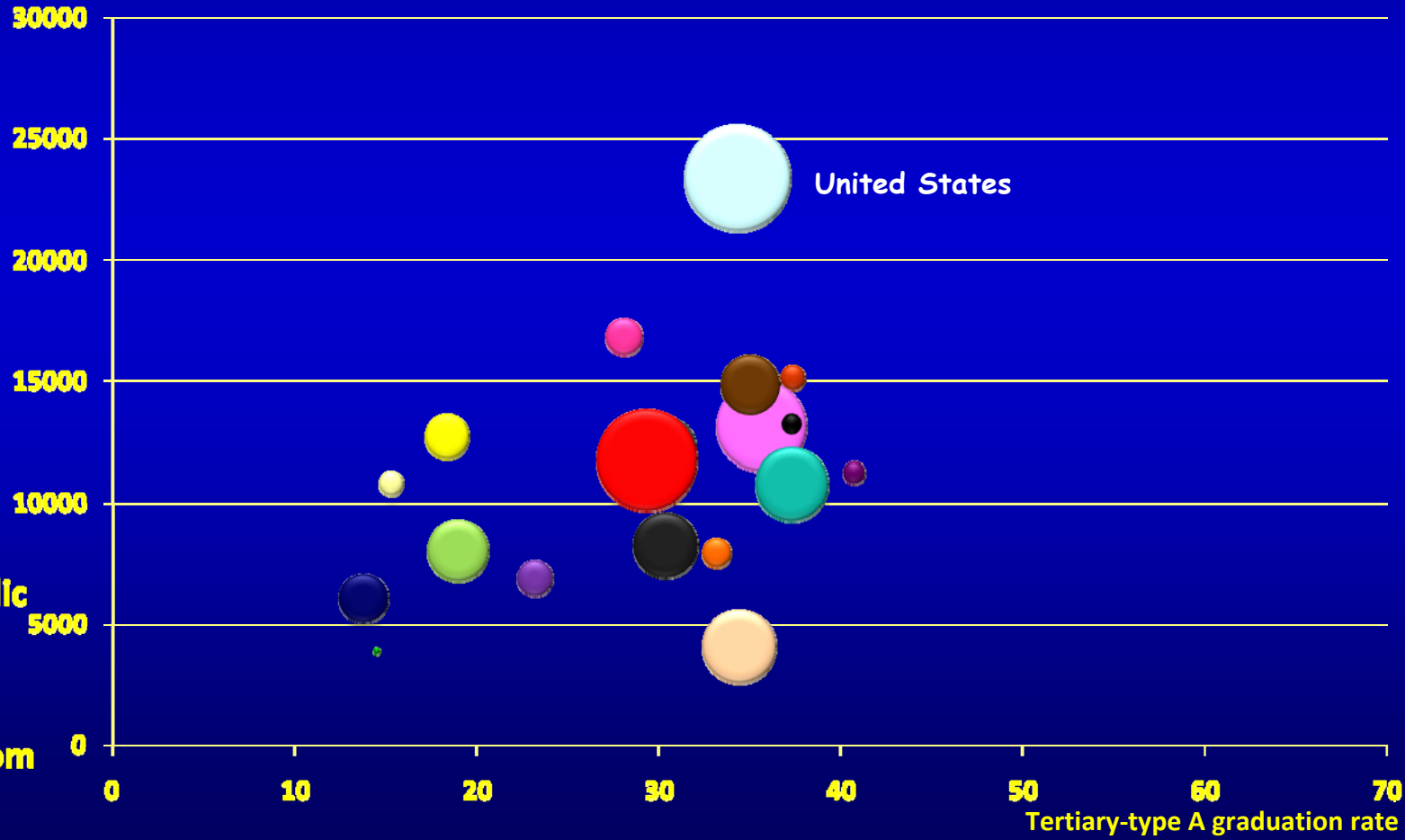


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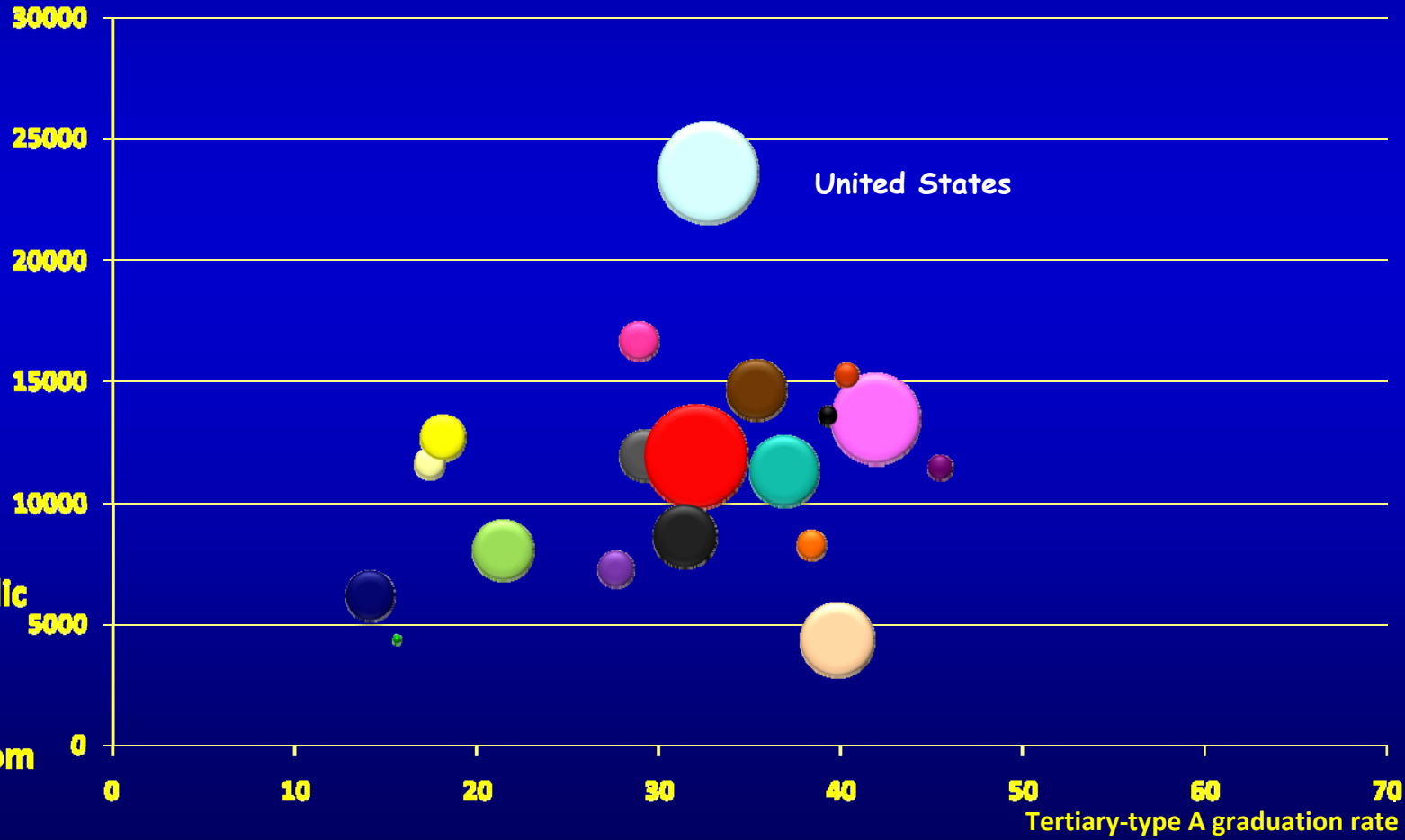


