



Key Competencies: Skills for Life 2007



“Key Competencies: an International Viewpoint”

Dr. Patrick Werquin*

OECD – Directorate for Education

The Oliver Thompson Lecture Theatre, London, 12-13 July 2007

(* the opinions expressed in this power point are those of the author alone)



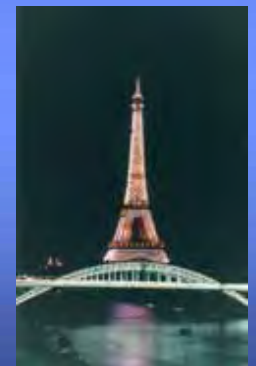
Agenda for today

- Facts (Demography, Literacy, Migrations, economic growth...)
- The OECD Thematic review of adult learning
- The role of national qualifications system in promoting Lifelong learning
- Recognition of non formal and informal learning



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- Recognition of non formal and informal learning



Key Competences

Why bother?

Patrick Werquin, Key Competencies: an International Viewpoint, London, 12-13 July 2007

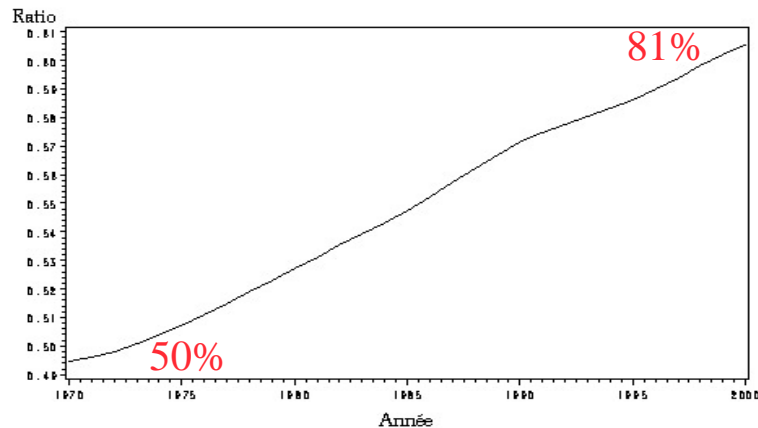
Facts

Ageing is a reality ☹

Patrick Werquin, Key Competencies: an International Viewpoint, London, 12-13 July 2007

Share of the 25-64 among the 0-65: Australia

Part des 25-64 ans parmi les moins de 65 ans
Australie



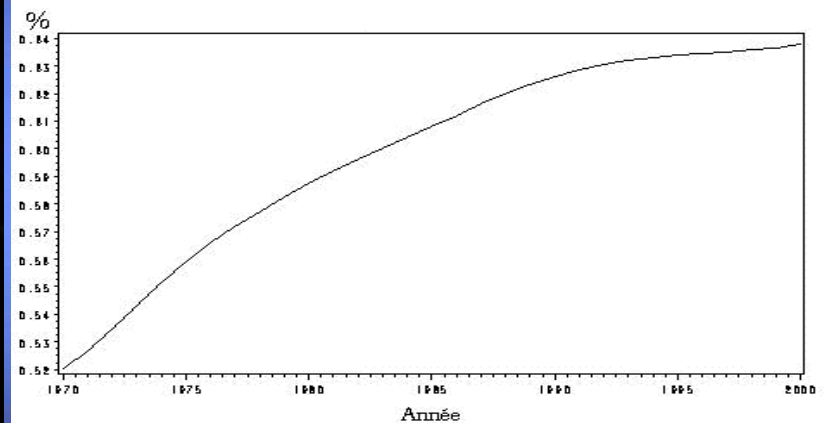
Source : Nations unies (2000)

Traitement : Patrick Werquin

Patrick Werquin, Key Competencies: an International Viewpoint, London, 12-13 July 2007

Share of the 25-64 among the 0-65: Finland

Part des 25-64 ans parmi les moins de 65 ans
Finlande



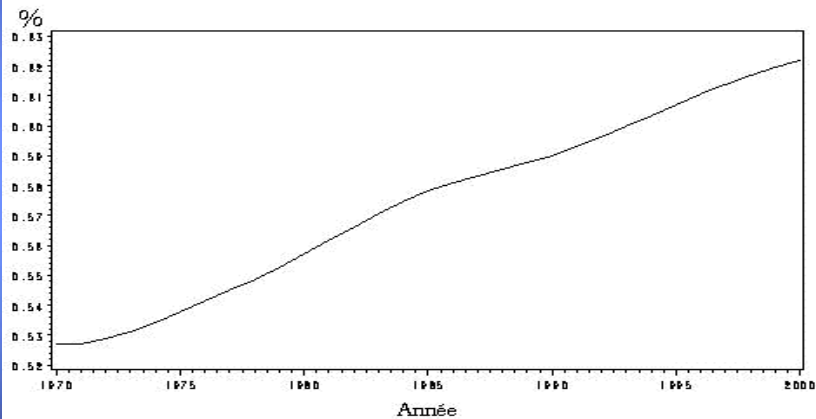
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Share of the 25-64 among the 0-65: France

Part des 25-64 ans parmi les moins de 65 ans
France



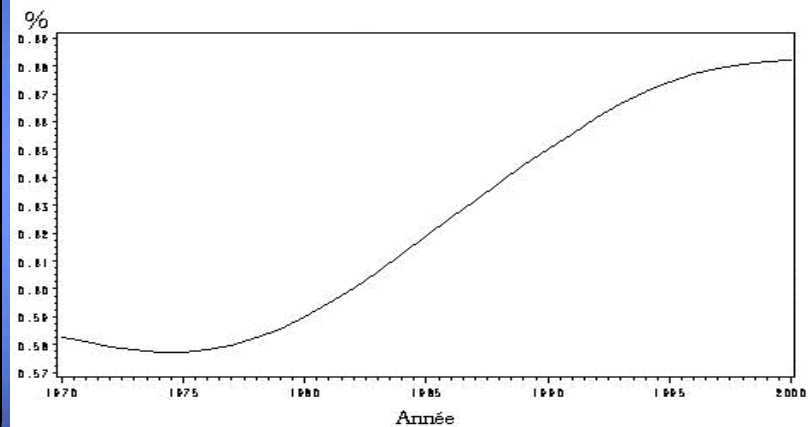
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Share of the 25-64 among the 0-65: Germany

