



# Workers' mobility as a buffer for the crisis?

## Potentials of the Single European Labour Market

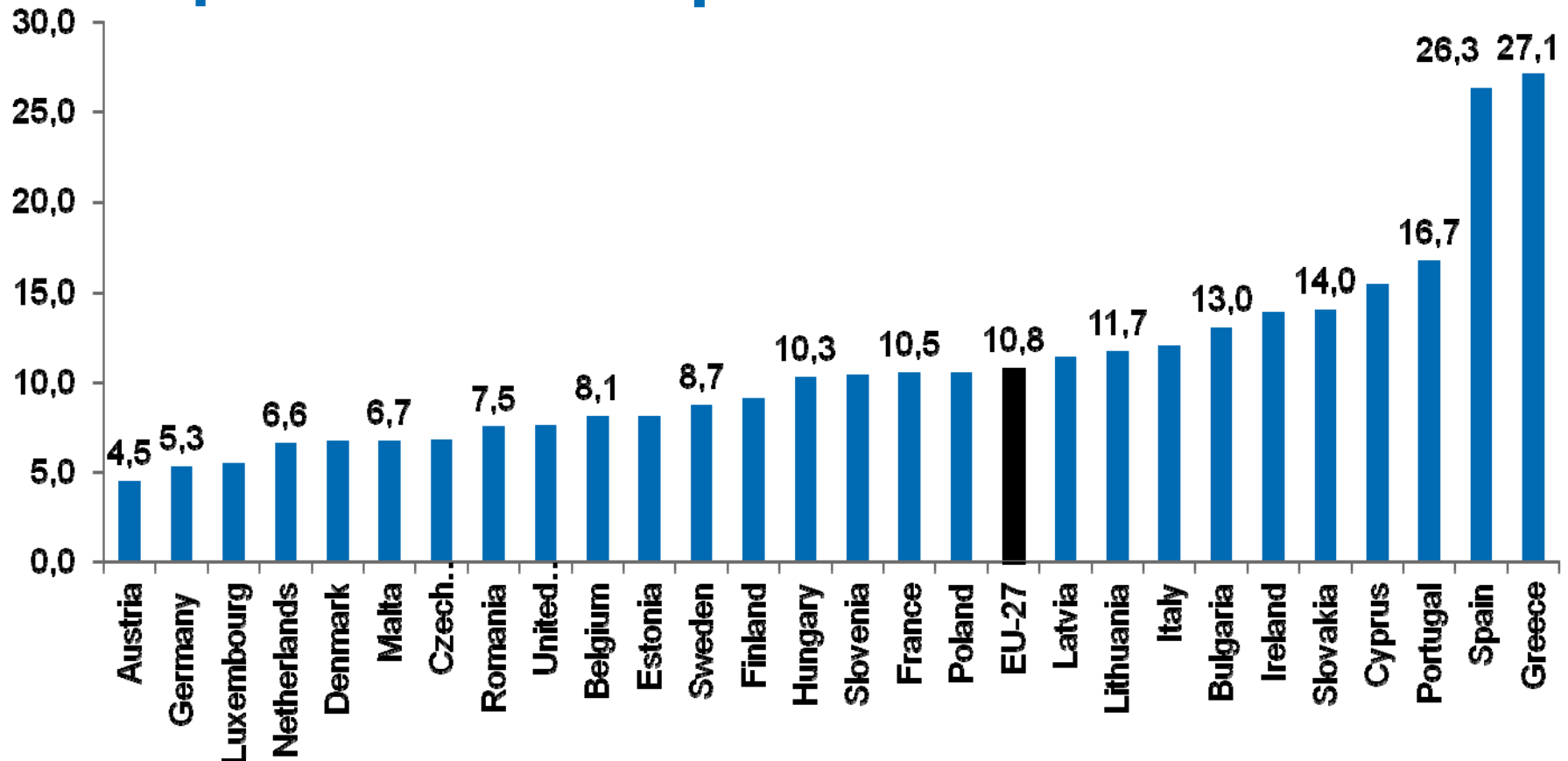
Workshop „The European Labour Market – Success through Flexibility and Mobility”

