

# Integration through education

## Successes and challenges for children of immigrants

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# Integration among young people

## Studies on Sweden

- Educational system similar to other Nordic & Baltic countries
- Long period of high and diverse immigration - can evaluate entire school careers



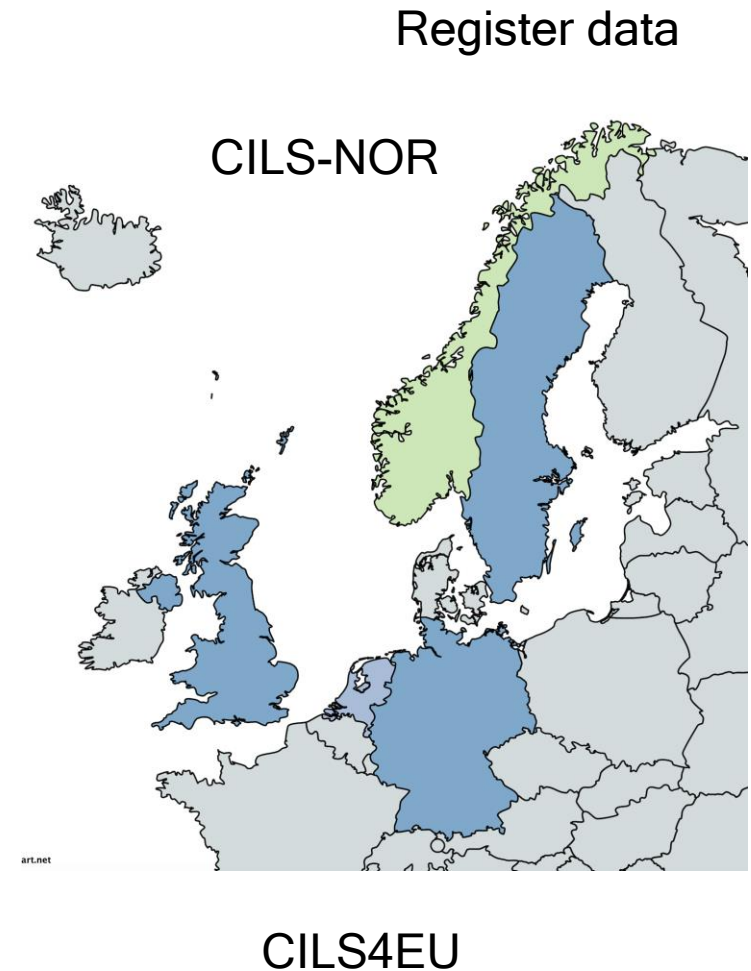
# Integration among young people

## Studies on Sweden

- Educational system similar to other Nordic & Baltic countries
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## Studies within the IntegrateYouth project (NordForsk)

- Variation in educational systems - learn from comparisons



# Sweden

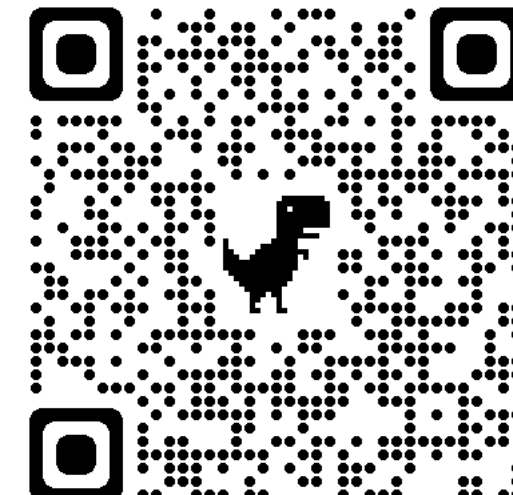
25% of children have  
immigrant background

- Biggest groups: Middle East (Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan), Africa (Somalia)
- Earlier immigration: Iran, Yugoslavia, Finland, Chile
- Ukraine 2022-2023: 60k, whereof 30% children

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Our studies of **education** are part of a larger framework - **multidimensional integration**



Education

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**Structural integration**

Education, school situation, work,  
economic resources, housing...

# Multidimensional integration

## **Structural**

Education, school situation, work,  
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## **Cultural**

Identity, values, religion,  
language...

## **Social**

Ingroup and outgroup relations,  
attitudes to other group, family,  
bullying..

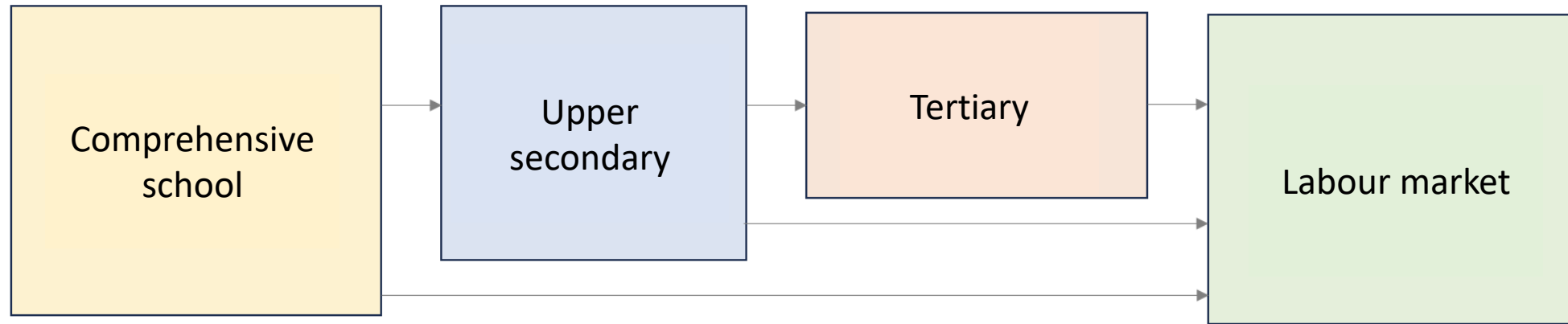
## **Psychological adaptation**

Psychological and psychosomatic  
health, worries, beliefs about the  
future...