Part des 25-64 ans parmi les moins de 65 ans
Allemagne



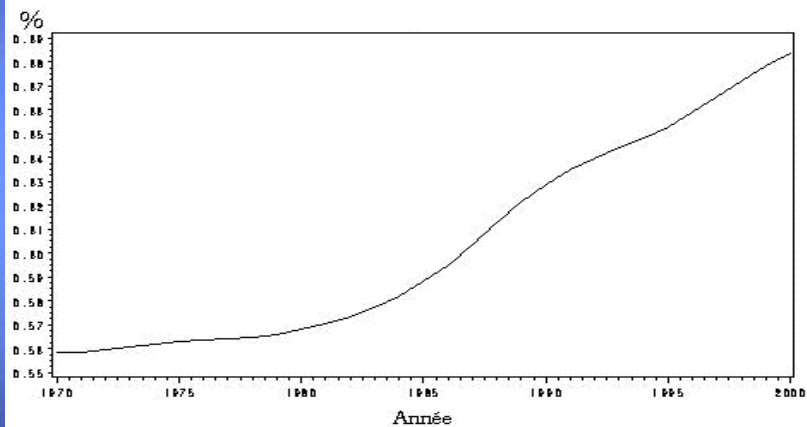
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Share of the 25-64 among the 0-65: Italy

Part des 25-64 ans parmi les moins de 65 ans
Italie



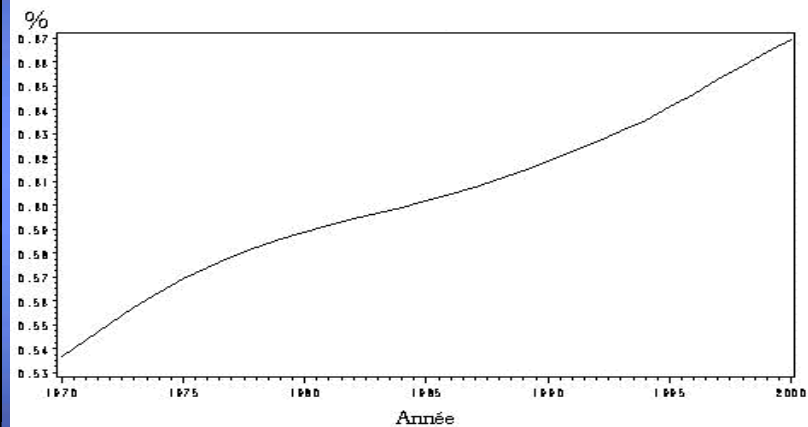
Source : Nations unies (2000)

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Share of the 25-64 among the 0-65: Japan

Part des 25-64 ans parmi les moins de 65 ans
Japon



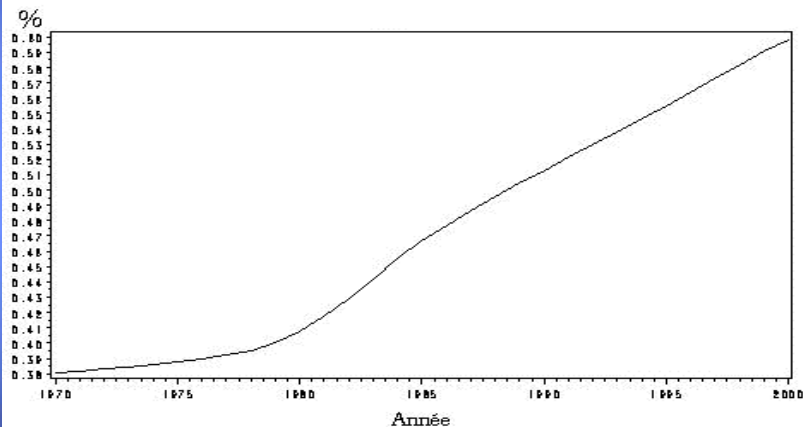
Source : Nations unies (2000)

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Share of the 25-64 among the 0-65: Korea

Part des 25-64 ans parmi les moins de 65 ans
Corée



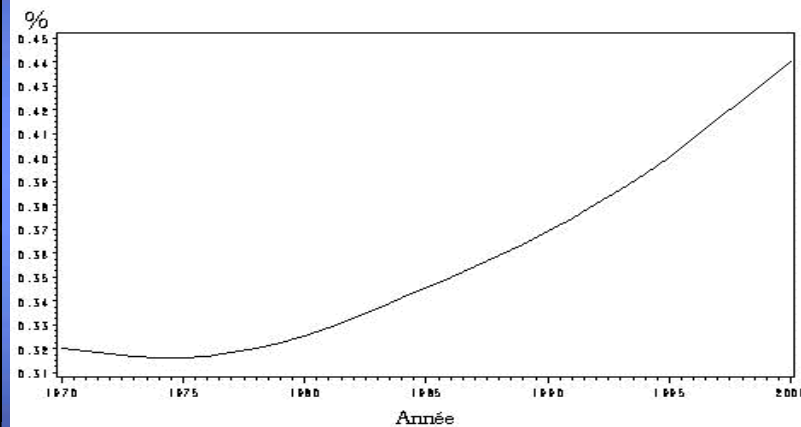
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Share of the 25-64 among the 0-65: Mexico

Part des 25-64 ans parmi les moins de 65 ans
Mexique



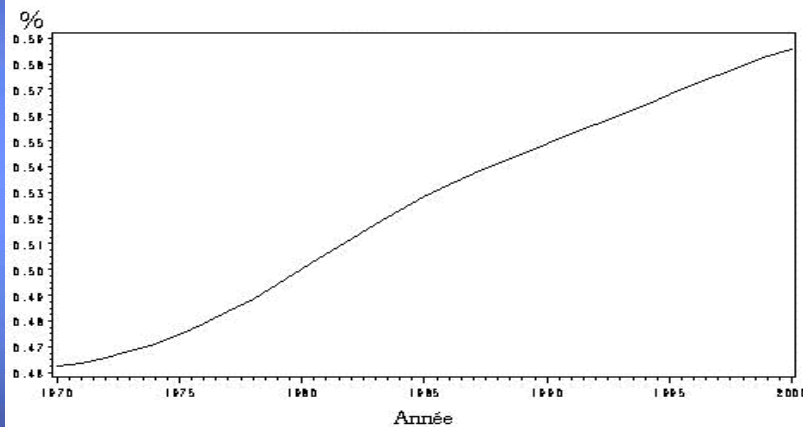
Source : Nations unies (2000)

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Share of the 25-64 among the 0-65: NZL

