



ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC  
CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT



# **Improving School Leadership**

## **Policy & Practice in OECD Countries**

# Content

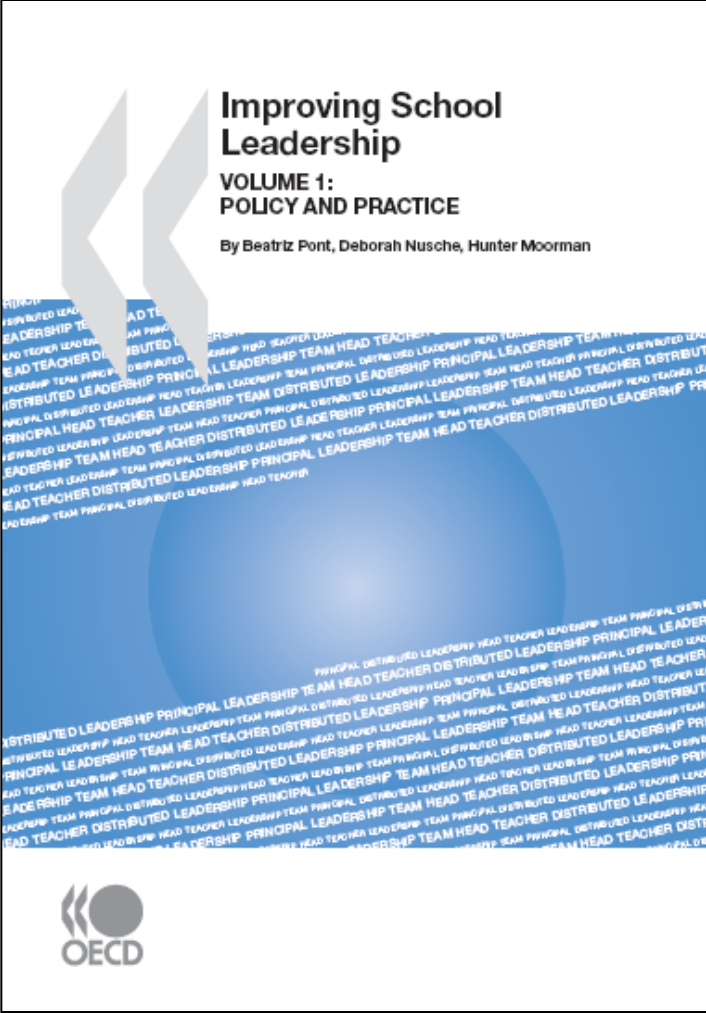
**1) Context** of the OECD Improving School Leadership study

A light blue downward-pointing arrow indicating the flow from the first step to the second.

**2) Common challenges** facing OECD school systems

A light blue downward-pointing arrow indicating the flow from the second step to the third.

**3) Some policy responses** identified in our comparative study



## 1. Background

# **Background:** The OECD Improving School Leadership activity (2006-08)

- OECD activity on teacher policy showed importance of school leadership for effective teaching and learning
- School leadership can improve school outcomes, by influencing the motivation and capacities of teachers, as well as the school climate and environment
- Pressing challenges in recruiting and training school leaders
- Priority: Improving School Leadership activity ranked #3 out of 29 activities for the OECD Education Committee Programme of Work (2007-2008).

# **Background:** The OECD Improving School Leadership activity (2006-08)

An international perspective on school leadership policy and practice

Australia

Austria

Belgium (French)

Belgium (Flanders)

Chile

Denmark

Finland

France

Hungary

Ireland

Israel

Korea

The Netherlands

New Zealand

Norway

Portugal

Slovenia

Spain

Sweden

United Kingdom (England)

United Kingdom (N. Ireland)

United Kingdom (Scotland)

*Network of experts*

*International organisations*

# Objectives

To provide policy-makers and others with timely analysis to help formulate school leadership policies leading to improved teaching and learning:

