

What do Australian aid flows show?

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<https://devpolicy.org/what-australian-aid-flows-show-20210113/>

Thank you to:

Matt Dornan and Sachini Muller (co-authors)

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation for supporting this research

The Australian Government Aid Program for their aid data transparency

I'm solely responsible for the talk today.

A question, a nagging question...

...how much are we giving? And are we giving it well?

Not an easy question to answer, as aid is given overseas.

But norms in the OECD have led to reasonable data availability (just a click away!)

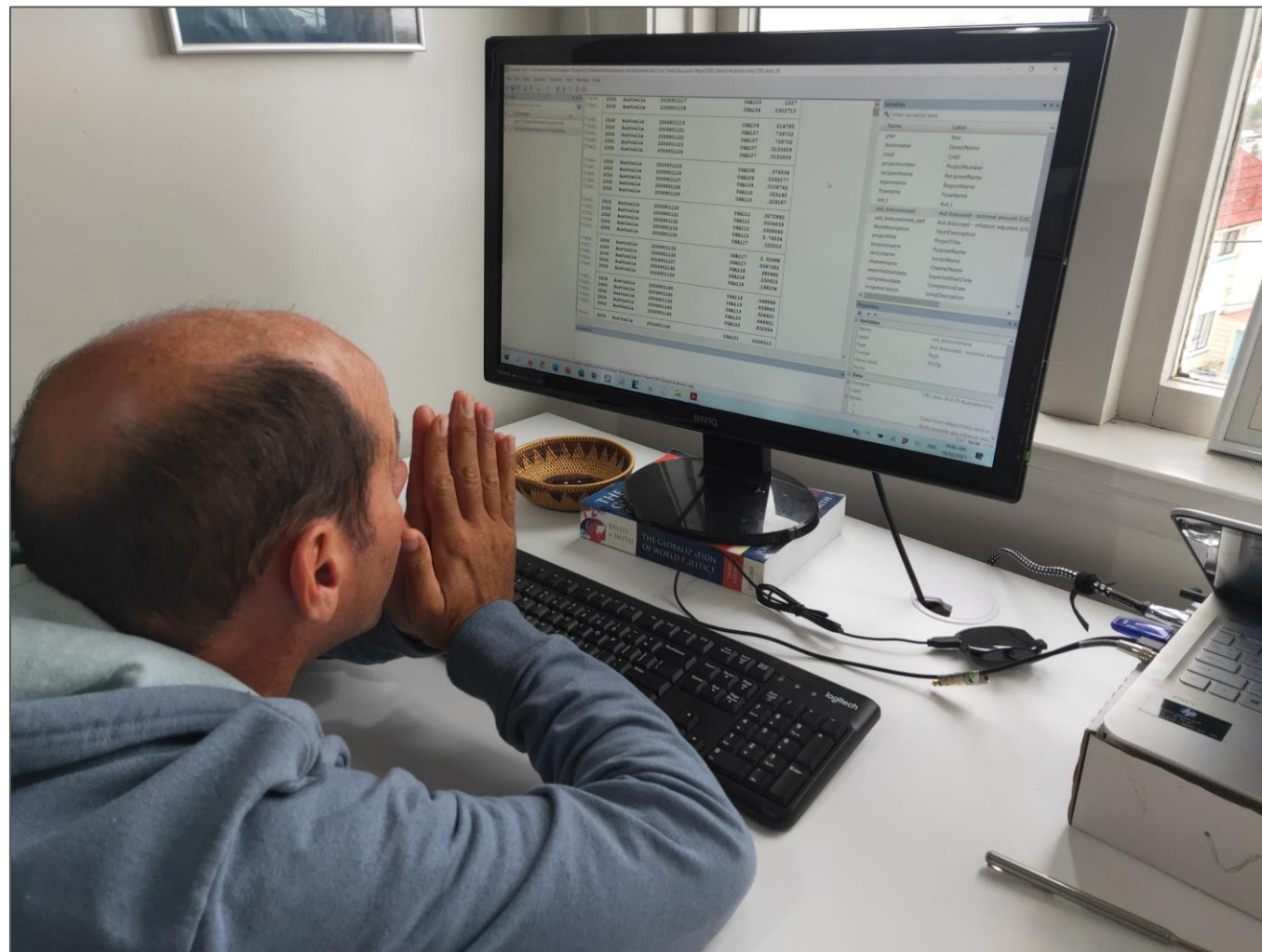
OECD.Stat data on overall aid flows

OECD CRS data on aid projects

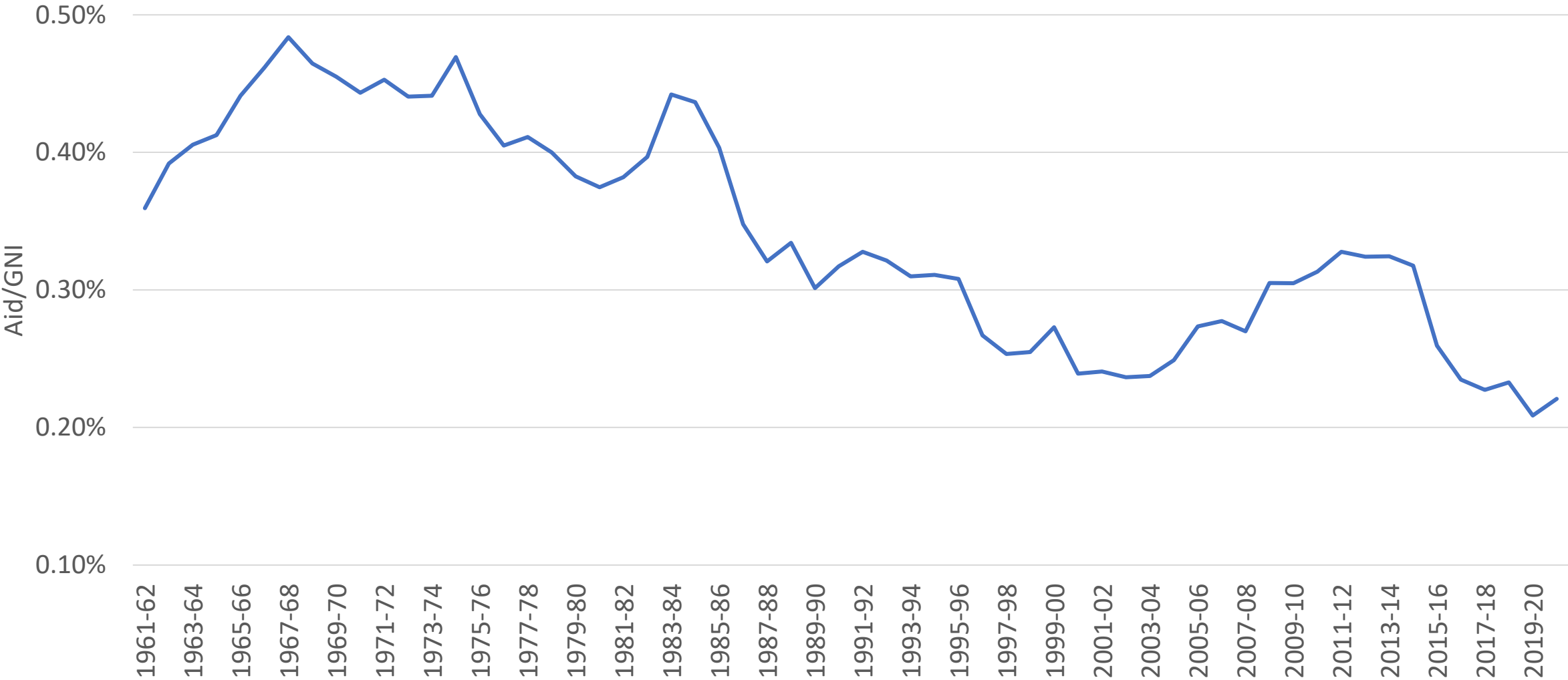
The Australian Aid Program puts some additional data online too

These datasets mean it is easy to get a good sense of some aspects of Australian aid.

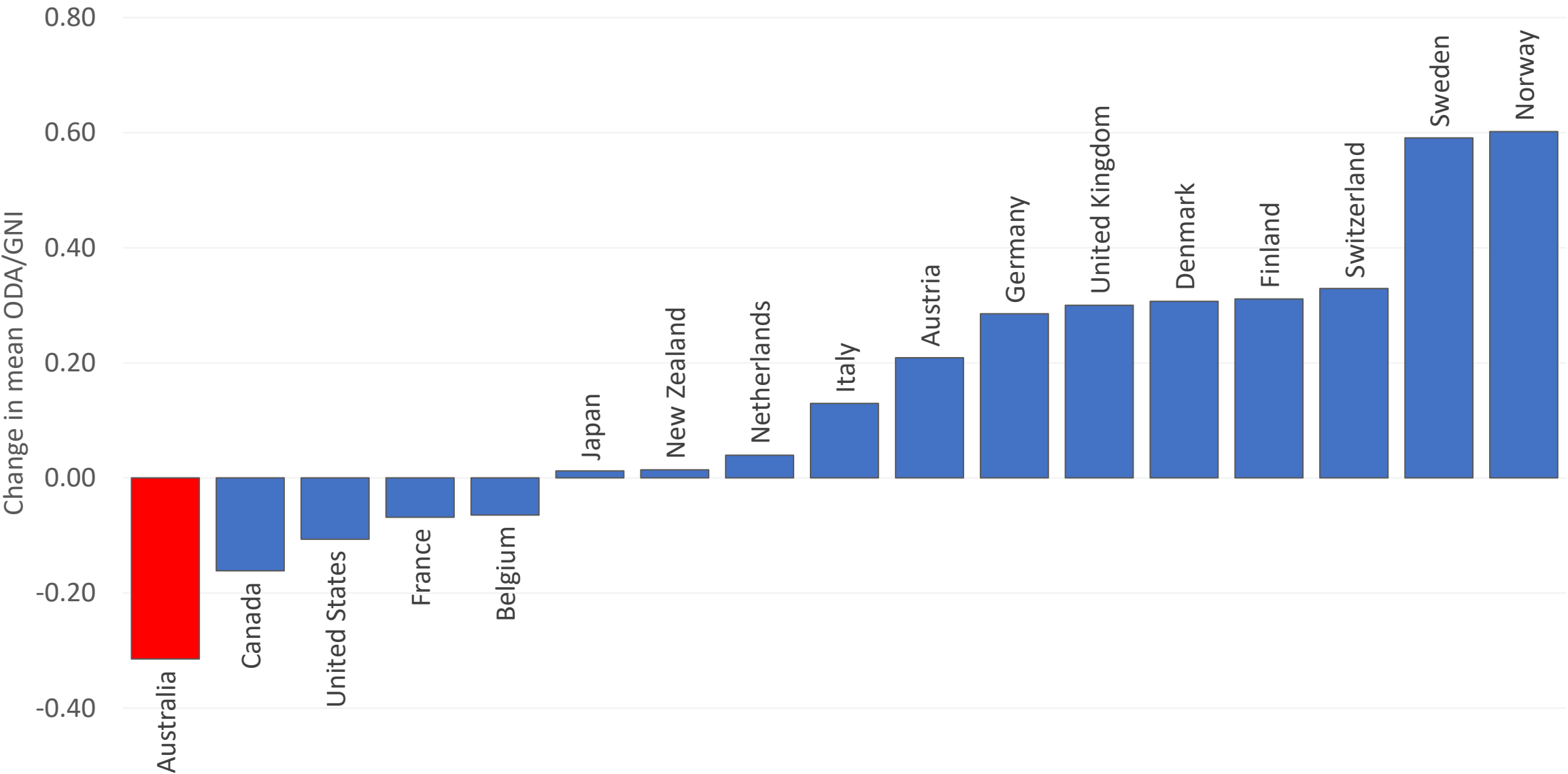
What did we find?