Part des 25-64 ans parmi les moins de 65 ans
Nouvelle-Zélande



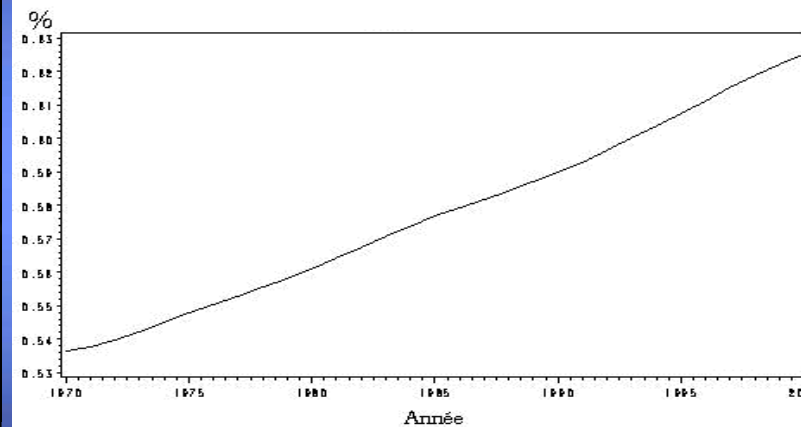
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Share of the 25-64 among the 0-65: Norway

Part des 25-64 ans parmi les moins de 65 ans
Norvege



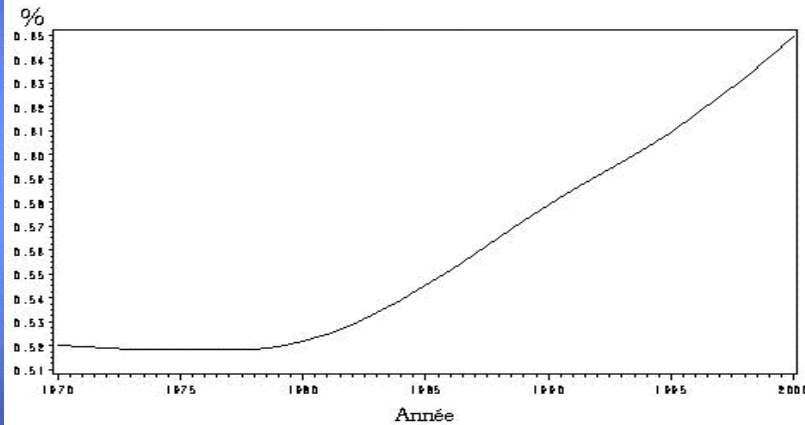
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Share of the 25-64 among the 0-65: Spain

Part des 25—64 ans parmi les moins de 65 ans
Espagne



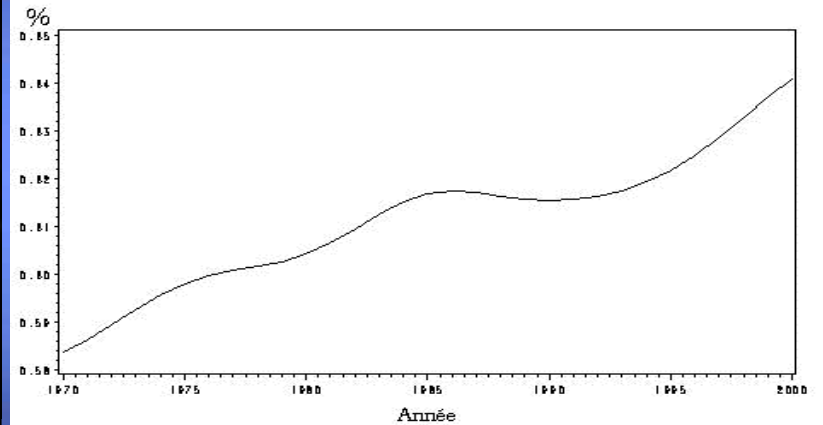
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Share of the 25-64 among the 0-65: Sweden

Part des 25—64 ans parmi les moins de 65 ans
Suede



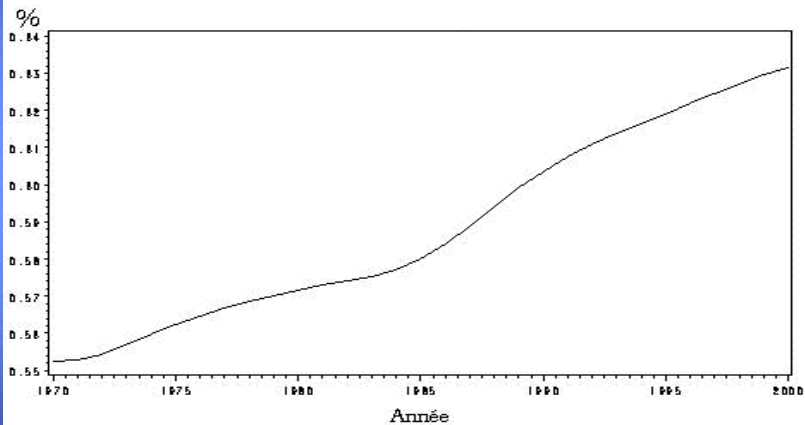
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Share of the 25-64 among the 0-65: UK

Part des 25—64 ans parmi les moins de 65 ans
Royaume—Uni



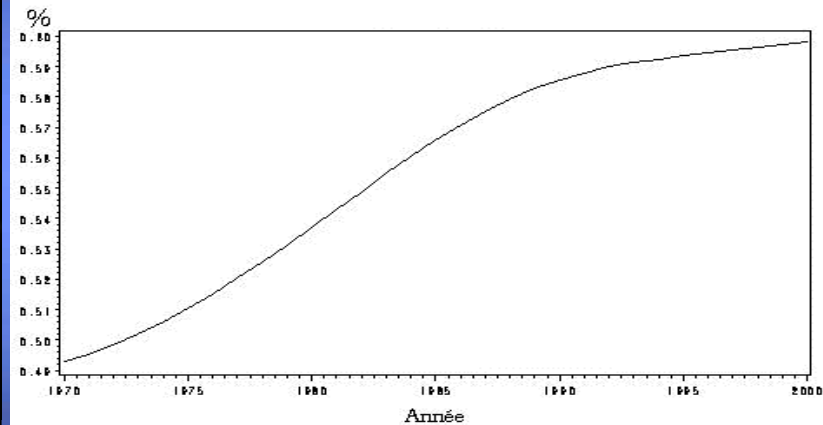
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Share of the 25-64 among the 0-65: USA

