

PIAAC: A Conversation on Canada's Survey Results and Implications for the Literacy Sector

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Skills for the 21st century

- ✓ **Literacy** - “understanding, **evaluating**, **using** and **engaging** with written texts (print and digital) to participate in society, to achieve one’s goals, and to develop one’s knowledge and potential.”
- ✓ **Numeracy** - “the ability to **access**, **use**, interpret and communicate mathematical information and ideas, in order to **engage** in and manage the mathematical demands of a range of situations in adult life”.
- ✓ **Problem Solving in Technology- Rich Environments (PS-TRE)** - the ability to **use** “digital technology, communication tools and networks to **acquire** and **evaluate** information, communicate with others and perform practical tasks”.

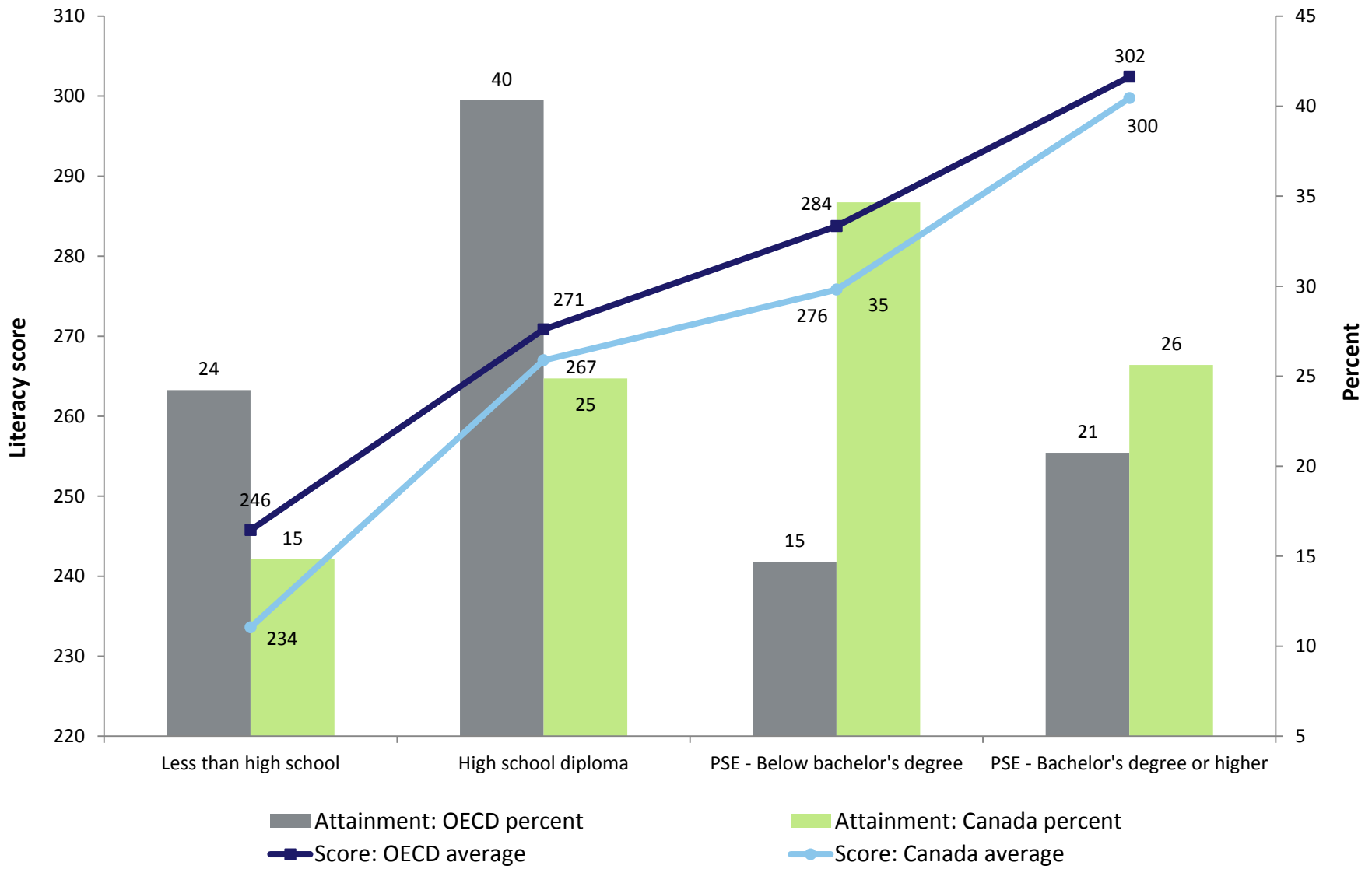


Education and skills

- ✓ Educational attainment has a strong positive influence on proficiency.
- ✓ The proficiency levels of Canadians with a university degree are on par with those of their counterparts in the OECD.
- ✓ There is a clear relationship between participation in organized adult learning and proficiency; but those who could benefit most from adult learning are not always those who access it.

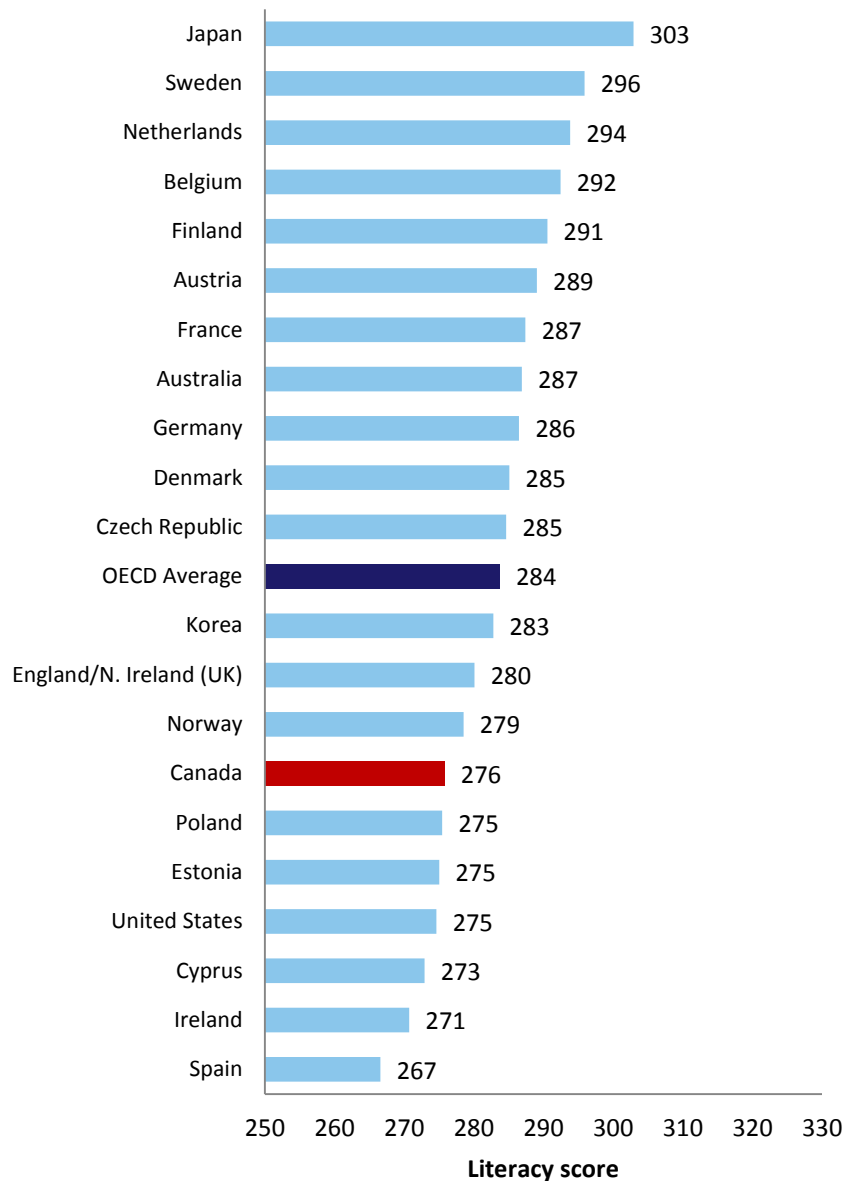


Literacy — Average scores and educational attainment, OECD average and Canada, 2012

