

ALERA National Conference 2014

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Productivity: A Workforce Participation Breakdown

BUSINESS
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- › ‘Closing the gap between male and female employment rates would have important implications for the Australian economy... closing this gap would boost the level of Australian GDP by 11%.’ (‘Australia’s Hidden Resource: The economic case for increasing female participation’, 2009, JBWere)
 - › Increasing female workforce participation is a ‘game-changer’: ‘female workforce participation can only change if more mothers have jobs’ (Grattan Institute, 2012, 38)
 - › ‘For those who leave the workforce to have children, we want you to have every opportunity to return to your career. Our Paid Parental Leave Scheme will help keep mothers engaged with the workforce.’ (Treasurer, 13 May, 2014)
 - › ‘Australia was first in female educational attainment out of 136 participating countries – but when it came to labour force participation we plummeted to 52nd’ (Brumby, SMH, Nov 20, 2013)
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The Australian Labour Force, 12.5m

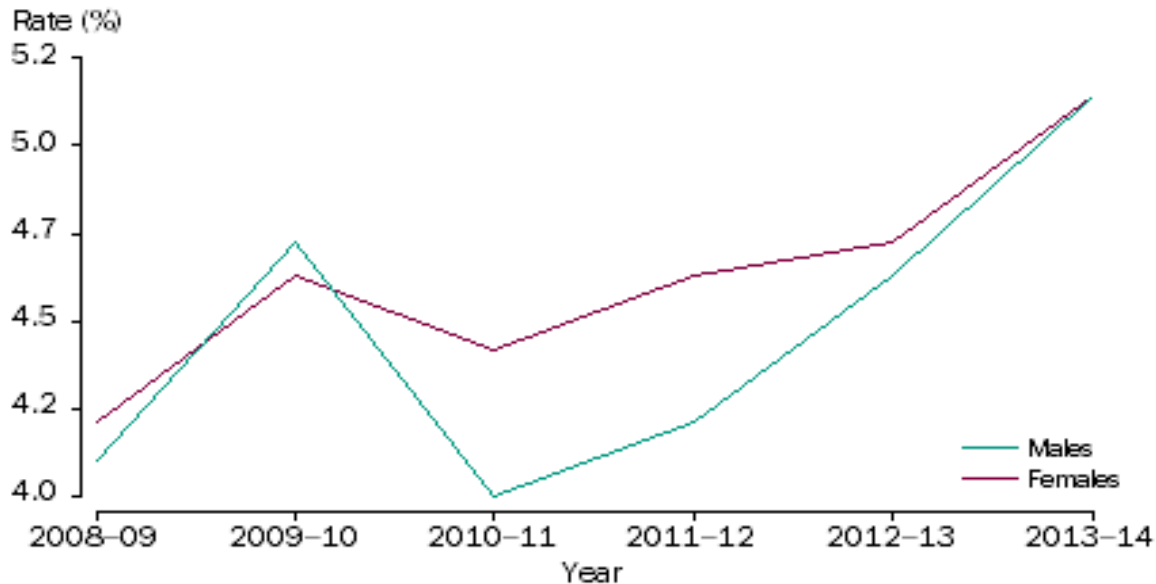
	Males	Females
Labour force participation	78.0%	65.0%
Employed part-time	14.4%	43.4%
Unemployment	5.1%	5.1%
Not in labour force	21.6%	35.0%
Bachelor degree or above	25.5%	32.4%
No superannuation coverage	19.4%	32.4%

Life Expectancy	79.9 years	84.3 years
Order of Australia	71.1%	28.9%

Source: ABS Gender Indicators 26 August 2014



UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, 20–74 YEARS (a)(b), 2008–09 to 2013–14



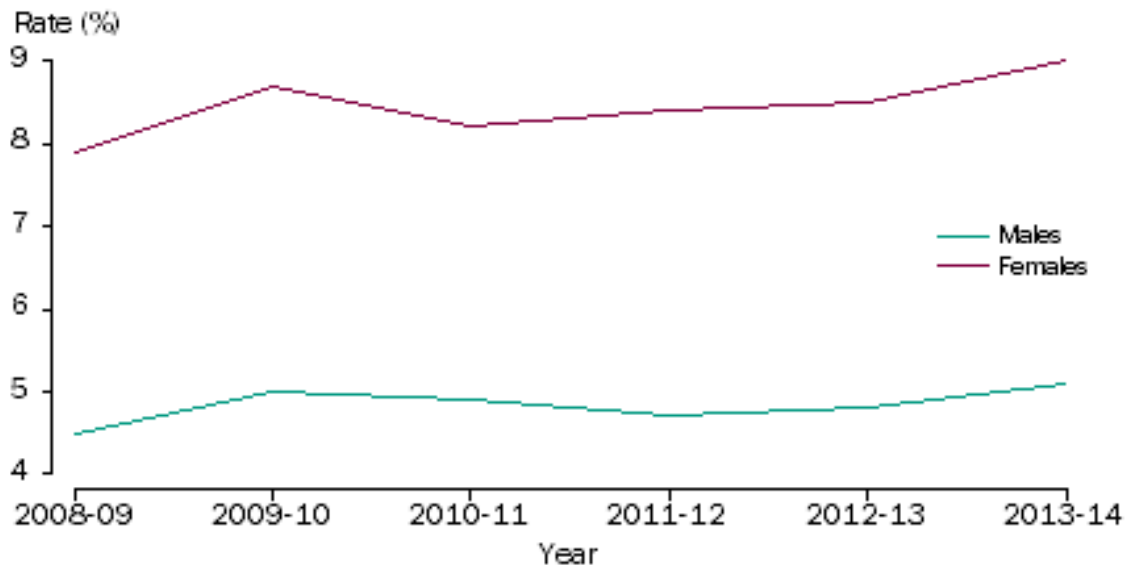
(a) Data were averaged using 12 months in the financial year.

