

# INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND THE EXPLOSION OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Preliminary evidence from text mining analysis on 1400 social partners  
newsletters

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**Collective Agreements, Low Wages and Covid**

**Online event**

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# Outline

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- Methodology and analytical approach
- Structure of the database
- Preliminary results
- Future steps

# Methodology and analytical approach

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## Research Question 1

- Will the Covid consequences affect the industrial relations landscape and the degree of coordination among employers, workers, their respective representatives, and public authorities in Europe?

## Aim is to analyse:

- The character of social dialogue and public discourse in relation to the policy responses to the covid-19 pandemic
- The evolution and progress in the public discourse over time
- The convergence/heterogeneity across EU countries

## Methods

- Data mining techniques (keyword-based search) and text analysis with Python and Dedoose
- **1,428 text extractions collected** from social partners' press releases and newsletters at the national and EU level
- Keyword extraction to classify each news item for prevalence of keywords (related to the policies and pandemic-related themes)

## Sources for data mining

- Newsletters from: Wageindicator (20%), ETUI (12%), BusinessEurope (10%), UniEurope (5%), National level letters (40%), Others (12%)

# Methodology and analytical approach

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## Analytical approach

1. Quantitative analysis (whole sample=1,428):  
(a) analysis of the frequency of policies; (b) comparison of the 1st and 2nd year of the pandemic
  
2. Quantitative and qualitative analysis based on the welfare regimes typology (N=1,047)  
(a) comparison of policies between the types of welfare regimes;  
(b) comparison between the first and the second pandemic year.

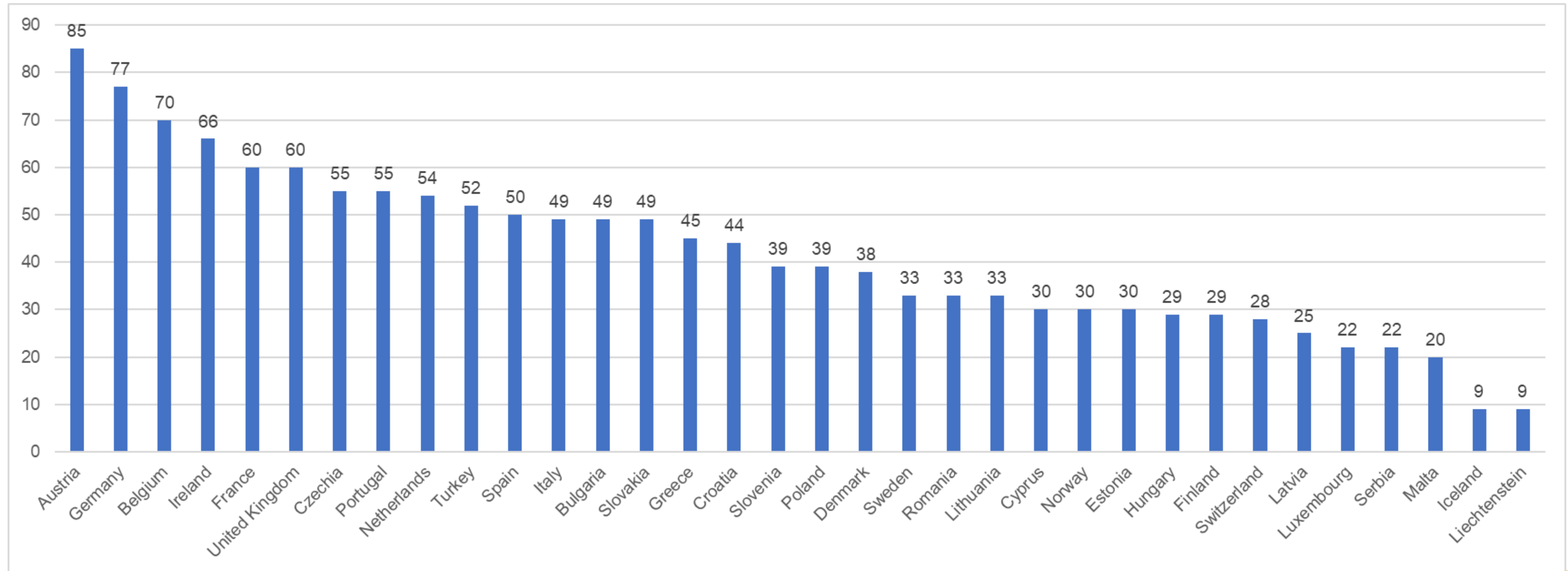
**Focus on six categories of policies:** job retention schemes, loans, remote work, care-giver support, measures for non-standard workers, and protection of workers

Qualitative analysis: text analysis of 150 newsletters across welfare regimes (Dedoose software)



