

Who returns to work and why?

A six country study

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Review of literature

- Inconsistencies -> no clear answers
- Variables:
 - Significant in one study
 - Not included, or
 - Not significant in other studies

Background inconsistent.

- Many studies: mono-disciplinary
- Variations in research design (populations, period, outcomes)
- No account for context (e.g. benefit levels, job protection regulations)
- Variations in data sources, analysis tools

Basic questions

- Do the various INTERVENTIONS (by social security, health care systems) found in different countries make a difference as to WORK RESUMPTION?
- If so: what are the best interventions?

Core design (1)

- Prospective study
- Cohorts:
 - employed persons
 - sick listed 3 months
 - due to low back pain (ICD-9: 721,722,724)
- Interventions:
 - health care
 - social security/employment services
 - employer

Core design (2)

- 3 Measurements:
 - T1: after 3 months of work incapacity
 - T2: one year after 1st day reported sick
 - T3: two years after 1st day reported sick
- Methods:
 - Standardized measurements (tel/postal/face-to-face)
 - Optional: admin. Data; additional informants
- Major outcome indicators:
 - Return to work rate
 - Receipt of benefit

Core design (3)

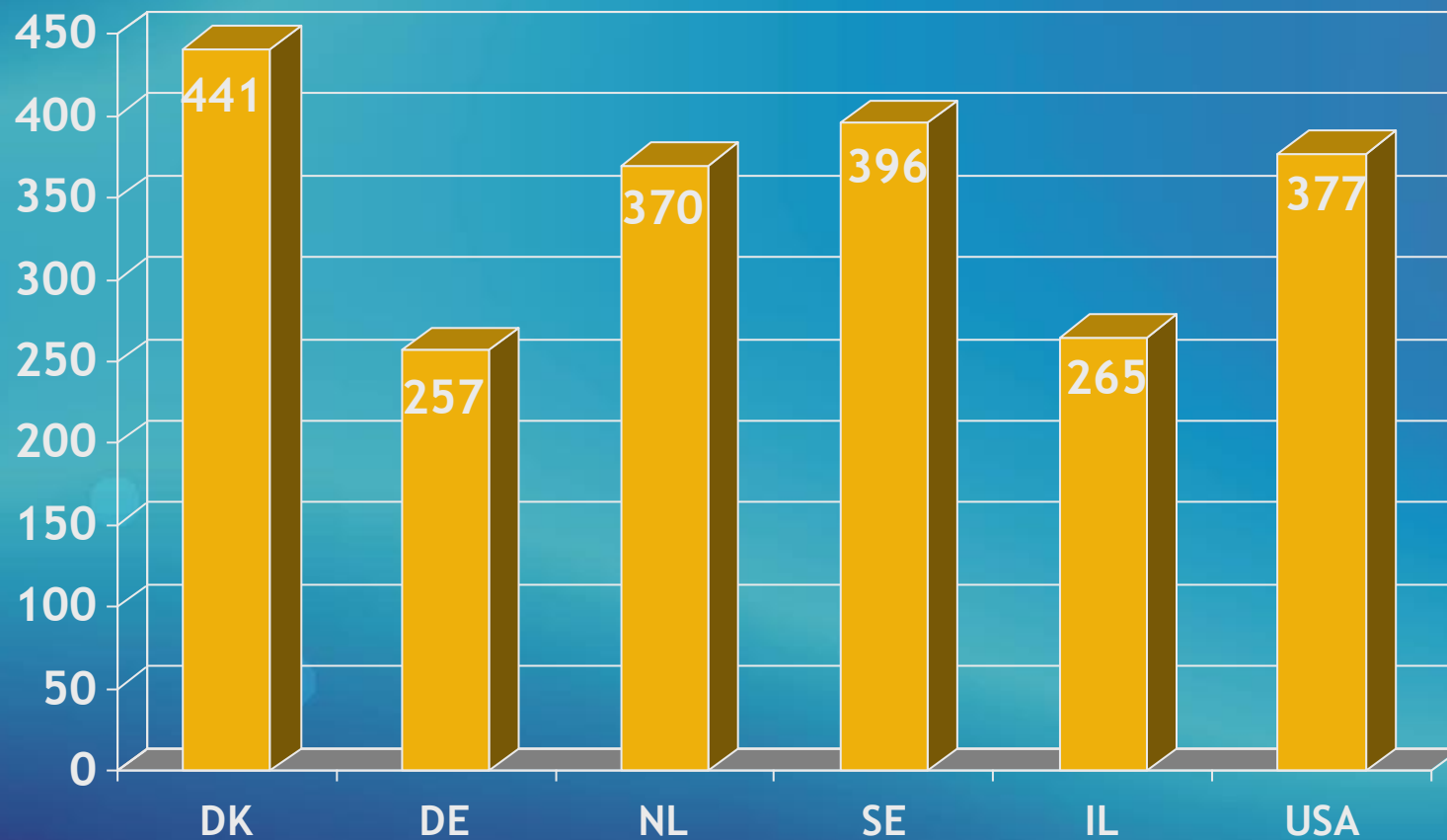
Variables:

- Demographic
- Work and Employment
- Health
- Health care and medical interventions
- Vocational/Non-medical interventions
- Work status