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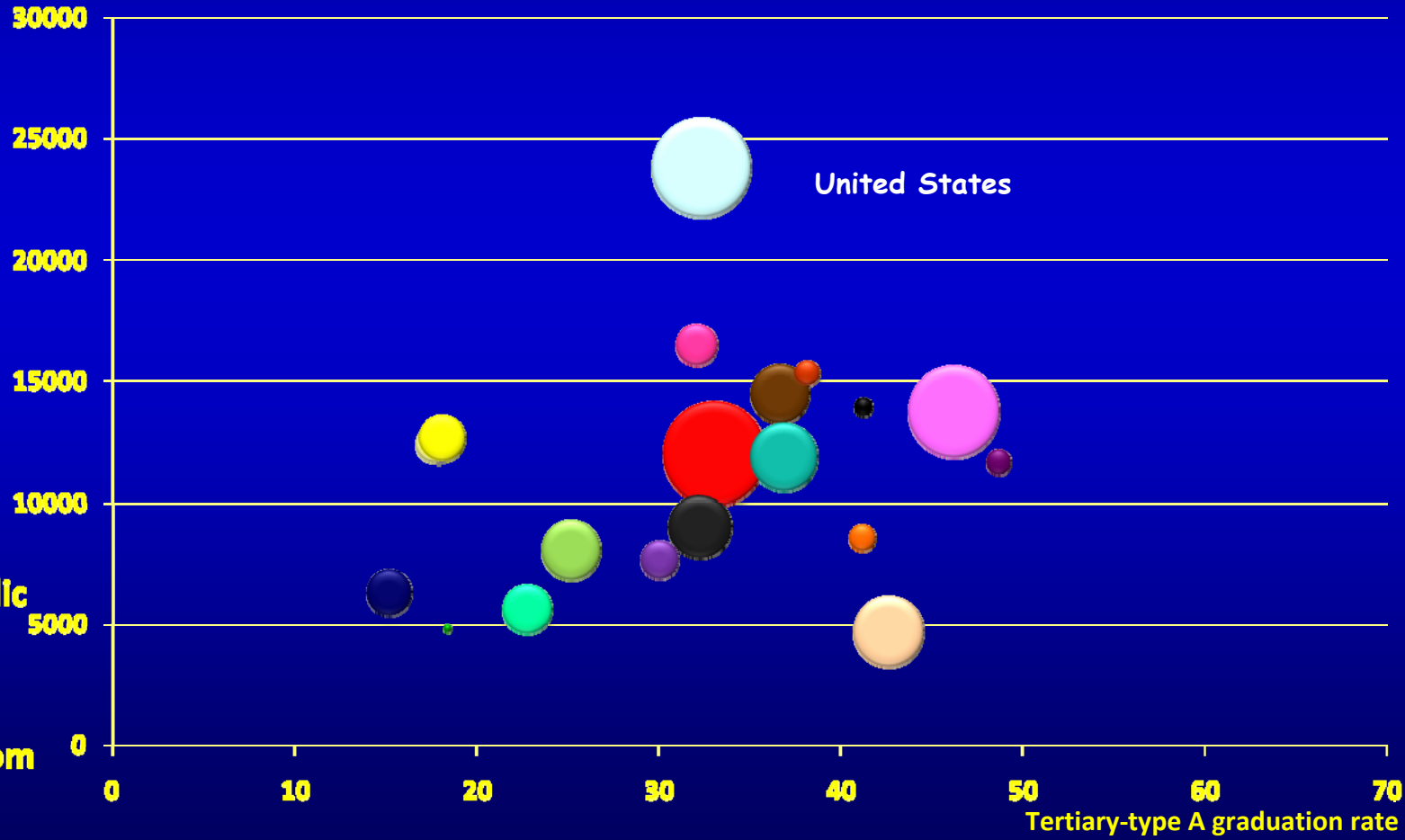


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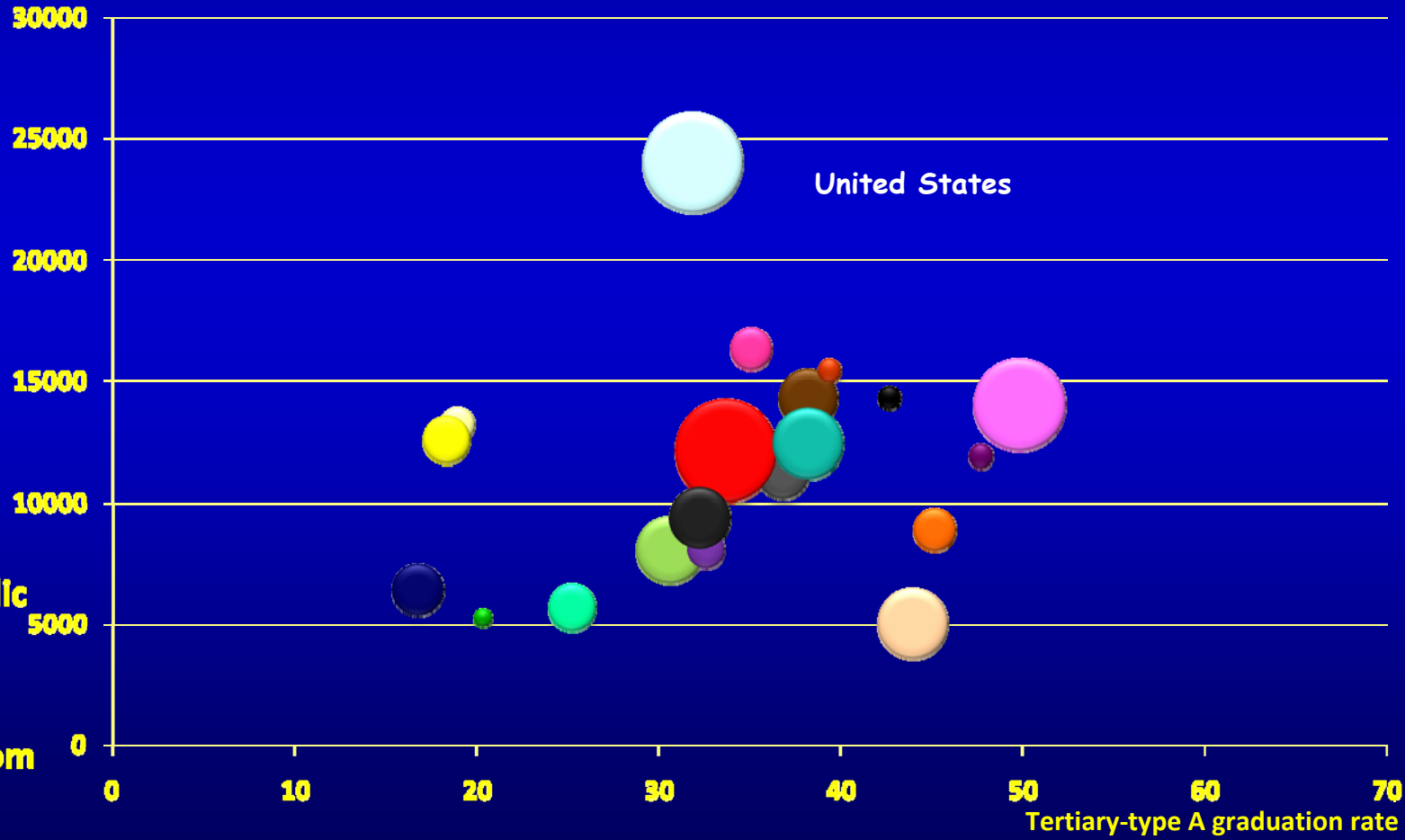


