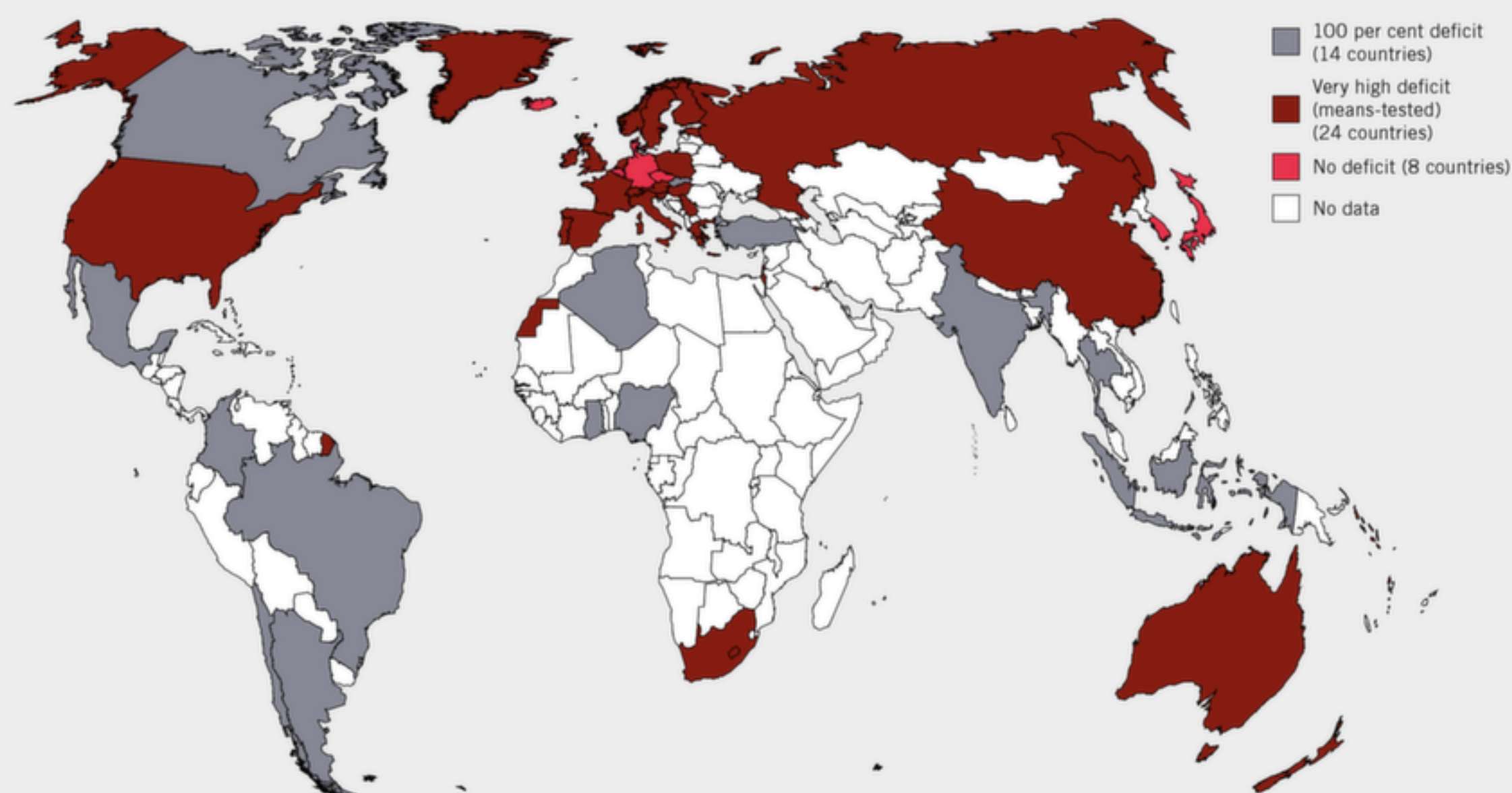


Figure 34

Deficits in legal long-term care coverage, 2015 (% of total population not covered by national legislation)



Source: ILO estimates 2015, World Bank, 2015b (population data in 2013); cited in Scheil-Adlung, 2015.

In the face of these LTC shortages, family members remain the main caregivers of their ageing relatives. In some countries, like China, the responsibility of the family to provide care to older persons is enforceable by law, often with penalties including fines and imprisonment (Wong and Leung, 2012; ILO, 2014c). Similarly, in India, children can be prosecuted if they fail to provide care for their parents (ibid.). While an increasing number of men are now providing elderly care, a disproportionate share of long-term carers are female family members. Not uncommonly, women drop out of employment temporarily or permanently to provide LTC to their older family members, often without access to social protection, training or any professional support (Scheil-Adlung, 2015). As already noted in the context of early childhood care and education, excessive reliance on unpaid informal LTC by women also aggravates existing gender gaps in the labour market.

6. Decent work deficits in care jobs

As discussed in Chapter II, women are overrepresented in paid care professions, which are perceived as an extension of women's unpaid care work at home and therefore highly undervalued (ILO, 2007b). A 2013 study suggests that care workers in the United Kingdom are only paid for the hours they spend actually providing care, and no account is taken of the considerable time spent on associated tasks, such as travelling to the homes of clients (Pennycook, 2013). Moreover, in an attempt to meet the increasing demands for care services, many employers try to keep the cost of care low. As a result, care workers in many developed economies are employed on temporary or on-call contracts or remain in the informal economy (ibid.; Eurofound, 2015b). In addition, care services are extensively provided by individuals already working other capacities. The specific instances of domestic workers, early childhood care and education personnel and long-term care providers are considered in the following sub-sections.

Domestic workers who provide care

Domestic workers perform a plethora of household work tasks. They also provide direct care to children, the elderly and persons with disabilities, effectively replacing the role traditionally assigned to women (ILO, 2011b). In view of the absence of adequate, quality and affordable social care services, an increasing number of households rely on domestic workers for care provision. This places additional pressure on a sector that is notoriously informal and in which labour and social protections are difficult to monitor and enforce (ILO, 2013f).