

DEMOCRACY AND PANDEMICS



13 — 15.11.25

Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venezia



13 November 2025

Democracy and Pandemics Conference

Session 2.B The International Dimension : The role of international organisations

EVIDENCE GAPS (CONTINUE TO) UNDERMINE RESILIENCE TO HEALTH SHOCKS

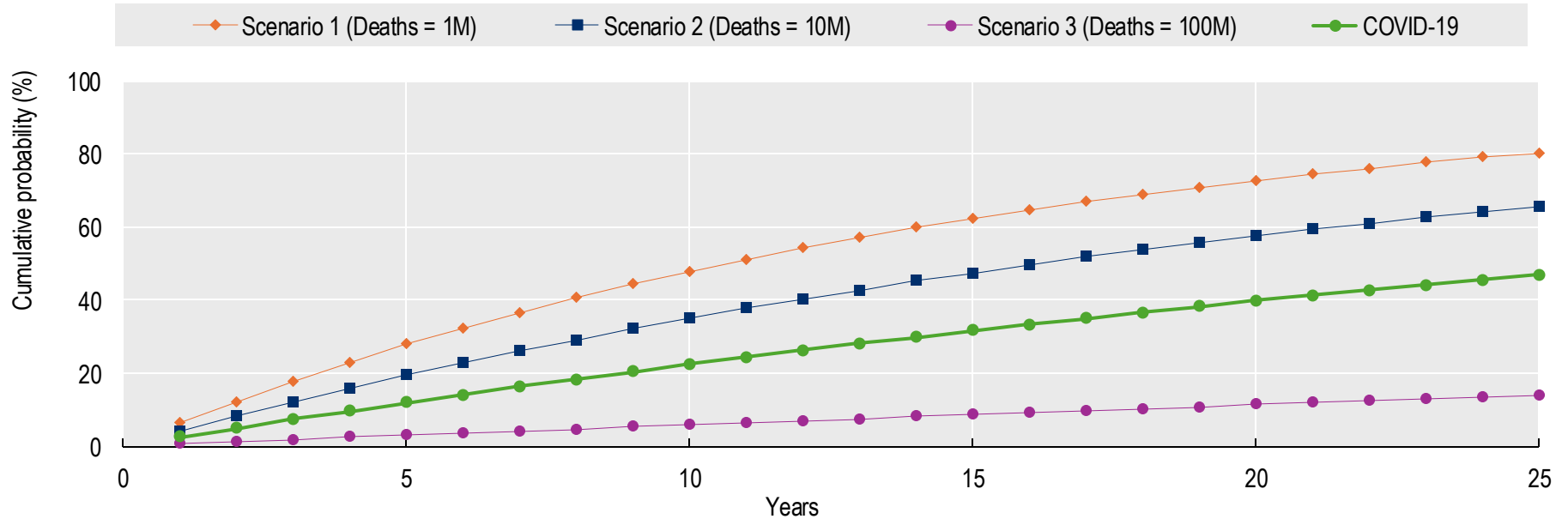
Mark Pearson

Director of Employment Labour and Social Affairs



Another pandemic is not a matter of if, but when

Probability estimates for historical and hypothetical respiratory pandemic scenarios