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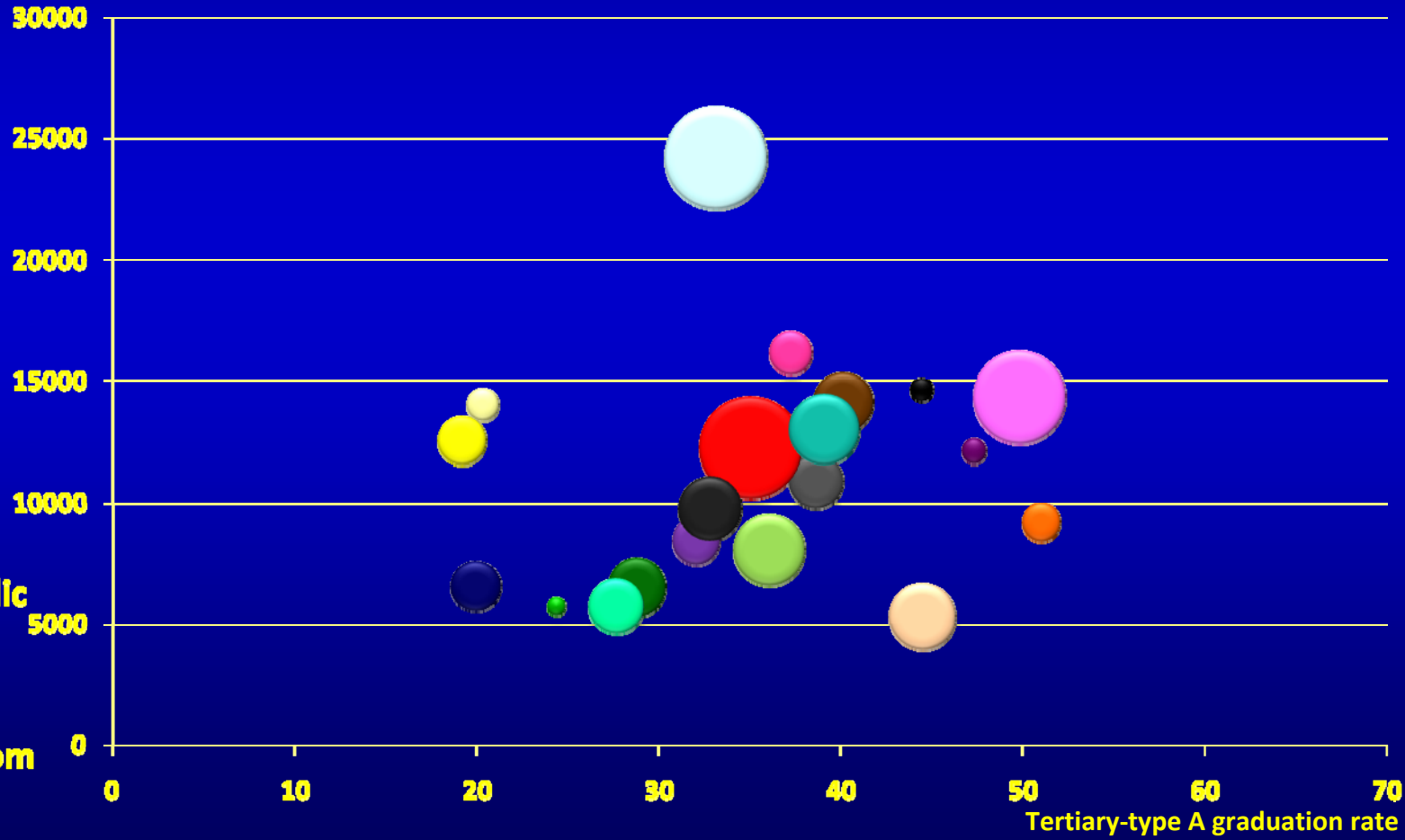


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Expenditure per student at tertiary level (USD)



A world of change - college education

Rising higher education qualifications seem generally not to have led to an "inflation" of the labour-market value of qualifications.

- In all but three of the 20 countries with available data, the earnings benefit increased between 1997 and 2003, in Germany, Italy and Hungary by between 20% and 40%

