

# **A minimum income standard- a cross-European benchmark?**

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# Issues

- How do we define poverty in relation to acceptable living standards?
- Do we adjust income standards criteria in hard times?
- How do we compare standards across countries?

# Aspects of poverty

- Hardship: lacking socially agreed necessities
- Falling behind: low income relative to others in one's country
- Unable to afford a household budget deemed "adequate" overall

# Measuring adequacy: budget standards

- Defines a minimum “decent” standard of living, through basket of items
- Can combine “expert” knowledge with “consensual” decisions
- Crucial issue is who initiates, who validates

# Minimum income standard approach

- Successive groups of members of public
- Case studies allow “projection”
- Validation of some aspects by experts
- Demonstrates that “consensual” method can produce robust results

# Minimum income standard approach

- Requires clear-cut definition

Eg: 'A minimum standard of living in the UK today includes, but is more than just, food, clothes and shelter. It is about having what you need in order to have the opportunities and choices necessary to participate in society.'

# **Minimum Income standard: comparing countries**

UK, Ireland, Japan, France, Portugal,  
Austria

During 2014, a chance to compare  
results

# Minimum Income standard: comparing countries

Three key questions to explore

1) How much do cultural norms affect qualitative results?

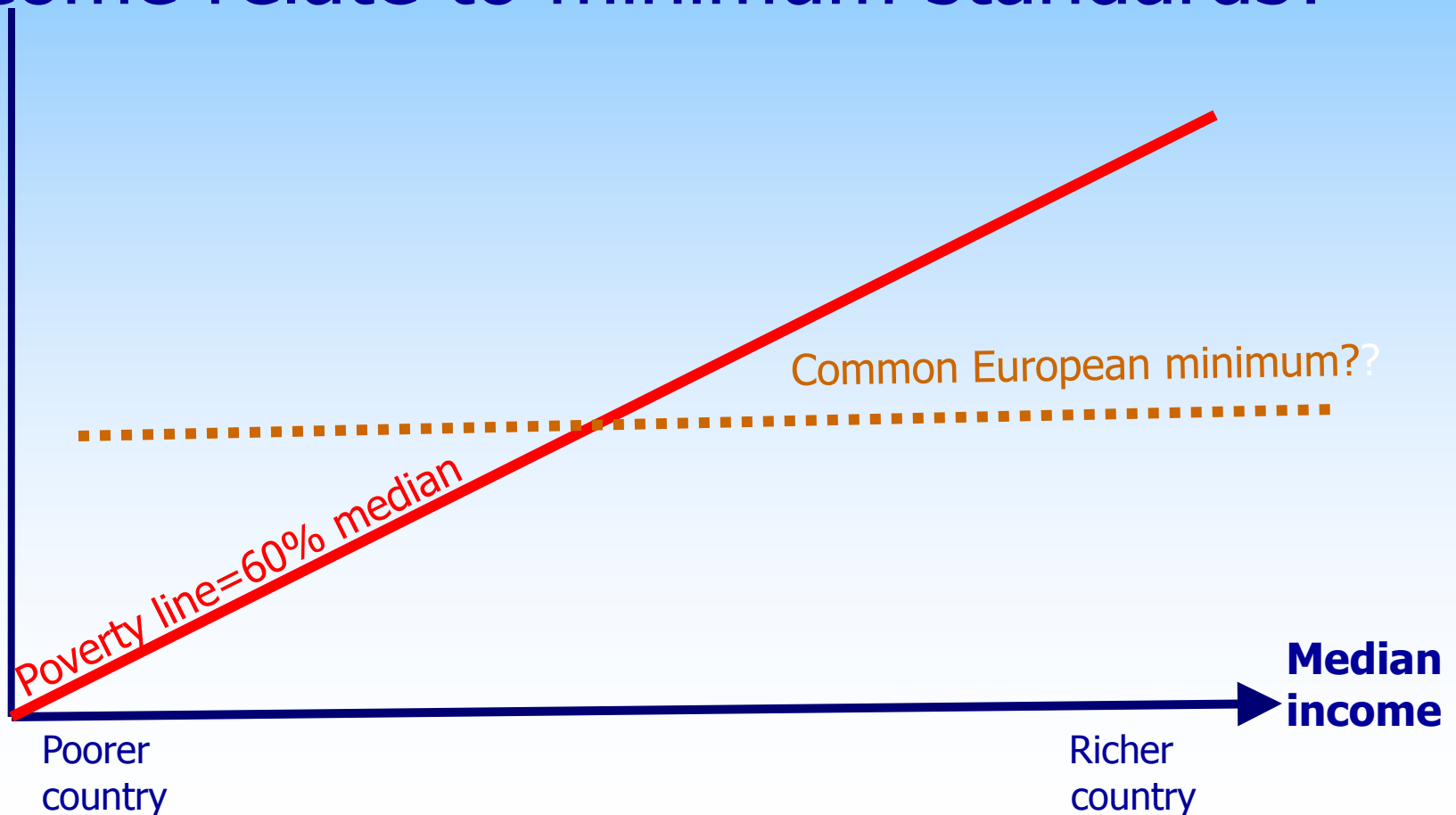
2) Does greater affluence/austerity affect what is included (qualitative comparisons)?

