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Children with Additional Support Needs: What can we learn from the statistics?

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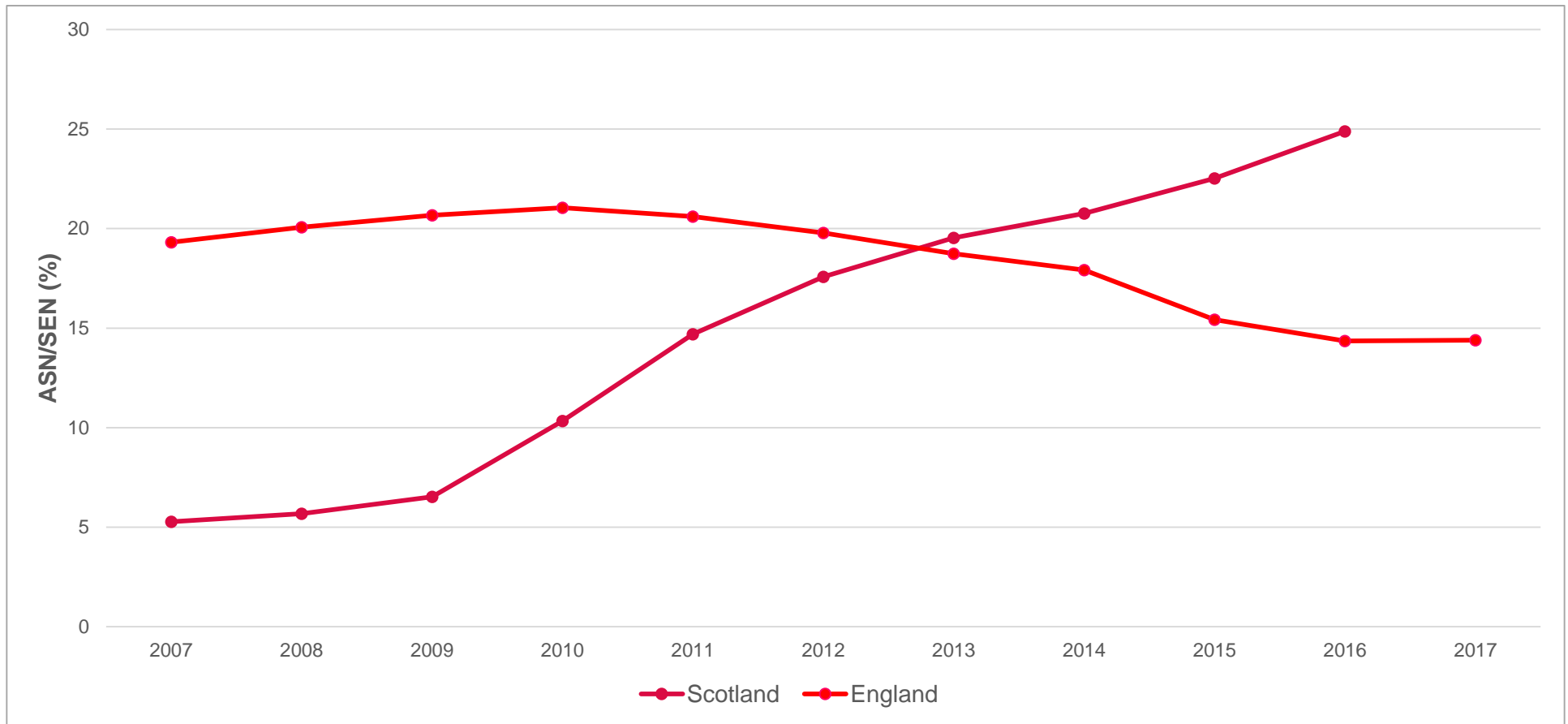
ASN policy background

- **Ongoing focus on inclusion – but definition of ASN population shifts over time.**
- **Special educational needs – referred to children with learning difficulties and disabilities**
- **Additional support needs covers children whose difficulties are mainly social (e.g. children whose parents misuse drugs & alcohol, children of travellers, children of refugees and asylum seekers, looked after children.**
- **ASfL legislation abolished Record of Needs (formal documents given to about 2% of Scottish children) – replaced with Co-ordinated Support Plan (covers about 0.3% of pupils).**
- **Changes in the way that statistics about ASN are gathered, and who is included, has led to a considerable increase in children identified as having ASN – 5% in 2005 and 14.6% in 2011.**



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Overall rates of ASN (Scotland)/SEN (England)