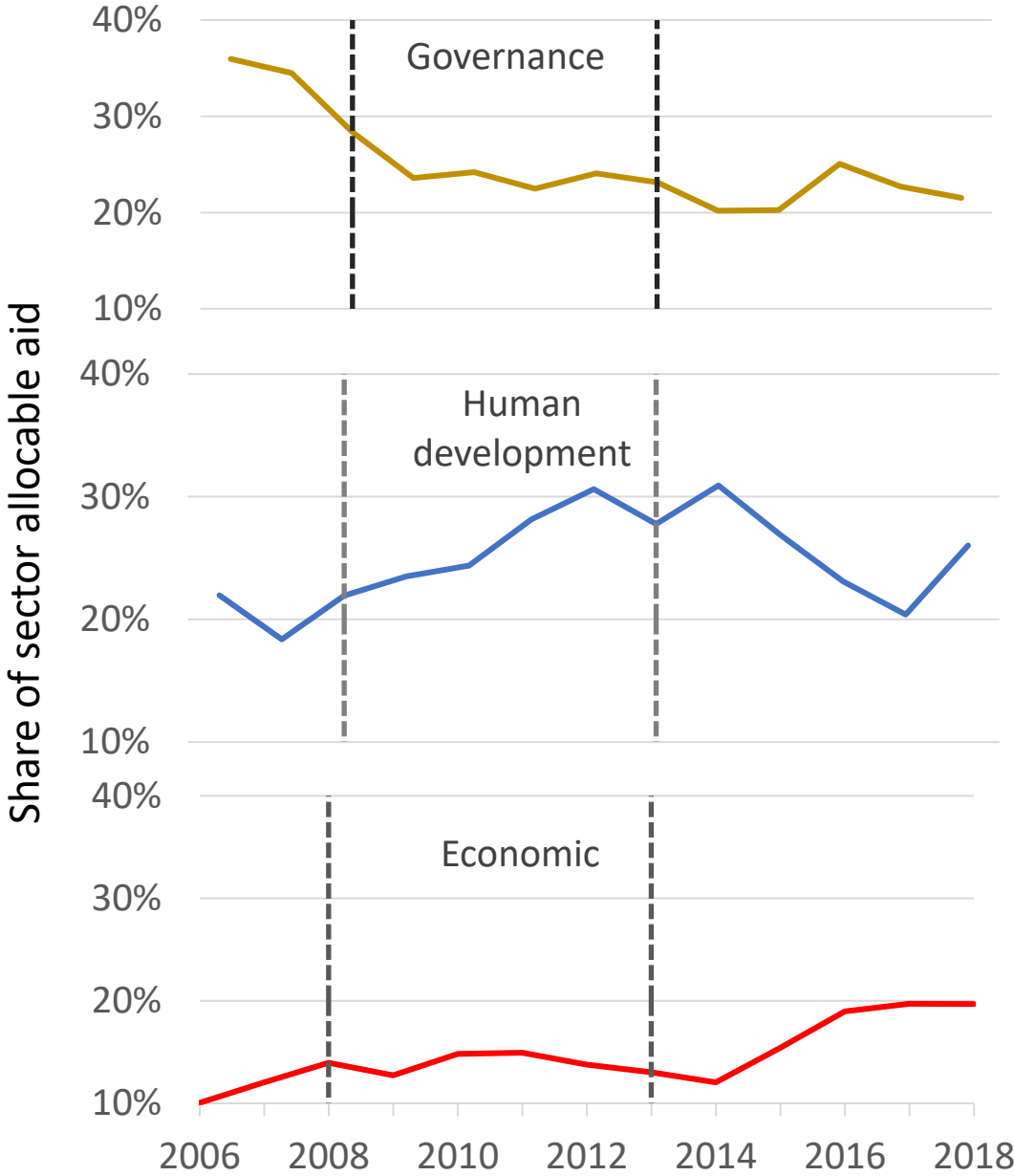
Australian government aid generosity (aid/GNI) over time



