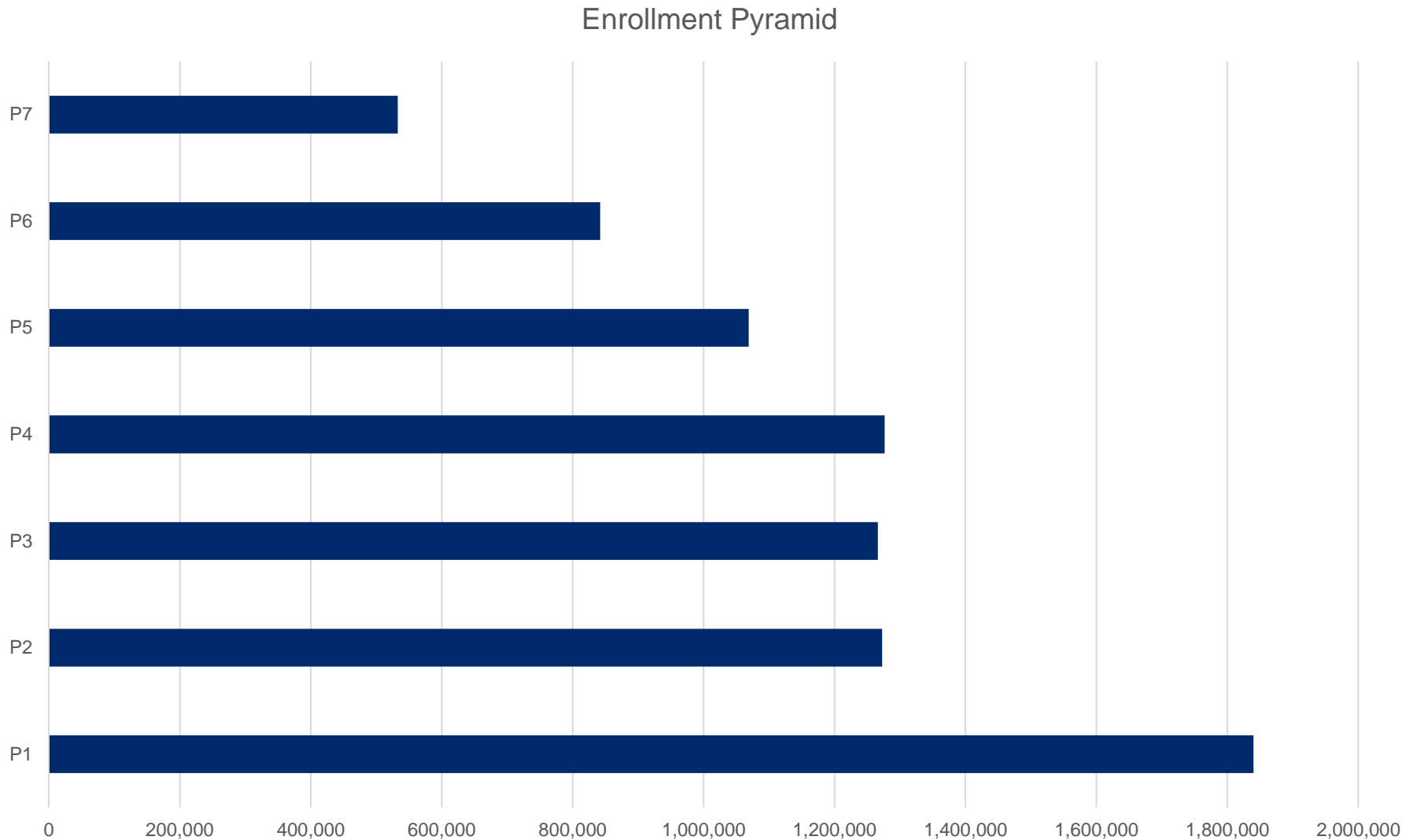# USAID/ UGANDA SCHOOL HEALTH AND READING PROGRAM

The Connection to Reading:
Implications for Efficiency, Repetition -
An Examination of Basic Data

Luis Crouch, RTI
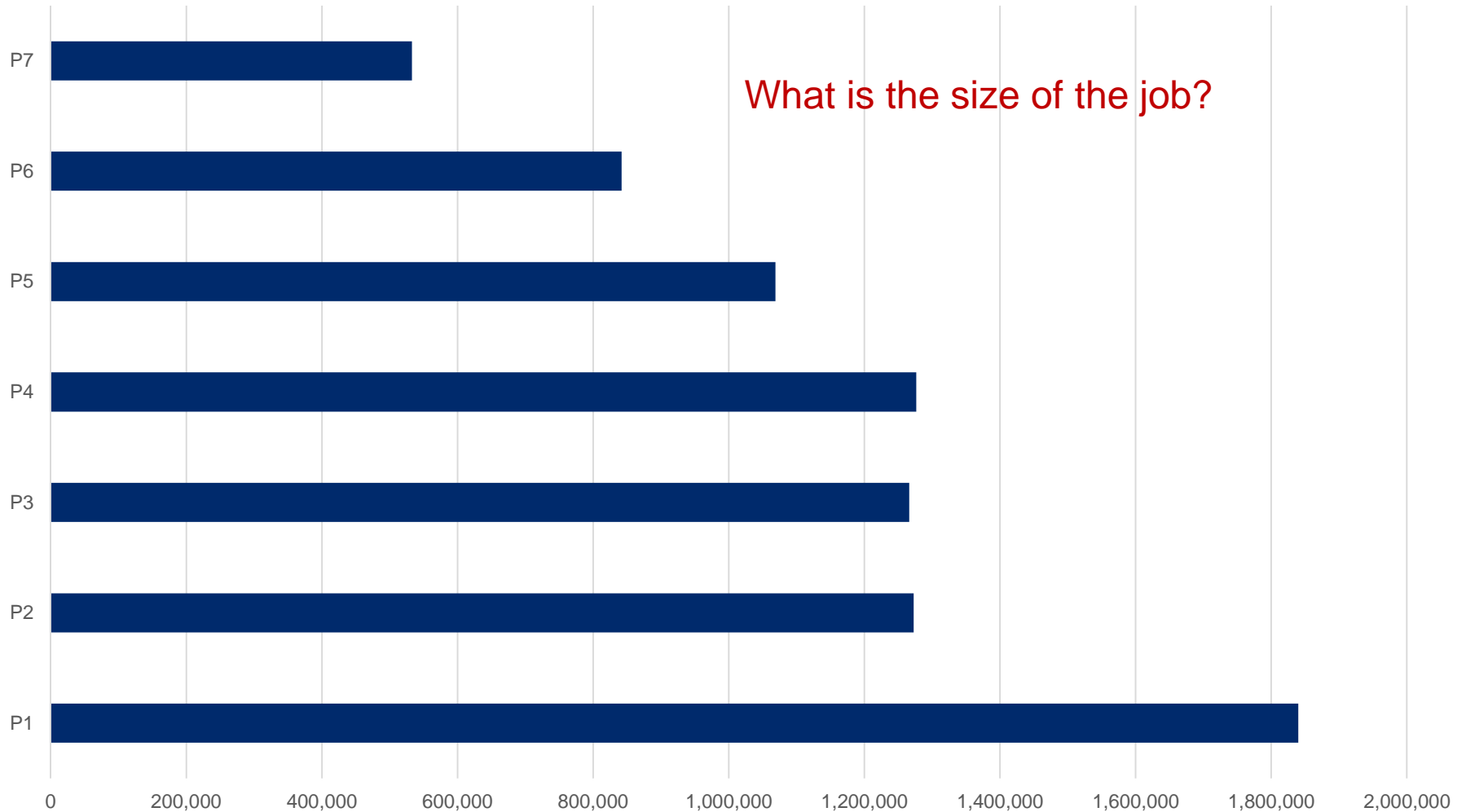
4 June 2015

What do the most basic numbers tell us?