Expenditure per

10000

5000

0

0

10

20

30

40

50

60

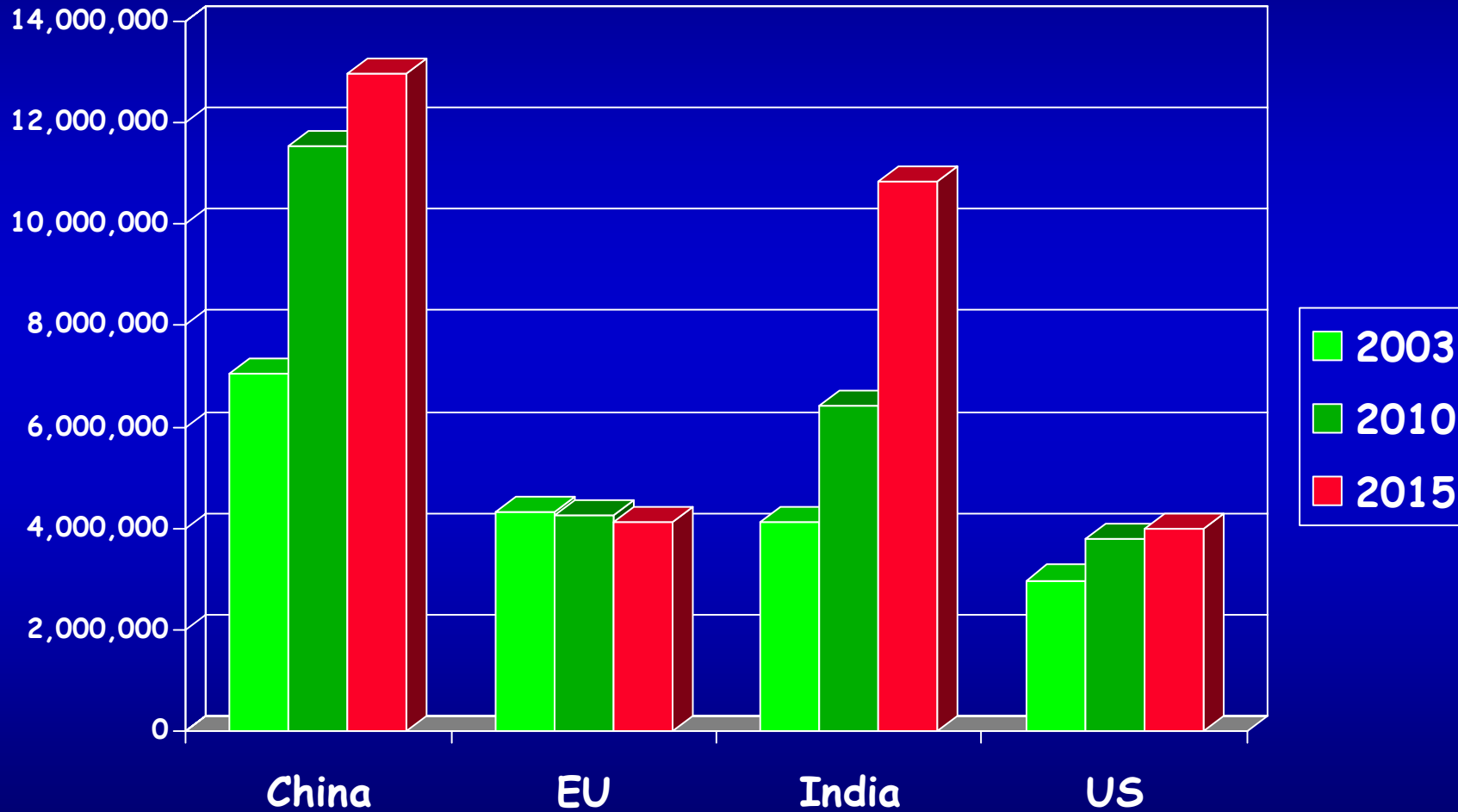
70

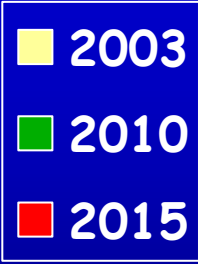
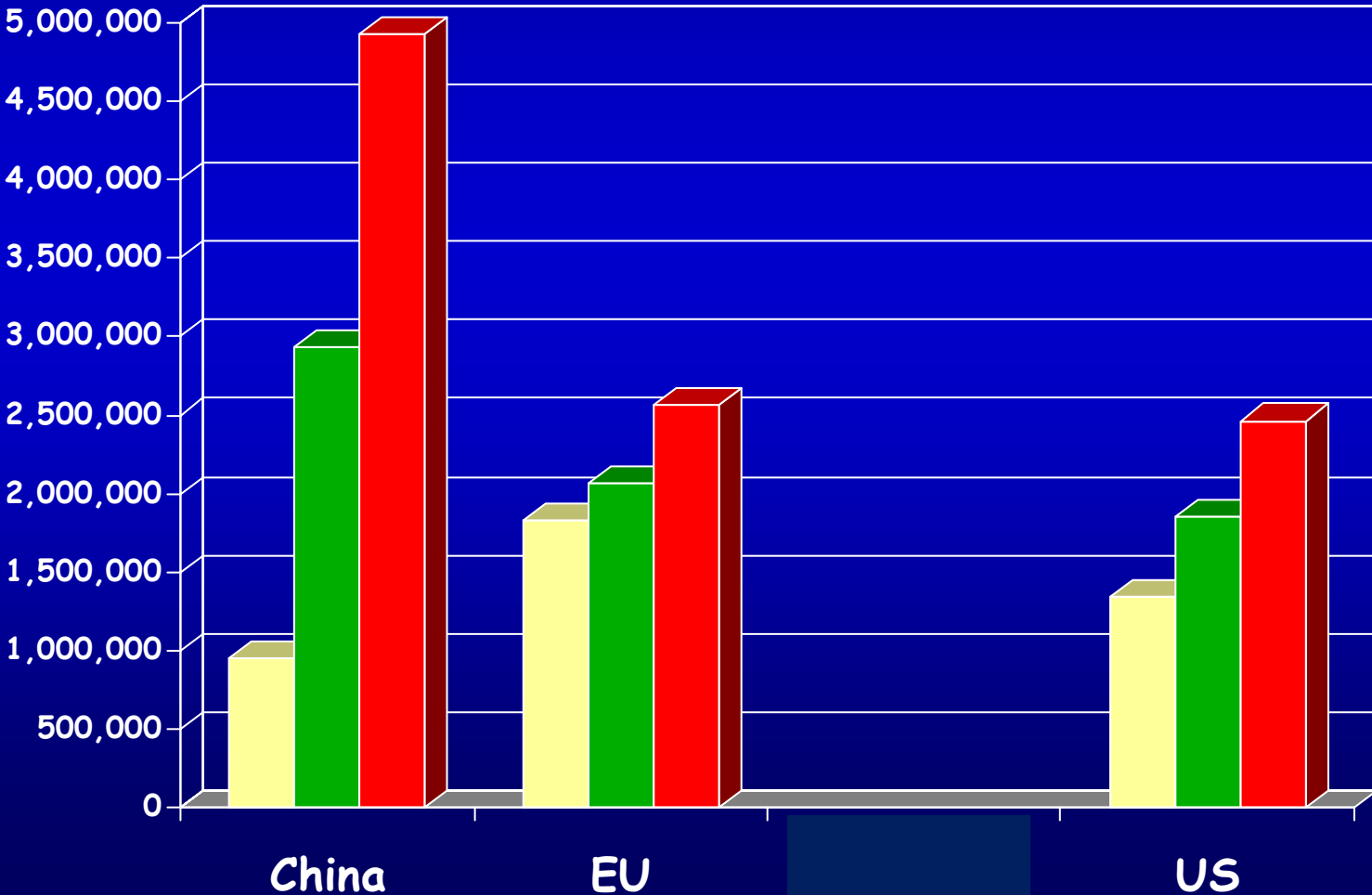
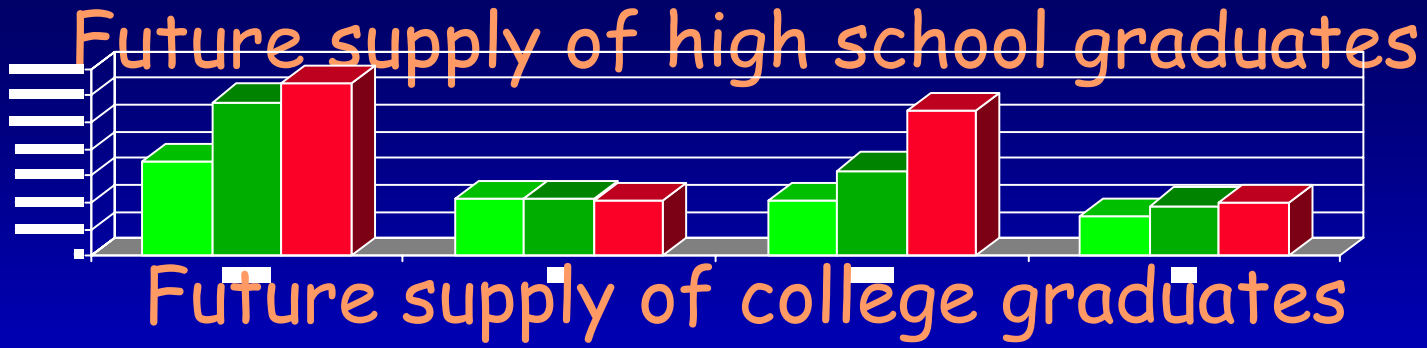
Tertiary-type A graduation rate