25. November 2013, Brussels

Dr. Wido Geis

# Unemployment rates in Europe

## 2nd quarter 2013 in percent



Data are not seasonally adjusted  
Source: Eurostat

**How mobile is the European labour force?**

**Why isn't there more mobility within Europe?**

**How can labour mobility in the EU be increased?**

## Measuring mobility is not trivial

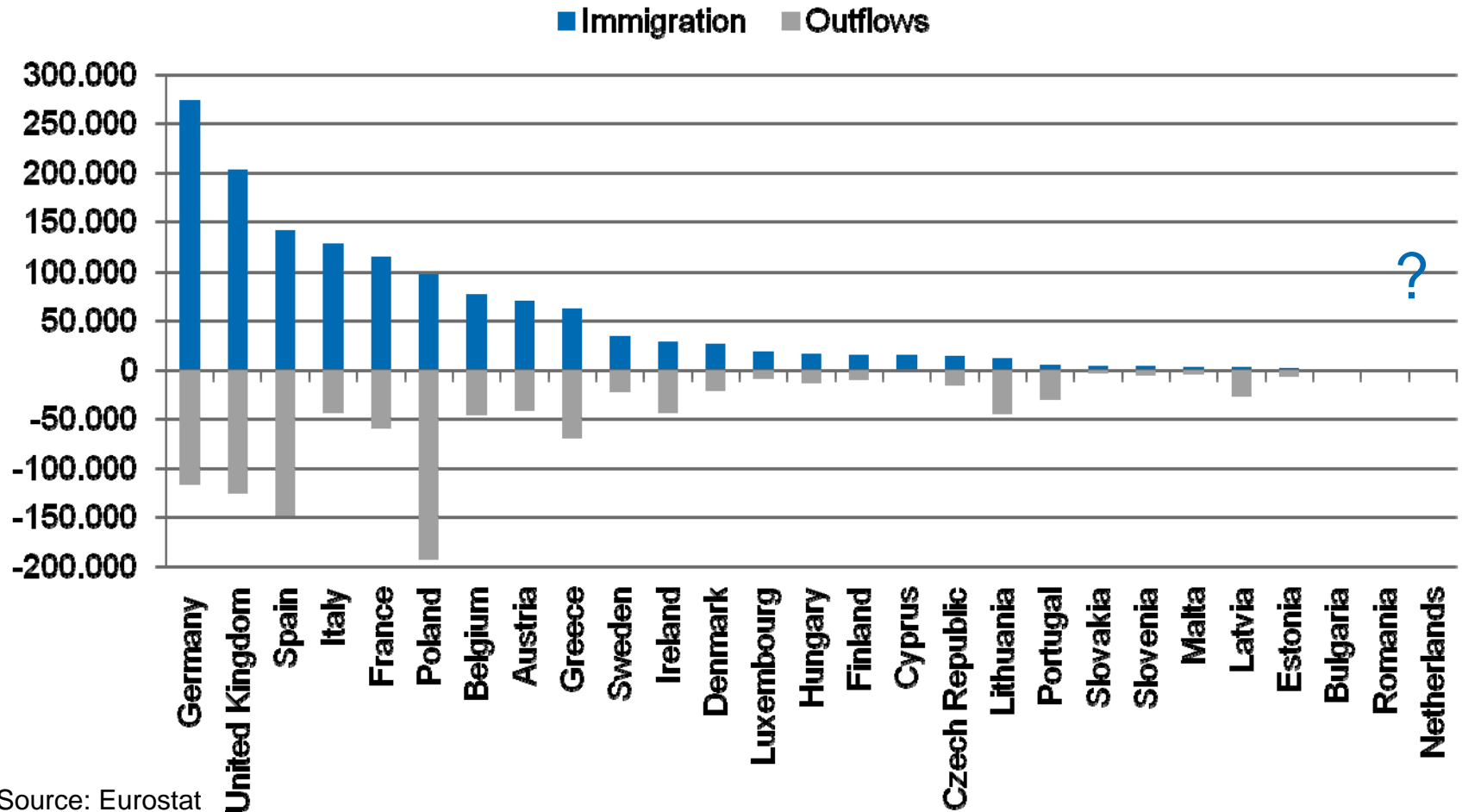
- ▶ Numbers on the immigration of foreign citizens to Germany in 2011:
- ▶ Inflows (Wanderungsstatistik): **841,695**
- ▶ Net immigration (Wanderungsstatistik): **302,858**
- ▶ Foreigners, who immigrated in 2011, living in Germany on the 31.12.2011 (AZR): **222,969**
- ▶ Immigration (Eurostat): **389,913**