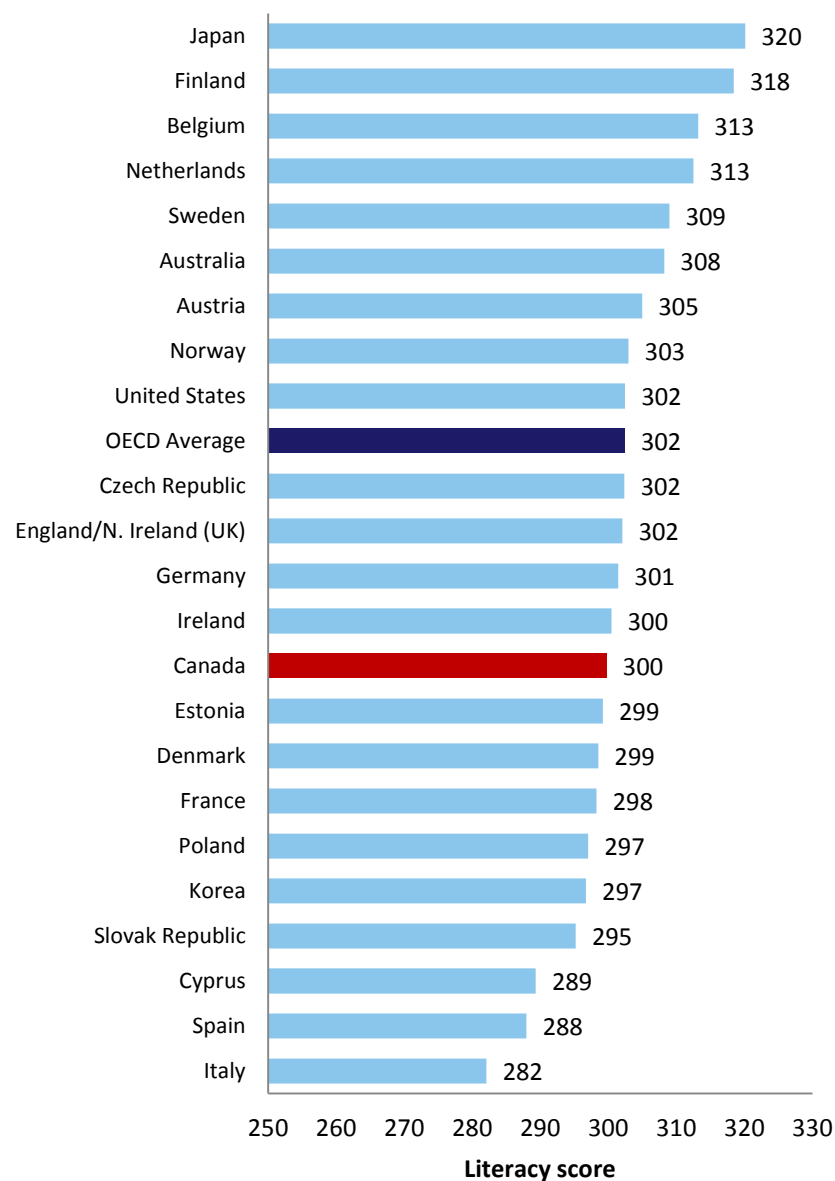


Literacy — Average scores of population aged 16 to 65 by PSE attainment, OECD average and countries, 2012

