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The Roles of Social Rented Housing in OECD Countries

**Access to Social and Affordable Housing,
Belgrade, 11 February 2010**



Presentation based on report on social rented housing

- 12 country review:
 - Size/ trends
 - Ownership
 - Demand
 - Eligibility
 - Allocations
 - Income mixing
 - Excluded households
 - Homelessness
- <http://tinyurl.com/59hcfk>



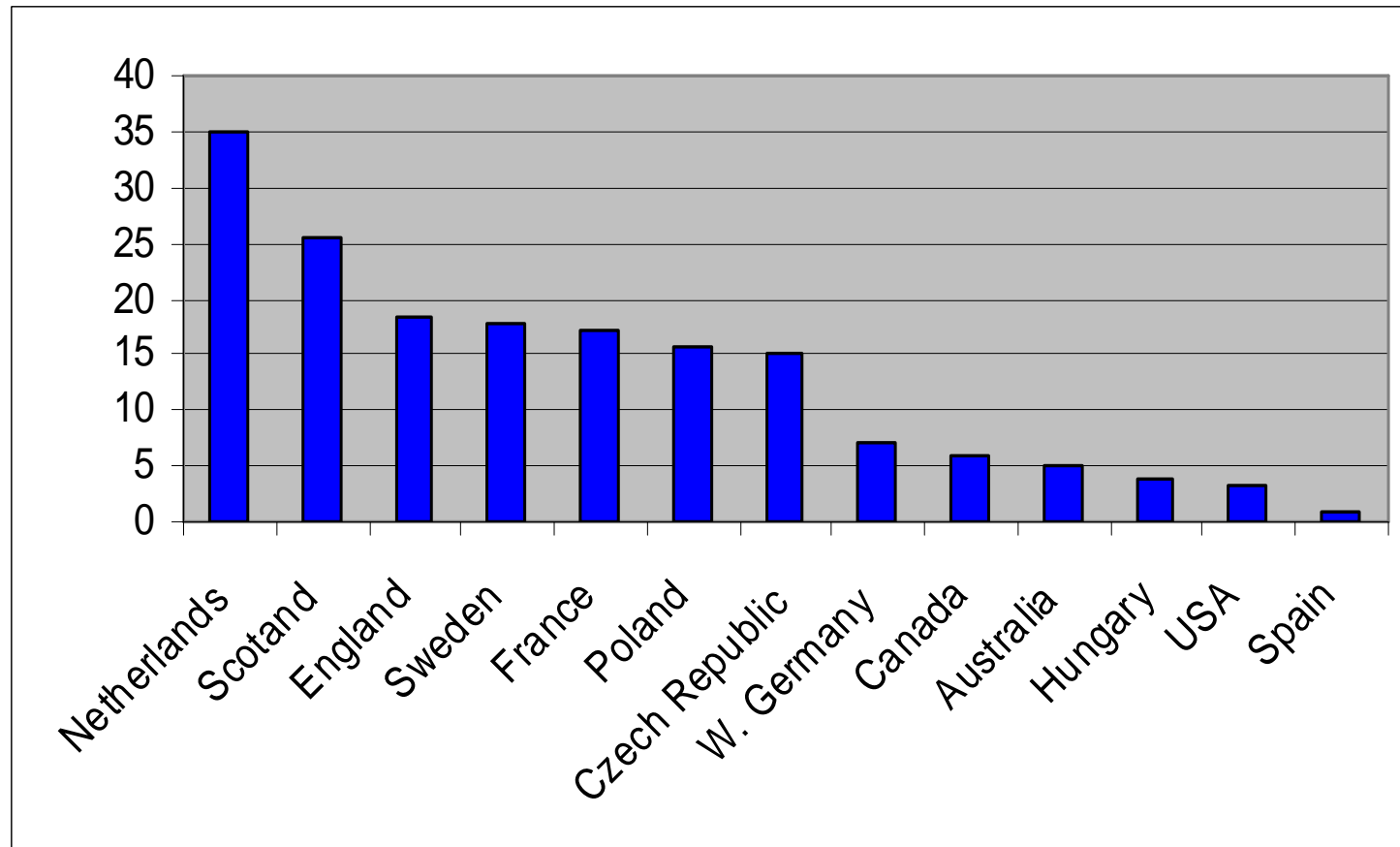
An International Review of Homelessness
and Social Housing Policy