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Enrollment Pyramid

What is the size of the job?

What do the most basic numbers tell us?

Enrollment Pyramid

What is the size of the job?

This big?

	0	200,000	400,000	600,000	800,000	1,000,000	1,200,000	1,400,000	1,600,000	1,800,000	2,000,000

P7
P6
P5
P4
P3
P2
P1
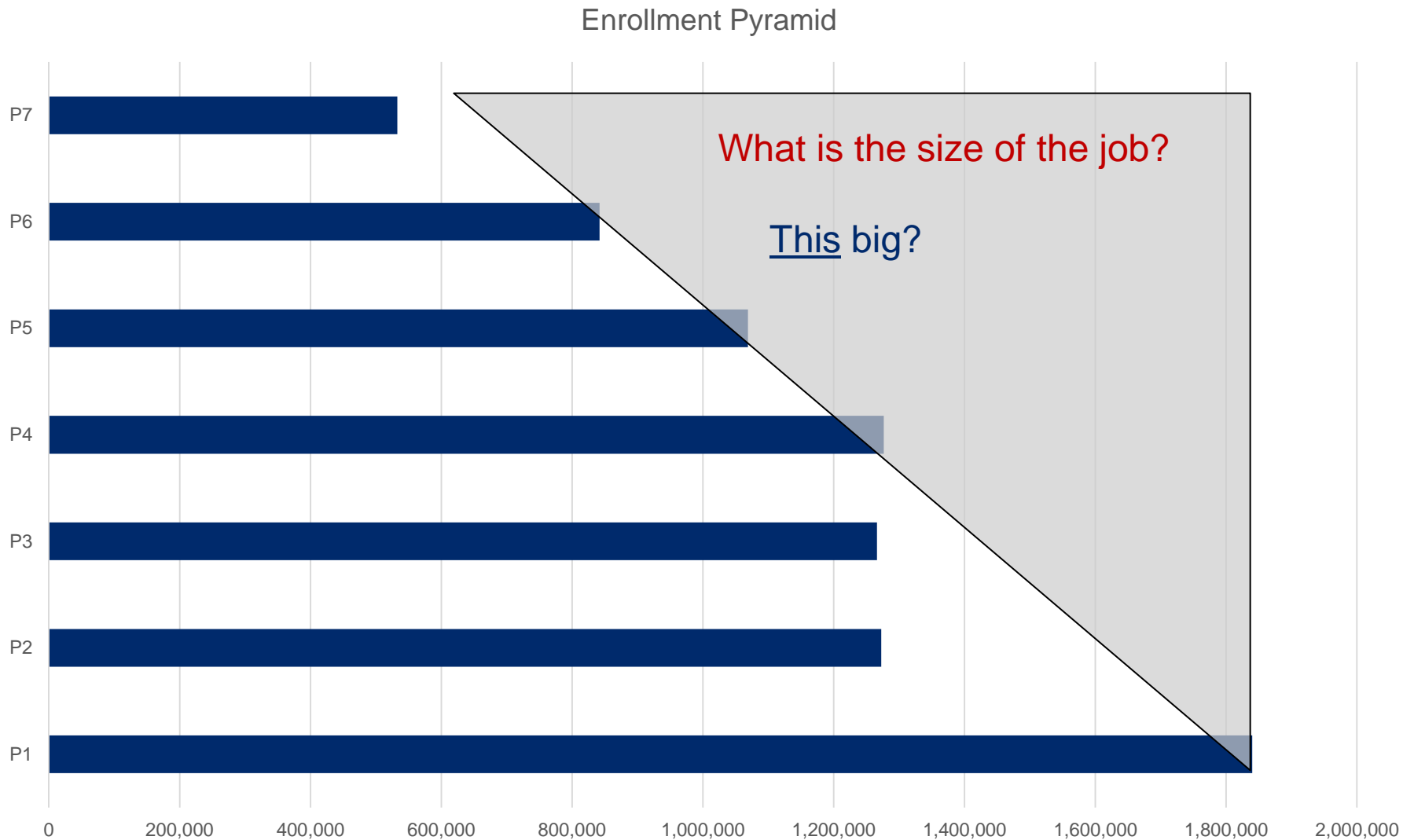
But what happens if we overlay the population?

Enrollment with Population Overlay
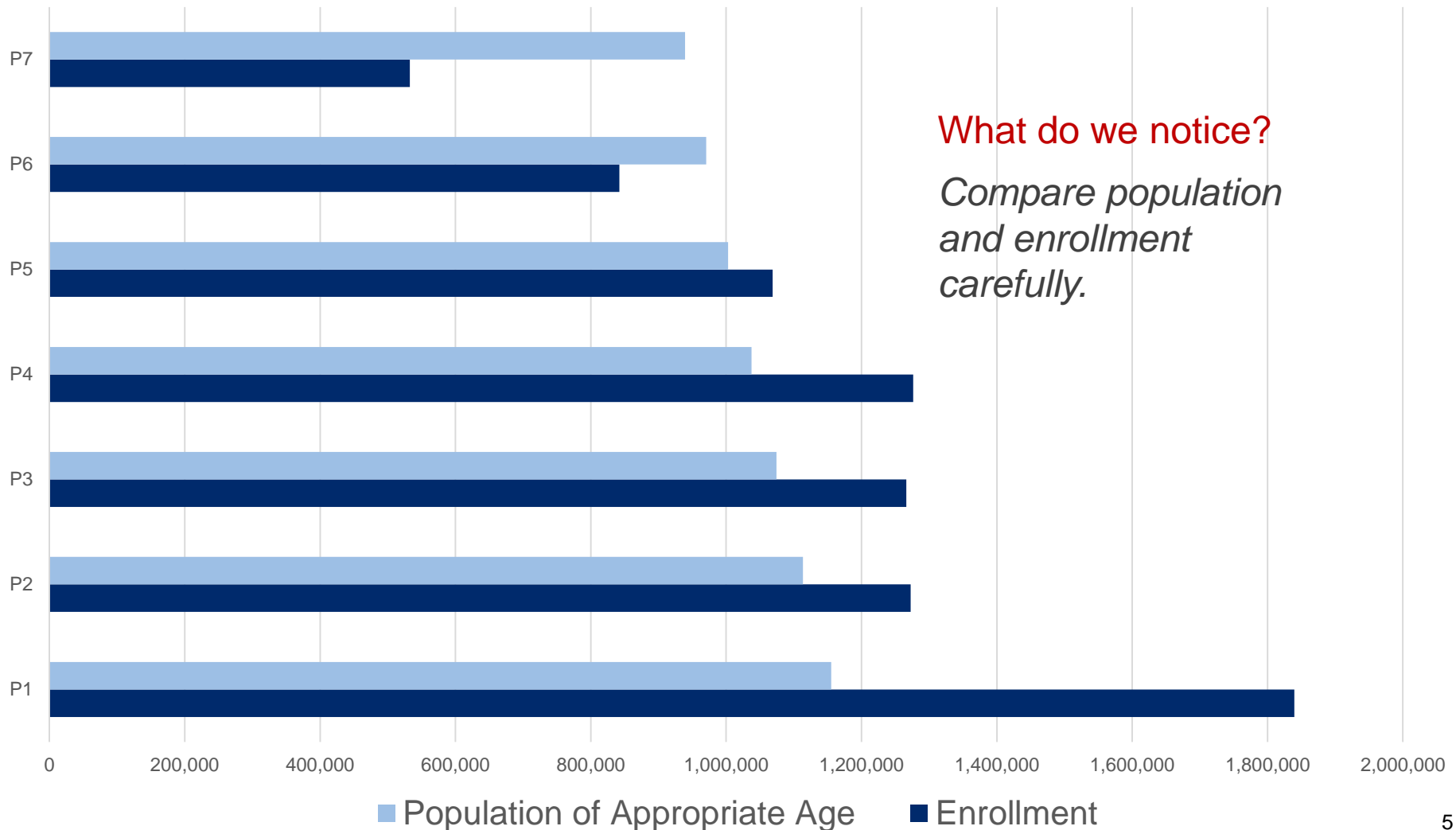
What do we notice?