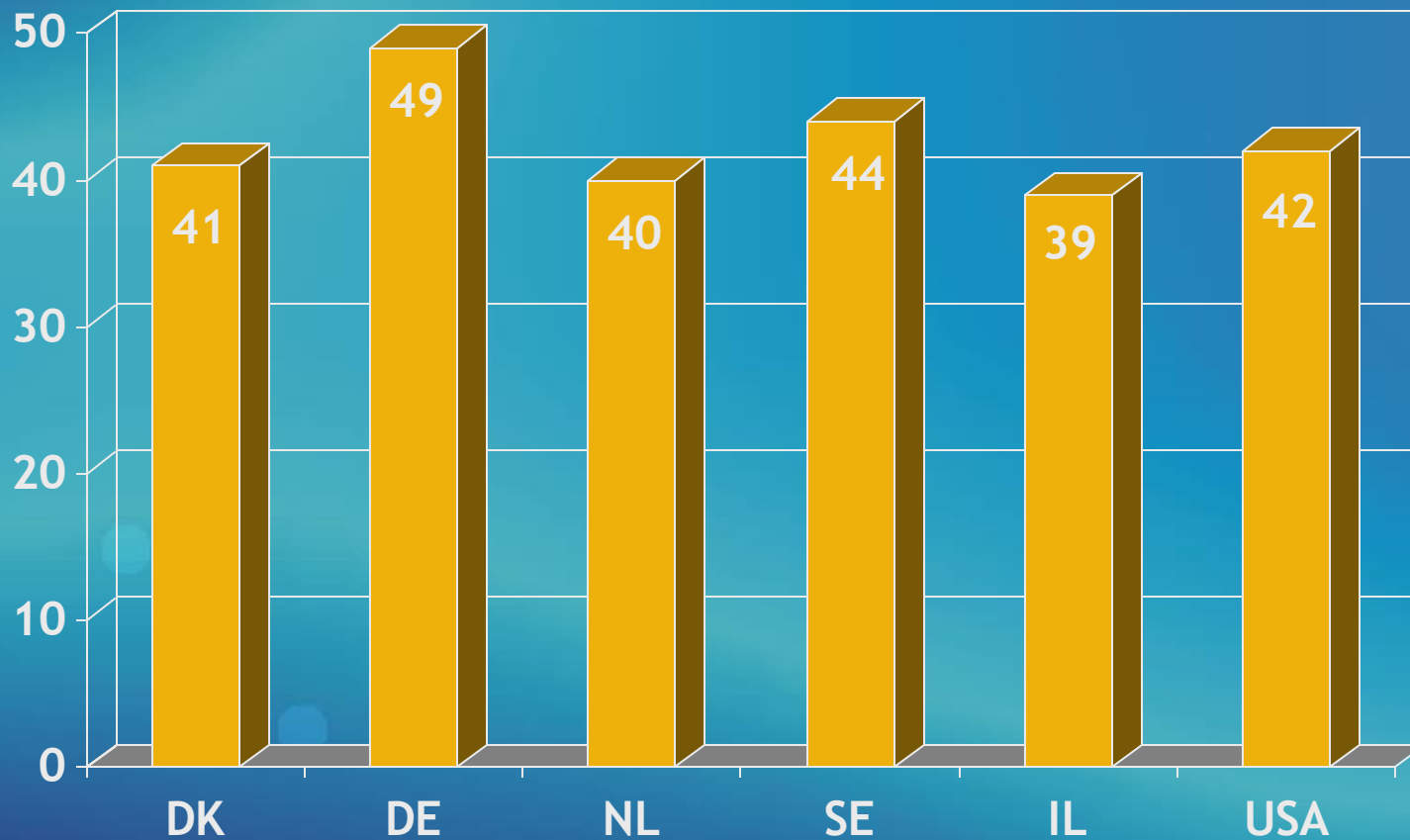
Incentives/Non-Med. Interventions

- Training, education
- Work accommodations
- Motivators
- Work (in) capacity assessment
- Employment/social services