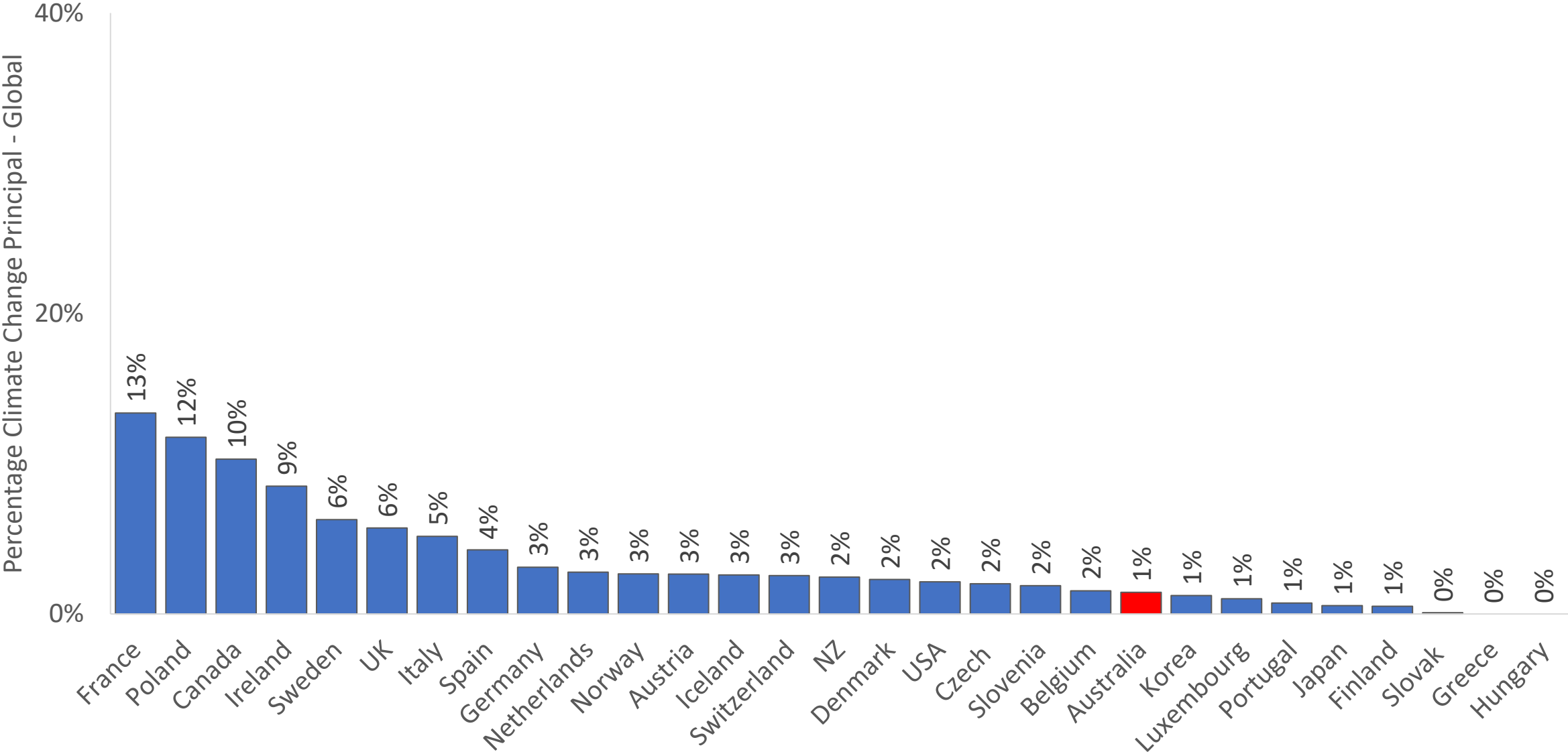
Australia's aid generosity has fallen more than any other OECD donor since the 1970s (1970-74 v 2015-19)