Compare population and enrollment carefully.

■ Population of Appropriate Age   ■ Enrollment

But what happens if we overlay the population?

Enrollment with Population Overlay

This small?

What is the size of the job now?

Population of Appropriate Age   Enrollment
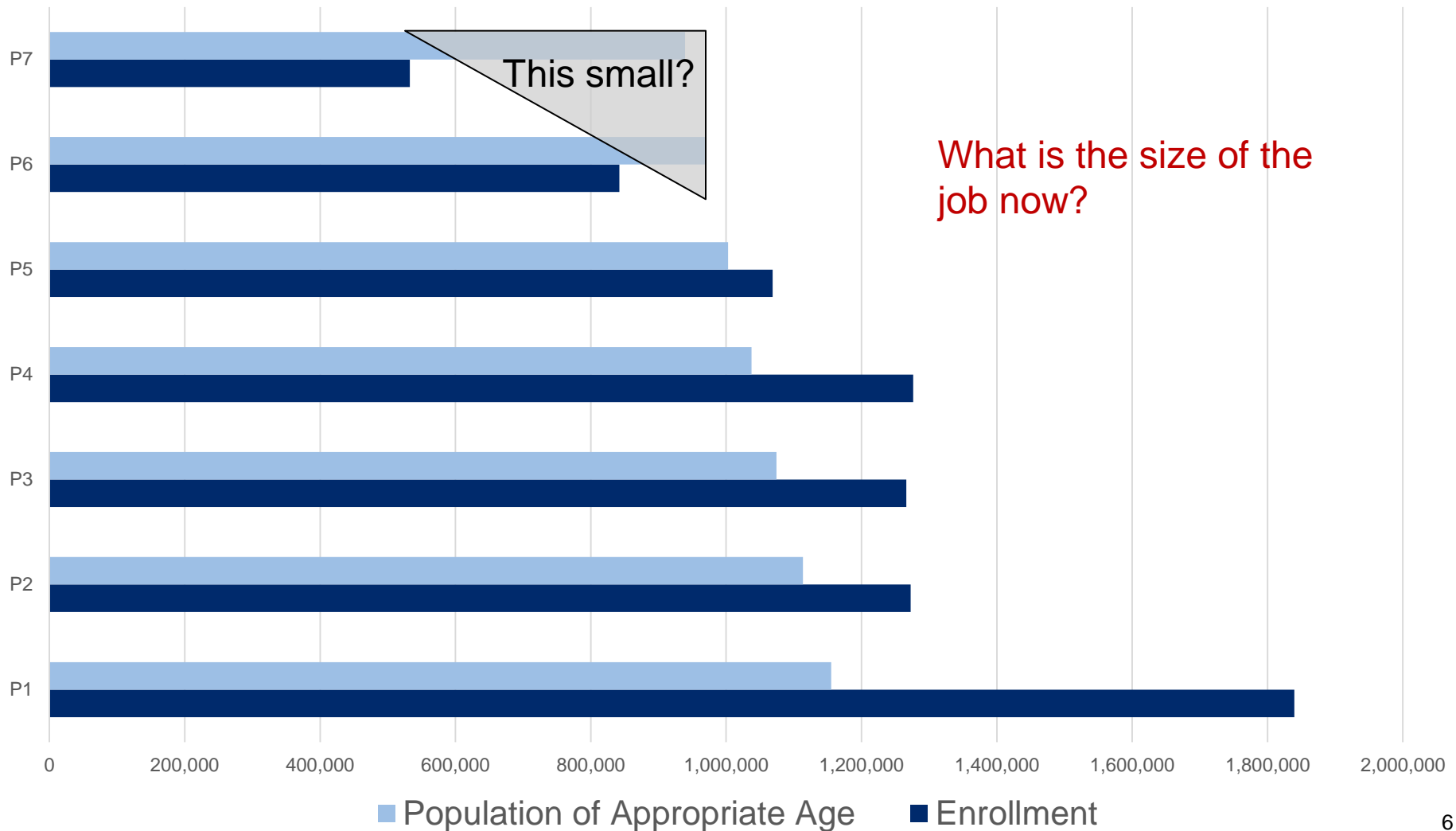
So what is going on here?

- Why is there so much enrollment compared to population in grade 1?

- And even in the other grades?

- Could it be under-age and over-age enrollment?

Under-age and over-age enrollment is a possibility

| Age	% of new enrollment in grade 1
Less than or equal to 5	4.6%
6	40.8%
7	24.5%
8	10.8%
Greater than or equal to 9	8.6%

- So, it would appear to be a possibility: entry age is somewhat widely distributed…

- In fact, the Gross Intake Ratio (new entrants regardless of age over population of appropriate age) is about **140%** in most recent year reported by EMIS

Can 140% gross intake ratio be due to over- and under-age *intake*?