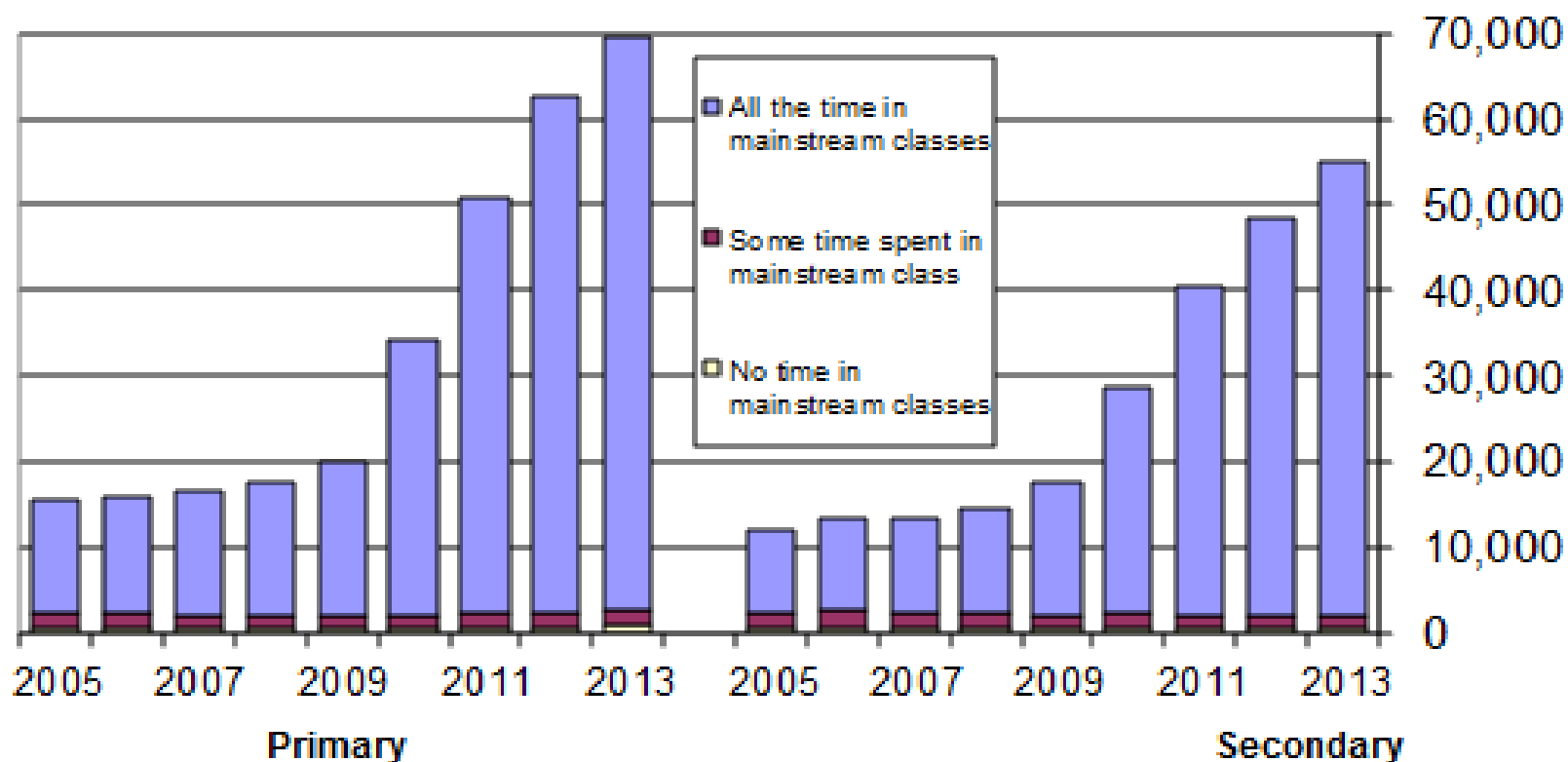


Overall rate of SEN decreasing in England, overall rate of ASN increasing in Scotland



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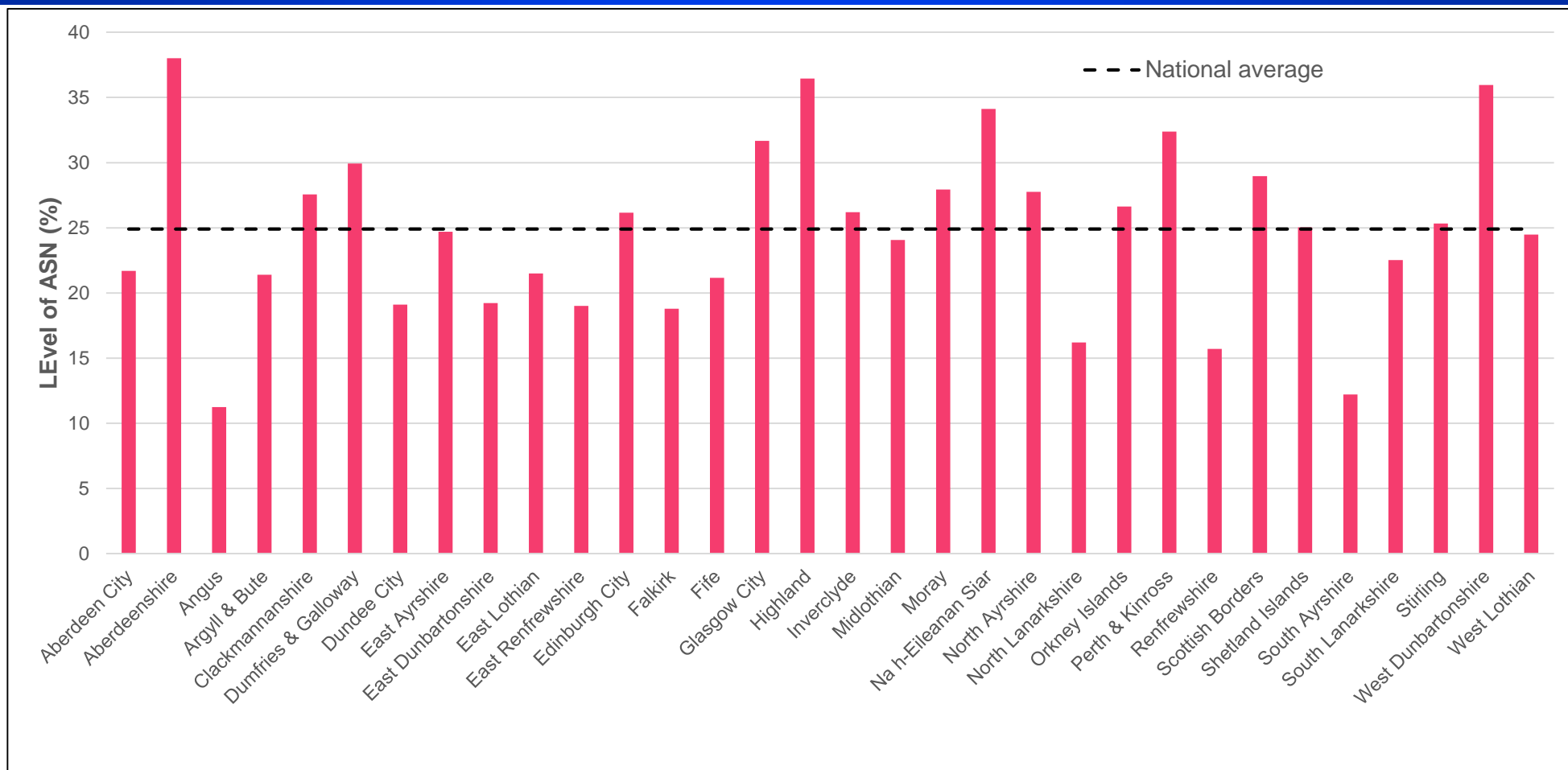
Number of children with ASN and use of special and mainstream settings





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Percentage of pupil population identified as having ASN by local authority

