



The Potentials of a Social Europe and some realities of social policy in Europe

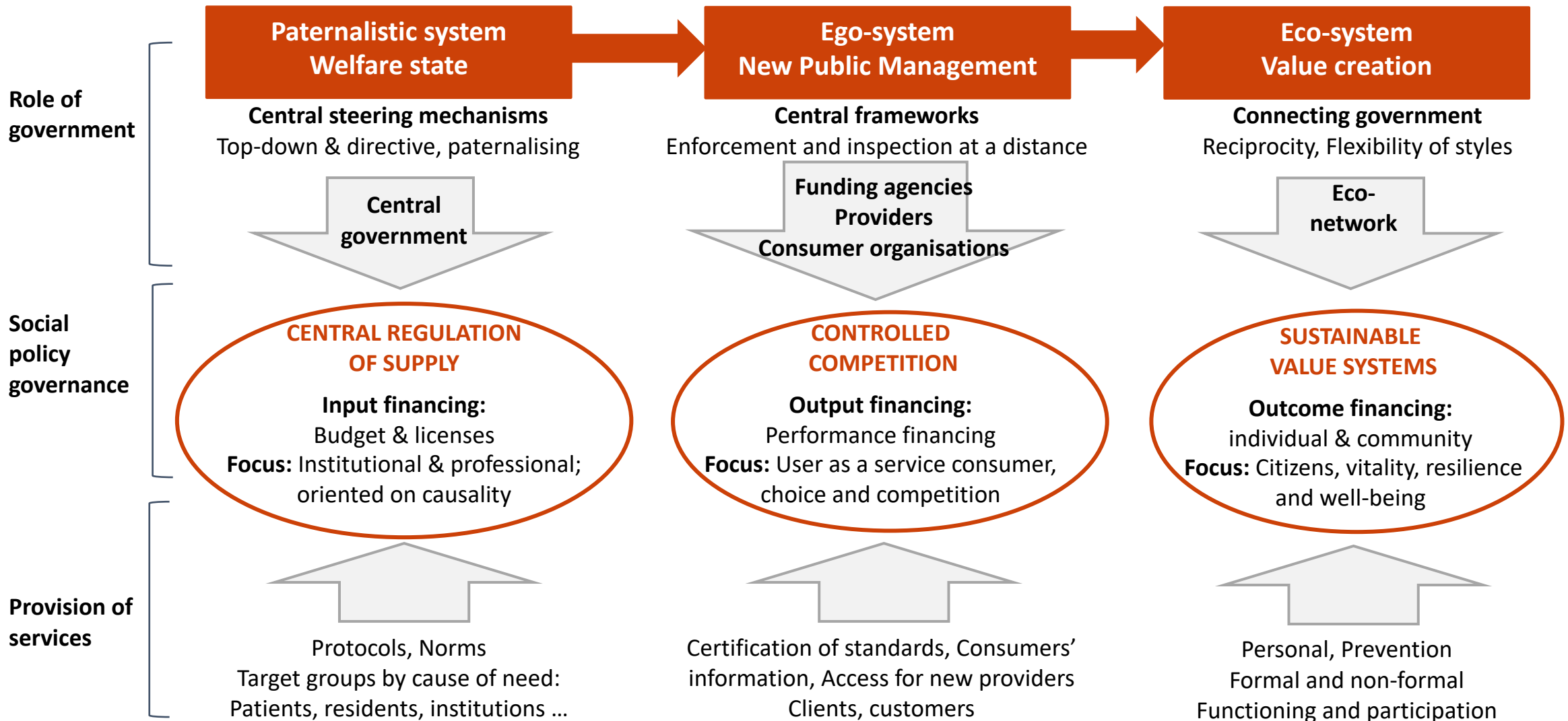
Vienna | 8 September 2019

Kai Leichsenring

EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY AND RESEARCH



Creating value by new approaches to social policy governance



Bad times for international cooperation?