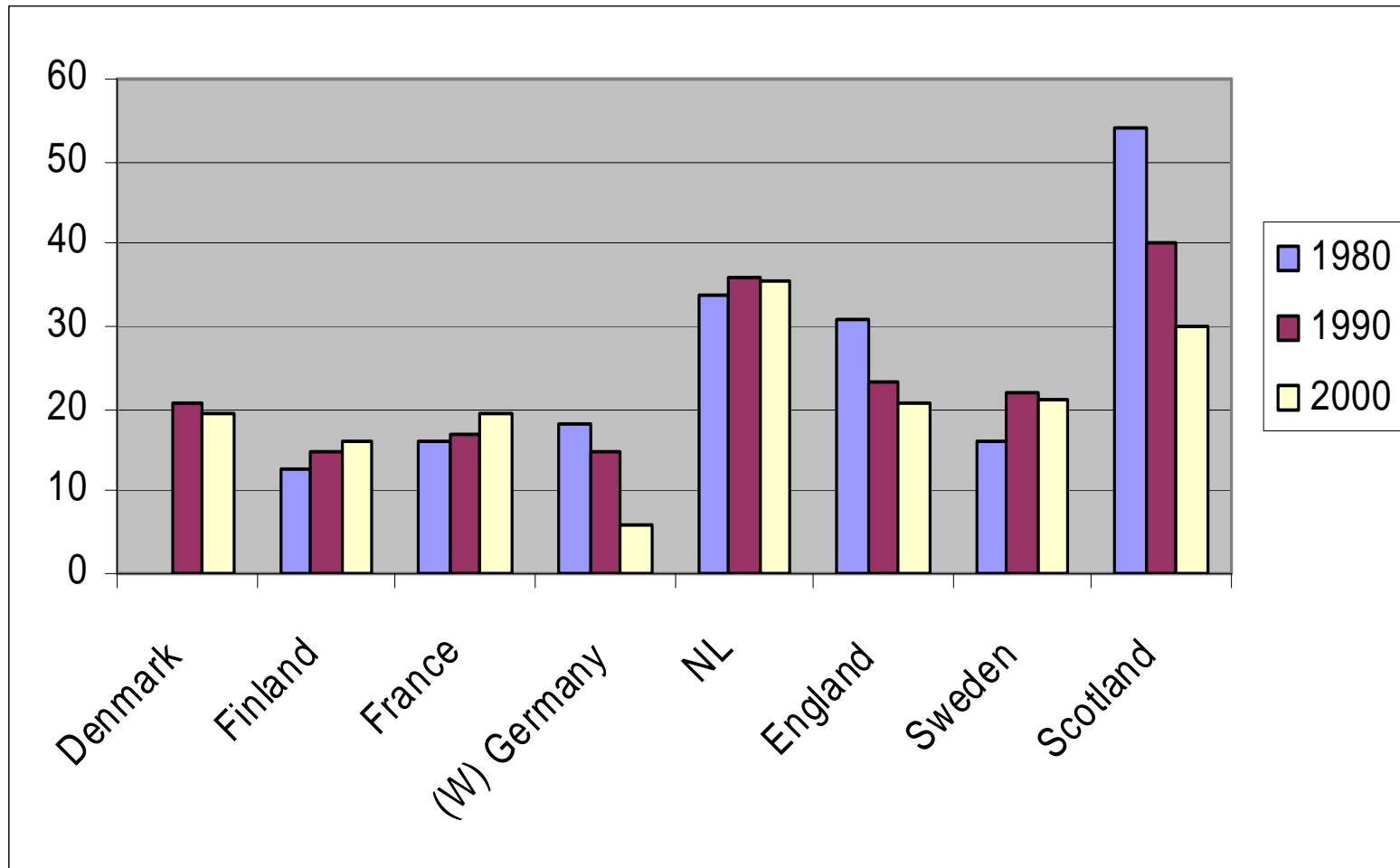
Roles of Social Rented Housing

- Supply function:
 - to meet housing shortages
- Affordability function:
 - improve quantity and quality of housing consumed for a given income
- Safety net function:
 - prevent homelessness among those unable to access housing through the market

Size of social rented sector (c. 2005)



Trends in size of sector



Ownership

- Varies from:
 - Direct state ownership
 - Arms-length ownership
 - Not-for-profit independent
 - Private (for profit)
- Within countries:
 - One type dominant (e.g. Sweden)
 - Mixture (e.g. Germany)

Eligibility

- Almost always income (and other) limits
 - But % population varies greatly
- Various groups often excluded:
 - Rent arrears, anti-social behaviour, criminal convictions
- Where programmes tightly prescribed (e.g. US) eligibility virtually determines allocation

Allocations

- Matter most when eligibility drawn broadly:
 - Most systems work with a combination of ‘need’ and chronology
 - LA nominations a frequent feature
 - British legally enforceable right to housing (homelessness) unique
- Outcomes (who actually housed) vary greatly:
 - ‘need’: English speaking countries
 - ‘affordability’: Europe – but how does this work?

Use of sub-sectors for excluded households

- Sub-sectors:
 - Lower rents and quality
 - Less security
 - Additional conditions
- Examples:
 - Swedish “secondary” housing
 - French “very social” sector
 - Czech “holobyt” system
 - Hungarian “emergency” units
 - Polish “social” housing

International Typology

Very Poor *and* with Special Needs

(USA, Canada, Australia)



Very Poor

(UK: 50% national average income)



Below average incomes, but exclude
very poor and most vulnerable

(France, Denmark, Sweden: 70% national average income)

Role of SRS relates to Social/ Economic Context

- Safety net role where high levels of poverty/ inequality:
 - Most effective when combined with large srs let on basis of need.
 - “Ambulance” role where high levels of poverty/ inequality + weak welfare state + small srs.
- Affordability function:
 - Associated with countries with less poverty/ inequality
 - But poorest in these systems often actively excluded

Social housing and homelessness

- Constitutional ‘rights’ to housing ineffective
- Legally enforceable rights to for ‘priority’ homeless in UK; for those who experience ‘abnormally long delay’ for social housing in France
- Rights to emergency accommodation in some other countries
- Duties on municipalities to assist – delivery through NGOs
- Reintegration strategies important

EU Housing Indicators

- EU agreed housing indicators in 2009
- Cover: affordability; overcrowding; physical housing conditions
- Affordability threshold = 40% net housing costs
 - concept
 - consistent measurement
- EU indicators linked to EU-SILC
 - Housing Module also includes access to range of neighbourhood services; satisfaction with housing and neighbourhood