- Most likely no

- Not if it has been going on for a decade or more

- One a child is enrolled as new, the child is enrolled, full stop…

- You cannot be "new" twice

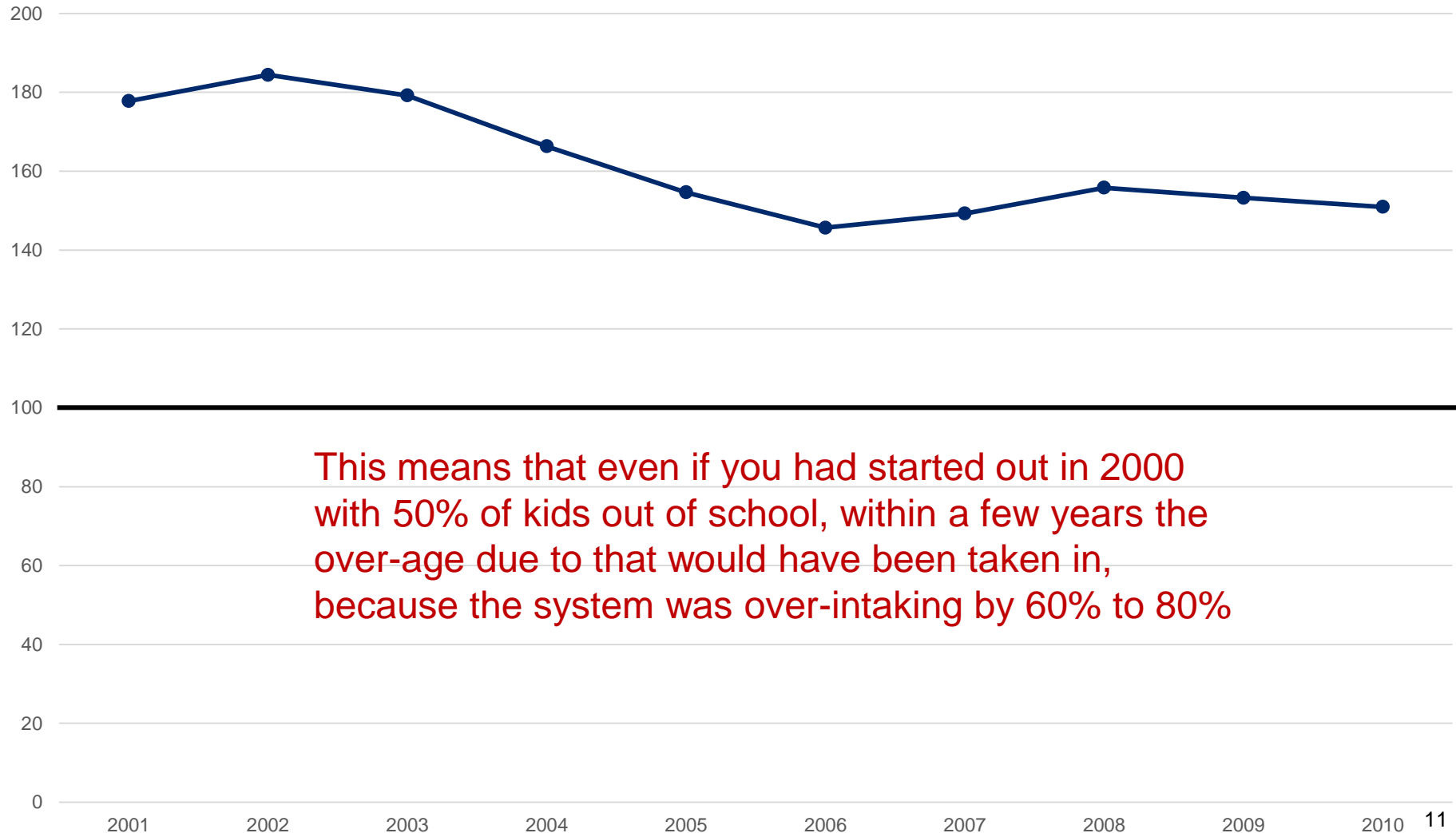- So it has to be under-age or over-age that are **<u>new</u>**

But take a look at the intake ratio for a decade…

Gross Intake Ratio into Grade 1: One Decade
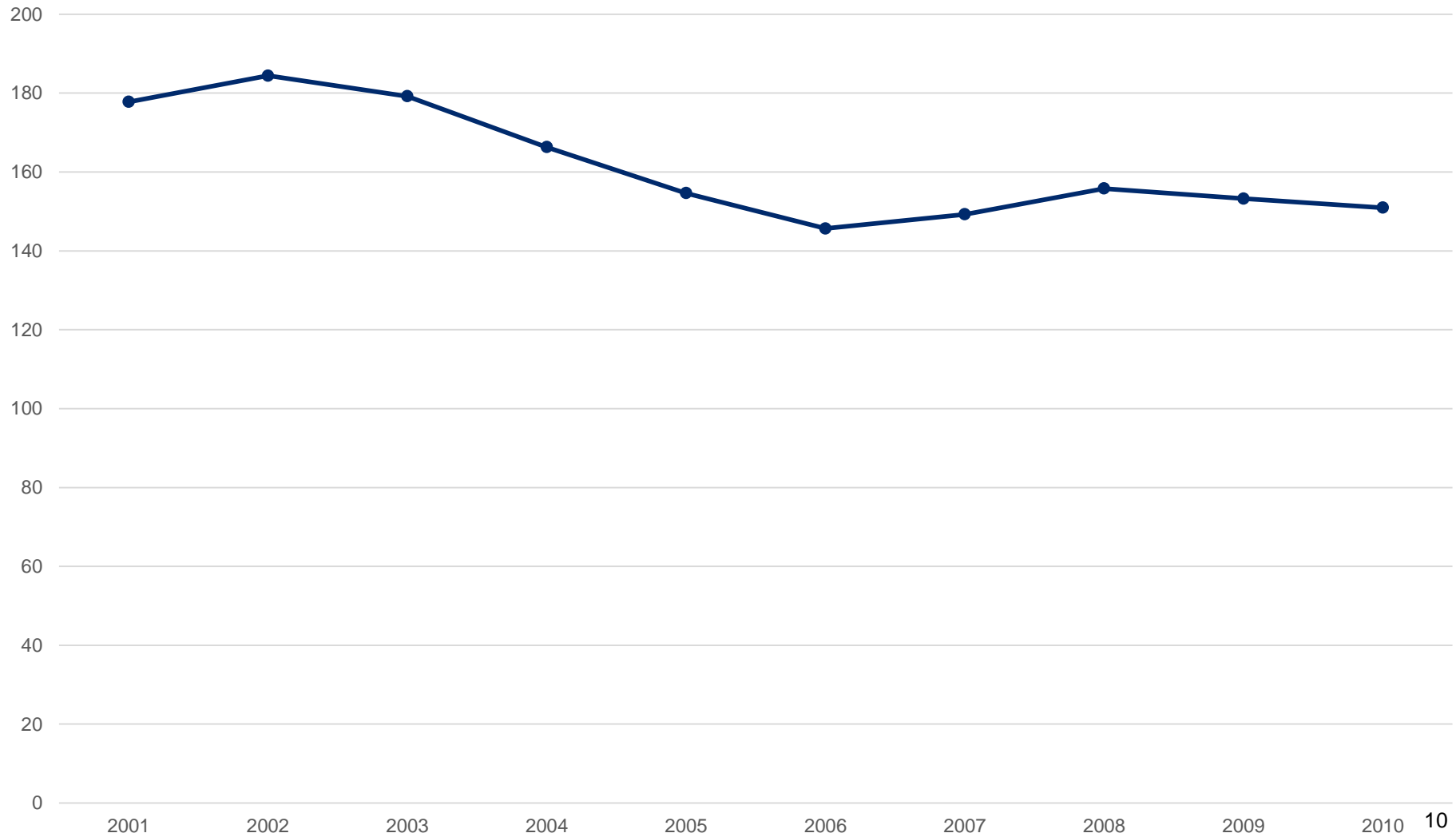
Now, what is the "normal intake"? 100%

Gross Intake Ratio into Grade 1: One Decade

This means that even if you had started out in 2000 with 50% of kids out of school, within a few years the over-age due to that would have been taken in, because the system was over-intaking by 60% to 80%

Yet we know that even in 2000 the total enrollment in all of primary was already > 100% of the population!

