

# ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN THE CHANGING WORLD

Environmental and Zoo Education Conference

Wollongong, NSW, Australia

4<sup>th</sup> February 2020



pasi\_sahlberg

# **Our experiment**

**NOAH**

# Childcare price rises leave Felicity working for almost no money

By [Pallavi Singhal](#)

Updated August 5, 2019 –  
9.31am, first published August  
4, 2019 – 4.12pm



77 View all comments

## TODAY'S TOP STORIES

### RUGBY WORLD CUP

'Super Typhoon' could wreak havoc on World Cup: Wallabies, Ireland in eye of the storm



### BUSHFIRES

'Everthing's gone': Up to 20 properties destroyed in out-of-control bushfires in NSW



### BREXIT CHAOS

'Stupid blame game': Donald Tusk berates Boris Johnson as hopes of a deal fade



### SYRIA



Fee rises of 20 per cent or more at childcare centres in NSW have prompted calls for the government to "name and shame" some of Sydney's most expensive centres.

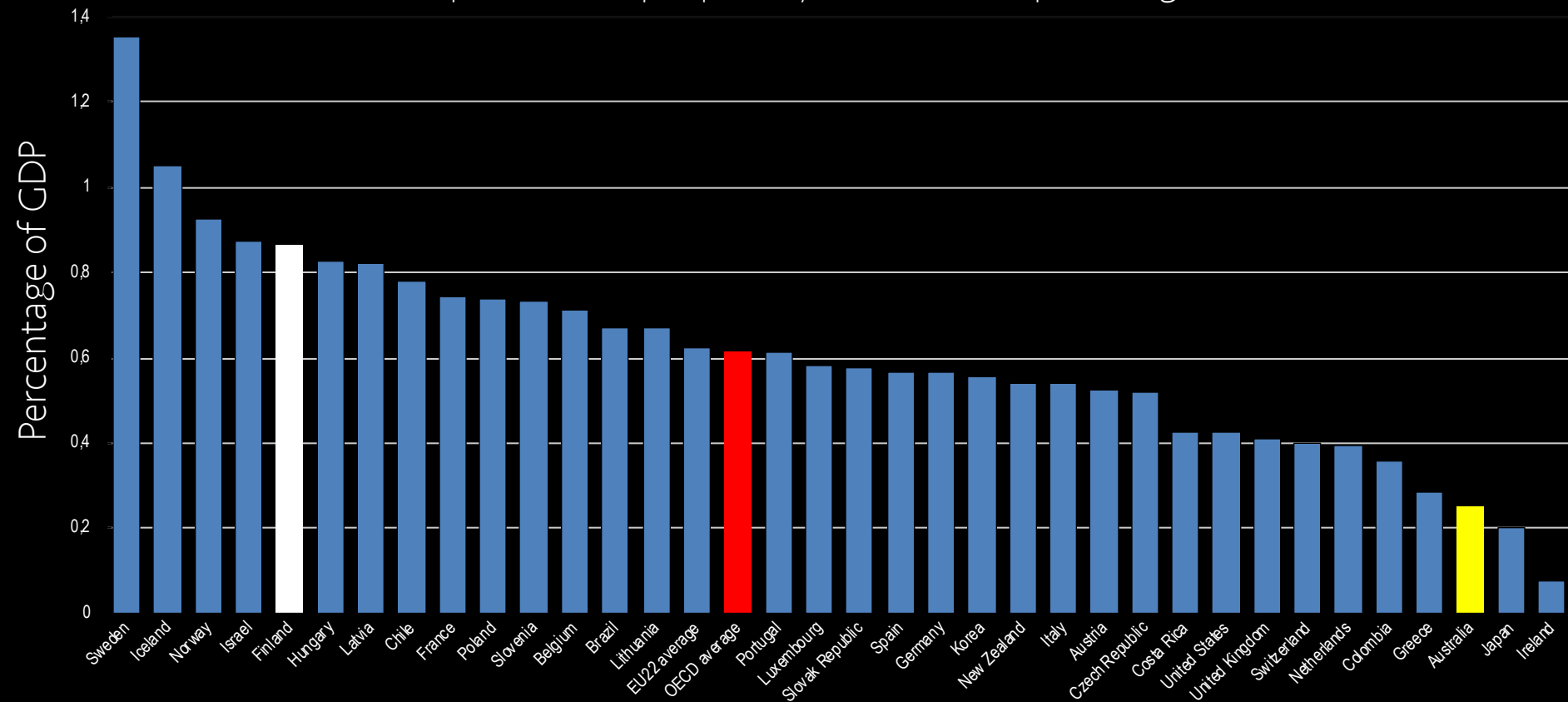
Childcare centres in some parts of the city, including the CBD, the north shore and northern beaches are charging up to \$200 a day.