(b) For this release of Gender Indicators, Australia, labour force estimates dating back to (and including) 2001-02 have been revised in accordance with a new benchmarking process. For more information see ABS Labour Force, Australia, Jan 2014 (cat. no. 6202.0).

Source: ABS data available on request, Labour Force Survey.



UNDEREMPLOYMENT RATE, 20-74 YEARS (a)(b), 2008-09 to 2013-14



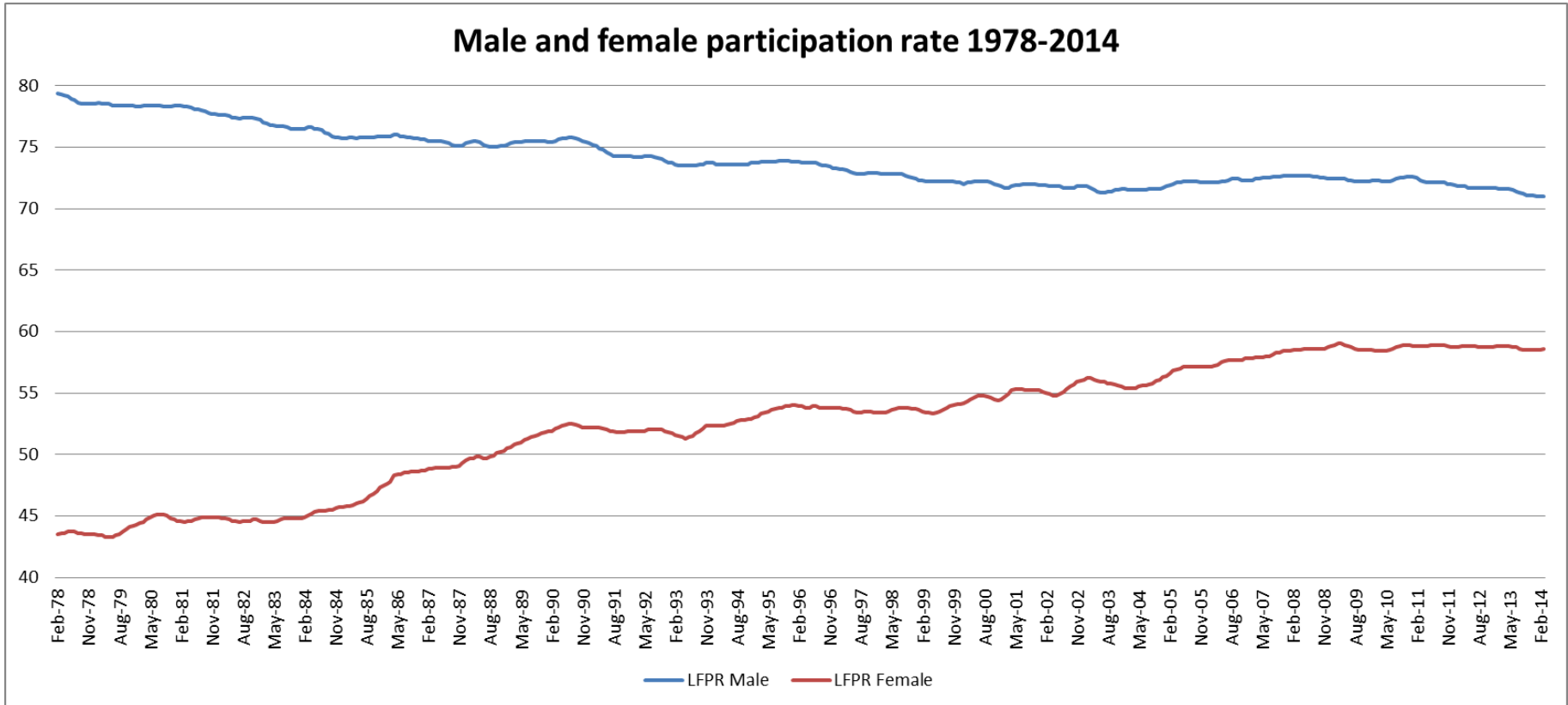
(a) Data were calculated as an average of four quarters (August, November, February, May) in the financial year.