Gross Attendance Ratios

Source: DHS Surveys

Yet we know that even in 2000 the total enrollment in all of primary was already > 100% of the population!

Gross Attendance Ratios

- 1995
- 2000

Source: DHS Surveys
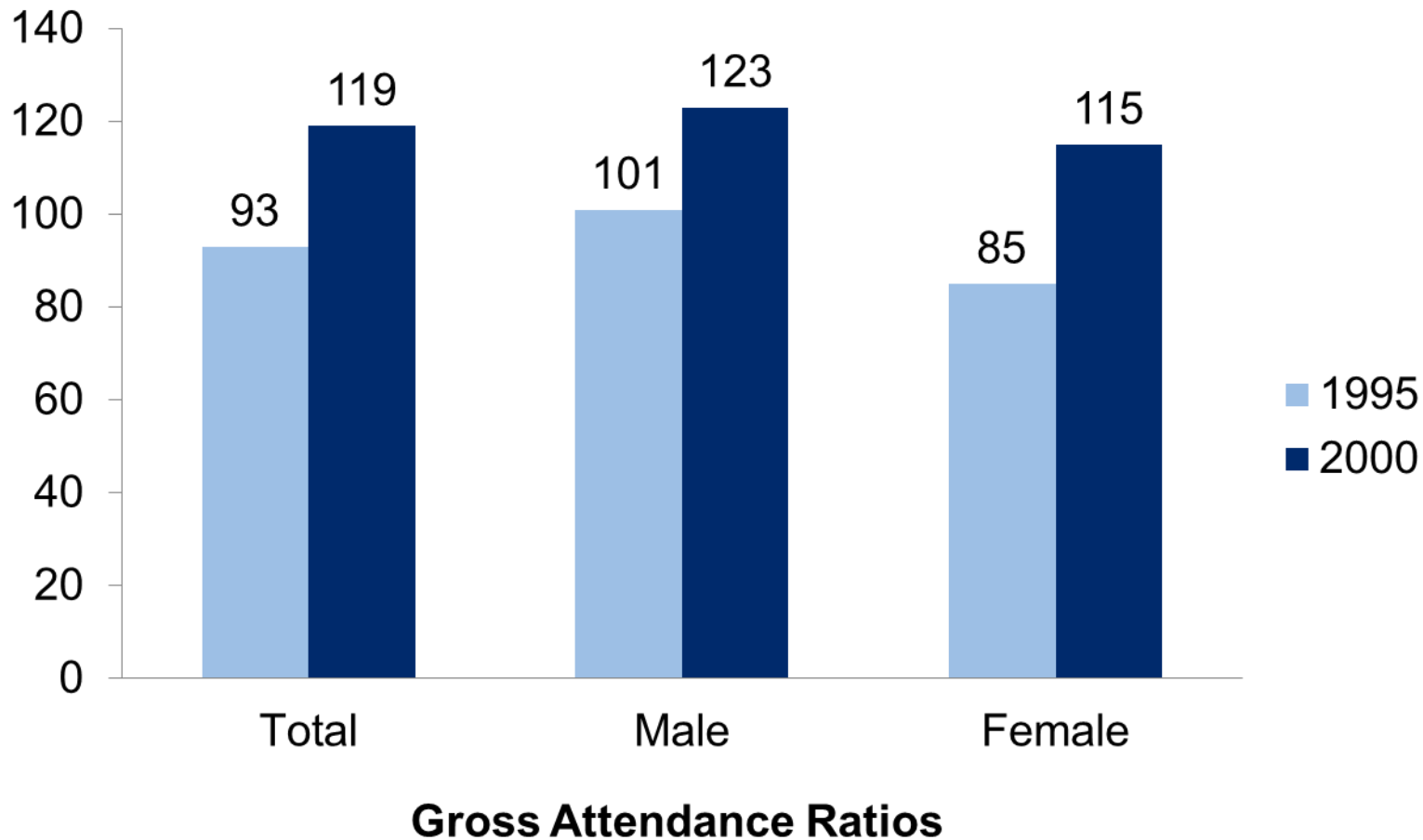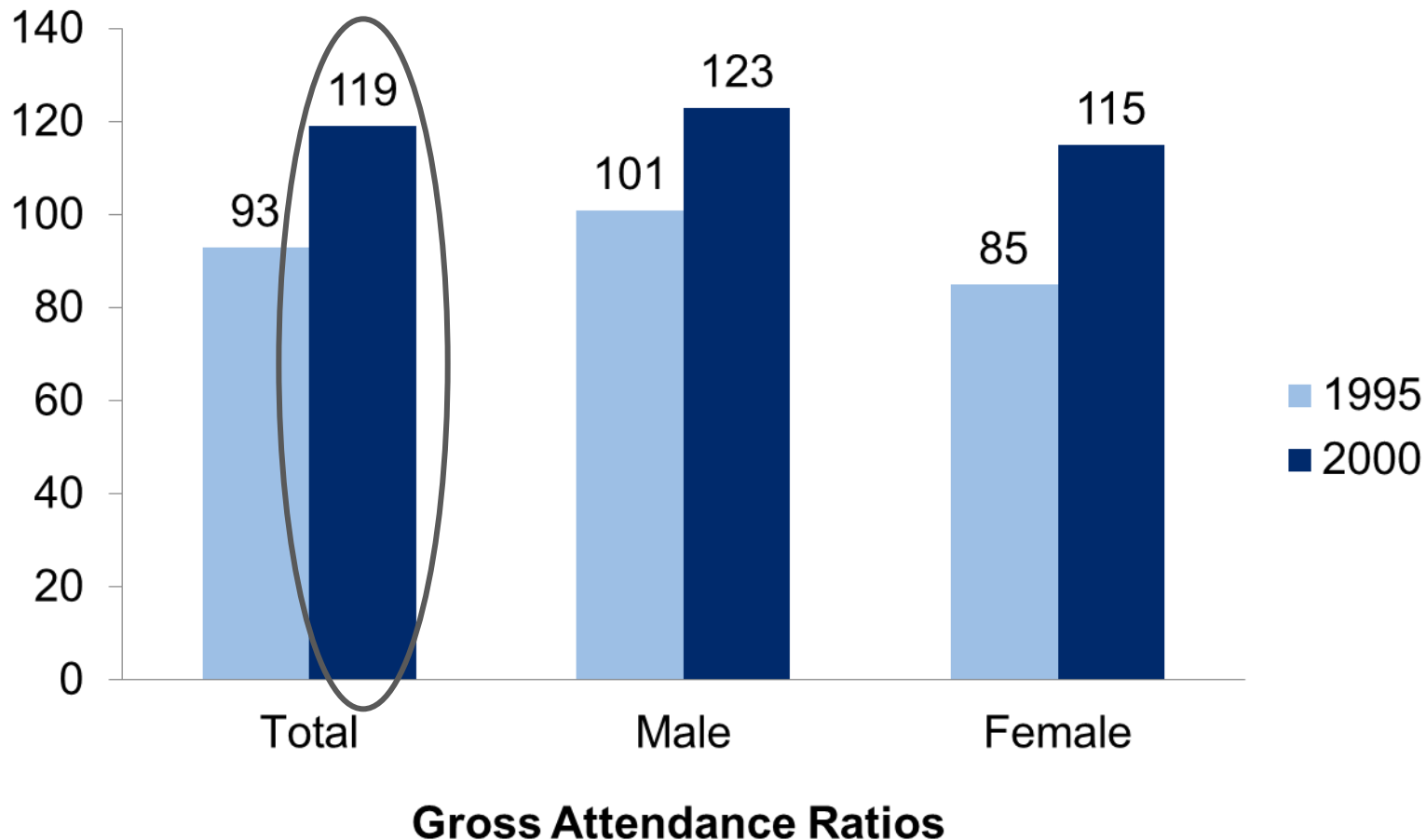
Perhaps the numbers are exaggerated? Or bad data?