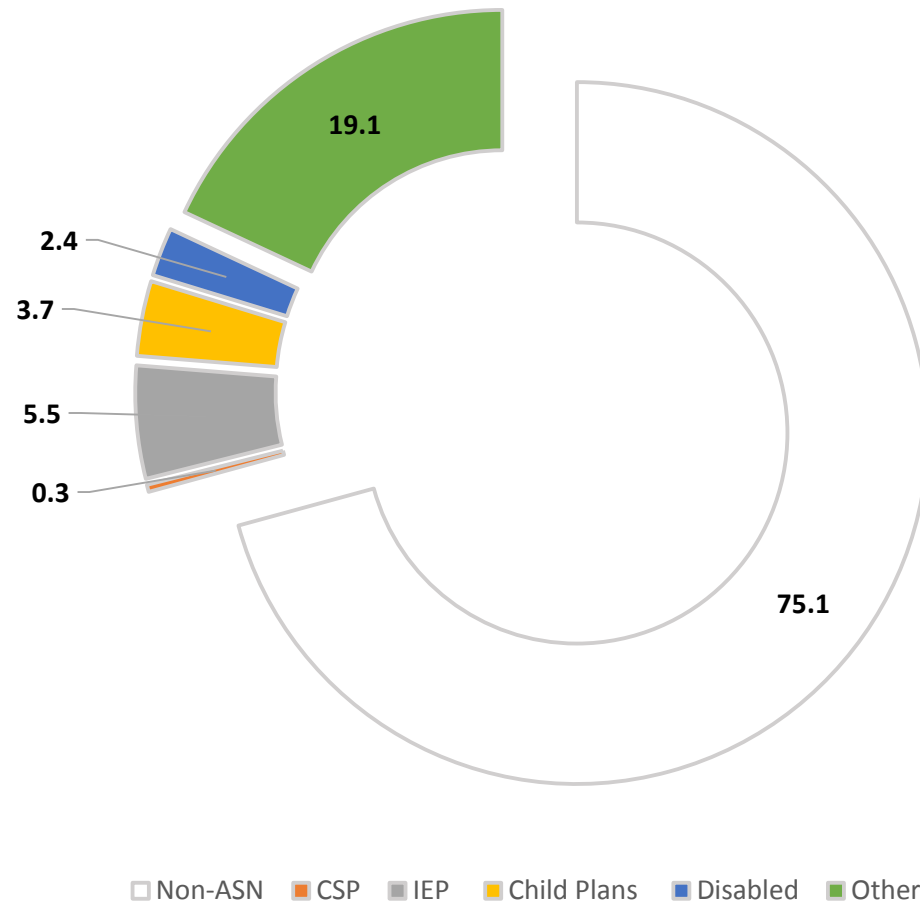


Source: Scottish Government, 2016



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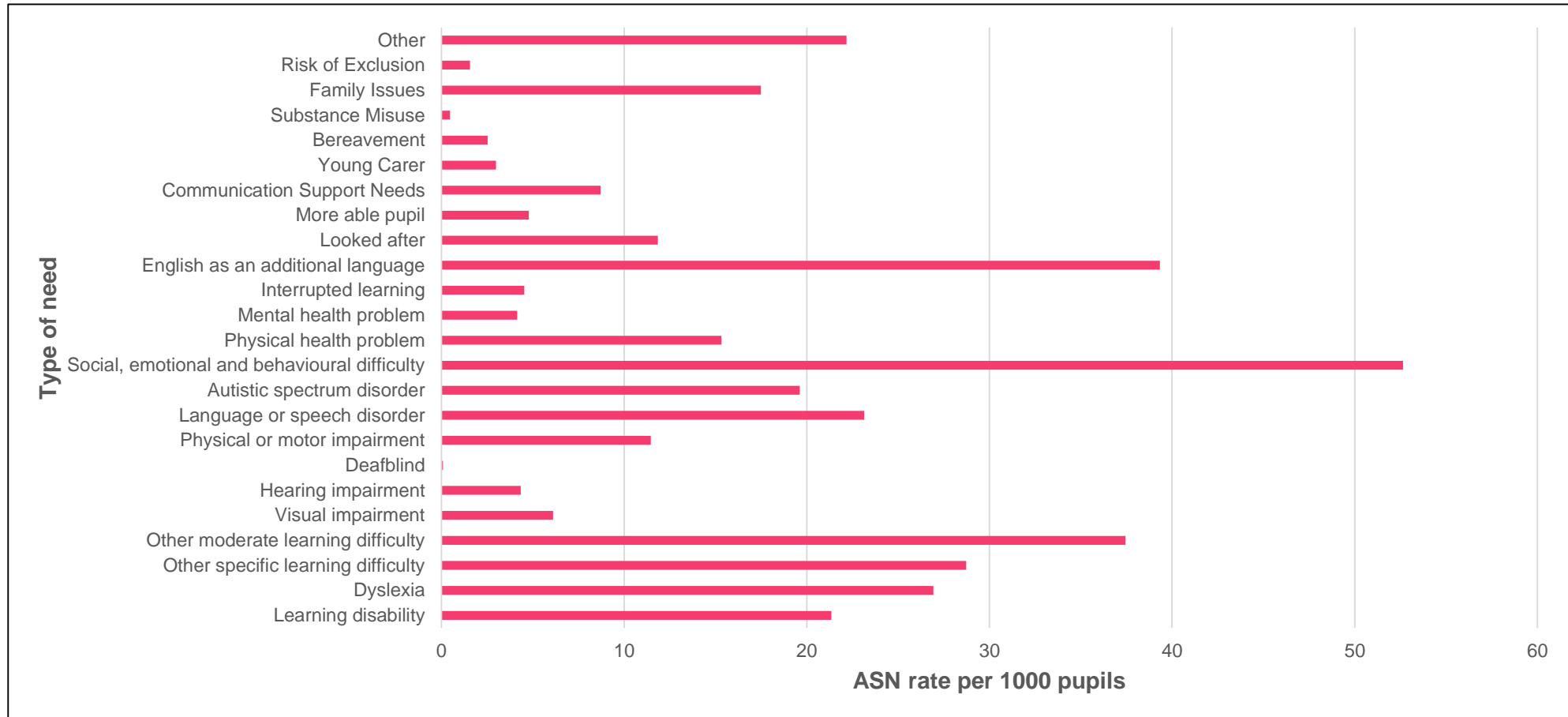
Snapshot of ASN plans





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ASN pupils by each type of need in Scotland, 2016