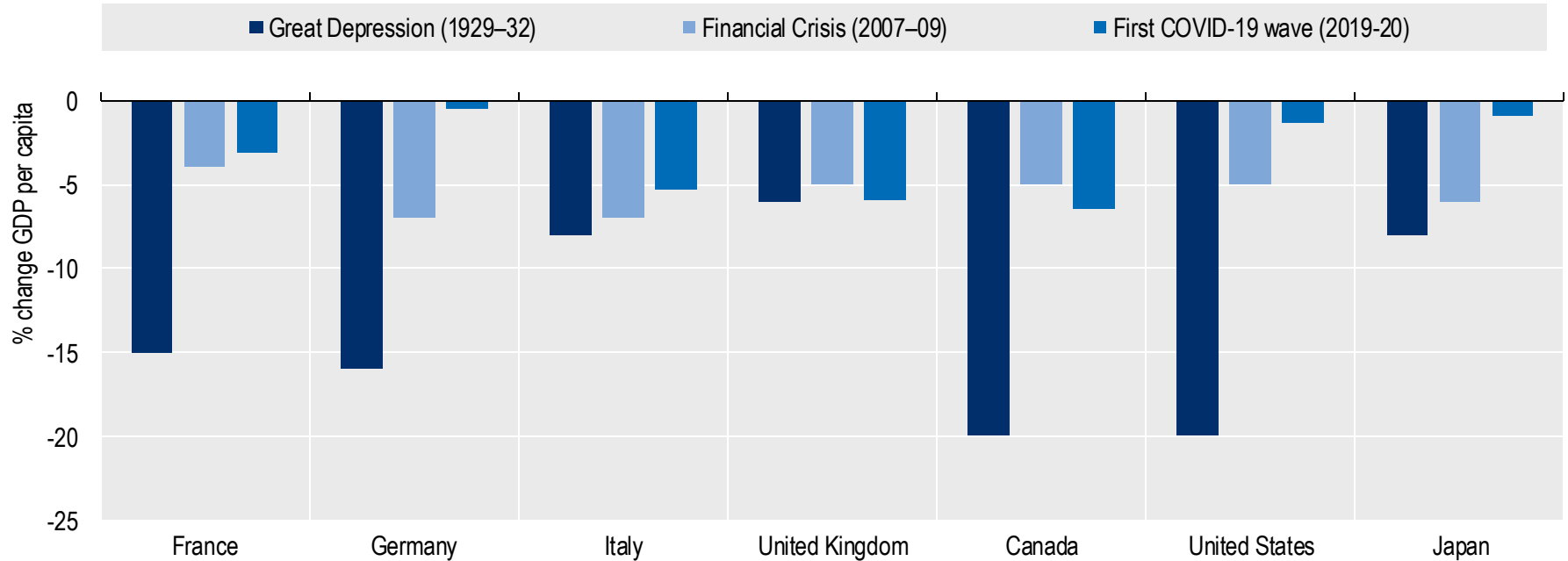
Notes: Probability refers to likelihood that an event of a given severity or worse will begin within a given year. Scenarios 1-3 represent hypothetical pandemic scenarios.

Source: OECD estimates based on [Madhav et al., 2023](#).



Pandemics are full-scale economic shocks

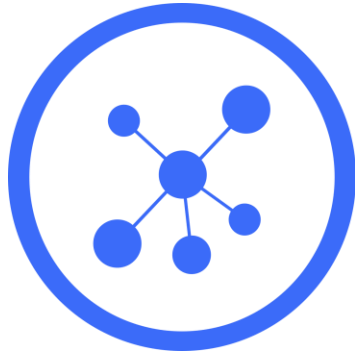
Reductions in GDP per capita in past main crises, %



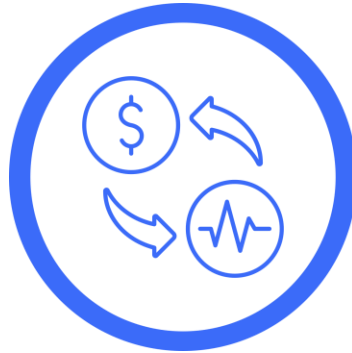
Reference: Estimates on 1929-32 and 2007-09 declines were obtained from IMF.(2017). [From Great Depression to Great Recession](#).