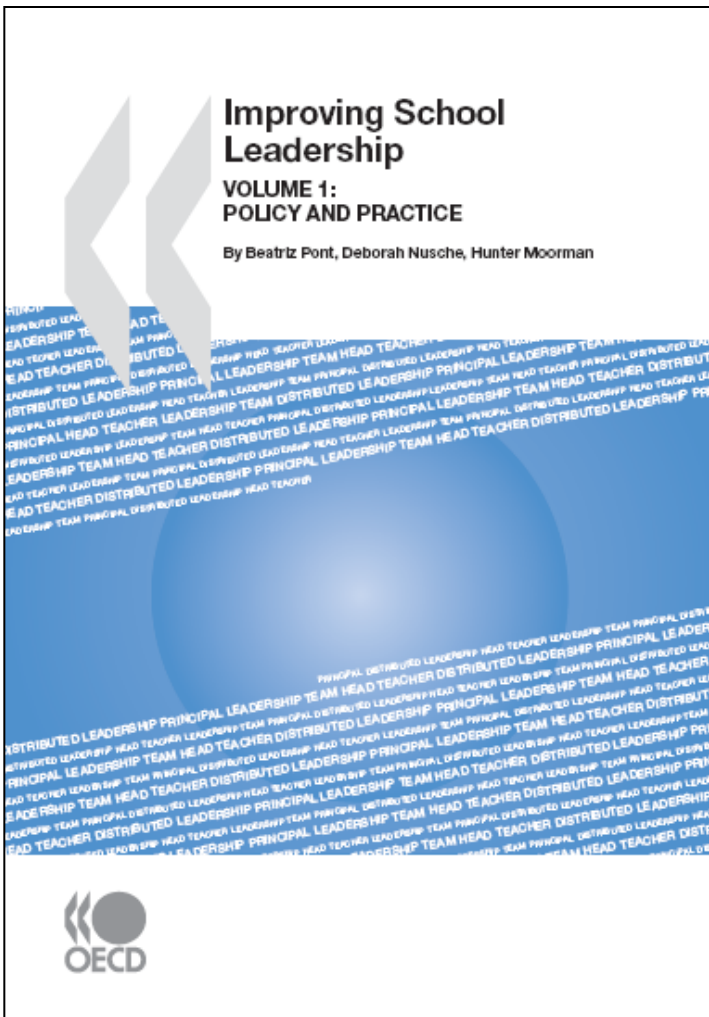
**Synthesize research and review national approaches;**  
22 country background reports

**Identify innovative and successful initiatives;**  
5 case study reports (AUS, AUT, BEL, FIN, ENG)

**Facilitate exchange and dialogue among countries;**  
3 conferences & 3 workshops

**Identify policy options for governments to consider;**  
Final comparative report

# Improving School Leadership: Policy & Practice



## 2. Common Challenges in School Leadership Policy and Practice

# School leadership: **the challenges**

**The role of school leaders has changed dramatically**

## **School autonomy**

- “Running a small business”
- Managing human and financial resources
- Adapting the teaching programme

## **Accountability for outcomes**

- A new culture of evaluation
- Strategic planning, assessment, monitoring
- Use of data for improvement

## **Learning-centred leadership**

- New approaches to teaching and learning
- Supporting collaborative teaching practice
- Raising achievement and dealing with diversity

The super principal ?



