

Rethinking the Caribbean Education System

Andreas Blom, Education Economist,
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- **Why bother rethinking?**
- Education for all, in particular for the poor
- Education for quality and productive jobs
- Are these the right key actions?

Key points

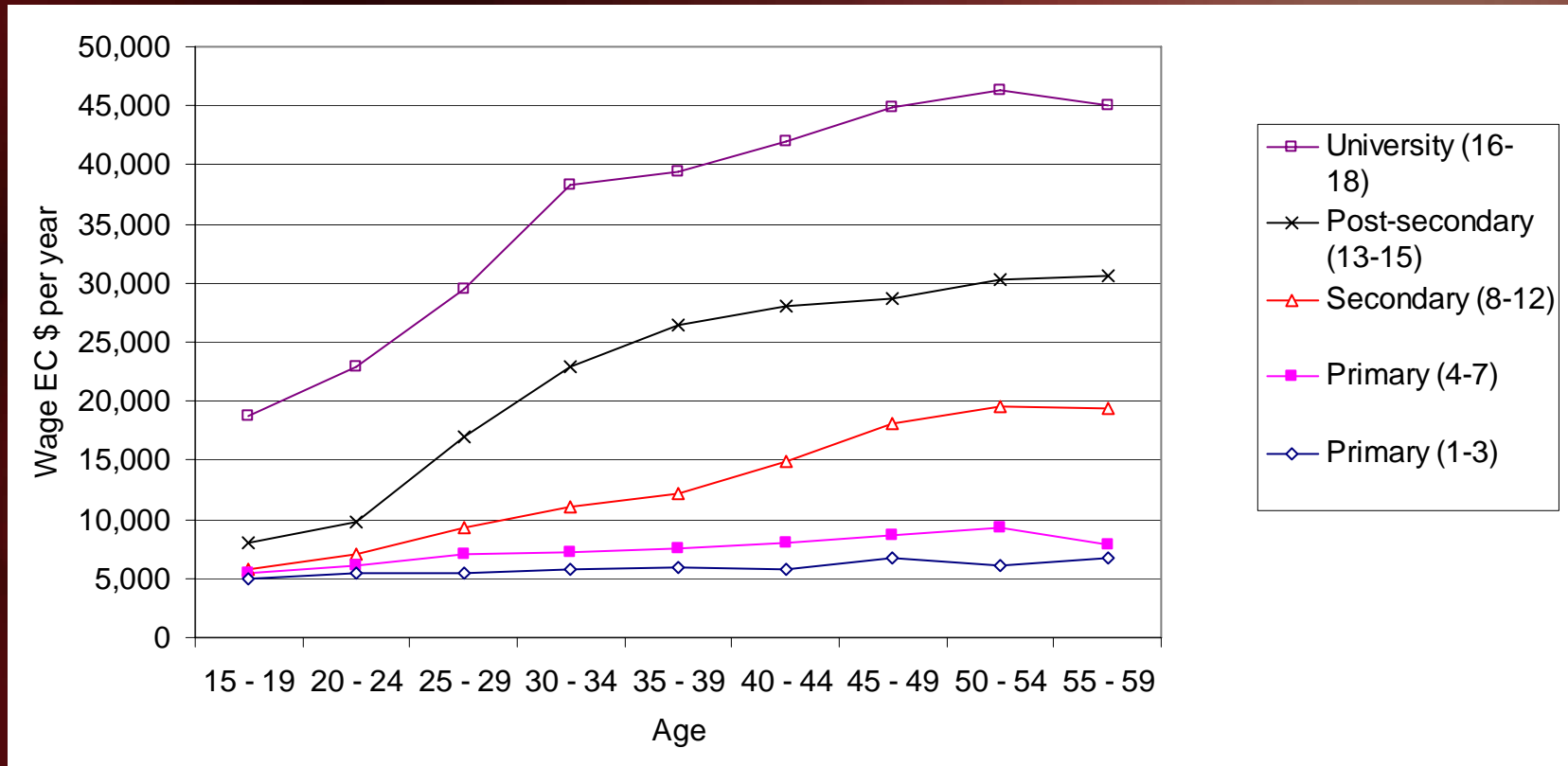
Issue	Need	Key challenges
Wide spread poverty (still)	Higher access for the poor (second chance programs for youth)	More investment (public and private)
Learning and skills are so critical (new knowledge economy)	(i) Improve learning (ii) New “knowledge economy” skills	Accountability and testing Teacher training and focus on competences , not academics
Increased specialization (new knowledge economy)	(i) Better linkages with firms (ii) Lifelong learning	More collaboration: between edu levels and within the Caribbean Qualification frameworks