Part des 25—64 ans parmi les moins de 65 ans
Etats—Unis



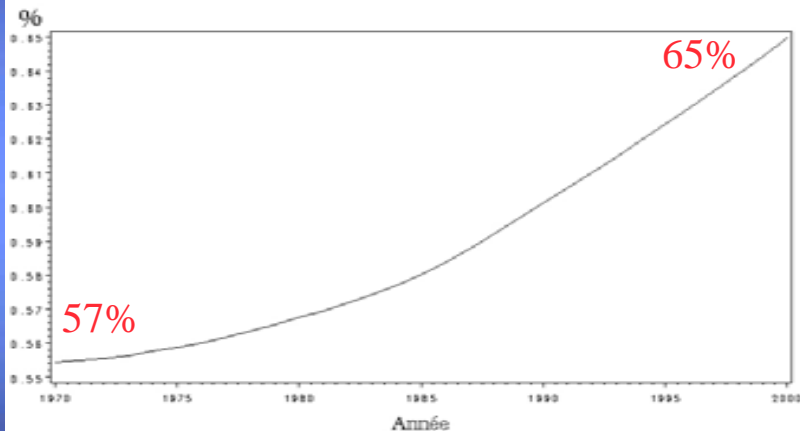
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Share of the 25-64 among the 0-65: Greece

Part des 25-64 ans parmi les moins de 65 ans
Greece



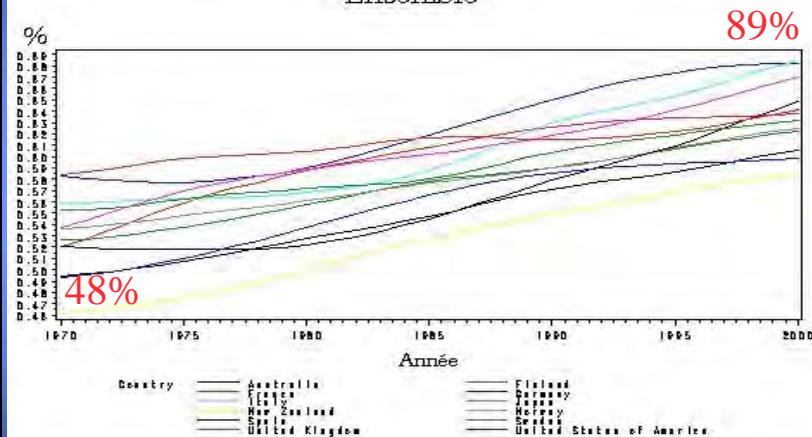
Source : Nations unies (2000)

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Share of the 25-64 among the 0-65: ALL

Part des 25-64 ans parmi les moins de 65 ans
Ensemble



Source : Nations unies (2000)

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Patrick Werquin, Key Competencies: an International Viewpoint, London, 12-13 July 2007

Ageing is indeed a reality

There are less and less young people!!!



Patrick Werquin, Key Competencies: an International Viewpoint, London, 12-13 July 2007

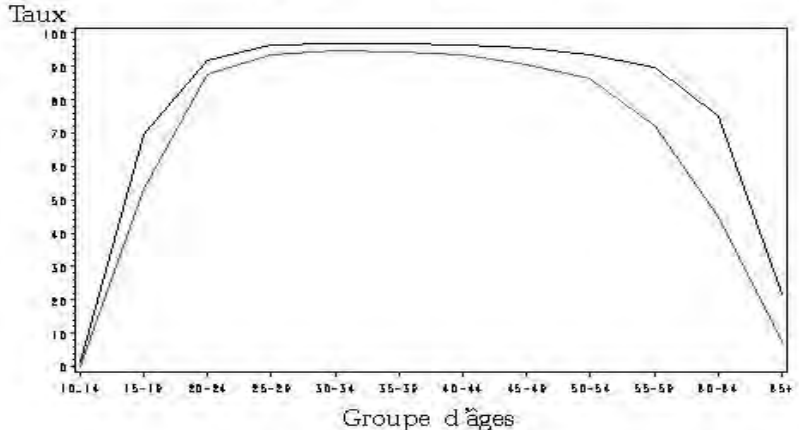
How about participation in the labour market?

Male population

Patrick Werquin, Key Competencies: an International Viewpoint, London, 12-13 July 2007

Labour market participation rate by age: Australia, Male

Taux d'activité par âge en 1970 et 2000 (rouge)
 Australie — Hommes

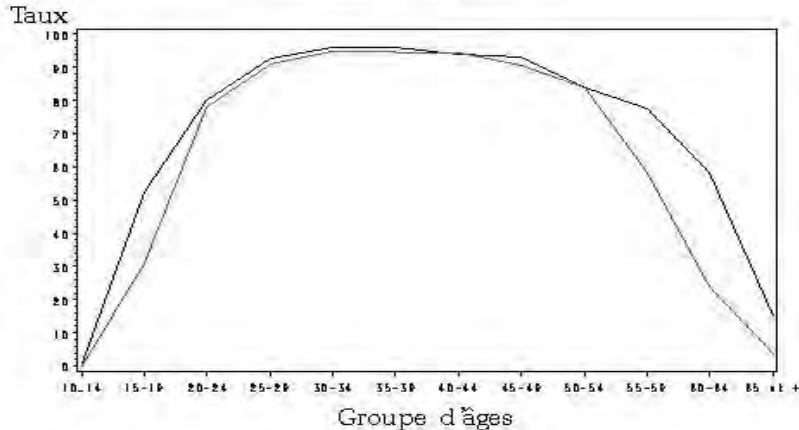


Source : Bureau international du travail (1997) Traitement : Patrick Werquin

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Labour market participation rate by age: Finland, Male

Taux d'activité par âge en 1970 et 2000 (rouge)
 Finlande — Hommes

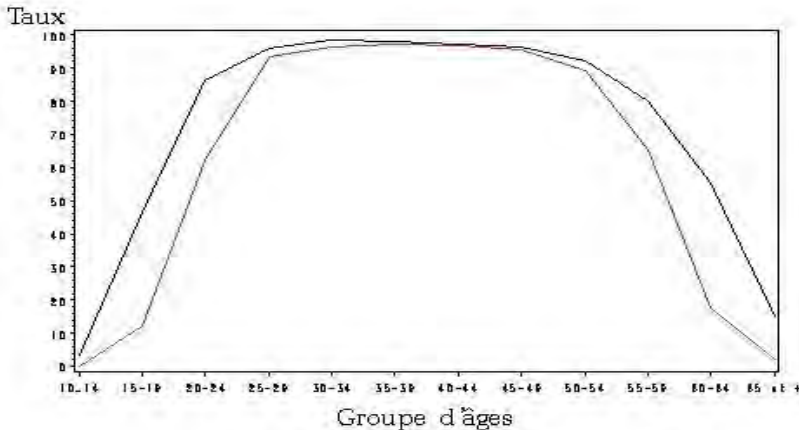


Source : Bureau international du travail (1997) Traitement : Patrick Werquin

Patrick Werquin, Key Competencies: an International Viewpoint, London, 12-13 July 2007