# School leadership: **the challenges**

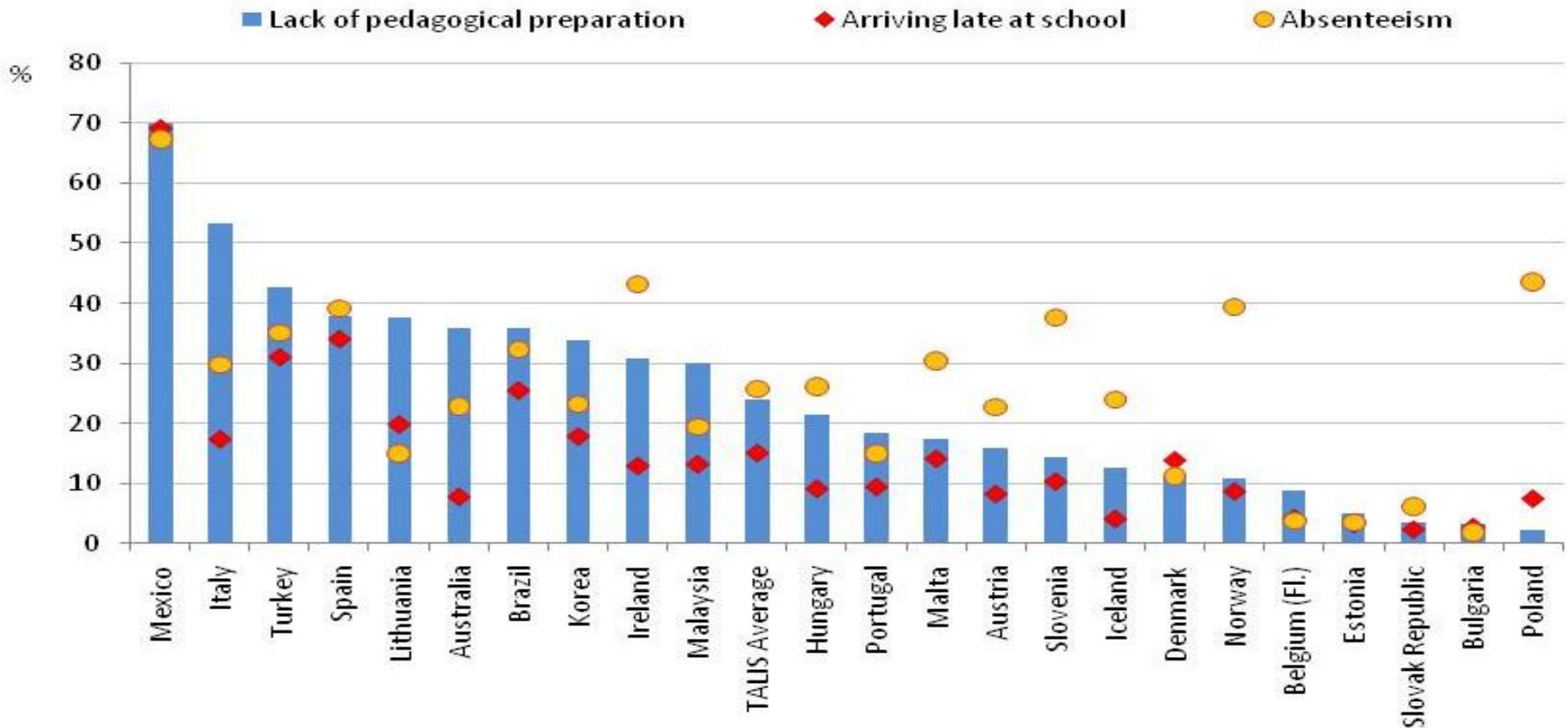


## Role expansion & intensification

- More and more tasks have been added to school leaders' workload.  
→ *How to define & prioritise core tasks?*
- Most of the leadership tasks are carried out by one individual  
→ *Need to redistribute tasks*
- Insufficient preparation and training  
→ *Need to provide more systematic professional development*

# School leadership: **The challenges**

*Percentage of teachers whose school principal reported that the following teacher behaviours hindered the provision of instruction in their school a lot or to some extent (2007-08)*



*Countries are ranked in descending order of the percentage of teachers reporting lack of pedagogical support as a factor hindering instruction.*