Moving targets

Future supply of high school graduates

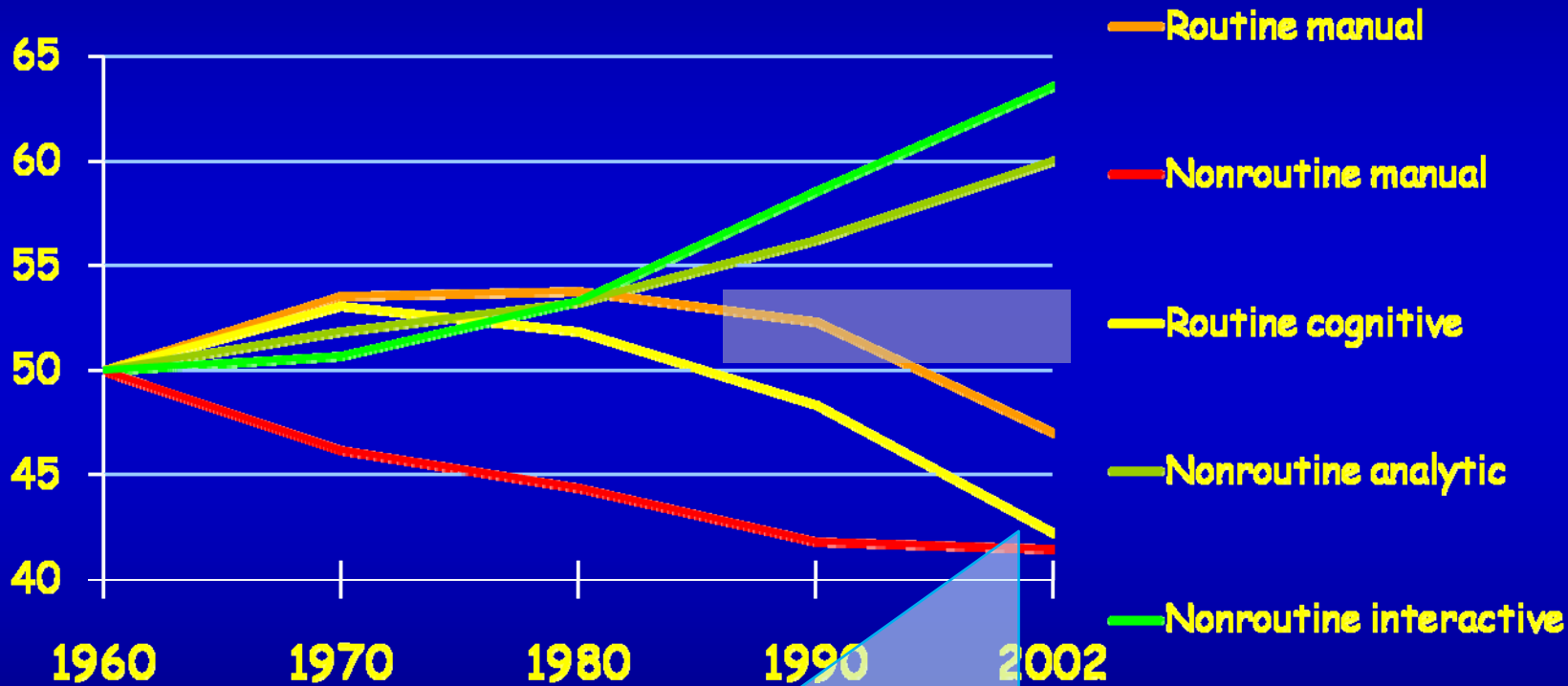




How the demand for skills has changed

Economy-wide measures of routine and non-routine task input (US)

Mean task input as percentiles of the 1960 task distribution

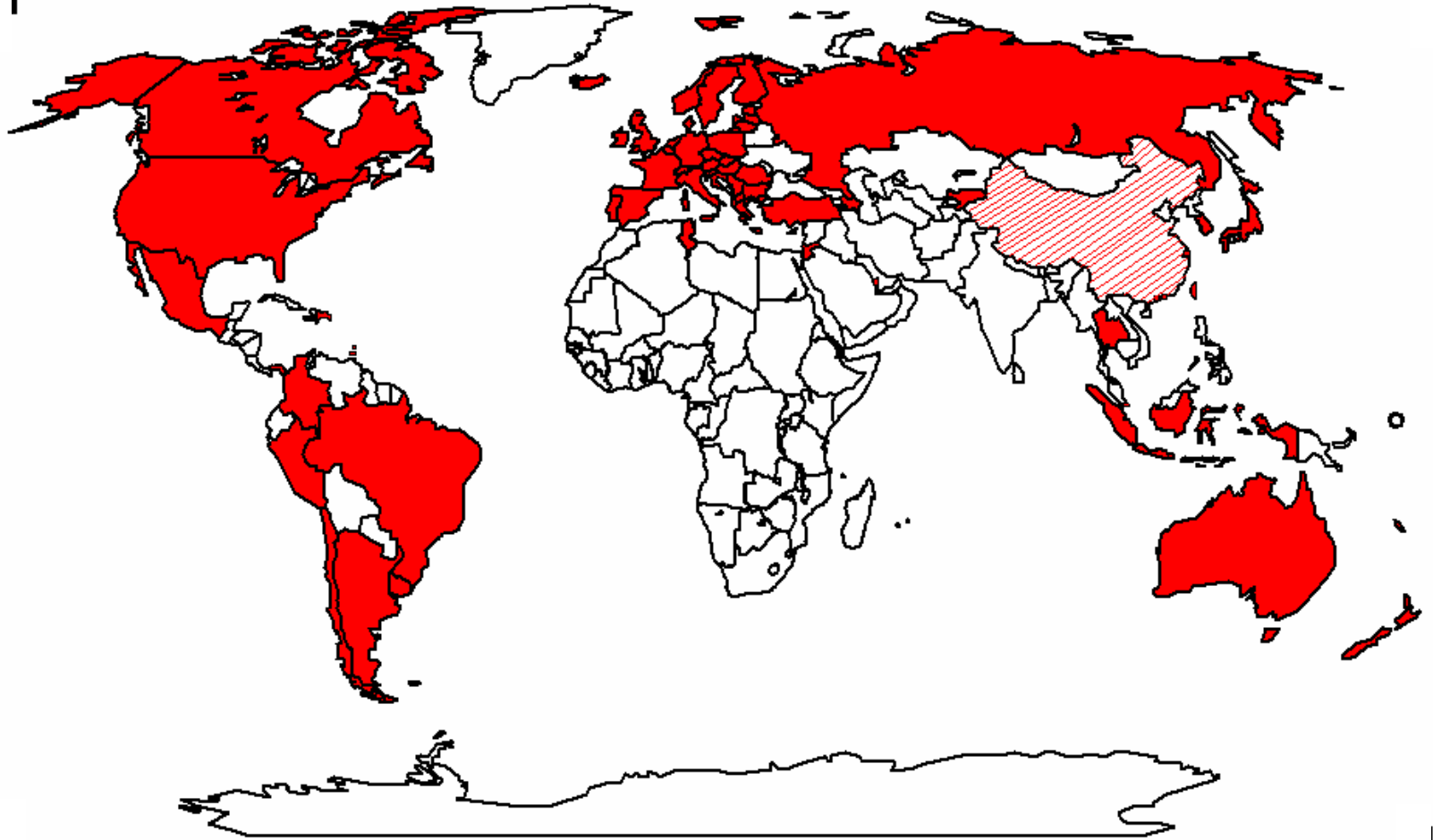


(Levy and Murnane)

The dilemma of schools:
The skills that are easiest to teach and test are also the ones that are easiest to digitise, automate and outsource

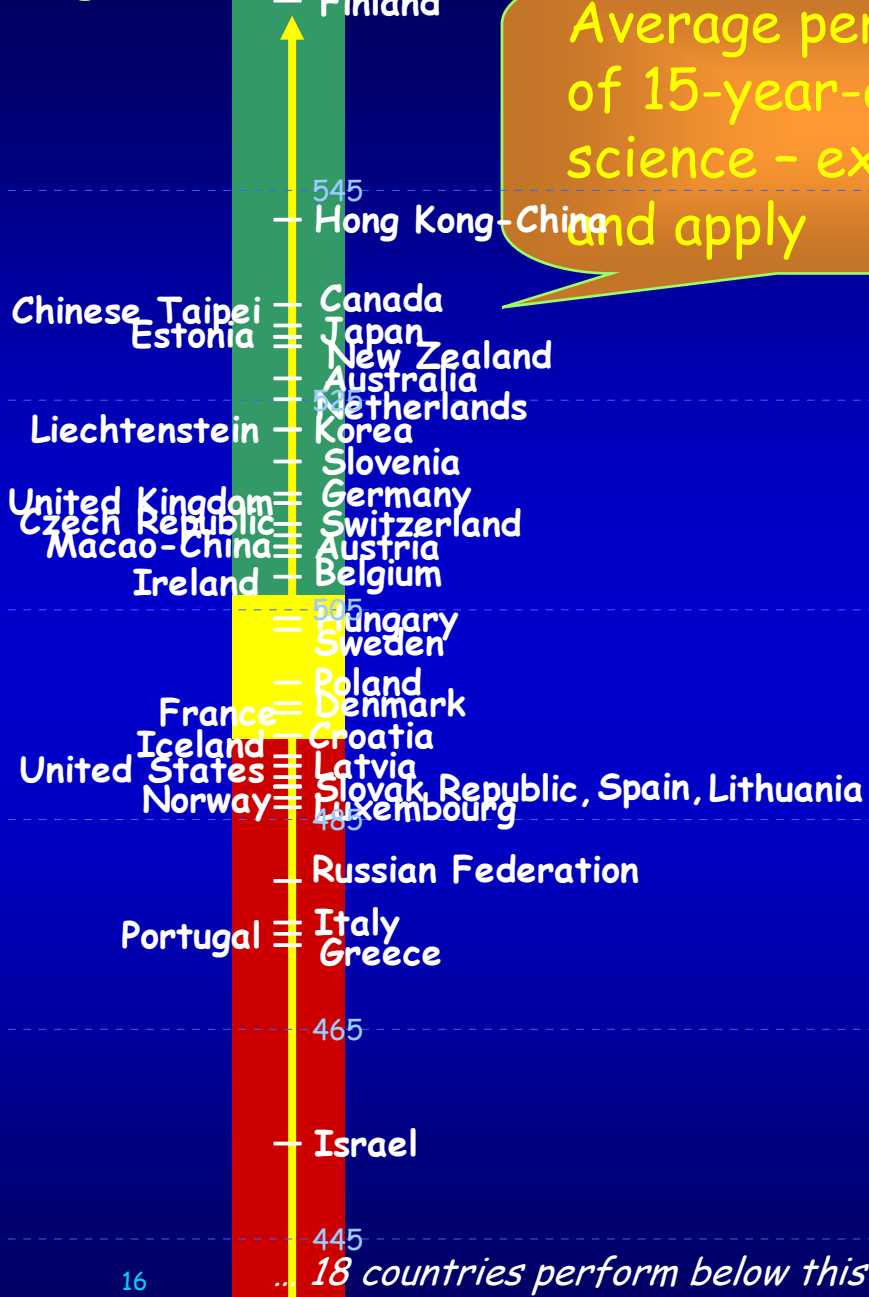
OECD's PISA assessment of the knowledge and skills of 15-year-olds