Labour market participation rate by age: France, Male

Taux d'activité par âge en 1970 et 2000 (rouge)
 France — Hommes

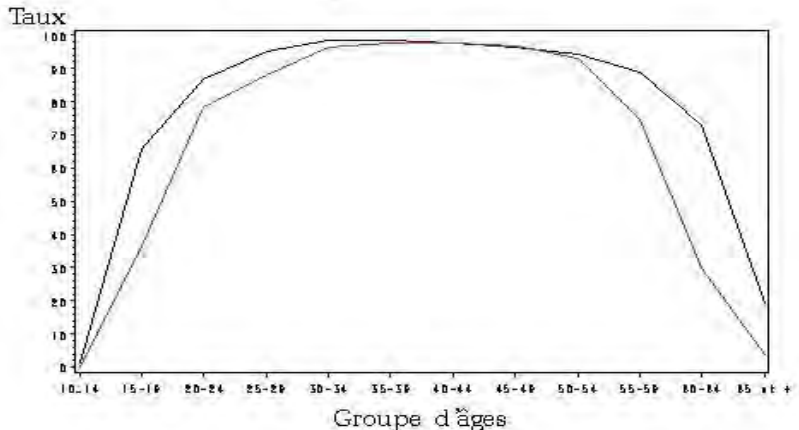


Source : Bureau international du travail (1997) Traitement : Patrick Werquin

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Labour market participation rate by age: Germany, Male

Taux d'activité par âge en 1970 et 2000 (rouge)
 Allemagne — Hommes

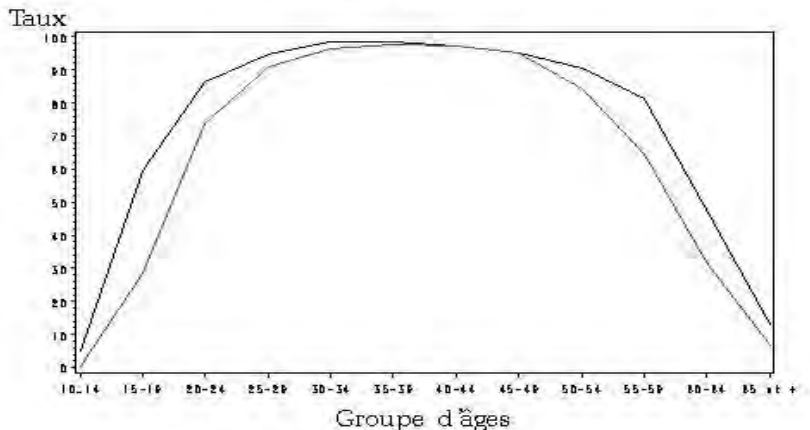


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Labour market participation rate by age: Italy, Male

Taux d'activité par âge en 1970 et 2000 (rouge)
 Italie — Hommes

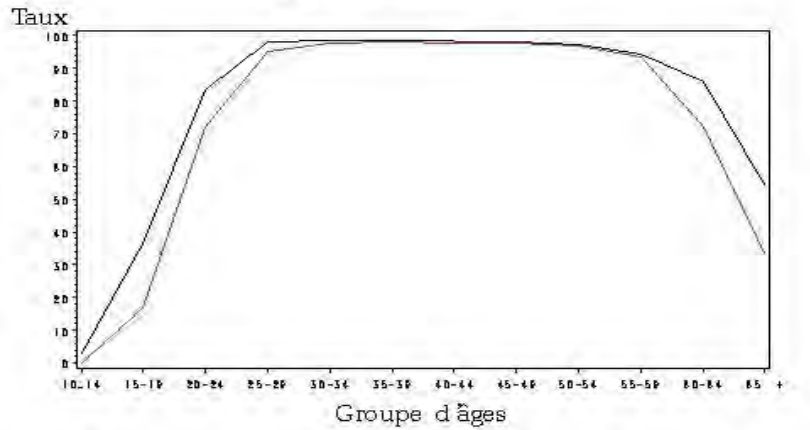


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Labour market participation rate by age: Japan, Male

Taux d'activité par âge en 1970 et 2000 (rouge)
 Japon — Hommes

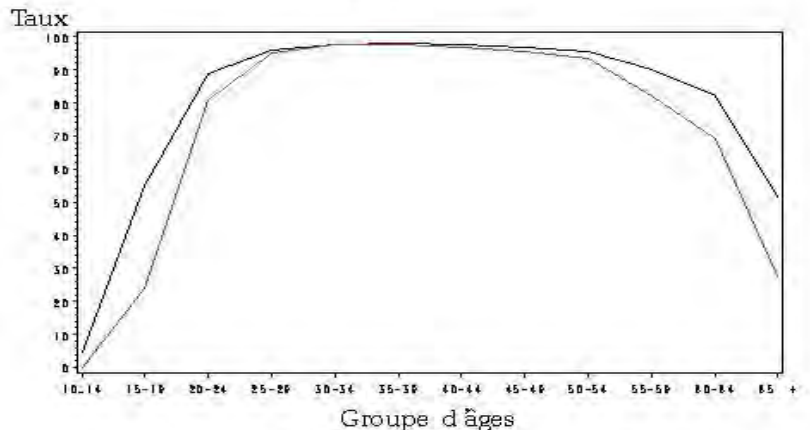


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Labour market participation rate by age: Korea, Male