- There may be some exaggeration in the numbers

- In 2000 and 2011, the official statistics were: 130% and 110% Gross Enrollment Ratio in Primary

- We see from DHS estimates of 120% and 100% respectively. Only a 10 point difference in each case.

  – <u>This is an independent survey and the numerator and denominator are the same source.</u>
  – So, unlikely to be exaggerated or bad data.

- So if there is some exaggeration, it is relatively minor.

Conclusions thus far

- The bulge in over-enrollment in early grades cannot be due to under-age or over-age entry or intake

- It may likely be partially due to some exaggeration

- But the main pattern is probably rather large-scale, under-reported repetition

- A little bit like Sherlock Holmes: look at all the possible explanations, exclude the ones that don't work, the "truth" is what remains

- But here is some <u>positive</u> evidence

Data from IDS Sussex's (Keith Lewin)"CREATE" project
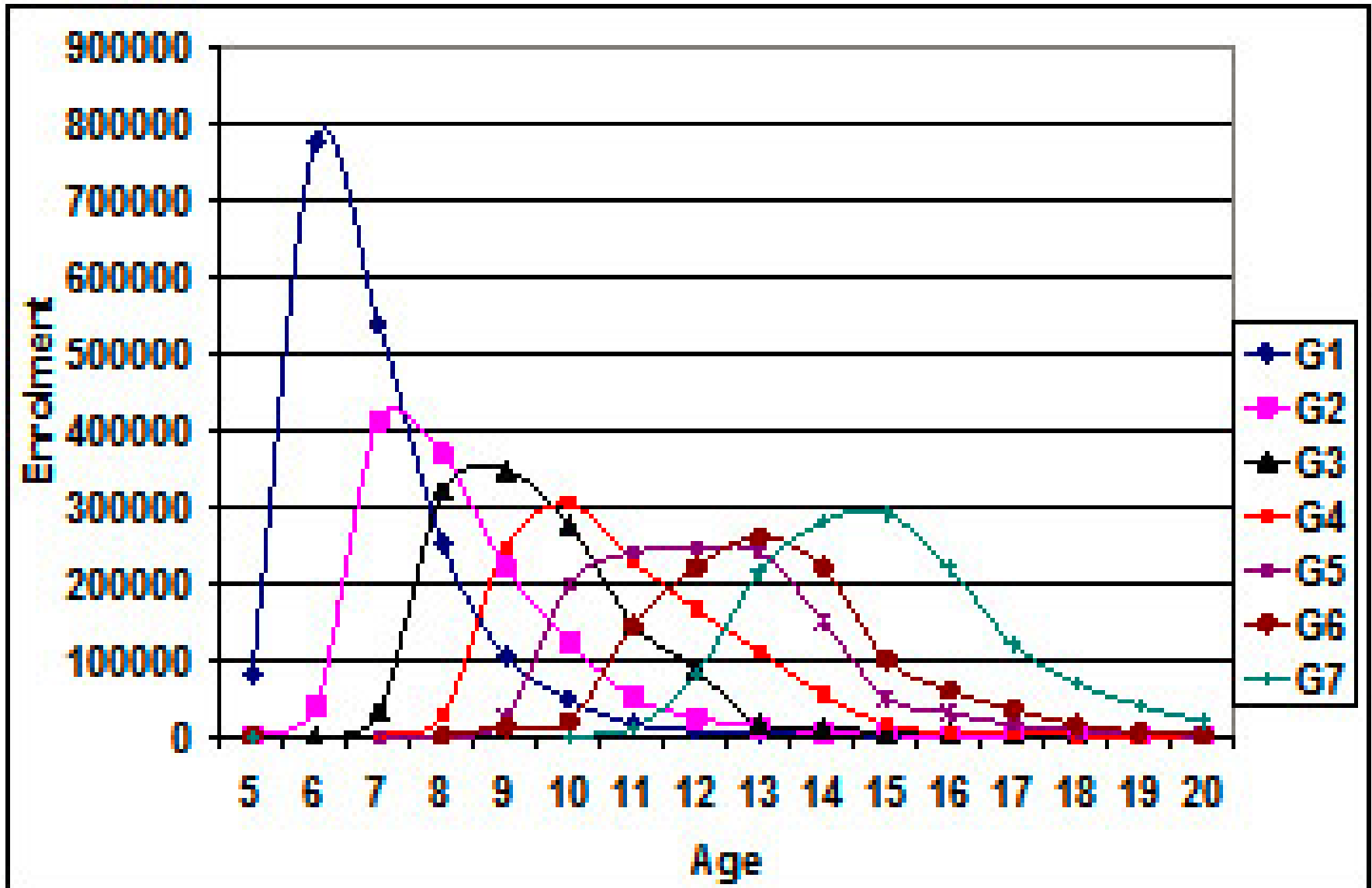
Note: am not sure when these data are for, but probably reasonably recent; problem may be smaller today but probably persists