“We seem to have arrived at an age of non-cooperation where the world is framed as a zero sum game immersed in moral hazard psychology. The anti-EU mobilization has been successful by asking the rhetorical question: **why should *we* share *our* resources with *others*?** Euro bonds and other forms of debt mutualization are taboos that are strictly observed by virtually all sides. **There is a new ethos of ‘going it alone’, of resentful unilateralism, of putting ourselves ‘first’ (Trump), and of taking back ‘control of our country’ (as in Brexit).”**

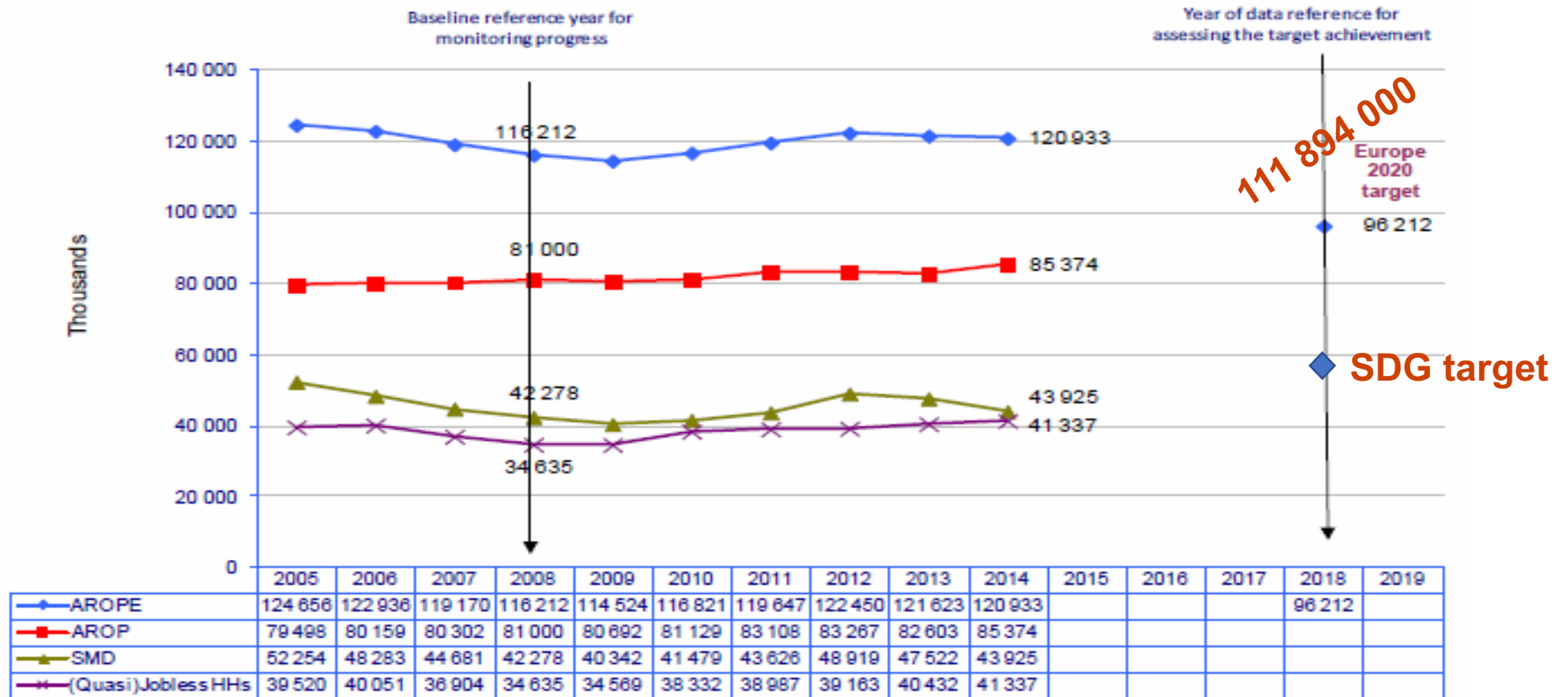
Claus Offe, Social Europe, 3/10/2017

The “European Pillar of Social Right” as a panacea?