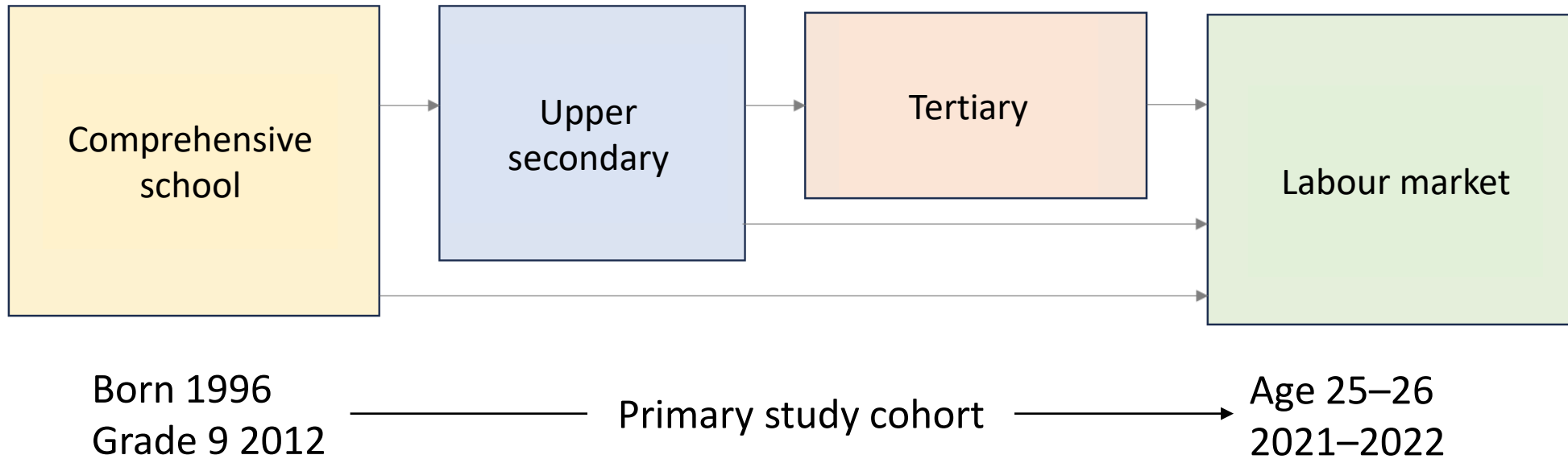


Education

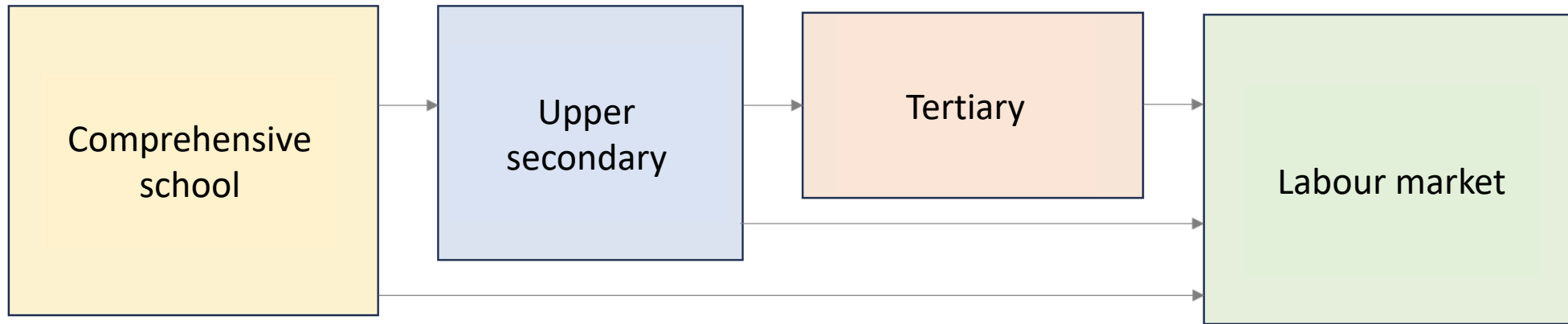
# Education: The full picture



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Born 1996  
Grade 9 2012

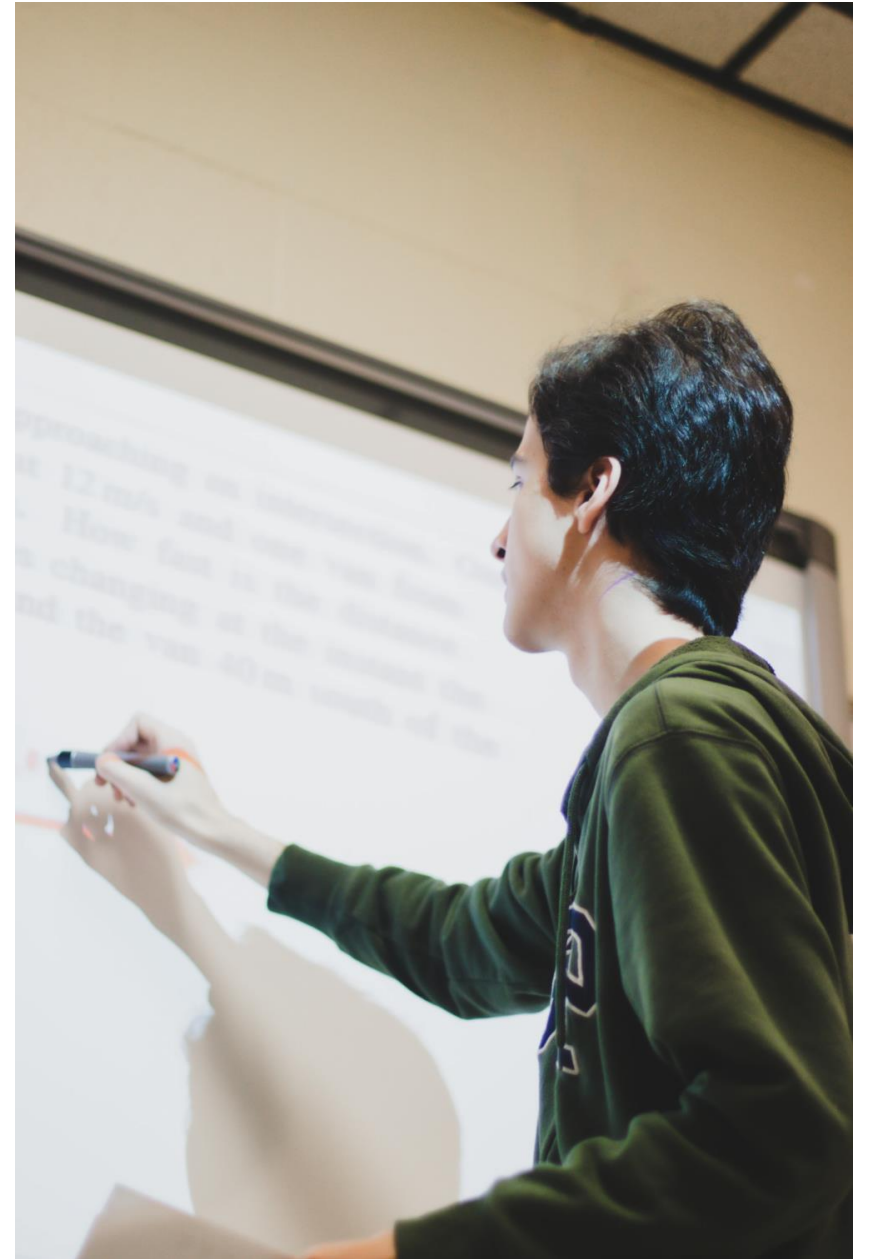
Primary study cohort

Age 25–26  
2021–2022

← Extra cohorts →

## Education

- Overall picture surprisingly positive
- Challenges concentrated to certain groups
- Important to distinguish late childhood migrants



# Aspirations

Immigrant-background youth  
have...

- ..higher school engagement
- ..higher aspirations
- ..higher optimism about the future

And make...