Three evidence gaps



1. **Health Data systems were not fit for purpose**



2. **Health and Economics were two different worlds of evidence**

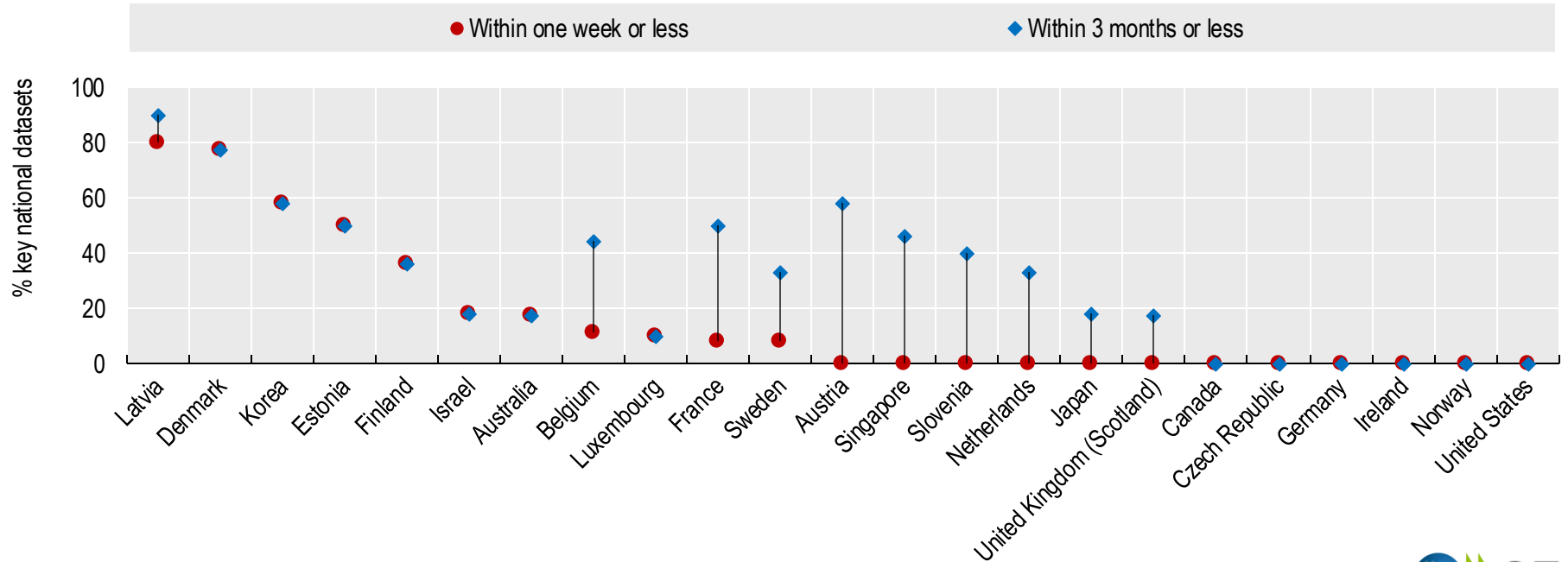


3. **We can't track efforts to Prepare for Pandemics properly**



Timely data? Not in 2020

Share of key national health datasets with available data

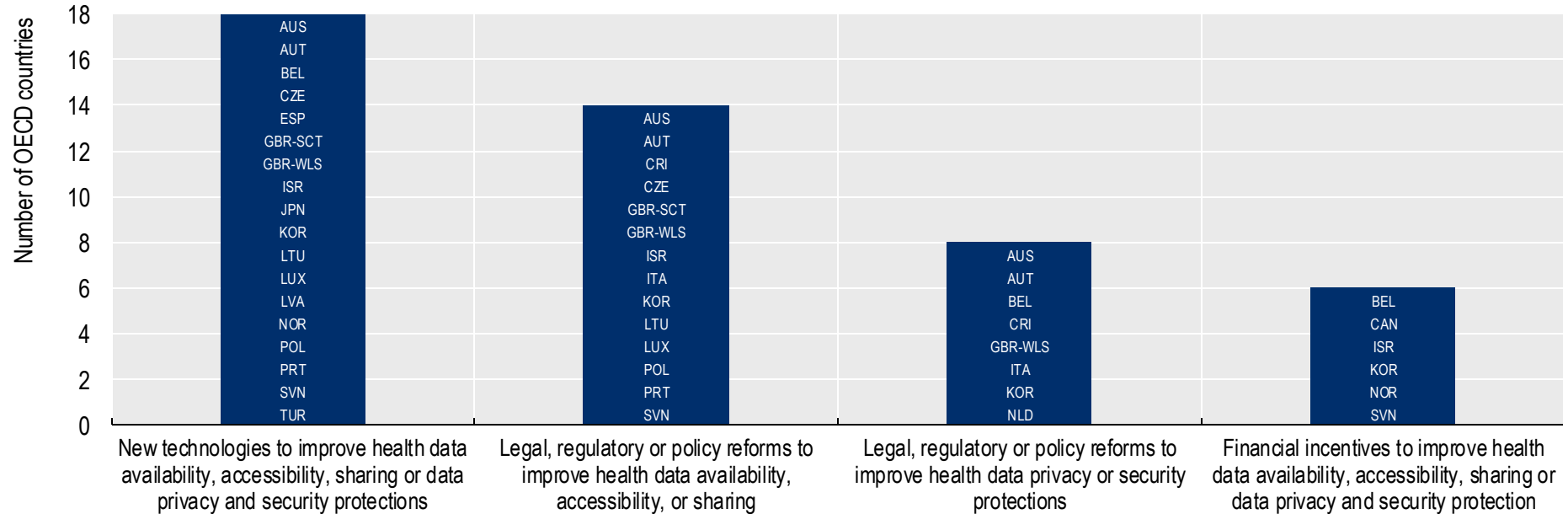