Why bother? WIDE SPREAD POVERTY

	Poverty rate (< US\$ 2 / day)	Population	<u>N# of poor</u>
Cuba		11,300,000	
Dominican Republic	11.8%	8,900,000	1,050,200
Haiti	77.2%	8,500,000	<u>6,562,000</u>
Jamaica	16.4%	2,700,000	442,800
St. Lucia	59.1%	142,000	83,922
Trinidad & T.	19.6%	1,300,000	254,800
Caribbean		32,842,000	<u>8,393,722</u>

Why bother? Education is the most important asset and can be the exit to poverty

OECS (St. Vincent and the G.): Salary by education level

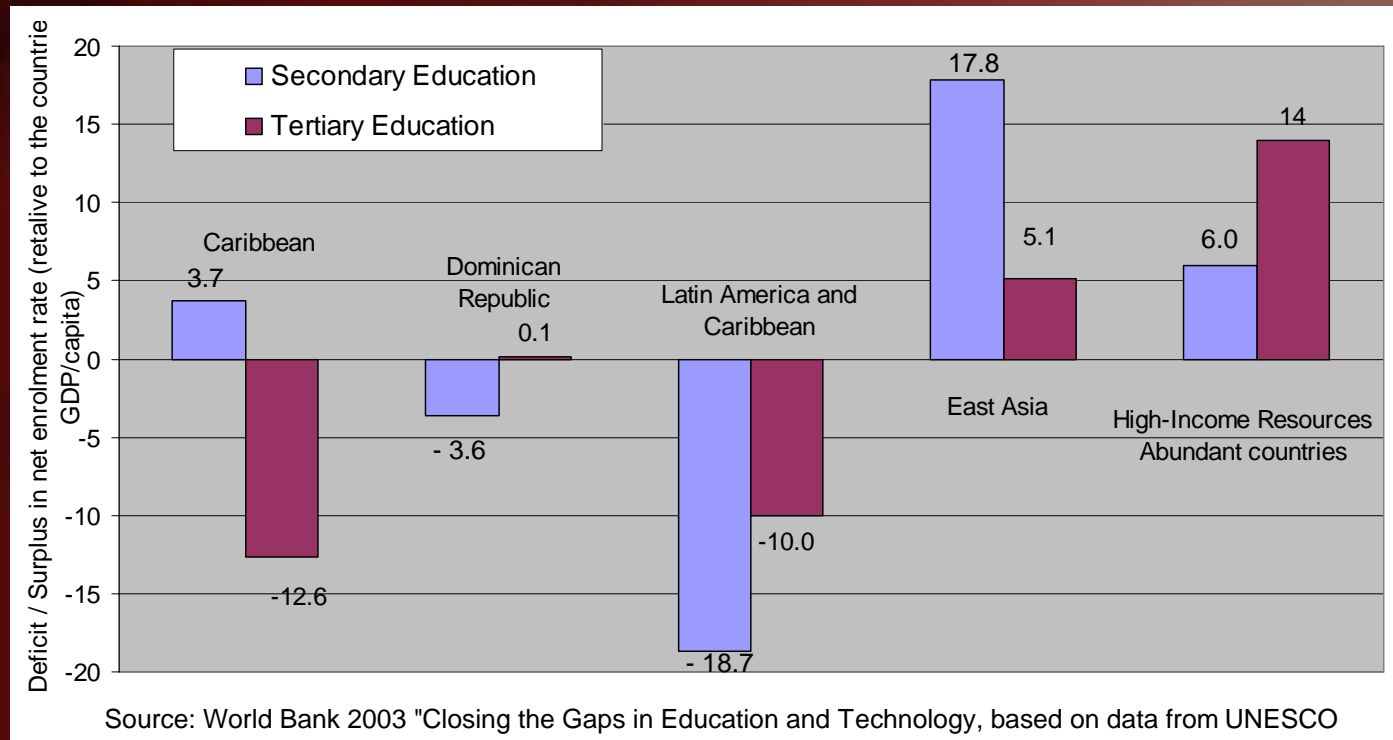


Source: Population and Household Census 2001, St. Vincent and the Grenadines,

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Access for the poor

- Different priorities by country:
 - Haiti: Primary
 - DR: more secondary education
 - English speaking Caribbean: tertiary education