- A reference framework for upwards convergence or just a first step?
 - Weak instruments: OMC, Social Dialogue, some Directives, minimum standards
 - More importance of social policy issues (not only employment) in the ‘European Semester’?
- Measuring progress: Social Scoreboard
 - Getting the indicators right – but also the quality assurance!
- Social investment and social innovation
 - More of the same, more ‘pilotitis’ or renewal towards an eco-social Europe?
- Some initiatives to strengthen the social dimension
 - From benchmarking to “benchlearning” and “benchaction”?

Getting the indicators right

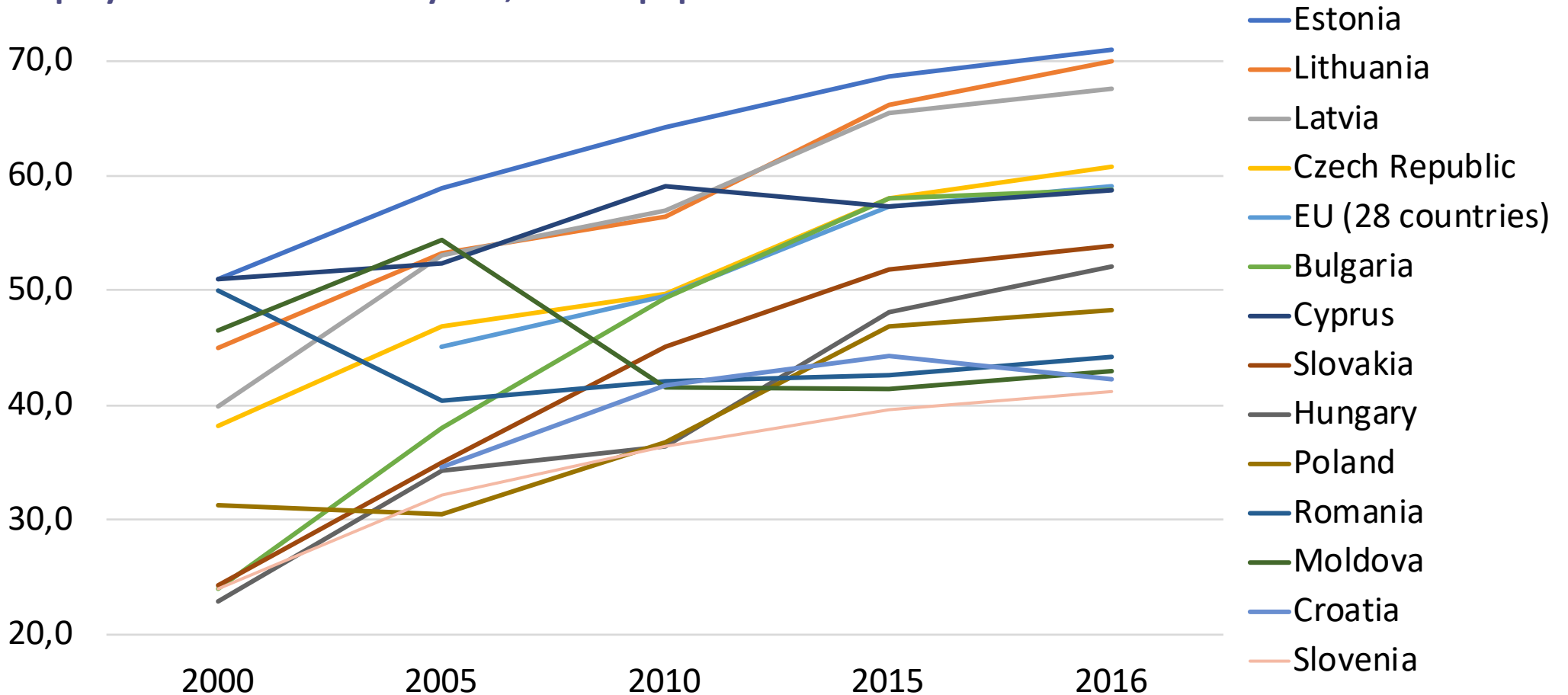
Evolution of the Europe 2020 Poverty and Social Exclusion target in the EU27 (1000s)