Source: Oderkirk, J. (2021), "Survey results: National health data infrastructure and governance". Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1787/55d24b5d-en>.



Some progress, post-COVID

Introduction of changes to health data governance models as a result of COVID-19



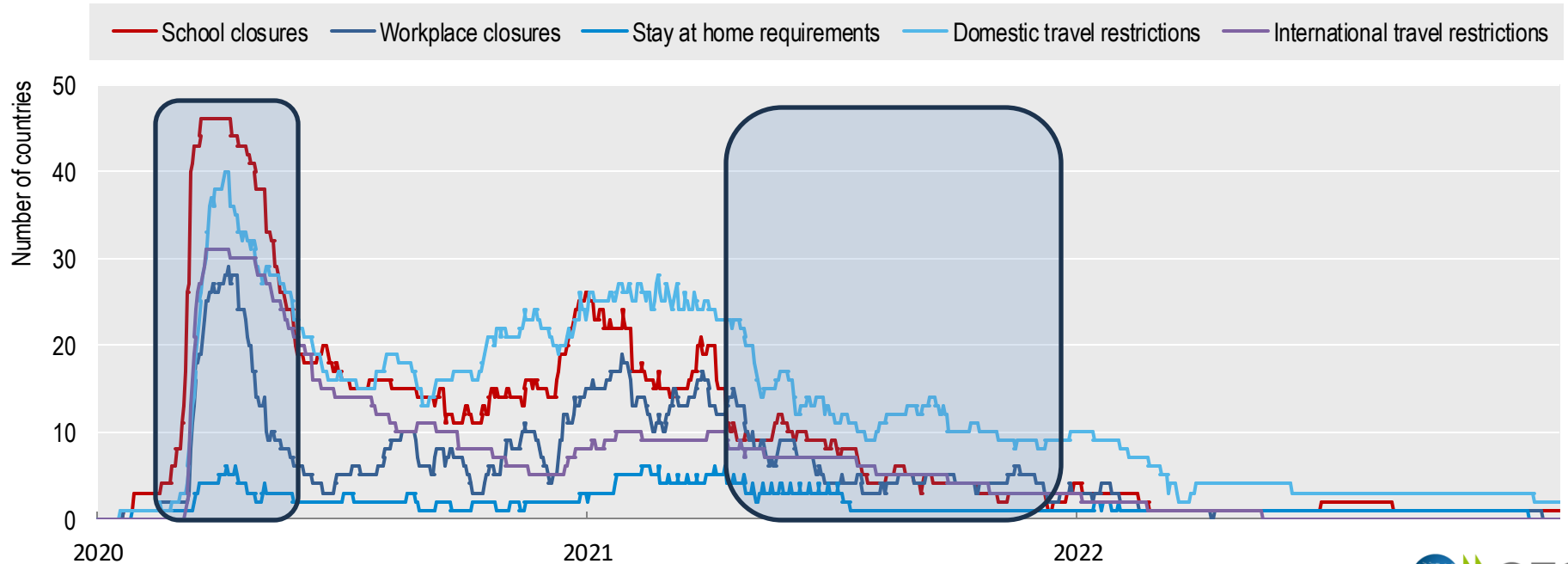
Note: For the purposes of this figure, Scotland (United Kingdom) (GB-SCT) and Wales (United Kingdom) (GB-WLS) are represented independently.