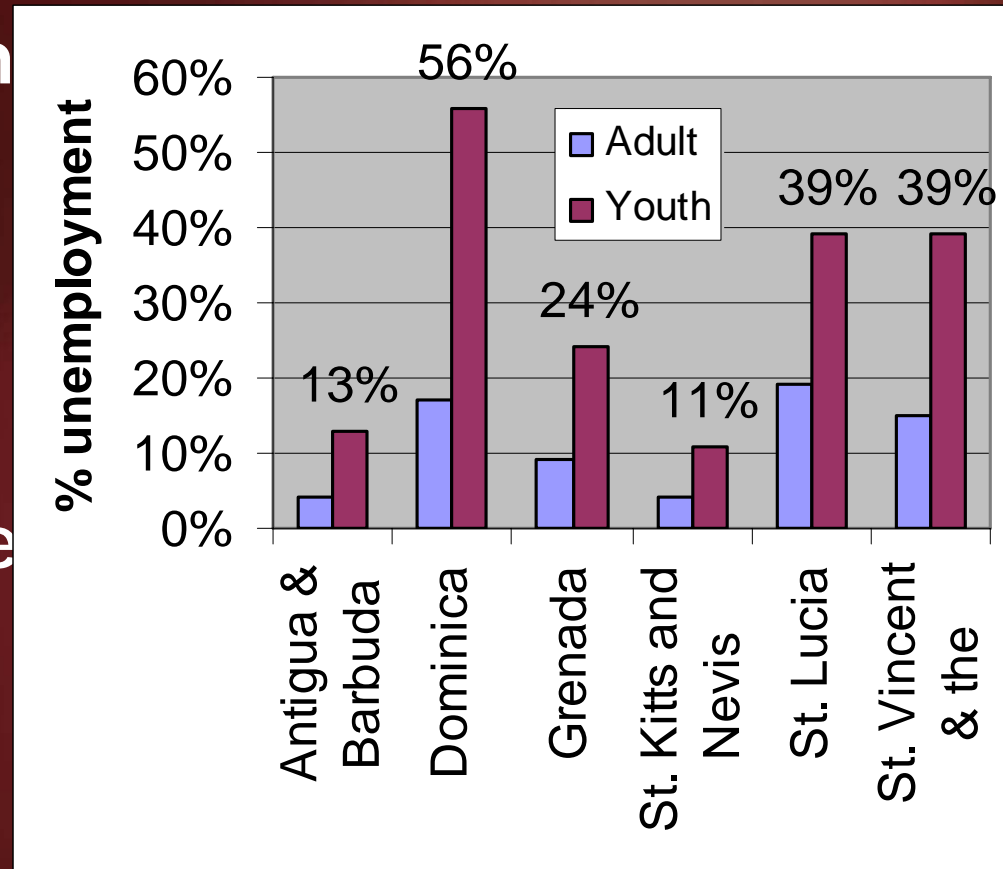


Challenges to increase coverage

- **Challenges (supply-constraint):**
 - **Increase financing (and system changes?)**
 - Public funds
 - Private funds (tertiary education)

What to do with the poor unskilled youth?

- Failed transition from school to life
- High youth unemployment
- Global competition => increased pressure on inequality
- Lost human capital
- Social loss, deviant behaviour and inequality