- ...more school effort
- ...bolder educational choices

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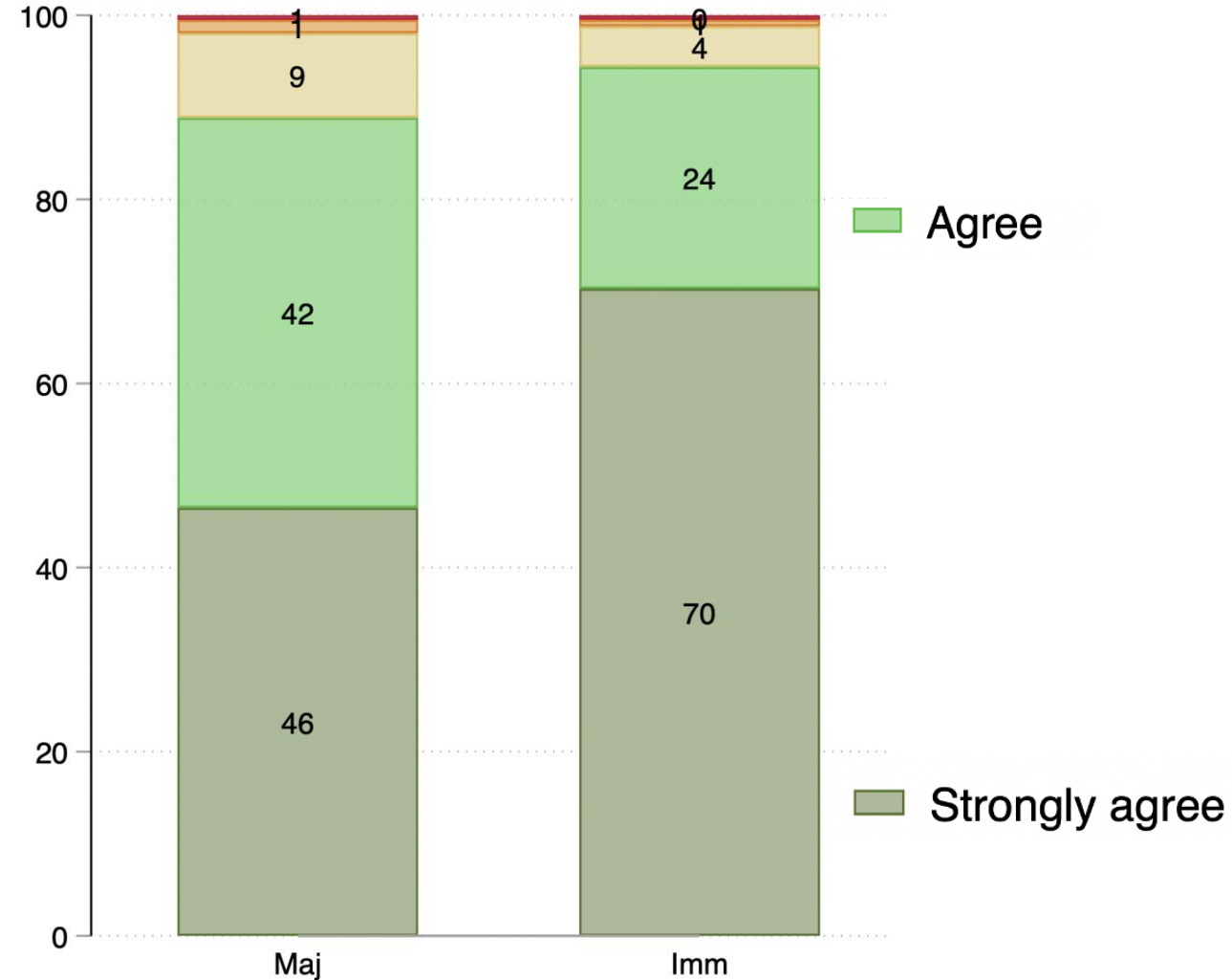
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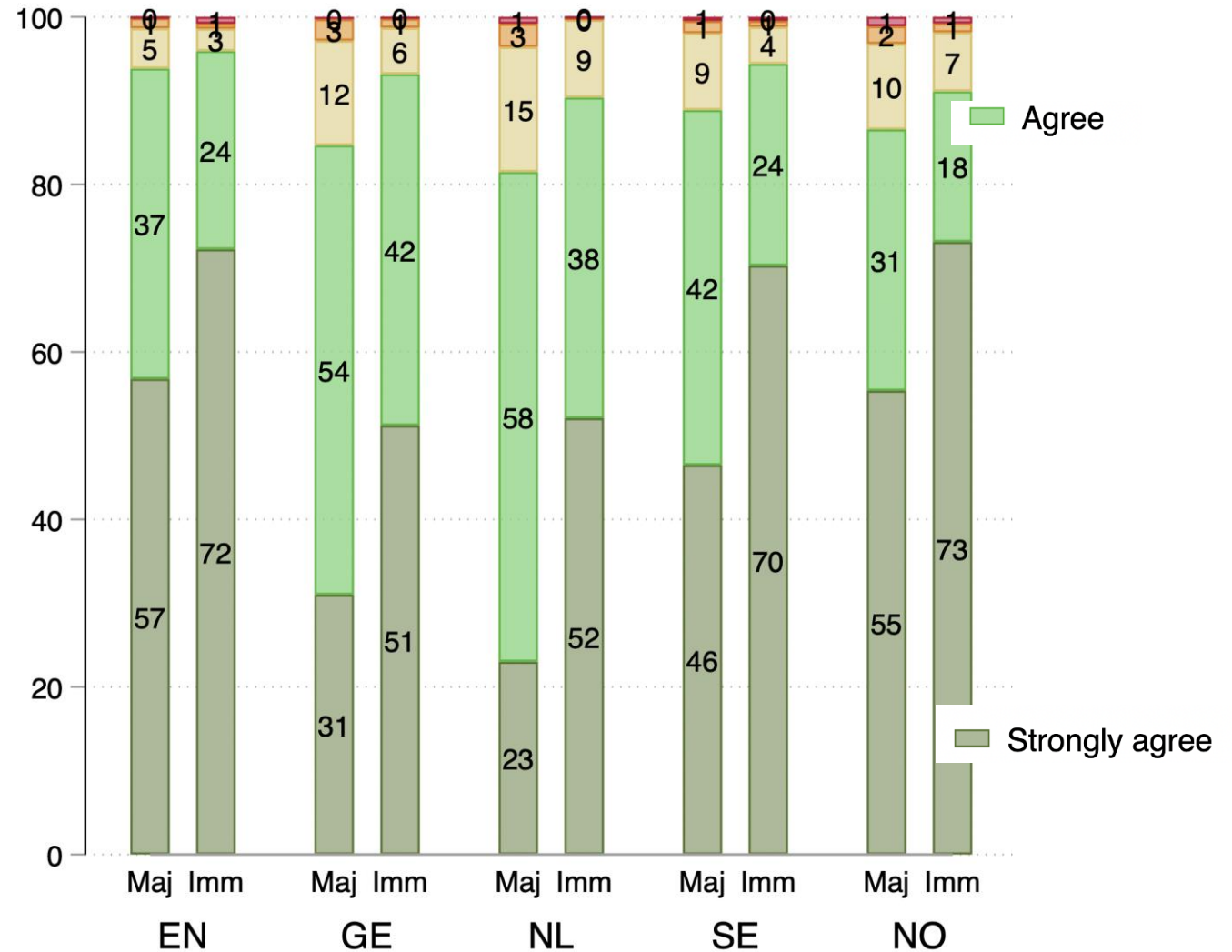
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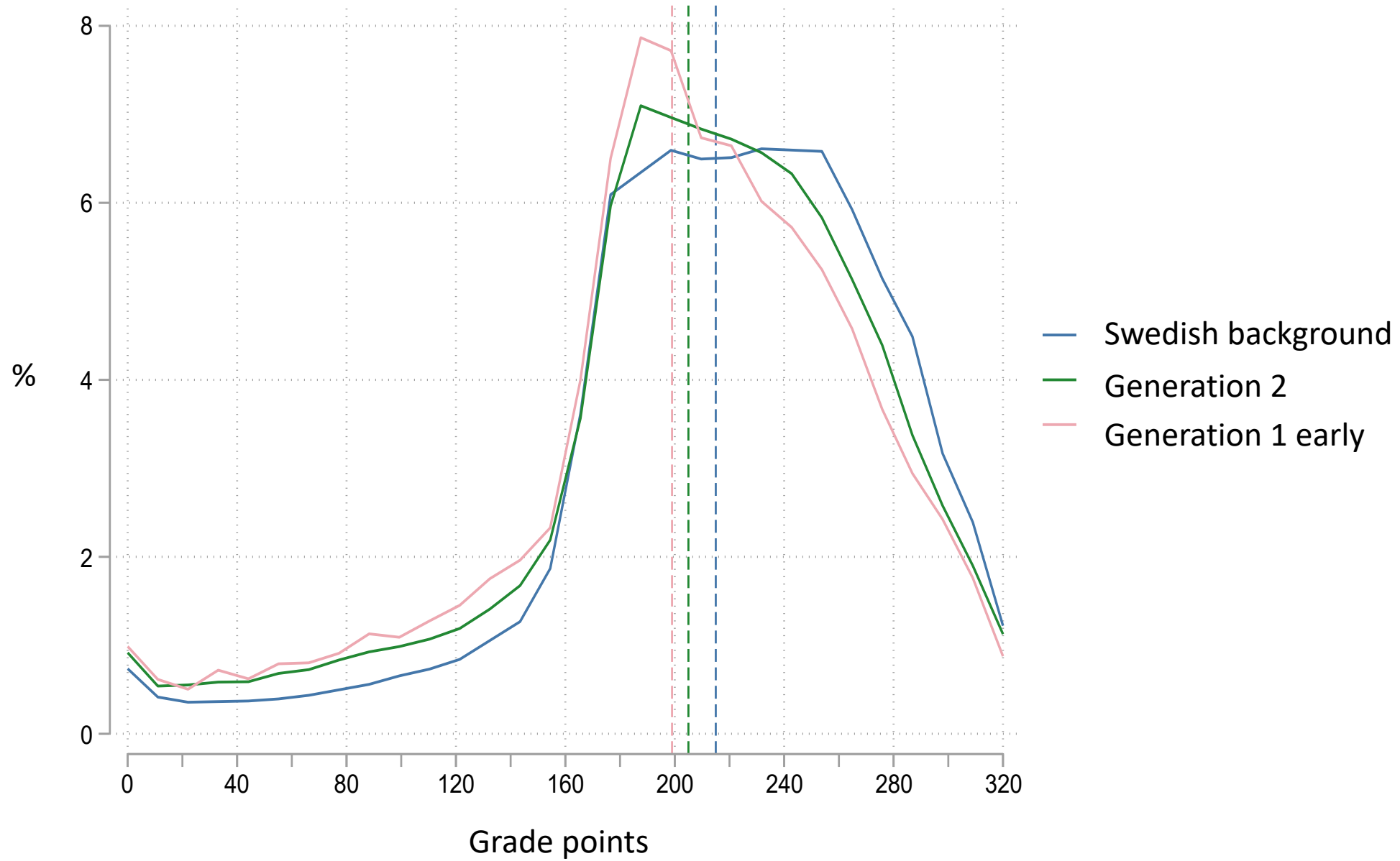
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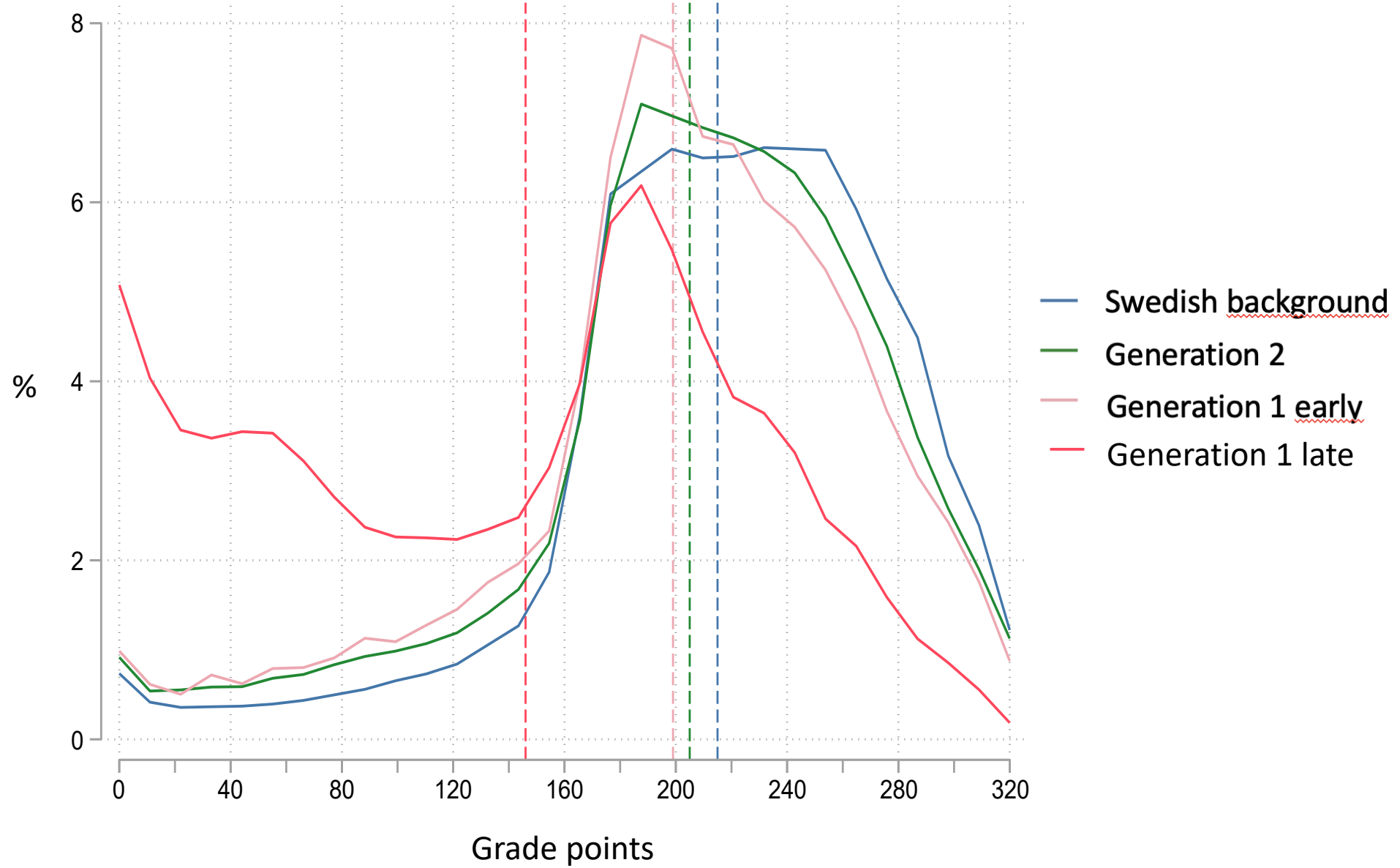
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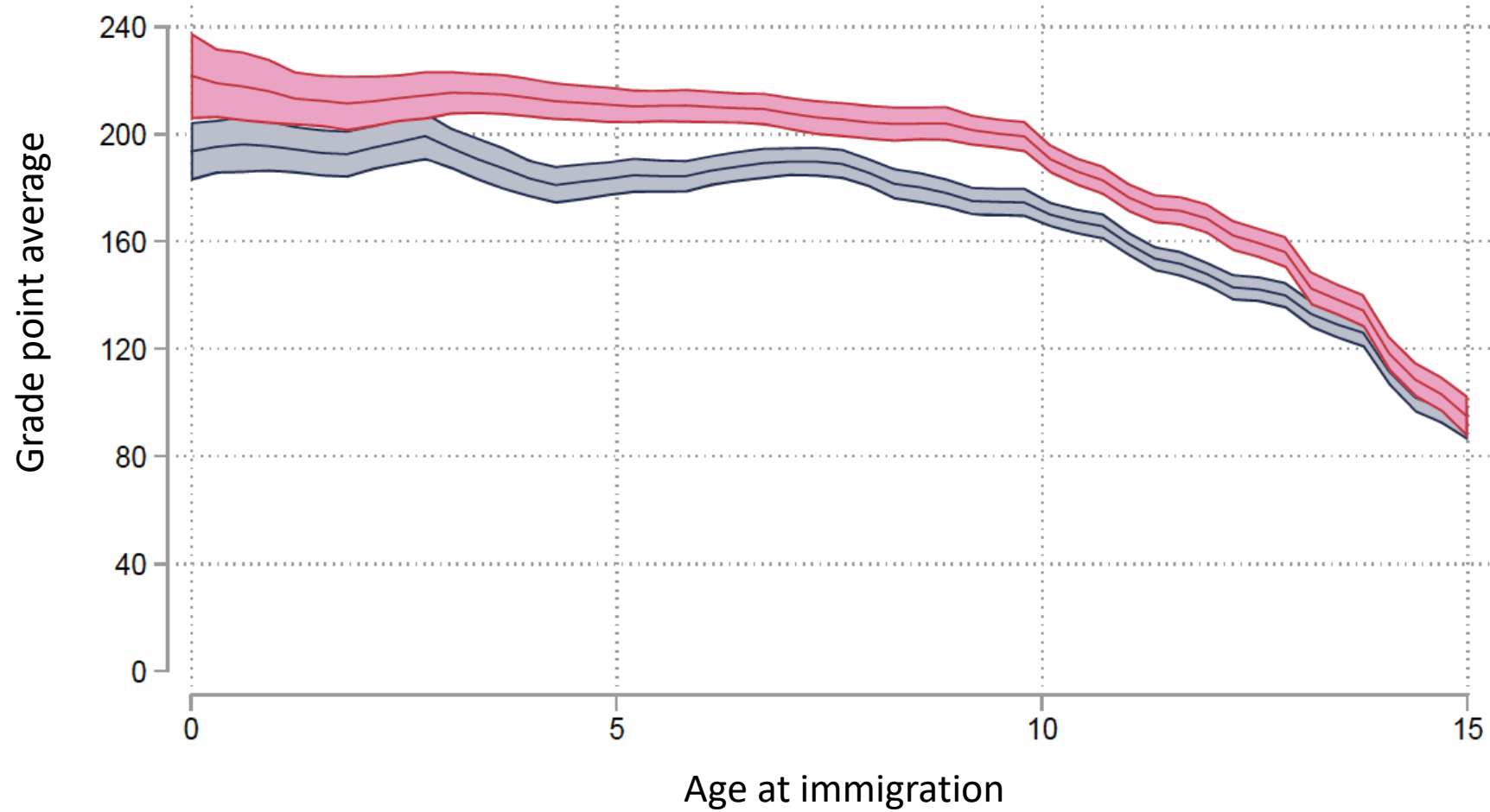