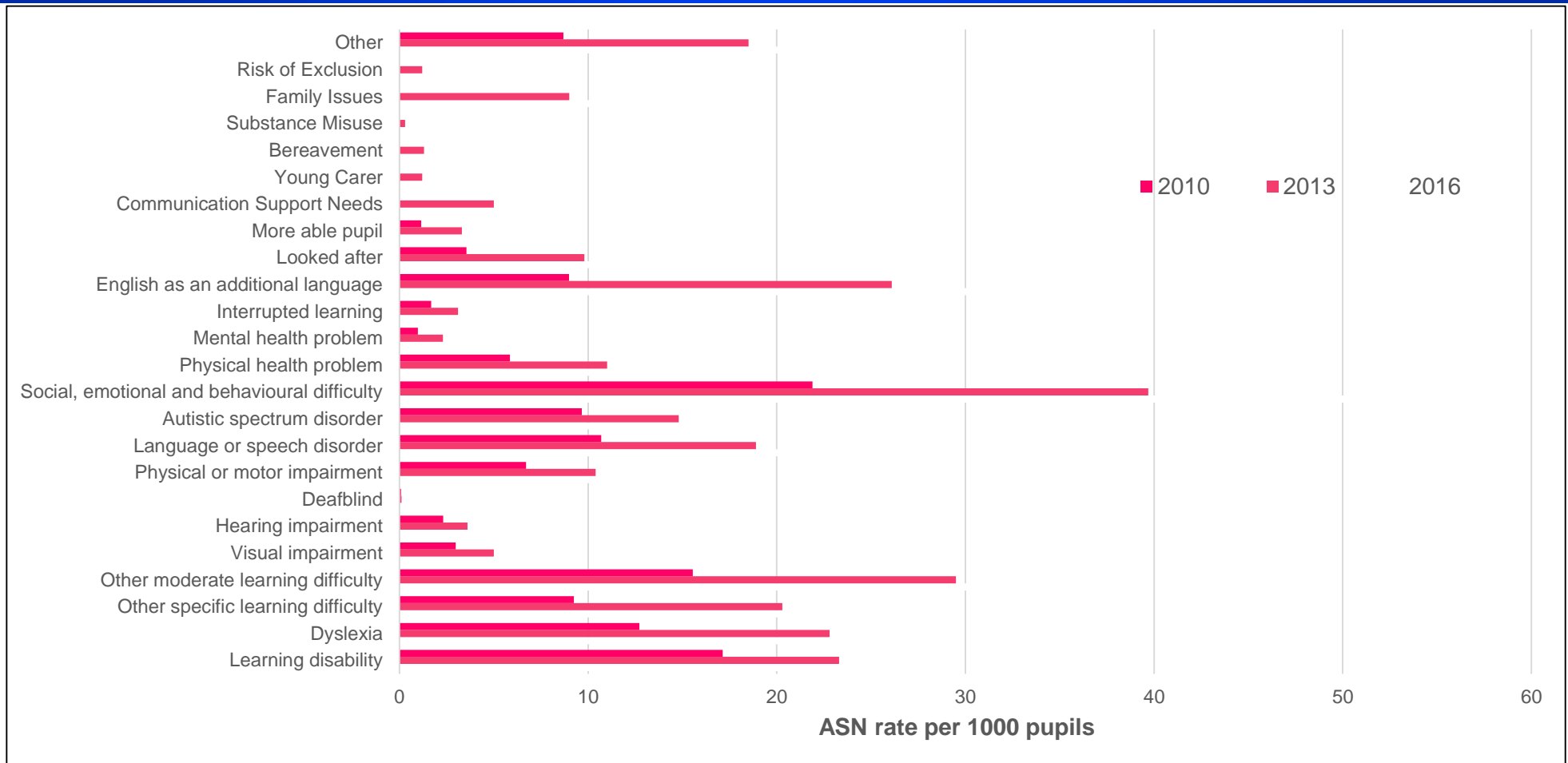
Source: Scottish Government, 2016

Entries per category are not discrete; a child with multiple needs will be recorded in multiple categories.



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ASN pupils by each type of need in Scotland, 2010, 2013 and 2016



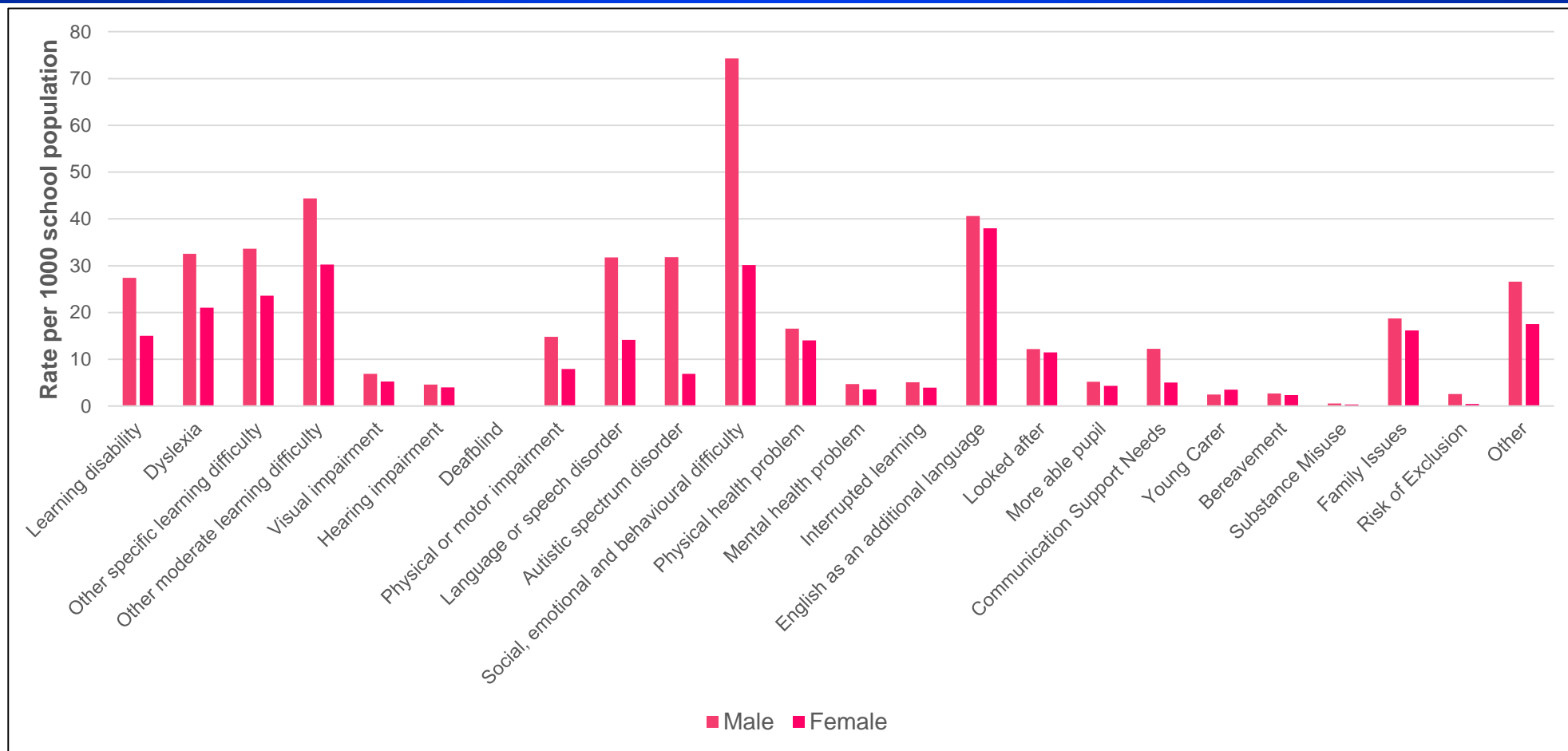
Source: Scottish Government, 2010, 2013, 2016