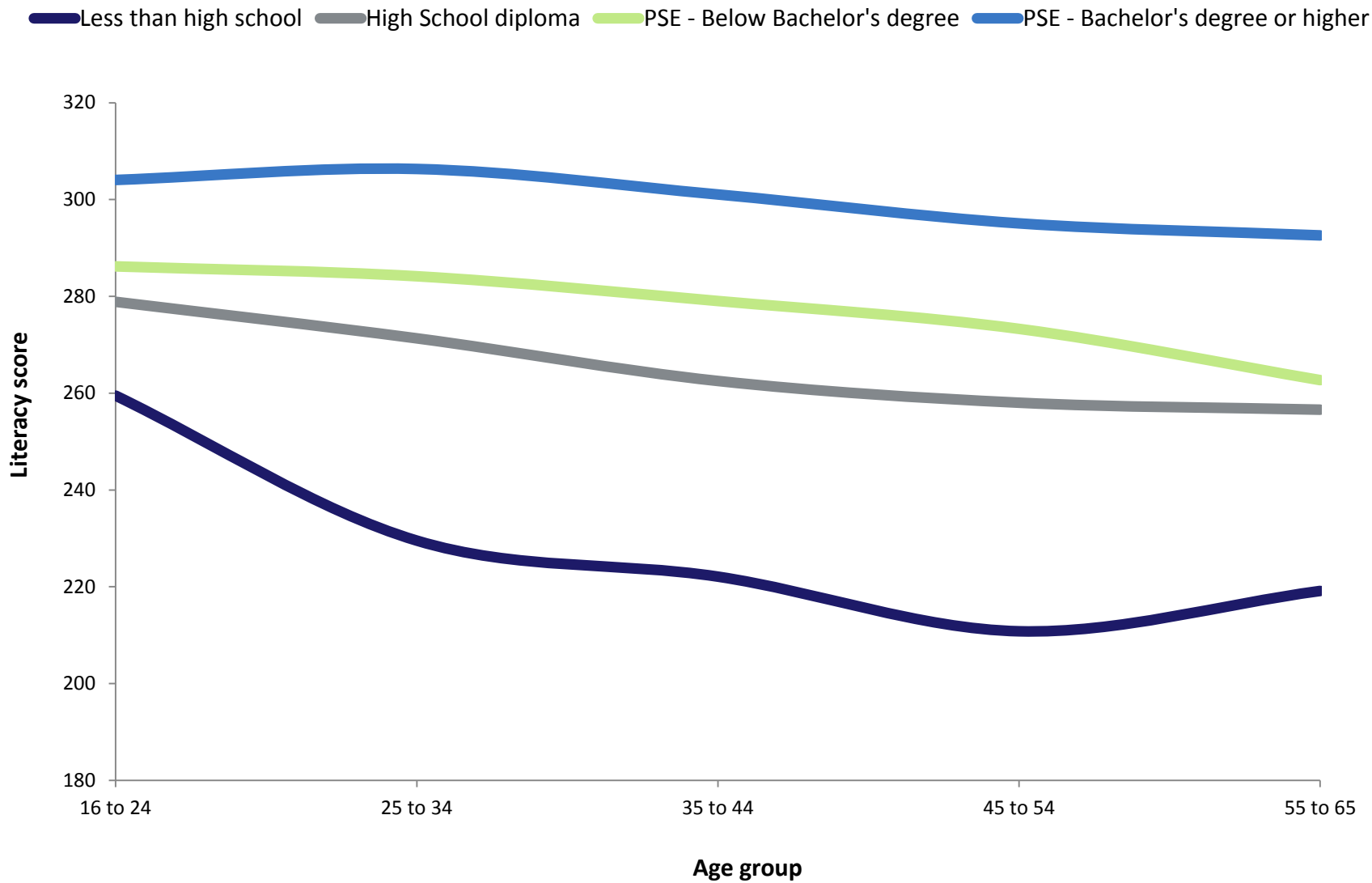
PSE - Below Bachelor's degree



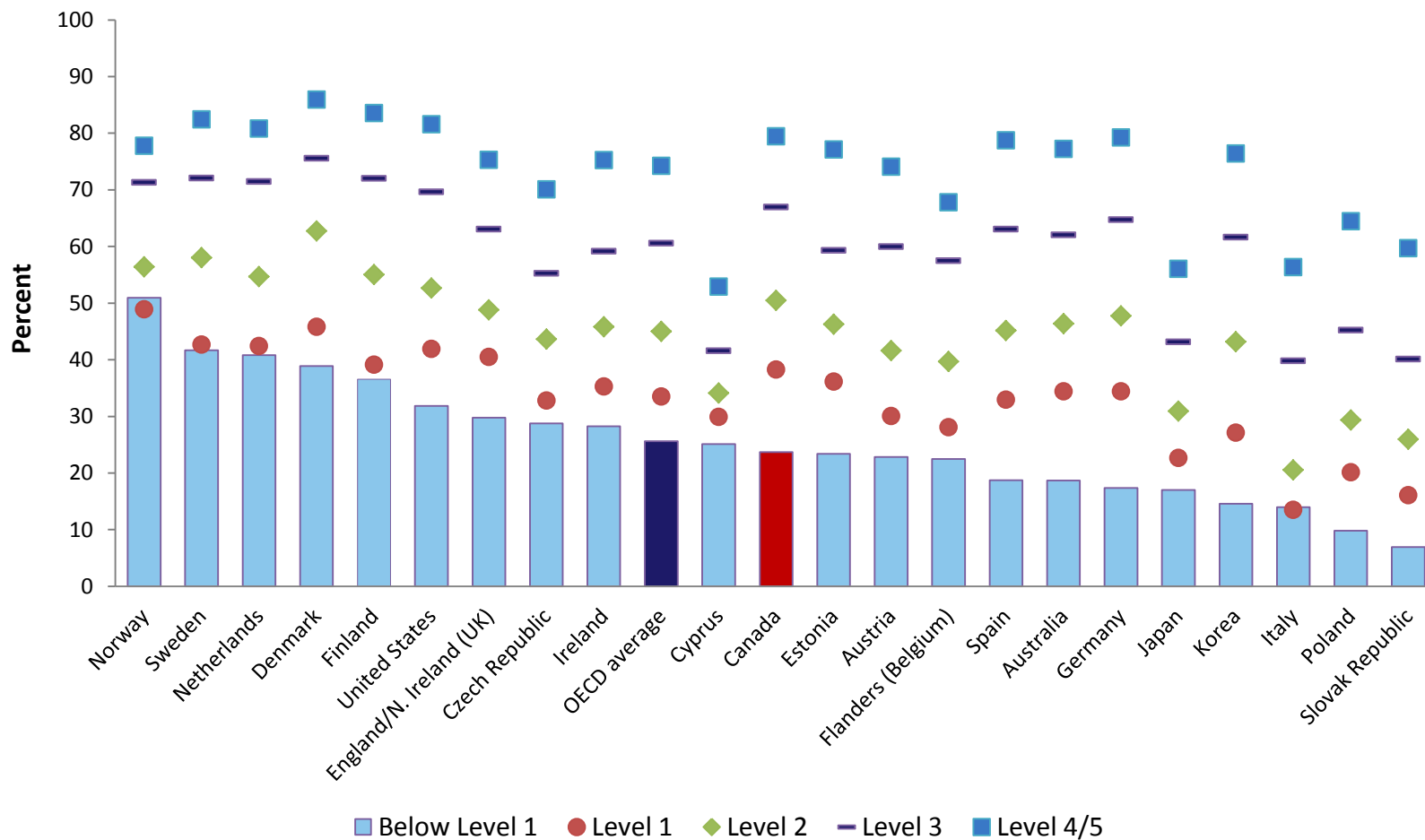
PSE - Bachelor's degree or higher



Literacy — Average scores of population aged 16 to 65, by educational attainment and age, Canada, 2012



Literacy — Proficiency levels of population aged 16 to 65, by participation rate in adult education, OECD average and countries, 2012

