

Addressing the health workforce crisis: Training, retaining and innovating

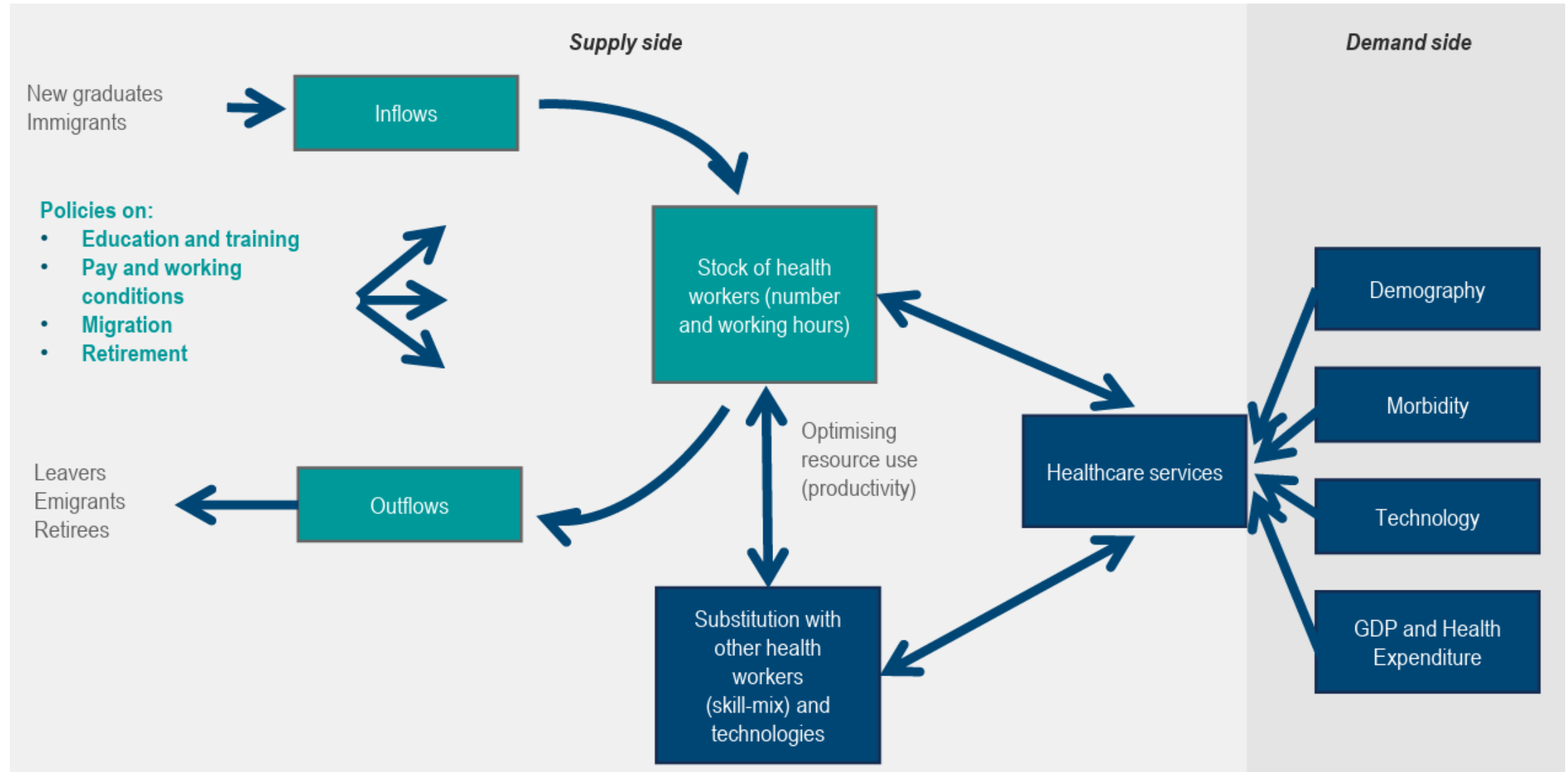
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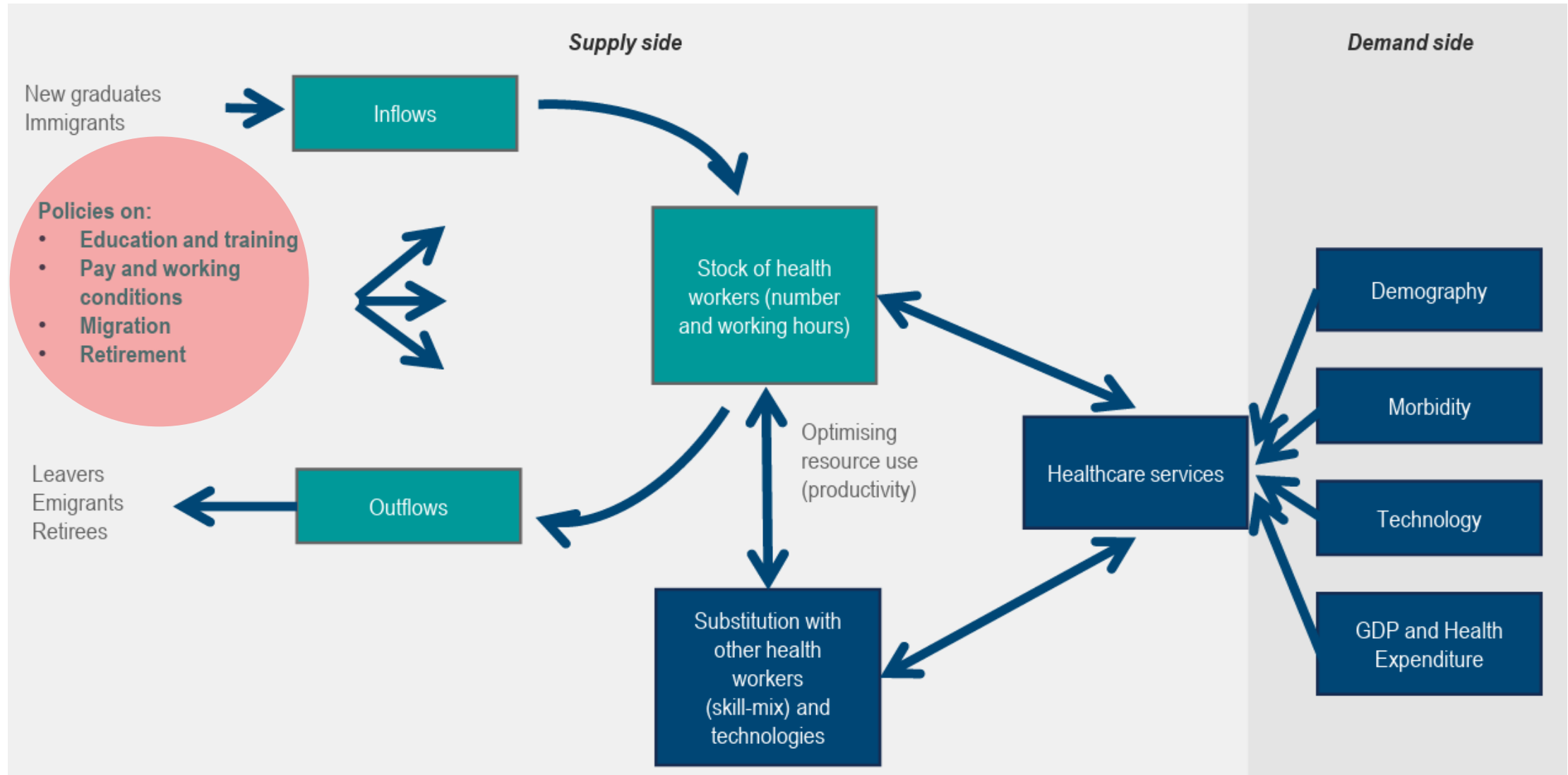
4 November 2025