(b) For this release of Gender Indicators, Australia, labour force estimates dating back to (and including) 2003-04 have been revised in accordance with a new benchmarking process. For more information see ABS Labour Force, Australia, Jan 2014 (cat. no. 6202.0)

Source: ABS data available on request, Labour Force Survey.

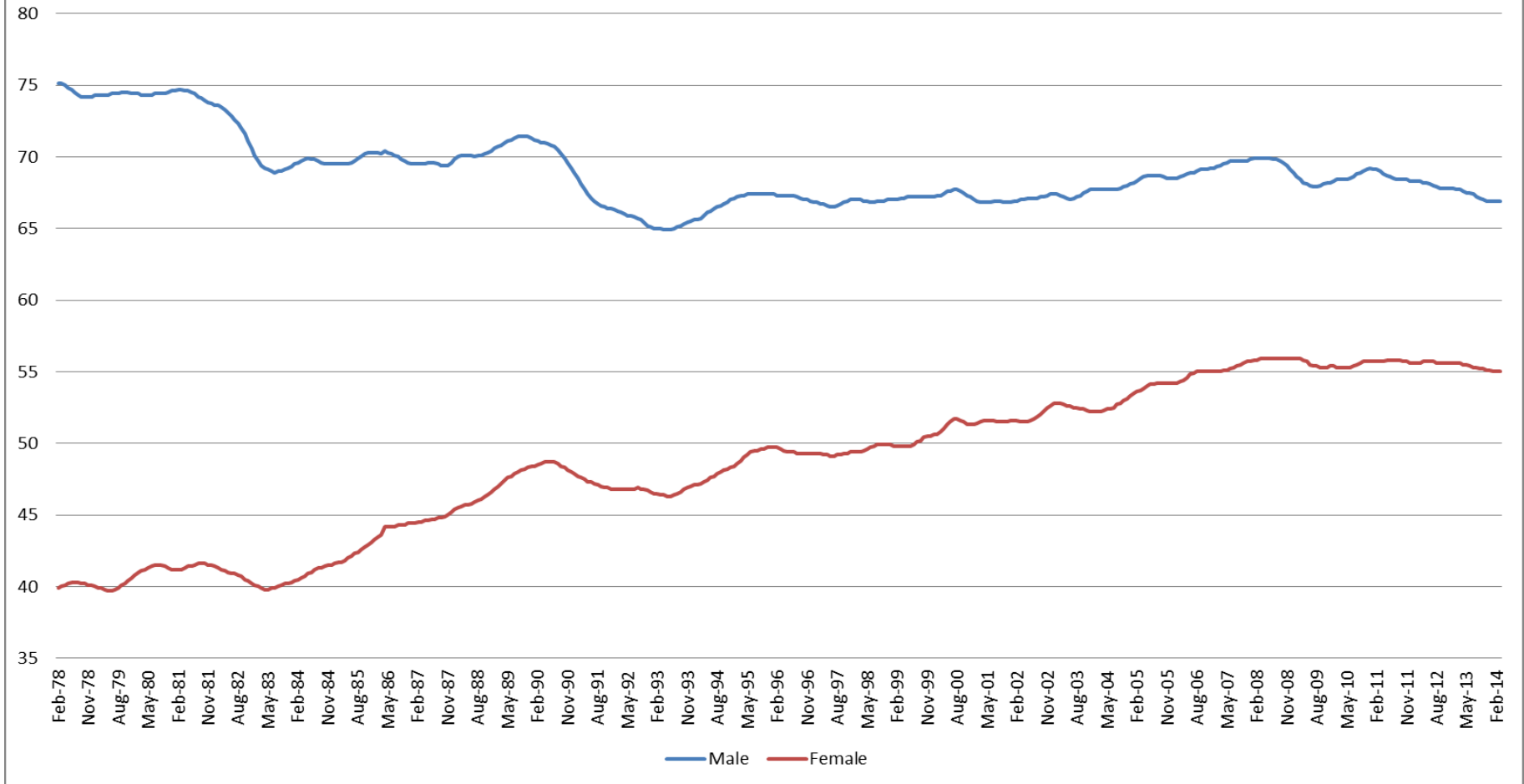
The Australian Workforce: Participation rates