Source: National Labor surveys different years 1991-2004

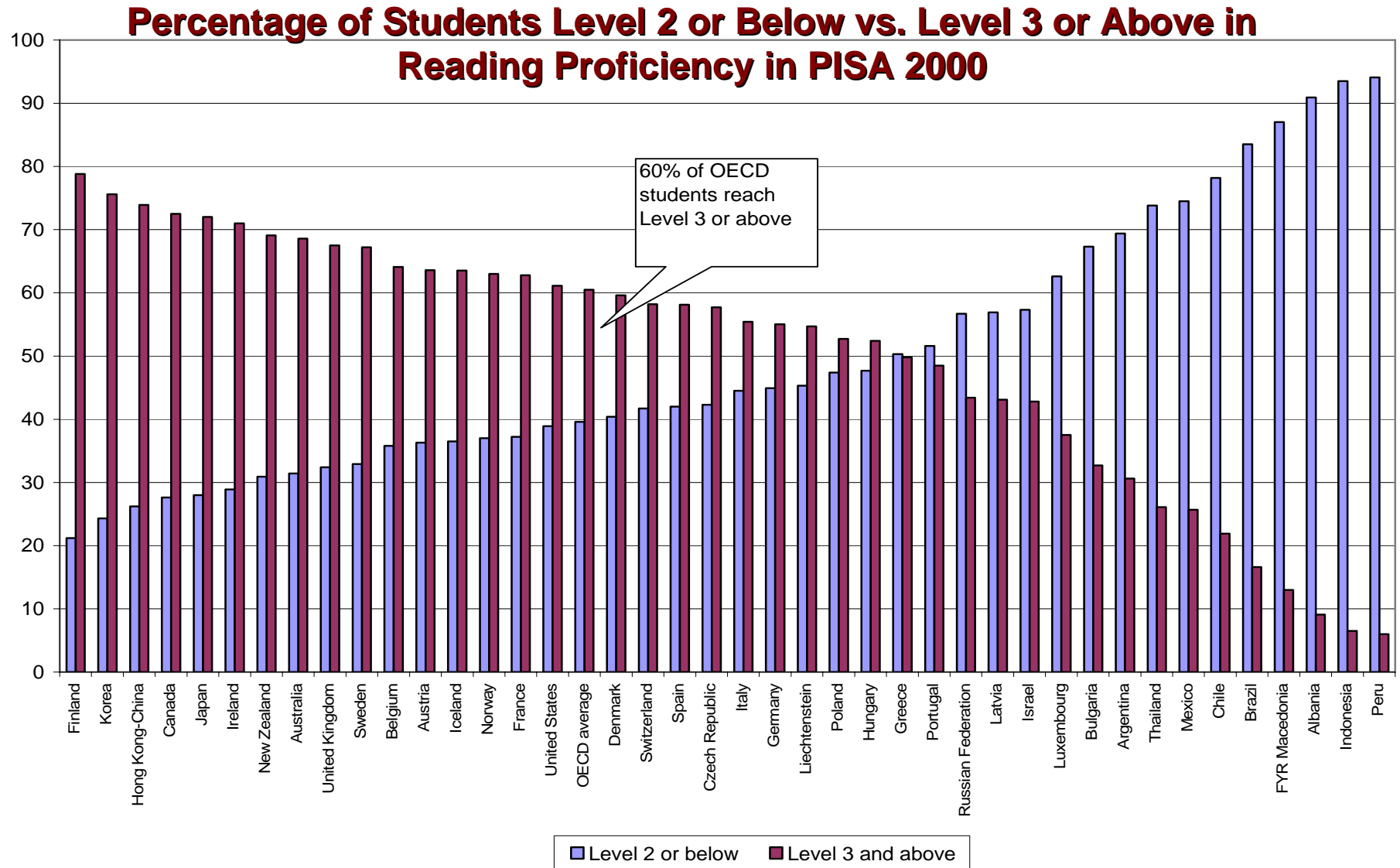
What to do with the poor unskilled youth?

- **Expand and strengthen Second chance programs:**
 - Objective: Assist those with difficulties finding jobs
- **Challenges:**
 - Difficult group: family environment and drop outs
 - Training, private sector driven to lead to jobs
 - Traineeship successful in the OECS: 50% stay with employer

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Quality and productive jobs: Learning

- Access does not imply Learning



Increase learning:

- **Challenges:**

- Enhance Accountability, involve parents,
- Build local capacity to manage teaching,
- Work with teachers' union and schools
- Increase testing (national and international), analysis and information

