Workshop on
"Strengthening skills and empowering
young people in the COVID-19 recovery and beyond"

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Disruptions in school systems

- Long periods of school closures

- Various forms of online and remote learning

- Low levels of digitalisation

(e.g. availability and access to digital solutions, digital skills of teachers and students)

Evolving situation, changing picture

- Early research pointed to negative results, rising inequalities, and potential long-term gaps

- Negative effects on learning outcomes are heterogeneous

- Both within and across countries, the magnitude and persistency vary across: age, gender, geographical location and socio-economic status

Evolving situation, changing picture

- Later research paints a more nuanced picture on any lasting legacy of Covid-19 school disruptions

- Resilient students, teachers, school systems

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# Children's online experience during the pandemic

- Gap in attitudes amongst different income groups

A more positive view among children from above average income households
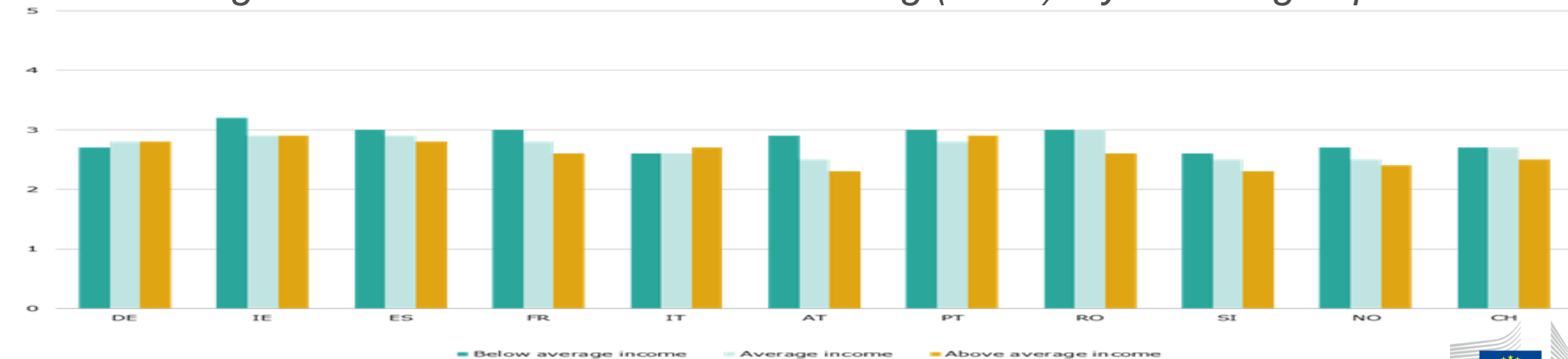
A more negative outlook in students (with the exception of Germany and Italy) from below-average income households

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Children's online experience during the pandemic

Children's positive attitudes towards online learning (index): by income group
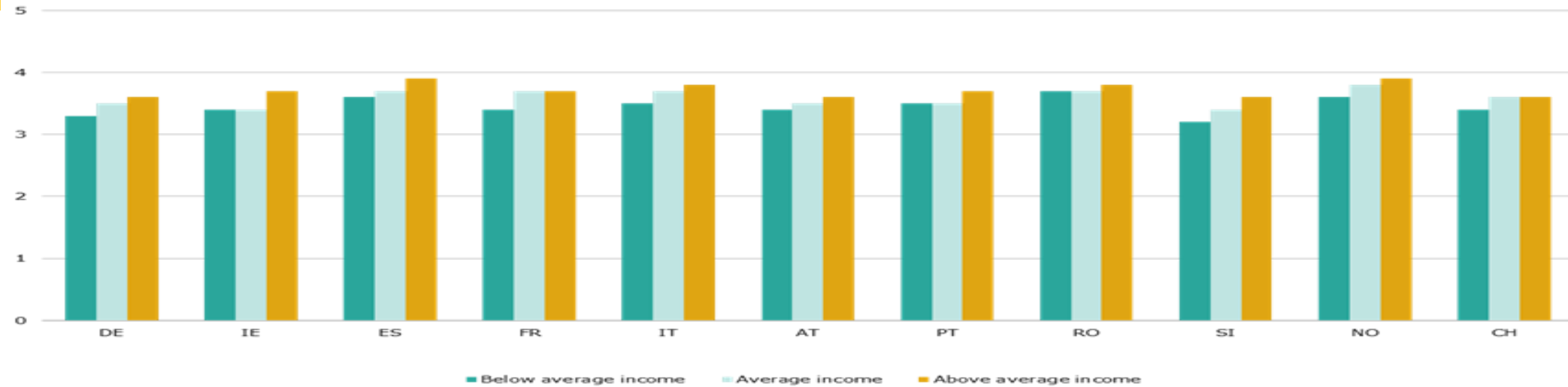
Children's negative attitudes towards online learning (index): by income group

Vocational education and training

- Social digital divide, potential higher dropout rates, geographical disparities, increase in psychological problems

- Apprentices faced additional challenges:

  - Decrease in supply of apprenticeships

  - Severe disruptions for those that remained in training

- Initiatives to mitigate impact (e.g. access to labour market measures or unemployment benefits, state grants)