Coverage of world economy 87%

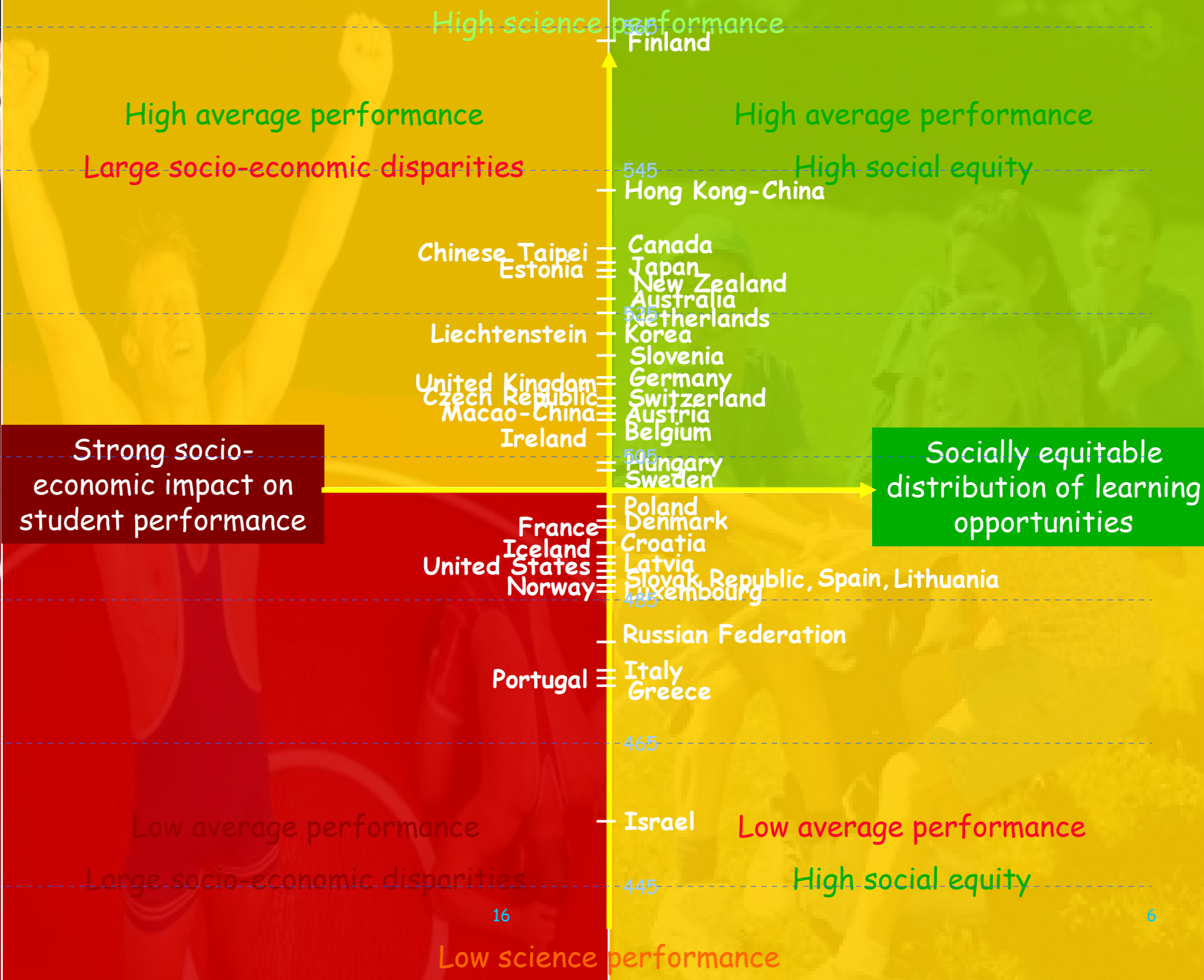


High science performance

Average performance of 15-year-olds in science - extrapolate and apply



Low science performance



High science performance

High average performance
Large socio-economic disparities

High average performance
High social equity

— Finland

560

540

Hong Kong-China—

Chinese Taipei —
— New Zealand

— Estonia —
— Australia —
— Canada —
— Japan

Liechtenstein —

— Netherlands
— Slovenia

— Korea

520

Germany — United Kingdom —
Belgium — Czech Republic — Switzerland —
Austria —
Ireland —