Data from IDS Sussex's (Keith Lewin)"CREATE" project
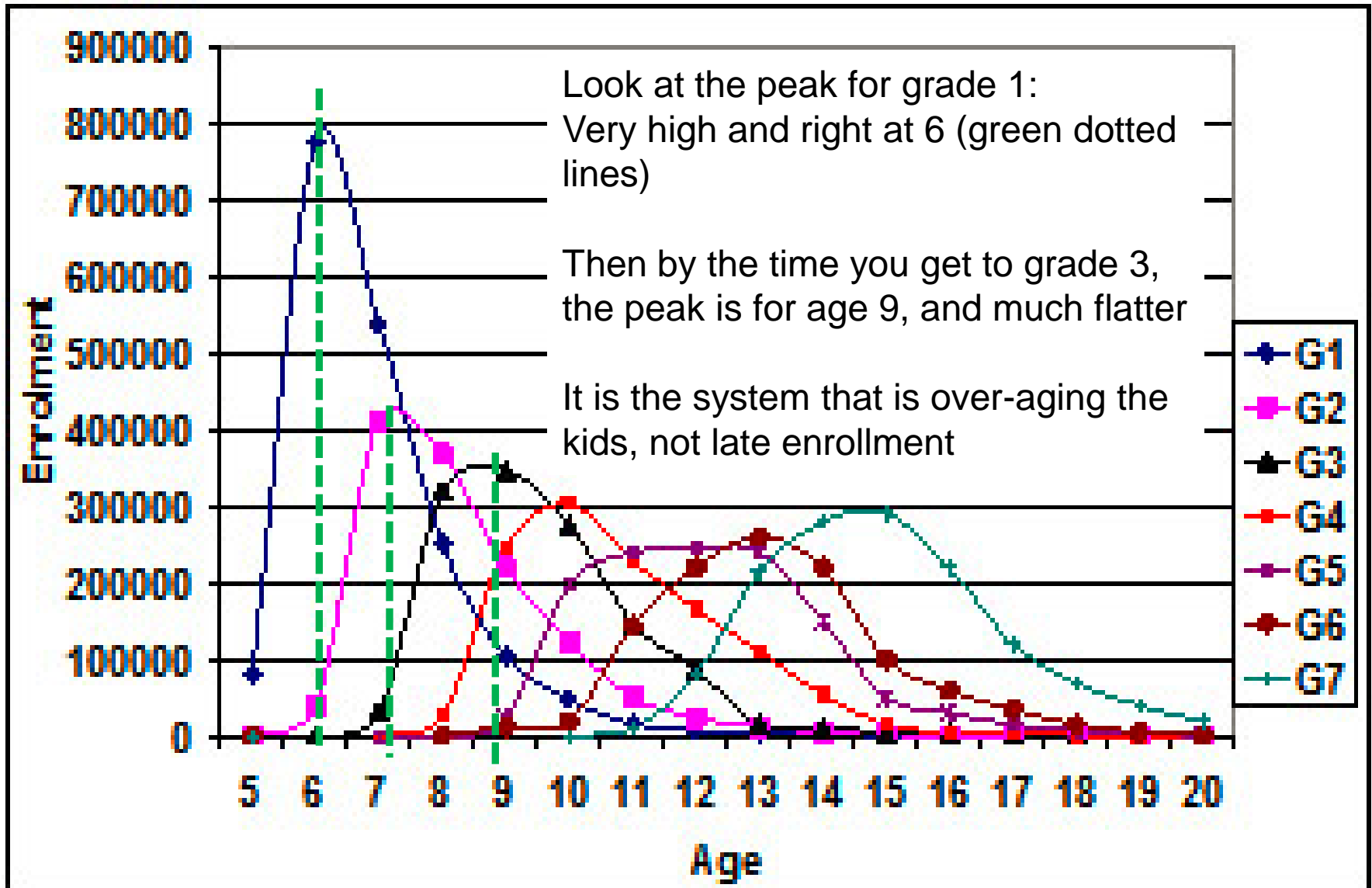
Optional slide in case of "Doubting Thomases"

Age	Grade		
	1	2	3
5	90	0	0
6	790	20	0
7	520	400	15
8	270	370	310
9	100	210	350

- Crouch can discuss the pattern
- During main presentation if there is interest
- Or come back if there is questioning and interest

Which means that it is the system that is over-aging the children

- It is not late entry

- The children age 1.3 years in grade 1

- And age again 1.3 years in grade 2

- By the time they get to grade 3 they are 60% over-age even if they entered at normal age