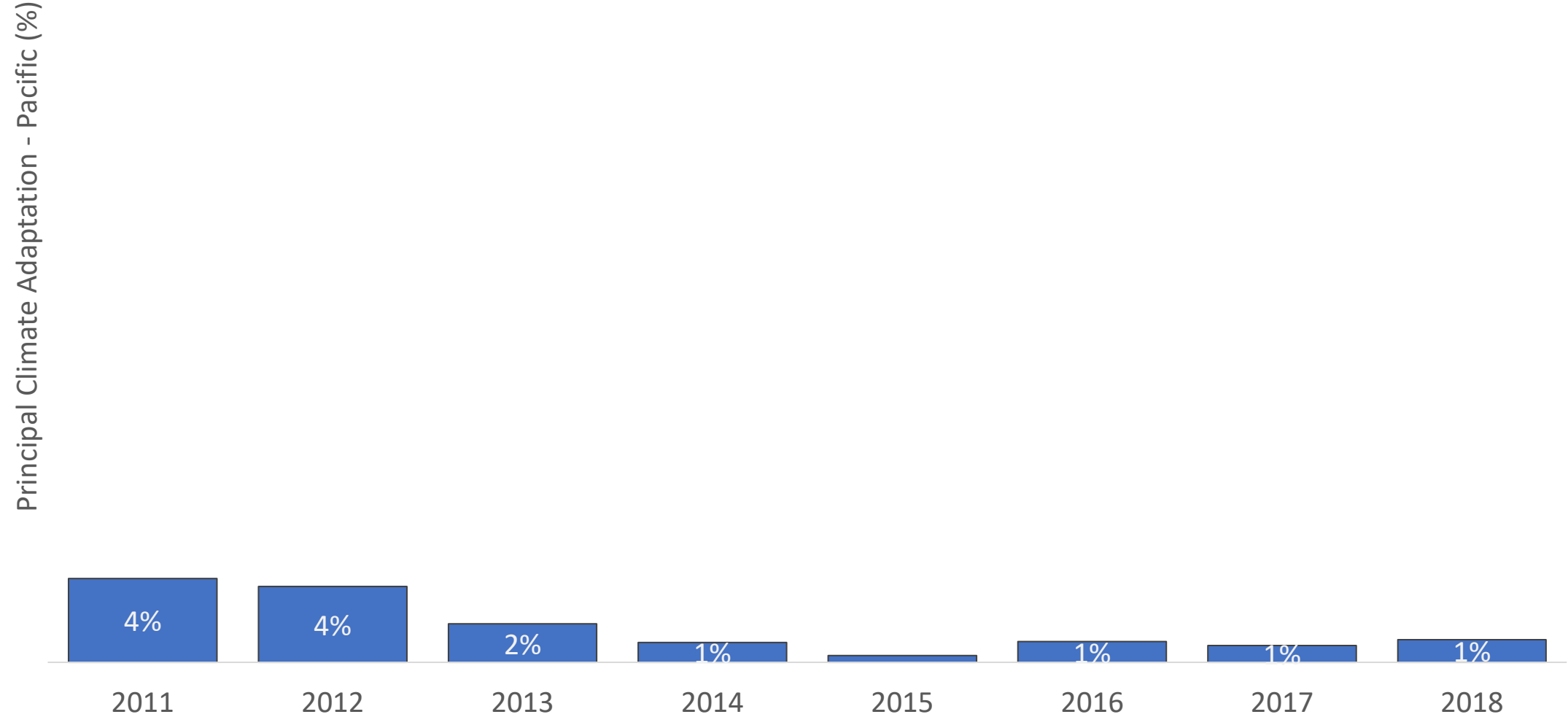
Sectoral spending



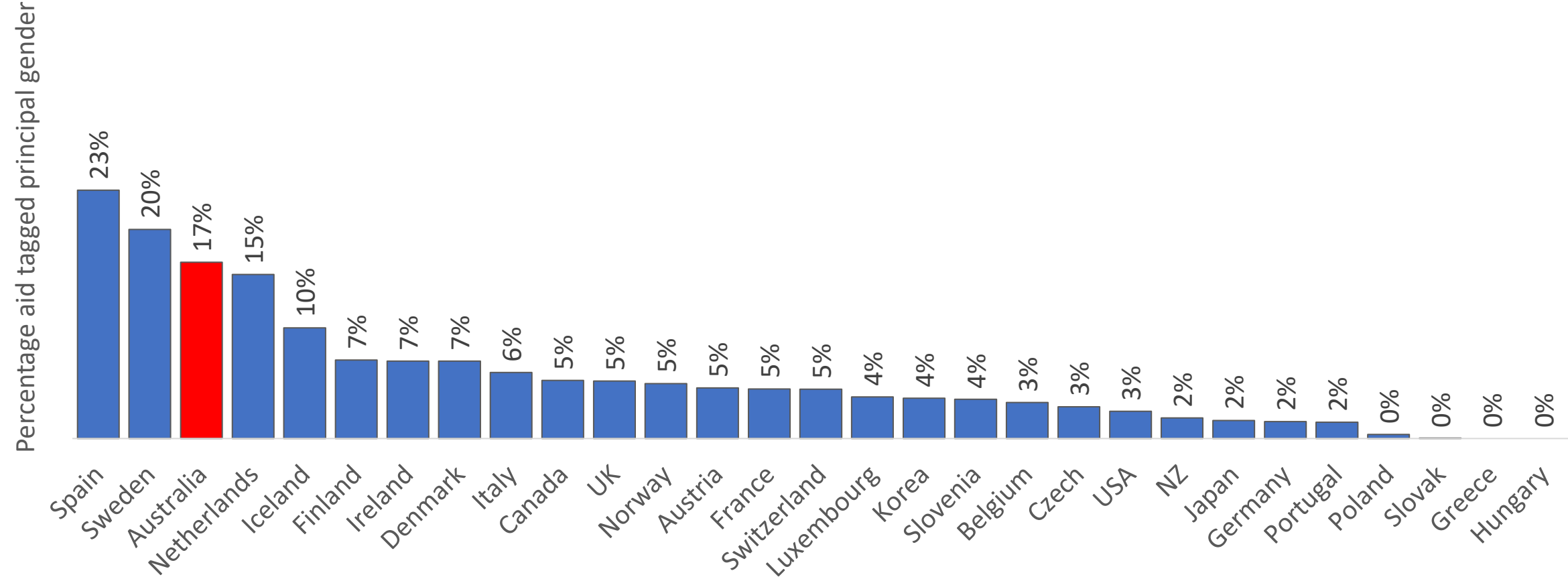
Climate change adaptation (principal focus; 2016-18 mean)