Male and female participation rate 1978-2014

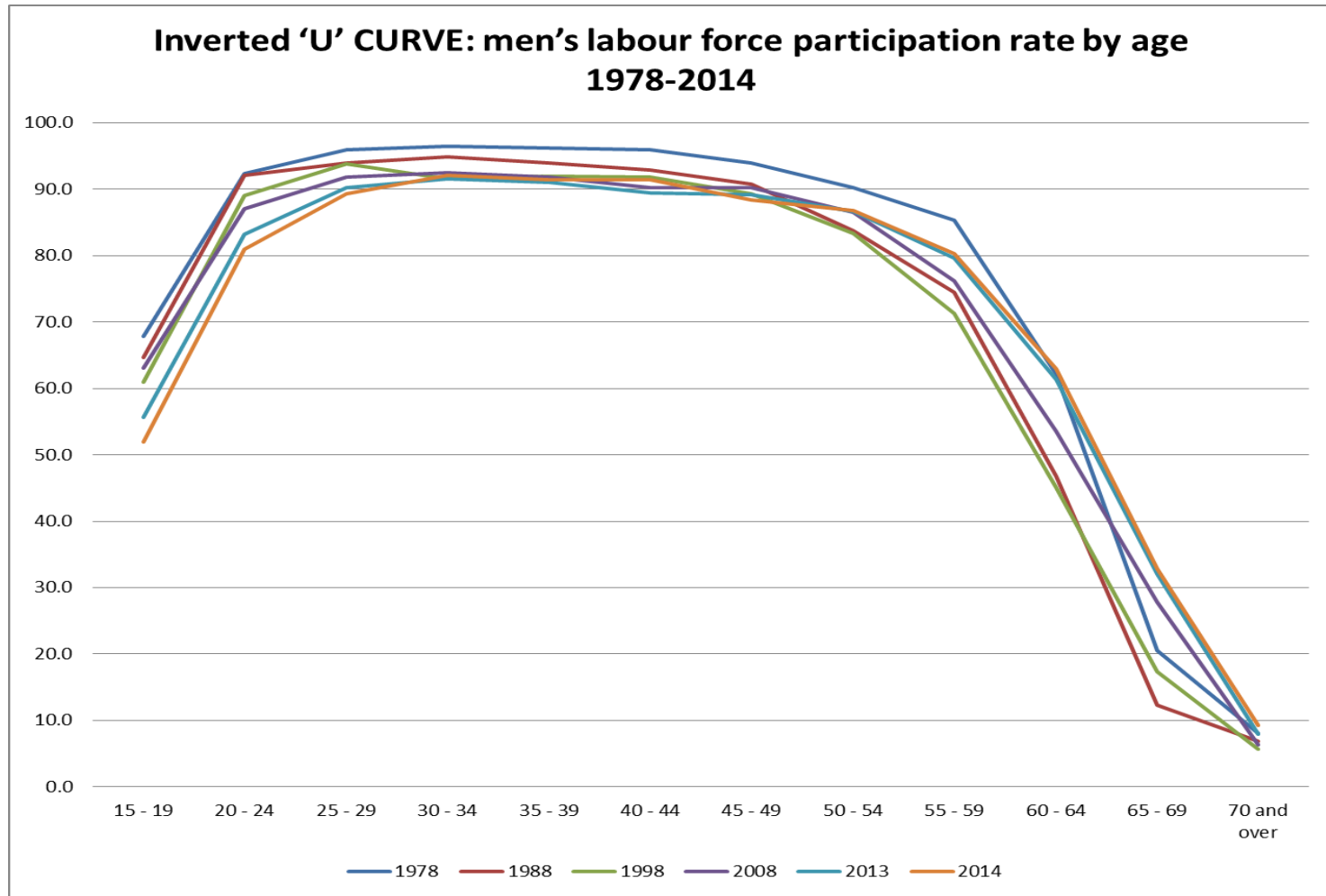


The Australian Workforce: Employment ratios

