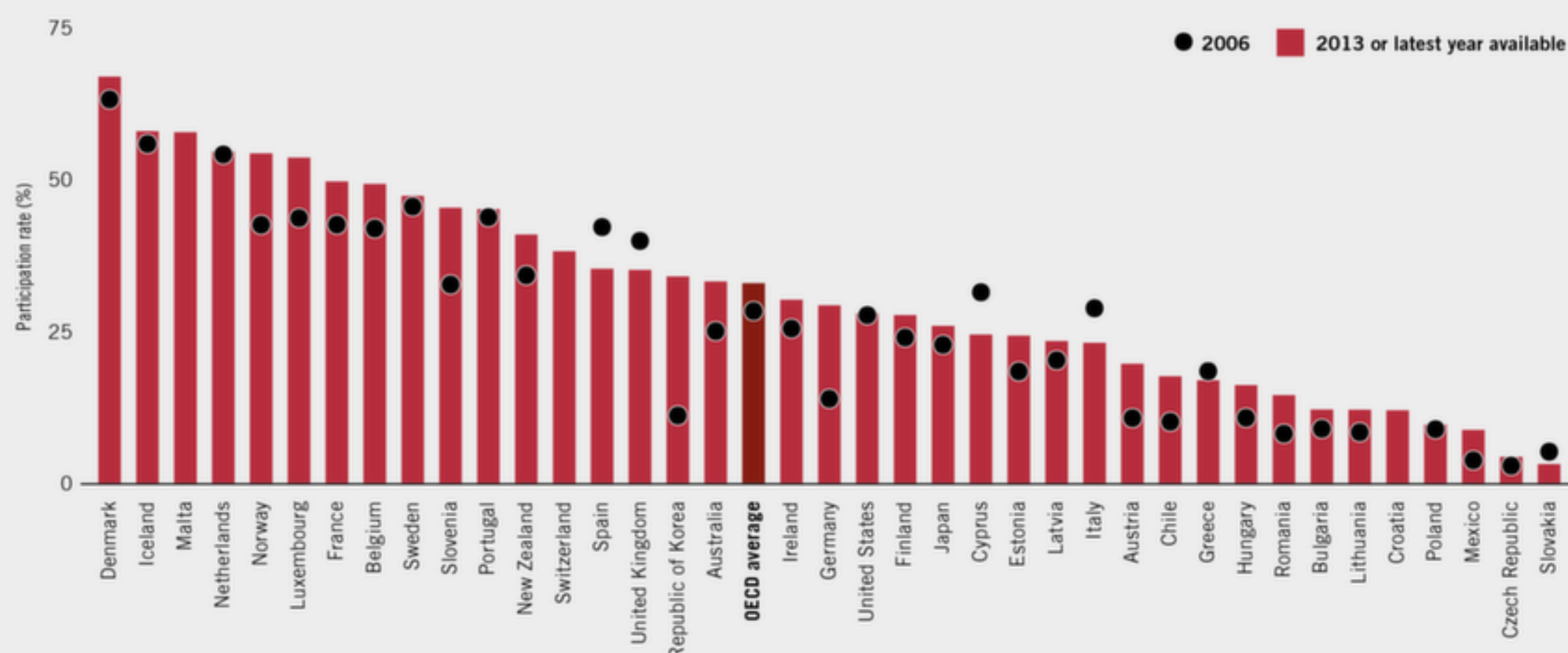


**Figure 32**

**Participation rates for 0-2 year olds in formal childcare and pre-school services, 38 countries, 2006 and 2013**



Note: Data for Australia are from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, for Chile, Japan, and Mexico from national correspondents, for Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden from NOSOSCO Social Protection in the Nordic Countries, for Germany from Destatis, for the Republic of Korea from the Korean Statistical Information Service, for New Zealand from Education Counts, for the United States from the US Census Bureau and for all other countries from EU Statistics on Income Living Conditions. Data for 2006 are not available for Croatia, Malta and Switzerland.

Sources: OECD, 2015c.

#### 4. Insufficient coverage, unaffordable costs and problems with quality

Privately supplied home-based childcare, mostly unpaid or informal – whether provided by a family member, neighbour or domestic worker – remains, however, the most prevalent form of childcare provision (UN Women, 2015). In 134 out of 173 countries for which information is available, national legislation establishes public provision of childcare services or public subsidies or allowances to offset childcare costs for pre-school children (World Bank, 2016). According to a 2011–2013 World Economic Forum (WEF) survey of 87 countries, however, only one fourth provide public day-care services supplemented by a childcare allowance (WEF, 2015). In almost all countries, except certain high-income countries such as Denmark, provision of formal childcare services is not universal and is socially stratified, meaning that children from low-income families have much more limited opportunities to attend formal childcare than children from better-off families (Van Lancker et al., 2012; UNESCO, 2015). A very few countries view childcare as a public good and provide a universal right to childcare, despite evidence showing that investing in young children by means of quality childcare leads to higher learning achievement, better health, greater employability and higher earnings (ibid.). Such investment also pays higher economic returns in terms of increased tax revenues and reduced social spending. In parallel, it contributes to sound public budgets and improved child development, thereby improving labour market achievements and reducing the intergenerational transmission of inequality (Heckman and Raut, 2013).

Even where programmes do exist, coverage is often inadequate and not responsive to the needs of children, workers and early childhood care and education personnel, as also called for by ILO standards (see below). In particular, its location in terms of proximity to the child's house or parents' workplace, the duration of the programme over the year and its daily opening hours often do not match the needs and preferences of parents working full-time, overtime or in non-standard forms of employment. In OECD countries, early childhood care and education programmes run between 25 and 35 hours per week, with programmes in some countries such as the Netherlands and the United Kingdom running an average of 16–17 hours only (OECD, 2015b). Coverage is extremely low, especially in rural areas. Lack of affordable school meals, out-of-school and back-up care programmes and provision of services targeting the needs of children with disabilities also dramatically affects women's ability to work full-time (Hein and Cassirer, 2010).