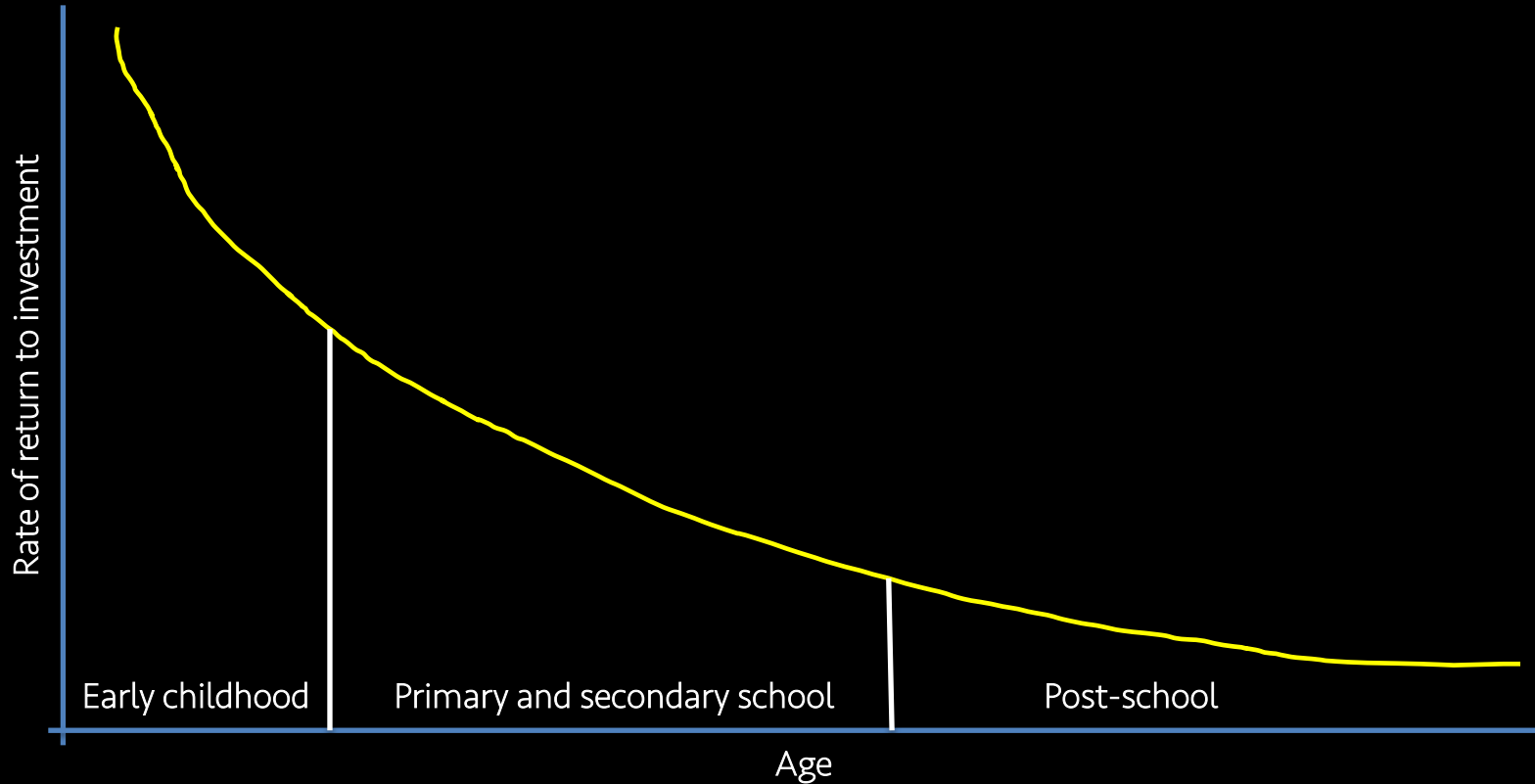
Sydney mother Felicity Frankish, who has just had her third child, says she is now having to choose between working for almost no money or staying home with her children and forgoing the educational benefits of preschool. JAMES ALCOCK

