ECER 2025

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UNIVERSITY OF LATVIA
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Home Language and Beyond: Examining the Multiple Dimensions of Educational Inequity

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The Purpose of this study

To identify the main factors differentiating students whose home and instruction languages are the same (native speakers) from those whose home and instruction languages are different (non-native speakers)

Countries of comparison:

PISA 2022 and PIRLS 2021 European countries

Previous research states that

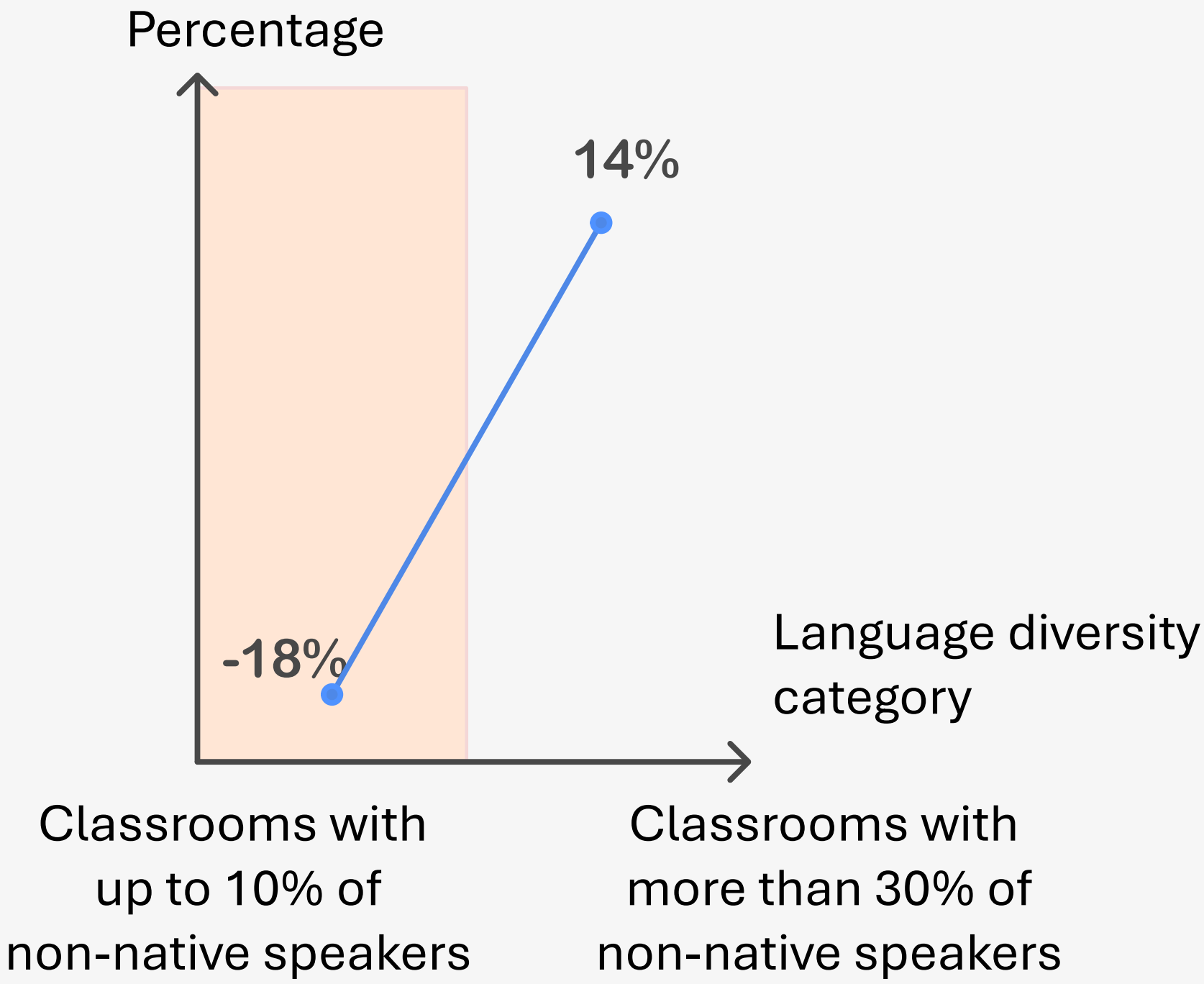
- **Dixon et al (2024):**
  - Most studies show no statistically significant cross-linguistic associations in vocabulary;
  - Usage of the language of instruction at home is associated with stronger literacy development in the language of instruction.
- **Nag et al. (2019), (2024):**
  - Advantage of the language at home is context-sensitive;
  - In high-income countries home environment impacts literacy development more than in low- or middle-income countries;
  - HLLE disadvantage is associated with both low income and social circumstances;
  - Home attributes can mitigate the impact of language disconnection;
  - Adult literacy practices & books at home have a significant impact on child's skills.