Source: SPC Annual Report 2017; Eurostat

Rays of hope for convergence**Increasing employment rates in Eastern Europe**

Employment rates of 55-64 years, as % of population



Source: Gilca, 2017

Strengthening the social dimension of the European Union

From benchmarking to ‘benchlearning’



- Root cause analysis : context, framework conditions and consultations with relevant stakeholders
- Clarifying the use of indicators: consensus on essential indicators
- Selection of performance indicators and impact drivers
- Determining best performers: exchanging good practices and ‘benchlearning’, identifying political levers
- Regular reflection on benchmarks

EU role:

- Implementation of comprehensive benchlearning and benchaction processes
- Promotion of social innovation and “social policy experimentation”
- Efforts to attain better interaction between policy areas (including social policies), governance levels and stakeholders

Social policies in the enlargement process**Chapter 19: Social policy and employment**

- Minimum standards to be implemented ...
- ... as against WB6 characteristics:
 - Undeclared work and its impact on taxes, social security institutions, and social dialogue
 - High risk of poverty (up to 25% in Serbia) and inequality (poor data)
 - Low wages and high share of precarious work
- The next bulk of countries to provide cheap labour force to the EU-15?

Realities of social policies

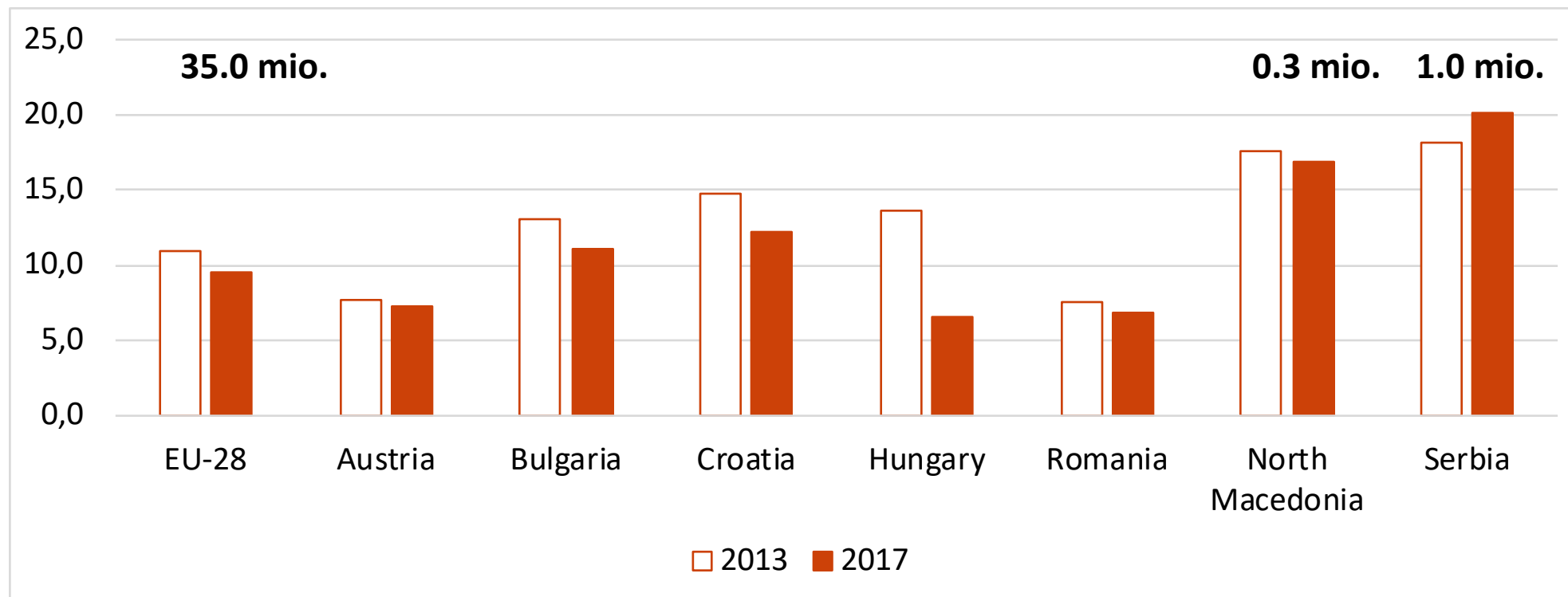
Activity rates, employment and unemployment in selected EU Member States and the WB6, shares of population 15-64, 2015