Australian climate change adaptation (principal focus) - Pacific

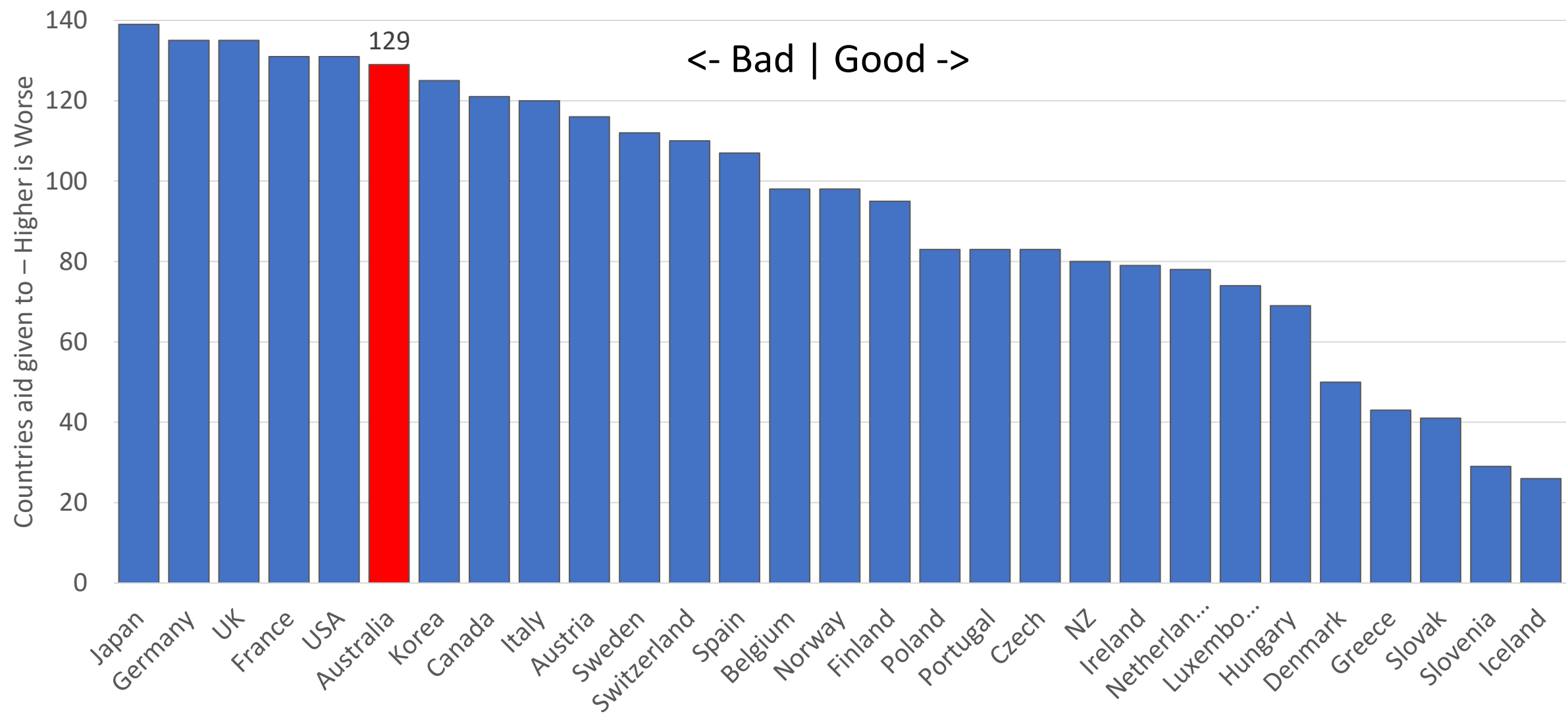


Gender Focus (2018)