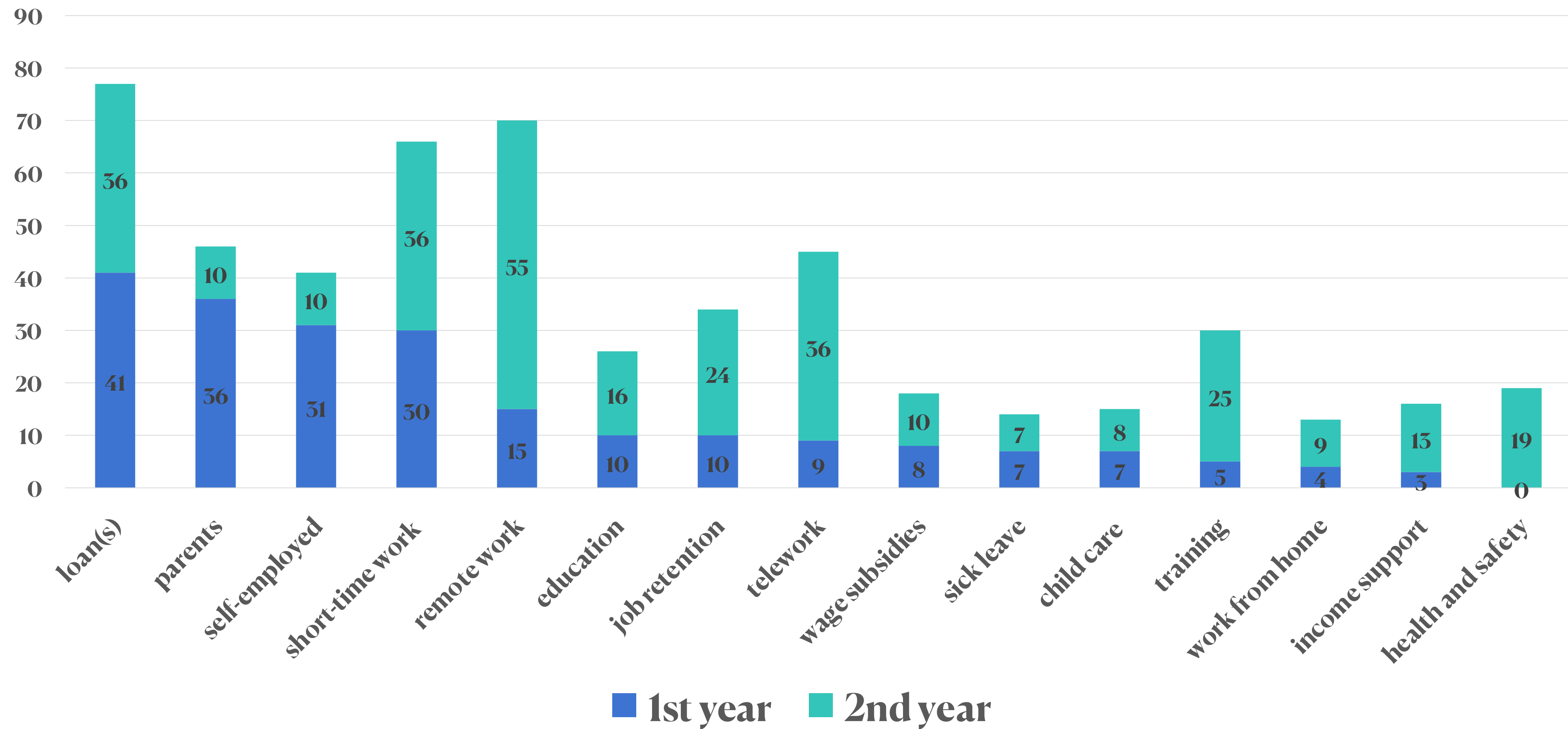
# Structure of the database

*The distribution of the text extractions by country (N=1,428)*



Source: Authors

# Preliminary results\_ The frequency of keywords between two pandemic years 2020 and 2021; N=571



Source: Authors

# Welfare regimes

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Countries welfare regime classification follows Ferrera (2020):

- ✦ Conservative regimes (Austria, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Netherlands),
- ✦ Liberal regimes (Ireland and United Kingdom),
- ✦ Mediterranean countries (Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain and Cyprus),
- ✦ Social Democratic Regimes (Denmark, Finland, Sweden and Iceland)
- ✦ Central and Easter Europe (Czechia, Croatia, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia)

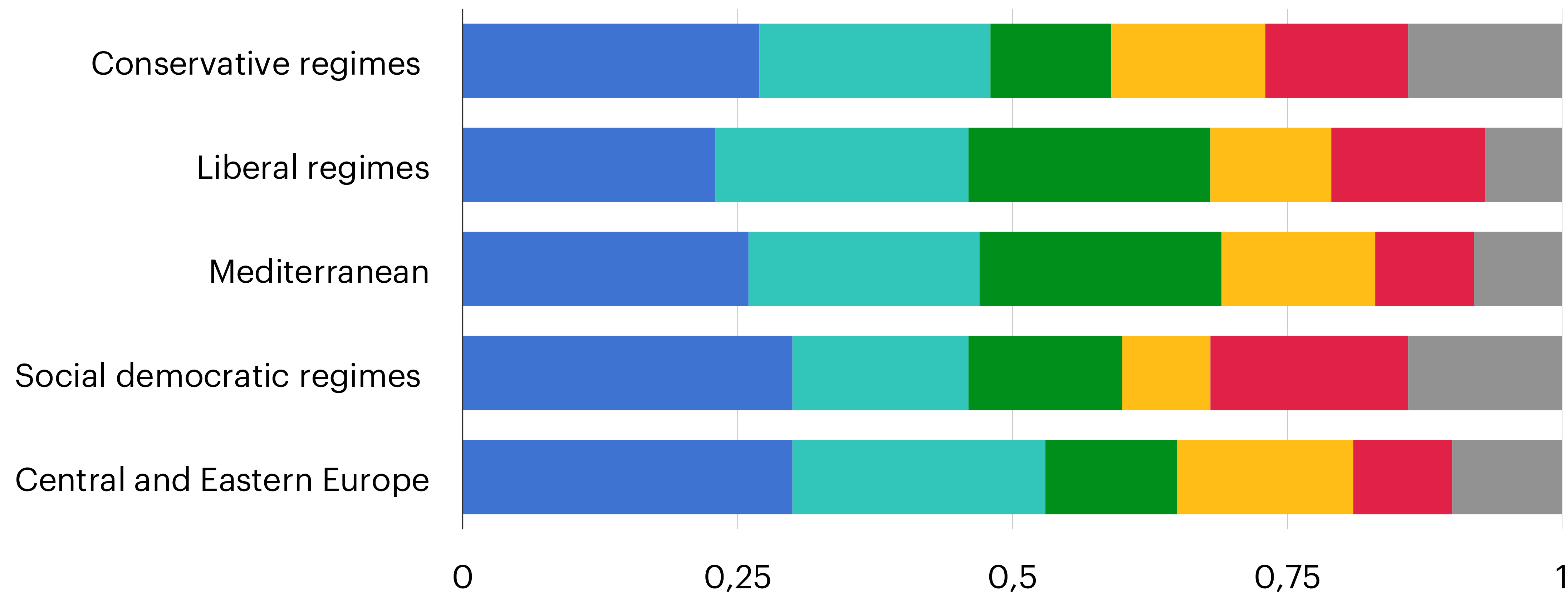
Source:

Esping-Andersen, G. (1990). *The three worlds of welfare capitalism*. Princeton University Press,

Castles, F. G., & Ferrera, M. (1996). Home ownership and the welfare state: is Southern Europe different? *South European Society and Politics*, 1(2), 163-185.

Adascalitei, D. (2012). Welfare state development in Central and Eastern Europe: A state of the art literature review. *Studies of Transition States and Societies*, 4(2).