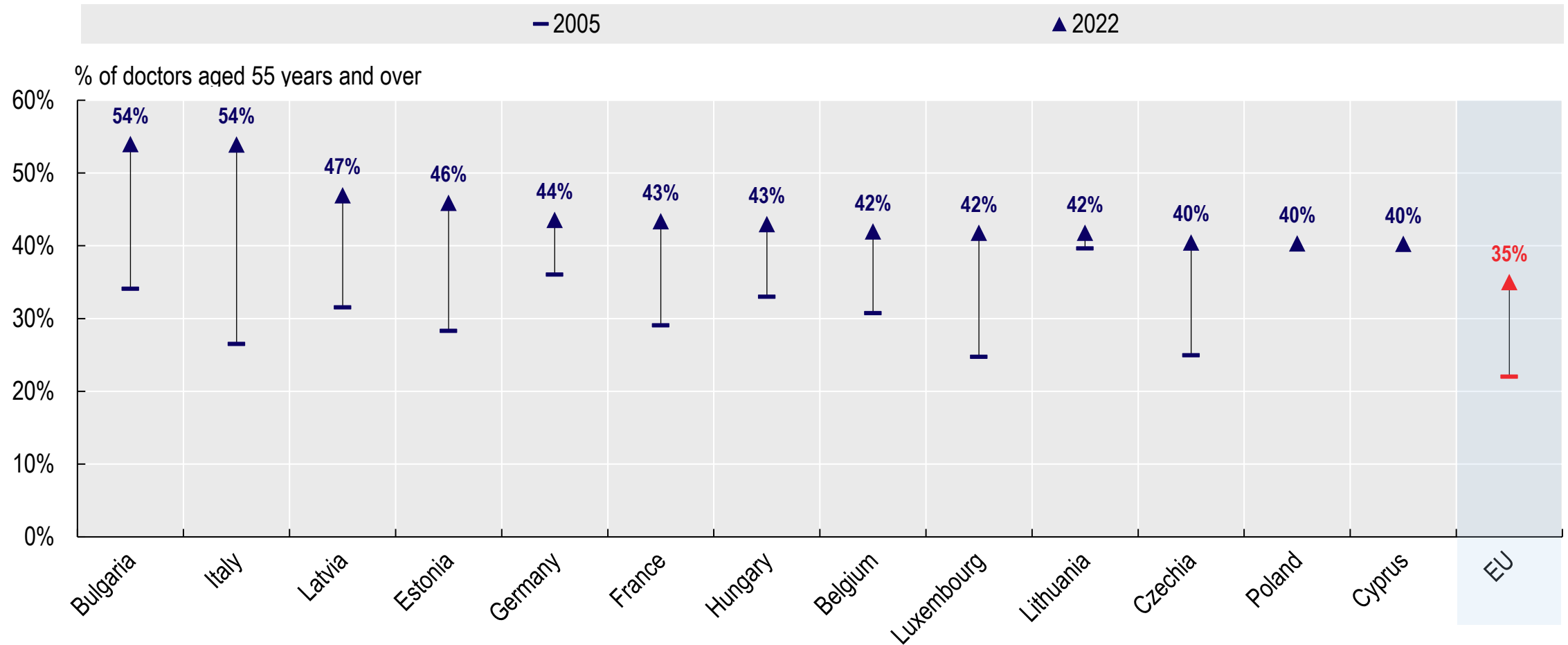
The anatomy of health workforce shortages: demand greater than supply