Methodology

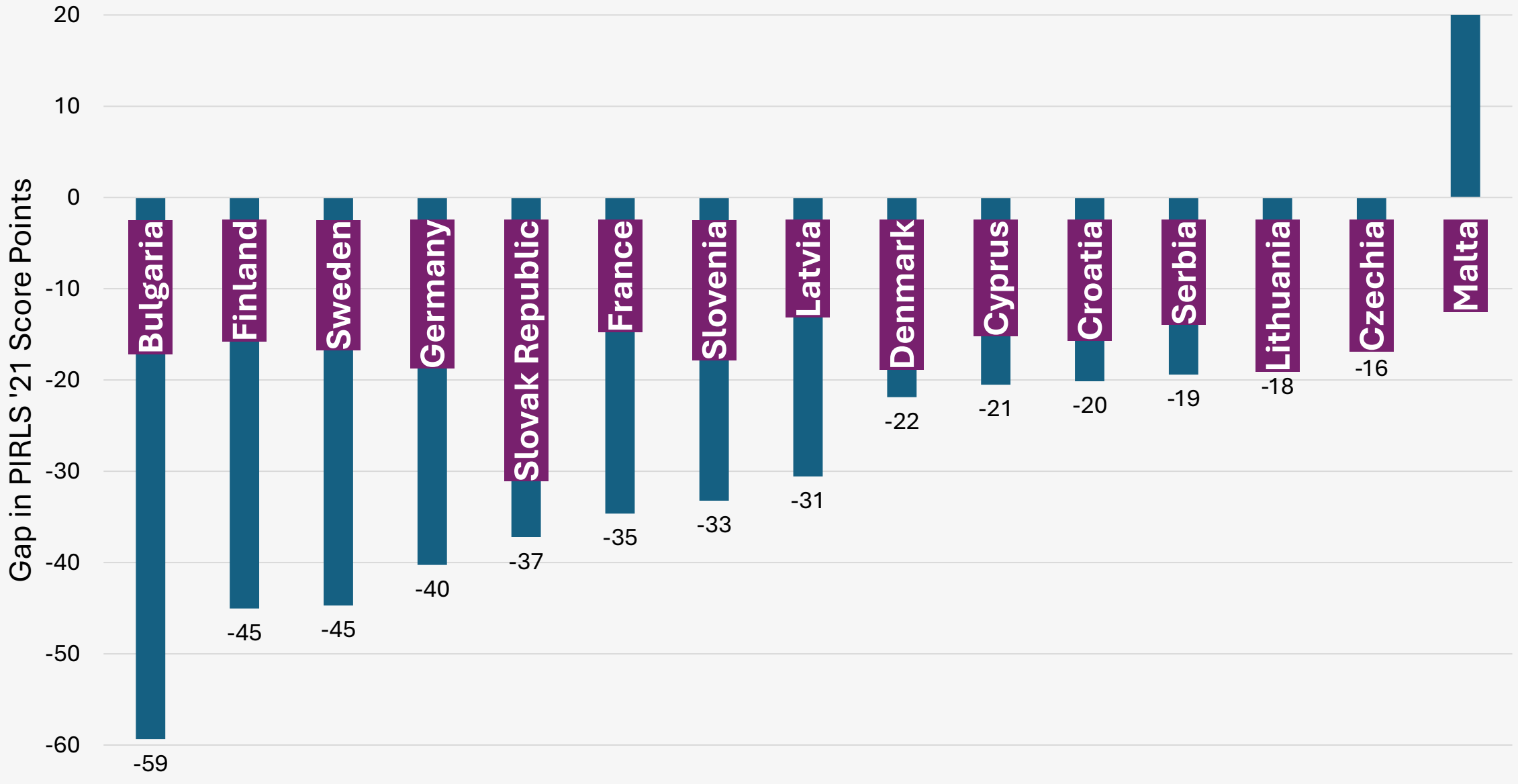
- Up to 10% native vs non-native language speaker detection from student's and parent's questionnaire
  - PIRLS – How often do you speak <language of test> at home?