# How much national wealth goes to early childhood education?

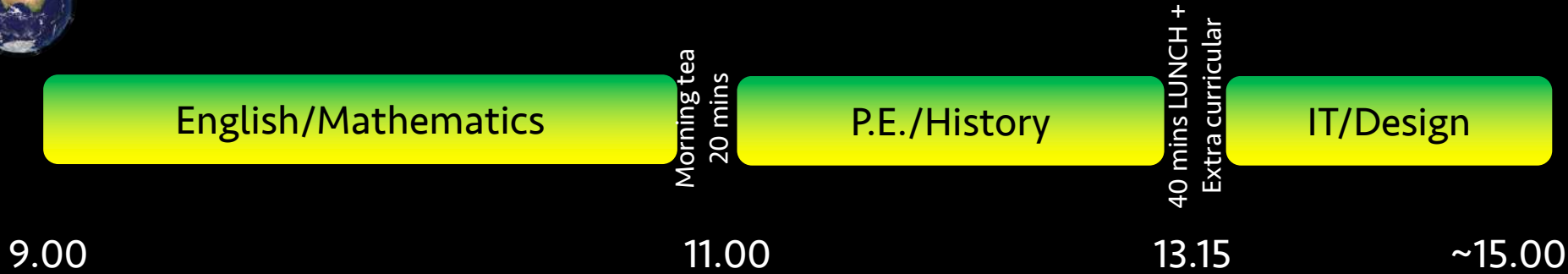
Expenditure on pre-primary education as a percentage of GDP



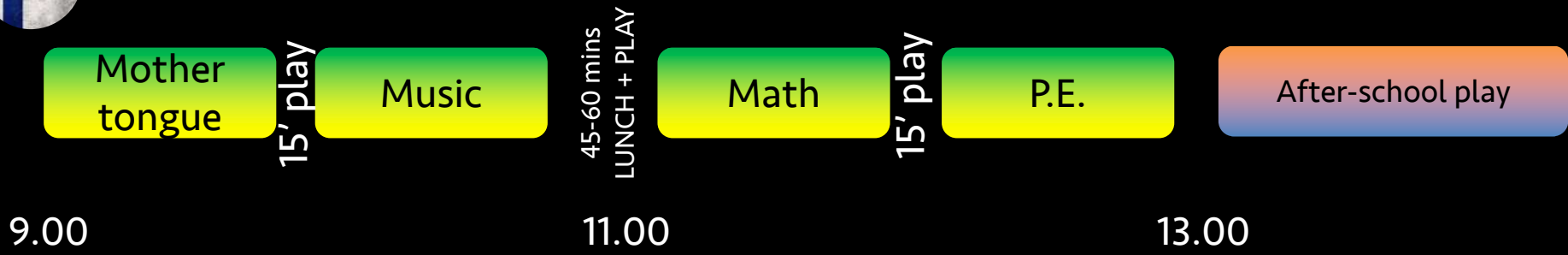
# Does money matter?