Source: [OECD Questionnaire on Health Data and Governance Developments in relation to COVID-19 2021](#).



We learned (and unlearned) how to balance health and economic objectives

Number of OECD, EU/EEA and G20 countries that implemented non-pharmaceutical interventions, 2020-22

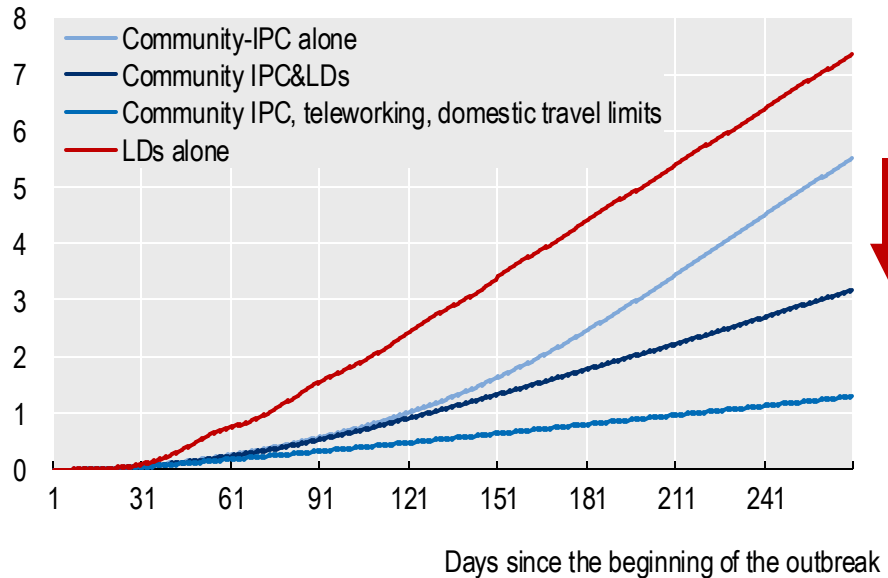


Source: OECD analysis of [the Oxford COVID-19 Government Response Tracker](#)