Source: EU-SILC; Arandarenko, 2018

Realities of social policies

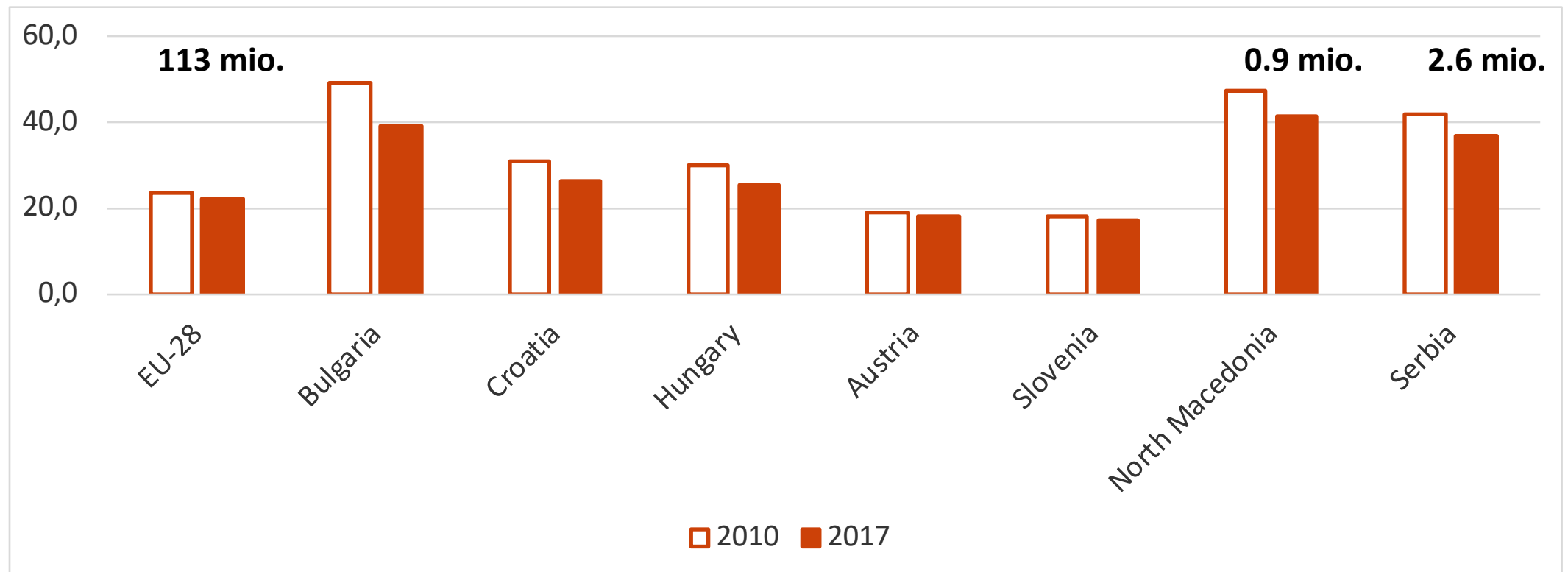
Percentage of people living in households with very low work intensity by age and sex (population aged 0 to 59 years), selected EU Member States, North Macedonia and Serbia, 2013 and 2017



