

HOW BEST DO YOU ACHIEVE VALUE FOR MONEY IN THE HUMAN SERVICES SECTOR?

Rob Bray



Australian
National
University

The challenges

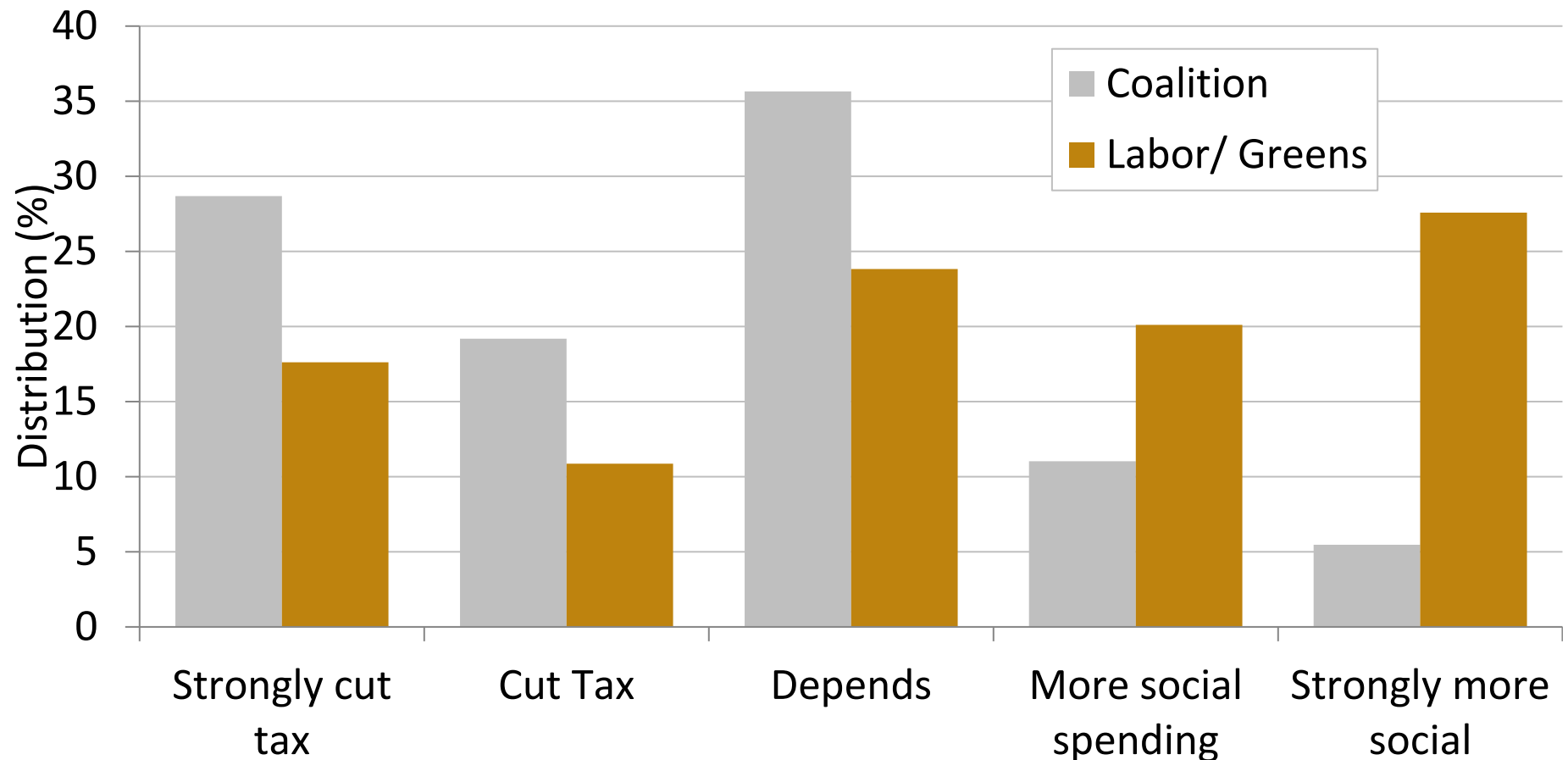
- ‘Value’ is difficult to define and contested
- Evidence base is frequently weak
- Highly regulated, but ...
- Limitations of relying on market competition
- Some directions