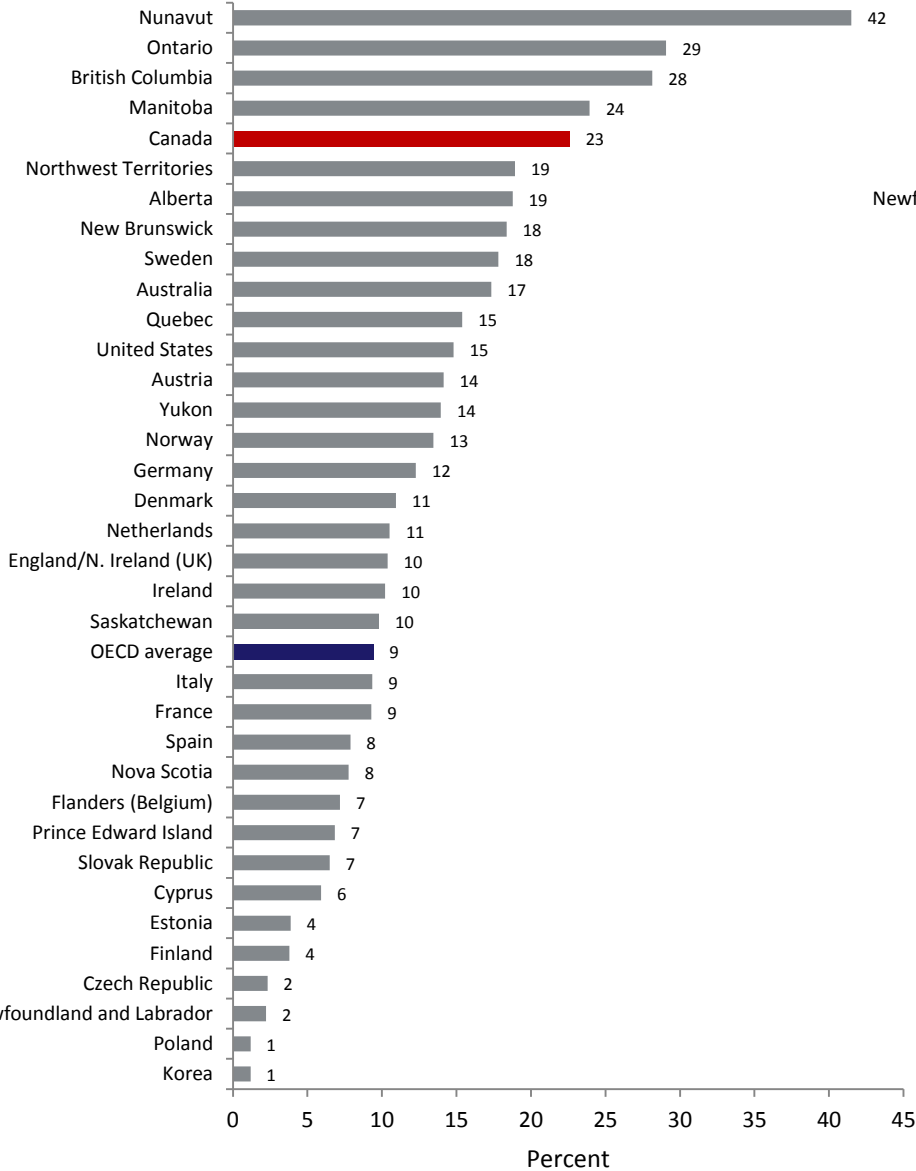


Language

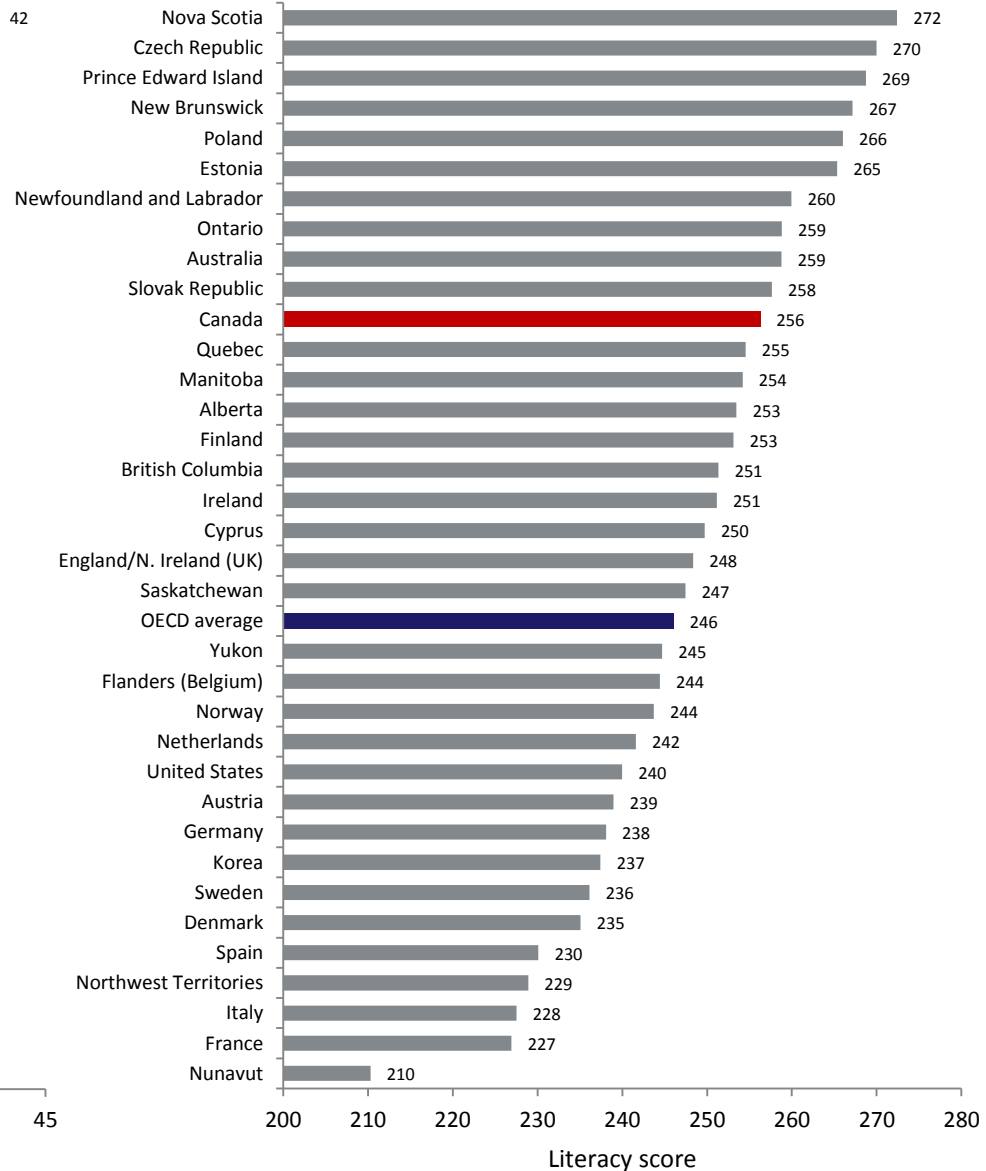
- ✓ The proportion of the population whose mother tongue is different from the language of the assessment is higher in Canada than in any other country.
- ✓ Canadian immigrants whose mother tongue is neither English nor French perform better than foreign-born/foreign-language respondents in almost all other countries.
- ✓ In Canada, official-language minority populations tend not to perform as well as official-language majority populations (except for anglophones in Quebec), but the size of the differences varies across jurisdictions.



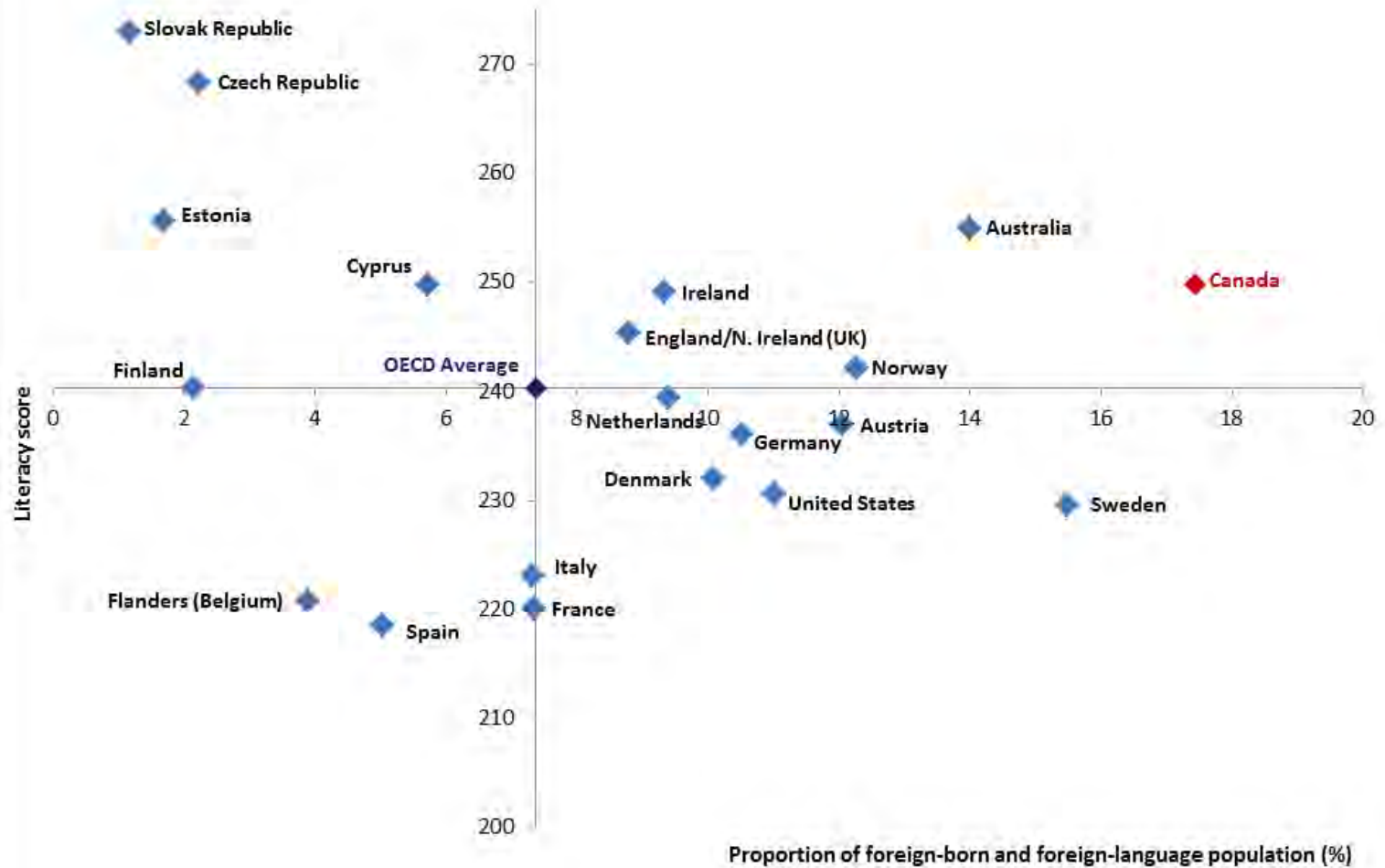
Proportion of the population whose first language is not the same as test language