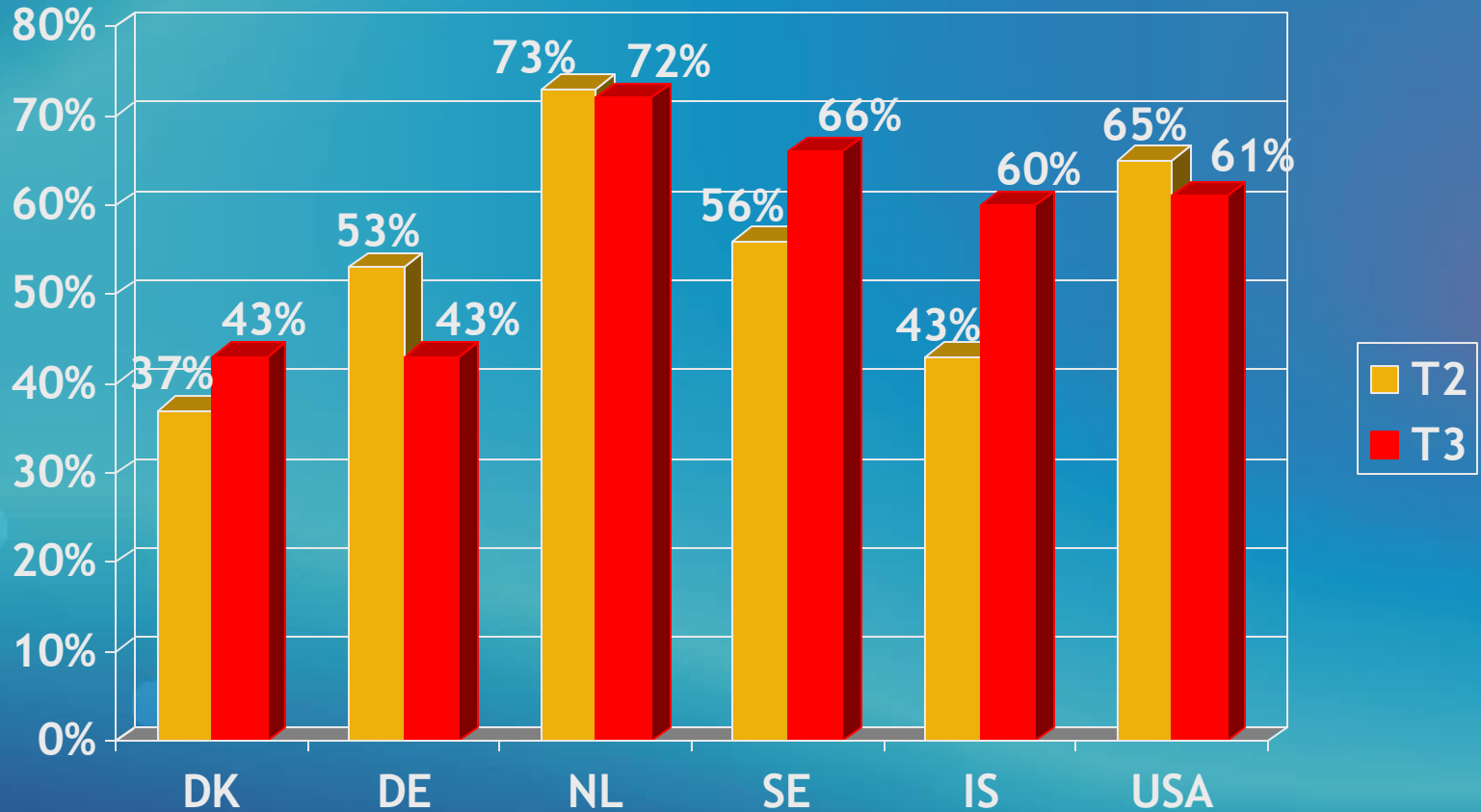
Cohort size T3



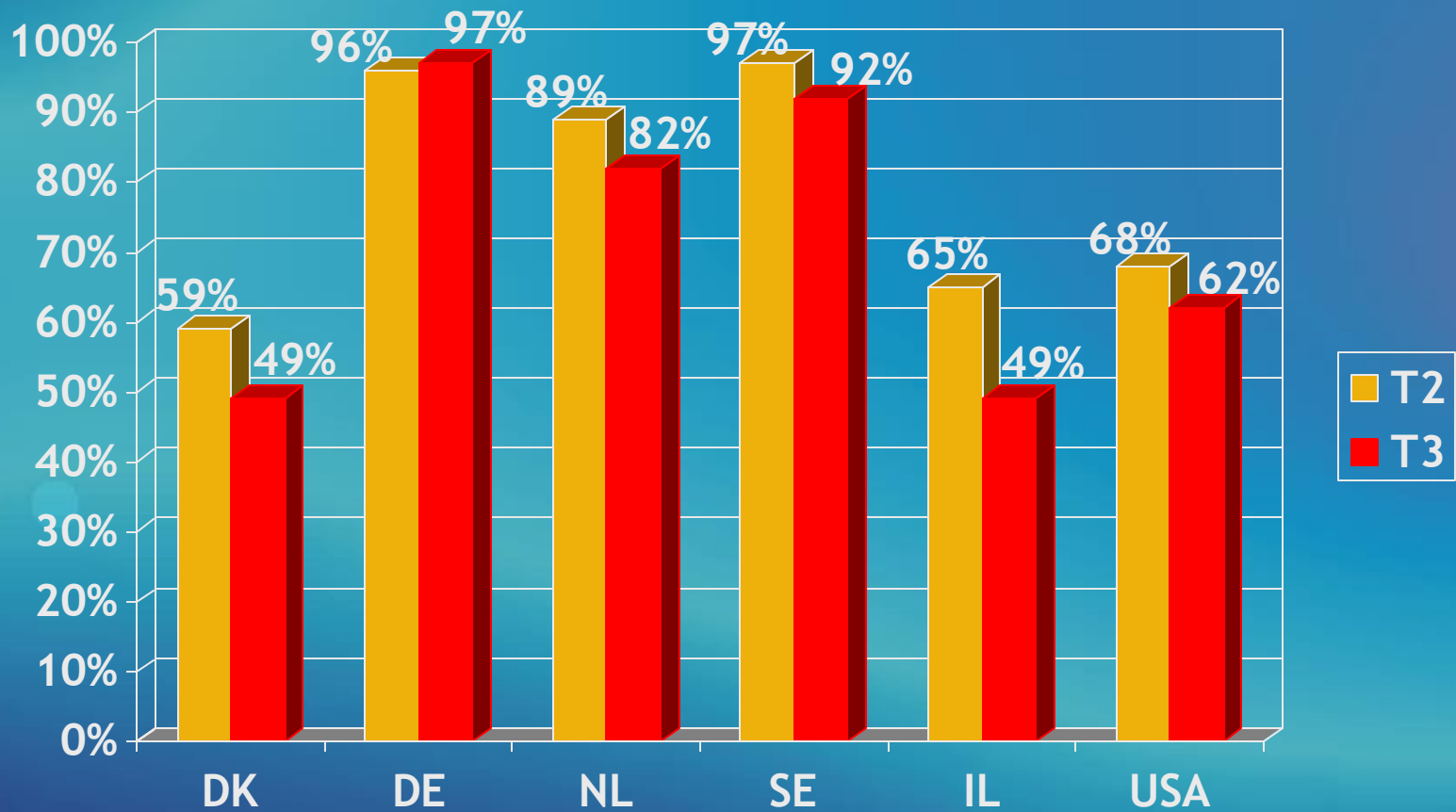
Mean age at T1



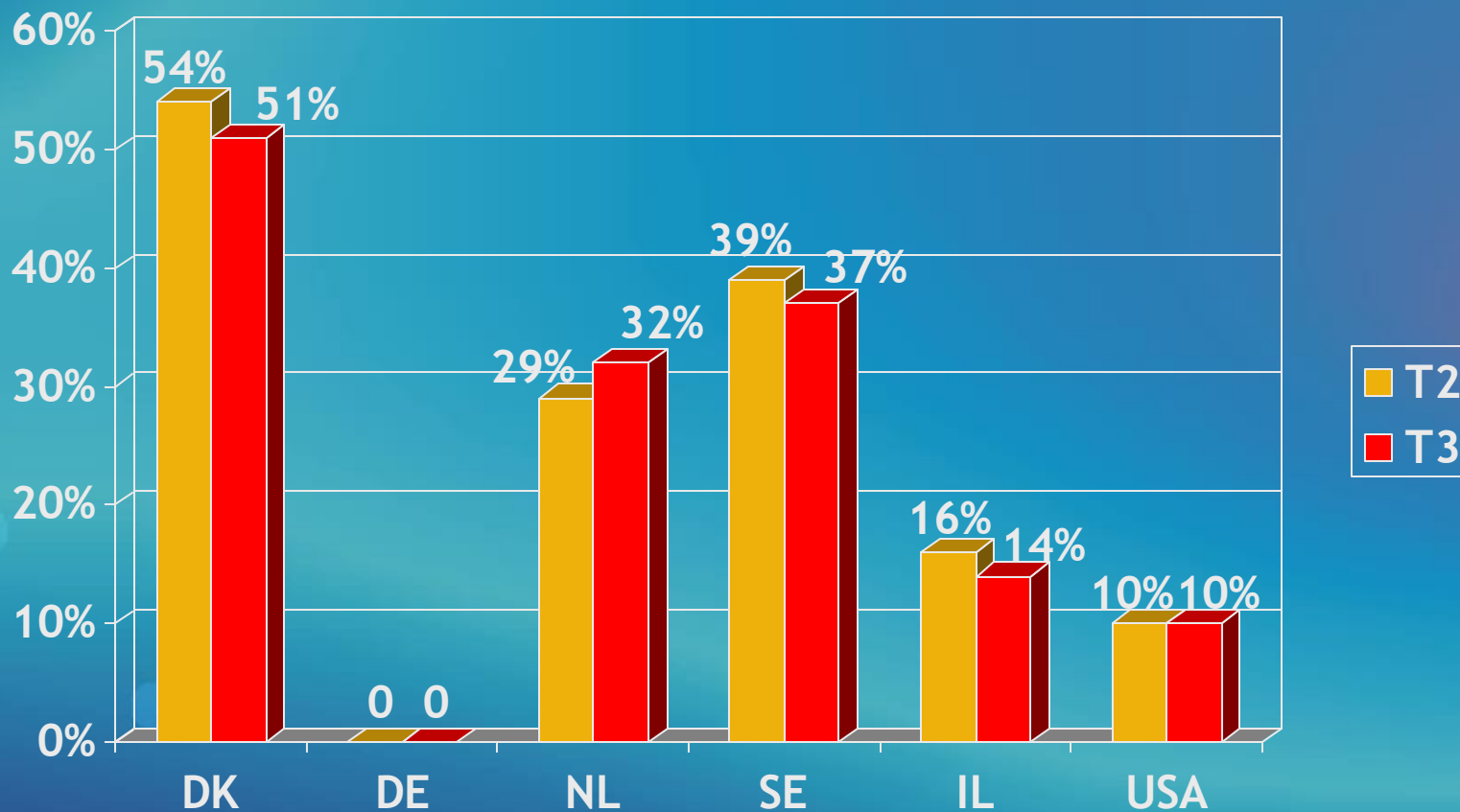
Work resumption T2, T3 (standardized)