Value – contested and unclear

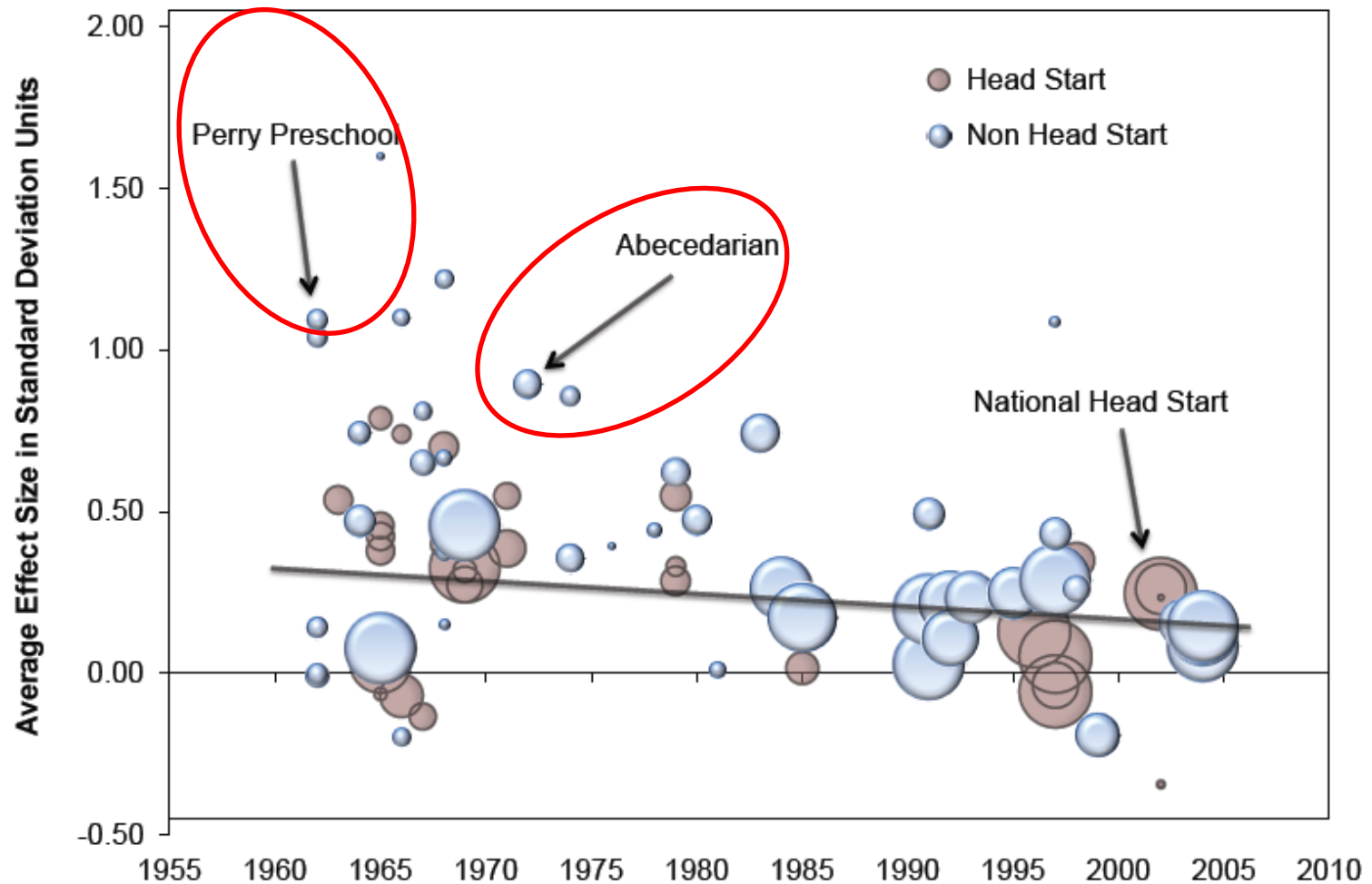
If the government had a choice between reducing taxes or spending more on social services, which do you think it should do?