**OTTO**

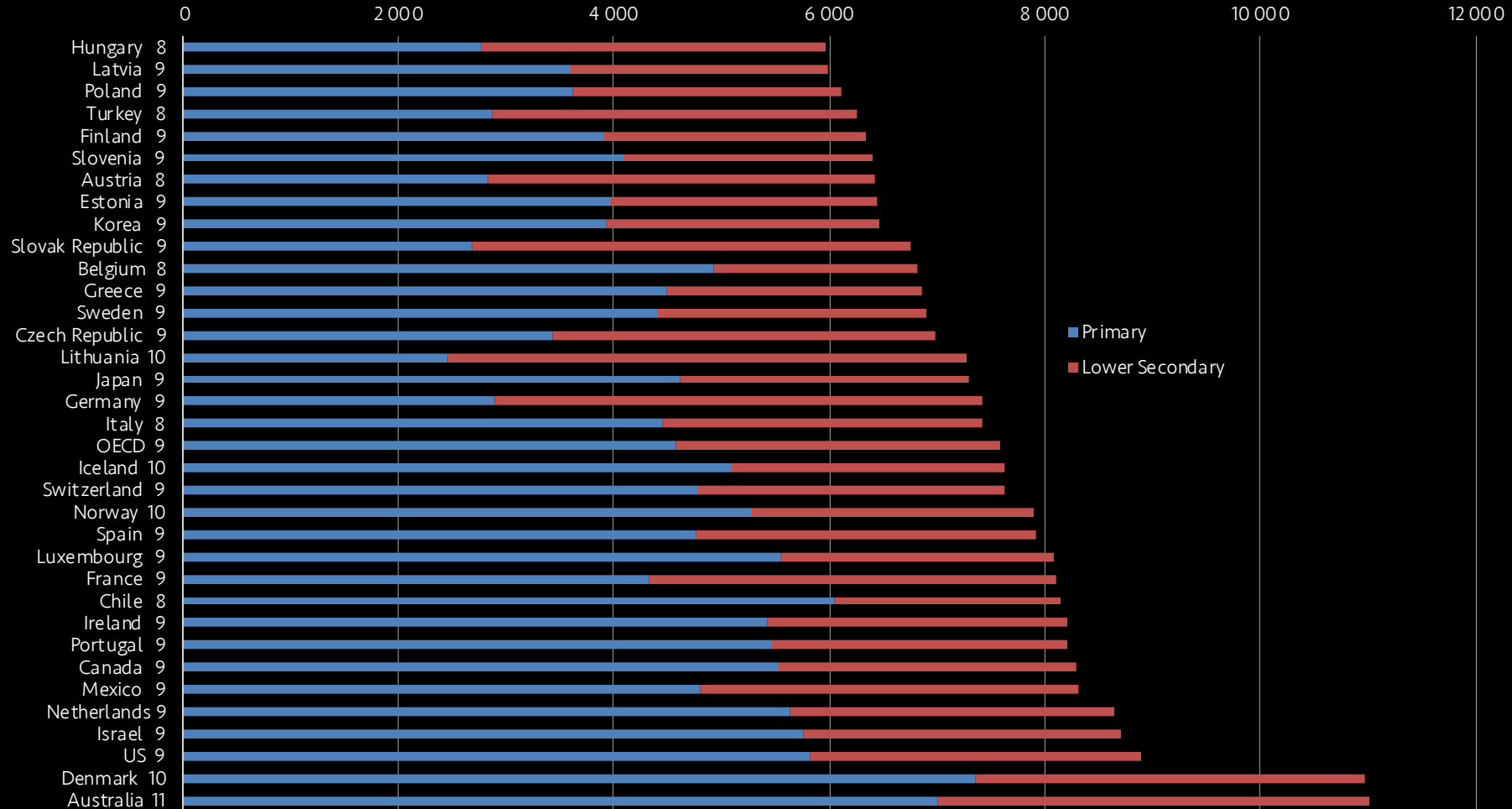


# A typical Year 2 primary school day

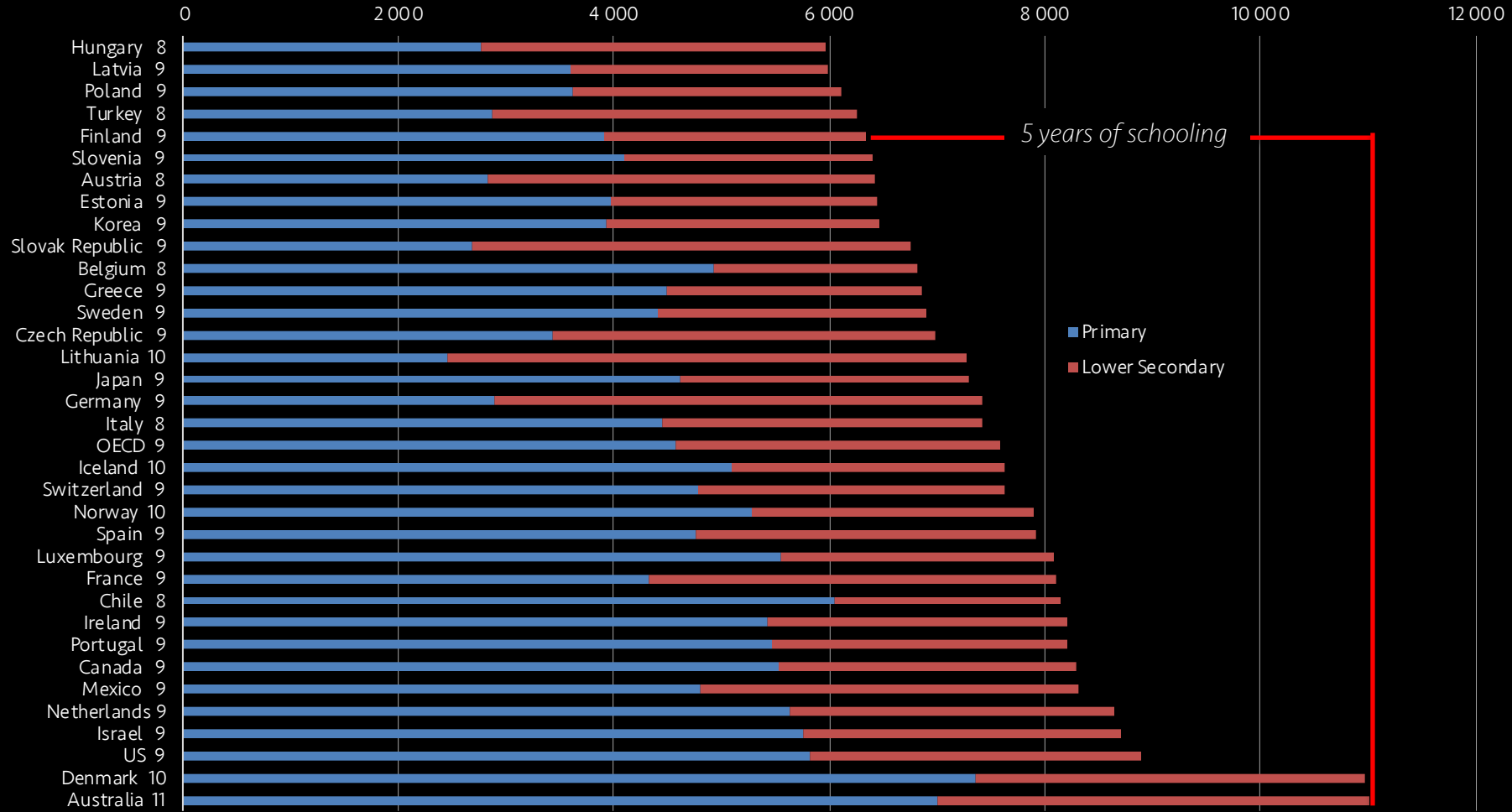




# Total number of compulsory instruction hours in primary and lower secondary schools



# Total number of compulsory instruction hours in primary and lower secondary schools



**PETRA**



1960

THESE GRADES  
ARE TERRIBLE!!



2010

THESE GRADES  
ARE TERRIBLE!!



© 2010 CAGS. All rights reserved.

## Percentage of school leaders experiencing violence in work in Australia

	2011	2014	2018
Threats of violence by students	17.4	23.8	32.4
by parents	19.0	25.2	30.7
Physical violence by students	17.3	24.6	34.6
by parents	4.6	6.7	7.8
Bullying by students	3.1	3.9	4.4
by parents	12.0	17.8	21.1

1

Australia has one of the best school systems in the world...for some of its children.



OECD (2018):

Australia has had the largest increase in social segregation within its school system in the OECD since 2006.

UNICEF (2018):

Australia has the second most unequal school system among the richest nations in the world.

**STRENGTHS**

The schools we need are already here.

**CHALLENGES**

Student achievement  
vs.  
Child wellbeing

A majority (85%) of Australian parents think children today spend less time playing compared to when they were young.

*Gonski Institute, 2019*

A vast majority of parents (88%) believe that children are under pressure to grow up too quickly.

*Center on Media and Child Health, 2015*

It's estimated that around one in seven Australian kids experience mental health issues and about half of all serious mental health issues in adulthood begin before the age of 14.