Employment to population ratio by sex 1978 - 2014

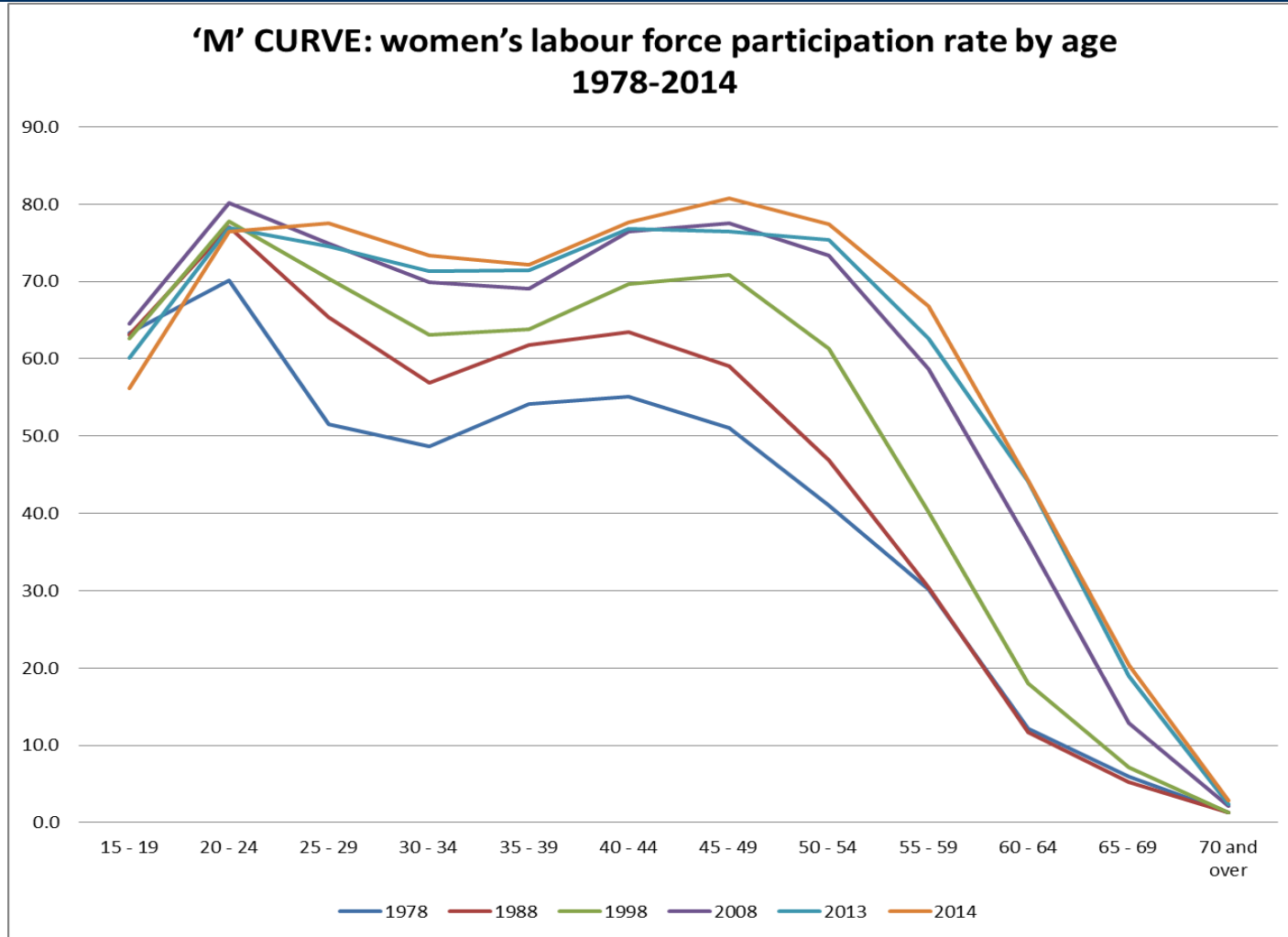


Male labour force participation rate



