

A higher skills ambition for Northern Ireland: Skills for growth and social inclusion

Wednesday 27 January 2021 | 2.00 – 4.00pm

Paul Donaghy, OCN NI (event chair)

Anne Marie McClure MBE, Chief Executive, Start 360

Dr Jonathon Hegarty MBE, Director of Curriculum and Learner Success, Belfast Met

Stephen Evans, Chief Executive, Learning and Work Institute

Graeme Wilkinson, Director of Skills, Department for the Economy

Dr Caoimhe Archibald MLA, Chair, Committee for the Economy

Martin Flynn, Chief Executive, OCN NI

AGENDA

- 2.00 **Welcome in introductions**
Paul Donaghy, OCN NI (event chair)
- 2.10 **Research and findings**
Stephen Evans, Chief Executive, Learning and Work Institute
Dr. David Southgate, Economic Researcher, Learning and Work Institute
- 2.30 **Q & A**
- 2.45 **Futures learners: evidence-based partnership best practice**
- 2.50 **Expert Panel: the three asks**
Anne Marie McClure MBE, Chief Executive, Start 360
Dr Jonathon Hegarty MBE, Director of Curriculum and Learner Success, Belfast Met
Stephen Evans, Chief Executive, Learning and Work
- 3.10 **Skills Strategy and Programme for Government**
Graeme Wilkinson, Director of Skills, Department for the Economy
Dr Caoimhe Archibald MLA, Chair, Committee for the Economy
- 3.40 **Q & A**
- 3.55 **Launch of the 2021 OCNNI Learning Endeavour Awards**
Martin Flynn, Chief Executive, OCN NI
- 4.00 **Summary and next steps**
Paul Donaghy, OCN NI

Open College Network NI

The Open College Network Northern Ireland (OCN NI) is a `not for profit` charity and social enterprise. Our Mission *is to develop and award qualifications which engage, enrich and equip learners for life.*

We are regulated by CCEA Regulation and OFQUAL to develop and award professional and technical (vocational) qualifications from Entry Level up to and including Level 5 across all sector areas.

We are the leading Awarding Organisation for Vocational and Technical qualifications in Northern Ireland and work with Further Education Colleges, Private Training Organisations, Voluntary & Community Partners, Schools, SME's and Public Sector bodies across the province, to provide learners with opportunities to progress into further learning and/or employment.

Our Vision *is a successful, inclusive society where every learner matters.*

Research and findings

Stephen Evans, Chief Executive, Learning and Work Institute
Dr. David Southgate, Economic Researcher, Learning and Work Institute

Contents

- Purpose of project
- Northern Ireland context
- Why learning and skills matter
- Key findings: Projecting skills to 2030
- 3 foundations for success: A higher ambition for Northern Ireland
- Q&A and discussion

Purpose of project

- To understand how skills affect economic growth and social inclusion
- To project Northern Ireland's skills profile to 2030 using current trends
- Then compare this to:
 - The UK as a whole
 - International comparators, including the Republic of Ireland
- Make recommendations to improve skills profile over the next decade