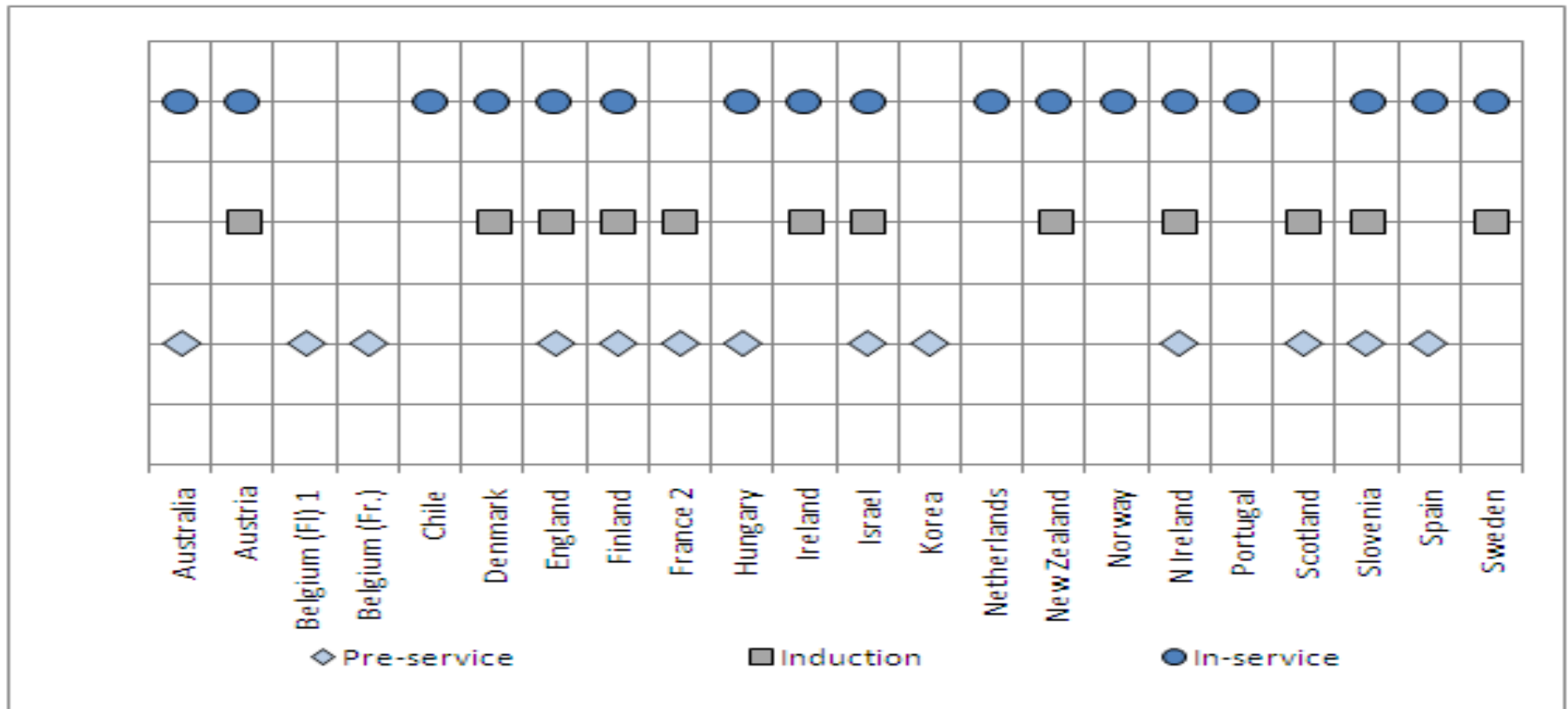
*Source: OECD (2009), *Creating Effective Teaching and Learning Environments: First Results from TALIS*, OECD, Paris.*