- So the children are over-aging while in school
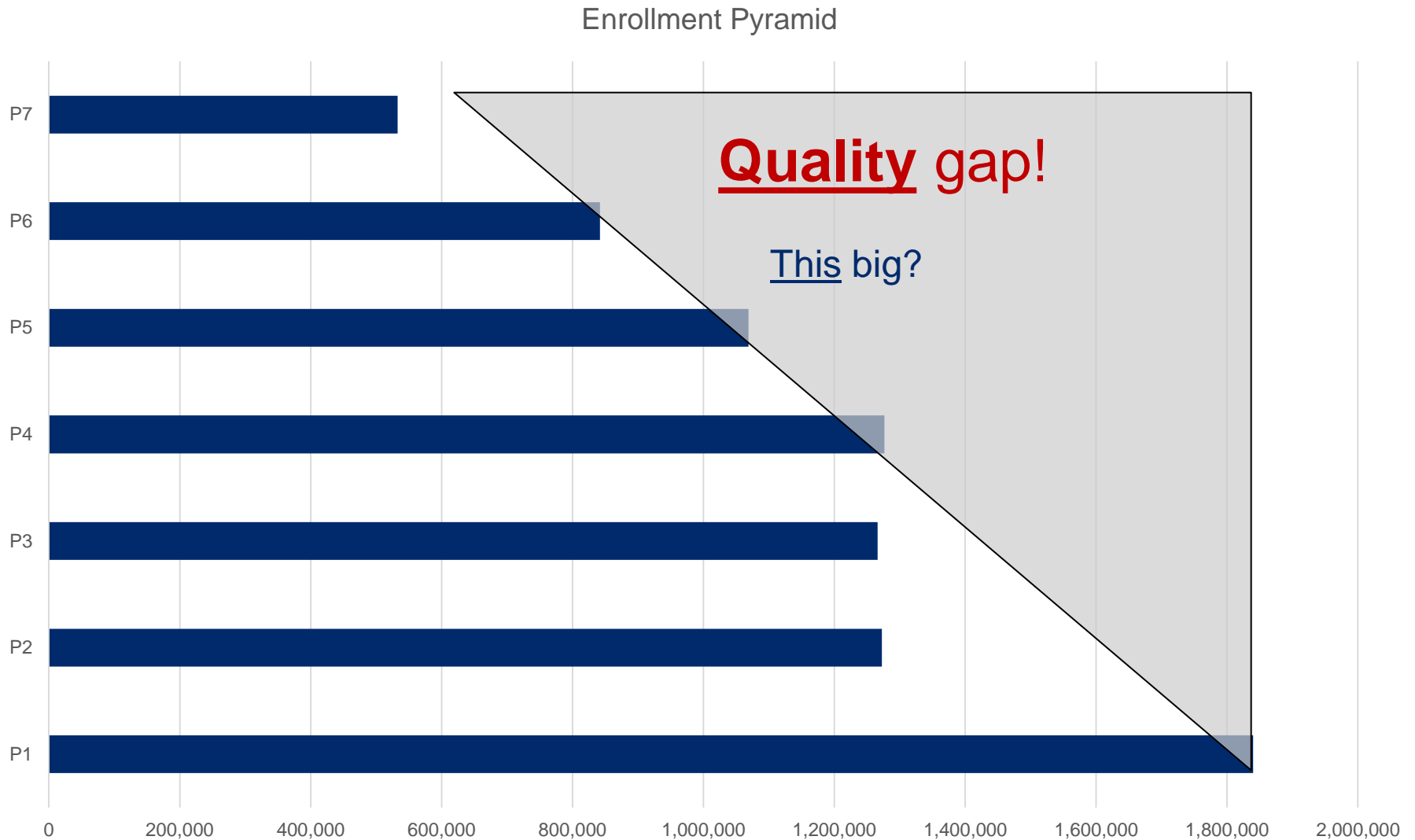
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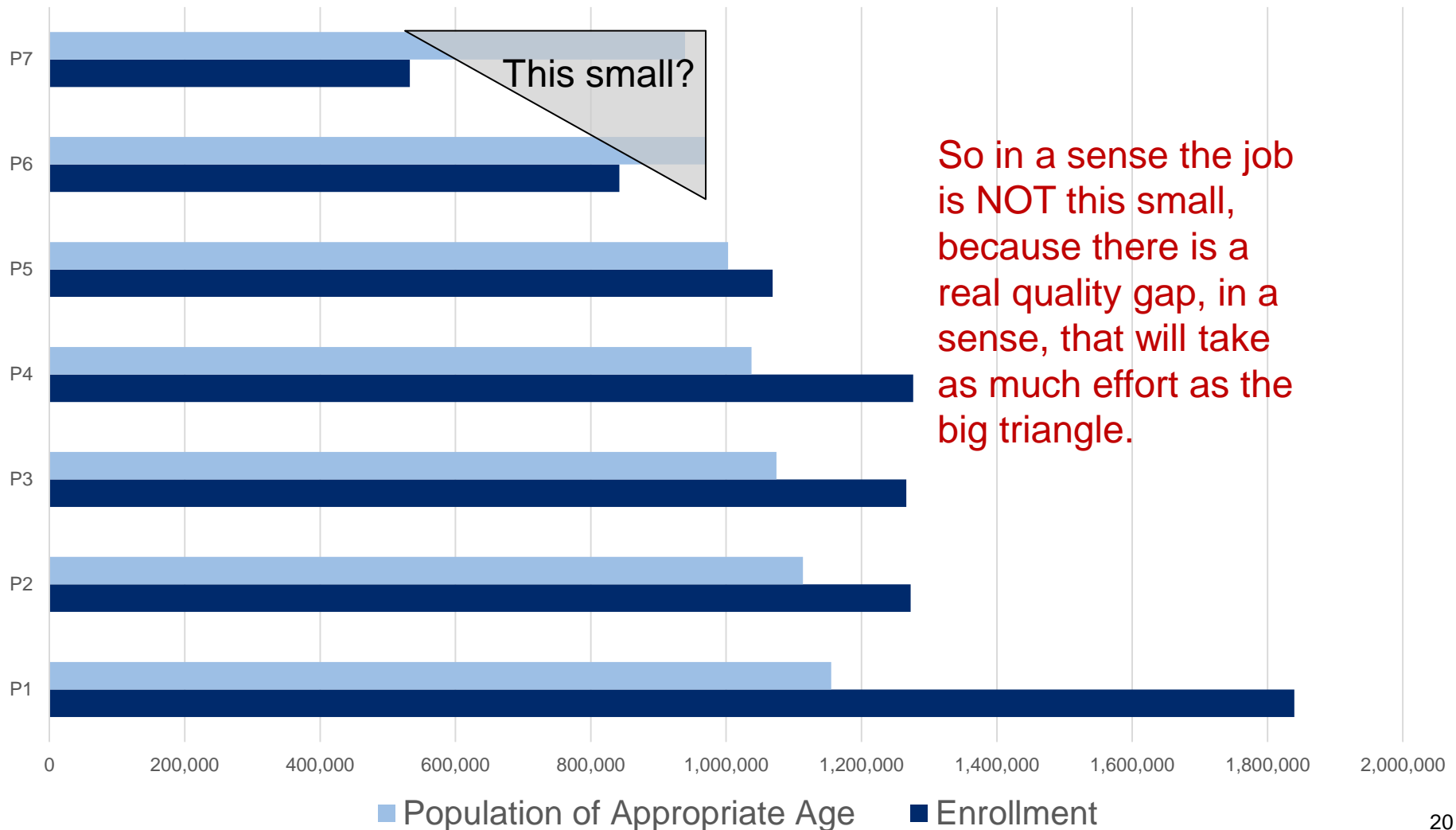
This small?

So in a sense the job is NOT this small, because there is a real quality gap, in a sense, that will take as much effort as the big triangle.

Population of Appropriate Age   Enrollment

What do the most basic numbers tell us?

Enrollment Pyramid

Quality gap!

This big?

Towards a Conclusion: What are the fundamental causes?

- **Maybe there is some exaggeration:**
  - It is easier to admit a young child with the expectation of repetition than to invent one altogether
- **There may be insufficient early-childhood, so children are admitted with the expectation to repeat**
  - Repetition is a sort of "informal Early Childhood" care
  - But extremely inefficient!!!
- **If a child attends some time during Grade 1 but not the whole time, and then re-enrolls in Grade 1 next year, not perceived as repeater (but from a resource point if view, is)**

- **Even with automatic promotion, if parents and teachers agree child not learning (reading, say), then repeat anyway**

Problem in many countries, not just Uganda

Triple crisis in "Foundational First Five"

1. Crisis of un-reported (very large) repetition, exaggerated (implausible) intake, not much dropout in the early grades (in spite of opinion that there is)

2. Lack of early childhood care / kindergarten and even pre-kindergarten

3. Crisis of reading in the early grades
   - About ½ of children in early grades in poorer areas are not capable of reading a single word
   - This combines with the above two

You get the triple crisis in the first five years

Crisis in "Foundational First Five"

- Explains much of the problem with achievement in school

- Very weak foundations simply cannot be built upon

- Was ok when current officials were children: only a minority made it through

- To have universal education of reasonable quality <u>must fix the foundations</u>

- Early Grade Reading (EGR) is only one element, but is a key element (mother tongue, teaching, better materials)

- Another is appropriate early childhood
  - Many countries say "We cannot afford it"
  - But they are already paying for it with a crisis of inefficiency in the first few grades

- <u>Knowledge now exists as to how to address this crisis</u>

Lastly, for the record: not only Uganda

Here are some "Grade 1 bulge" numbers for a sample of other, even middle-income, countries:

– Uganda   1.6
– Rwanda   2.2
– Brazil   1.5
– Philippines   1.3

It is **far** from an rare problem; many countries have it

We increasingly know what to do about it