    How often does your child speak <language of test> at home?
  - PISA – What language do you speak at home most of the time? <language of test>
- Classroom (PIRLS) or school (PISA) composition:
  - up to 10% native speakers
  - 10% to 30% non-native speakers
  - 30% or more non-native speakers
- Descriptive statistics - percentage
- Logistic regression – odds to be in the high achievers' group if student is a non-native language speaker

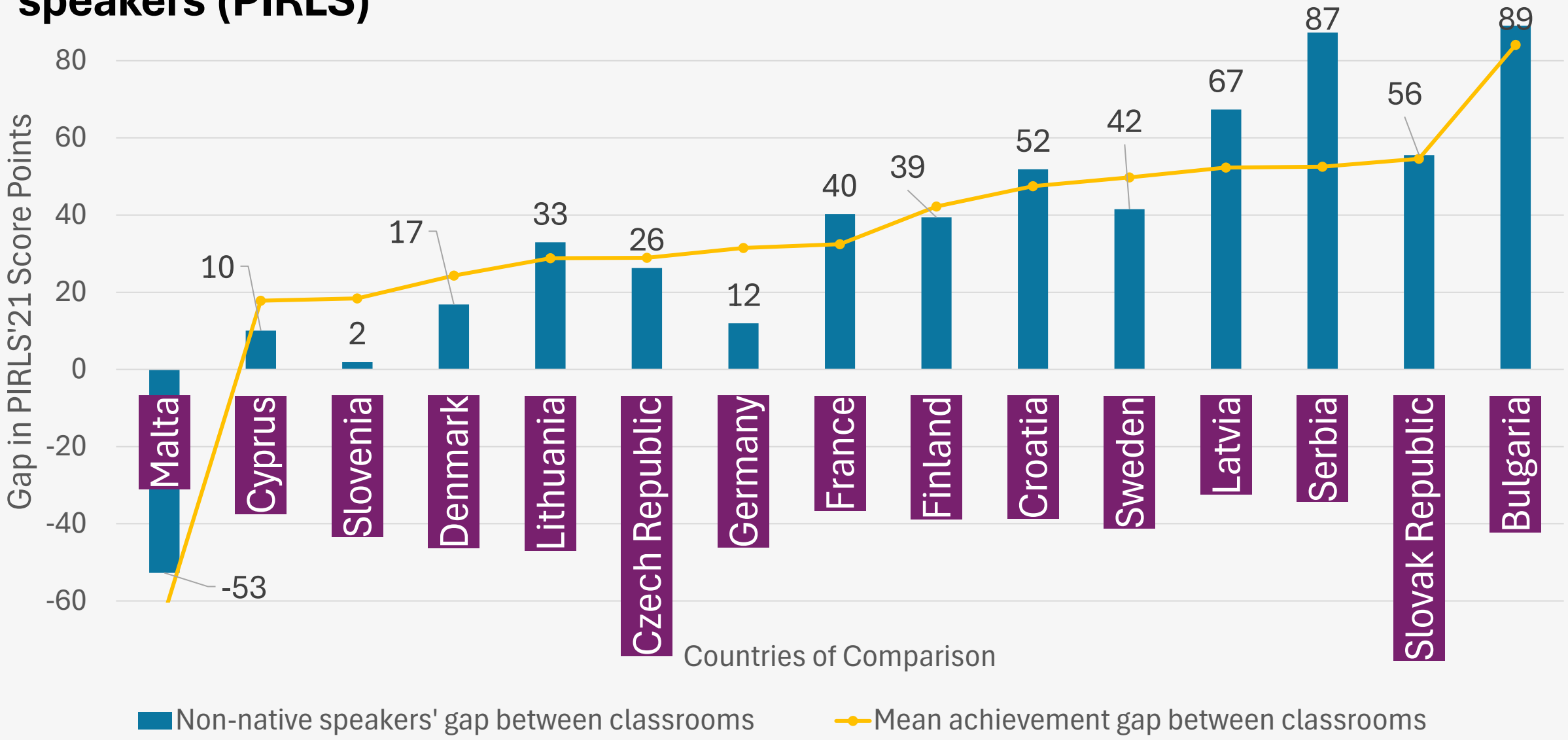
Home language diversity in PIRLS and PISA has increased compared with previous cycles



Average achievement gap between native and non-native language speakers in reading achievement (PIRLS'21)



Non-native language speakers' achievement gap comparing classrooms with up to 10% of non-native speakers and more than 30% of non-native speakers (PIRLS)



