



# Social integration in European sports clubs

*Similarities, differences, potential explanations – and points of awareness*

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# Why social integration in sports clubs?

- It is assumed that sports clubs have the ability to bring people together in valuable social networks
- Sports clubs are believed to be among the social arenas that are most conducive to social integration
- BUT some population groups are underrepresented in sports clubs, including ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, elderly, women and various socially vulnerable groups
- AND there are large variations in the participation and commitment of members in sports clubs

# The concept of social integration

- Three main dimensions of social integration

<b>1. Structural integration</b>	Integration of various population groups compared with the population distribution
<b>2. Socio-cultural integration</b>	
- a. Assimilation	The ability of individuals to know and master dominant values and norms
- b. Pluralism	The acceptance of multiculturalism
<b>3. Socio-affective integration</b>	
- a. Interaction	The participation in social life and the formation of social networks
- b. Identification	The degree of identification and emotional commitment

*[Adapted from: Elling, De Knop & Knoppers, 2001; Esser, 2009]*

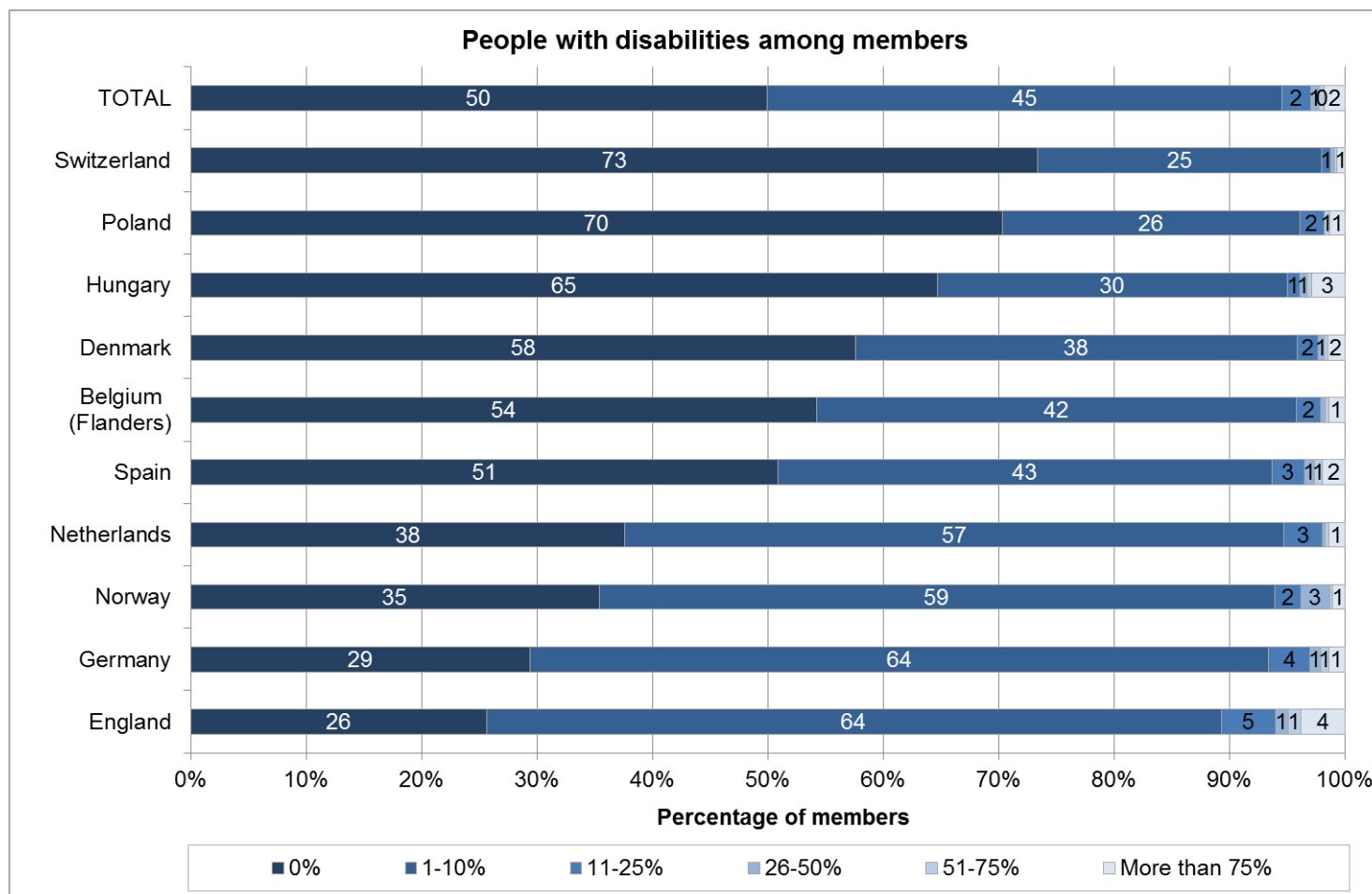
Part I

# **STRUCTURAL INTEGRATION**

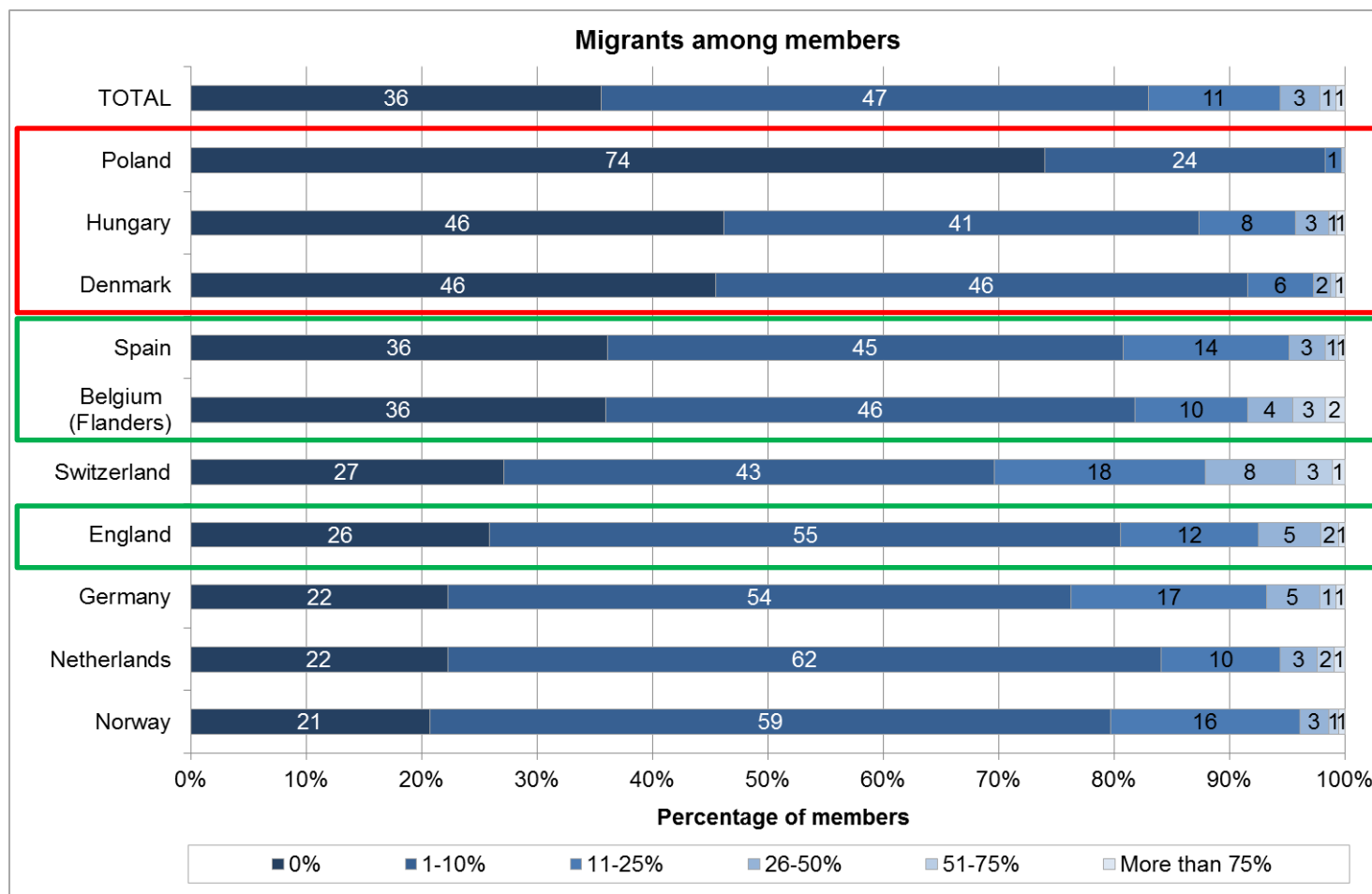
# Agenda

- a) Representation
- b) Targeted initiatives
- c) Attitudes
- d) Alignment with policy
- e) Club characteristics