## European migration statistics

- ▶ **Guidelines laid down in EC Regulation No. 862/2007, completely in force since 2009**
- ▶ **Immigrant: person, who intends to stay at least one year in the country**
- ▶ **Nevertheless different types of data sources: registration data in Germany, International Passenger Survey in the UK**

# Migration movements within the EU

Inflows from and outflows to other EU-countries in 2011

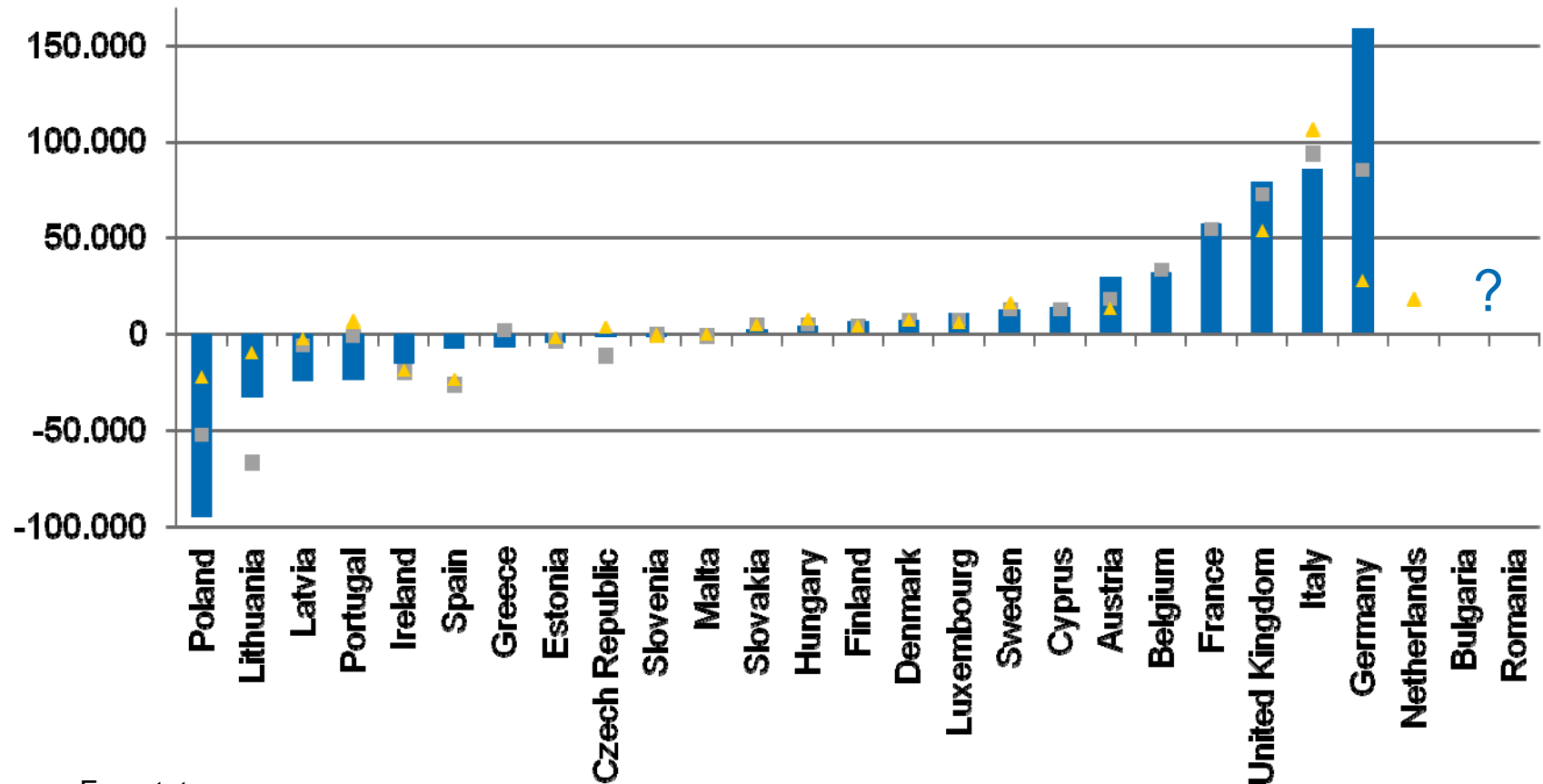