Northern Ireland context

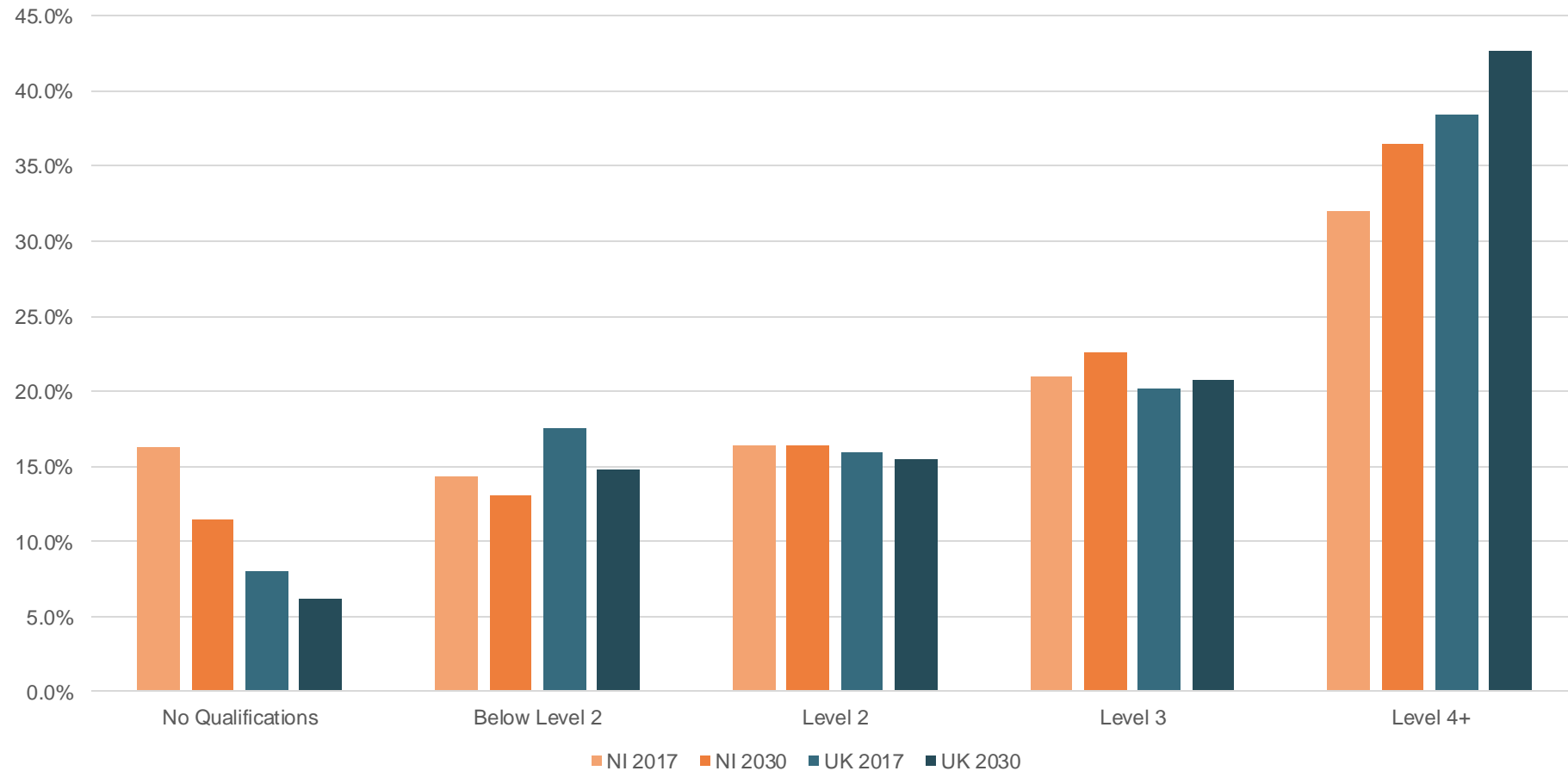
- **Growth:** Weaker in Northern Ireland over the last decade than in the UK as a whole with significant productivity gap.
- **Employment:** Lower than in the UK as whole & falls during coronavirus crisis.
- **Economic inequality:** Relative poverty remains a significant issue.
- **Health inequality:** Life expectancy being lower for the most deprived areas of Northern Ireland.
- **Future context:** Coronavirus, transition to a new trading relationship with the EU, aging population, demographic change.