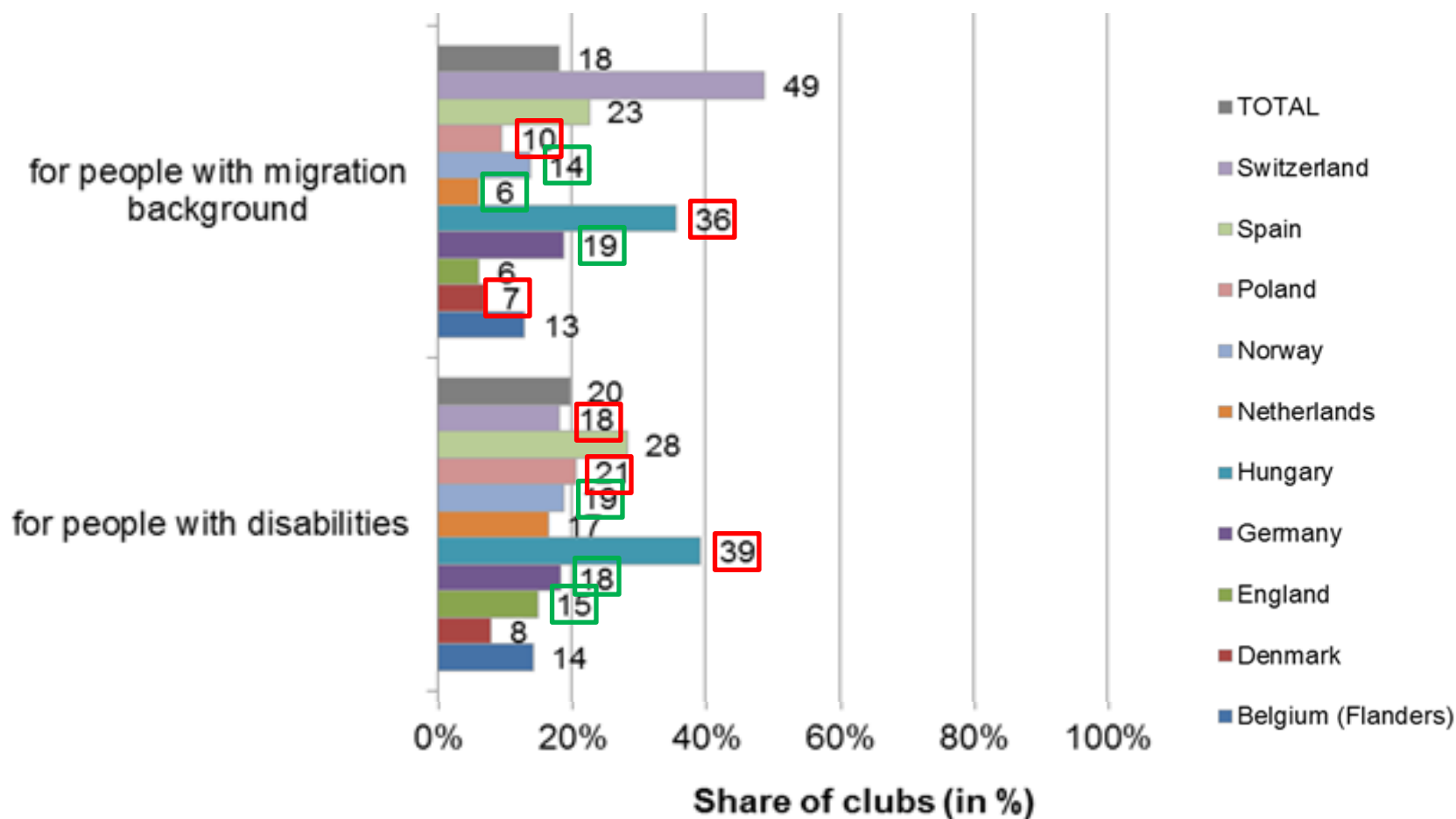
# a) Representation



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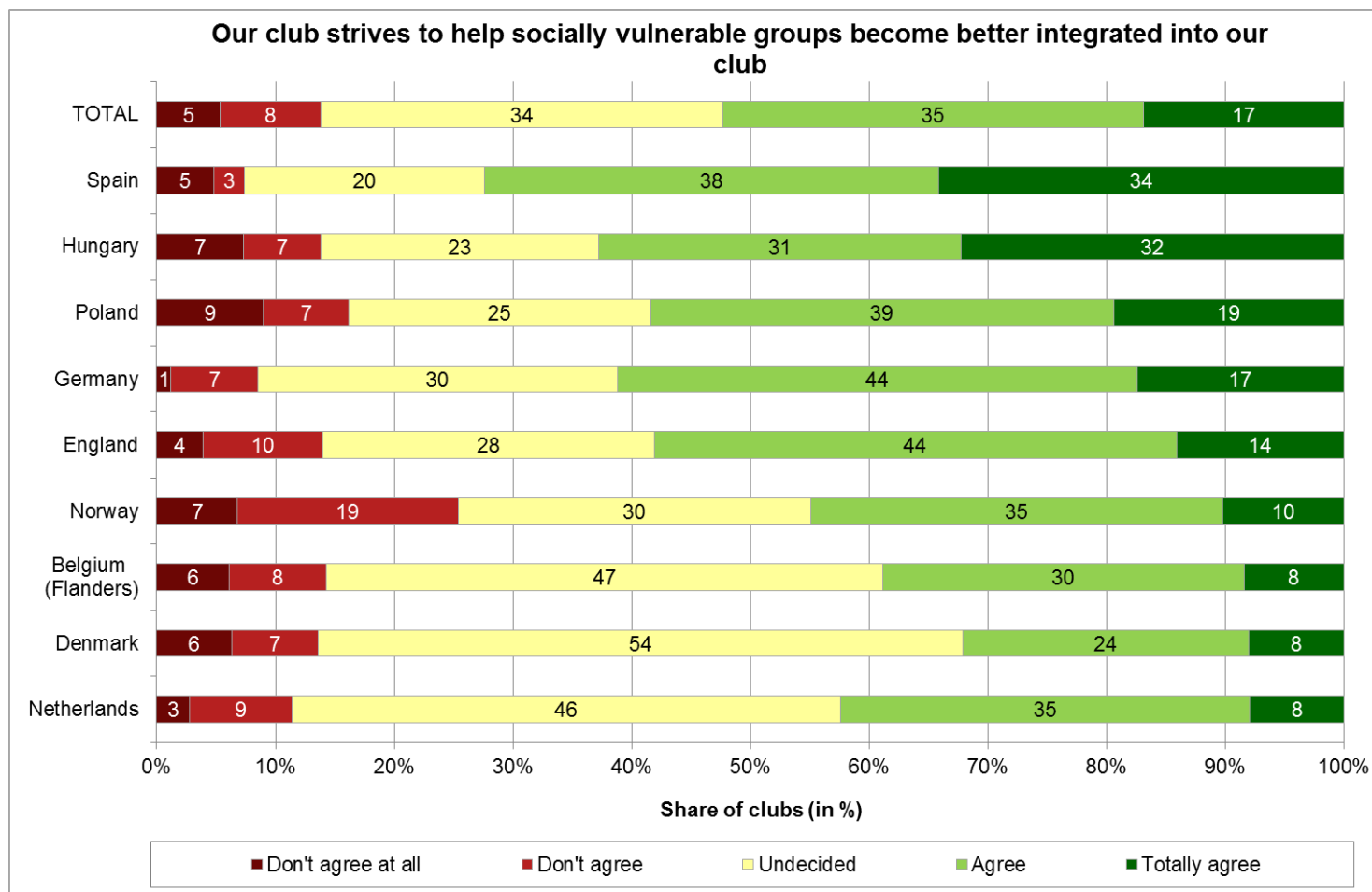