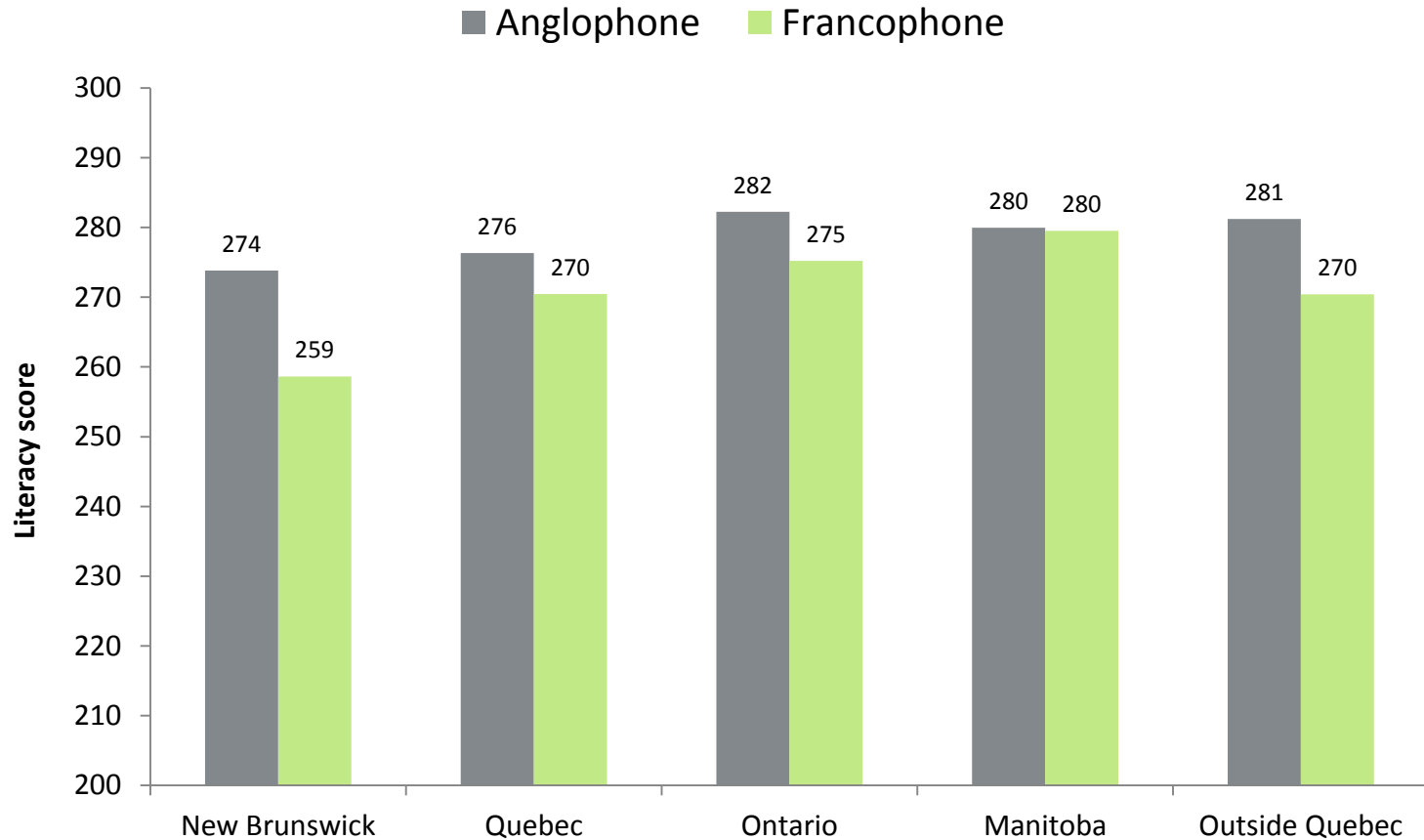
Literacy scores for adults whose first language is not the same as test language



Literacy — Average scores of population aged 16 to 65, foreign-born and foreign-language status, OECD average and countries, 2012



Literacy — Average scores of population aged 16 to 65 by official-language minority, Canada, 2012