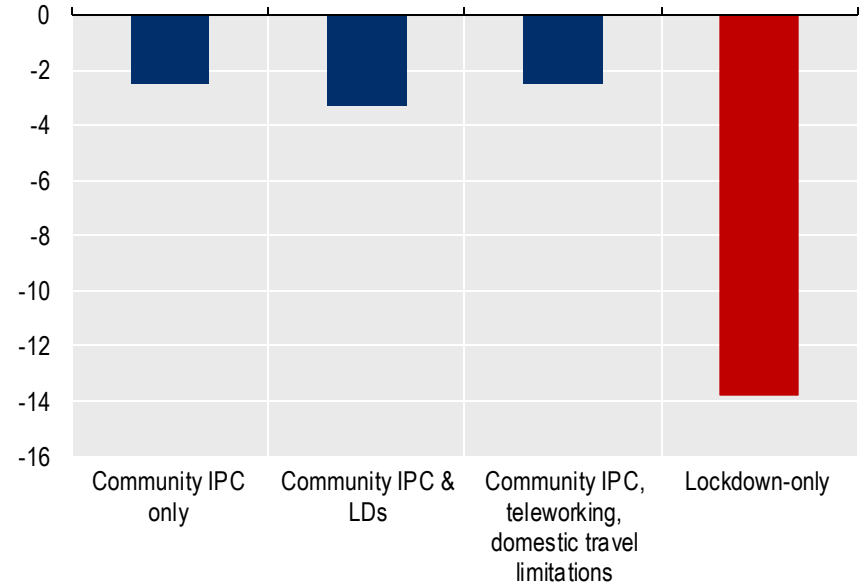
Lockdowns are the most expensive way to save lives

Coronavirus-like outbreak scenario

% of population infected (cumulative)



% of GDP contracted

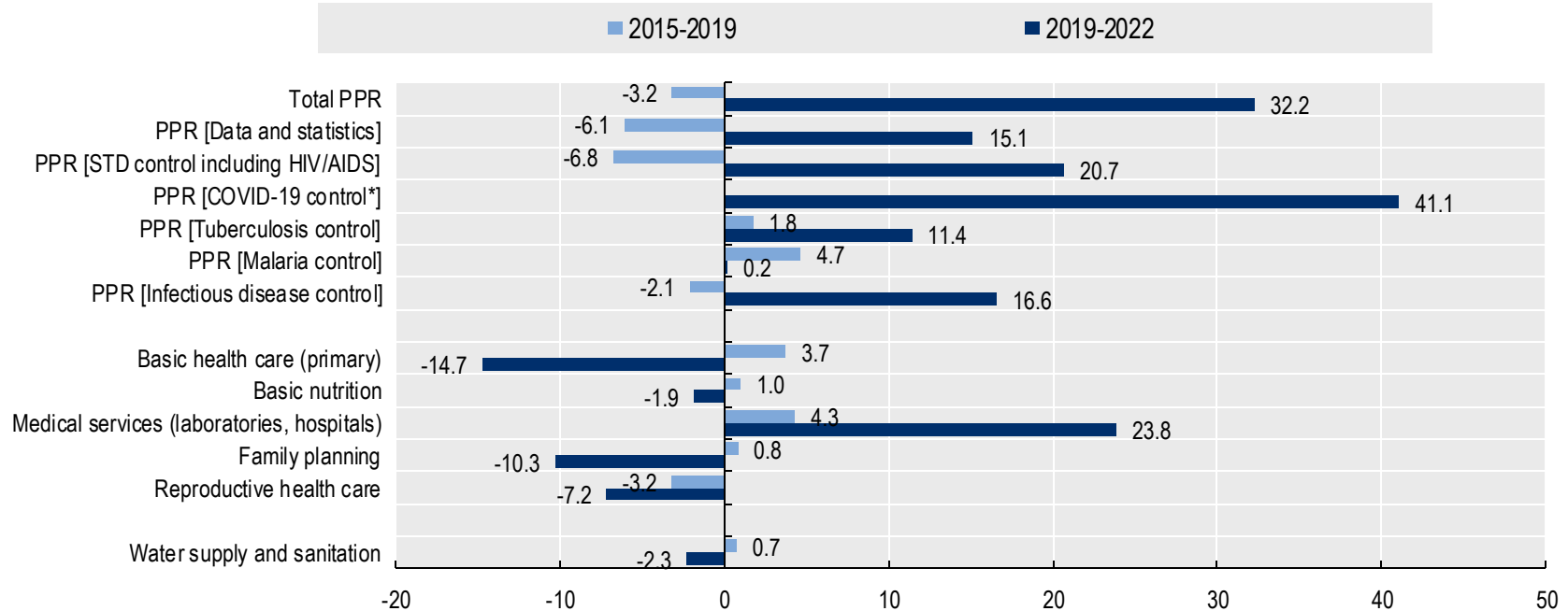


Notes: LDs = lockdowns; community IPC = hand washing, mask wearing, respiratory etiquette and indoor ventilation.
Source: Forthcoming OECD work