## b) Targeted initiatives

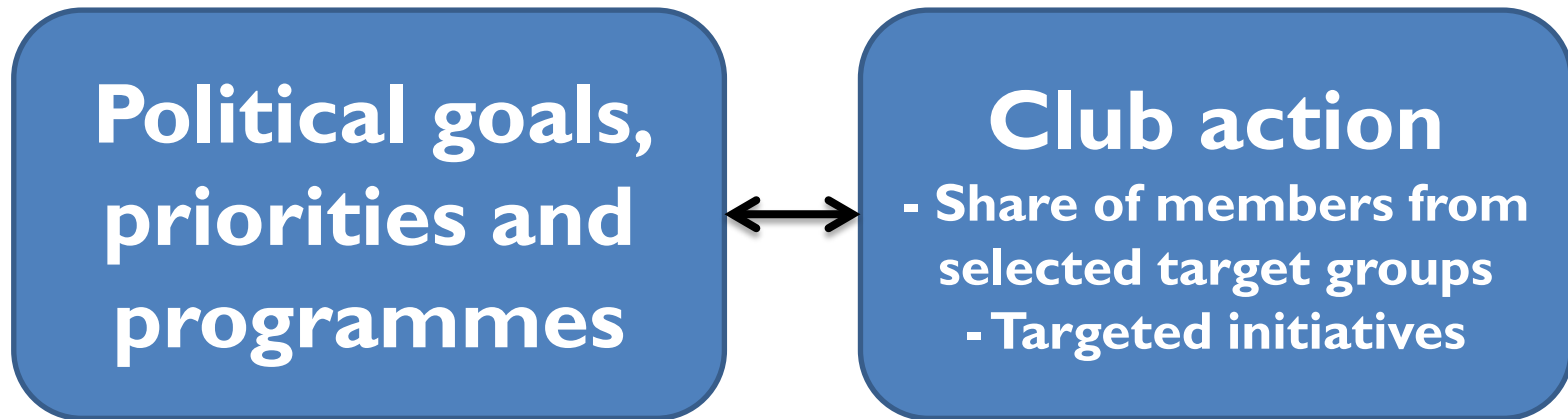




## c) Attitudes

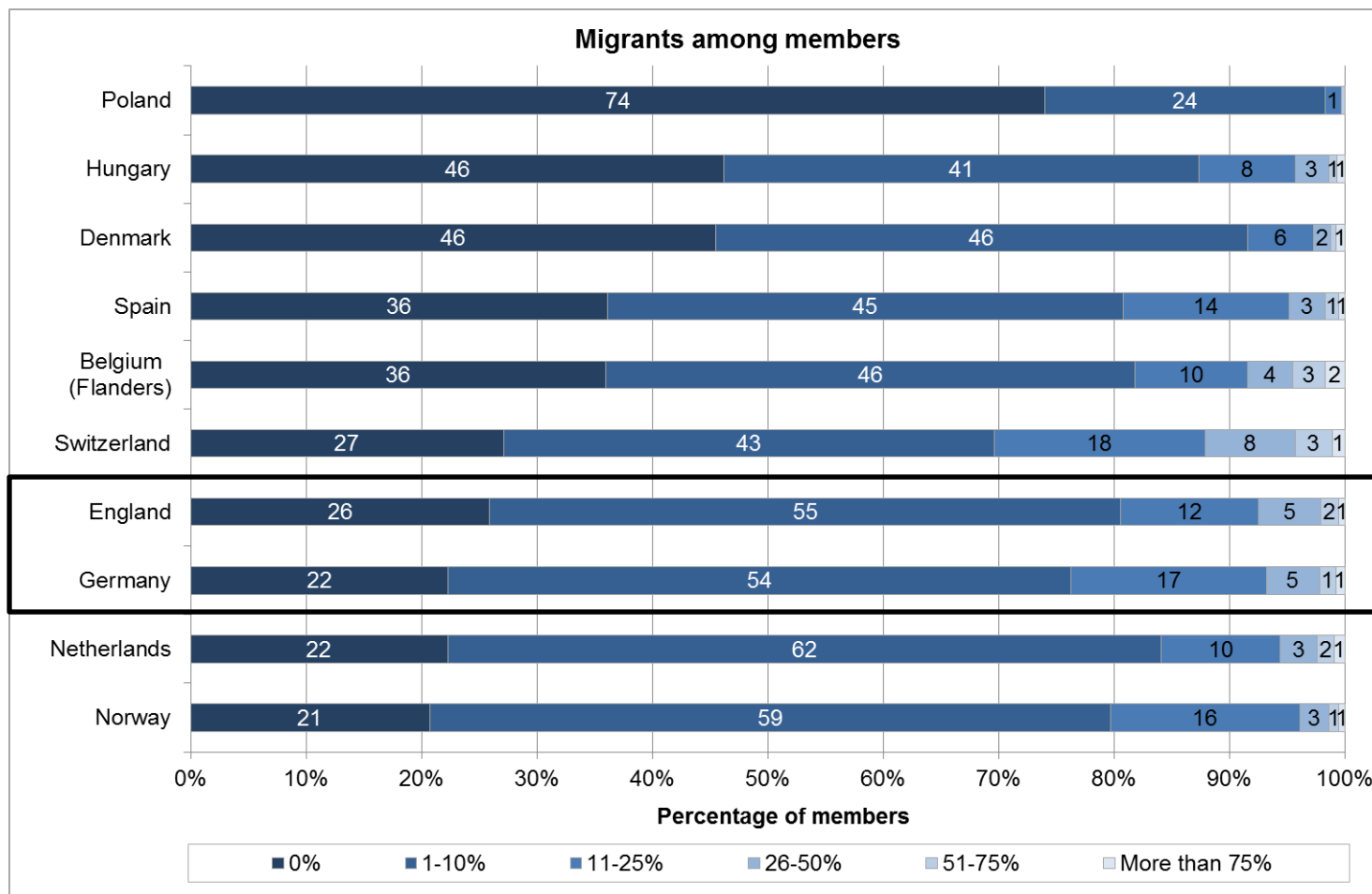


## d) Alignment with policy



- No clear and general link can be identified
- Example: People with migration background
- High political priority in Germany, the opposite in England, but relatively high representation in sports clubs in both countries

## d) Alignment with policy



## e) Club characteristics

	Representation	Targeted initiatives
<b>Club characteristics</b>		
Club size	+	+
Long-term planning	0	+
Paid manager	0	+
Companionship and conviviality	0	0
Sports	<p>Depending on target group</p> <p><u>People with migration background:</u> Football, basketball, boxing, 'fighting/combat sports'</p> <p><u>People with disabilities:</u> Golf, swimming</p>	<p>Depending on target group</p> <p><u>People with migration background:</u> Football, handball, boxing, 'fighting/combat sports'</p> <p><u>People with disabilities:</u> Shooting sports</p>