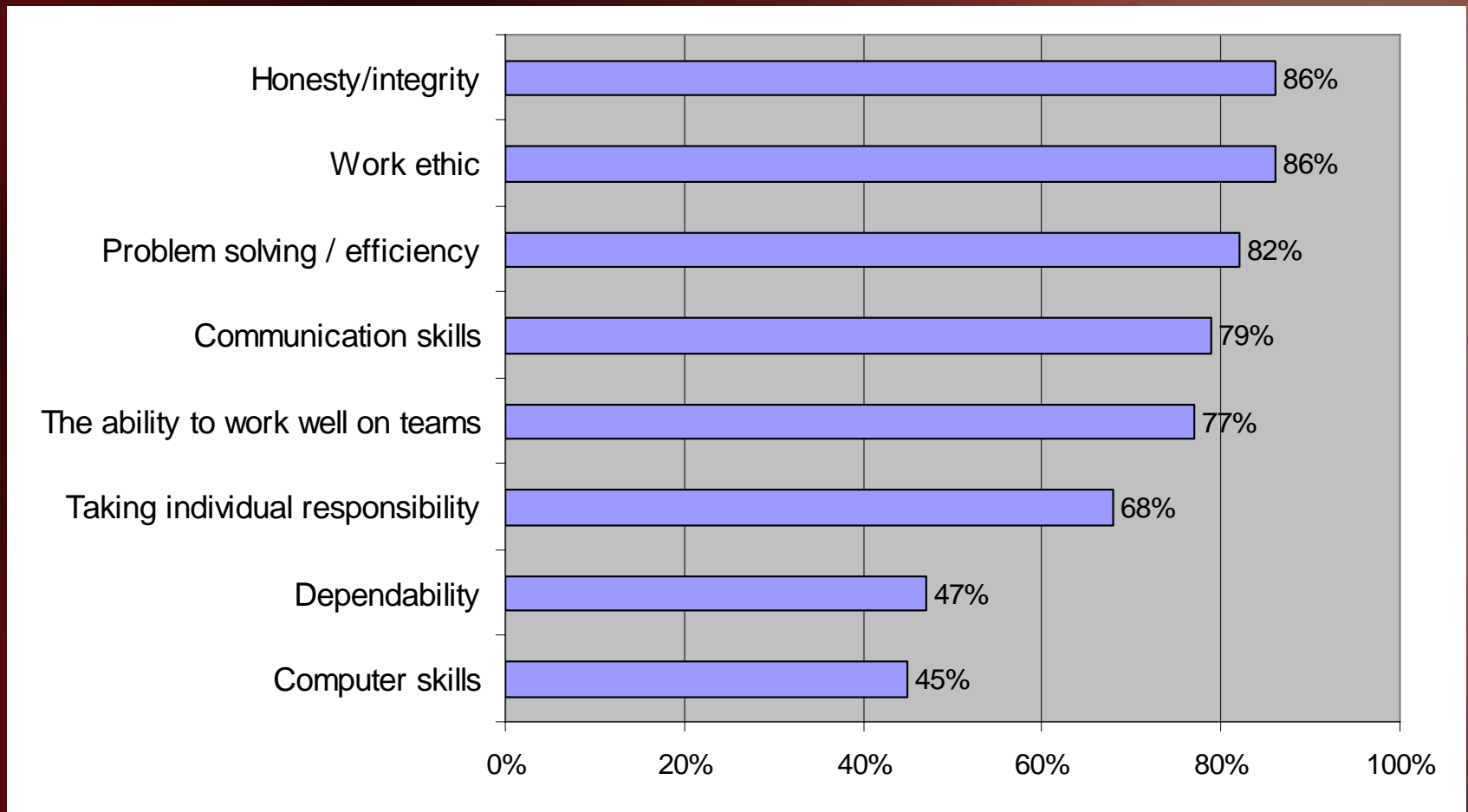
Quality and Learning: New skills

- New “Knowledge economy” skills
- The Definition and Selection of Competencies (DeSeCo) reviewed 12 countries on competencies for a knowledge society
- Wide variations, but some common competencies

High	Medium	Low
Social competencies/ cooperation	Self-competence/self- management	Health/sports/physical competencies
Literacy/intelligent and applicable knowledge	Political competence/ democracy	Cultural competencies (athletic, creative, intercultural, media)
Learning competencies/ lifelong learning	Ecological competence/ relation to nature	
Communication competencies	Value orientation	