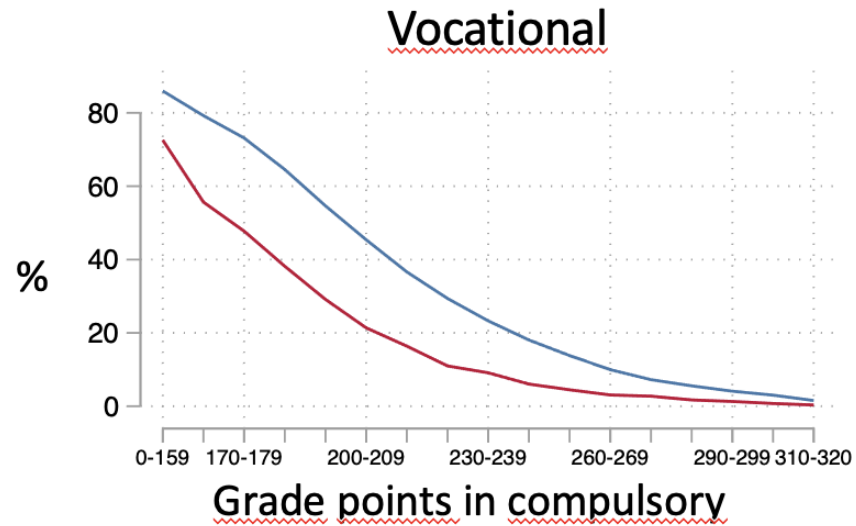
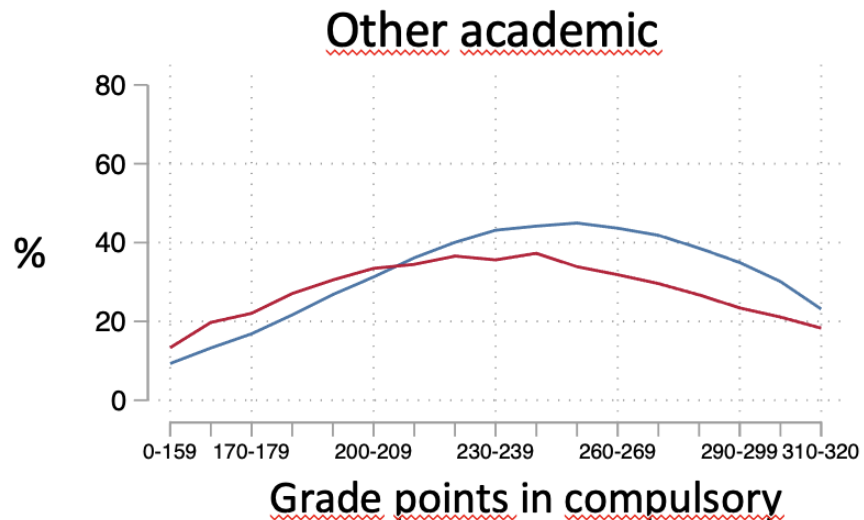
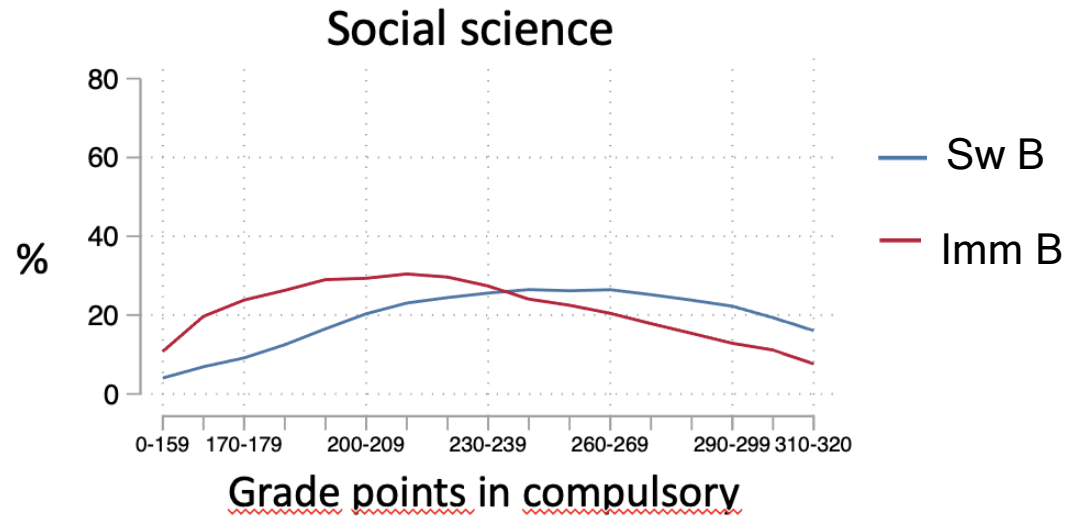
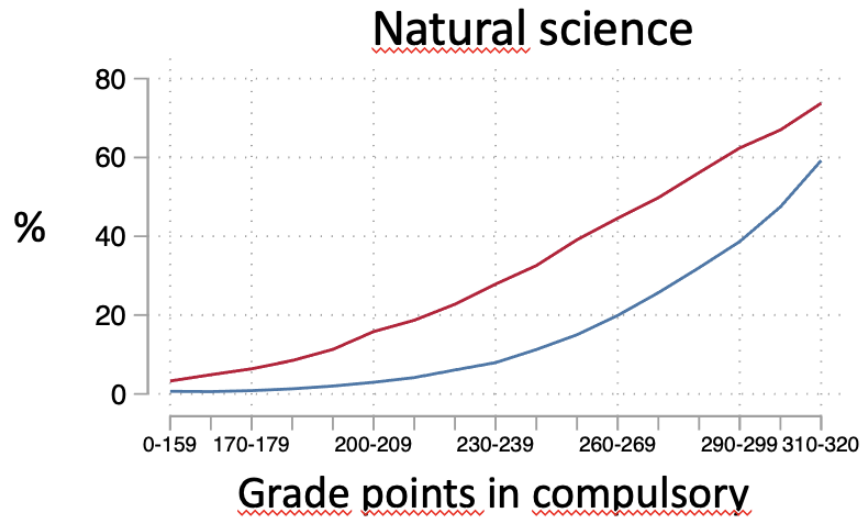