# School leadership: **the challenges**



## Diverse preparation and training

### Approaches to leadership training and development (2006)

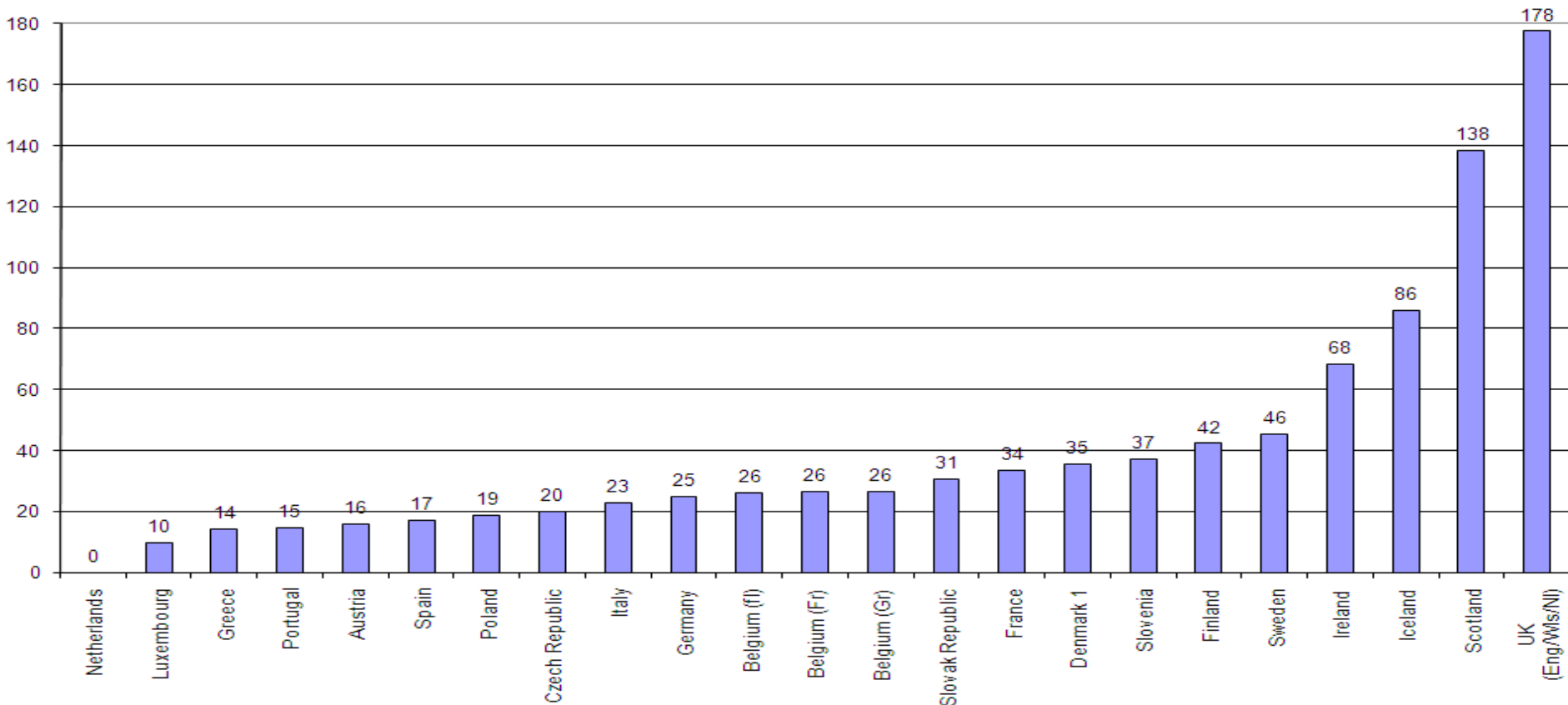


# School leadership: **the challenges**



## Unattractive working conditions

Difference between maximum teacher and principal salaries (2003)