Strong socio-economic impact on student performance

Macao-China
Socially equitable distribution of learning opportunities

Sweden —

— Poland
— Denmark

— Hungary
— France

Luxembourg — Slovak Republic — United States — Lithuania —

— Croatia — Iceland —
Latvia — Norway

— Spain
— Russian Federation —
— Greece — Italy

Low average performance
Large socio-economic disparities

Low average performance
High social equity

Low science performance

480

460

440

Is the sky the limit to educational improvement?
Andreas Schleicher

Global Education Competitiveness Summit
Washington, 29-30 June 2009

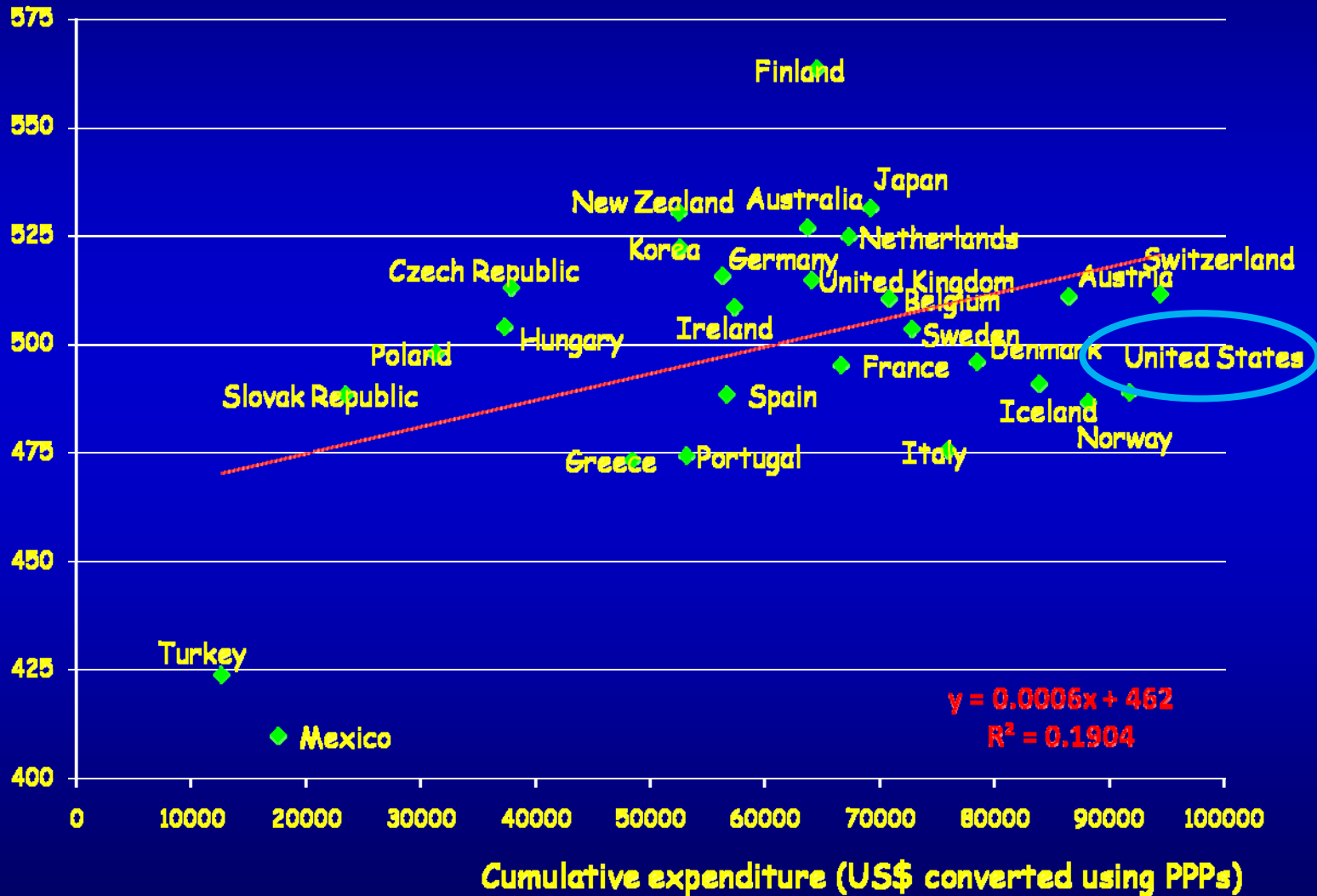


How to get there

Some policy levers that emerge from international comparisons

Money matters - but other things do too

Science performance

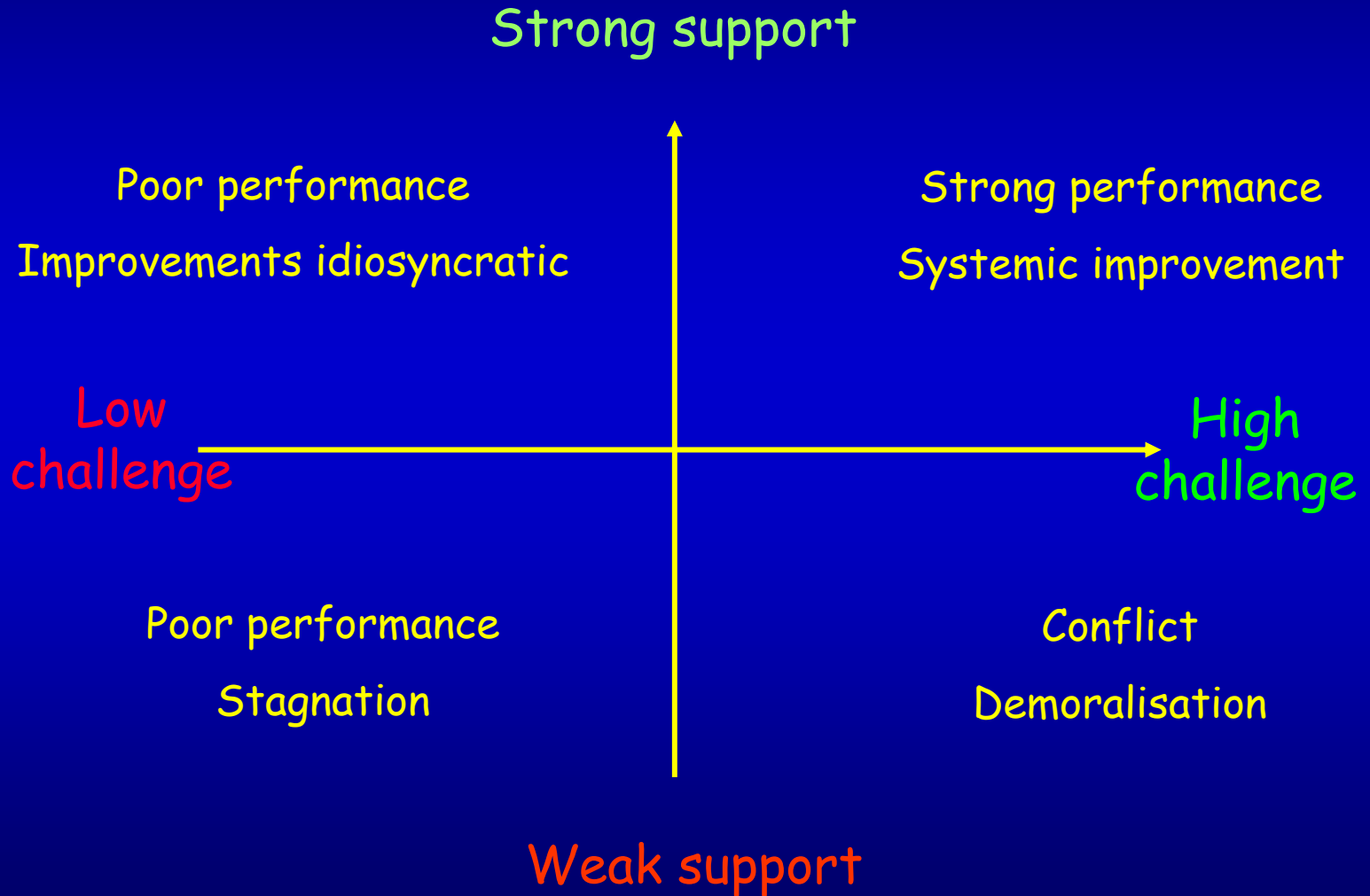


High ambitions
and universal standards

Rigor, focus and
coherence

Great systems attract
great teachers and
provide access to best
practice and quality
professional
development