Source: Eurostat

# Migration movements within the EU

## Balances per country

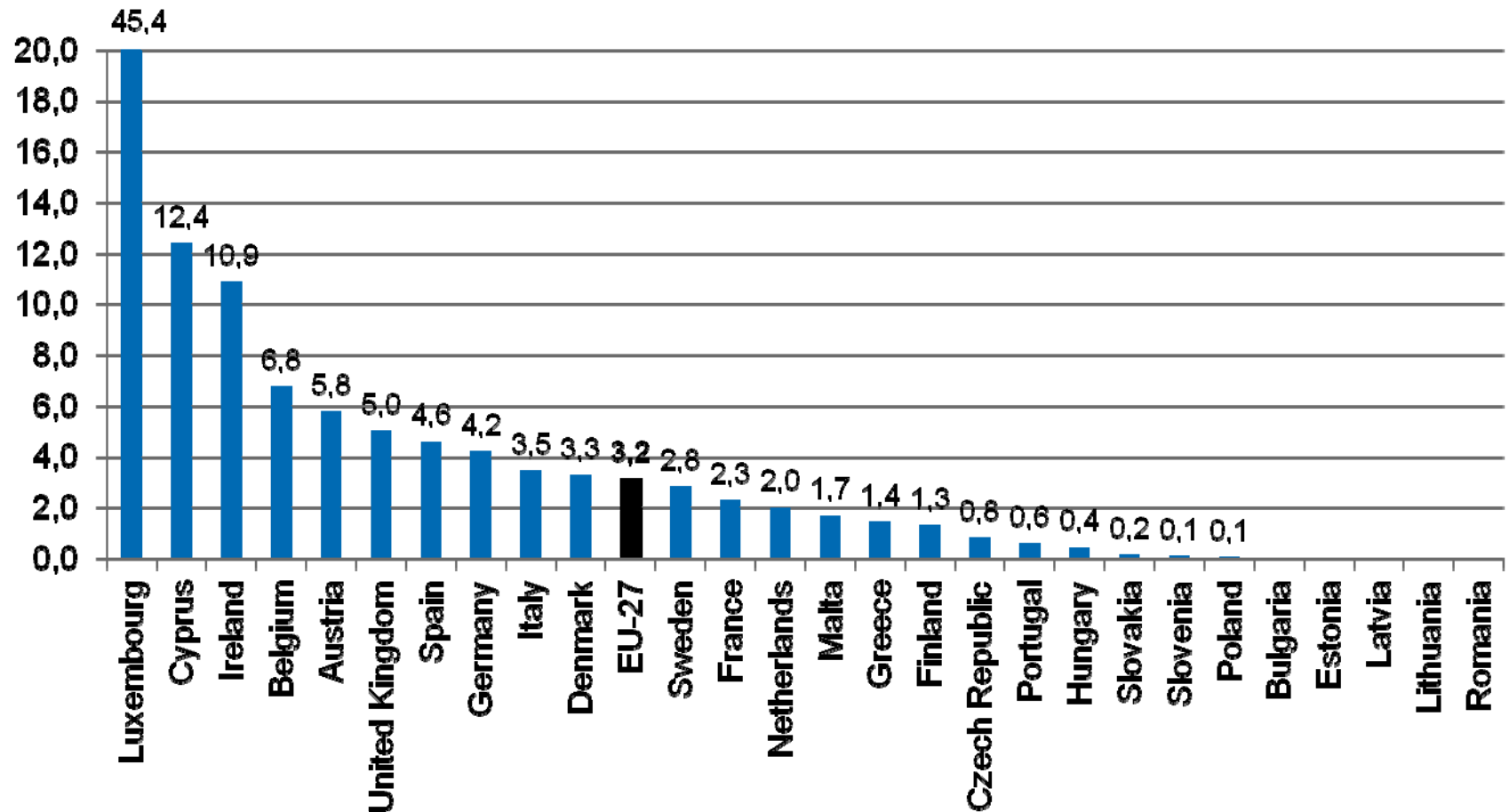
■ 2011 ■ 2010 ▲ 2009



Source: Eurostat

# Workers from other EU countries

Proportion in labor force in percent, 2nd quarter 2013



Source: Eurostat



## Some conclusions on the mobility of the European labour force

### ▶ Mobility within Europe is still low

*Of the 502.5 million people who lived in the European Union in 2011, 16.4 million or 3.3 per cent were born in a different EU-country*

*Of the 309.4 million people who lived in the US in 2010, 11.7 million or 3.8 per cent were born in Mexico*

### ▶ Mobility has been increasing in the last years but its contribution to levelling out Europe's economic imbalances has been modest

*Against the backdrop of an unemployment rate of 21.7 per cent in 2011 and a population of 46.1 million, 147,746 emigrants (gross value) from Spain is a modest number*