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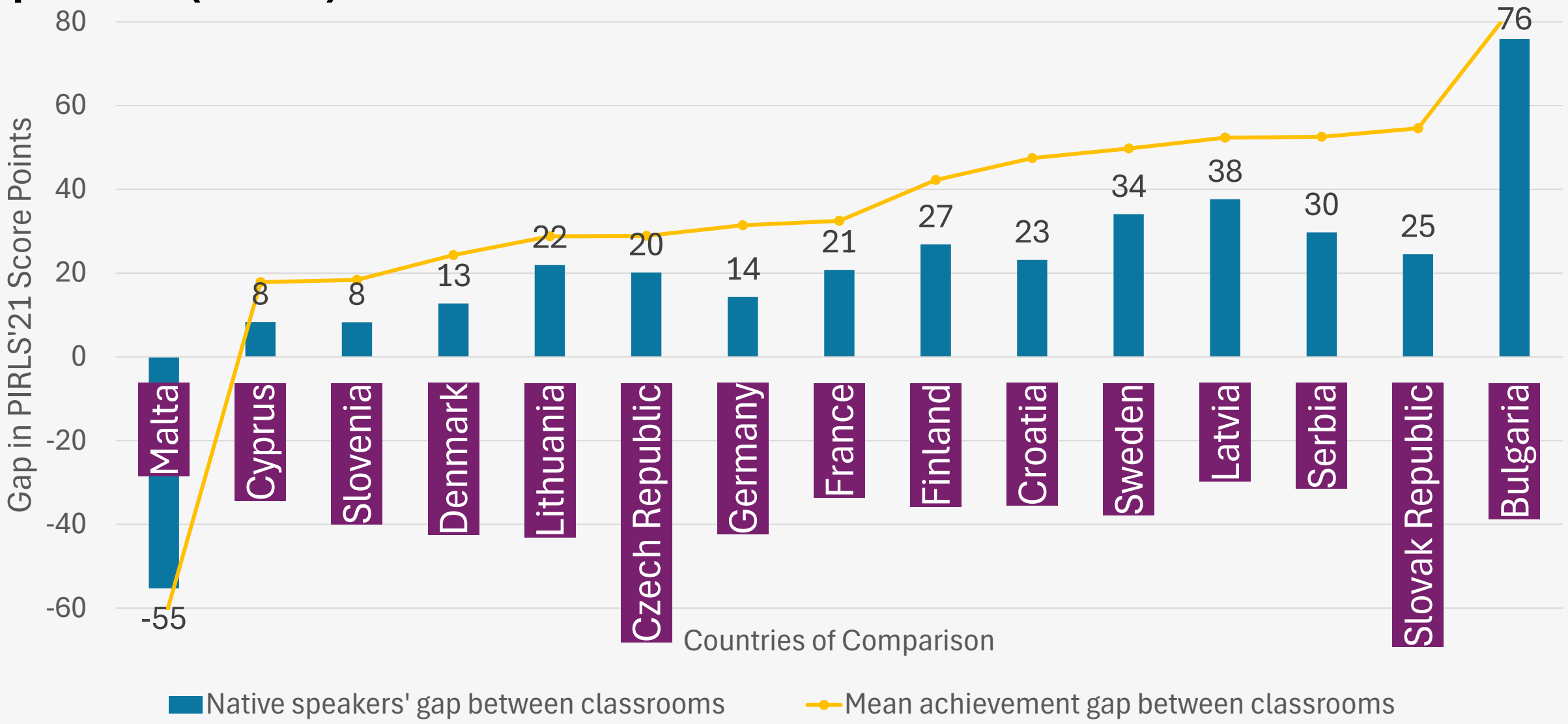