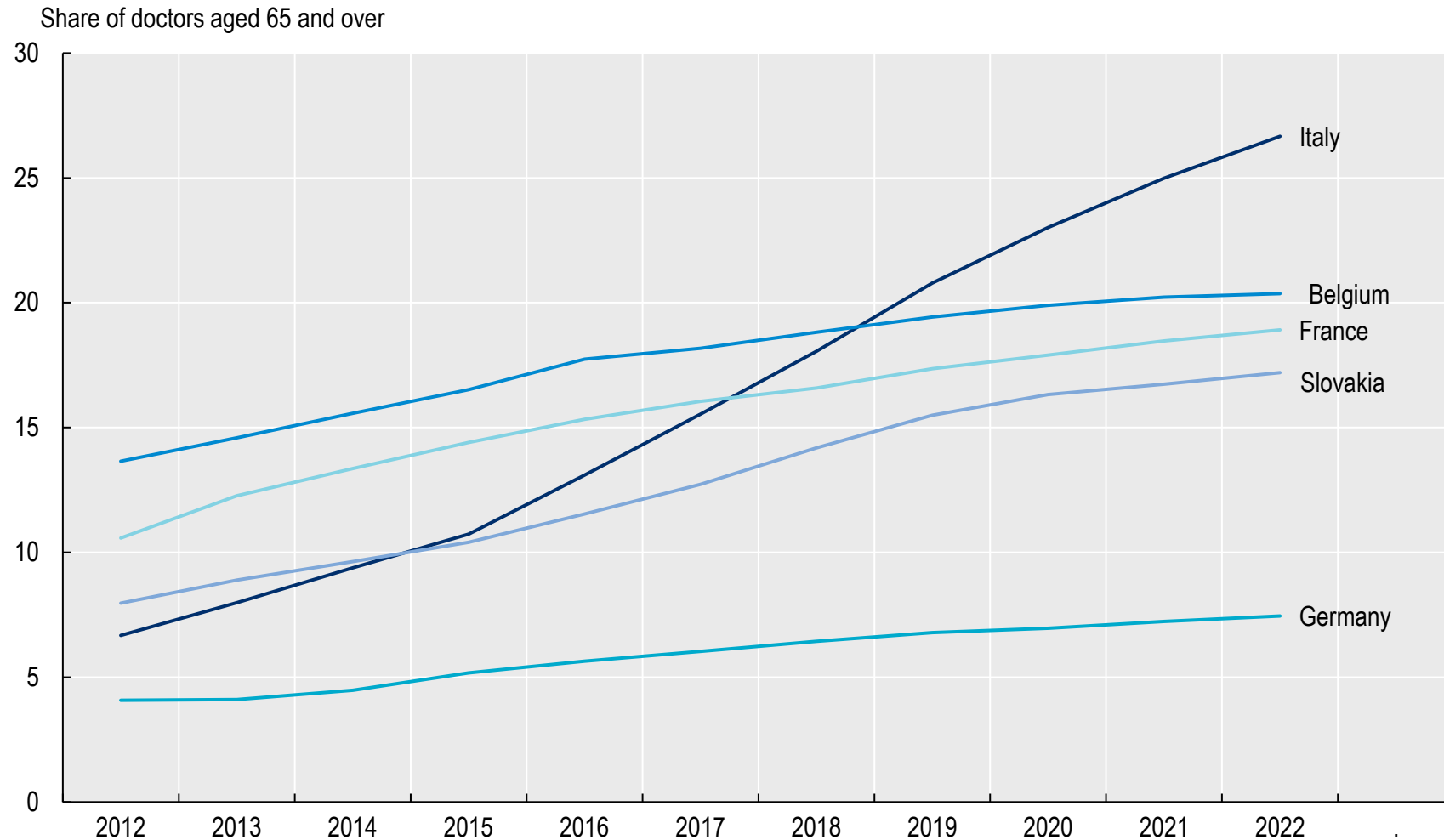
Focus on supply-side policies: Increasing inflows, reducing outflows