Why learning and skills matter

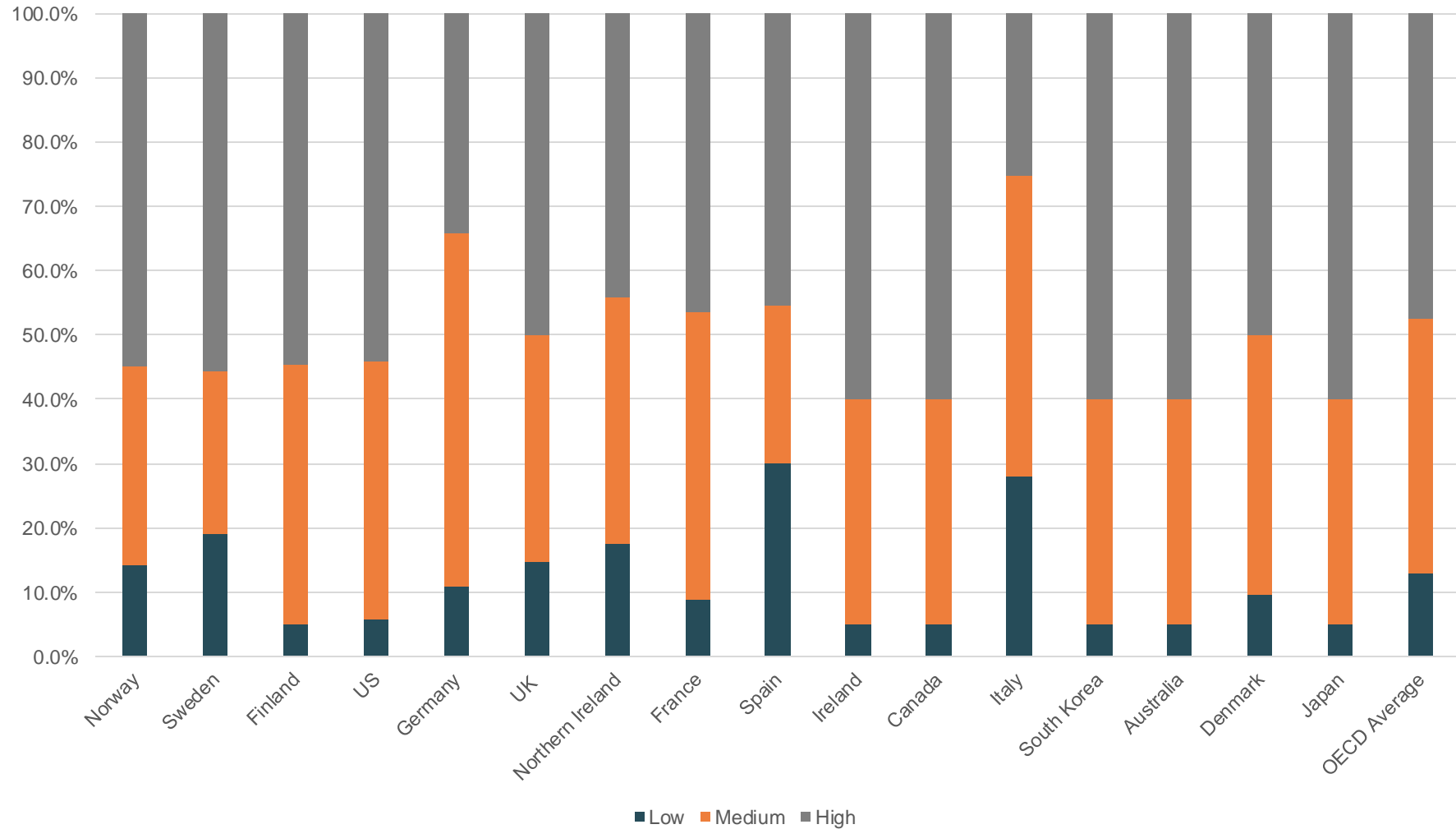
- Central to both **economic growth** and **social inclusion**:
 - Increase employment
 - Improve productivity
 - Grow incomes
 - Support community cohesion
 - Improve wellbeing
 - Reduce health inequalities