## High age at immigration, lower grades



# Choice of upper secondary programme at given compulsory grades

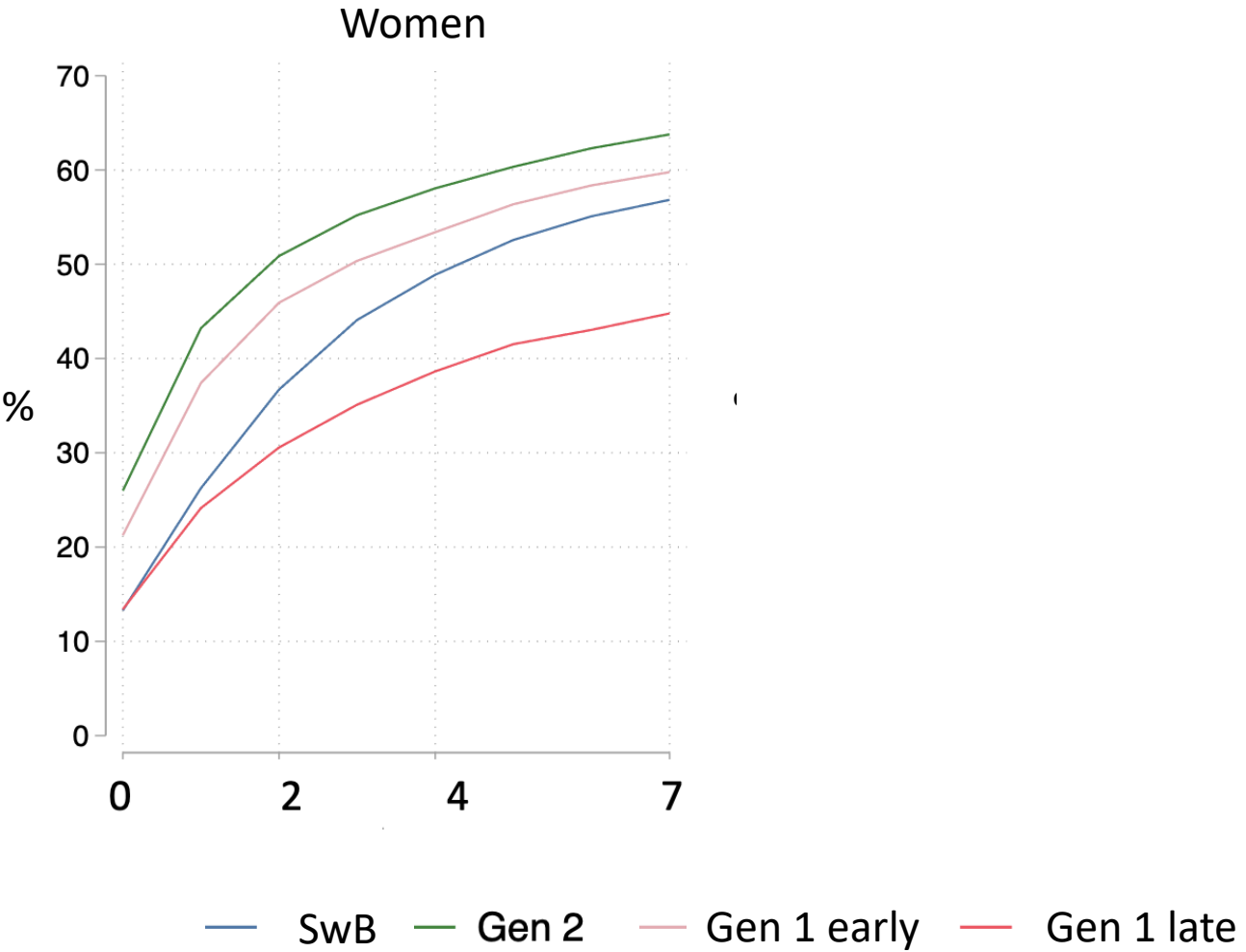


## Upper secondary education

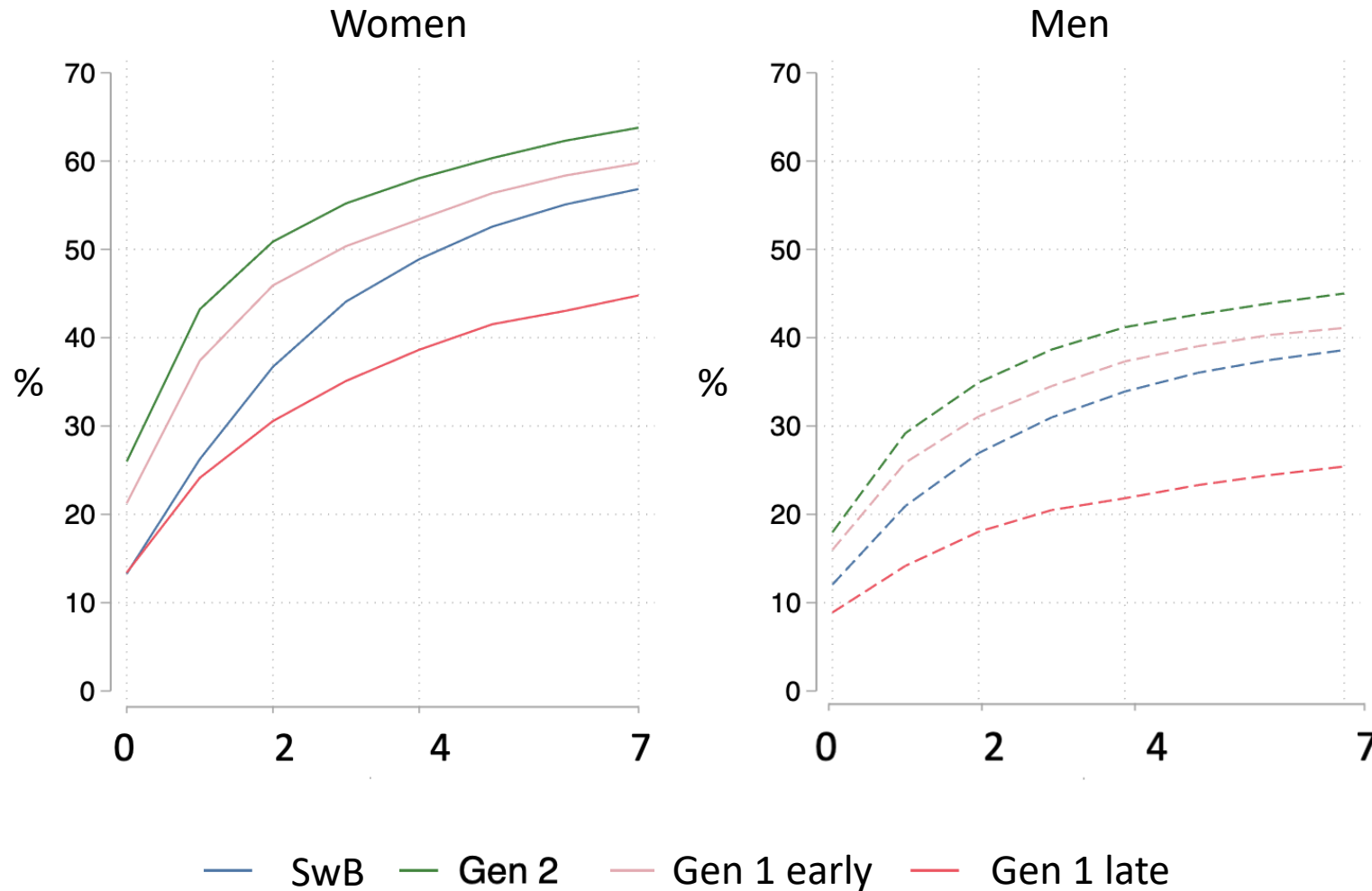
- Completion of upper secondary is lower among immigrant-background youth - partly explained by optimistic choices
- Gap decreases with time - catch-up, but not full
- Almost half of those who immigrated late in childhood lack an upper secondary degree at age 25



# Tertiary education: % of full cohort who have started, 0-7 years after normal upper secondary leaving year



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- Immigrant background: Quicker and more often tertiary - despite fewer with upper secondary degree
- Exception: Gen 1 late, due to weaker earlier school results

# Tertiary

- Completion of tertiary is similar - despite differences in previous performance
- % of **full cohort** with tertiary degree at age 26

Women:

SwB = 28%; Gen 2 = 33%;

Gen 1 early = 29%; Gen 1 late = 20%

Men:

SwB = 15%; Gen 2 = 17%;

Gen 1 early = 14%, Gen 1 late = 8%





## At age 25

- "Bipolar" pattern of educational outcomes
  - Over-representation in both top and bottom.
- No big differences in labour market outcomes
- Education seems to have equal value regardless of background
- **Exception:** Men after vocational upper secondary
  - Esp. MENA & Africa.