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ASN by type of need and gender, Scotland 2016: Rate per 1,000 school population



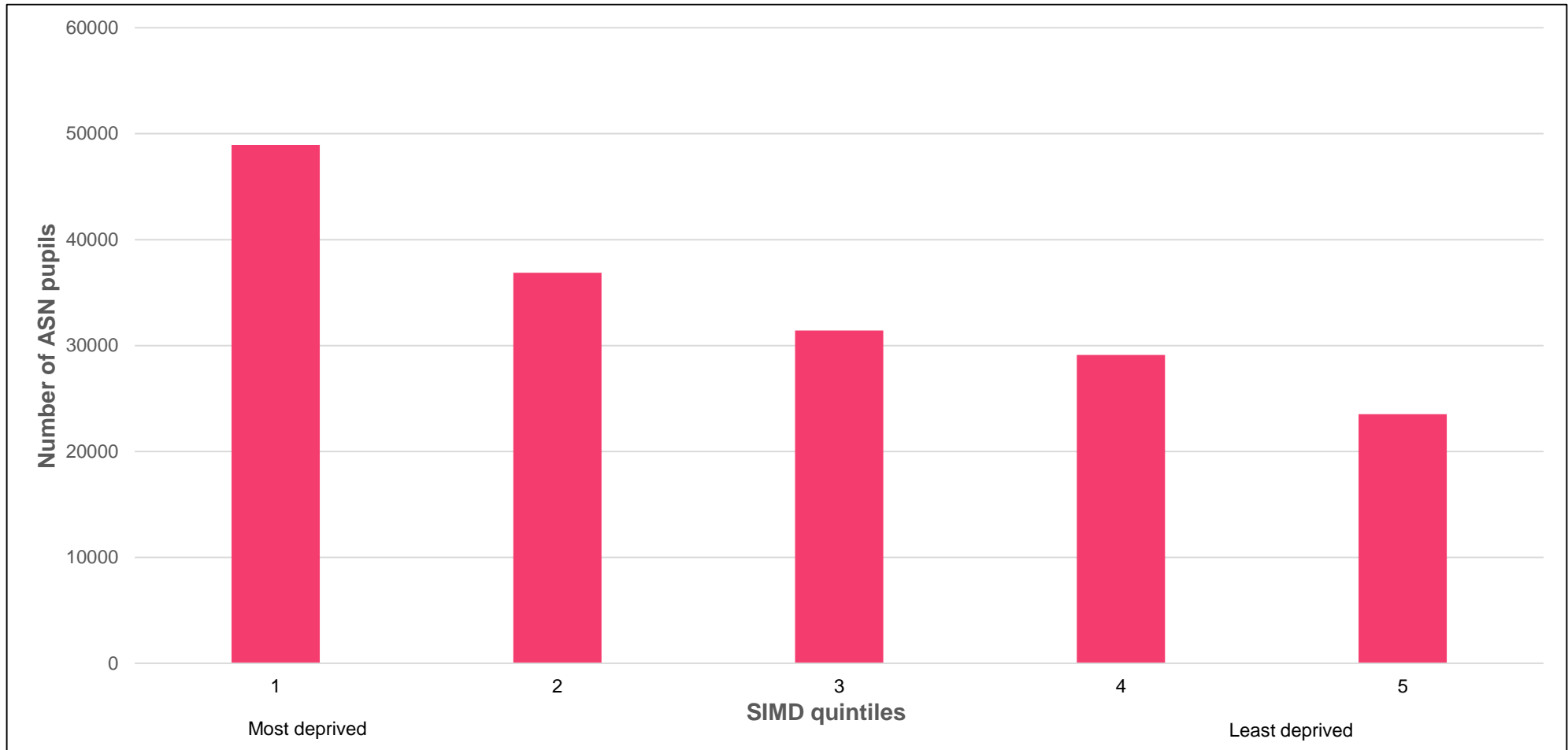
Source: Scottish Government, 2016

Entries per category are not discrete; a child with multiple needs will be recorded in multiple categories.