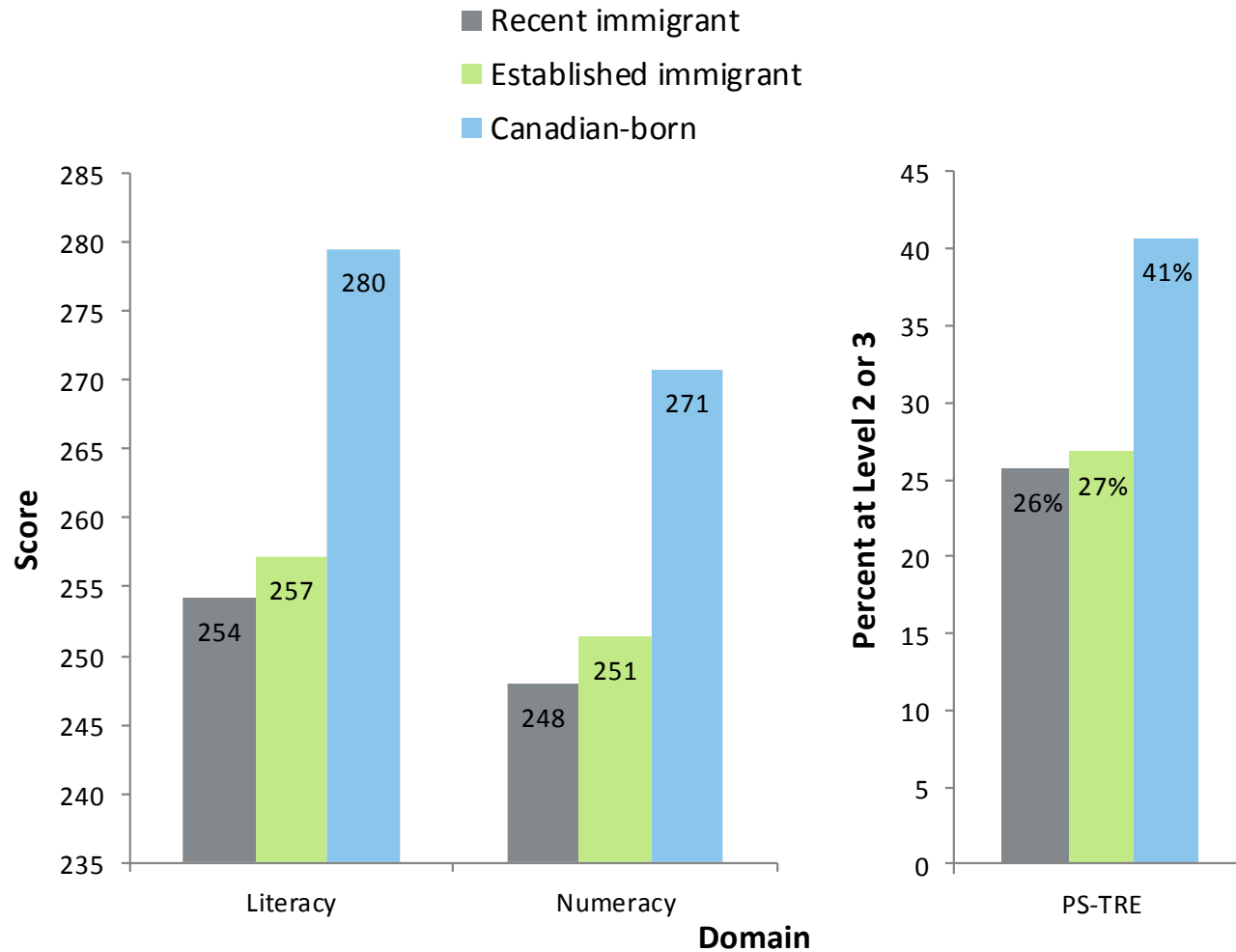


Immigrants

- ✓ Canada is one of only a few countries whose immigrant population is both proportionately larger than average and more proficient than average.
- ✓ While there is a skills gap between immigrants and non-immigrants, the gap in Canada is relatively narrow.
- ✓ For immigrants, educational attainment does not always translate into proficiency in literacy in the official language of their new country.
- ✓ Immigrants who receive a significant portion of their education in Canada are much less likely to be at a disadvantage in terms of skills.

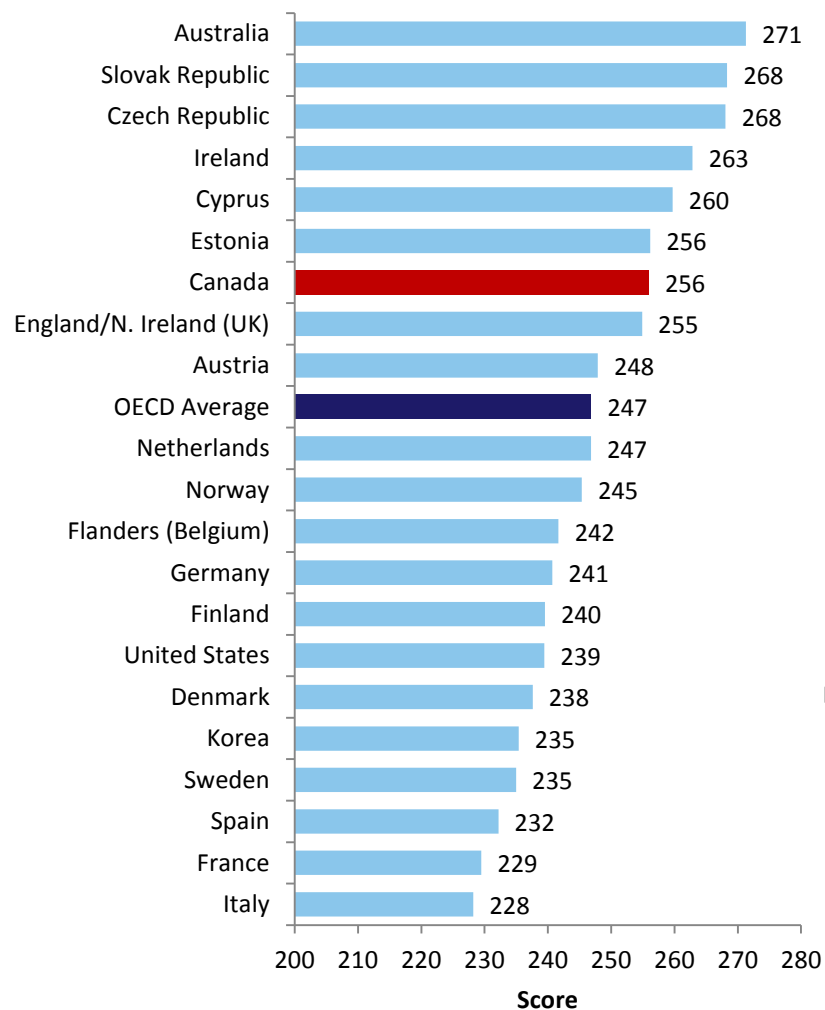


Literacy, Numeracy, and PS-TRE — Average scores of population aged 16 to 65 by immigrant status, Canada, 2012

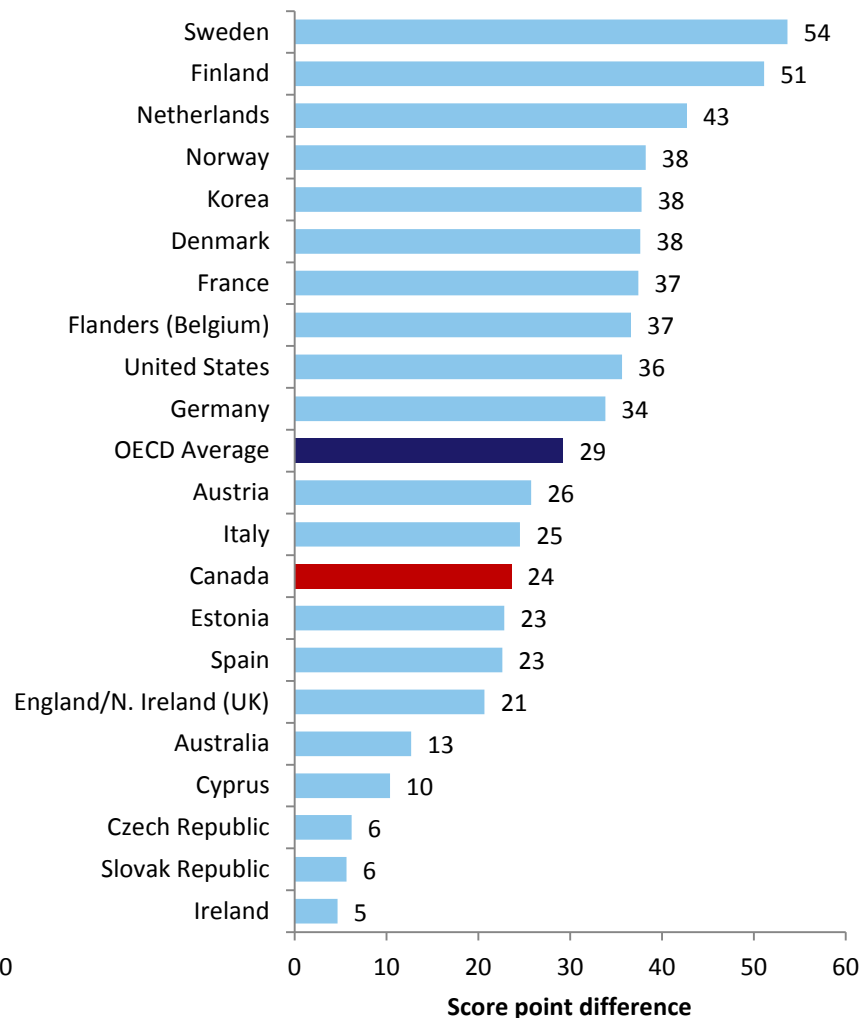


Literacy — Average scores and score point differences of population aged 16 to 65 by immigrant status, OECD average and countries, 2012

Literacy mean proficiency scores of foreign-born population



Mean score differences on the literacy scale between native- and foreign-born adults