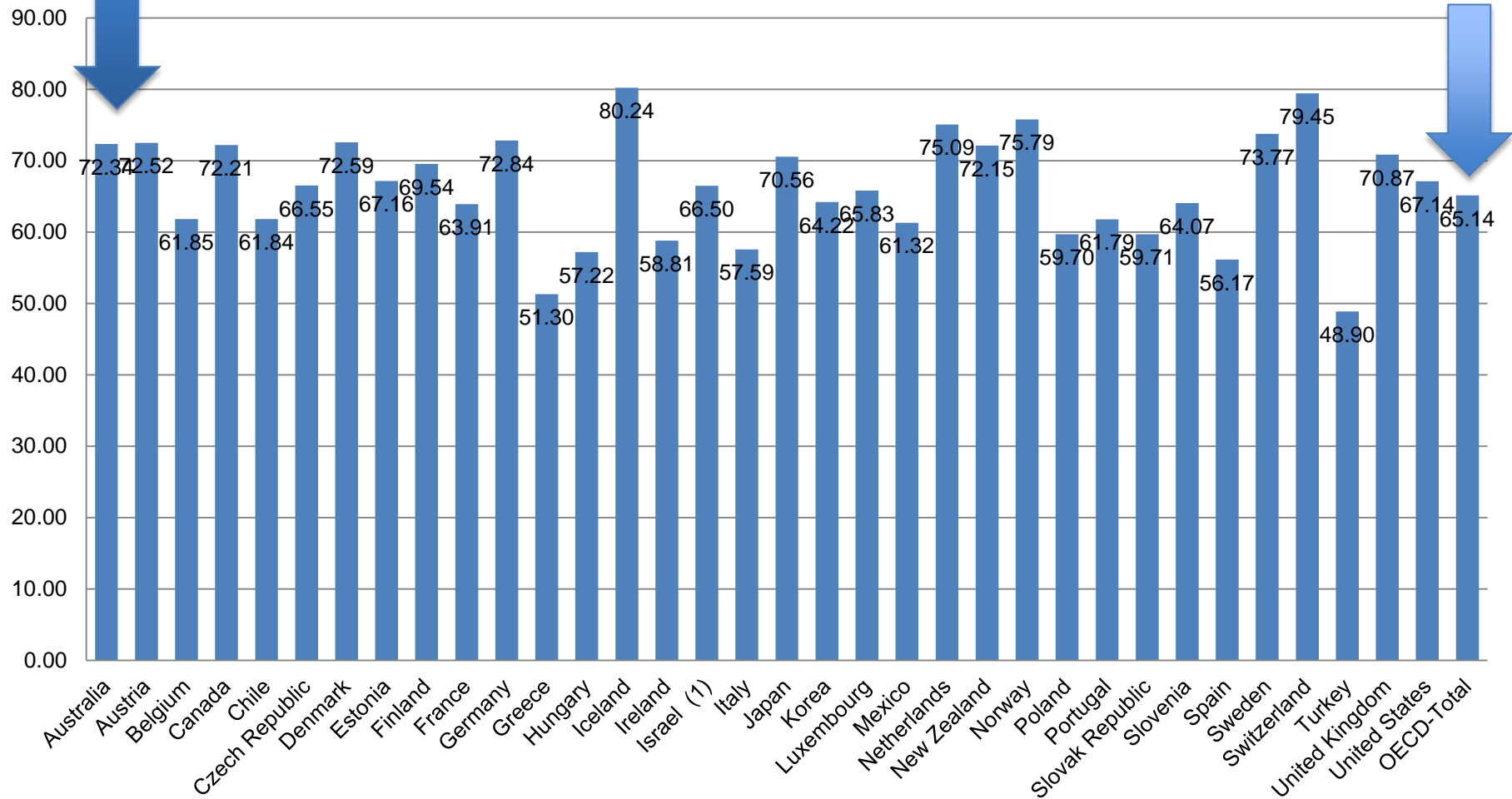


Female labour force participation rate

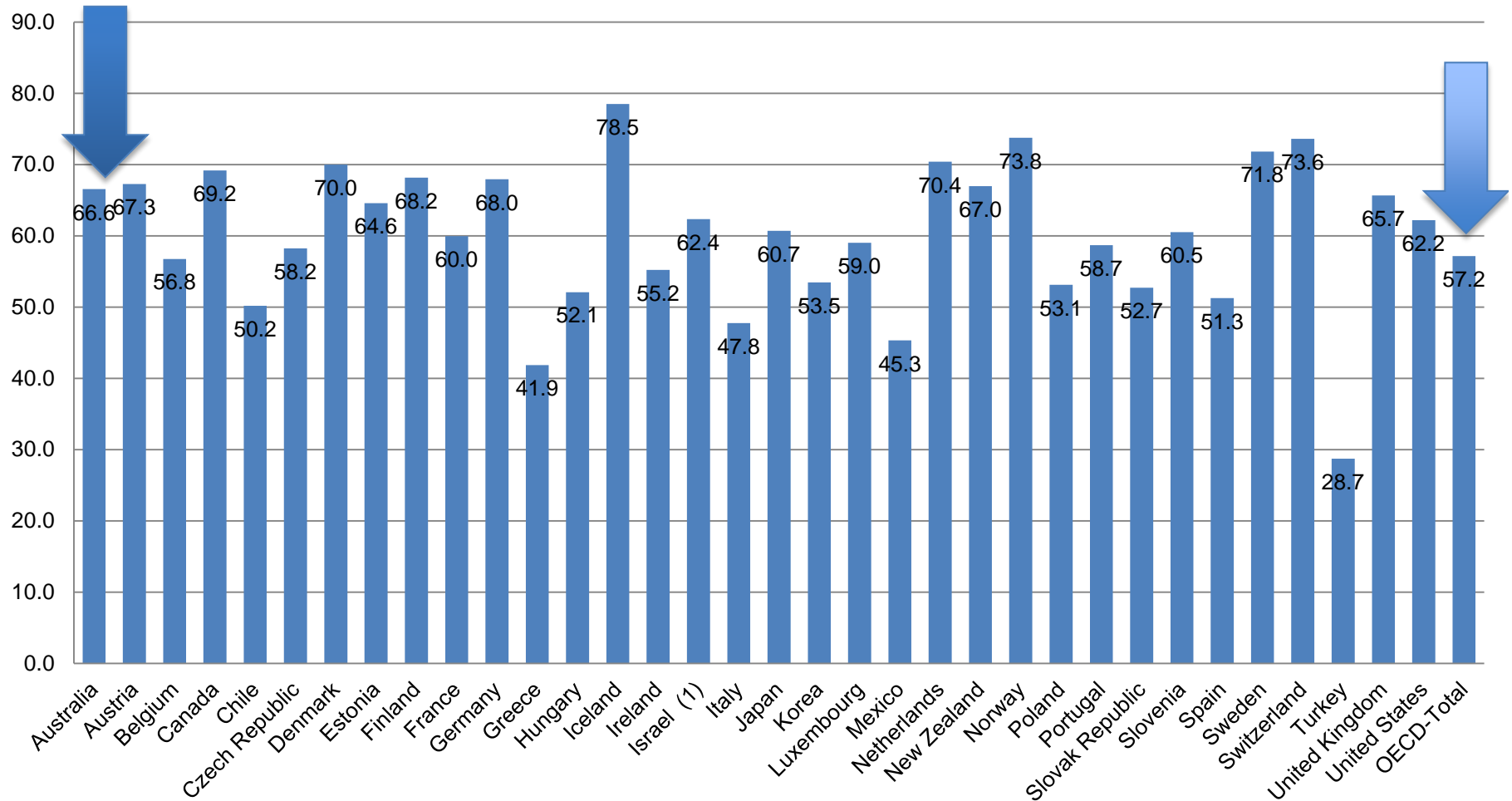