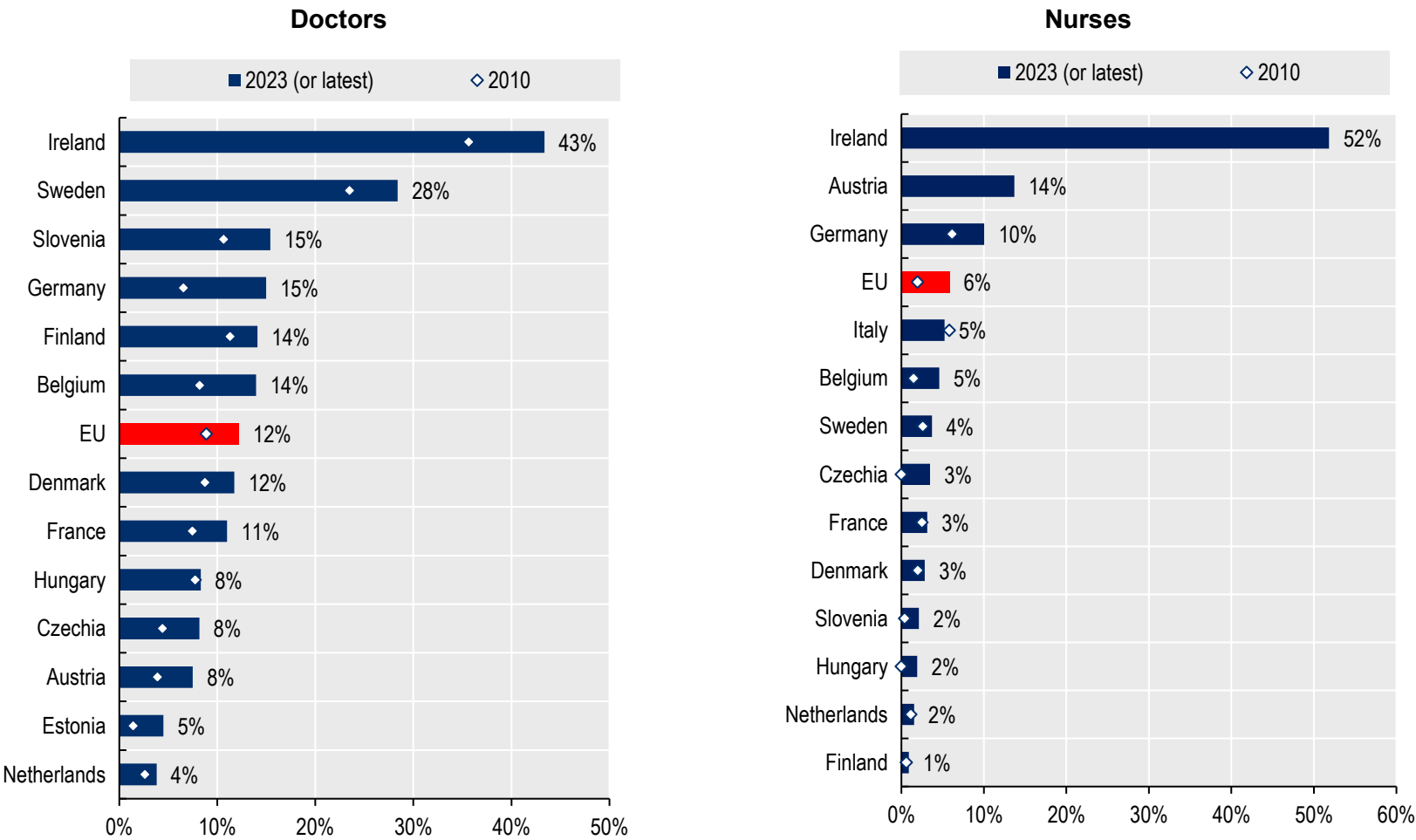
Over a third of doctors in the EU are aged over 55, raising concerns about a potential large wave of retirement in the coming years



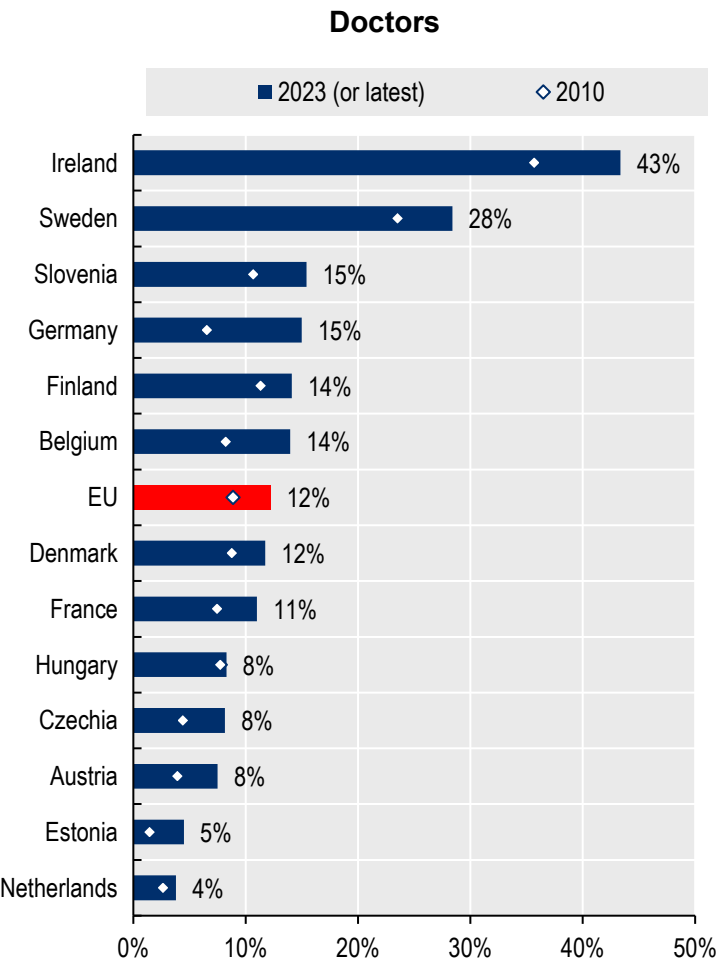
Retaining experienced doctors for longer can help mitigate shortages