## Variation across groups

In general, larger challenges for groups with:

- Little or no prior exposure to host country **language**
- Low **parental education**

Sweden has large challenges because

- Few immigrants know the Swedish language
- High immigration of groups with low education

# What can we expect for Ukrainian children?

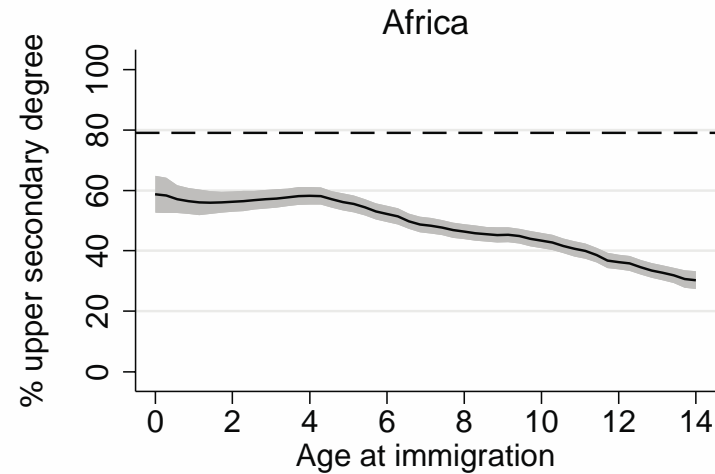
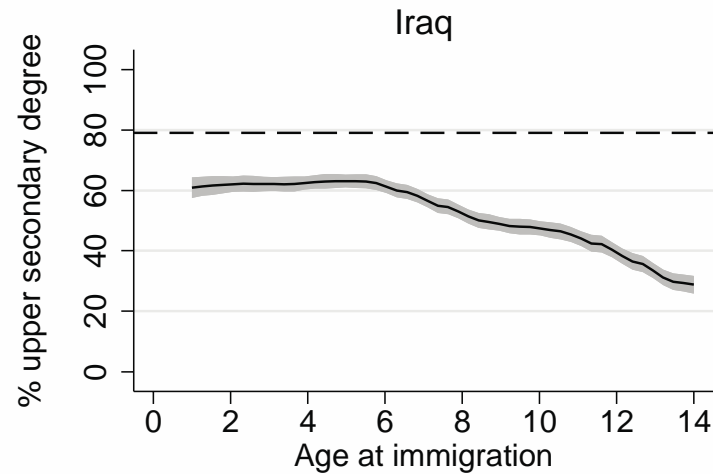
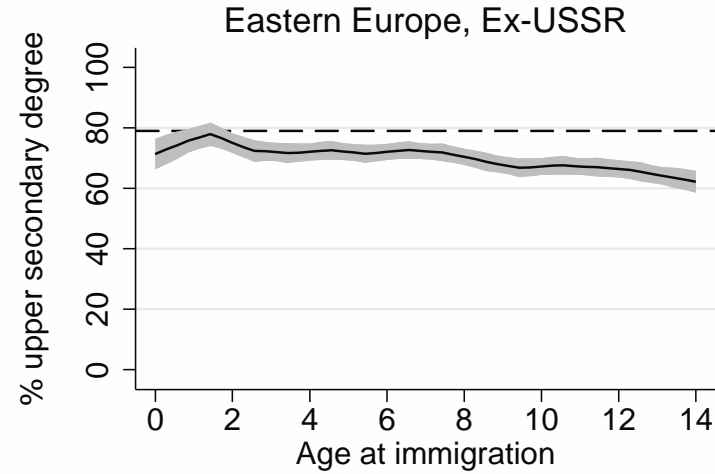
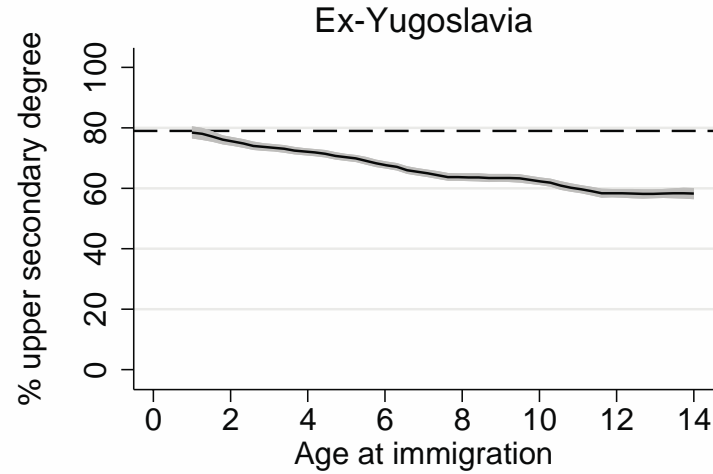
Compare to **earlier migration from Ukraine** and neighbouring countries

- But primarily labour migration

Compare to **migration from Ex-Yugoslavia** in the 1990's

- Refugees from war and large-scale violence
- European, slavic language
- Relatively high education

# Differences across origin groups: % with upper secondary degree



Note: Immigration 1990-1999, born 1976-1999.  
Horizontal reference line shows % with upper secondary degree among Swedish-born same-aged youth.

## Education: Conclusions

- Age at migration
  - Distinguish late childhood immigrants: Need intensive support
  - Disadvantage decreases with time (catch-up)
- Origin/destination variation:
  - Language, parents' education
- High aspirations
  - Open school systems benefit immigrant-background youth

## Multidimensional integration

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bullying..

### **Psychological adaptation**

Psychological and psychosomatic  
health, worries, beliefs about the  
future...

- Social integration
- Mental well-being
- Values and tolerance



The more students from other background in school,  
the more friends of other background

**Segregation** matters for friendship  
across groups

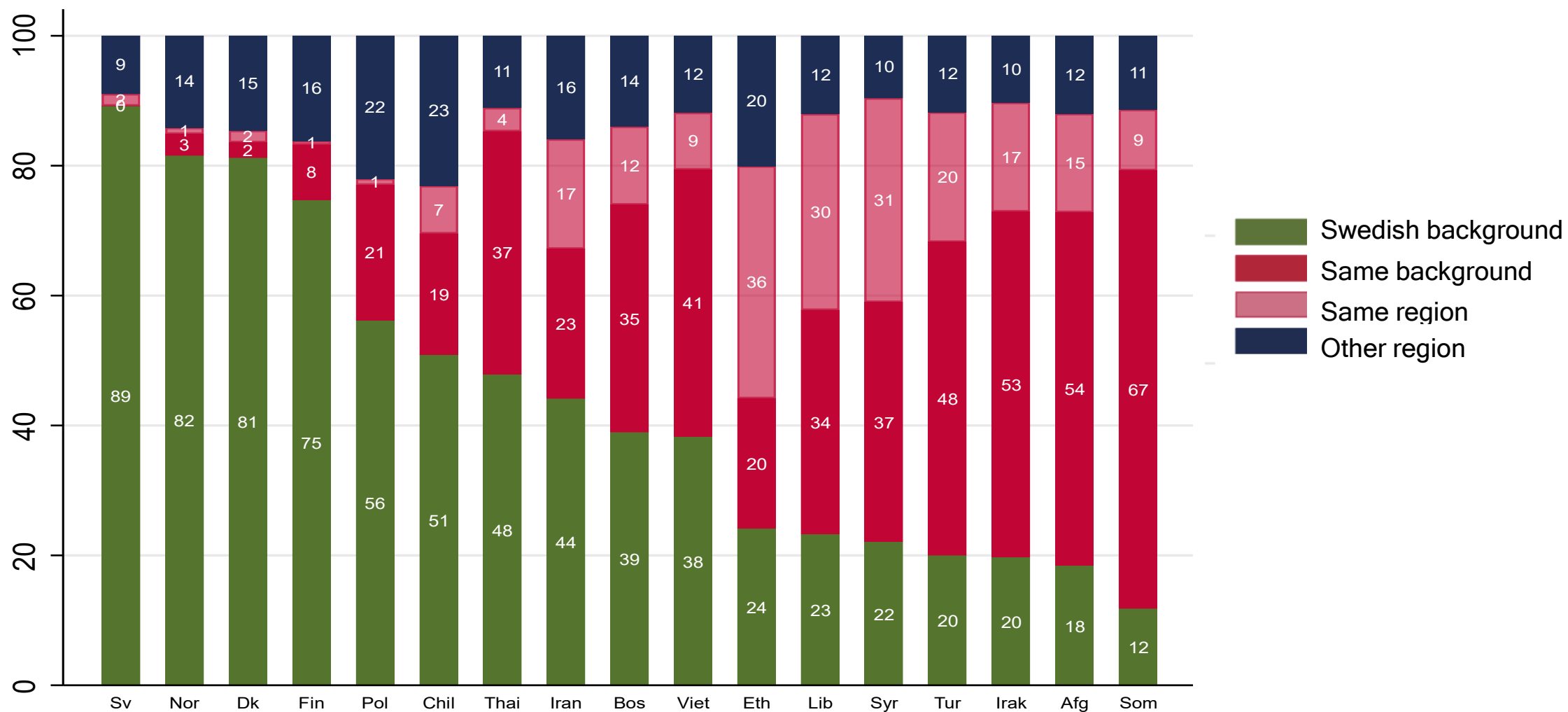
But strong friendship segregation **also**  
within a given school

**Both** segregation and preferences  
matter





# Weak social integration – partnering across groups uncommon



# Mental well-being

- Mental well-being similar or better, also among children to refugees
- Higher self-rated health
- Higher optimism about the future
- Higher self-confidence