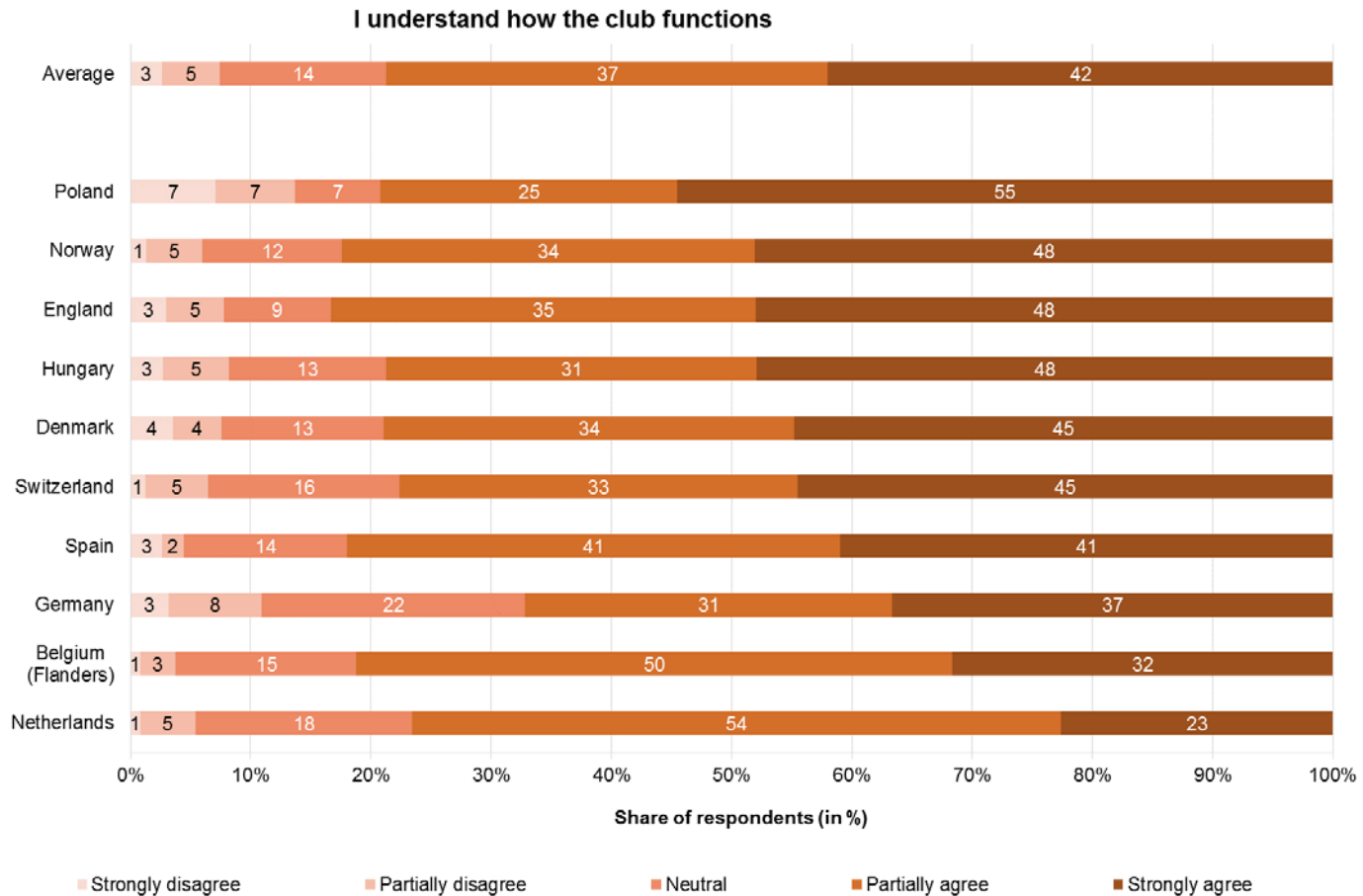
Part II

# **SOCIO-CULTURAL INTEGRATION**

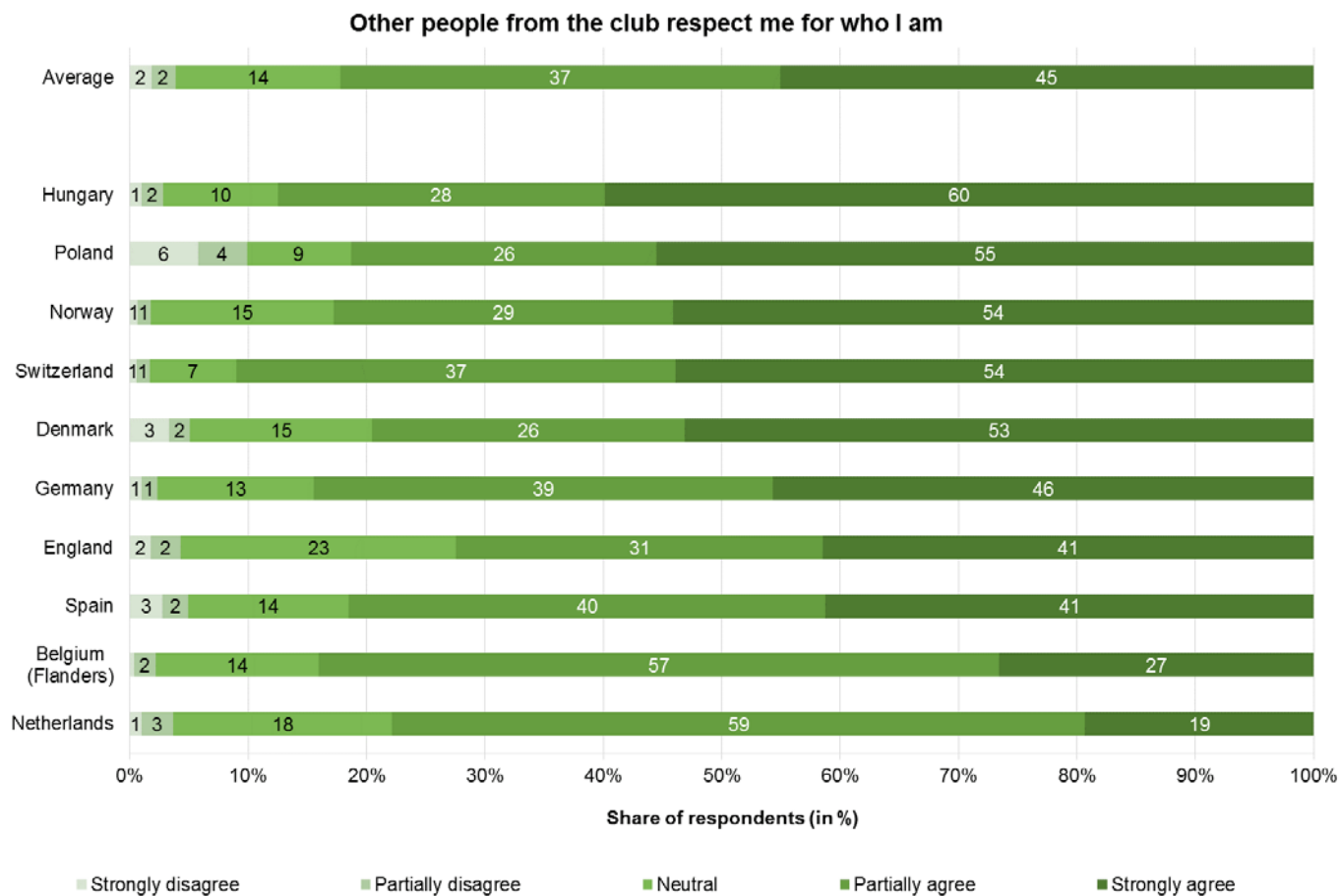
# Agenda

- a) Assimilation
- b) Pluralism
- c) Club and member characteristics

# a) Assimilation



## b) Pluralism





## c) Club and member characteristics

	Assimilation	Pluralism
<b>Club characteristics</b>		
Club size	-	-
<b>Member characteristics</b>		
Being a volunteer	+	+
Duration of affiliation	+	+
Gender (male)	+	0
Age	+	+
Migration background	-	0
Disability	0	0