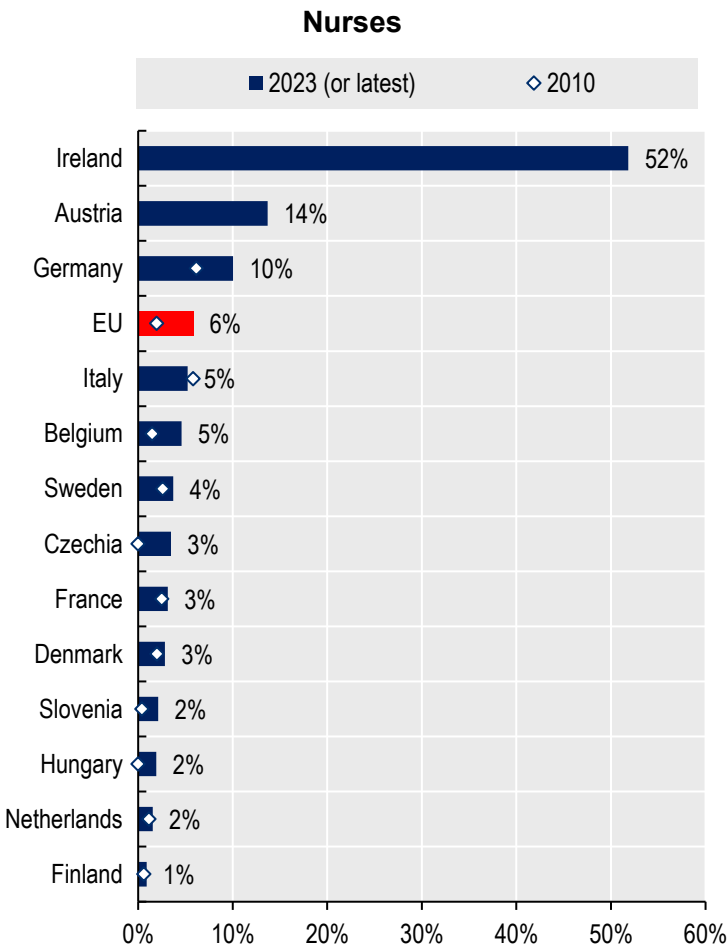
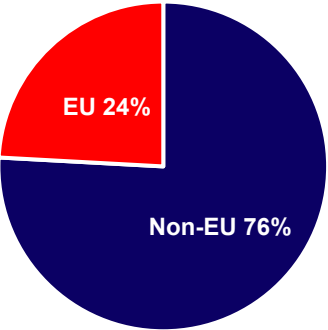
Several countries are recruiting foreign doctors and nurses to respond to domestic needs, but this raises equity and sustainability issues



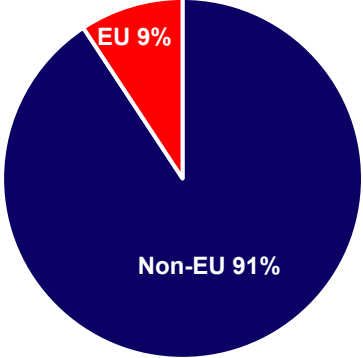
Most foreign-trained doctors and nurses working in EU countries come from outside the EU



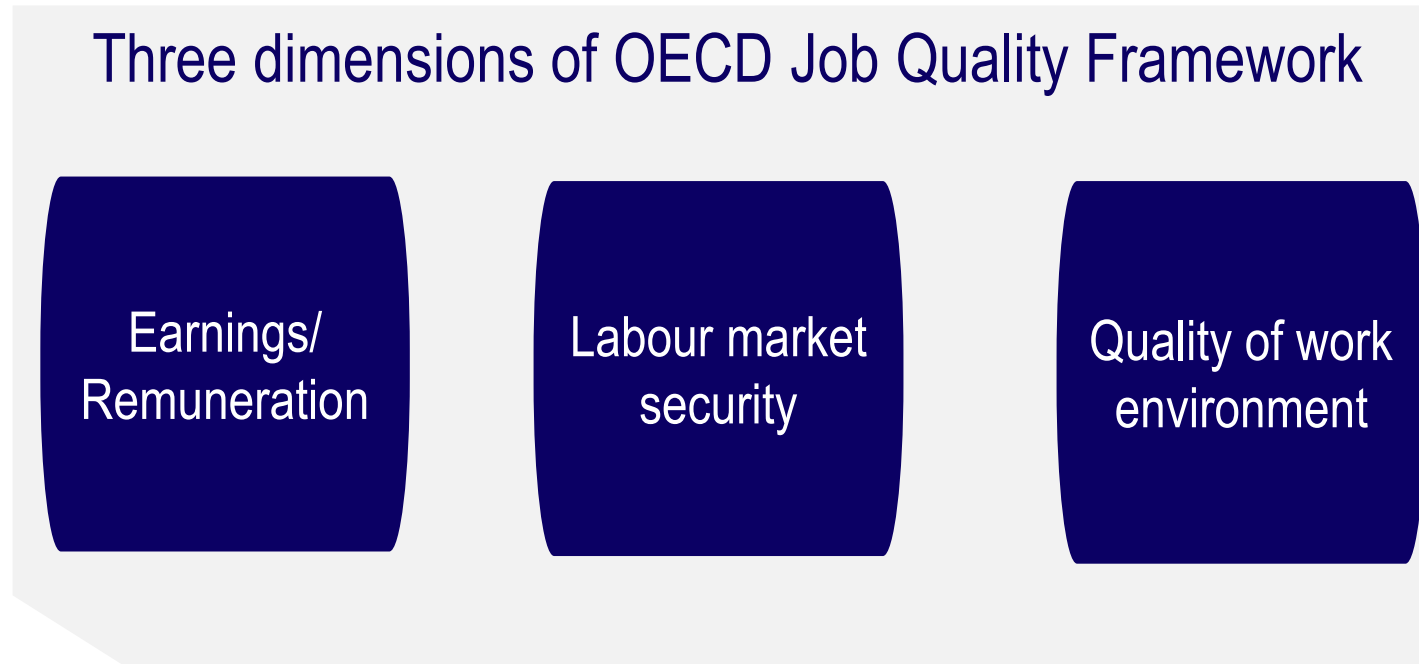
Foreign-trained doctors inflows into EU countries (2023 or nearest year)