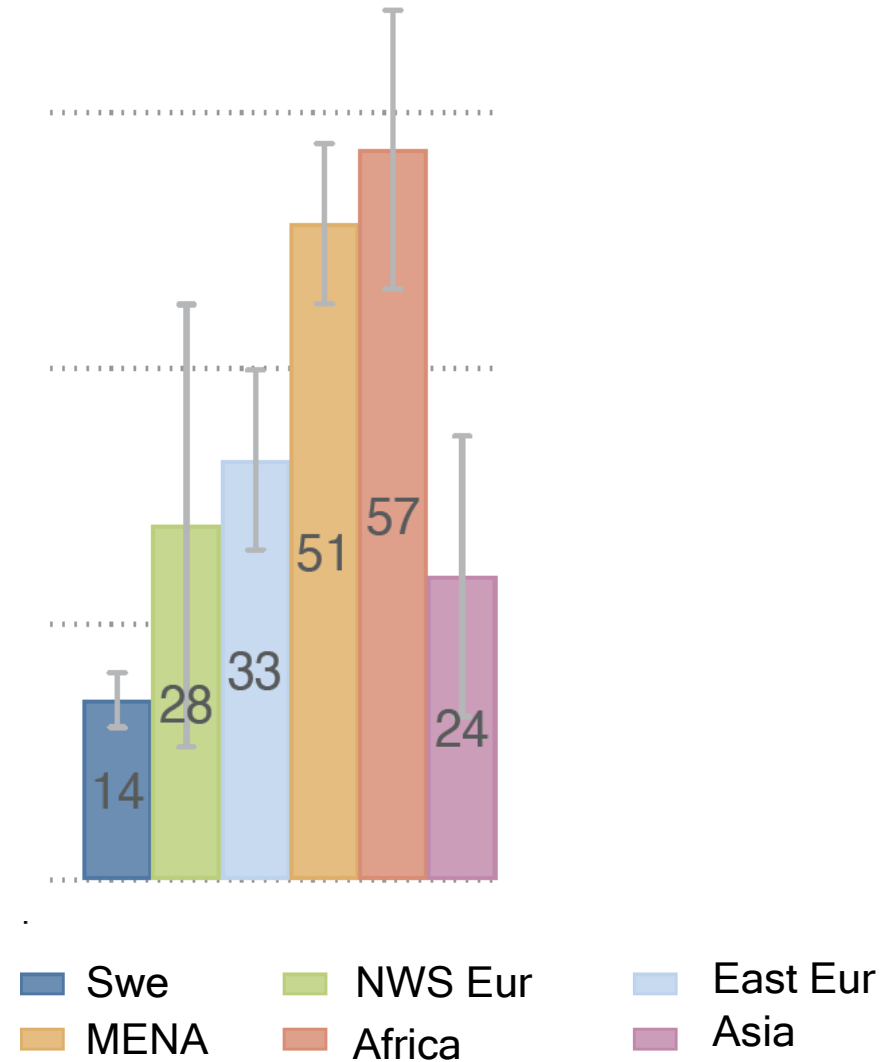
# Cultural integration

Big differences in religiosity,  
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Example: % "Homosexuality is never ok"

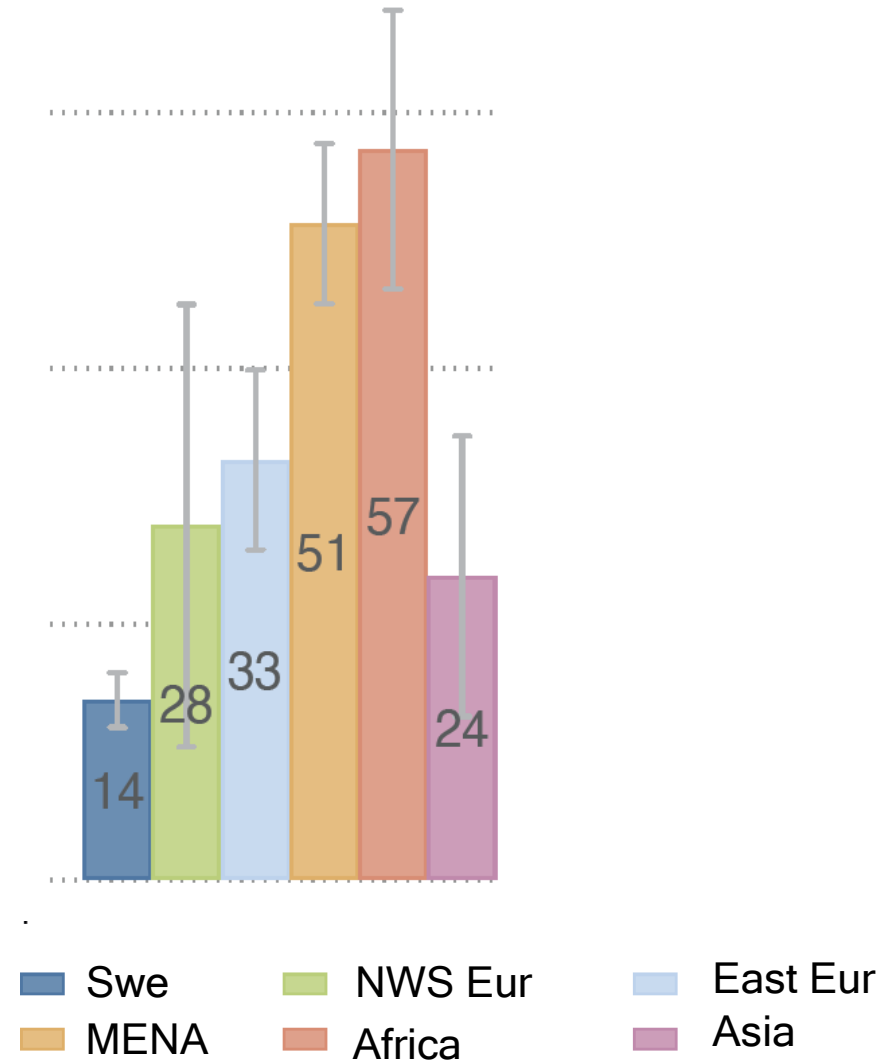


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Big differences in religiosity, gender attitudes, attitudes to family and sexuality

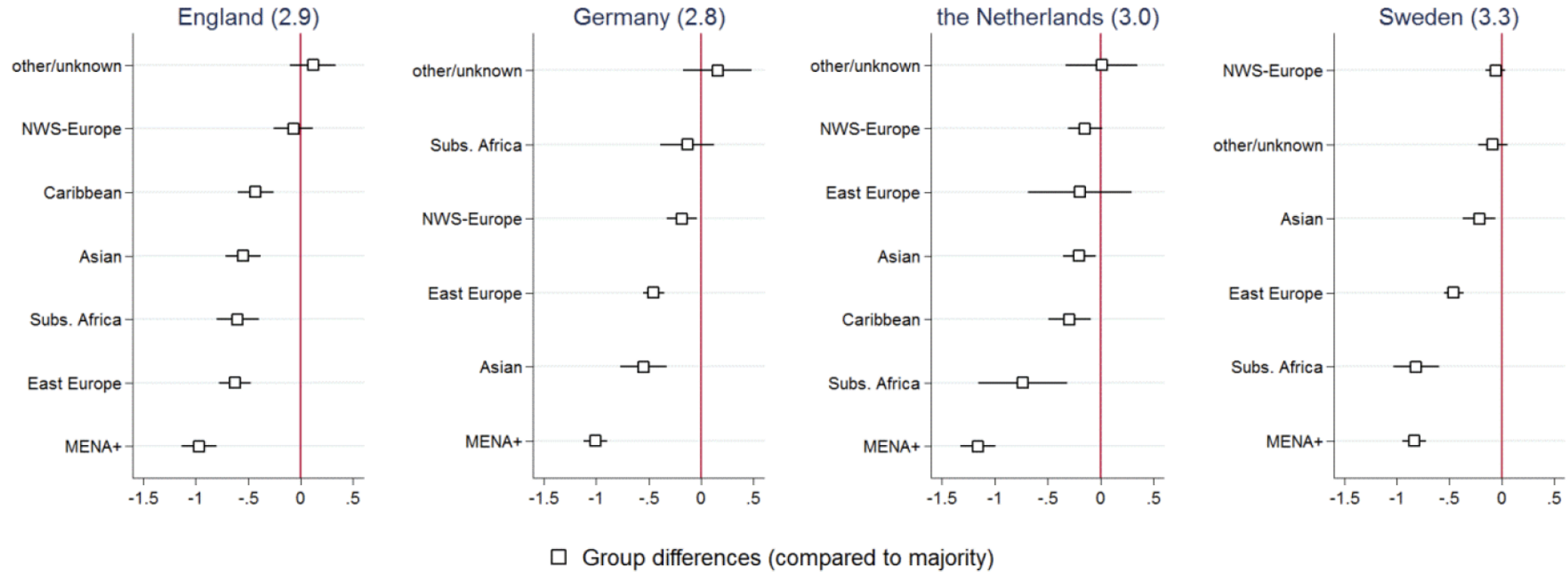
Example: % "Homosexuality is never ok"

Little convergence over time



# Cultural integration

## Value index (homosexuality, abortion, unmarried cohabitation)



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## Integration through education?

- Education used purposefully to reach ambitious goals
- In open school systems, immigrant background youth can live out their aspirations
- Immigrant-background youth in high positions - visibility, inspiration, less discrimination?