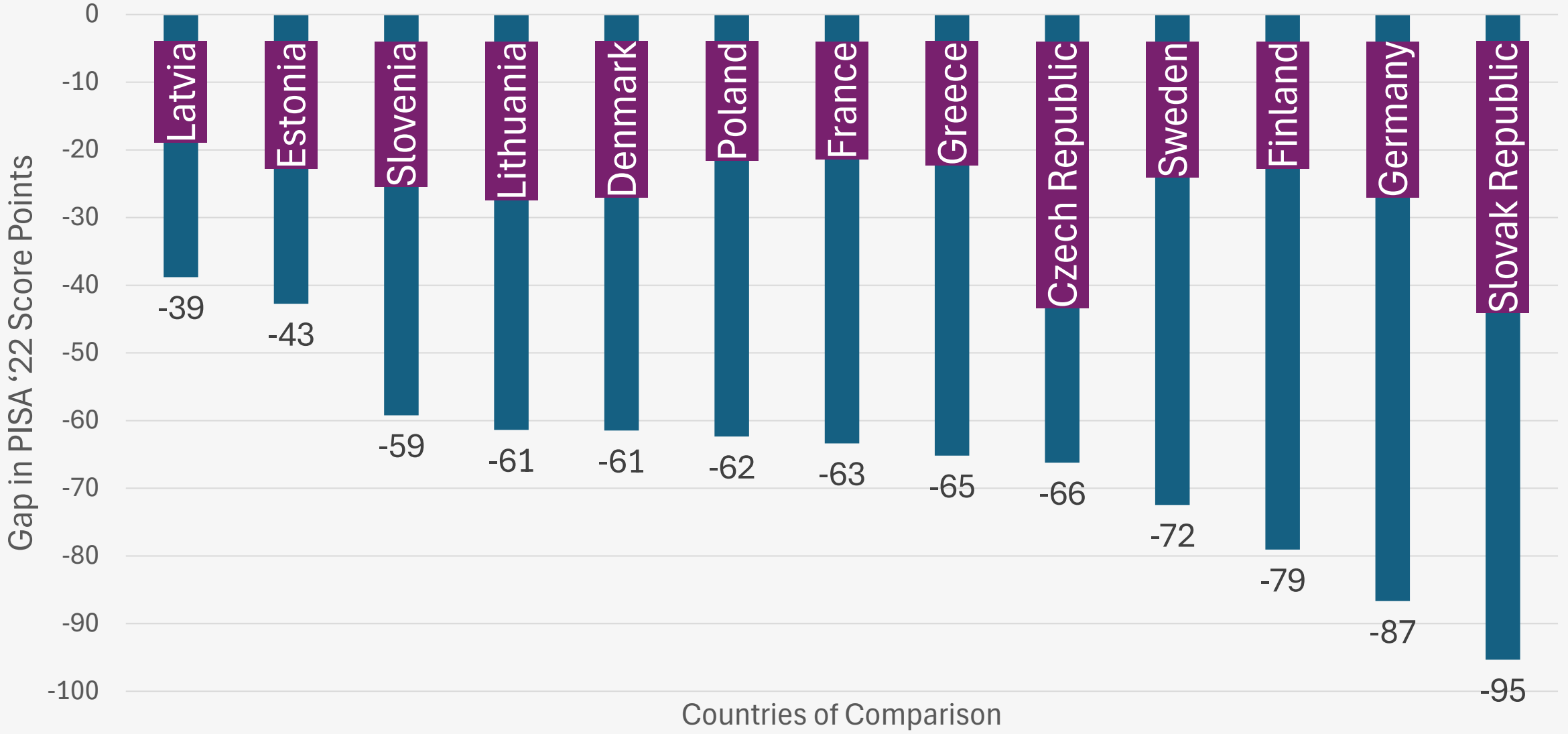
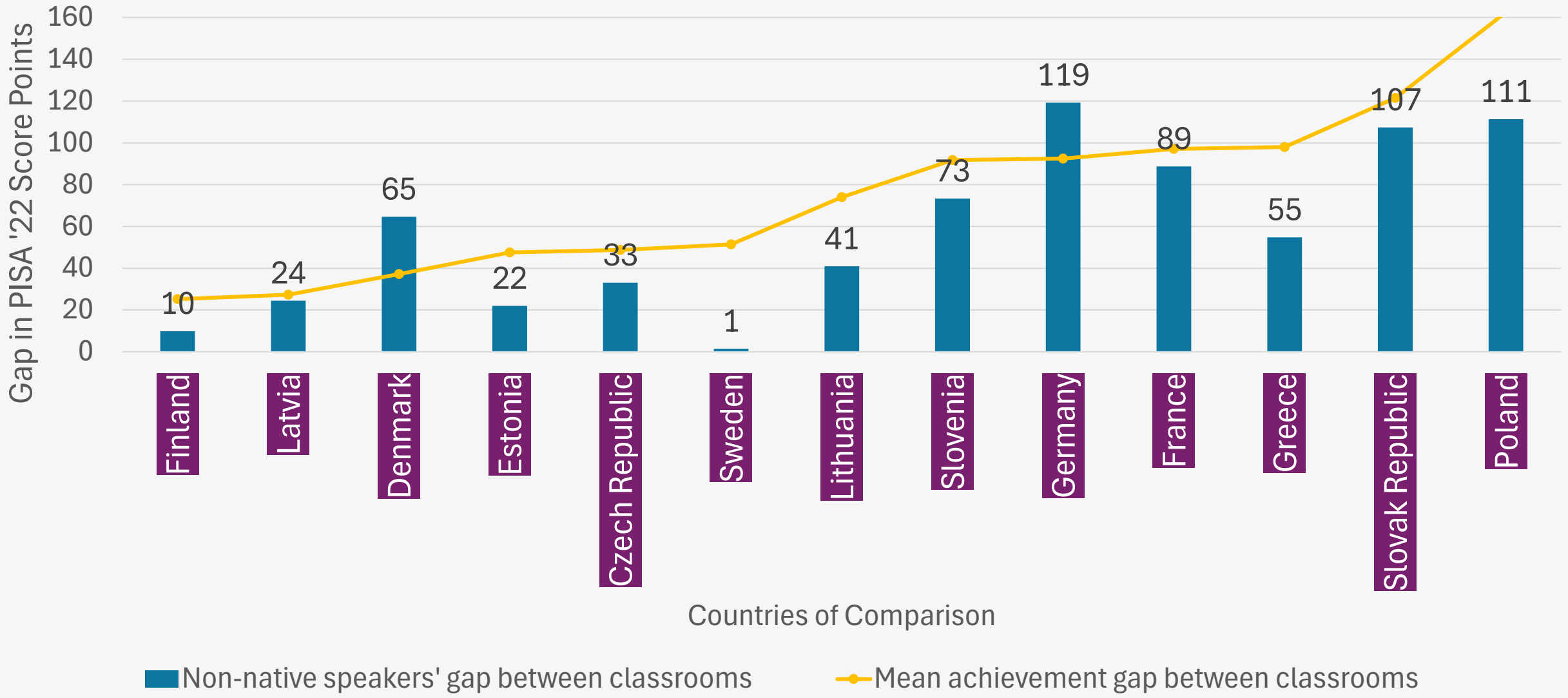