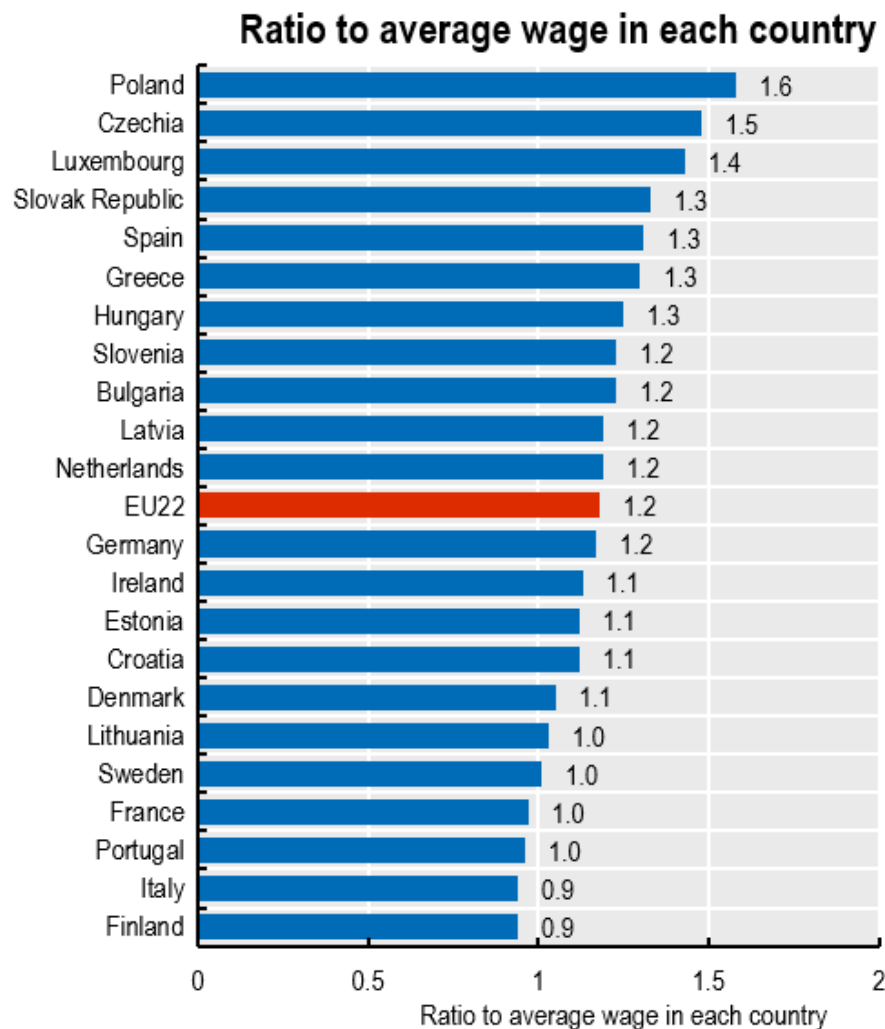
Foreign-trained nurses inflows into EU countries (2023 or nearest year)