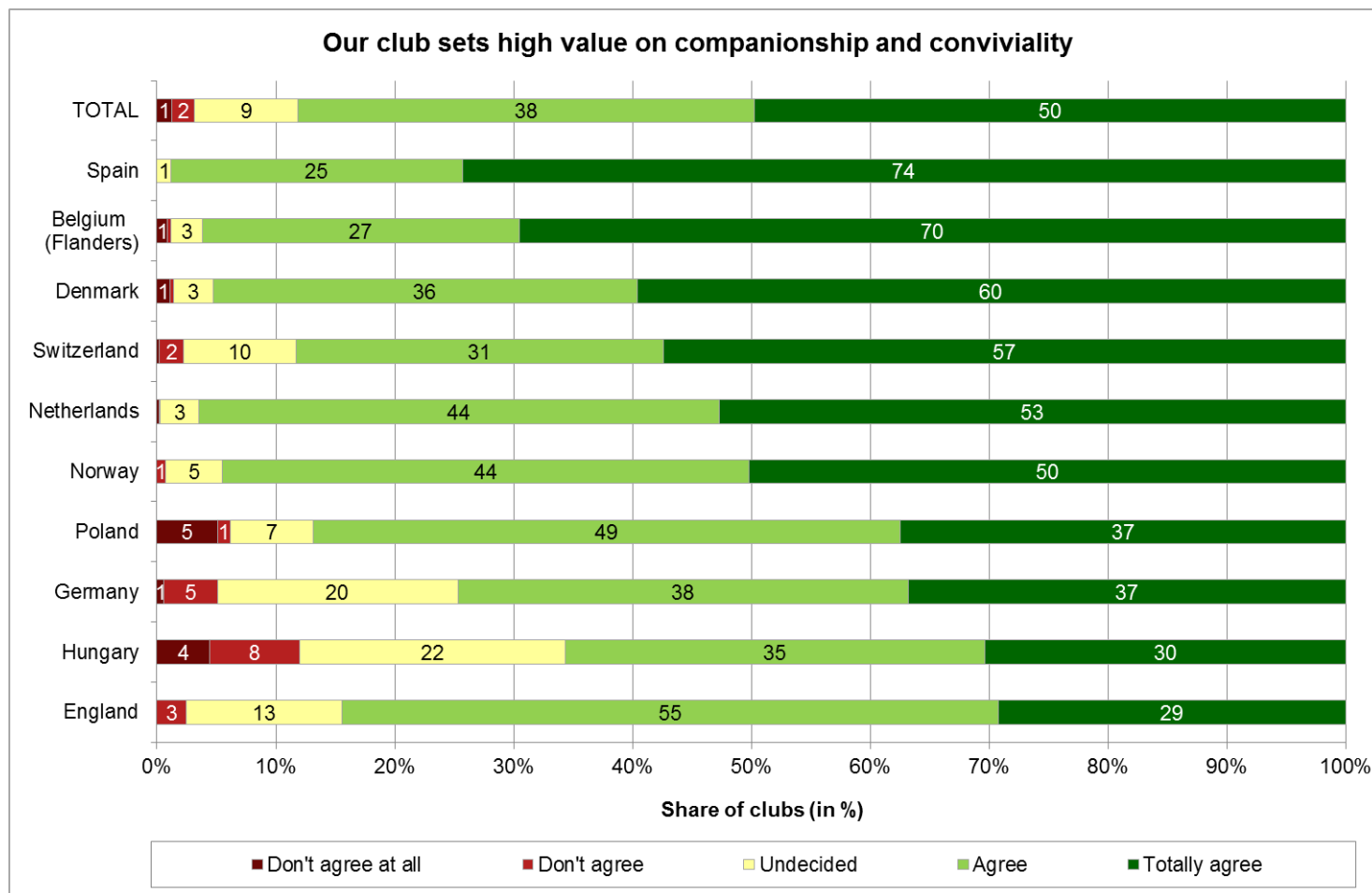
Part III

# **SOCIO-AFFECTIVE INTEGRATION**

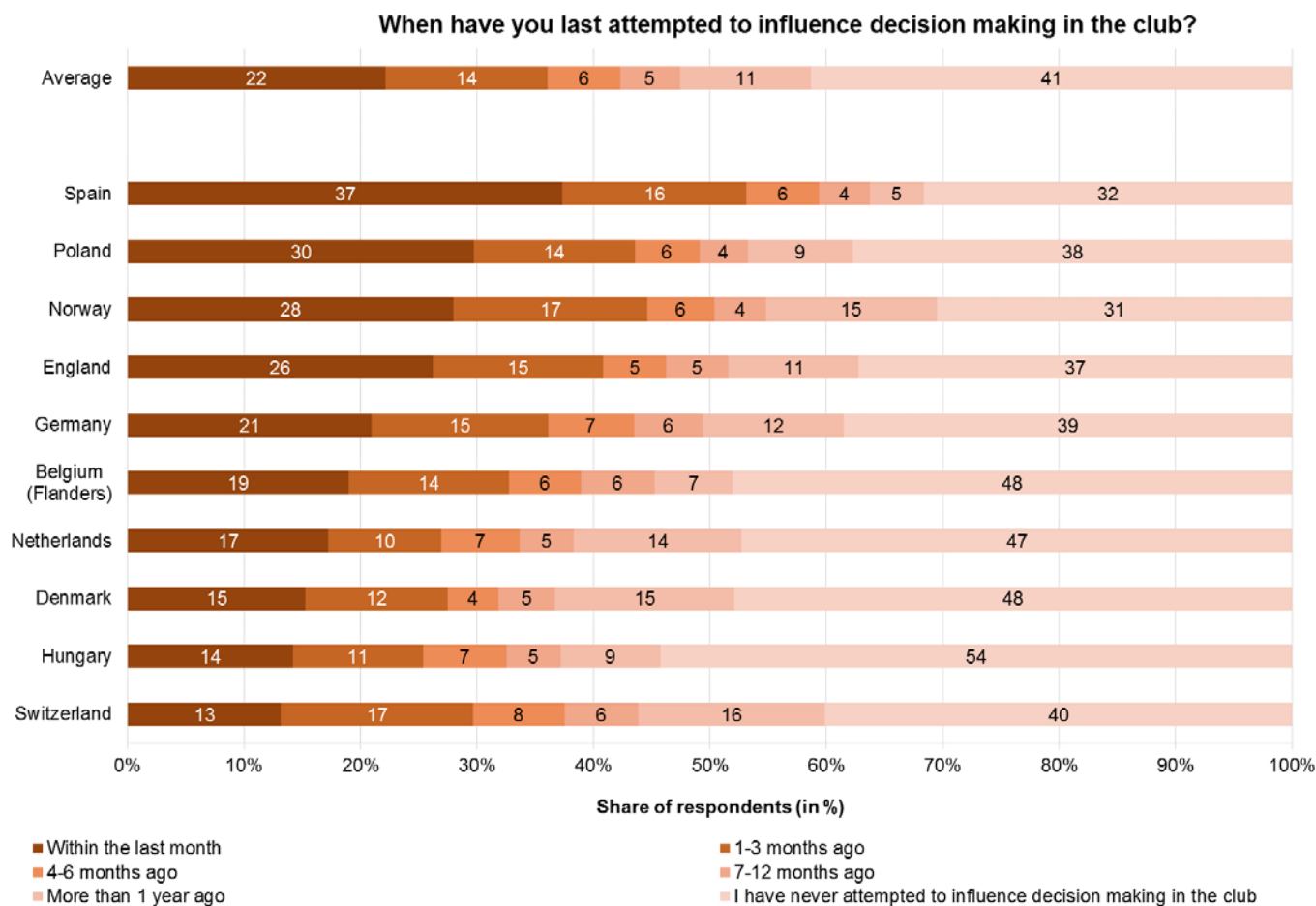
# Agenda

- a) Club opinion
- b) Democratic participation
- c) Social participation
- d) Identification and commitment
- e) Club and member characteristics