Australian Electoral Study, 2022



The evidence base

US Preschool initiatives - Average cognitive effect at the end of treatment

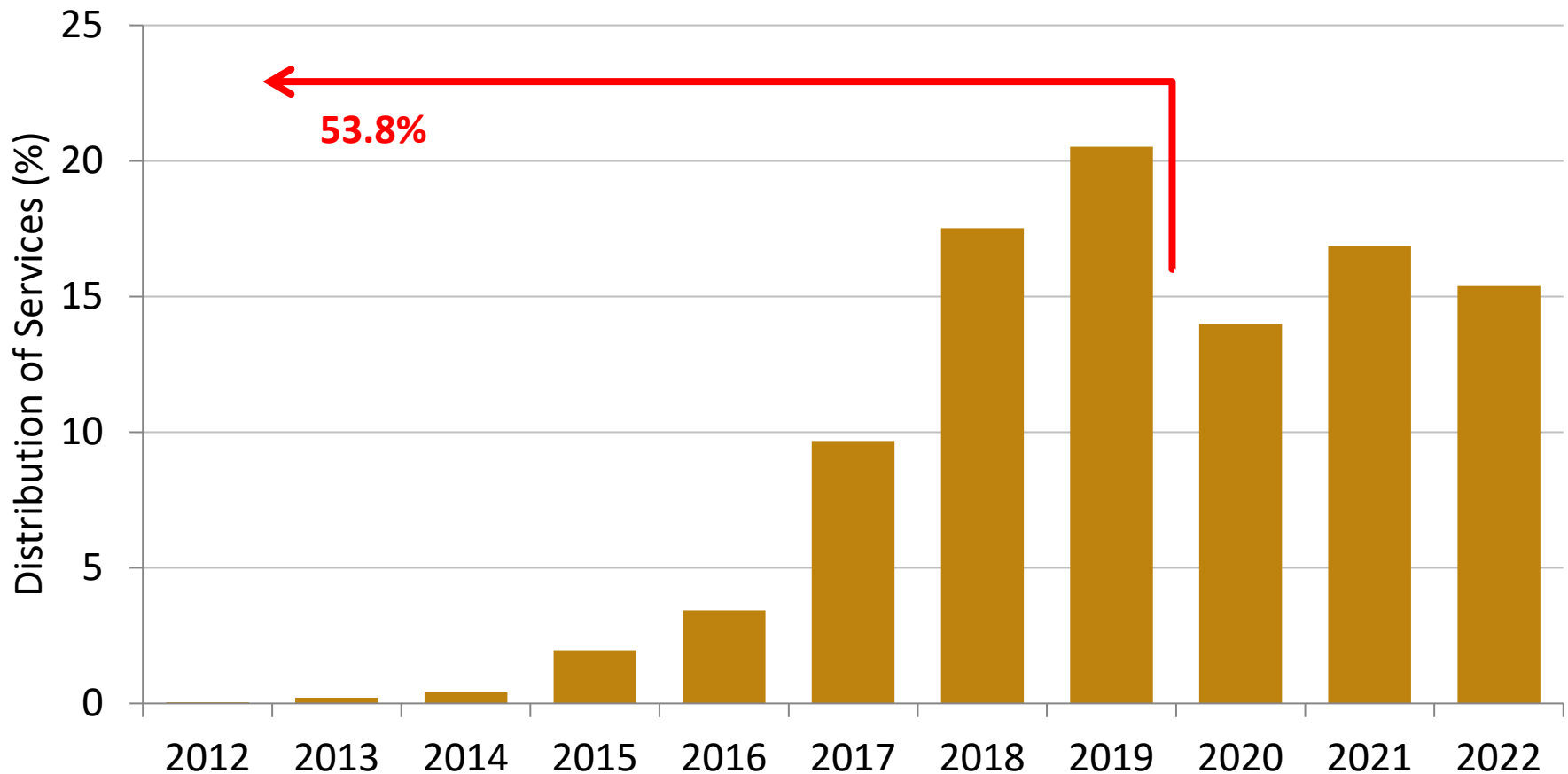


Effective regulation

Childcare service quality ratings

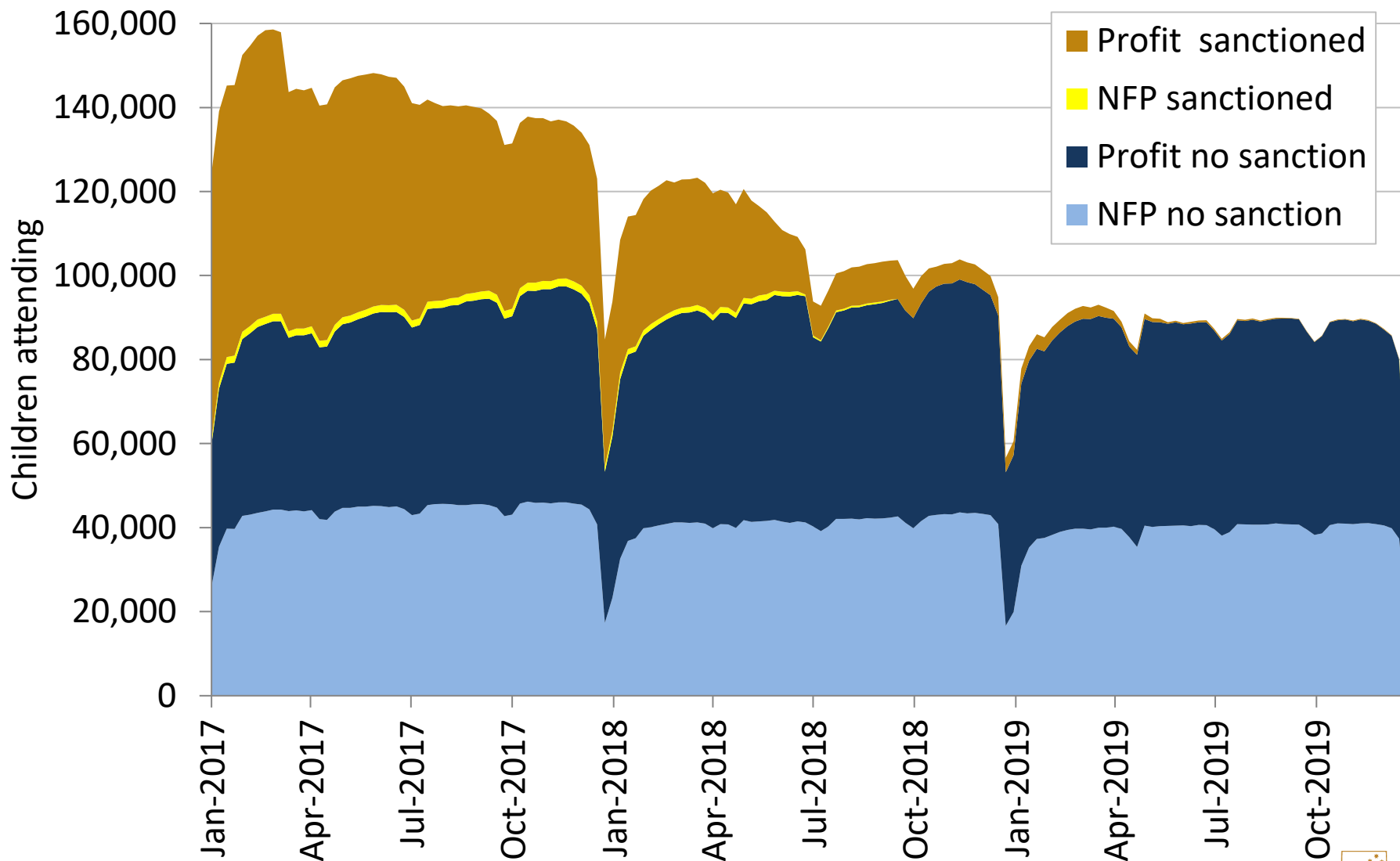
Centre Based Day Care services – date of last quality rating, December quarter 2022

ACECQA: National Quality Standard Data, as at 1 January 2023



Competitive market

Children attending Family Day Care – Sanctioned services



Some directions

- Clear program objectives
- Invest in evidence base and data transparency
- Clear lines of accountability and responsibility
 - Including regulation
- ... but social policies do reflect specific values and priorities