3) Does GDP per capita systematically affect cost of minimum budget?



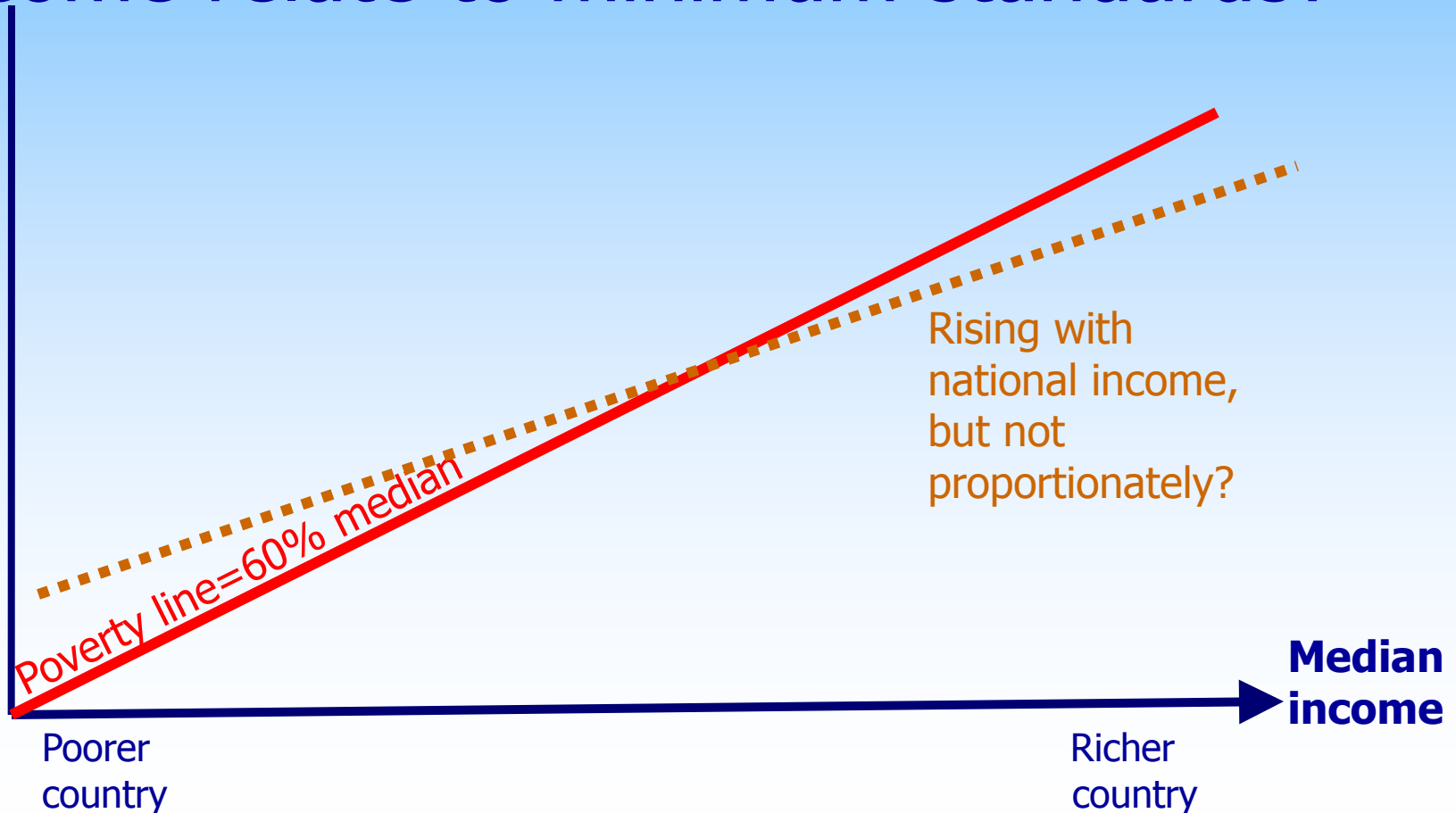
# Comparing countries

The holy grail: how does relative income relate to minimum standards?