# School leadership: **the challenges**



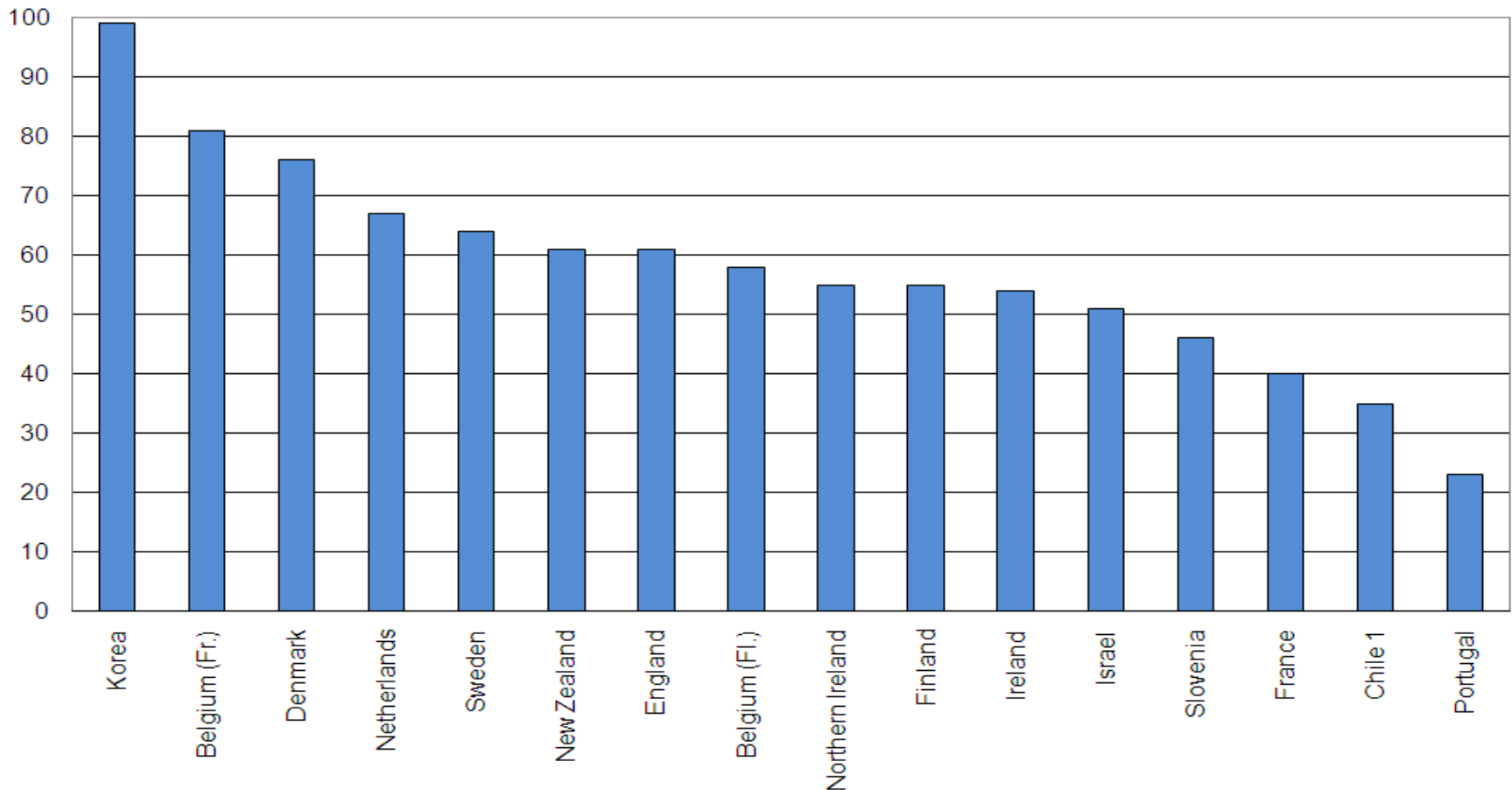
## Shortages in leadership personnel

- ✓ Few people are interested in moving up to leadership
- ✓ Application numbers are decreasing
- ✓ 15 out of 22 participating countries report difficulties in finding a sufficient number of qualified candidates

# School leadership: **the challenges**

## A “retirement boom”

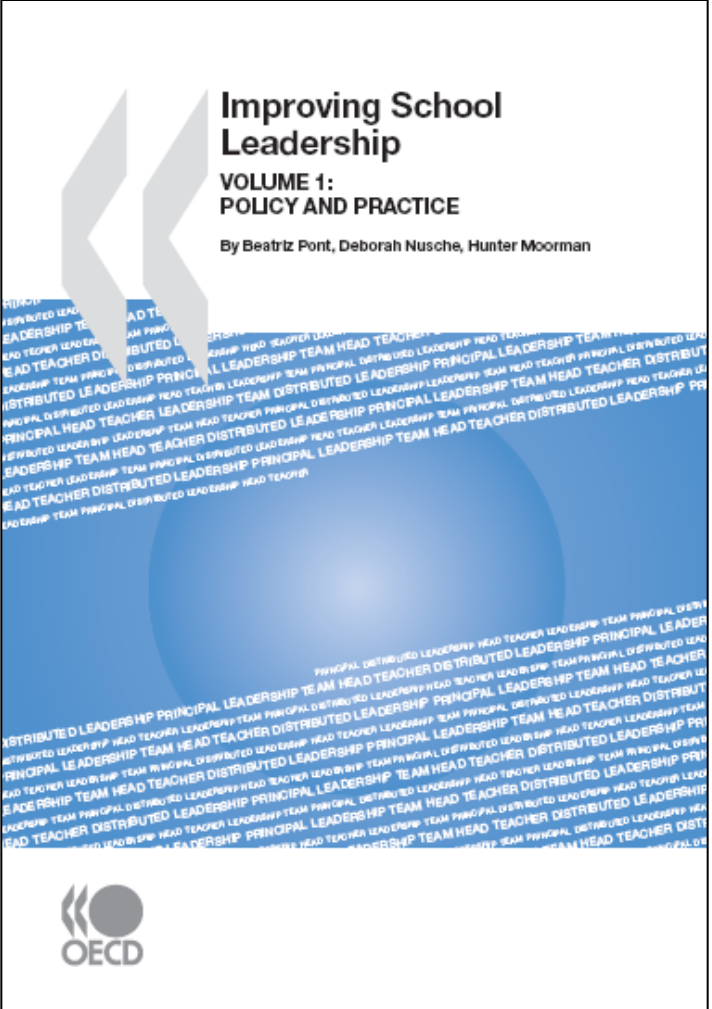
Percentage of principals aged over 50



# School leadership: **the challenges**



1. Lack of clarity about the core roles of school leadership
2. Role overload
3. Insufficient preparation and training
4. Concerns about recruiting new school leaders