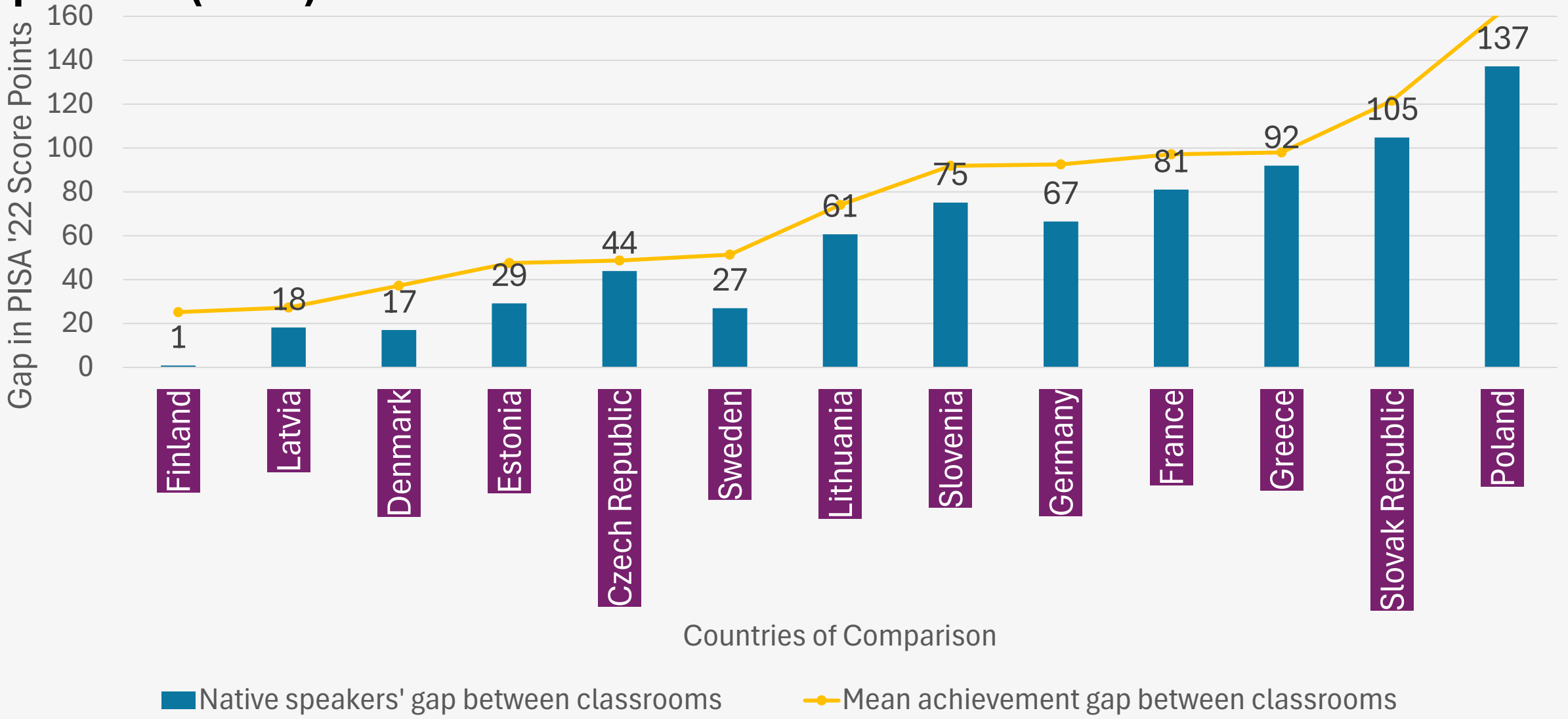
Average achievement gap between native and non-native language speakers in reading achievement (PISA'22)