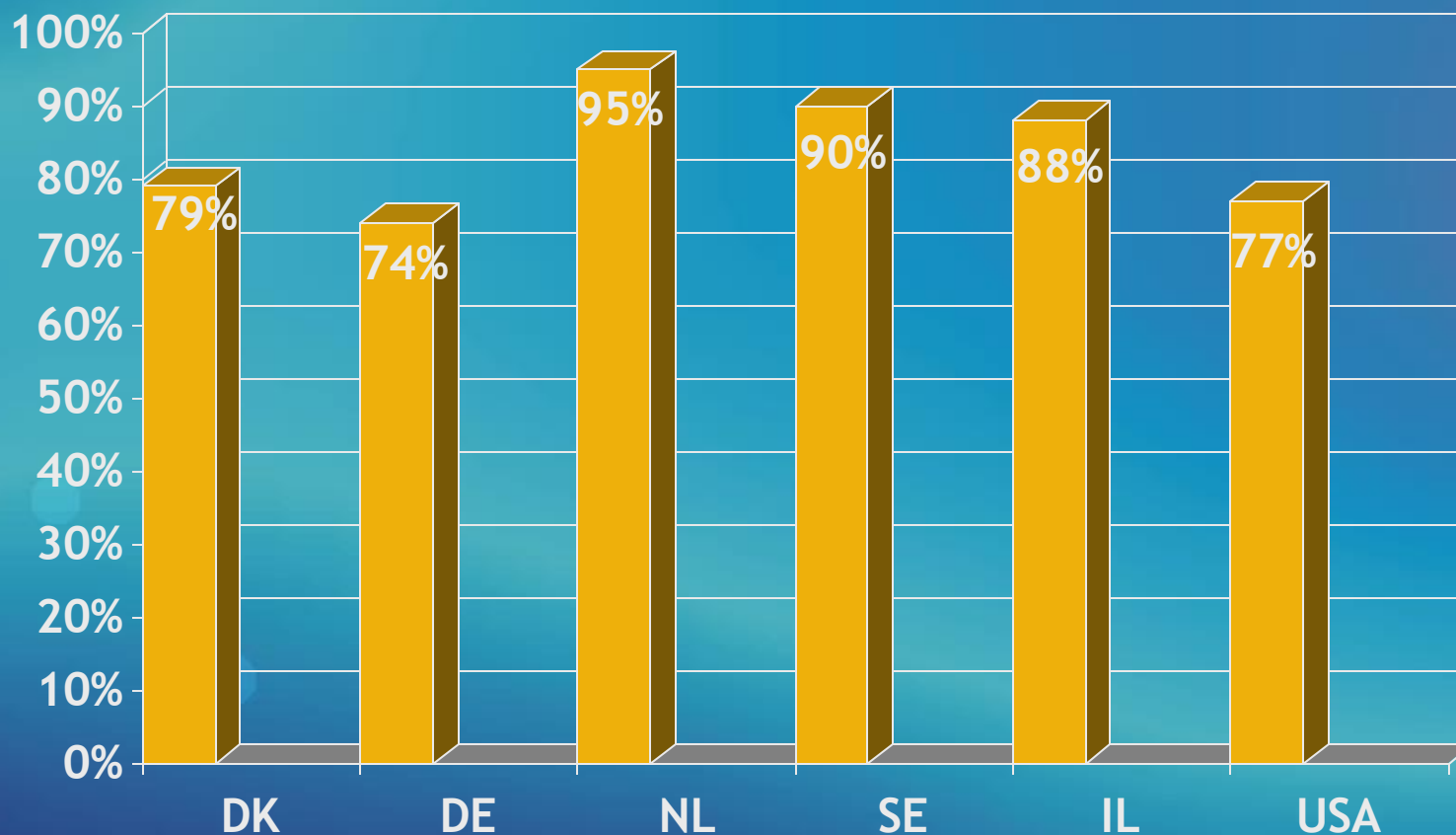
If working: with old employer (T2, T3)