Source: EU-SILC

Realities of social policies

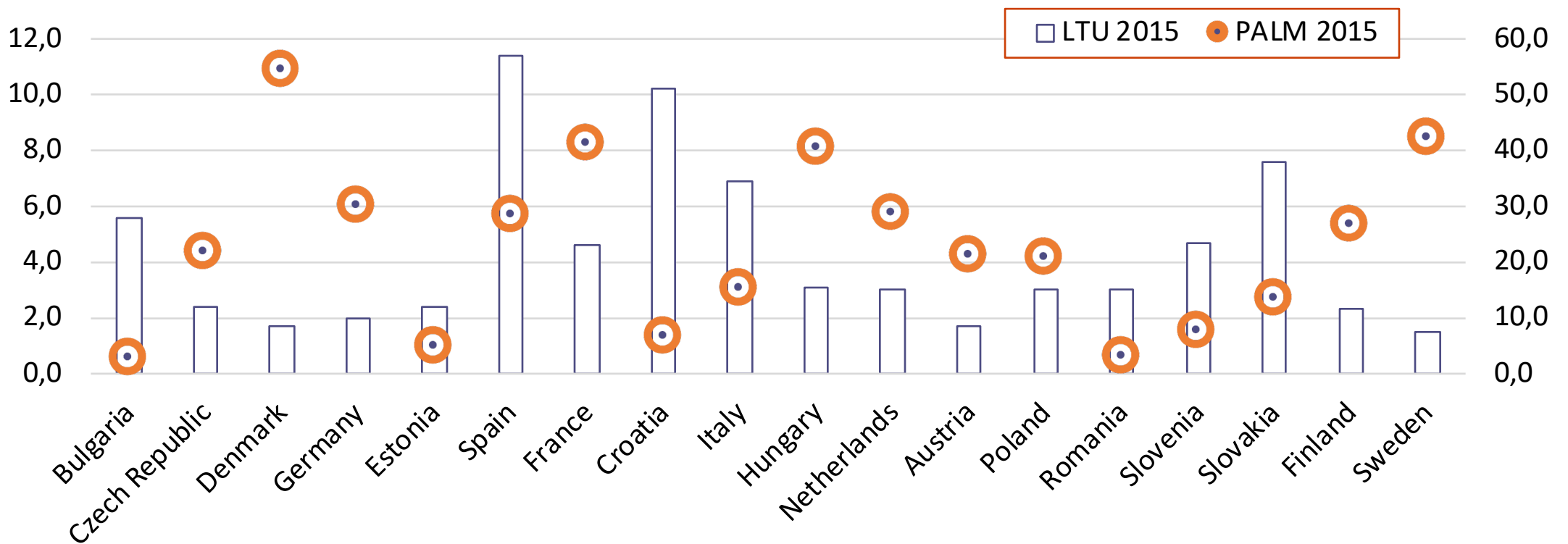
Percentage of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion, selected EU Member States, North Macedonia and Serbia, 2010 and 2017



Source: EU-SILC; Serbia: first column = 2013

Realities of social policies

Participants in active labour market measures per 100 persons wanting to work (PALM) and long-term unemployment rates as a percentage of active population aged 15-74 (LTU), 2015



Source: EU DG Empl; EU-SILC; Note: % of LTU = left scale; % of PALM = right scale

Improving partnerships and the knowledge base

- Capacity building with a strong focus on social policies
 - Not only labour market, including civil society, not only policy-makers
- Avoiding brain-drain through programmes in partnership
 - Is 'circular migration' really working?
- Re-inventing the welfare state
 - Social innovation, social investment and social dialogue in sustainable value systems



EURO.CENTRE.PUBLICATIONS

The Social Dimension of the EU

of the EU

Opportunities of and Limits to Benchmarking for a Social Europe

Annette Scoppetta
Michael Fuchs
Kai Leichsenring

30 January
2017 Vienna



EUROPÄISCHES ZENTRUM FÜR WOHLFARTSPOLITIK UND SOZIALFORSCHUNG

Thank you!

Follow us on Twitter! @EuroCentre_SWPR

Contact:

Kai Leichsenring

leichsenring@euro.centre.org

European Centre for Social
Welfare Policy and Research,
Berggasse 17, 1090 Vienna,
Austria

www.euro.centre.org

+43-1-319 4505-12