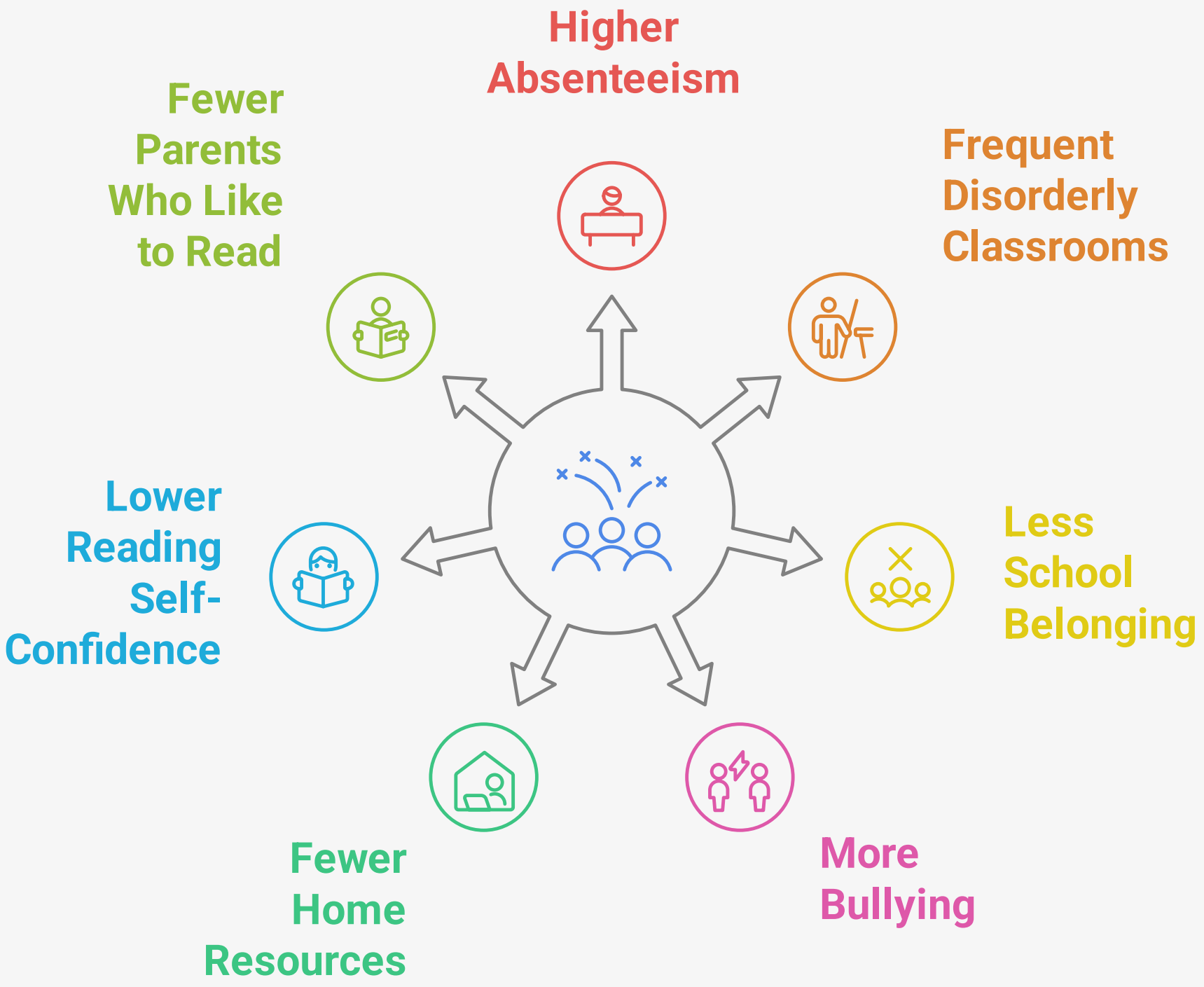
Non-native language speakers' achievement gap comparing schools with up to 10% of non-native speakers and more than 30% of non-native speakers (PISA)