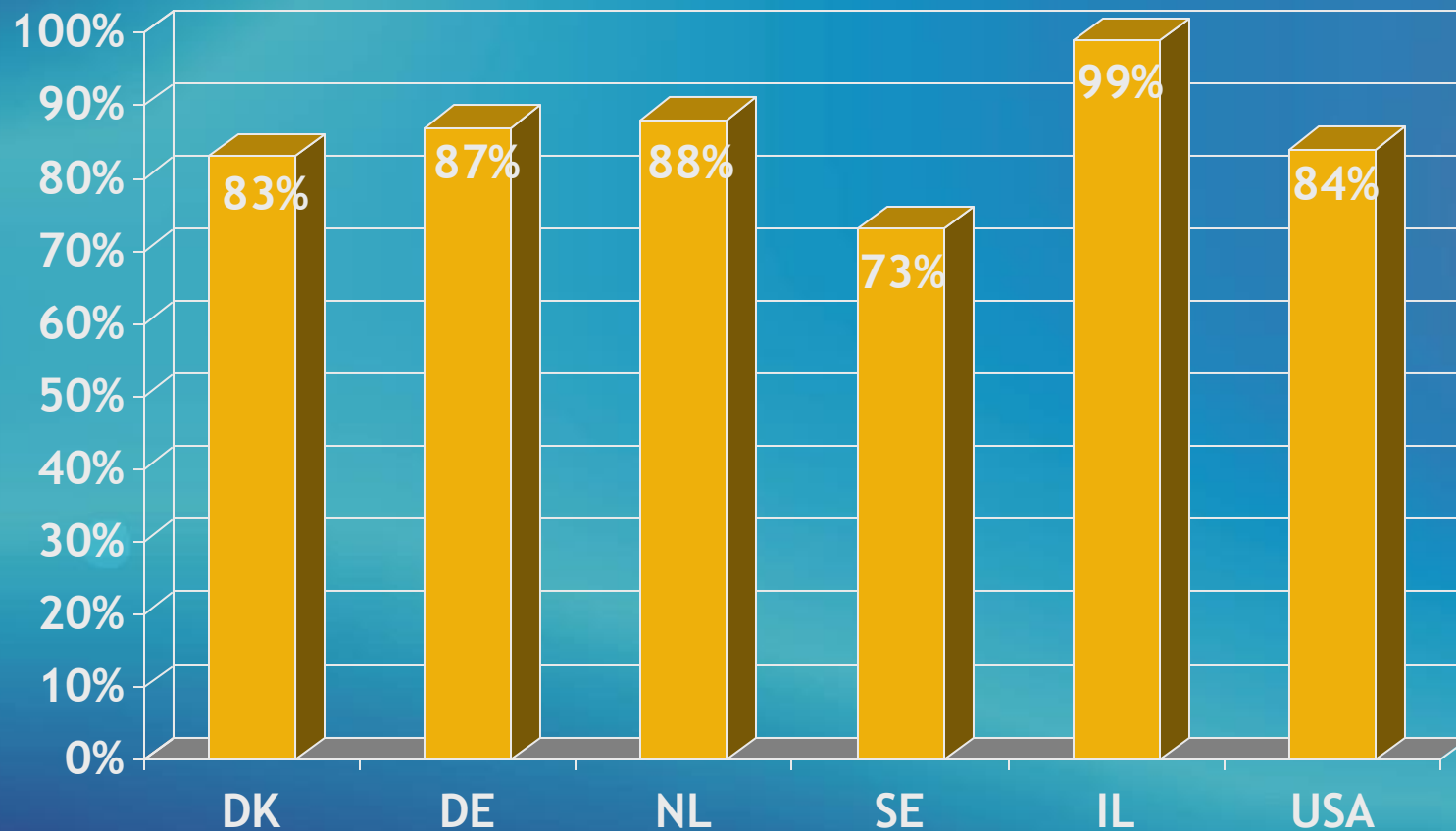
Benefit receipt at T2, T3



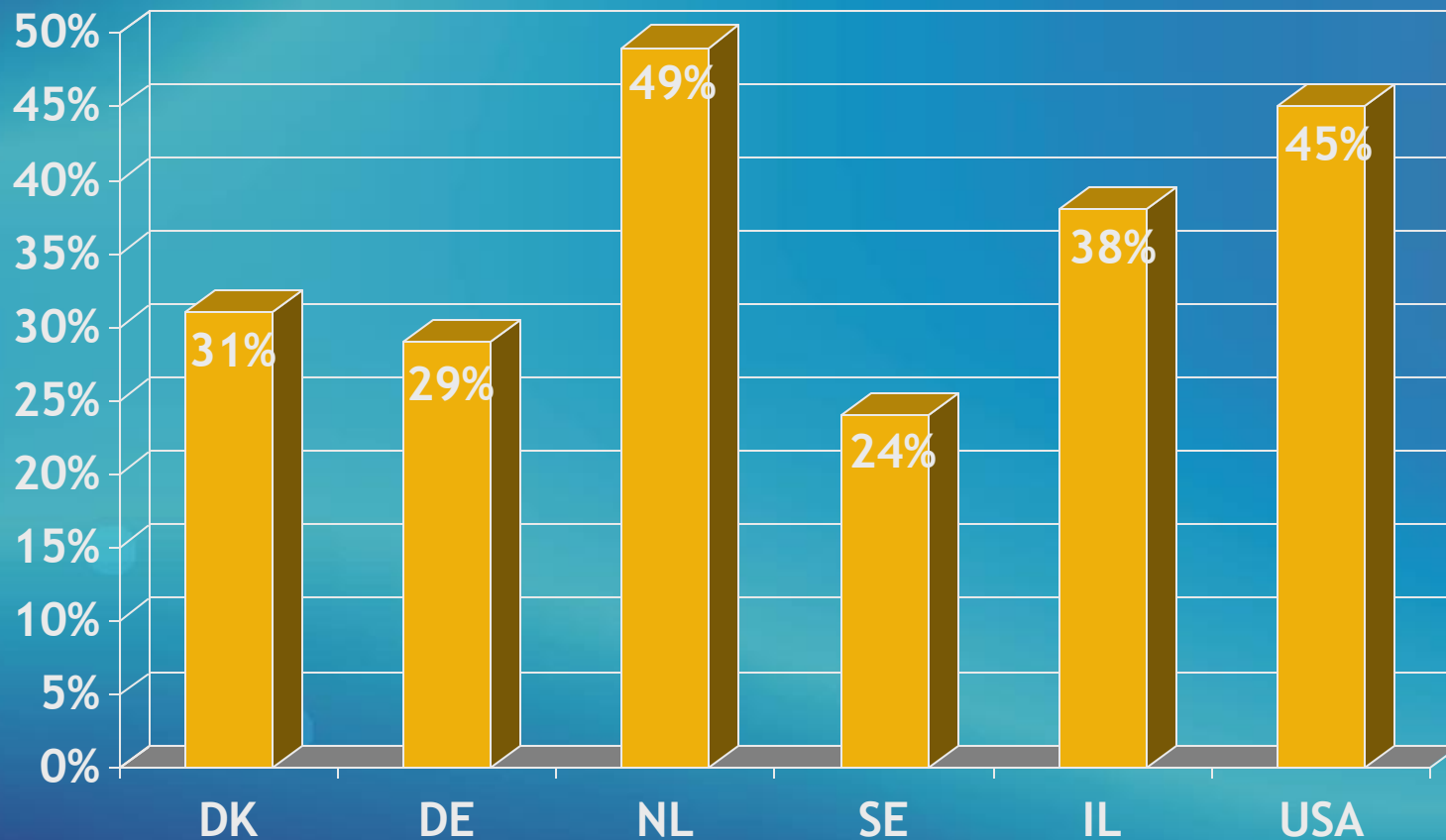
Treatment by physiotherapist (T0 - T2)