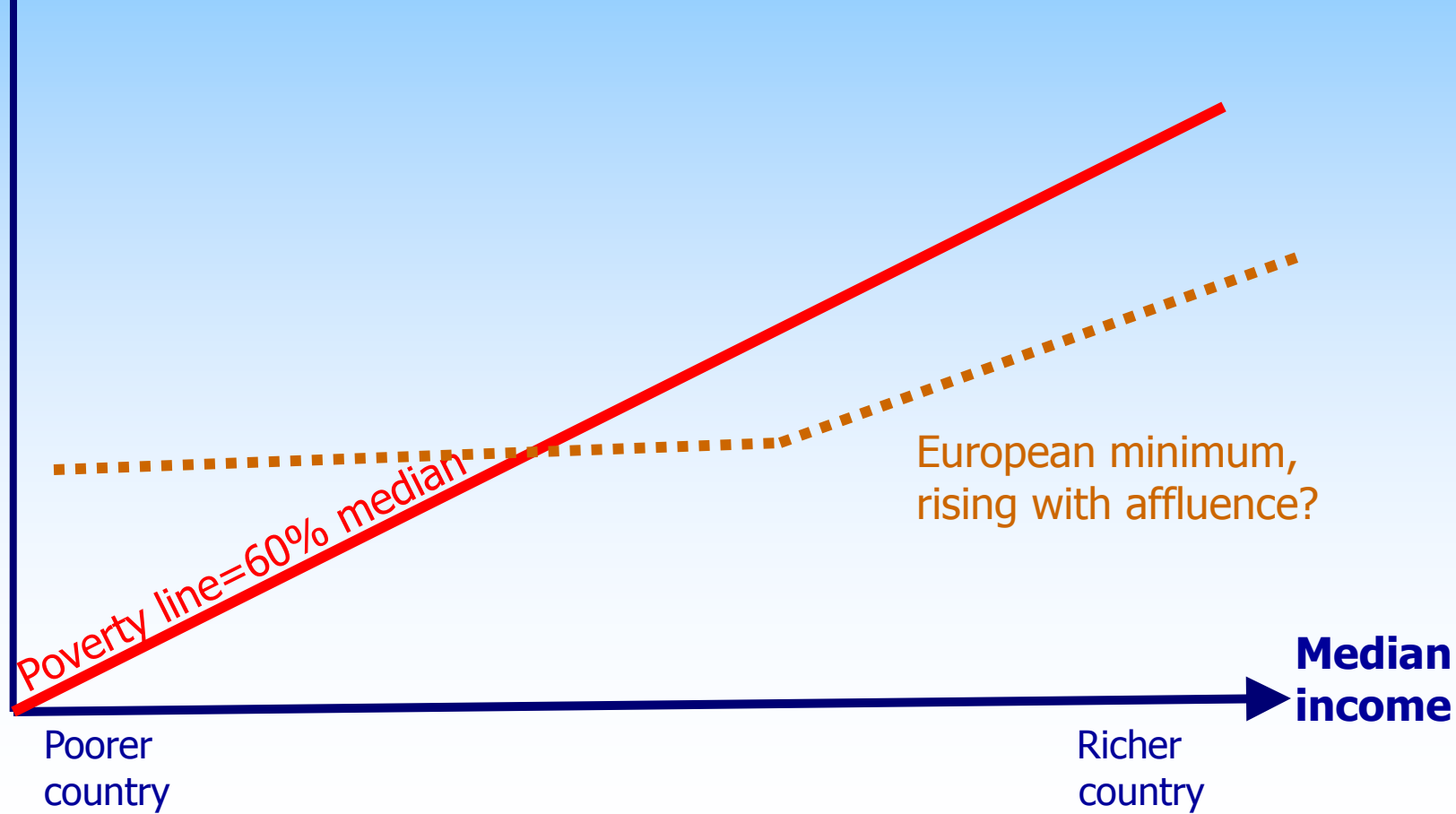
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