# Preliminary results\_differences across countries 2020-2022



■ Job retention schemes  
■ Protection of workers  
■ Care-giver support

■ Remote work and telework  
■ Non-standard workers  
■ Loans



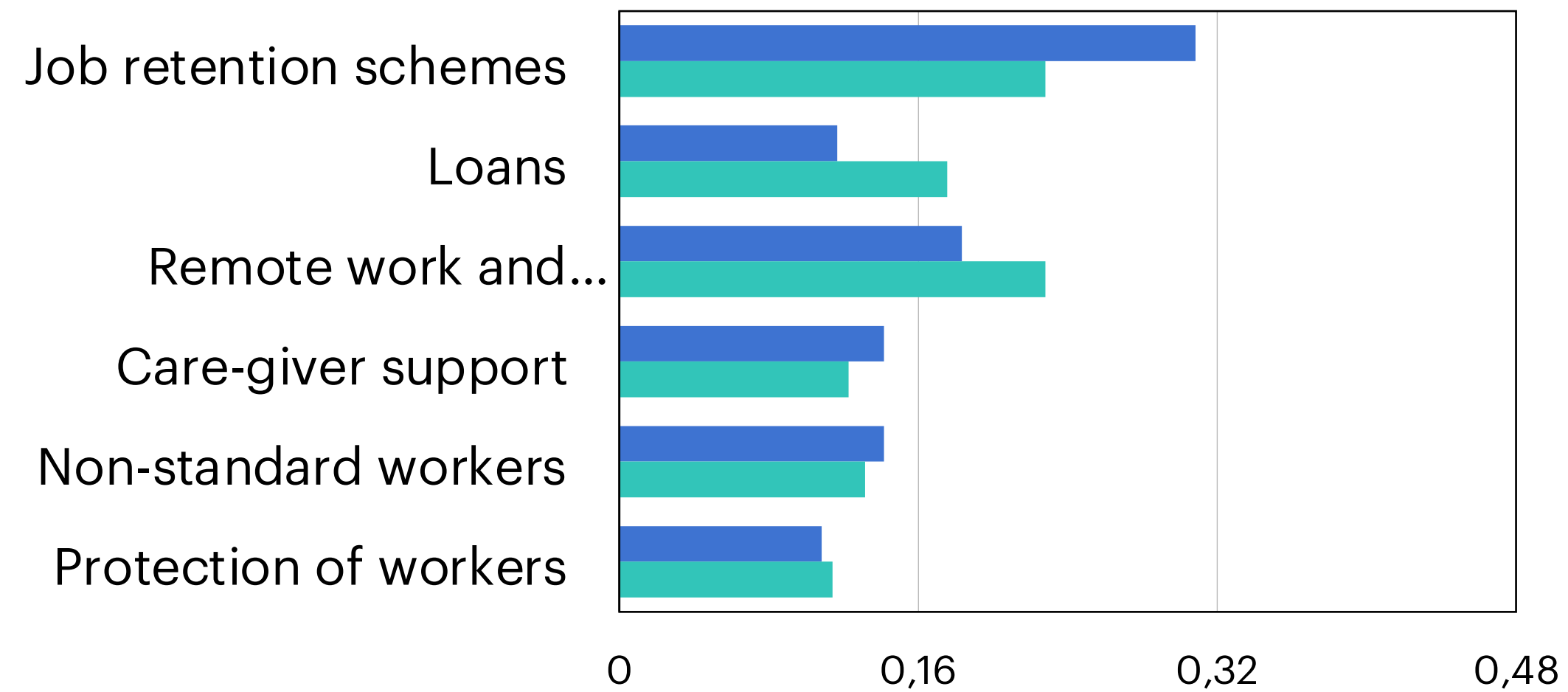
# Preliminary results\_differences across countries 2020-2022

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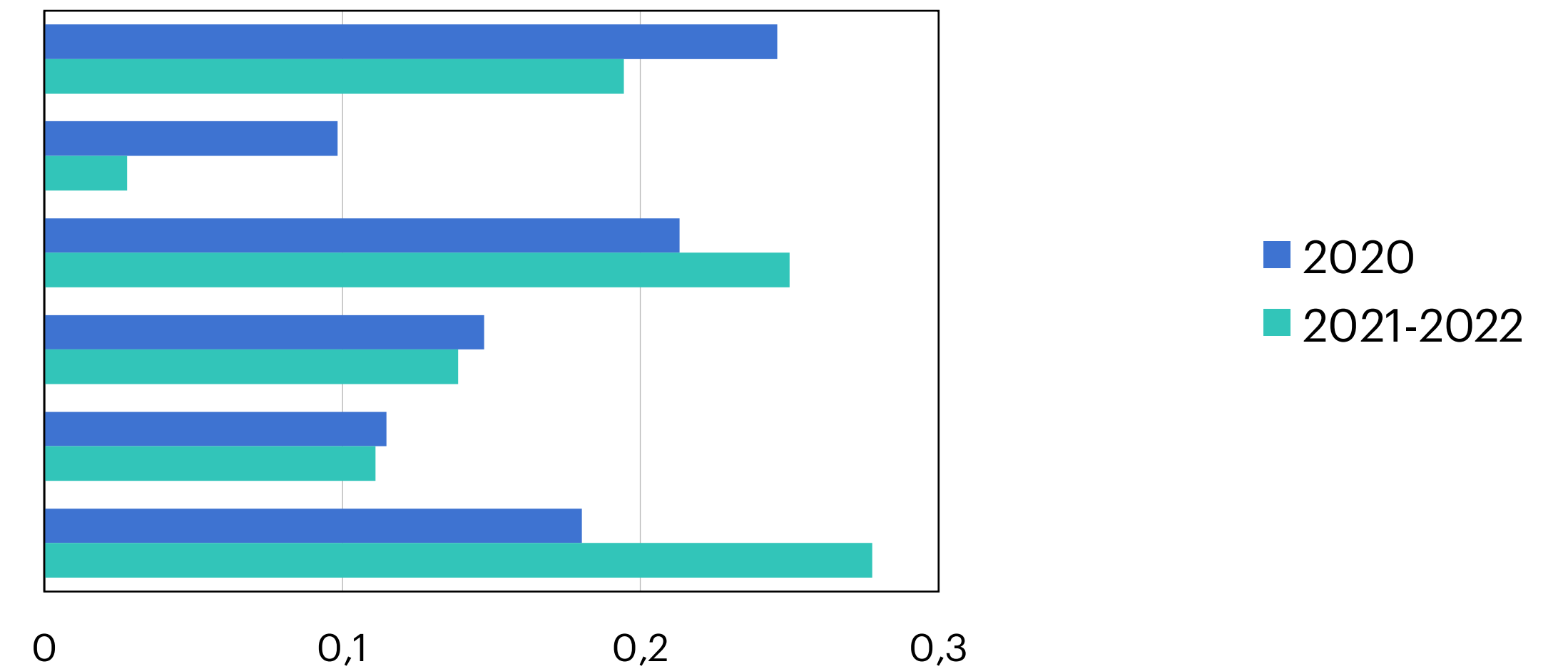
- Different types of **job retention schemes** seem to be in the spotlight of social dialogue in most of the countries and across all the welfare regimes (in particular, regulation of the short-time work scheme in CEE, following the German Kurzarbeit model).
- Novel policies discussed by the social partners during the pandemic concern **new flexible working arrangements/remote work** and increasing focus of trade unions on **non-standard workers** (particularly in Mediterranean and CEE countries).
- Social democratic and conservative regimes put more emphasis on the support for the **care-givers**, whereas scarce attention is paid to this topic by Mediterranean and CEE countries.