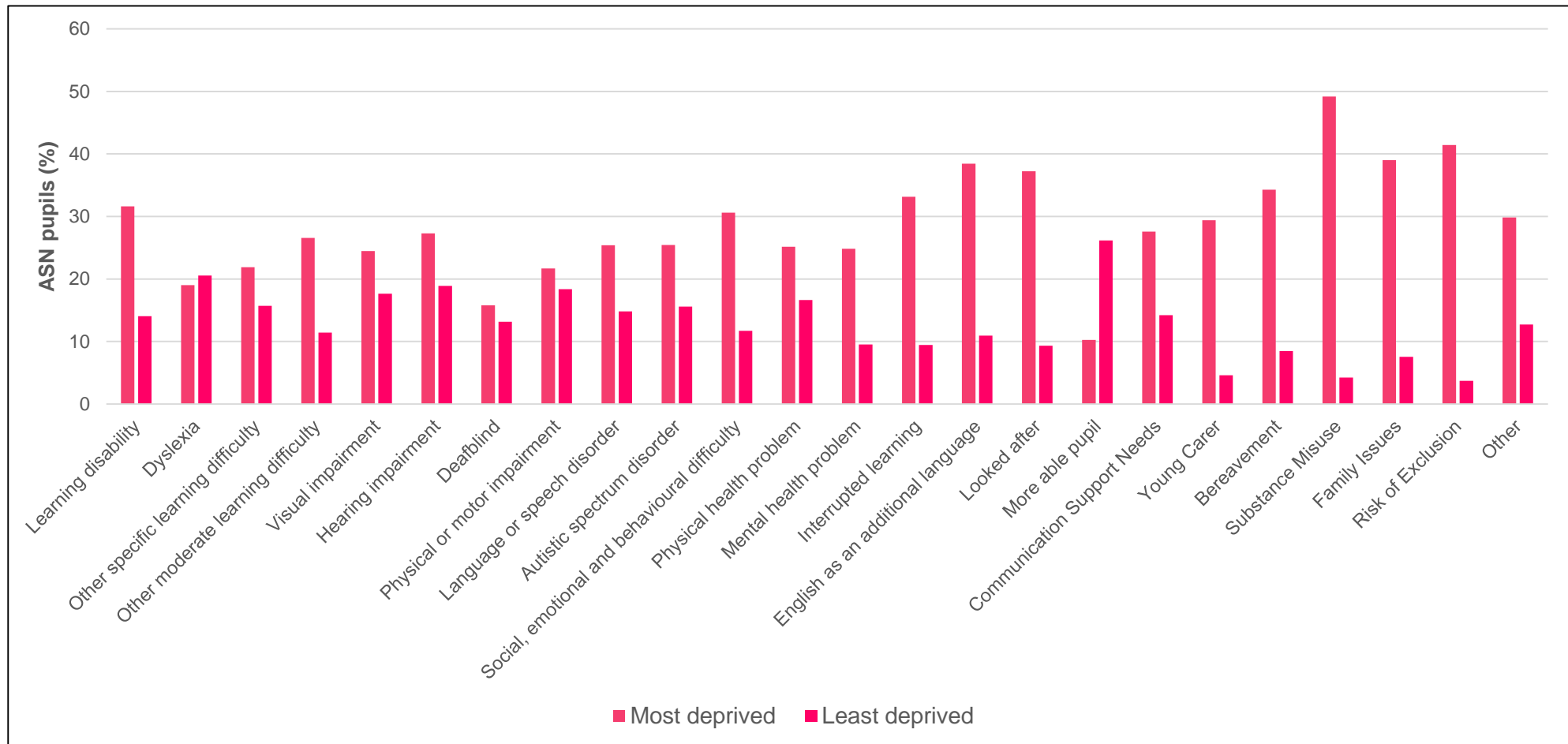
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Number of pupils with ASN by SIMD quintile



Source: Scottish Government, 2016; special request.

Percentage of ASN pupils per category in the most (quintile 1) and least deprived areas (quintile 5)



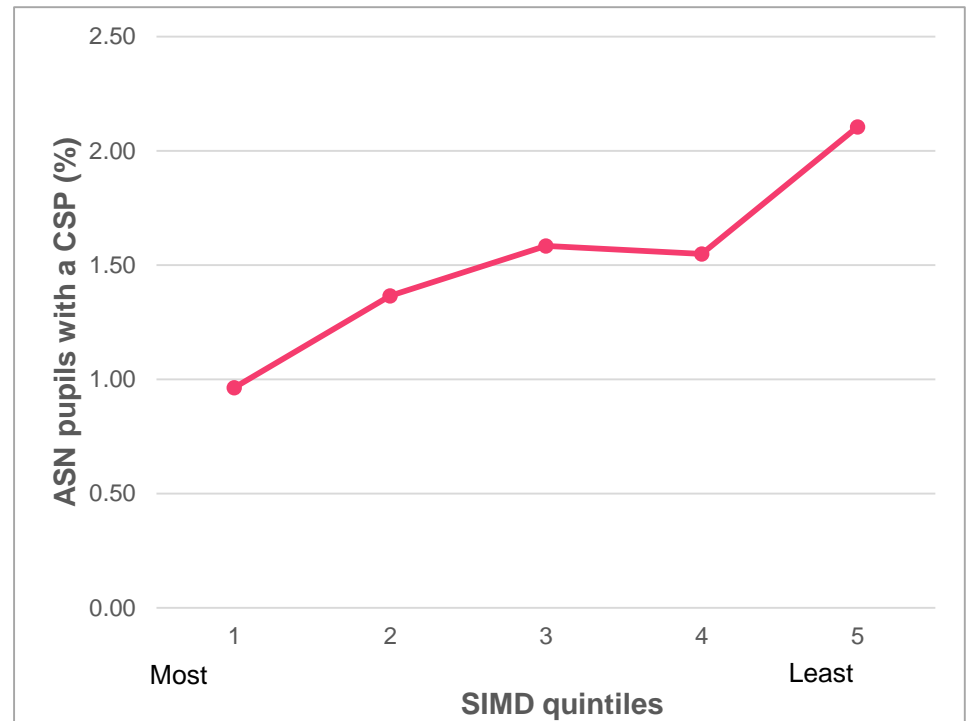
Source: Scottish Government, 2016; special request

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Social Deprivation: ASN & CSP