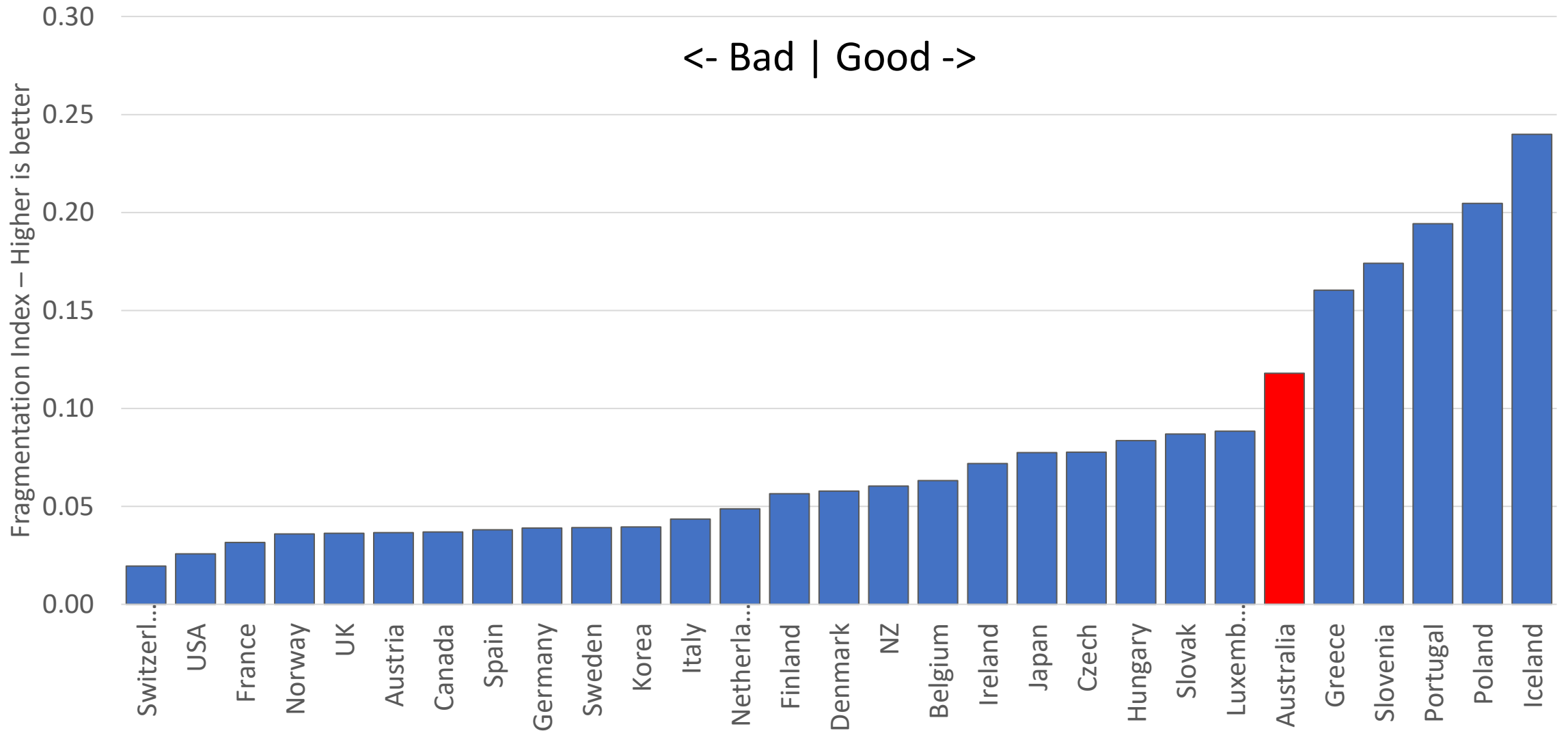
Aid Fragmentation (2018)

Australia gives to a lot of countries... (144 countries are eligible)

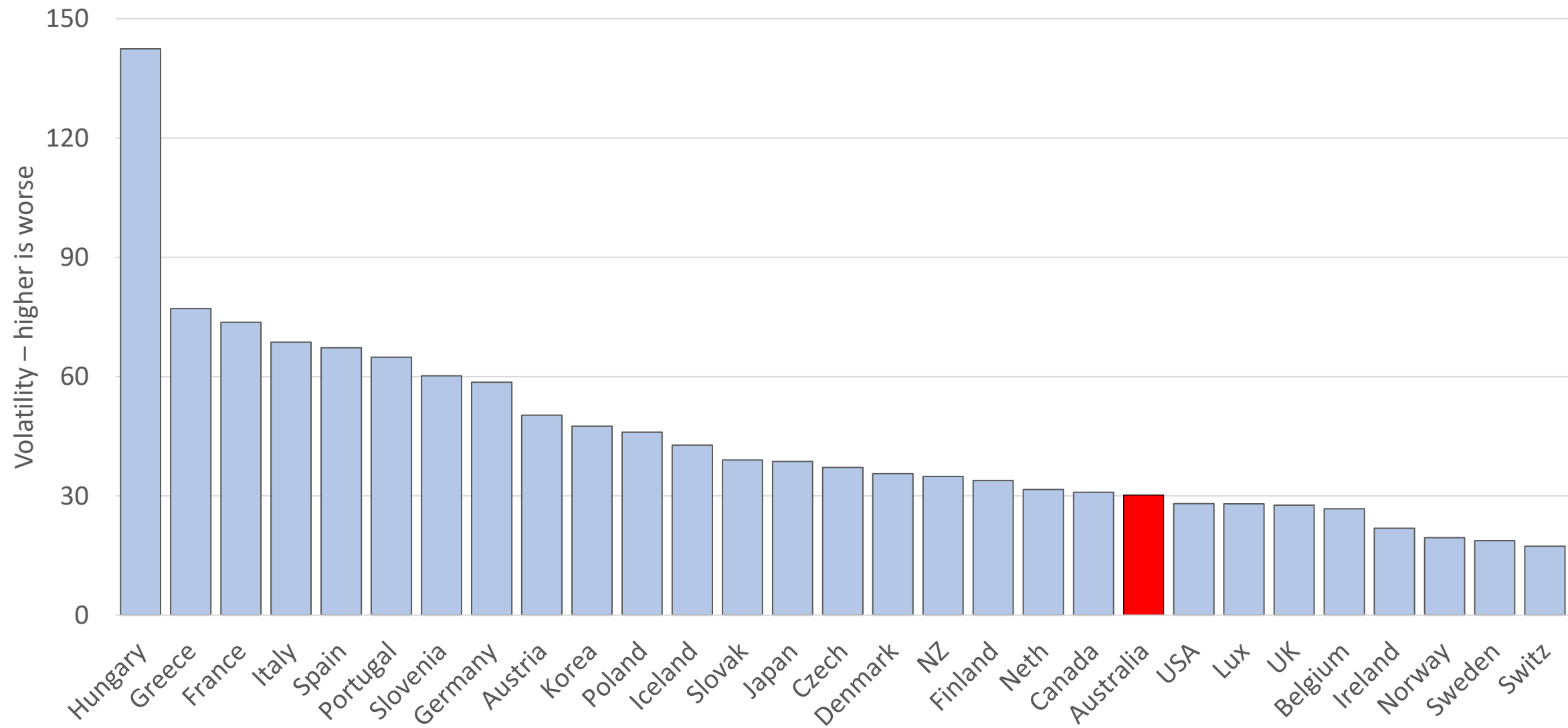


Aid Fragmentation - Fragmentation Index (2018)