Knowledge economy skills in the Caribbean

Caribbean: Employers' assessment of most desired skill set



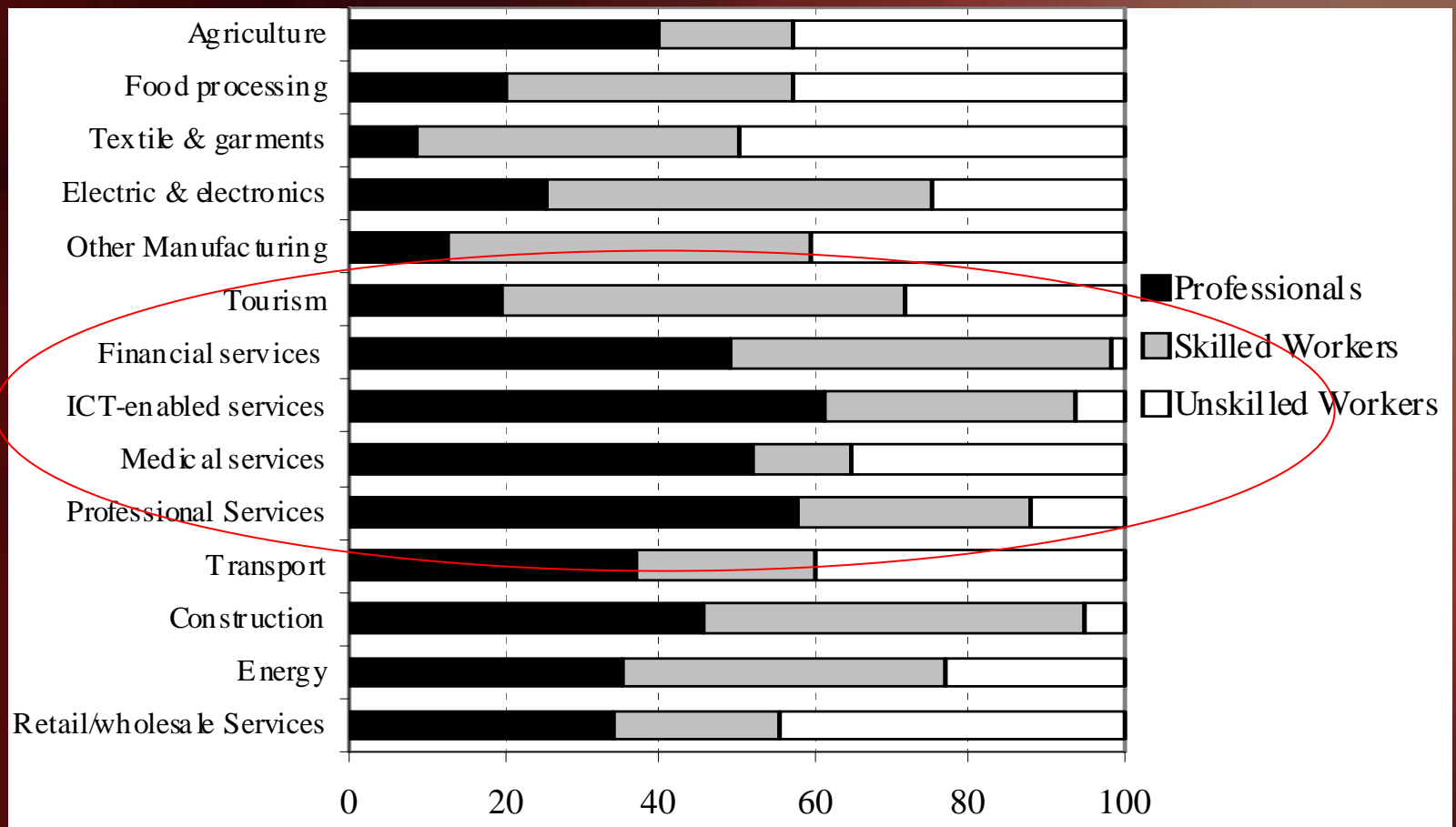
Imparting these knowledge economy skills?

- **Challenges:**
 - **Exam-driven: education to obtain a credential (not competences),**
 - **Team and project oriented teaching**
 - **In-service training of teachers**

Enhance relevance of skills and careers

- Specialization of the global economy
- Niche products in manufacturing and agriculture
- Services (Tourism, banking, call centers)?
- Skills and knowledge as a critical factor for competitiveness