Native language speakers' achievement gap comparing classrooms with up to 10% of non-native speakers and more than 30% of non-native speakers (PISA)



Non-native Speaker's Profile (PIRLS'21)

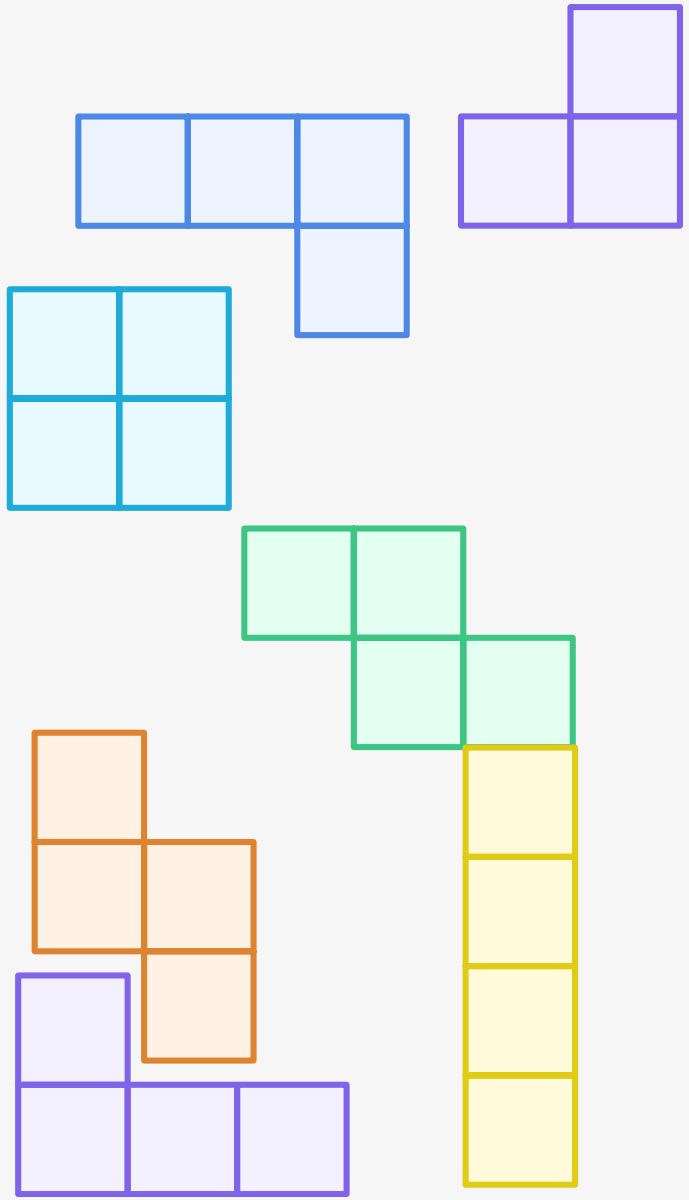


Non-native Speaker's Profile (PISA'21)

School Absenteeism

Lacking Key Non-Cognitive Skills

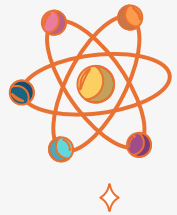
Lower Academic Drive



Grade Repetition

Perceived Teacher Disappointment

Main Conclusions



- The number of non-native speakers in the classroom influences reading achievement for both – natives and non-natives, in both studies – PIRLS and PISA.

- For some countries (Finland, Sweden, Latvia) the achievement gap between native and non-native speakers, depending on the class composition, was smaller in the PISA study than in the PIRLS study.

- The most influential predictors were the same as for reading achievement in general.

- Confidence in reading being the most influential for low-achievers.

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