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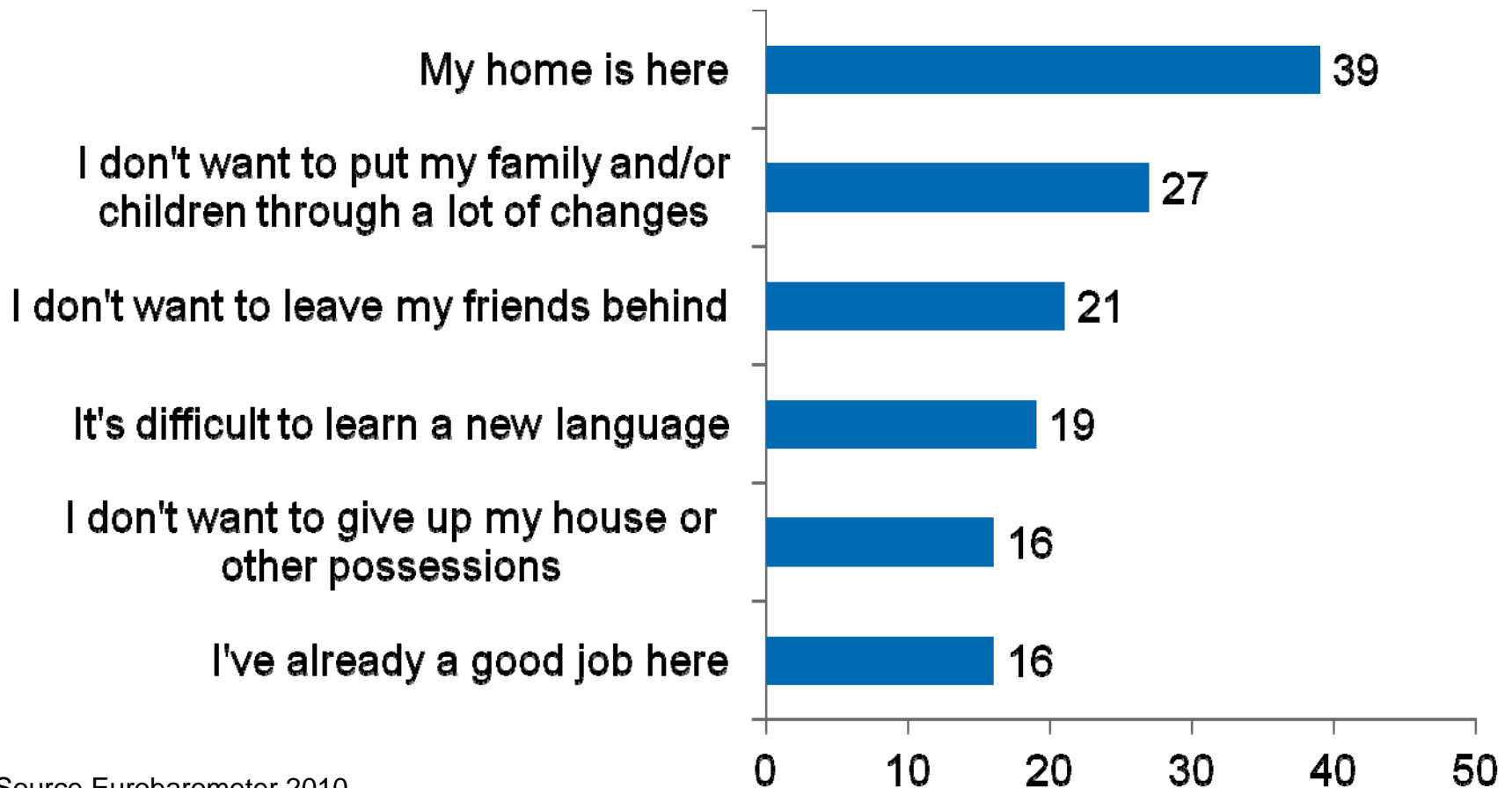
# What reasons might encourage Europeans to work in another country?