Challenge and support



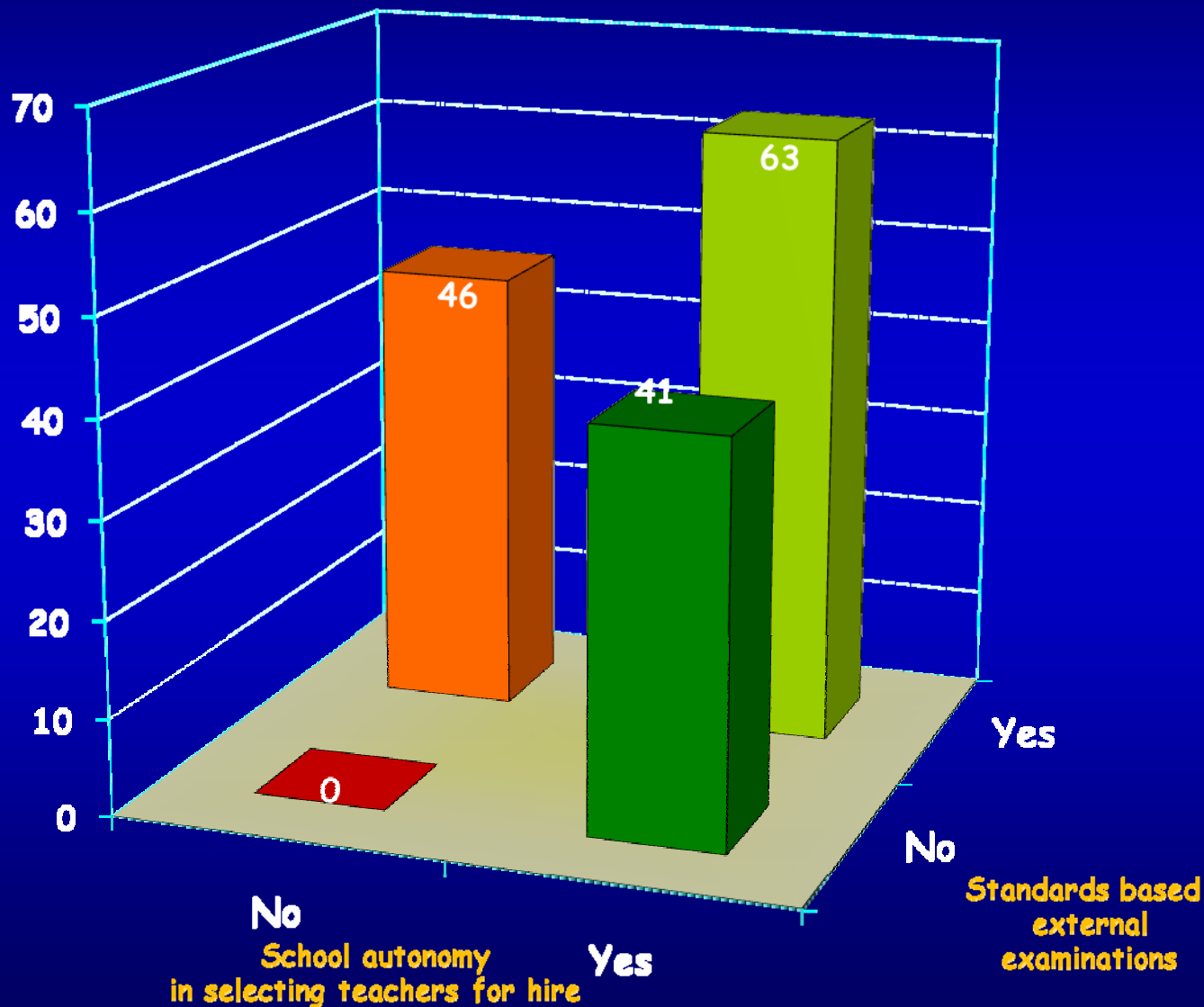
High ambition

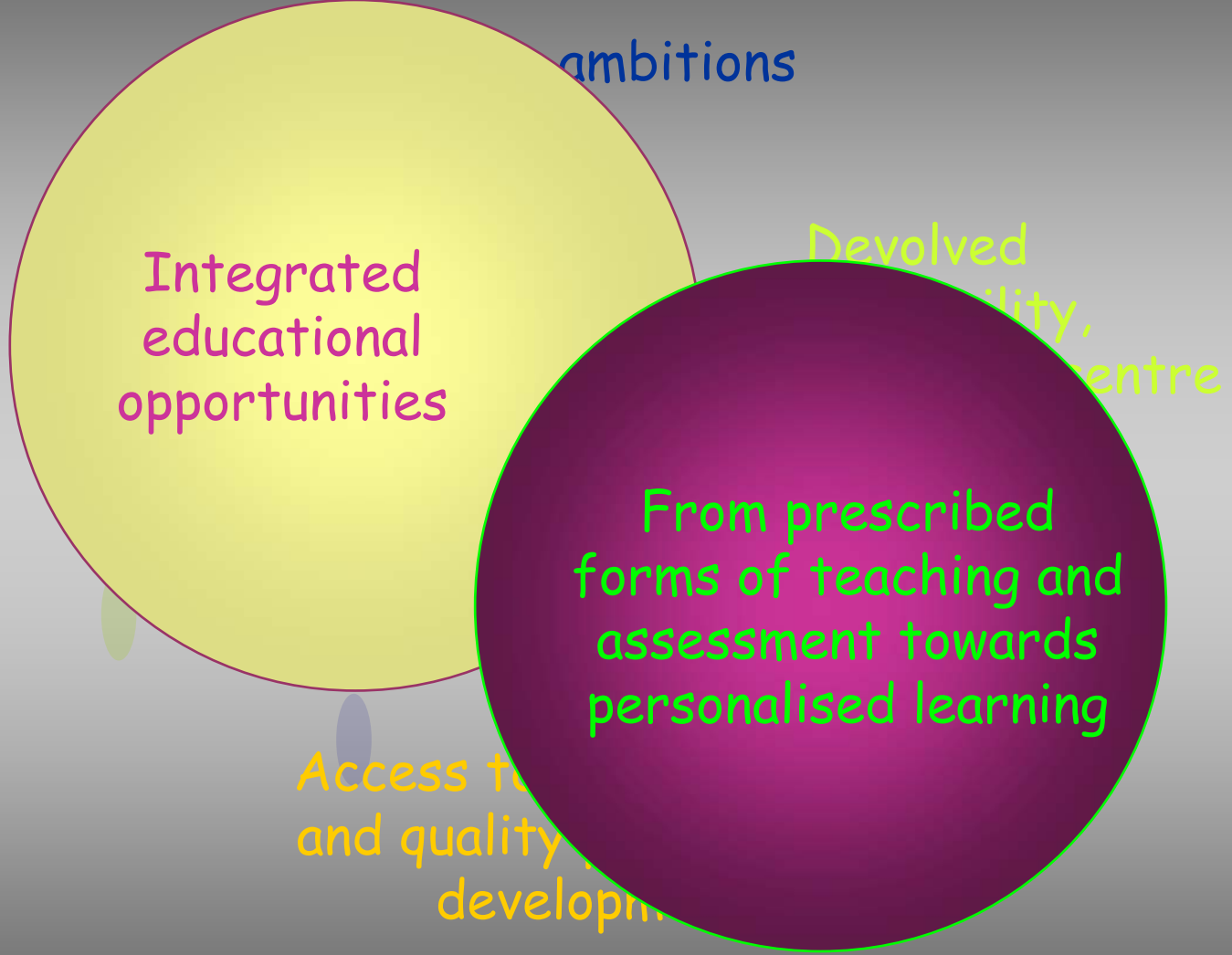


School autonomy, standards-based examinations and science performance

School autonomy in selecting teachers for hire

PISA score
in science





Paradigm shifts

The old bureaucratic education system

The Finnish education system

Hit & miss→ Universal high standards

Uniformity→ Embracing diversity

Provision→ Outcomes

Bureaucratic - look up→ Devolved - look outwards

Talk equity→ Deliver equity

Received wisdom→ Data and best practice

Prescription→ Informed profession

Demarcation→ Collaboration

Why care?

r Progress

- Concerns about skill barriers to economic growth, productivity growth and rates of technological innovation
 - One additional year of education equals to between 3 and 6% of GDP
 - Rising tertiary level qualifications seem generally not to have led to an "inflation" of the labour-market value of qualifications (in all but three of the 20 countries with available data, the earnings benefit increased between 1997 and 2003, in Germany, Italy and Hungary by between 20% and 40%)

r Fairness

- Concerns about the role of skills in creating social inequity in economic outcomes
 - Both average and distribution of skill matter to long-term growth (high percentages of low skill impede growth)

r Value for money

- Concerns about the demand for, and efficiency and effectiveness of, investments in public goods

- www.oecd.org; www.pisa.oecd.org
 - All national and international publications
 - The complete micro-level database
- email: pisa@oecd.org

- Andreas.Schleicher@OECD.org

Thank you !

... and remember:

Without data, you are just another person with an opinion