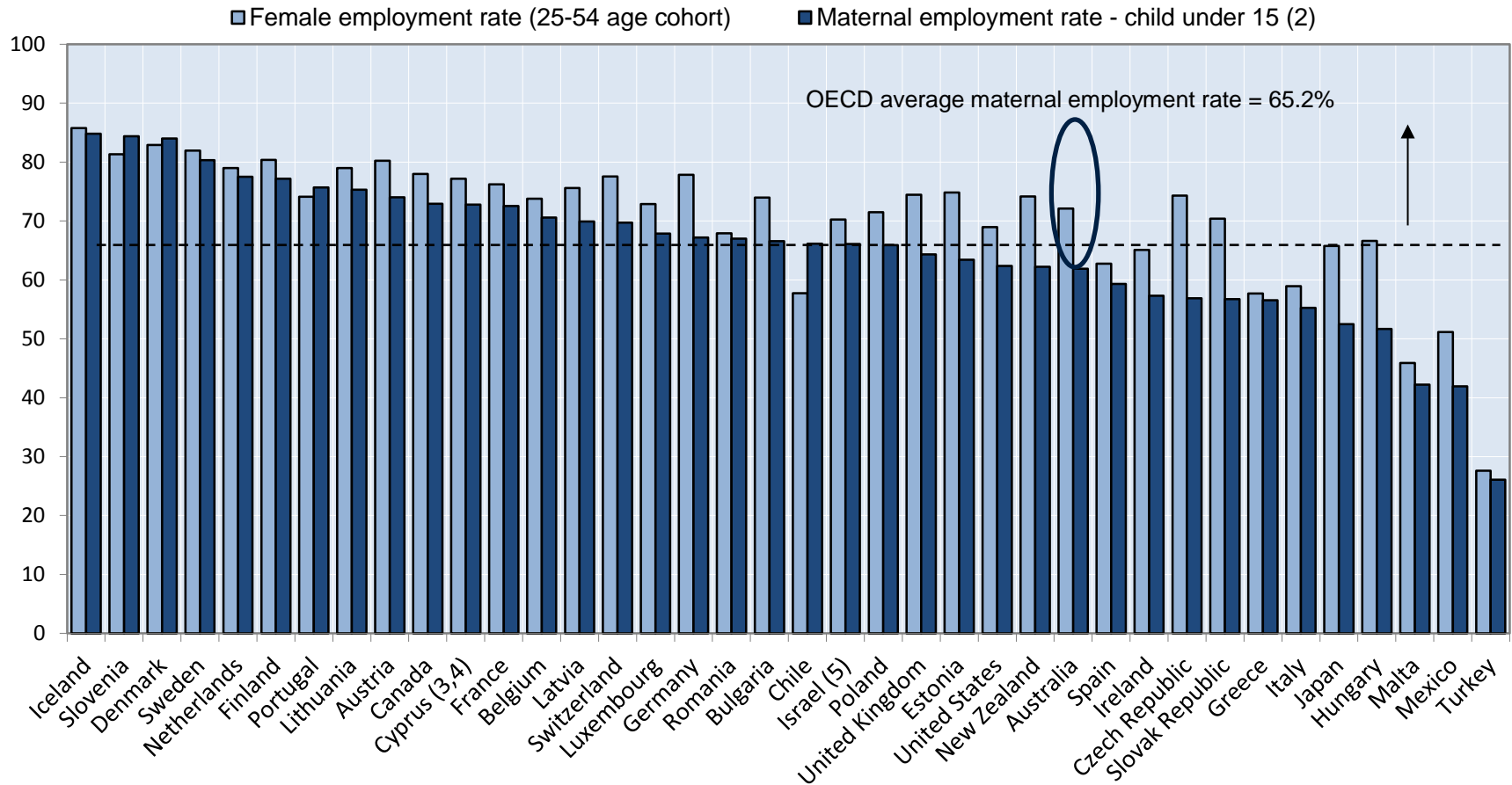
Sex	Age	1988	2014
M	25	93%	87%
F	25	65%	78%
M	50	87%	87%
F	50	50%	78%