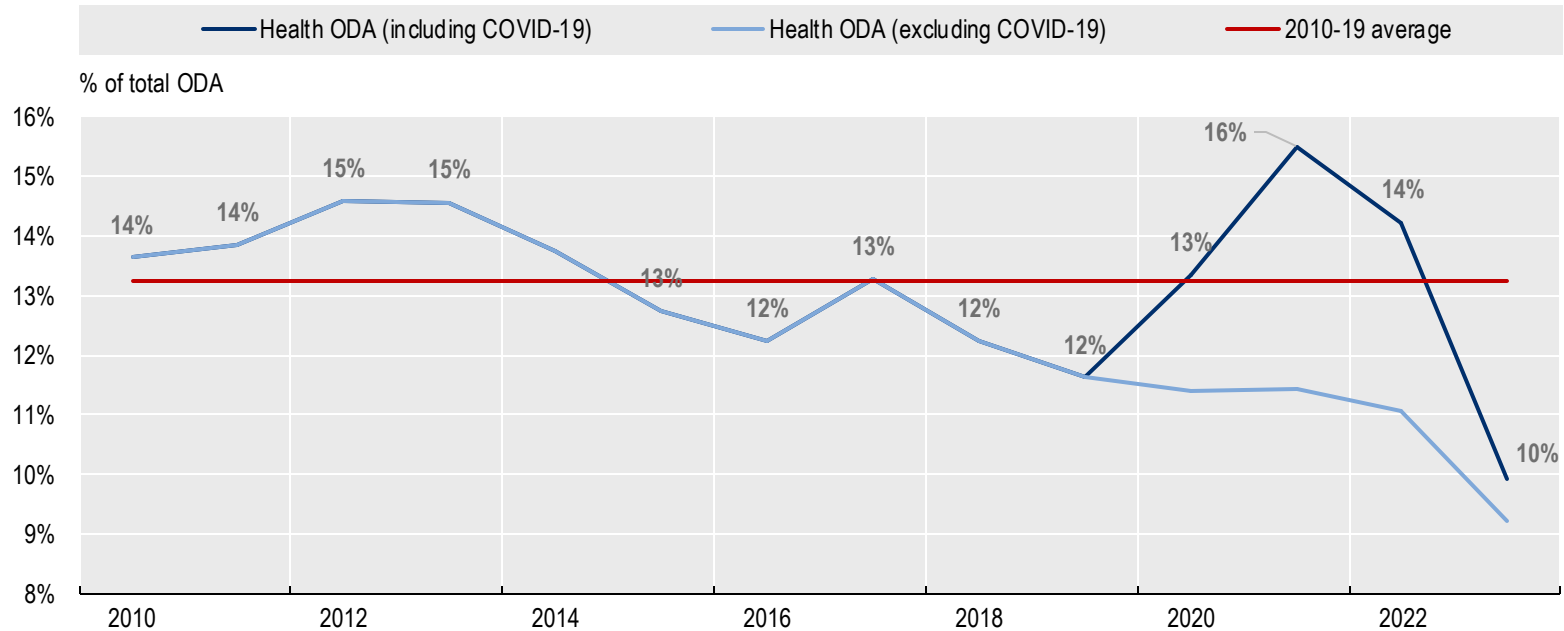
We need better data to monitor support for both for PPR as a whole and its dimensions

Average annual % change in ODA disbursements 2019-22





We need to understand better the sources of funding to PPR





THANK YOU