Europeans 15 years and older, in percent



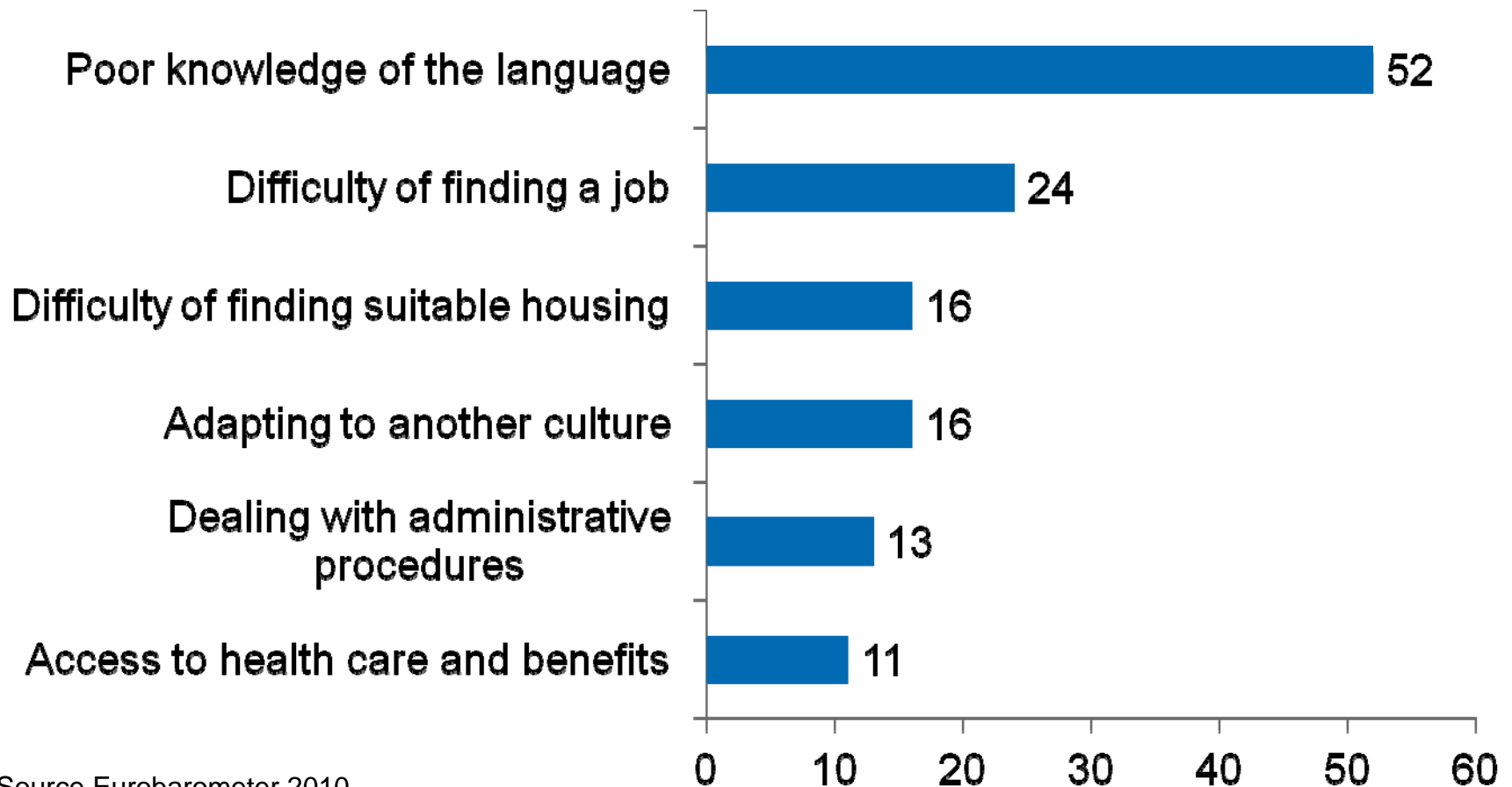
# ...and what might discourage them from working abroad?

Europeans 15 years and older, in percent



# Practical difficulties working abroad

Difficulties that Europeans 15 years and older have encountered or expect to encounter working abroad, in percent



# Effects of the linguistic diversity on mobility within Europe

- ▶ Many workers are unwilling to migrate to another EU country because the challenge of learning the language is too great → **Lower Mobility**
- ▶ When workers decide to move to another country, they often choose countries where they already speak the language or are able to learn it easily → **Migration flows fail to level out the economic imbalances**
- ▶ Before people can start working in another EU country they need time to improve their language skills → **Migration flows react slowly to changes**