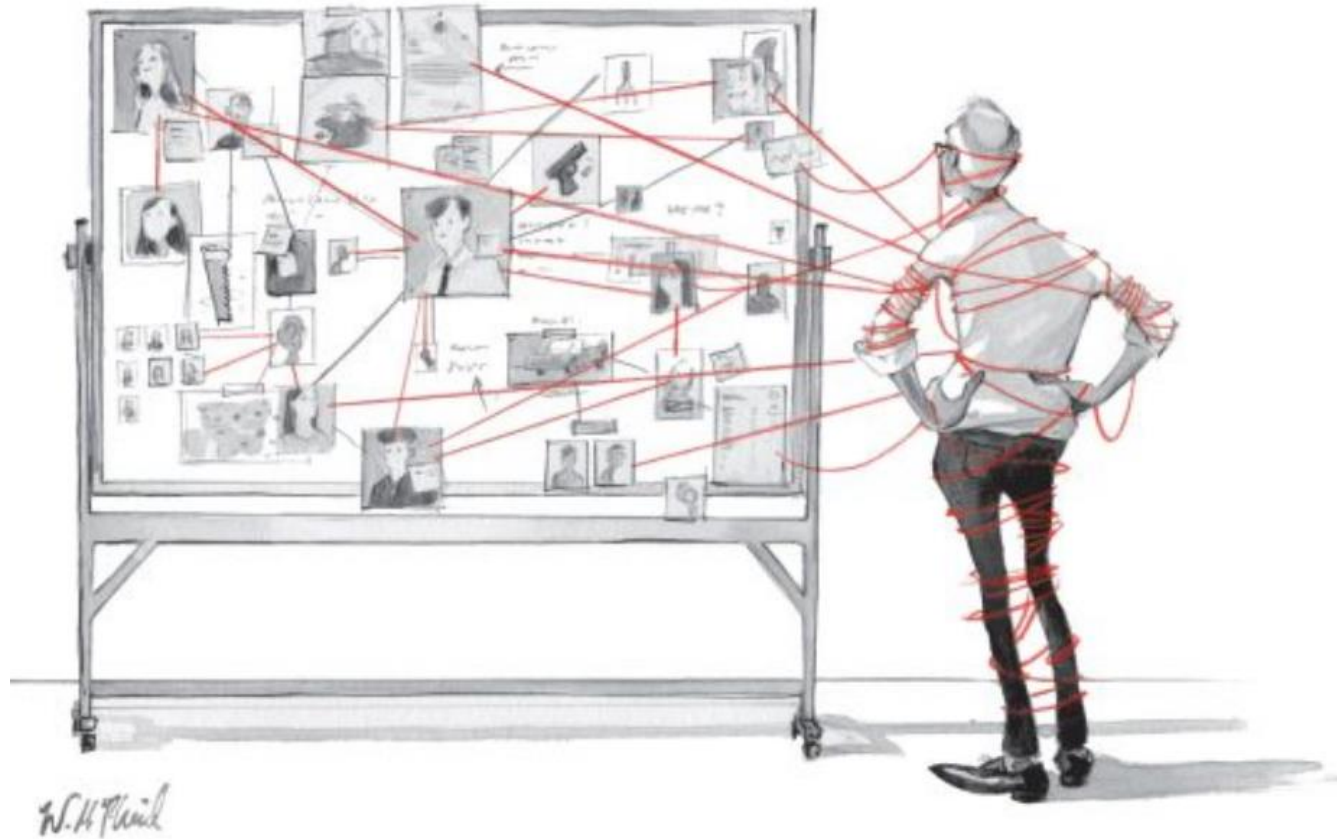
Australia focuses most aid on a few countries, so does well on aid fragmentation measure.



Aid volatility (2006-18) – surprisingly good



So what does this actually mean?



"Well, this is troubling."

Very simple conclusions

From what the data can show us we see that:

1. Australia's aid generosity has fallen to dire levels. It is improving again now, but has a long way to go.
2. Different governments clearly bring different aid priorities. At times individual politicians have had a discernible positive mark – Bishop & gender.
3. Climate change adaptation is a glaring weakness.
4. Low fragmentation is a strength.
5. The aid program has done well in managing aid flows in very volatile times.

Is that all?

No! Aid flow data can reveal important information about aid, but much more is needed for a full picture.

In the case of Australian aid Devpolicy and others have been trying. For example,

[Devpolicy Stakeholder Surveys](#)

[Richard Moore's review of Australian aid integration](#)

[Luke Minihan's study of aid transparency](#)

[Ashlee Betteridge's Study of aid communications](#)

[Stephen Howes's review of the iXc](#)

Remember the [Devpolicy AidTracker](#) for aid data too.