Taux d'activité par âge en 1970 et 2000 (rouge)
 Corée — Hommes

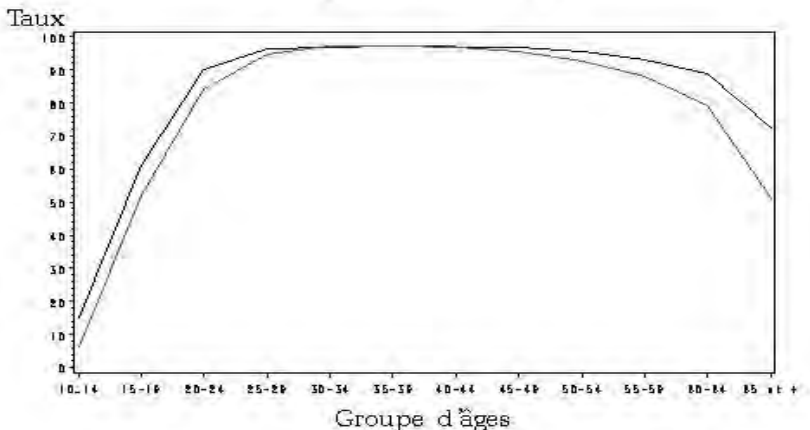


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Labour market participation rate by age: Mexico, Male

Taux d'activité par âge en 1970 et 2000 (rouge)
 Mexique — Hommes

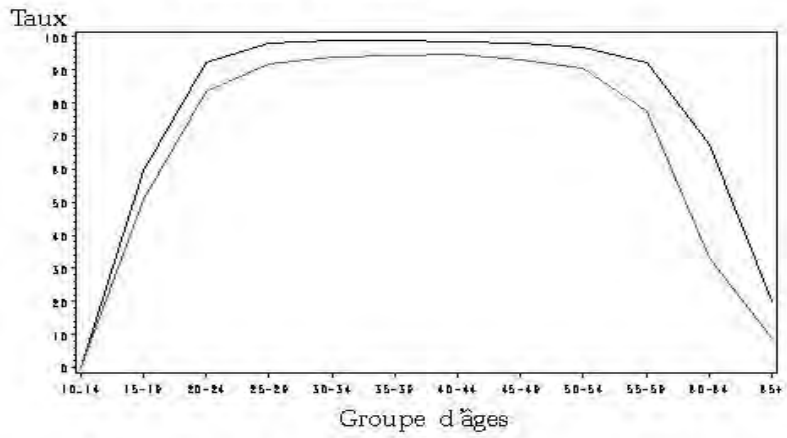


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Labour market participation rate by age: NZL, Male

Taux d'activité par âge en 1970 et 2000 (rouge)
Nouvelle Zélande — Hommes

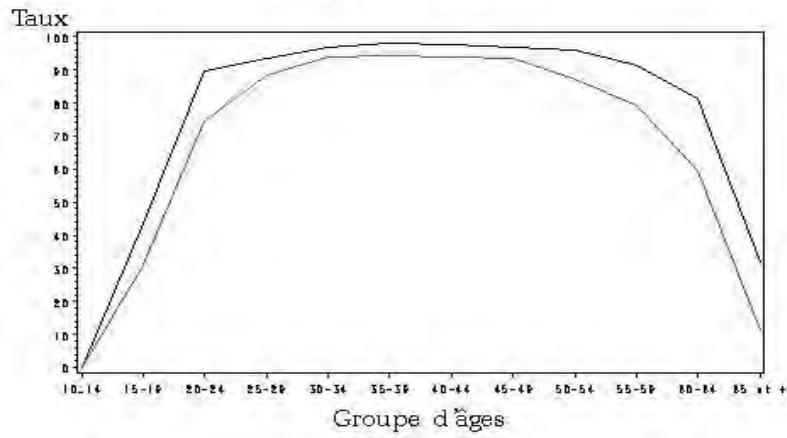


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Labour market participation rate by age: Norway, Male

Taux d'activité par âge en 1970 et 2000 (rouge)
Norvege — Hommes

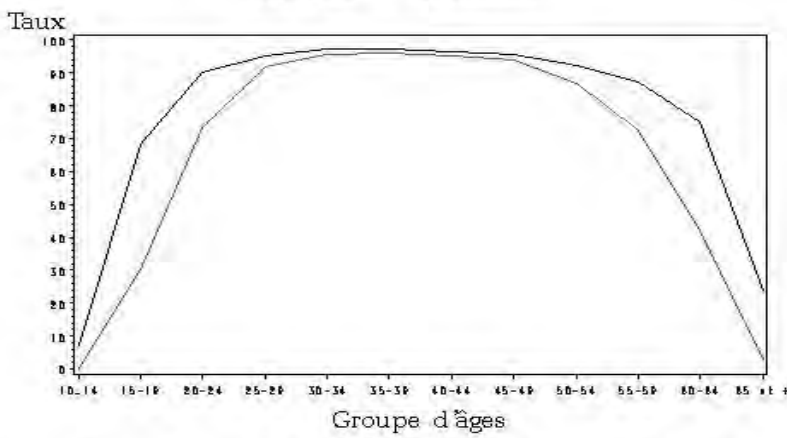


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Labour market participation rate by age: Spain, Male

Taux d'activité par âge en 1970 et 2000 (rouge)
Espagne — Hommes

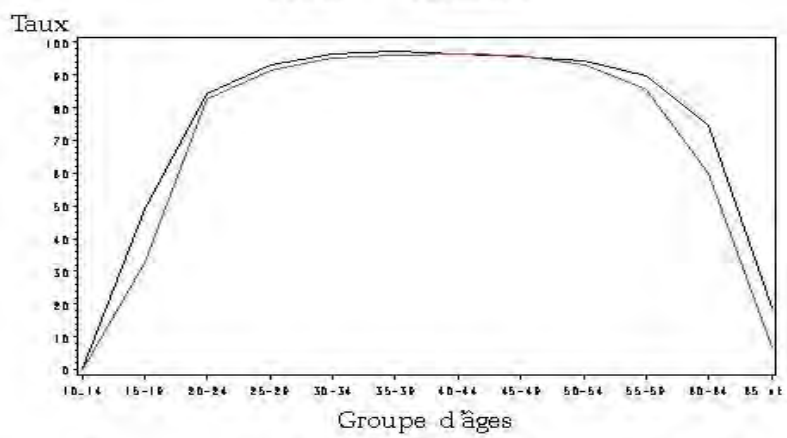


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Labour market participation rate by age: Sweden, Male