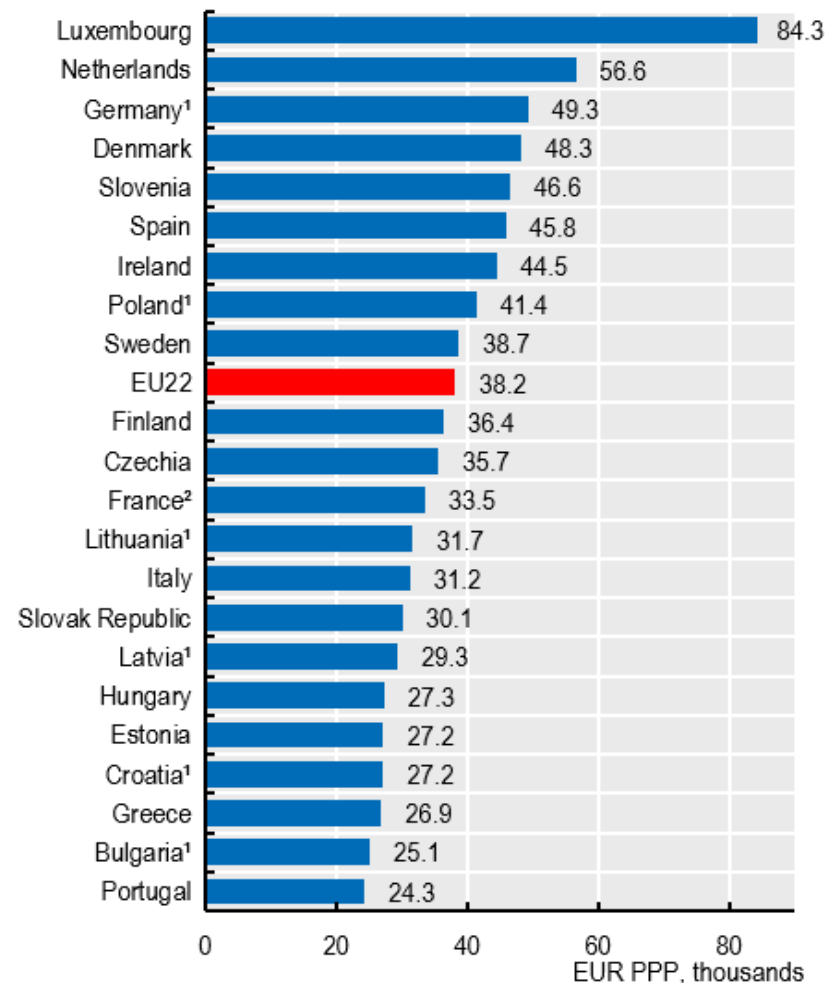
Retaining more health workers involves improving working conditions



The remuneration of nurses varies compared to the average wage of all workers in each country and across countries



EURO (adjusted for purchasing power parity)



Retaining more health workers also involves improving the quality of the work environment

Three dimensions of OECD Job Quality Framework

Earnings/
Remuneration

Labour market
security

Quality of work
environment

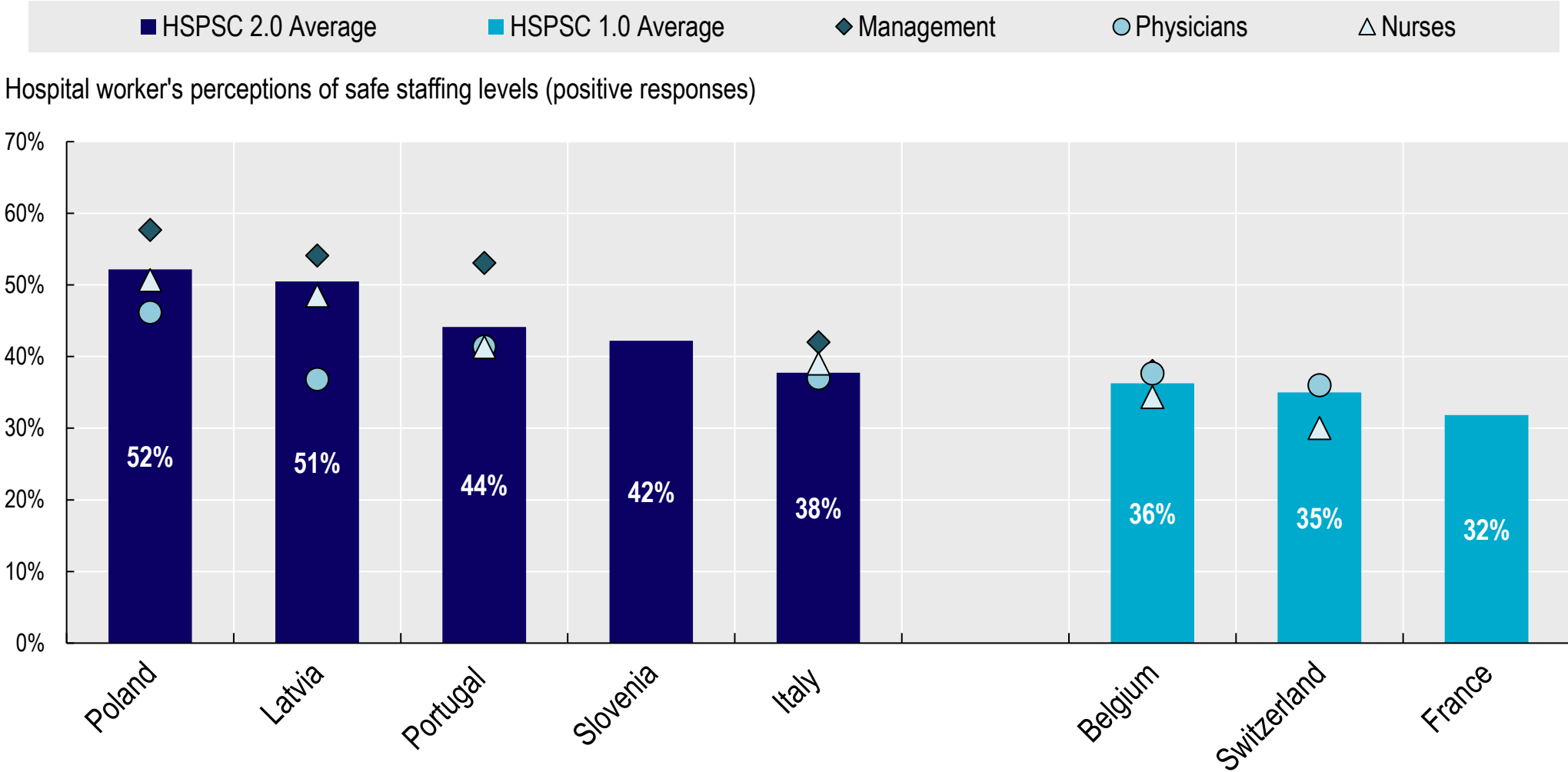
Fulfilling jobs

Work-life balance
(number and
flexibility in working
hours)