**But: Remaining social and cultural divides**



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An aerial photograph showing a vast, dense crowd of people gathered in a large open square or park. The people are packed closely together, filling most of the frame. In the center of the crowd, there is a small, circular structure that looks like a fountain or a stage. The ground is paved, and there are some trees visible at the edges of the square. The overall scene is one of a large-scale public event.

Knowledge requires data!

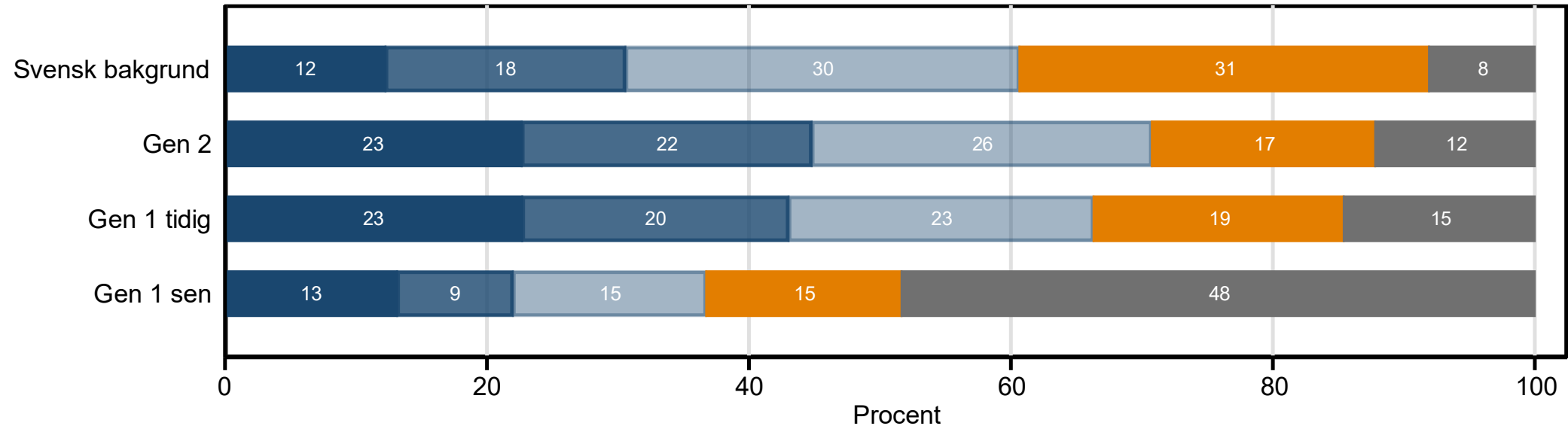
Data from children themselves  
Large-scale (variation)  
Many destinations and origins  
Follow over time



Extra slides

Age	ENGLAND	GERMANY	NETHERLANDS	SWEDEN	NORWAY					
19	TERTIARY ACADEMIC		TERTIARY ACADEMIC	TERTIARY ACADEMIC	TERTIARY ACADEMIC	APPR ENTIC ESHIP				
18	UPPER SECON- DARY	VOCA- TIONAL EDUCA- TION	VOCATIONAL EDUCATION & TRAINING	TERTIARY ACADEMIC	ACADEM. UPPER SECON- DARY	VOCA- TIONAL UPPER SECON- DARY	GENE RAL			
17							VOCA- TIONAL UPPER SECON- DARY			
16								VO. EDUC.		
15	COMPULSORY EDUCATION		GYMNASIUM	REALSHULE	HAUPTSCHULE	VWO	HAVO	VMBO	COMPULSORY EDUCATION	COMPULSORY EDUCATION
14										
13										
12										
11										
10	PRIMARY EDUCATION		PRIMARY EDUCATION	PRIMARY EDUCATION	PRIMARY EDUCATION	PRIMARY EDUCATION	PRIMARY EDUCATION	PRIMARY EDUCATION	COMPULSORY EDUCATION	COMPULSORY EDUCATION
9										
8										
7										
6	PRIMARY EDUCATION		PRIMARY EDUCATION	PRIMARY EDUCATION	PRIMARY EDUCATION	PRIMARY EDUCATION	PRIMARY EDUCATION	PRIMARY EDUCATION	COMPULSORY EDUCATION	COMPULSORY EDUCATION
6	PRIMARY EDUCATION		PRIMARY EDUCATION	PRIMARY EDUCATION	PRIMARY EDUCATION	PRIMARY EDUCATION	PRIMARY EDUCATION	PRIMARY EDUCATION	PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION	COMPULSORY EDUCATION

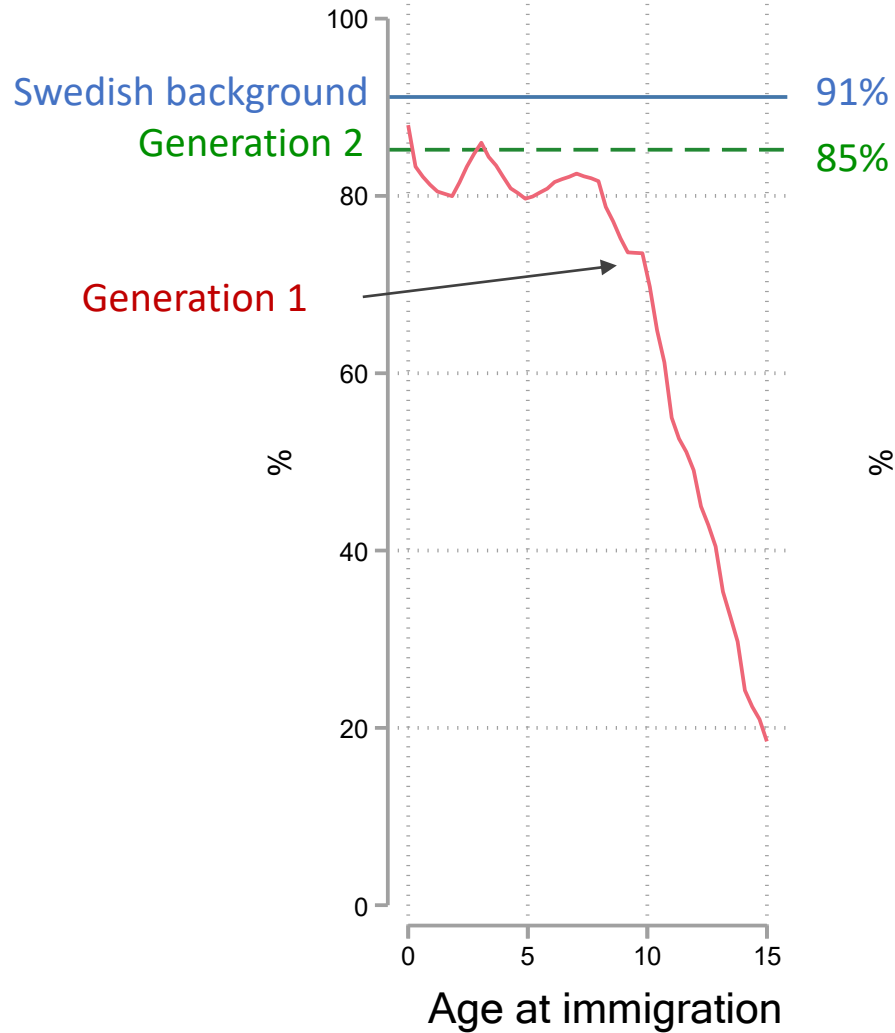
# Upper secondary programmes



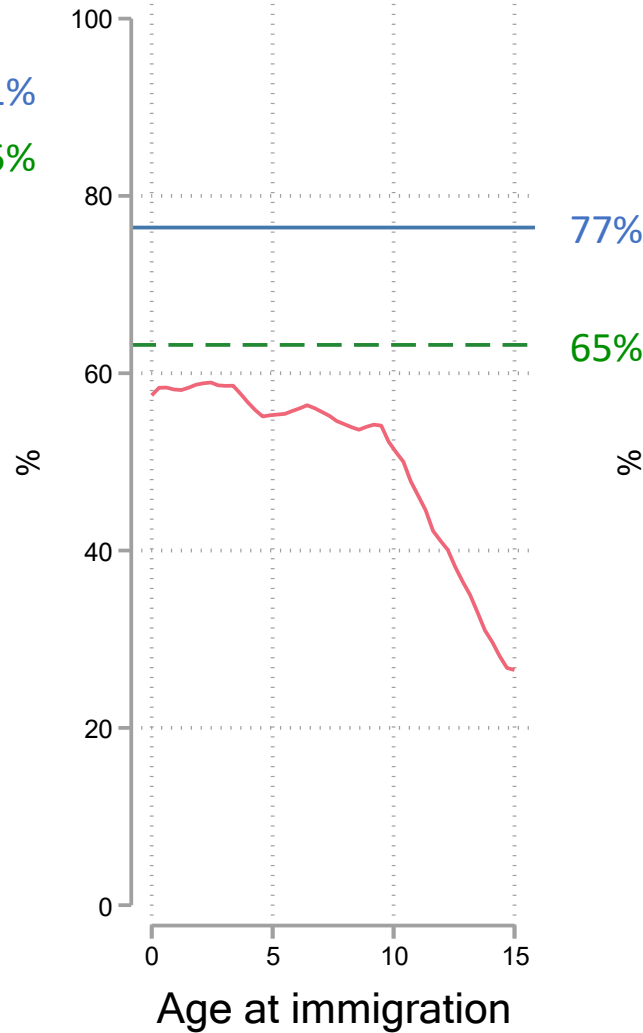
Natur Samhälle Övriga HSF Yrkes Ej nat prog

# Upper secondary eligibility and -degree

## Eligibility after grade 9



## Degree after 4 years



## Degree after 9 years