Taux d'activité par âge en 1970 et 2000 (rouge)
Suede — Hommes

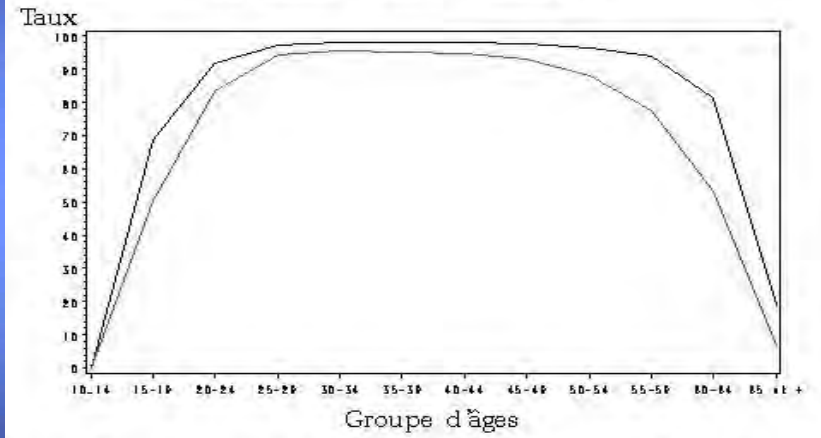


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Labour market participation rate by age: UK, Male

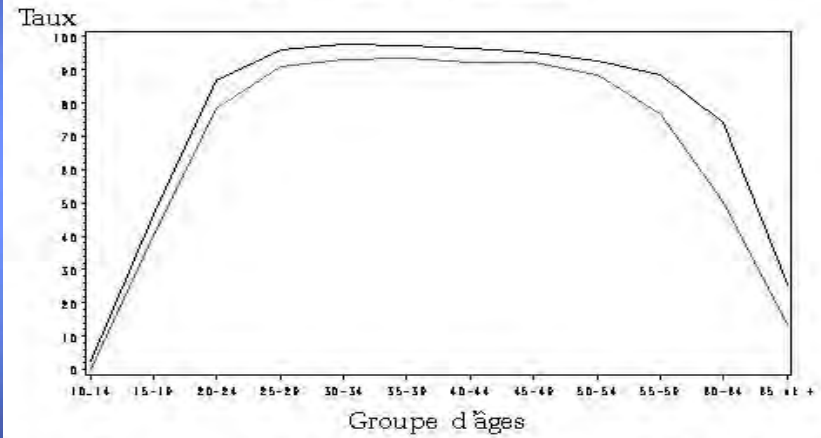
Taux d'activité par âge en 1970 et 2000 (rouge)
Royaume-Uni — Hommes



Source : Bureau international du travail (1997) Traitement : Patrick Werquin

Labour market participation rate by age: US, Male

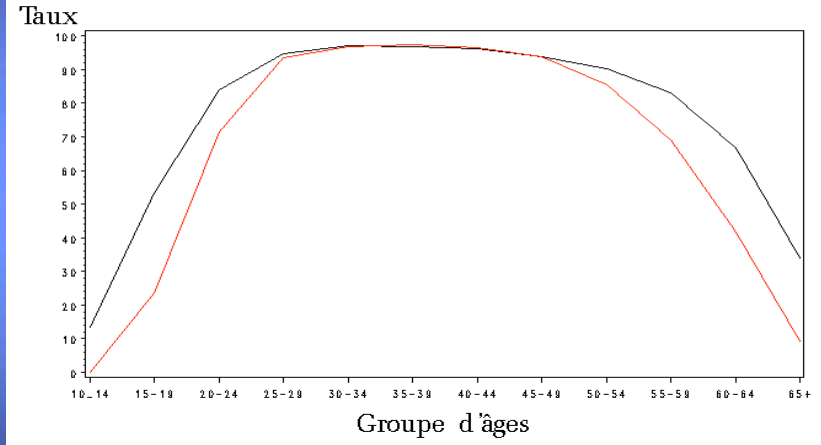
Taux d'activité par âge en 1970 et 2000 (rouge)
Etats-Unis — Hommes



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Labour market participation rate by age: Greece, Male

Taux d'activité par âge en 1970 et 2000 (rouge)
Grece — Hommes



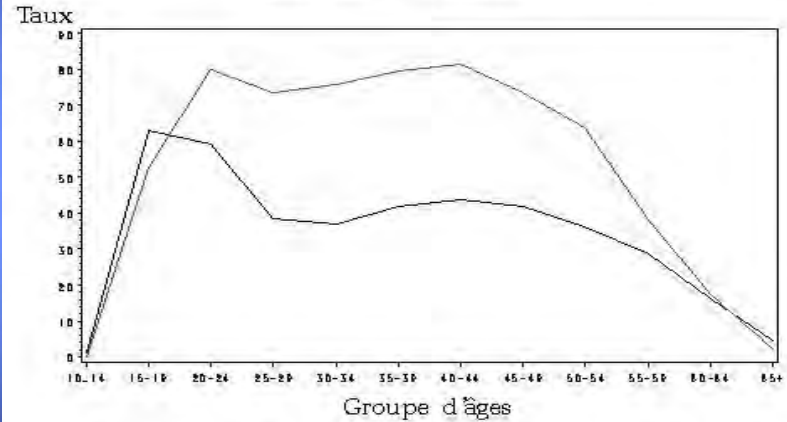
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How about participation in the labour market?

Female population

Labour market participation rate by age: Australia, female

Taux d'activité par âge en 1970 et 2000 (rouge)
 Australie — Femmes

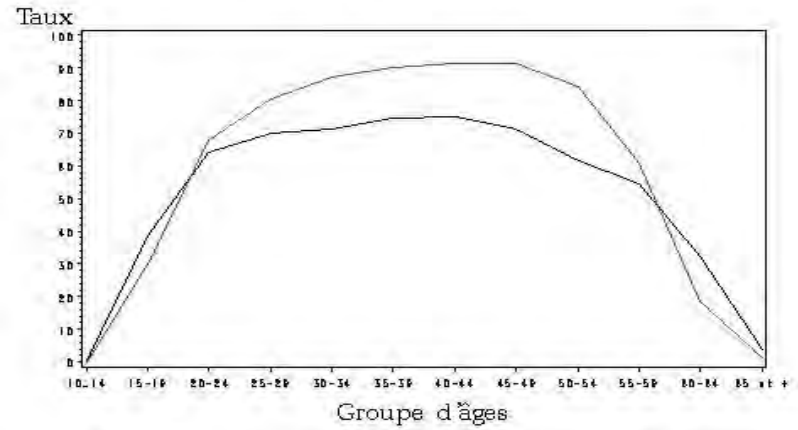


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Labour market participation rate by age: Finland, Female