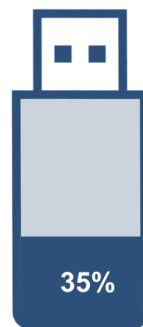
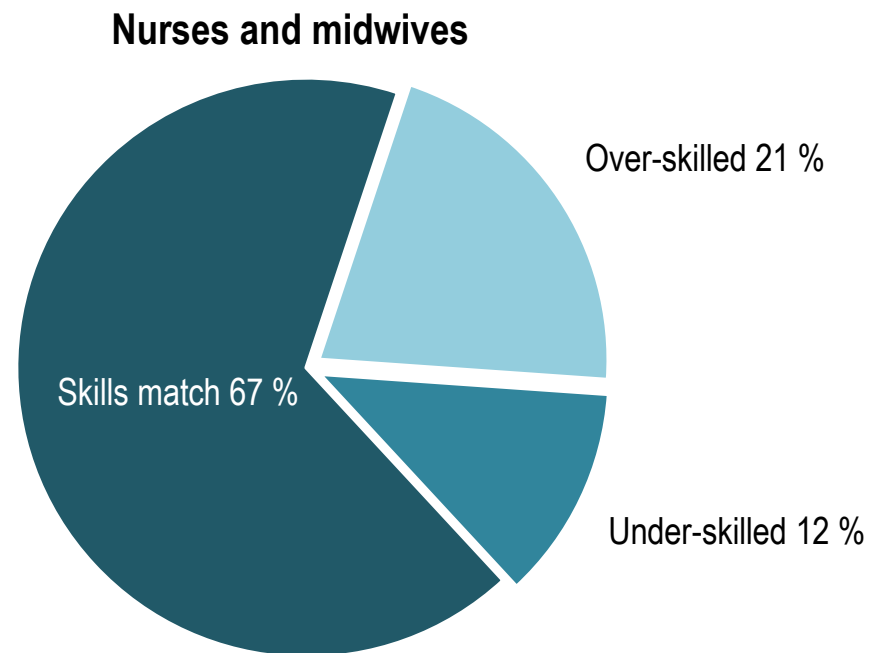
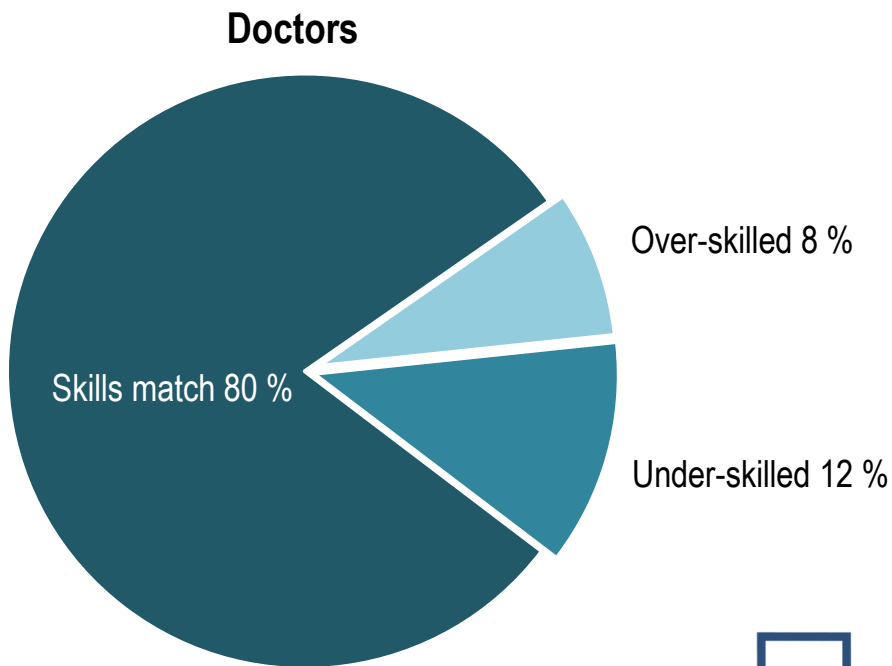
Training and career
progression

Workplace
relationships and
management

Less than half of doctors and nurses working in hospital feel there is enough staff and time to provide safe care



Skills mismatches in the health sector point to the need for continuous professional development and more effective use of skills



35% of skills gaps for both doctors and nurses are digital skills

Three complementary strategies to address health workforce shortages

1

Train more health workers, but need to increase attractiveness of health sector jobs (this will cost money)



2

Retain more workers and for longer by improving job quality (some of this will cost money, but other measures may involve little or no cost)



3

Address skills mismatches, both skills gaps and effective use of skills