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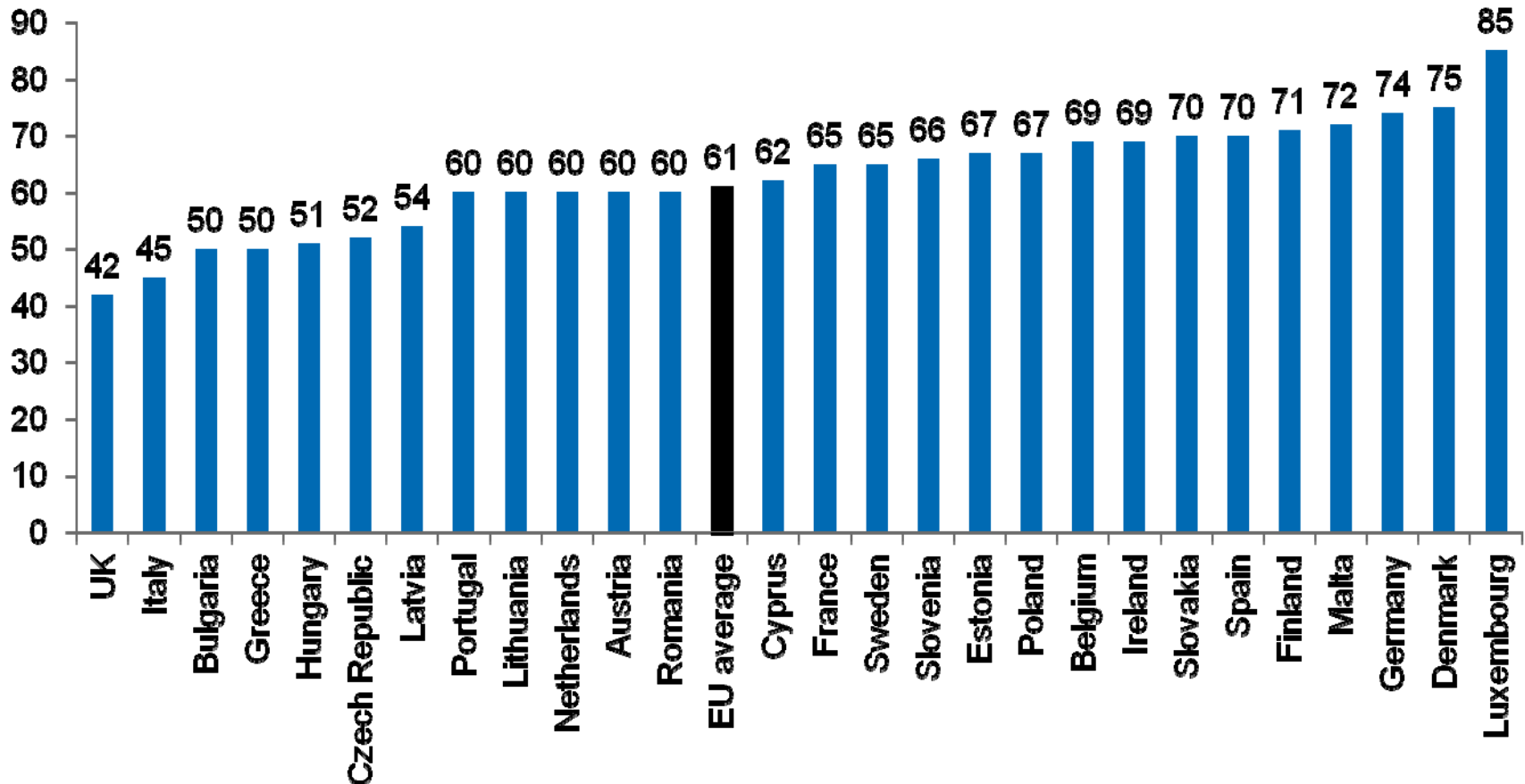
# Measures to improve mobility in Europe

- ▶ **Intensification of English teaching, enabling population to use English for everyday communication**
- ▶ **Language classes for (potential) migrants in home and destination countries**
- ▶ **Improvement of the comparability of educational and professional qualifications**
- ▶ **Strengthening European identity**



# European Identity

Proportion of persons who consider themselves as EU-Citizens in percent



Source: Eurobarometer, 2012

## Potential of the single European labour market

- ▶ **In the short term: modest because of obstacles to migration**
- ▶ **In the medium term: large, if obstacles are reduced**
- ▶ **In the long term: modest as business cycles will very probably converge and all European countries are affected by the demographic change.**