Key findings

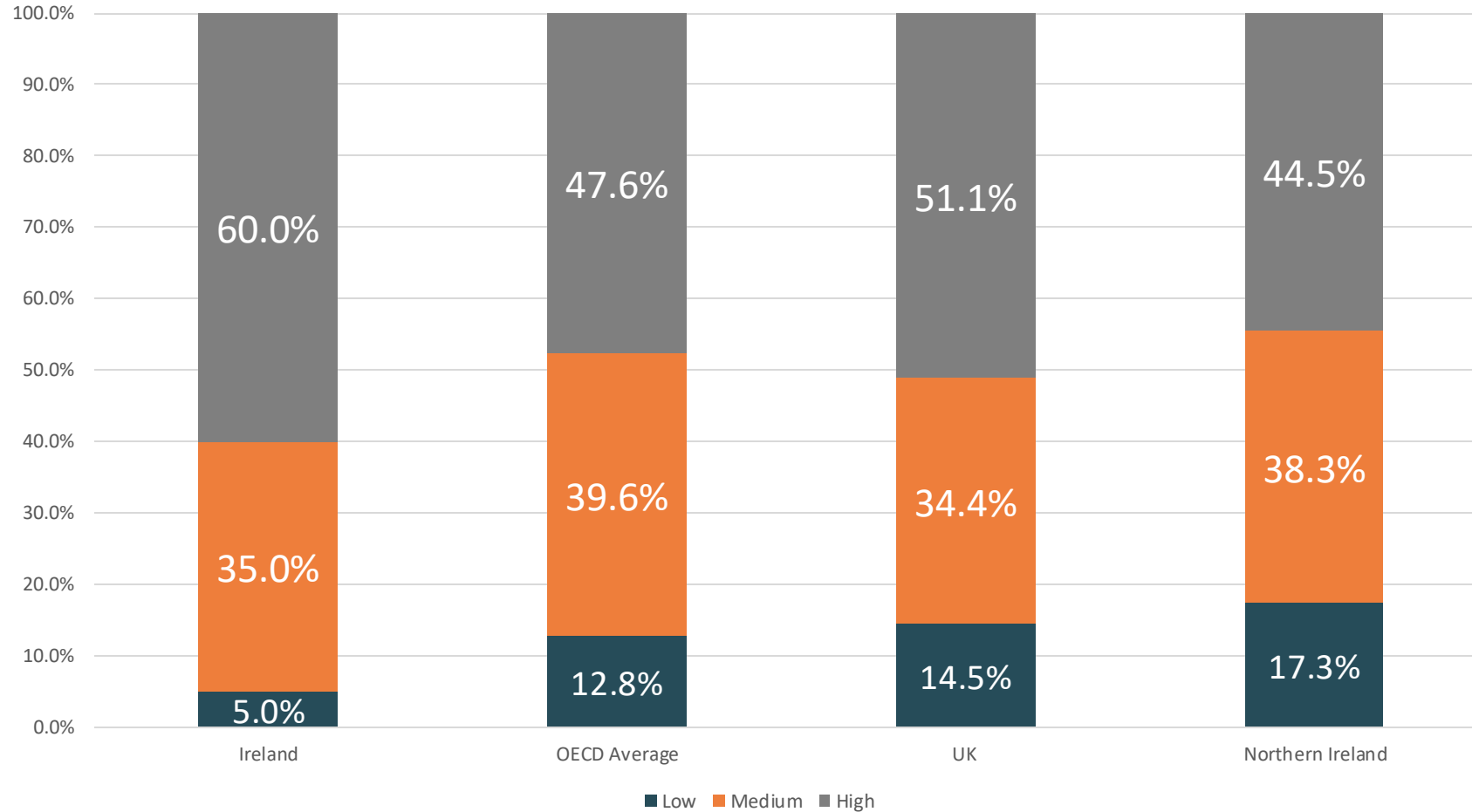
2017 & 2030 UK and Northern Ireland qualification profiles