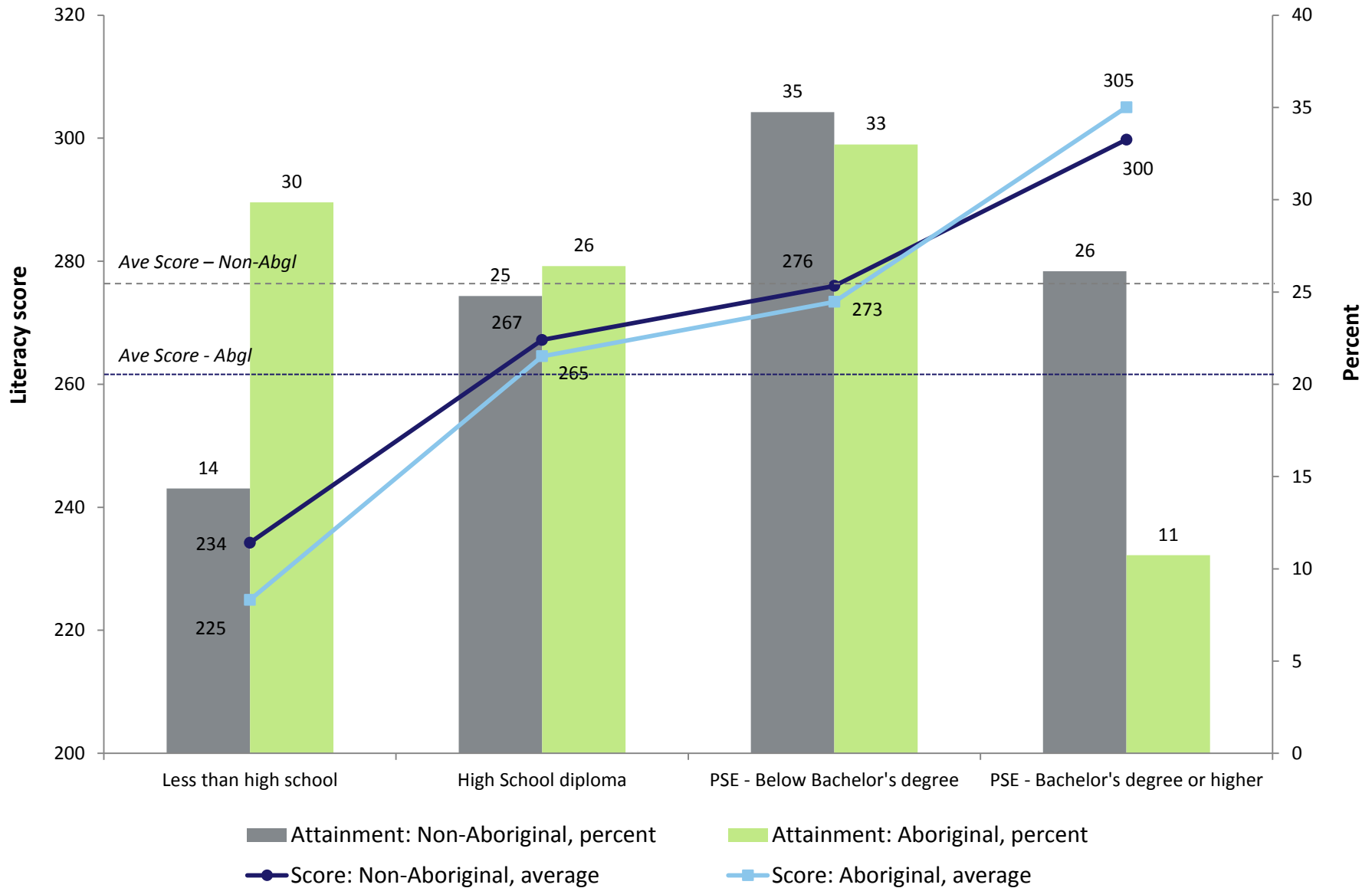


Aboriginal peoples

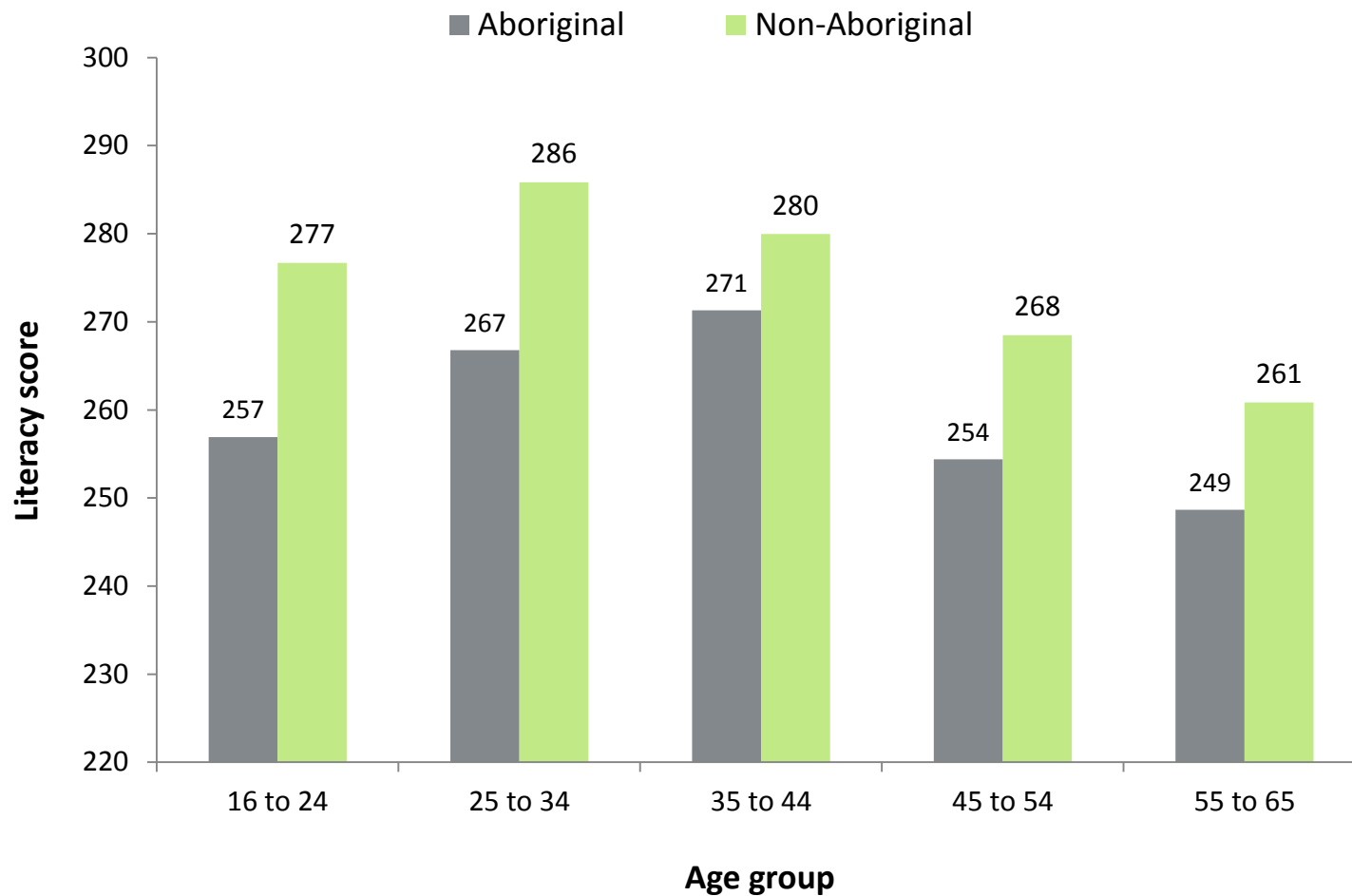
- ✓ Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people with similar levels of education have similar skills proficiency; education is the key to eliminating the skills gap.
- ✓ The skills gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people is wider among young adults than among older cohorts of the population.
- ✓ The skills gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people varies considerably by region and by type of skills assessed.