## 3. Policy Options identified by the OECD study



# School leadership: **the policies**



(Re)defining school leadership responsibilities



Distributing school leadership



Developing the knowledge and skills of school leaders



Making school leadership a more attractive profession

# School leadership: **the policy**



## 1) Redefining school leadership roles and responsibilities

- Provide autonomy coupled with support and clear definition of core responsibilities
- Develop leadership frameworks for improved policy and practice
- Frameworks should define the main tasks of leadership for improved learning:
  - Support, monitor and develop teacher quality
  - Goal setting, assessment and accountability
  - Strategic financial/HR management
  - Collaborate with other schools and institutions (system leadership)

# School leadership: **the policy**



## 2) Distributing school leadership responsibilities

- Adopt a broader concept of leadership
- Distribution as a strategy for succession planning
- Extend leadership training to leadership teams and middle management
- Recognise and reward distributed leadership

# School leadership: **the policy**



## 3) Developing knowledge and skills for effective school leadership

- Provide ongoing and career-staged training (preparation, induction, in-service)
- Ensure coherence and quality of provision by different institutions
- Connect training to experience: combination of learning and coaching and practice

# School leadership: **the policy**



## 4) Making school leadership a more attractive profession

- Plan for leadership succession
- Professionalise recruitment
- Provide adequate remuneration: salaries should reflect the high level of responsibility
- Provide opportunities for career development

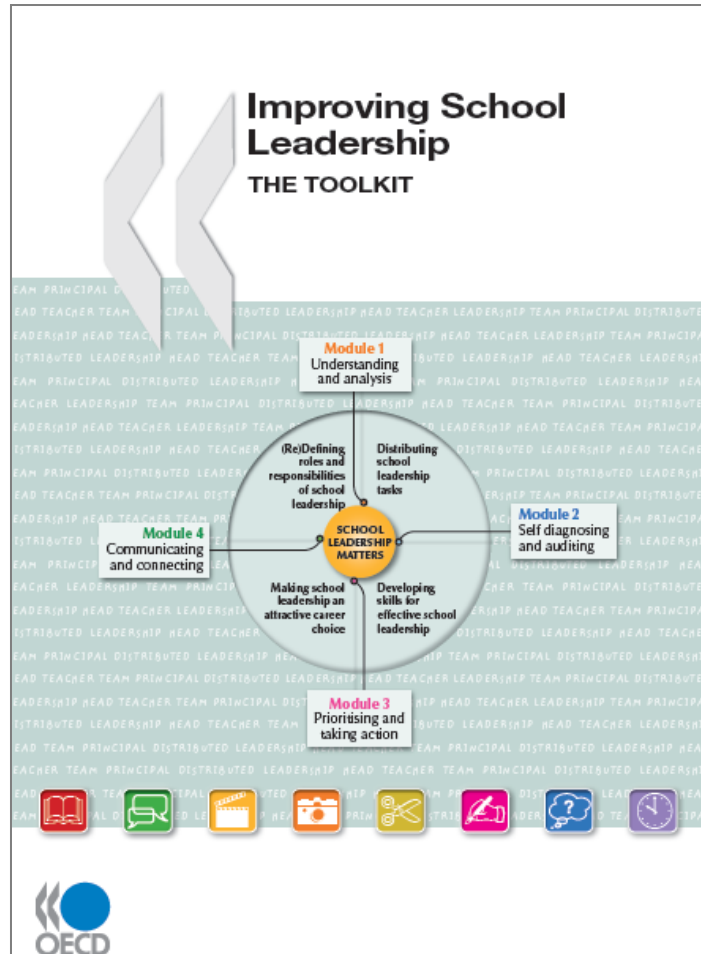
# School leadership: **the policy**



## Four policy levers to improve school leadership

1. (Re)defining school leadership
2. Distributing school leadership
3. Developing the knowledge and skills for effective leadership
4. Making school leadership a more attractive profession

# School leadership: **The Toolkit**



Available for free from:

[www.oecd.org/edu/schoolleadership](http://www.oecd.org/edu/schoolleadership)