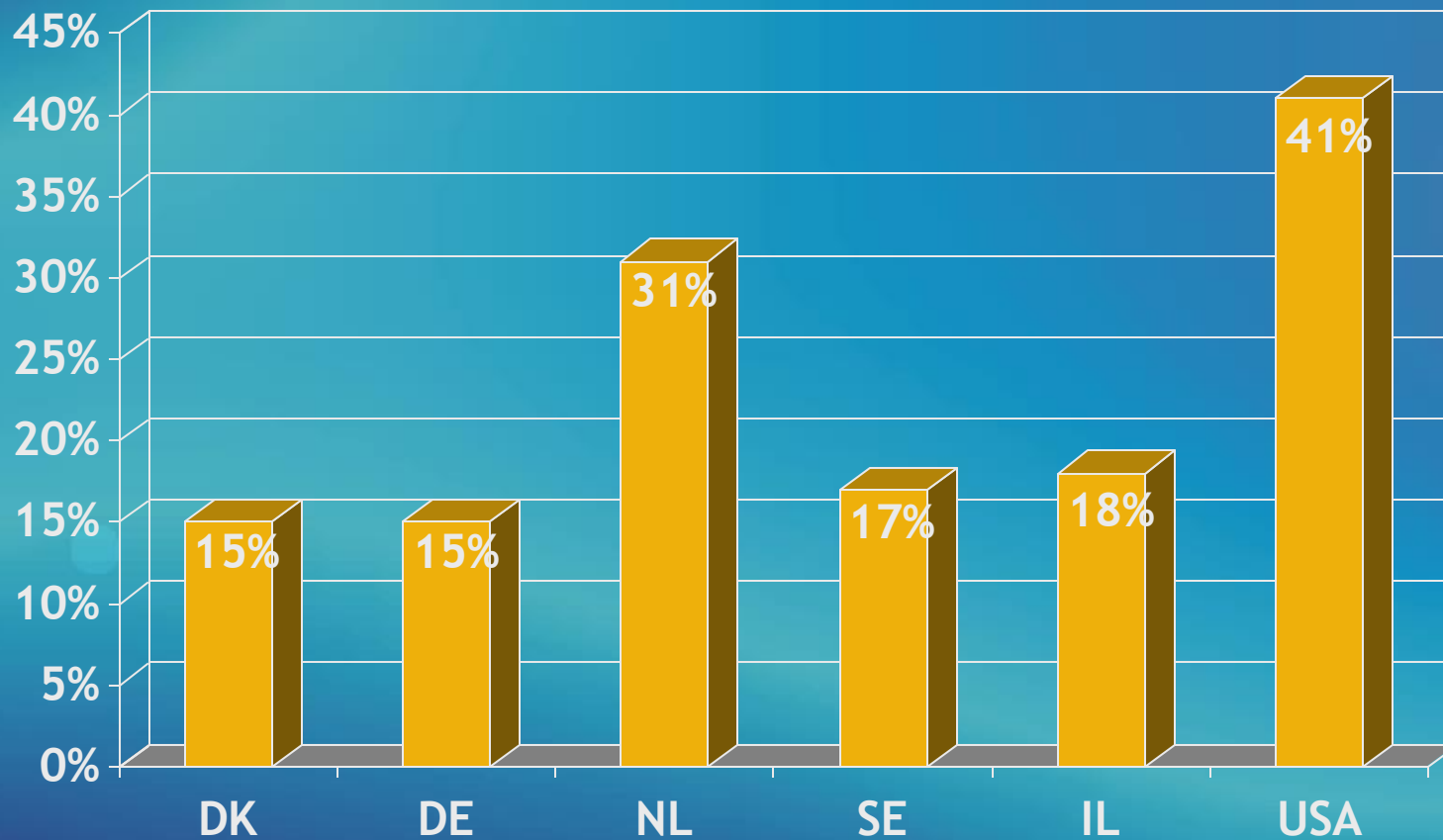
Visit specialist T0 - T2



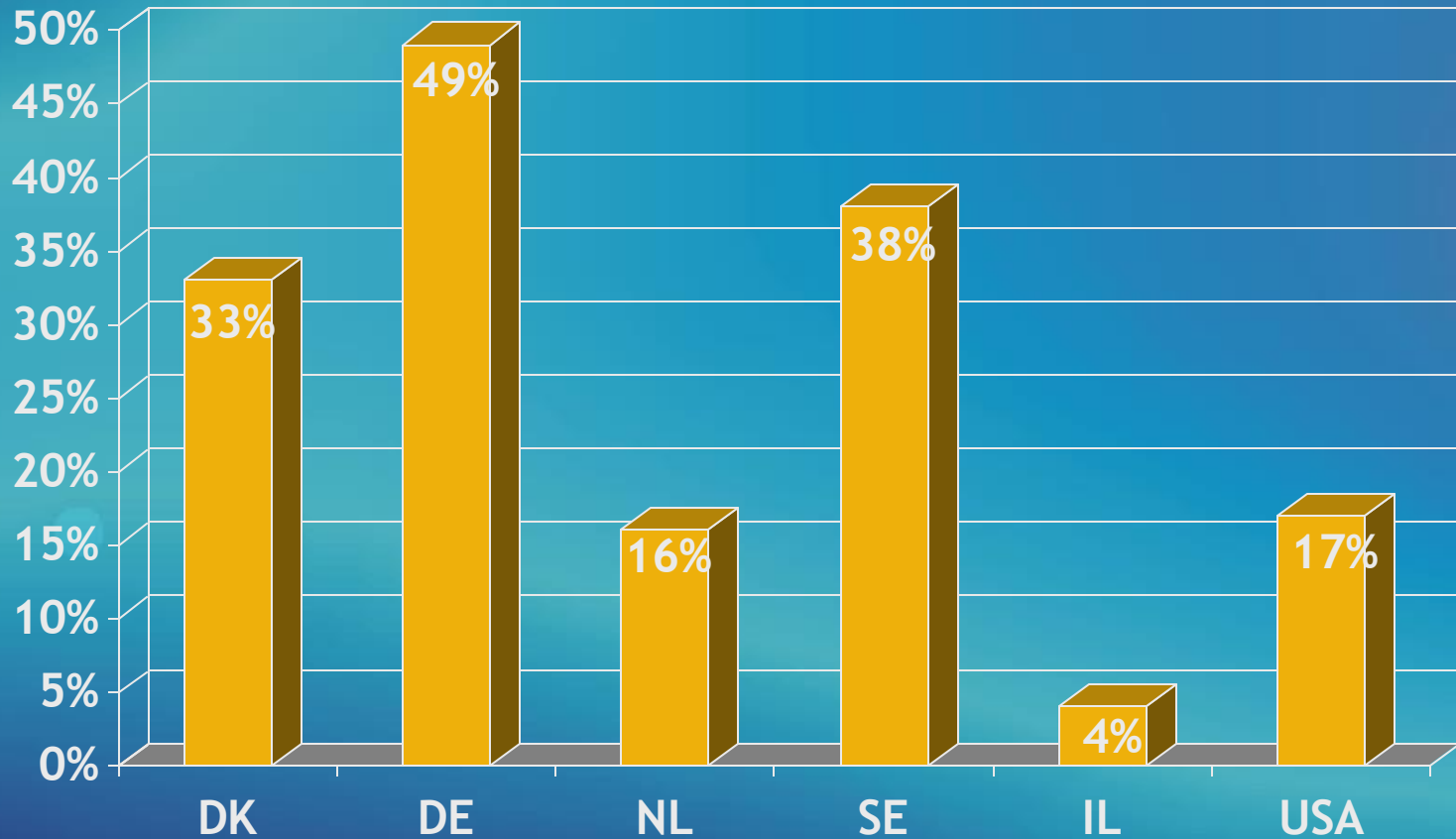
Hospitalization (T0 - T2)



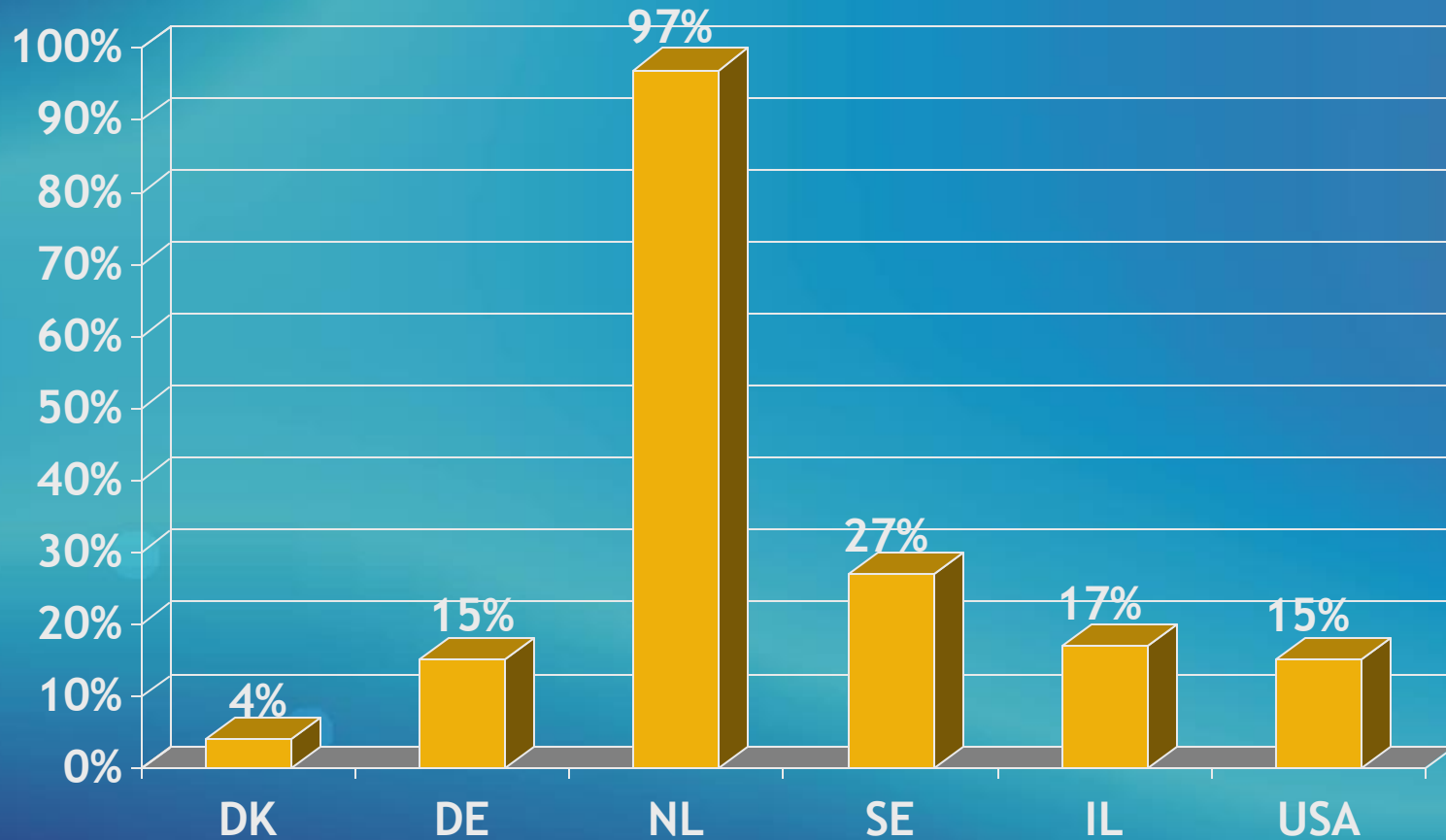
Surgery (T0 - T2)