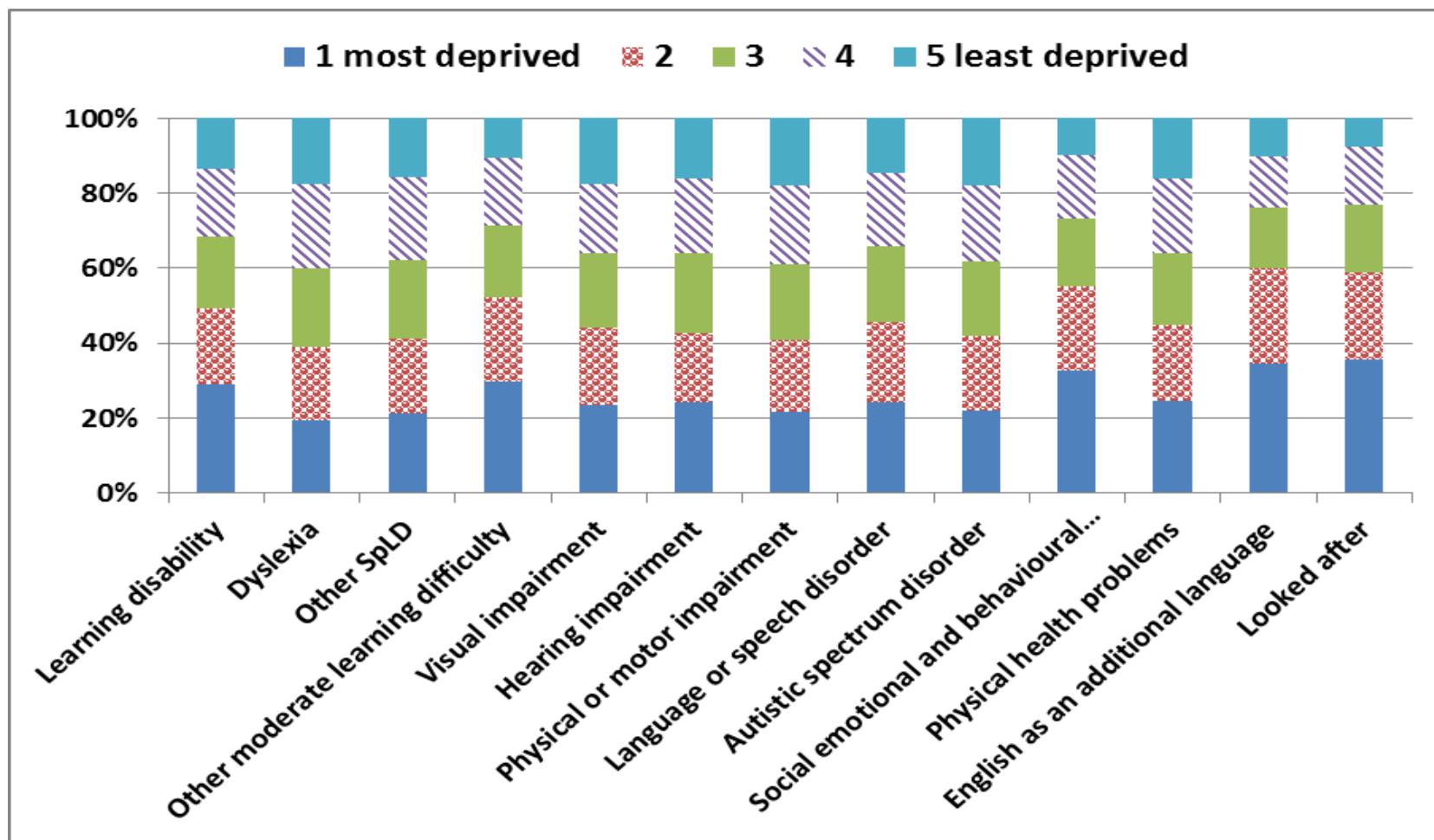


Higher numbers of ASN pupils in most deprived areas
More use of CSPs in less deprived areas



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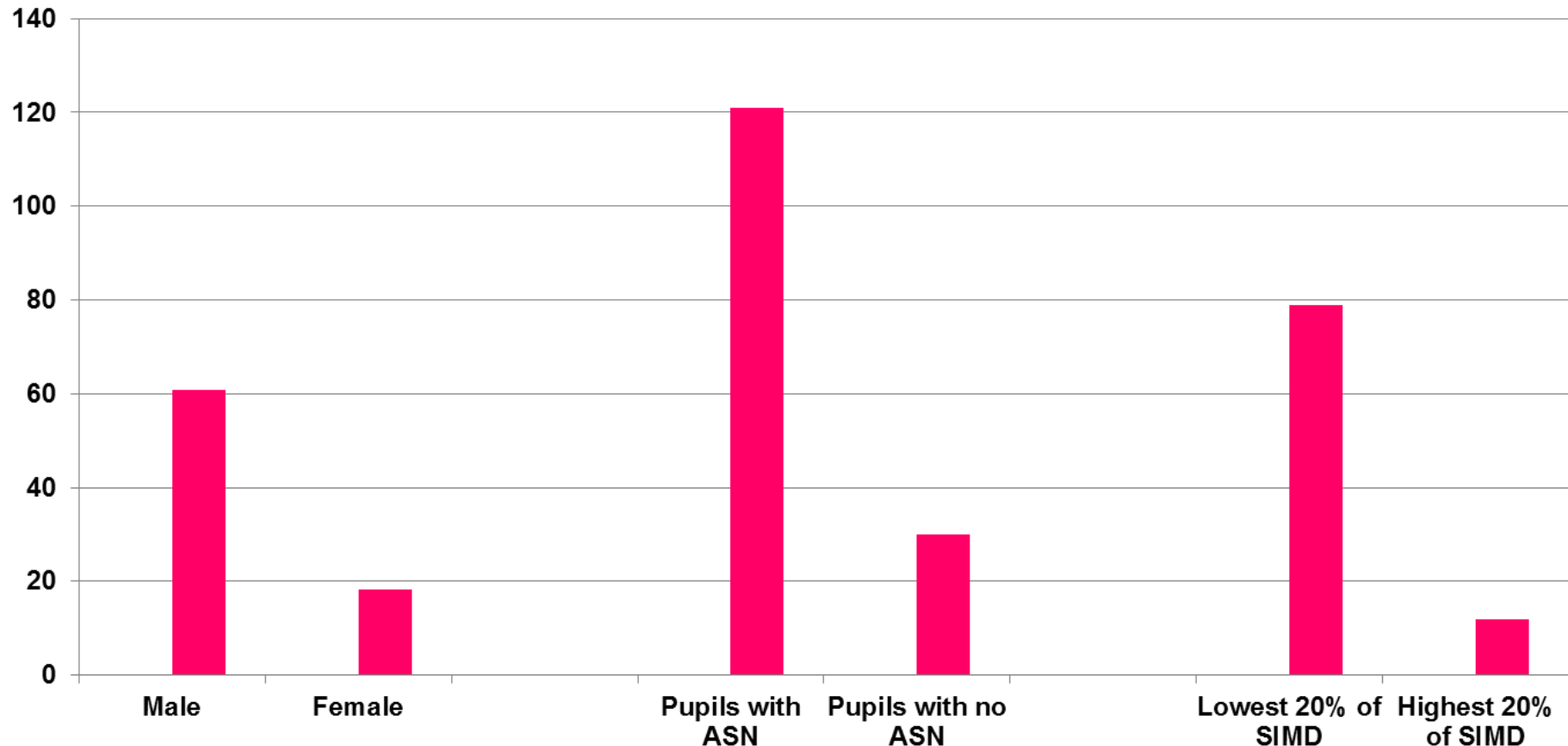
Links between deprivation & ASN