Higher education

Multiple challenges: academic, social, health, financial

- Increase in workload, Participation in exchange programmes

- Lack of social contacts, Illness/fear of illness

- Loss of part-time jobs, Uncertain labour market prospects

"I had sufficient financial resources to cover my monthly costs"

Legend: Strongly agree or agree · Neither agree or disagree · Disagree or strongly disagree
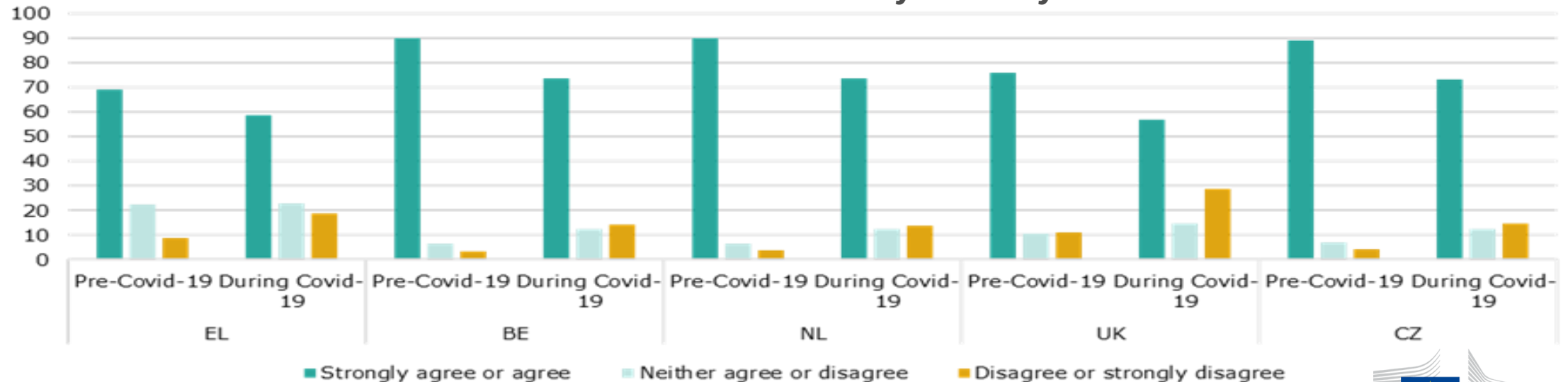
Inequalities

Differences in socioeconomic status, a determinant of disadvantages in education

- School disruptions emphasised pre-existing inequalities and contributed to their widening

- Children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds appear to be more negatively affected by school disruptions

- Part of the exacerbated inequalities related to children's home environment:

- *Parental situation can affect learning experiences at home*

  (e.g. higher stress, job loss, remote work, essential workers, availability and ability to support)

- *Housing conditions (space, sound, comfort, food)*

- *Connectivity (access, affordability, devices)*

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Learning gaps and potential long term effects

Educational systems and labour markets across EU have unique characteristics

School systems reacted differently – even within countries

ANY LASTING EFFECTS?

Early studies show **negative effects**, especially for children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds

Later studies from 2021 and 2022 provide a **more nuanced picture** (ranging from no major learning losses/no significant achievement gaps to heterogeneous impact affecting more lower-achieving students or students from lower-educated families)

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Remedial actions

- **Remarkable adaptability and resilience of educational systems**

- **Remedial actions helped to reverse declining tendencies, mitigate differences linked to inequalities**

e.g. Summer programmes (voluntary, priority to disadvantaged students)

- **Some evidence suggesting a link between remedial actions and academic results**

- **Yet, inequalities still persisting**

Policies - Act, Monitor, Evaluate

Continue to:

1. **Implement remedial and structural measures**

2. **Monitor implementation and results**

3. **Evaluate actions and results**

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EU added value, cooperation

- **Strengthening the knowledge base, exchange of good practices**

- **Policy initiatives**

- **Funding**

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Knowledge Base, reports published by expert networks supported by the Commission

[Policy measures to monitor and mitigate the negative impacts of COVID-19 and COVID-19 related policy measures on education](#)

[Impact of COVID-19 on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in the context of twin transition](#)

[The impact of COVID-19 on the education of disadvantaged children and the socio-economic consequences thereof](#)

[The impact of COVID-19 on student learning outcomes across Europe: the challenges of distance education for all](#)

[Governing quality Early Childhood Education and Care in a global crisis: first lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic](#)

[The impact of COVID-19 on higher education: a review of emerging evidence](#)

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Policy Initiatives to support the achievement of the European Education Area

- **The *Digital education action plan* will help improve digital skills and infrastructure in education, and contribute to the digital transformation in priority countries and regions**

- **The *Pathways to school success* initiative will promote better educational outcomes for all young Europeans, in particular by:**

1) **helping pupils reach a baseline level of proficiency in *basic skills* (reading, maths and science)**

2) **reducing *early leaving* from education/training**

3) **encouraging pupils to complete *upper secondary education*.**

Focusing on *groups at risk*

Funding

- **Recovery and Resilience Facility**

- **European Structural and Investment Funds**

- **Erasmus+**

- **Horizon Europe**

Information on European Education Area

https://education.ec.europa.eu/

Thank you

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