Employment rate % of working age population 2012

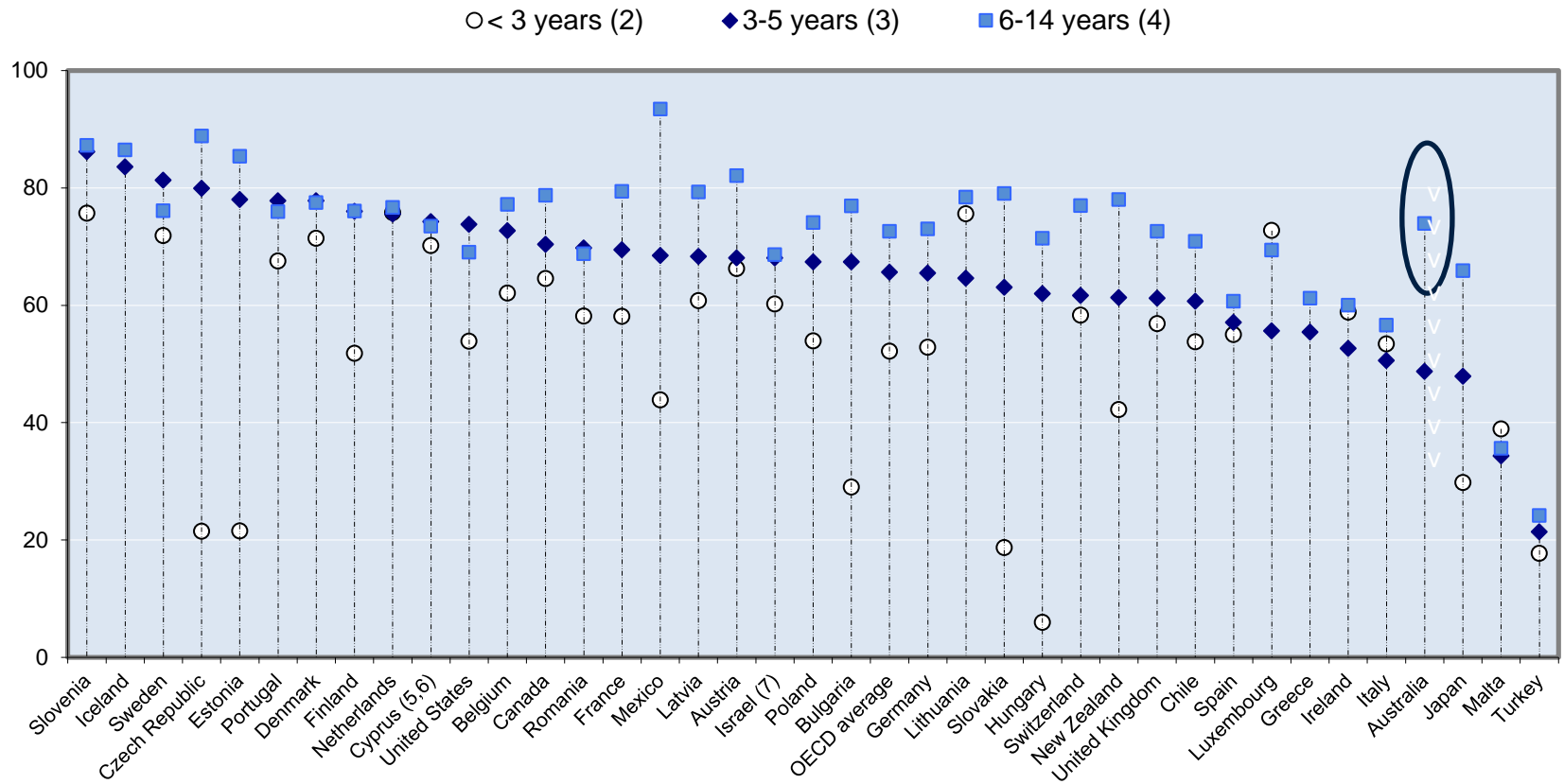


Female employment rate 2012





Maternal employment rates by age of youngest child, 2011¹



1. Maternity leave returners
 2. The female breadwinner
 3. The self-employed
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1. Maternity Leave Returners

- › Strong work attachment developed prior to having children
- › High expectation of returning to work
- › High expectation of returning to work part-time – and do!
- › Important provider role: as 'backstop breadwinners'

2. The Female Breadwinner

- › ‘The rise of wives’; ‘breadwomen’
- › Australia: Women earn more than men in 14.4% of families with dependent children <15; In 24.5% households woman earns > man (HILDA, 2014)
- › Female breadwinners saw themselves as providers for their children, but not their partner
- › Female breadwinners were not agents of organisational change

3. Self-Employed Women

- › ‘Mumpreneurs’
- › UK study: ‘weave a path between the discourses of intensive mothering and enterprise’ (Duberley and Carrigan 2013)
- › 2002-2012 - 25% increase in the proportion of self-employed women in Australia
- › Motivated by:
 - children/motherhood
 - quality of available work
 - working hour expectations

Conclusion

- › Productivity debate includes questions about female workforce participation.
- › -> But in the shadow is changing male workforce participation
- › Highlighted the sub-categories of the worker-mother, which present *food for thought* for men:
 - Mat leave returners → p/t and flexibility accepted for these women but not necessarily for men
 - Female breadwinners – changing male roles
 - Self employed – reaction to ‘ideal worker’ expectations and lack of ‘ideal employment’ options
- › -> New generation of public policies and company policies –
But how will they influence productivity?

- › 2010 - Right to Request Flexible Work Arrangements; extended 2013
- › 2011 - Paid Parental Leave
- › 2013 – Dad and Partner Pay
- › 2015 – The new Paid Parental Leave scheme?