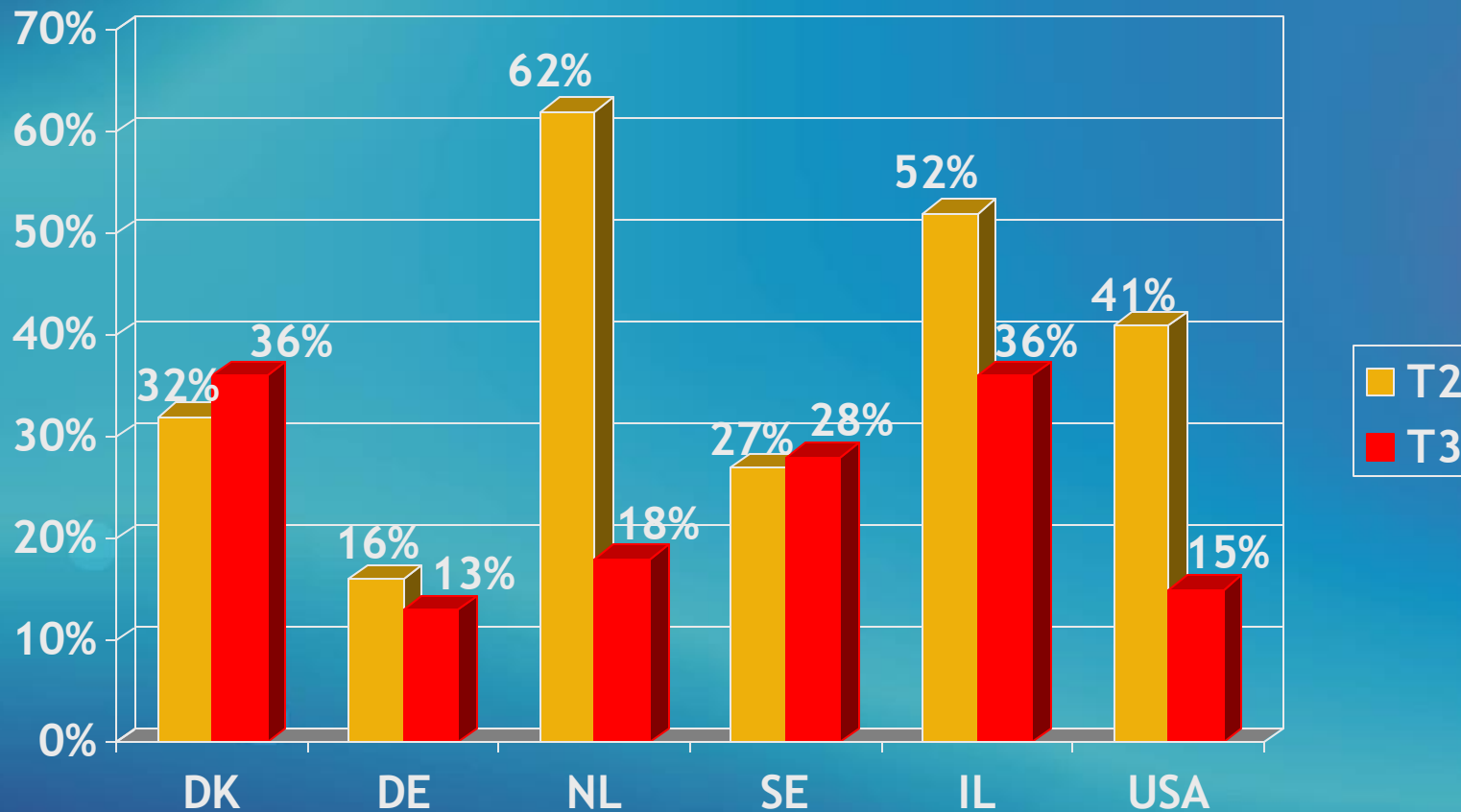
Back school/pain school (T0 - T2)