Workers by education level per economic sector in the Caribbean



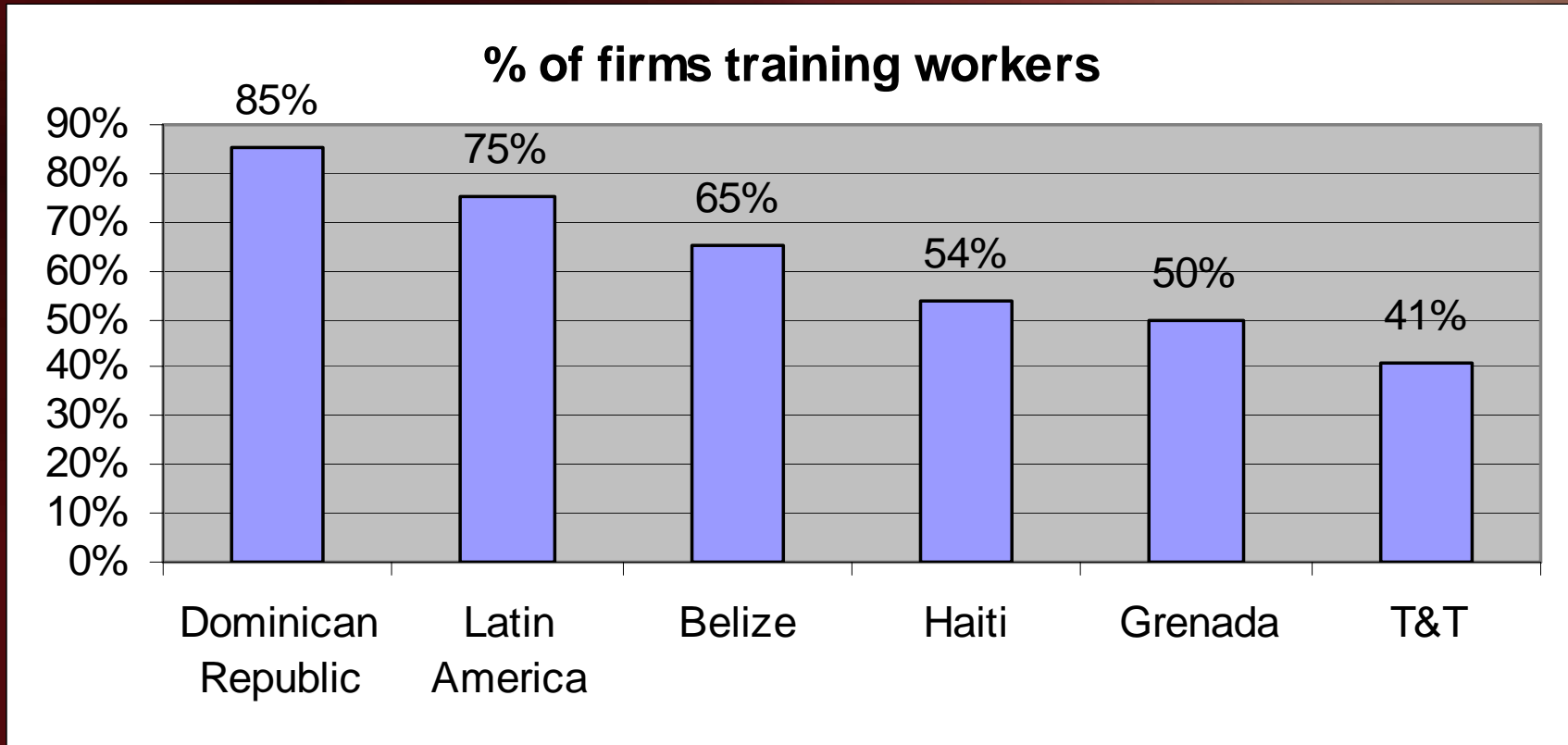
Enhancing Relevance

- **Challenges:**

- Specialize through collaboration across countries / internationalization,
- Build linkages with employers,
- What does it take to make education and science more linked to a country's development? Governance reform?
- Increase student guidance

Lifelong learning

- Aging population, scope for adoption of more technology and productivity
- Low training of work force



Source: Caribbean Investment Climate Assessment, World Bank (2005)

Stimulating lifelong learning

- **Reasons**

- **Lack of emphasis and systemic approach:**
 - Improve firms' HR policy
 - Increase labor unions' focus on training
 - Government: many small ad-hoc efforts
- **Low recognition and value of training**

- **Challenges:**

- **Link levels (qualification framework)**
- **Collaboration to reach economies of scale**
- **Work on the portability within the CSME**
- **Monitoring and evaluation**

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**Thank you so much for the
attention**

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