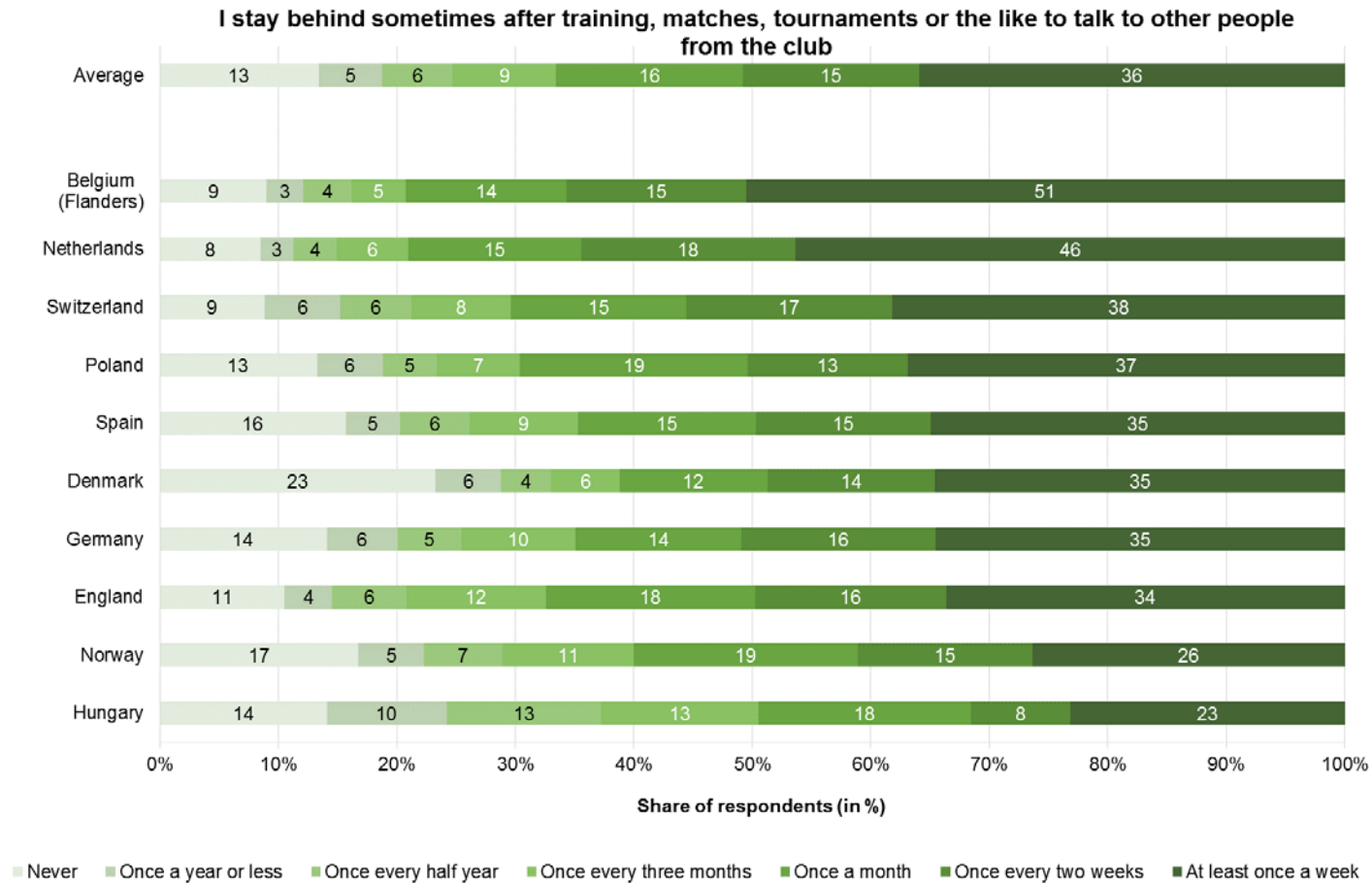
# a) Club opinion



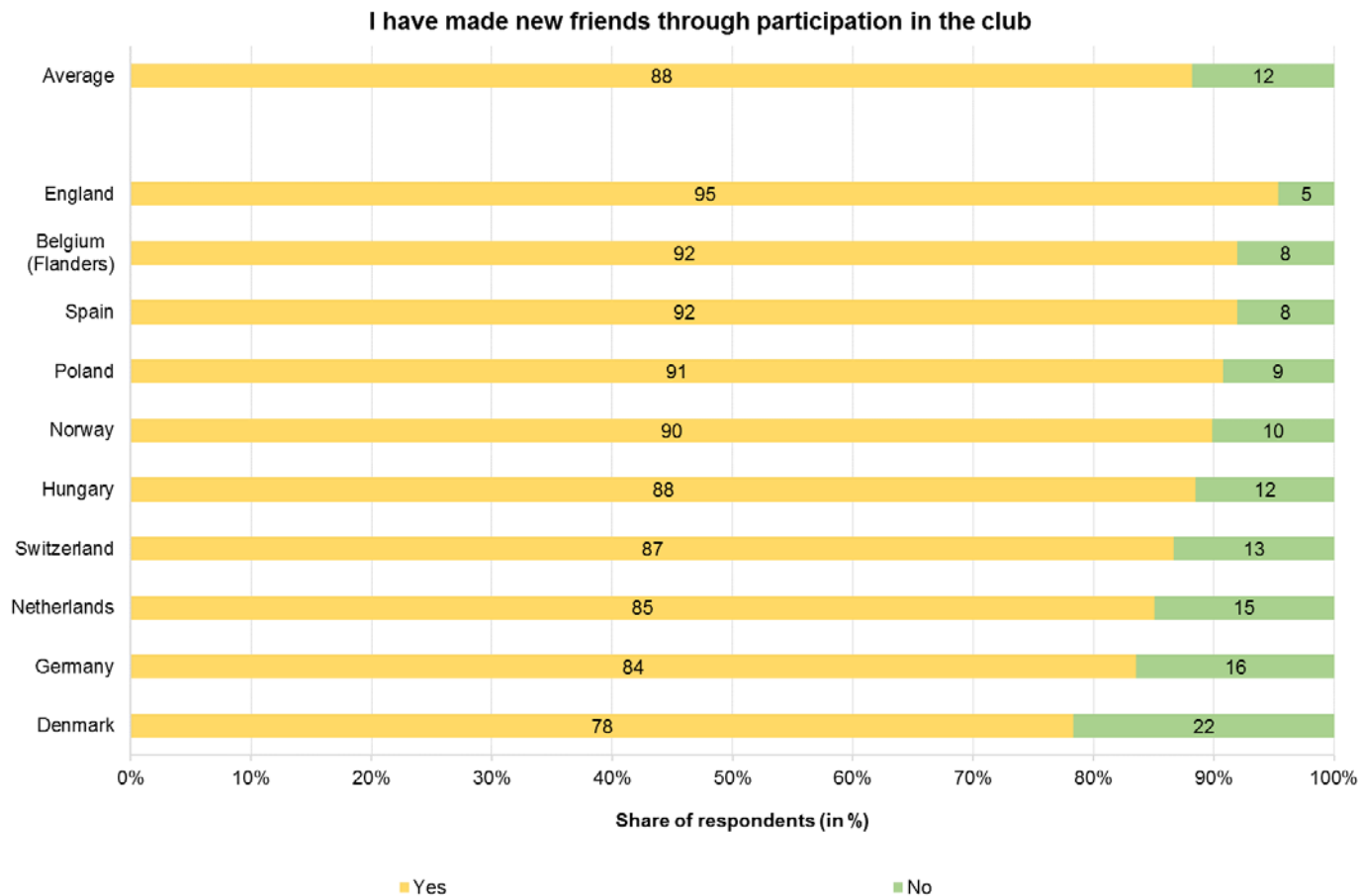
## b) Democratic participation



## c) Social participation



## d) Identification and commitment



## e) Club and member characteristics

	Democratic participation	Social participation
<b>Club characteristics</b>		
Companionship and conviviality	0	(+)
Involve members	0	0
Sport	Negligible differences	+ Team ballgames, (table) tennis, dancing - Fitness/aerobics
<b>Member characteristics</b>		
Being a volunteer	+	+
Duration of affiliation	+	+
Gender (male)	+	+
Age	-	-
Migration background	0	- (less 'bridging')
Disability	0	0



Part IV

# **MAIN FINDINGS AND POINTS OF AWARENESS**

# Main findings

- I. Many sports clubs integrate people from various targeted population groups, but many also do not. It is difficult to identify a clear and general link with policy. Larger and more professionalised clubs take more 'targeted initiatives'.
- II. Most members understand how their clubs function, and they feel respected for who they are by other members. But we do not know about non-members and 'drop-outs'.
- III. A majority of members are active in the social life within their clubs and they feel emotionally committed. But many are also not active, particularly in the member democracy.

# Points of awareness

- I. The socially most vulnerable groups are likely to be most in need of clubs taking 'targeted initiatives', which are more common in larger and more professionalised clubs. Should more clubs be motivated to take 'targeted initiatives'? How?
- II. Sports club members mainly understand how clubs are run and they respect each other, but could lack of understanding and respect be a barrier for people not (currently) in clubs?
- III. There are many democratically and socially active members in sports clubs. Could increasing membership numbers come at the expense of democratic and social participation?

# Lessons from practice



PROMOTING SOCIAL INTEGRATION  
AND VOLUNTEERING IN SPORTS  
CLUBS

Monika Piątkowska, Szilvia Perényi and Karsten Elmosé-Østerlund



- An interesting offer which meets the needs of the target group
- The activities are offered at a time that fits in with the target group
- The activities are offered at a reasonable price
- Qualified coaches and trainers can serve as role models
- Integrative club policies for socially vulnerable groups
- A good social life in the club
- Participation in the local community
- A wide network of partners
- Adapting a development strategy for the club
- Serving as a benchmark

# Lessons from practice



# Thank you for your attention!

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