# Preliminary results \_ evolution over time

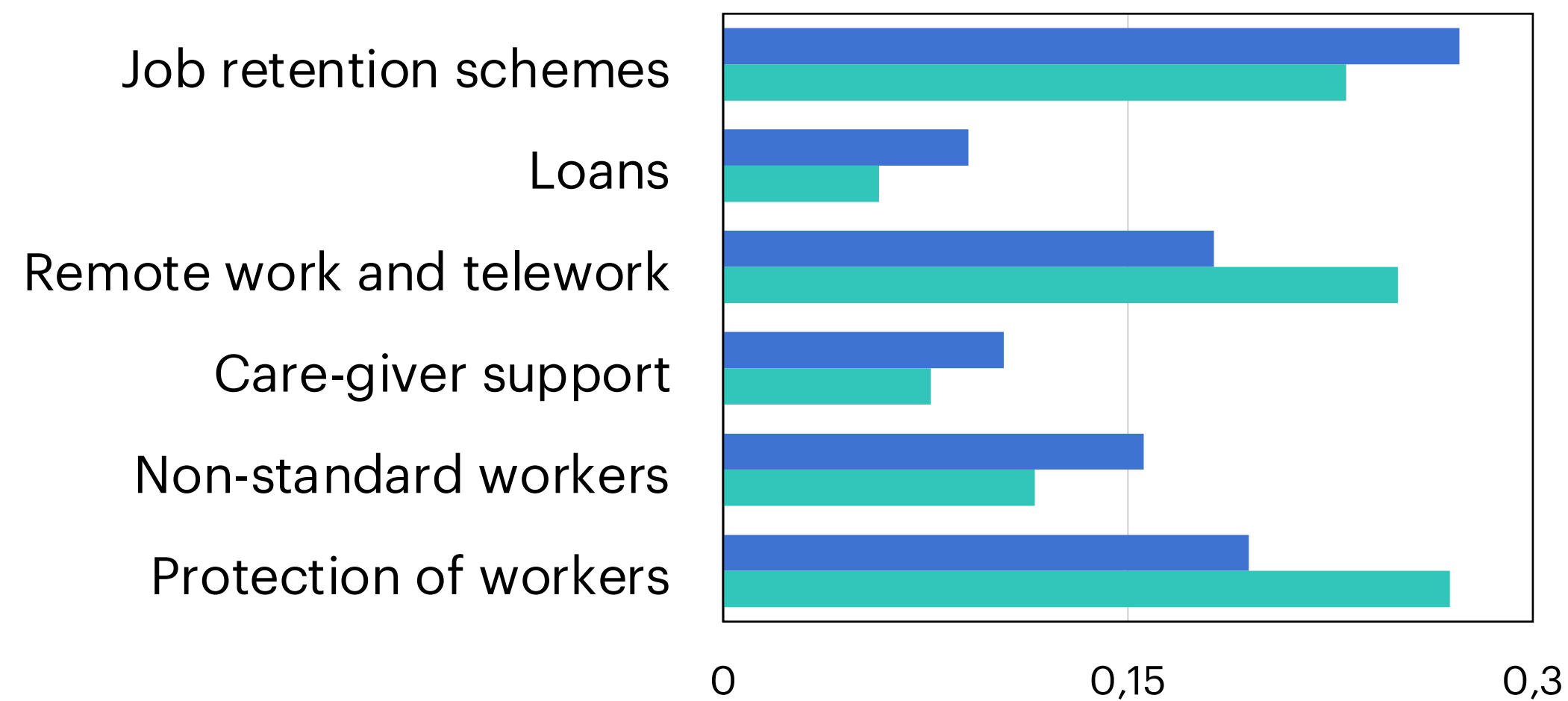
*Conservative regimes*



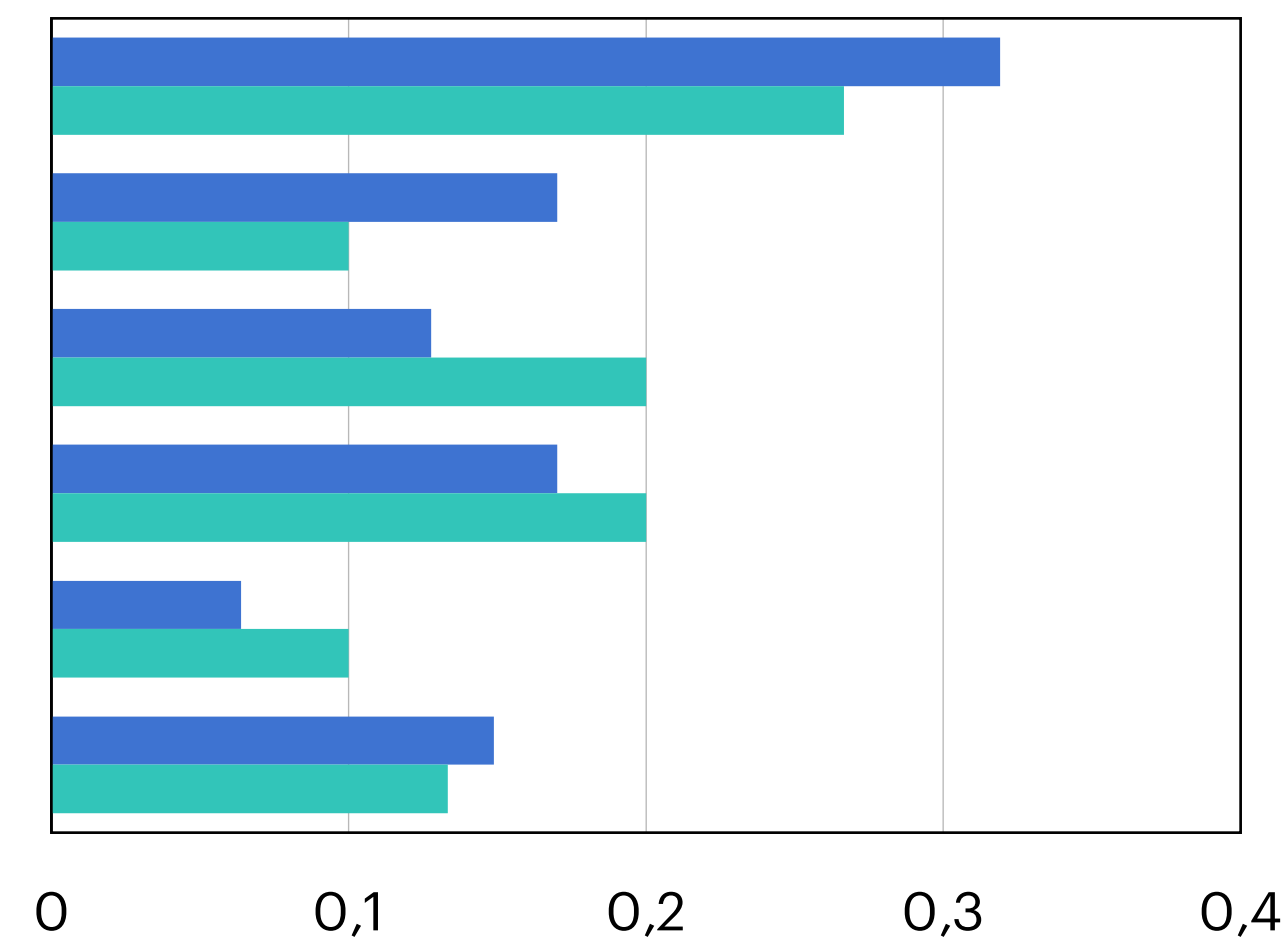
*Liberal regimes*



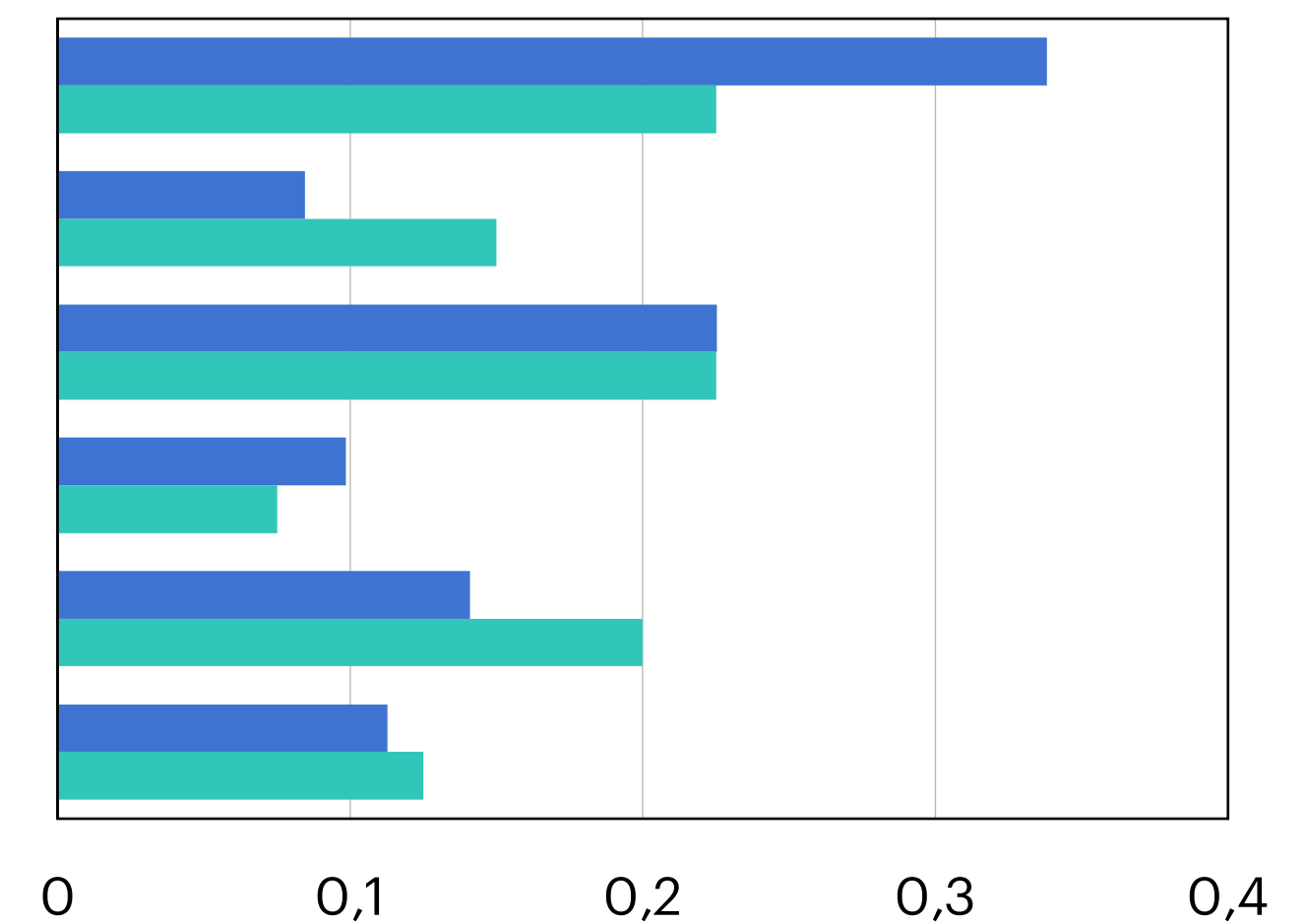
*Mediterranean countries*



*Social democratic regimes*

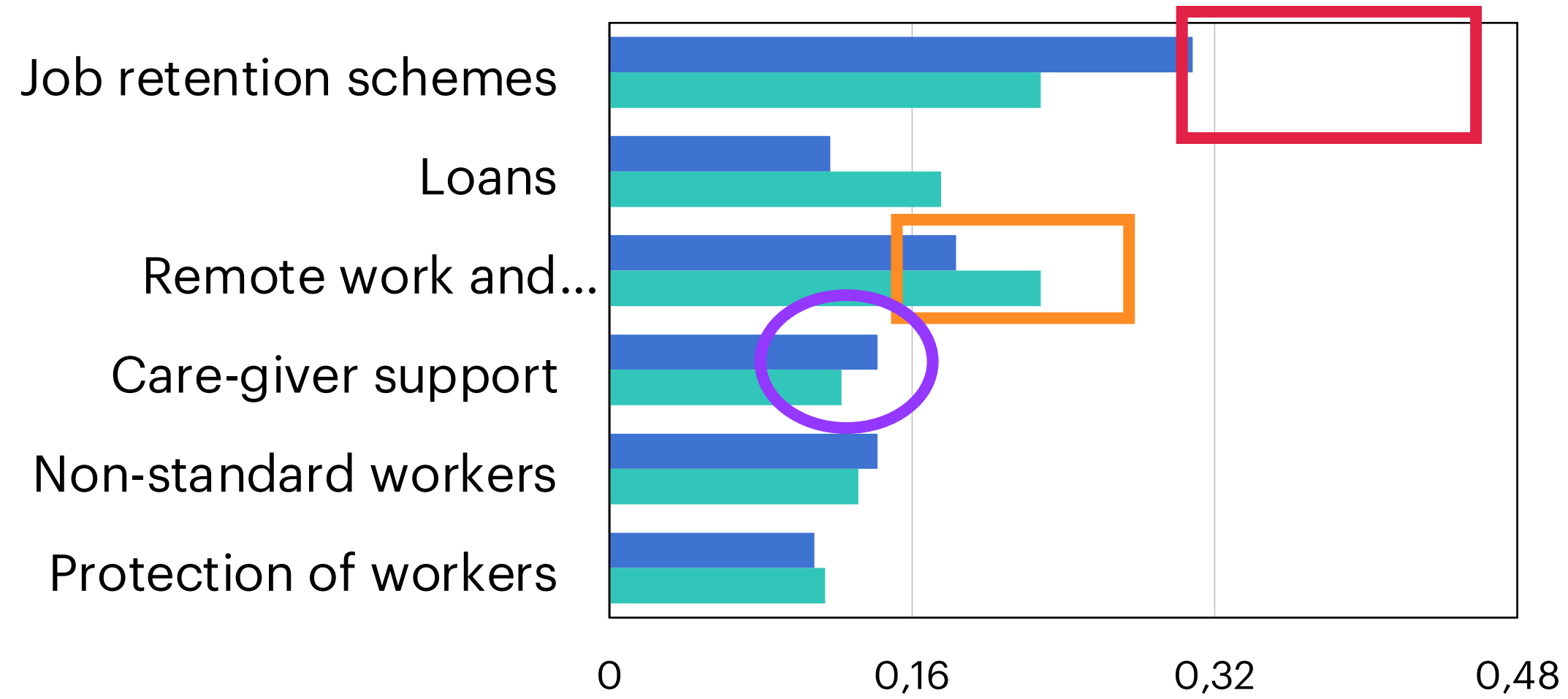


*Central and Eastern Europe*