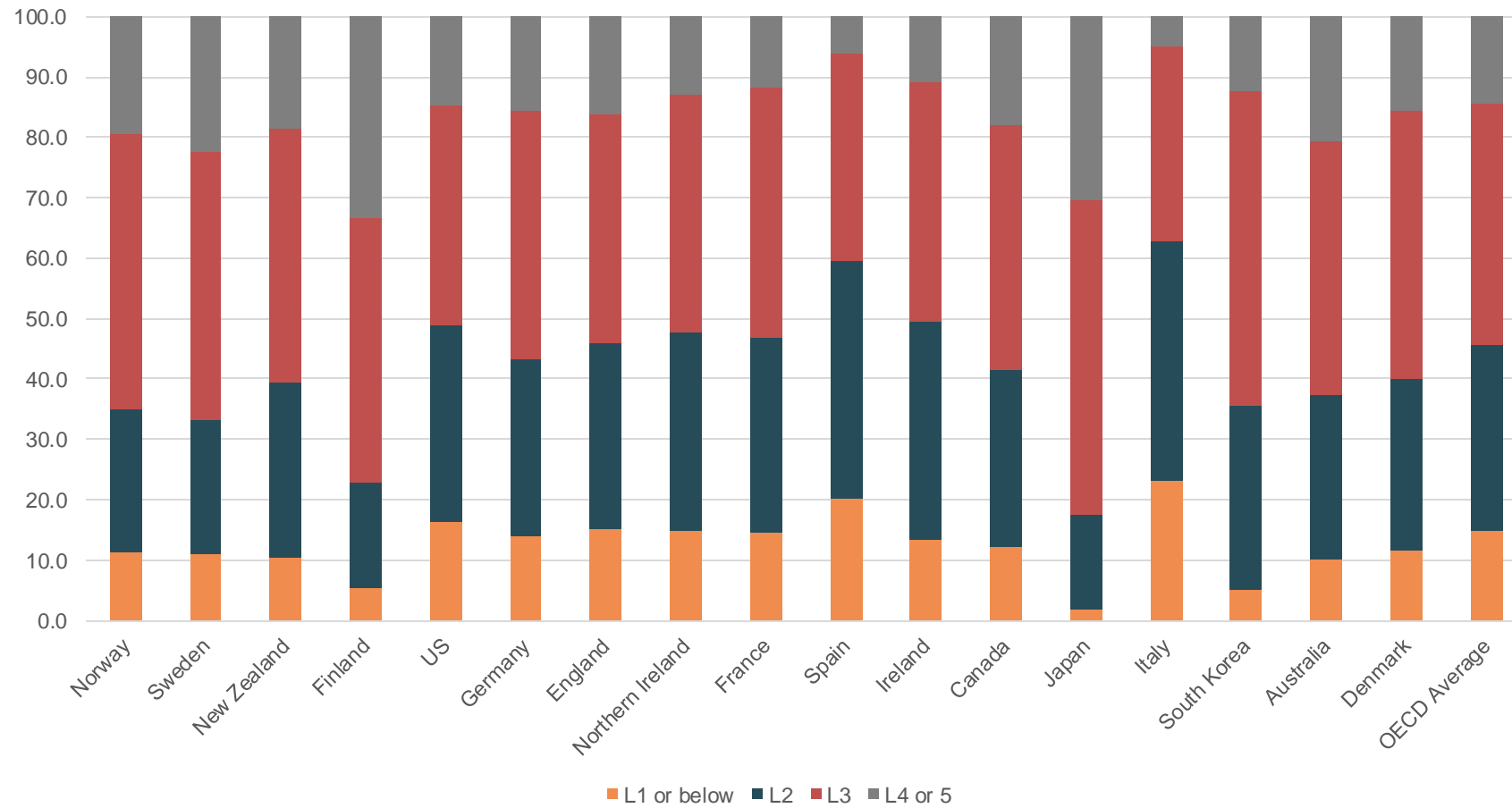
OECD 2030 qualification profiles



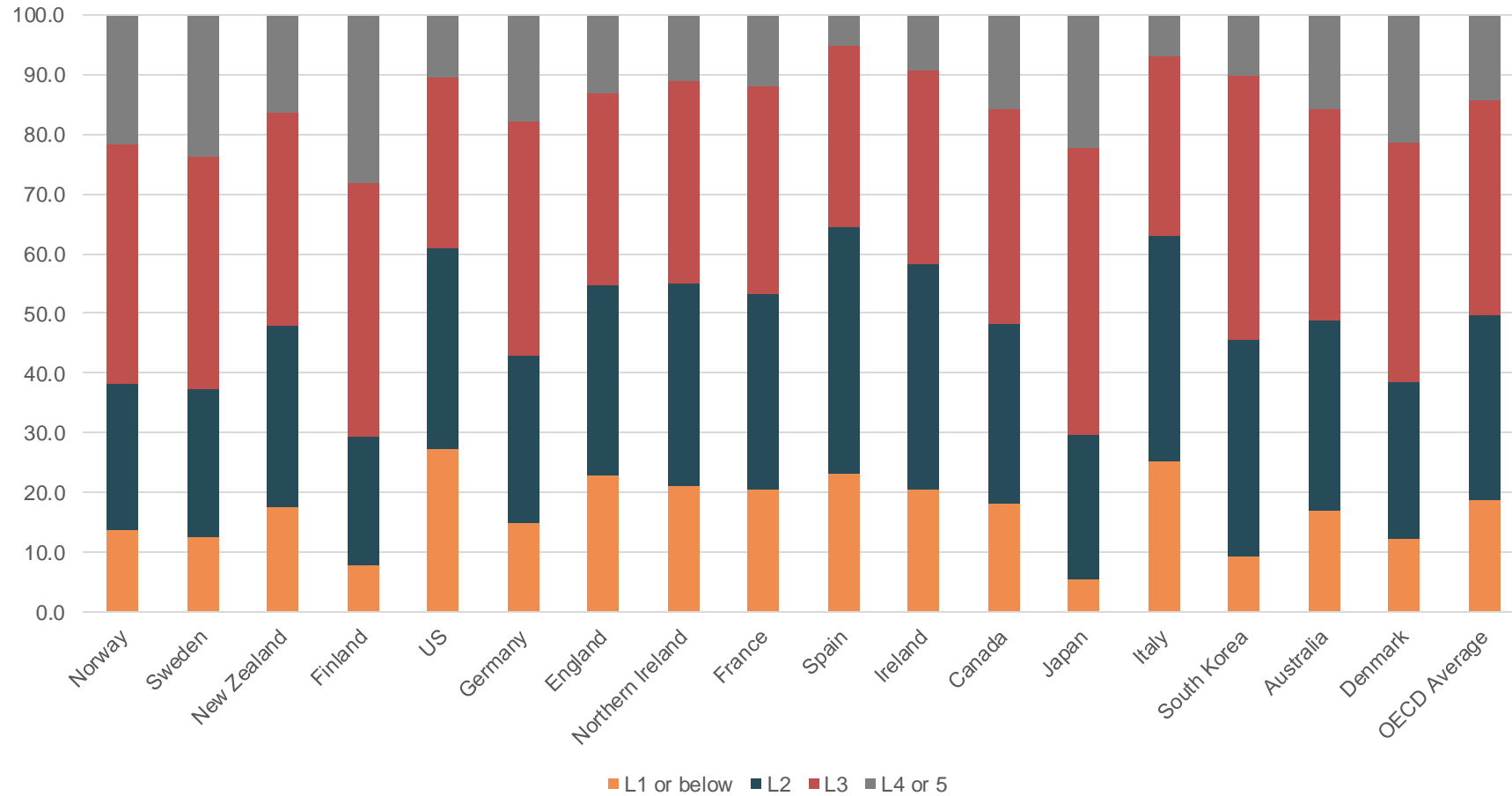
2030 qualification profile comparisons



Literacy



Numeracy



3 Foundations for Success - What We Need To Do

Concerted outcomes-based action aligned to funding, building on proven best practice, grown to scale.

- 1. Promote and fund a higher ambition around Skills for economic growth and social inclusion in Northern Ireland.*** The need to support the upskilling of ALL our people in Northern Ireland has never been greater, especially as we deal with the dramatic consequences of Coronavirus.
- 2. Promote alignment across all phases of education to meet learner, industry and community needs.*** Identify clear progression routes for learners of ALL ages, delivered in the most appropriate learning settings. Replace competition, duplication and repetition with coherent, outcome focused pathways.
- 3. Promote Collaboration for Change To deliver on the Programme for Government*** and a more prosperous future for all in Northern Ireland, government and social partners in education, health, industry and the community need to work in a more collegiate, joined up and outcome focused way.



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Expert Panel: the three asks

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Skills Strategy and Programme for Government

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Launch of the 2021 OCNNI Learning Endeavour Awards

Martin Flynn, Chief Executive, OCN NI



WEDNESDAY
2ND
JUNE



ocn
northern ireland

LEARNING ENDEAVOUR
AWARDS 2021



Save the date
OCN NI Learning Endeavour Awards
Wednesday 2nd June 2021
11.30am - 12.30pm

Applications open Tuesday 9th February 2021
and close on Friday 5th March 2021