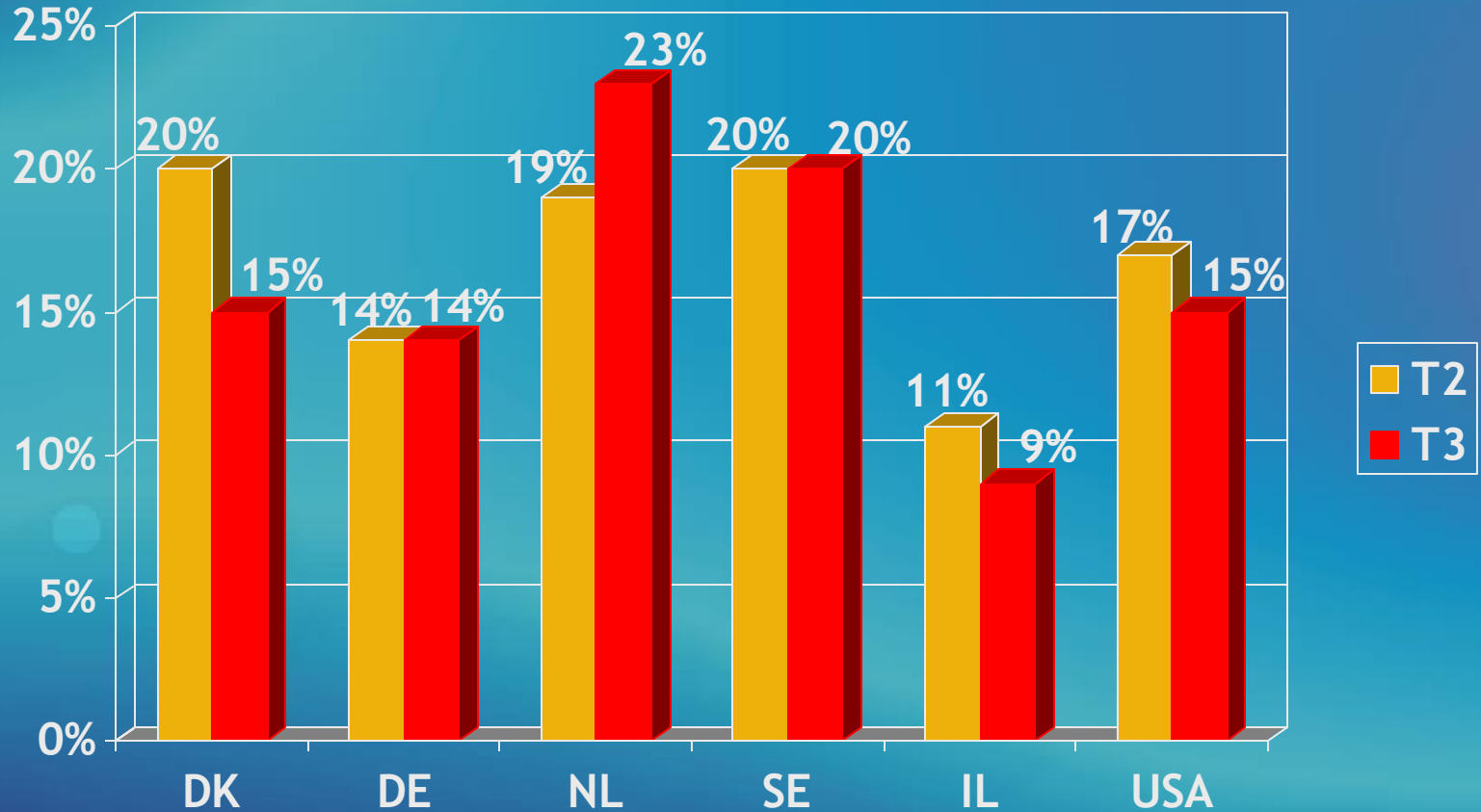
Contact occupational physician (T0 - T2)



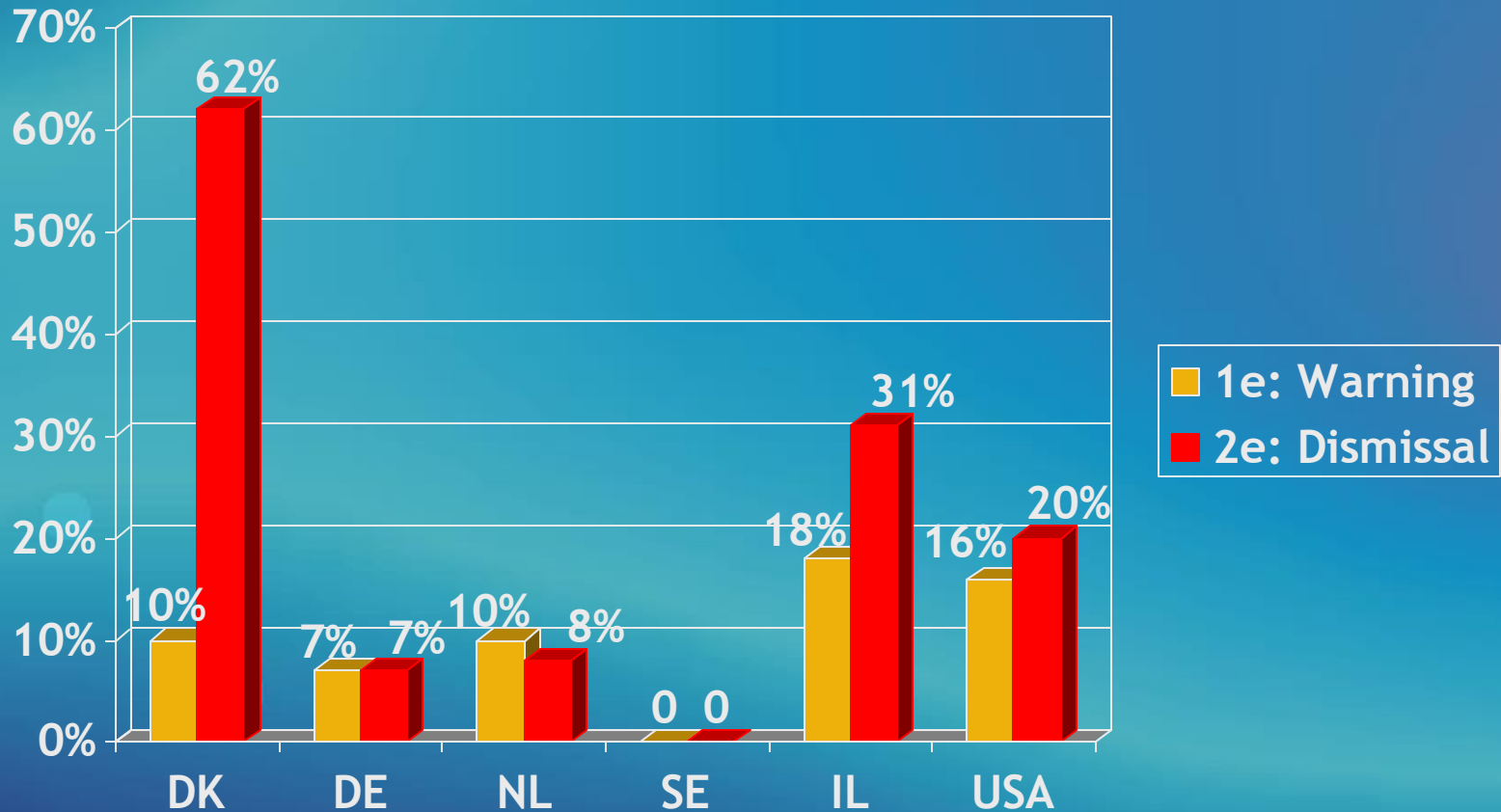
Working hours adaptation



Workplace adaptation T2 and T3



Warning, dismissal T2



Conclusions:

- Variations in work resumption:
 - Frequencies and patterns
 - Old employer/ new employer
- Medical interventions affect:
 - (Subj.) health status
 - Not: work resumption
- Work adaptations, rehabilitation:
 - Poor/No relationship with return to work
 - Except: therapeutical /step wise

Work resumption factors

- Client characteristics:
 - Age,
 - Perceived work ability
 - Physical job demands
 - Employment expectations
- Employer-employee relationship
- Job protection
- Stepwise return to work (therapeutic)