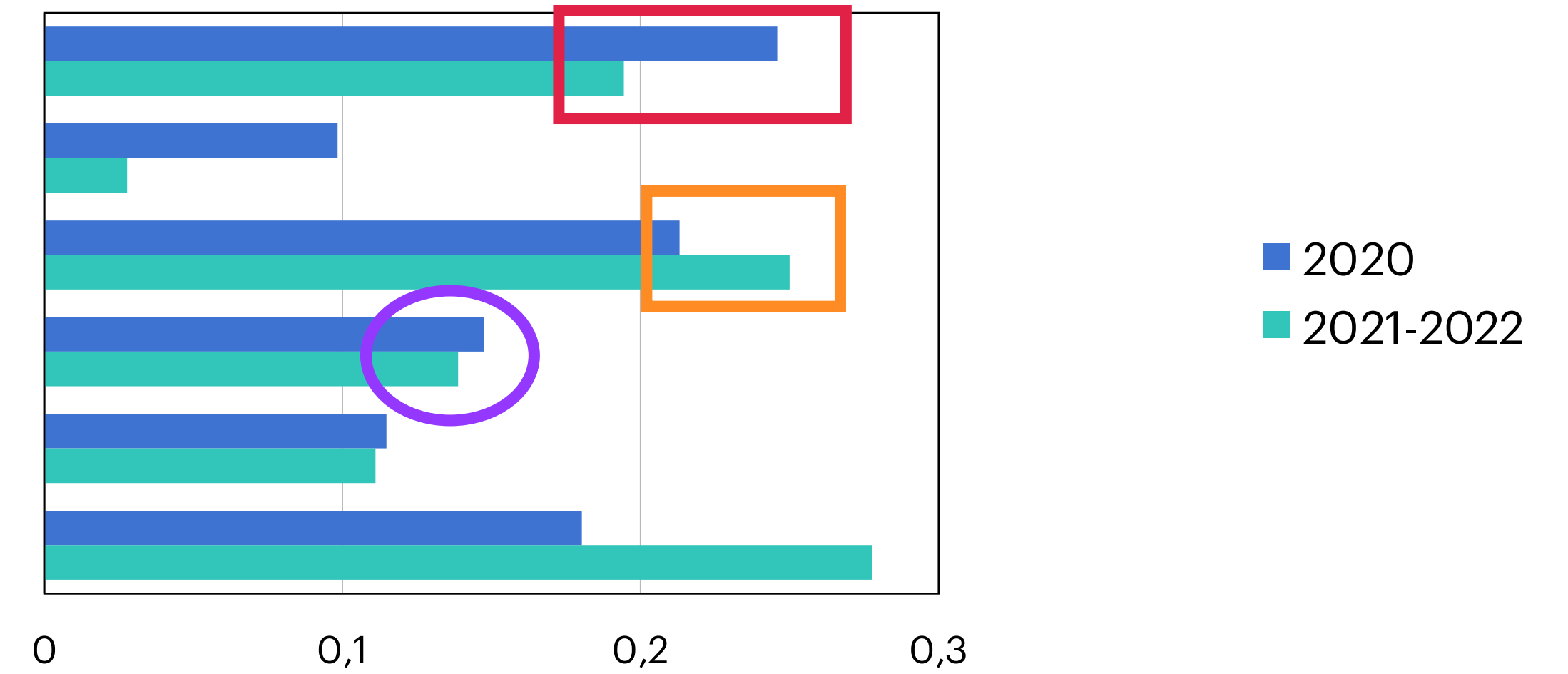


# Preliminary results \_ evolution over time

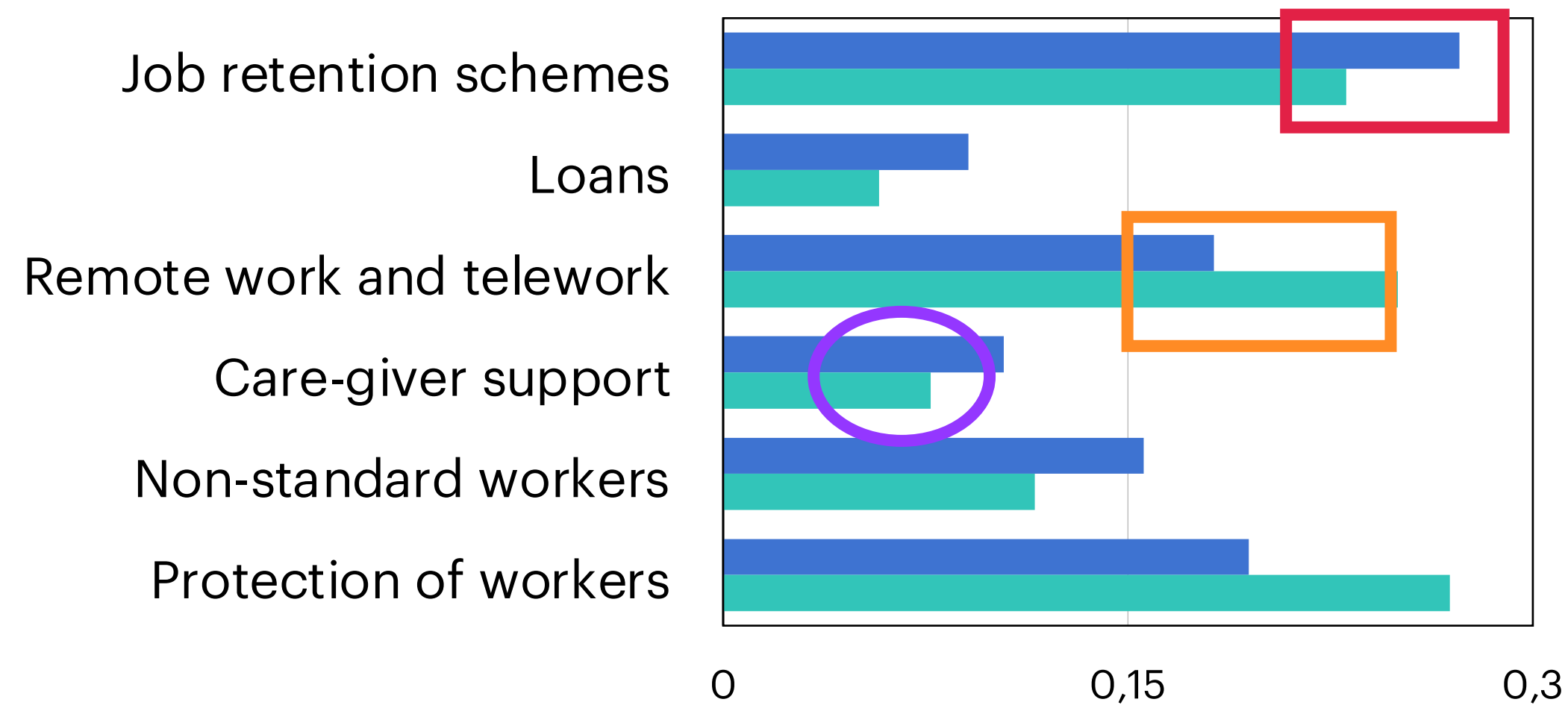
*Conservative regimes*



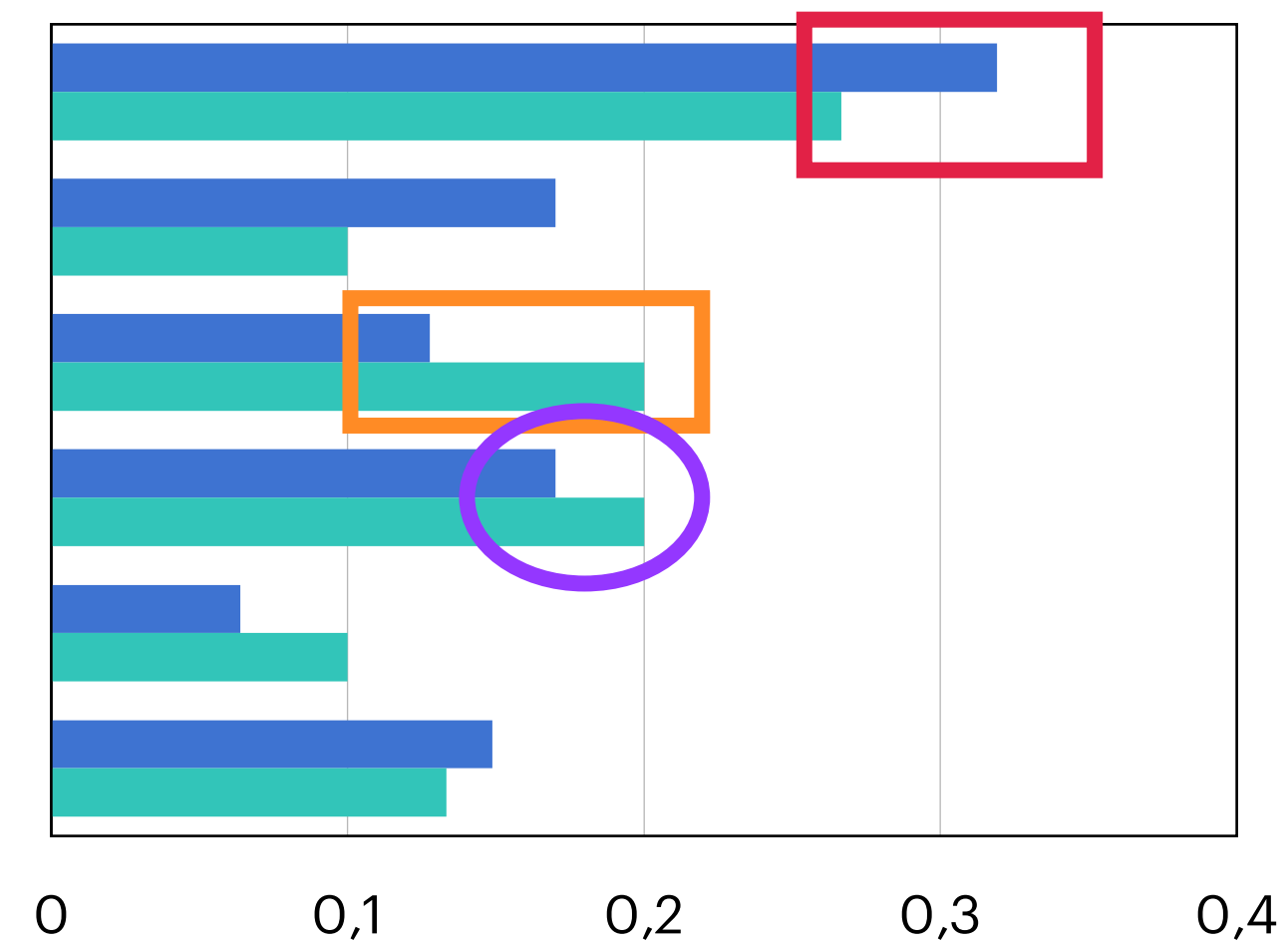
*Liberal regimes*



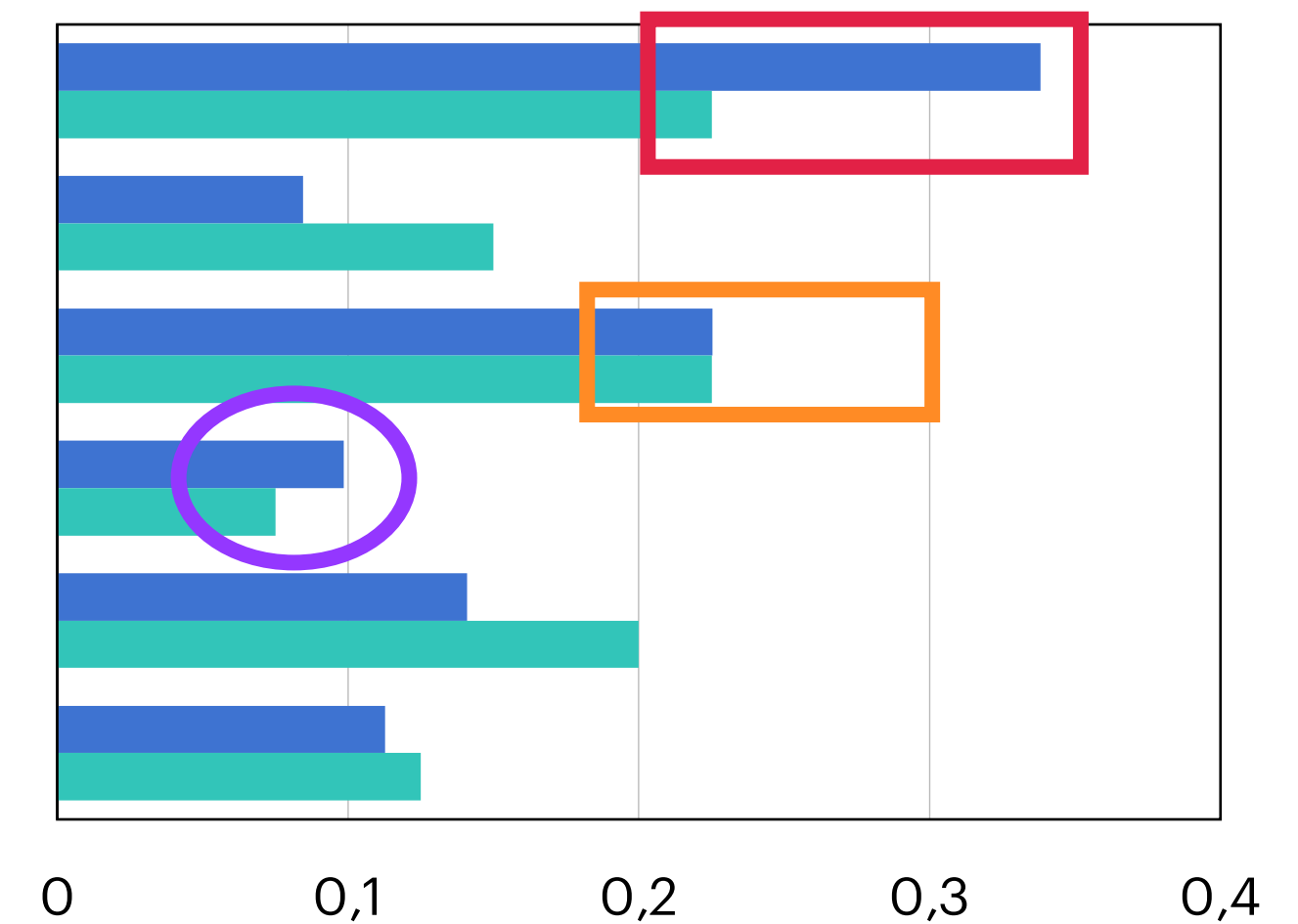
*Mediterranean countries*



*Social democratic regimes*



*Central and Eastern Europe*



# Future steps

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- To continue enlarging the database
  - ✦ including further newsletter sources in the database
- To conduct further quantitative and qualitative analysis of the newsletters
  - ✦ better understanding of social partners' claims by grasping further contextual information about the social dialogue/public discourse by qualitative research methods (emerging country clusters from semantic analysis)
  - ✦ conducting further analysis of keywords associations (with the enlarged sample)
- Interview/survey to national and European trade unions (to be launched in Fall 2022)
  - ✦ renewal strategies and obstacles to collective bargaining during the pandemic

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# Thank you!

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Additional material can be found at <https://wageindicator.org/Wageindicatorfoundation/projects/barcovid>  
(Barcovid publications- reports on Covid-19 impact on industrial relations)