Parents' expectations  
vs.  
Students' interests

# Kids expect from school

PARENTS LEAST EXPECT FROM SCHOOL

Students being given opportunities to be creative at school

Students having fun at school

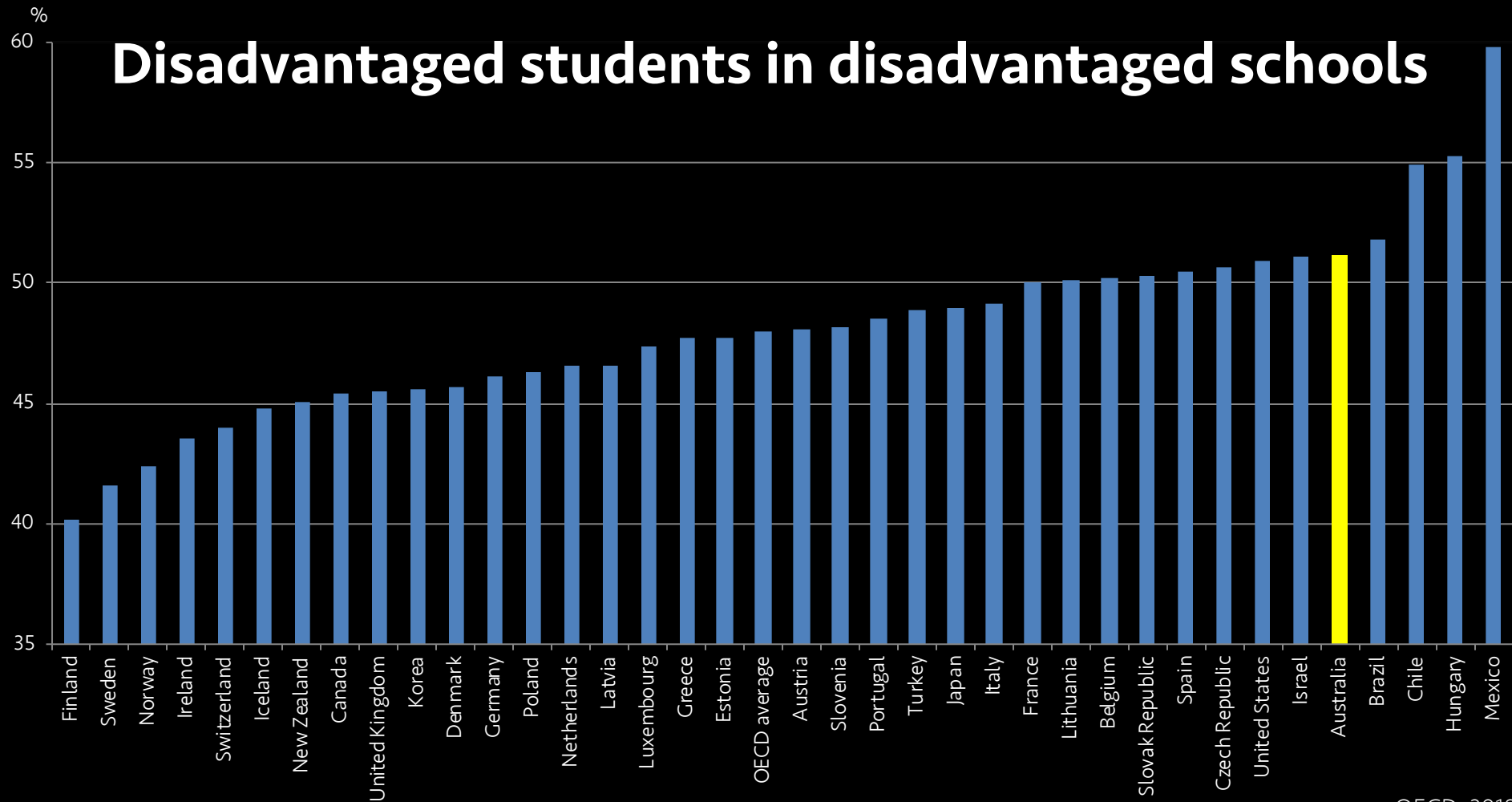
Students learning about the things that interest them

Public opinions on Australian schools & schooling,  
Deana Leahy & Neil Selwyn, Monash University,  
February 2019



Good schools  
vs.  
Poor schools

# Disadvantaged students in disadvantaged schools



“Disadvantaged students attending advantaged ... schools score 78 points ... points higher than those attending disadvantaged schools.”

- OECD, 2018

*Since Australia has one of the most unequal education systems in developed world, the majority of opportunities for educational improvement are found in system level issues, such as fair funding, inclusive special education, and giving children voice regarding their own schooling.*

**OUR OPPORTUNITY**

# Top 3 most important issues for young Aussies

Mental health – 36%

The environment – 34%

Equity and discrimination – 25%



**ASKING DIFFERENT QUESTIONS**

“Ask not is a child ready for school, ask is the school ready for that child.”

“Ask not how smart is my child,  
ask how is my child smart.”

“Ask not what your school can do  
for you, ask what you can do for  
your school.”

Thank you!