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Exclusions, ASN and social deprivation, rate per 1000 pupils

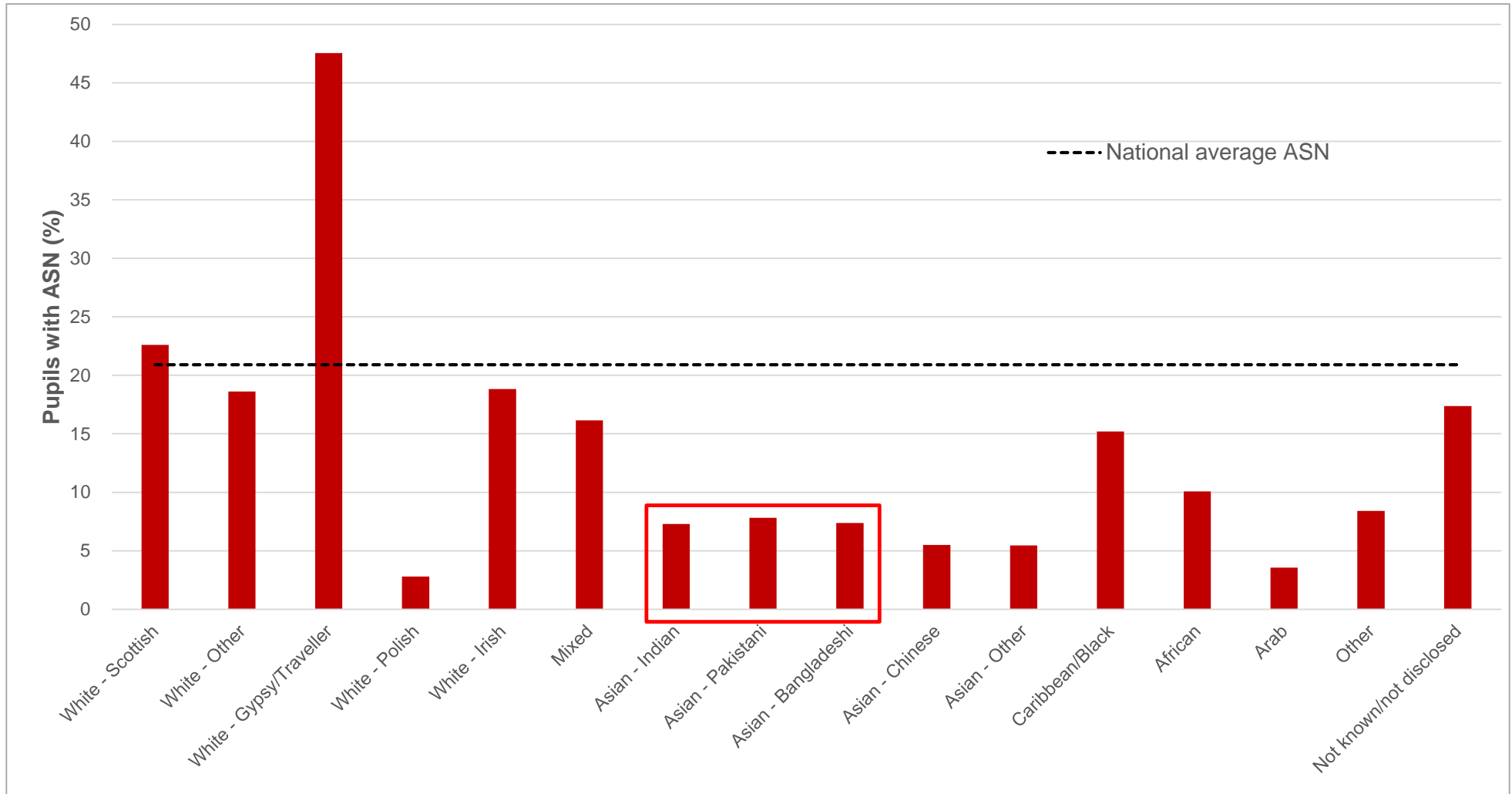




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Ethnicity

when category of ASN removed, children of Asian heritage
less likely to be identified than other groups



ASN & Parents' Rights

- **ASfL legislation increased parents' rights by strengthening dispute resolution mechanisms.**
- **New measures included tribunal, adjudication (dispute resolution) and mediation.**
- **Scottish tribunal used much less than English equivalent – in 2016/17, c. 75 references/claims**
- **Majority related to children with autistic spectrum disorder & placing requests.**
- **Research shows that significant minority of parents dissatisfied with provision, but find it difficult to use available remedies.**

ASN and Children's Rights

- Children and young people are rarely involved in dispute resolution, placing requests, setting/reviewing IEP targets etc.
- Education (Scotland) Act 2016 strengthens rights of children over 12.
- But two tests apply – before child can exercise their rights LA must decide that (a) the child has capacity and (b) exercising the right would not be detrimental to the child's well-being.
- Many rights linked to CSPs – but these are gradually disappearing

Experiences of disabled children & their parents

Professionals wary of parents' rights discourse:

I think [the ASfL Act] strengthened the rights of those parents I described earlier who have this sense of entitlement and hostility to basically be frivolous and vexatious. (LA Pupil and Parent Manager)

Significant minority of parents complain about lack of attention to rights:

There has been no support whatsoever, even though he is starting P7 and was diagnosed in P2. the school has been unhelpful, even issuing a letter of exclusion. We have had to fight for basic rights

(Parent of child with diagnosis of ADHD)

Conclusion

Majority of children with ASN educated in mainstream schools – but significant minority of parents dissatisfied with provision.

Parents and young people – particularly those in less advantaged areas – find it difficult to exercise their rights.

Current research explores extent to which children with ASN able to use new rights of participation and redress.

Questions for discussion

What is driving the increase in number & proportion of children with ASN in Scotland and what are the pros and cons of this trend? Why is the use of CSPs and IEPs declining over time?

Why do you think there is a link between neighbourhood deprivation and identification of ASN?

Why are children with ASN who live in the least deprived areas more likely to get a CSP than their counterparts in the most deprived areas?

Why do you think the tribunal is relatively less used in Scotland than England?

Why do parents and young people with ASN find it difficult to use their rights?

What actions may be needed to enhance the rights of children and young people with ASN and their parents?