Literacy — Average scores of population aged 16 to 65 by off-reserve Aboriginal identification and educational attainment, Canada, 2012



Literacy — Average scores of population aged 16 to 65 by age and off-reserve Aboriginal identification, Canada, 2012



The distribution of skills

- ✓ Canada has a higher-than-average proportion of its population at both the high and low ends of the proficiency scales.
- ✓ Over one in seven Canadians perform at the highest levels of proficiency in literacy and numeracy.
- ✓ A significant number of Canadians (between one in seven and one in five) have very low levels of proficiency.
- ✓ Higher levels of proficiency are associated with better social and economic outcomes.
- ✓ In technology-rich environments, the challenges facing those with lower proficiency in literacy and numeracy contribute to the “digital divide”.



Likelihood of positive social and economic outcomes among highly literate adults (scoring at Level 4/5 compared with those scoring at Level 1 or below)



Who are the Canadians performing at the lowest proficiency levels?

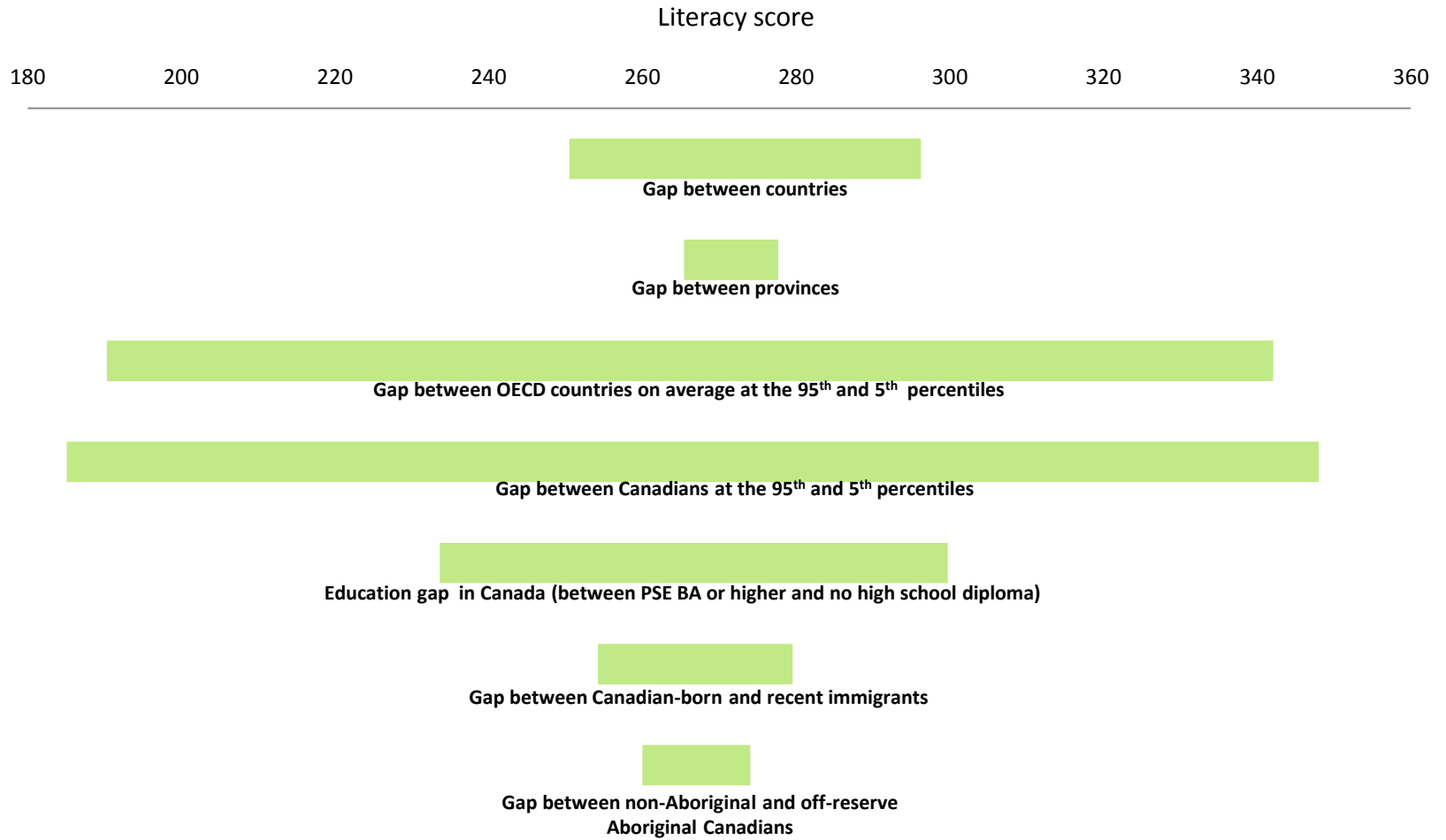
Category	Performance at the lowest proficiency levels		
	Literacy (Level 1 and below)	Numeracy (Level 1 and below)	PS-TRE (Below level 1)
General population aged 16 to 65	17%	23%	15%
45 to 65 years of age	21%	28%	19%
Less-than-high-school educational attainment	41%	51%	22%
Not in labour force	26%	35%	17%
Service and support occupations	18%	28%	16%
Immigrant	27%	33%	19%
Off-reserve Aboriginal identification	24%	35%	18%
First language is not the same as the language of the test	27%	33%	19%

Skills gaps that matter

- ✓ The OECD observes that the variation in proficiency between the adult populations in participating countries is relatively small.
- ✓ The same is true of provinces within Canada.
- ✓ The difference between the performance of people from different backgrounds within jurisdictions is much larger than the difference between jurisdictions themselves.



Literacy - Range in average scores, OECD average and Canada, 2012



PIAAC was sponsored in Canada by ...

... provincial and territorial ministries and departments responsible for education, under the aegis the **Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC)**...

- **Newfoundland and Labrador:** *Department of Education; Department of Advanced Education and Skills*
- **Prince Edward Island:** *Department of Education and Early Childhood Development; Department of Innovation and Advanced Learning*
- **Nova Scotia:** *Department of Education and Early Childhood Development; Department of Labour and Advanced Education*
- **New Brunswick:** *Department of Education and Early Childhood Development; Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour*
- **Quebec:** *Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport; Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur, de la Recherche, de la Science et la Technologie*
- **Ontario:** *Ministry of Education; Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities*
- **Manitoba:** *Department of Education; Department of Advanced Education and Literacy*
- **Saskatchewan:** *Ministry of Education; Ministry of Advanced Education*
- **Alberta:** *Alberta Education; Alberta Enterprise and Advanced Education*
- **British Columbia:** *Ministry of Education; Ministry of Advanced Education*
- **Yukon:** *Department of Education*
- **Northwest Territories:** *Department of Education, Culture and Employment*
- **Nunavut:** *Department of Education*

... **Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC)** and partners...

- Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency
 - Citizenship and Immigration Canada
 - Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada
 - Public Health Agency of Canada
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- The survey was administered in Canada by Statistics Canada.