Taux d'activité par âge en 1970 et 2000 (rouge)
 Finlande — Femmes

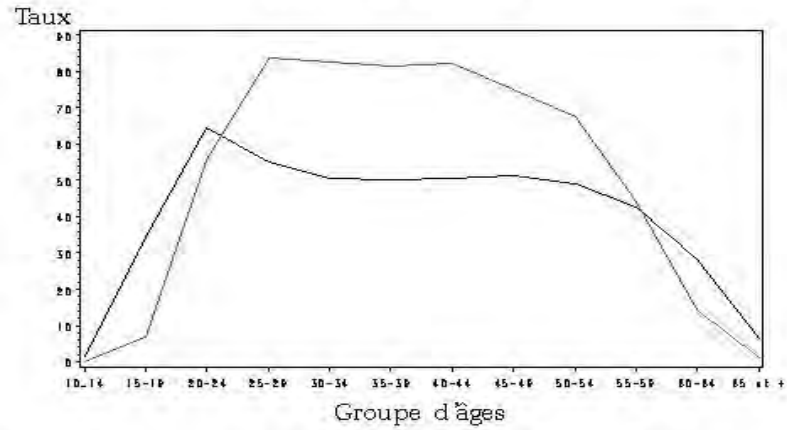


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Labour market participation rate by age: France, Female

Taux d'activité par âge en 1970 et 2000 (rouge)
 France — Femmes

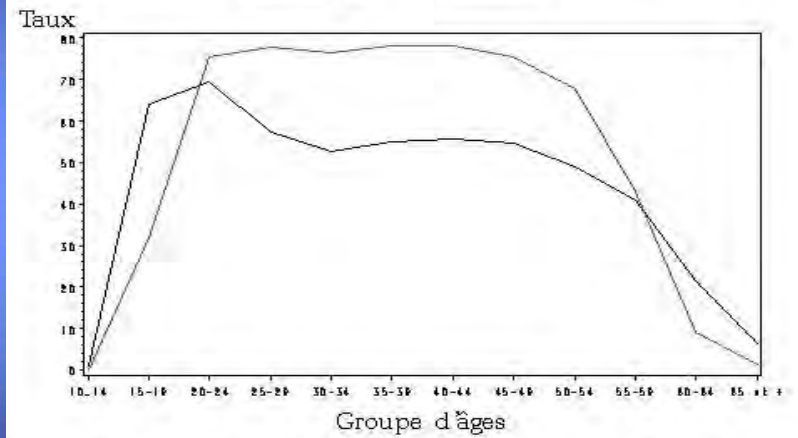


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Labour market participation rate by age: Germany, Female

Taux d'activité par âge en 1970 et 2000 (rouge)
 Allemagne — Femmes

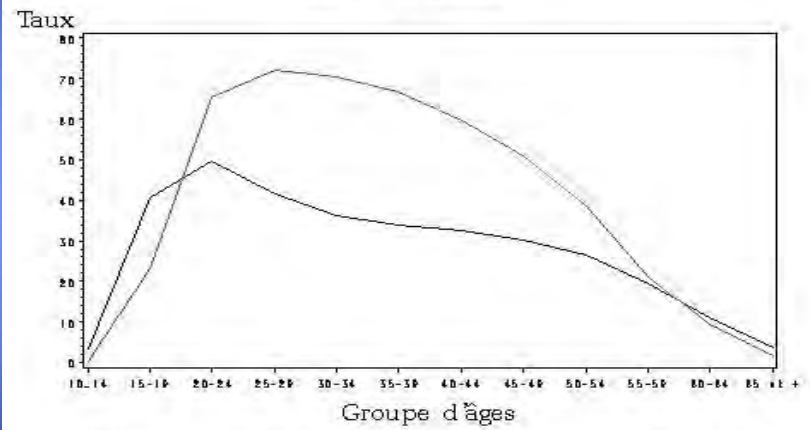


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Labour market participation rate by age: Italy, Female

Taux d'activité par âge en 1970 et 2000 (rouge)
Italie — Femmes

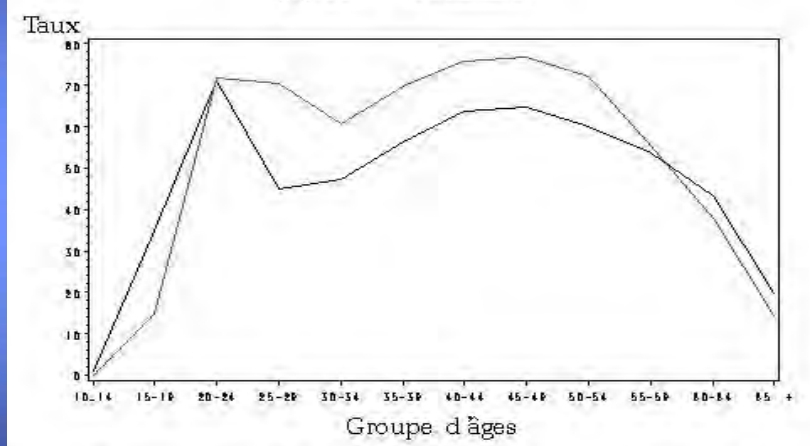


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Labour market participation rate by age: Japan, Female

Taux d'activité par âge en 1970 et 2000 (rouge)
Japon — Femmes

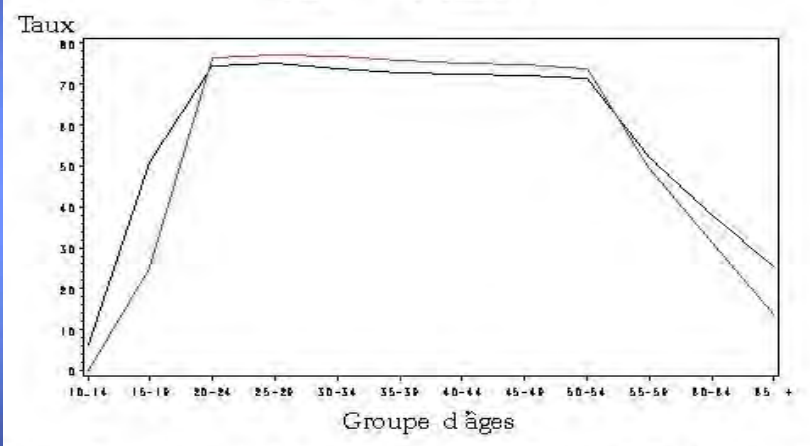


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Labour market participation rate by age: Korea, Female

Taux d'activité par âge en 1970 et 2000 (rouge)
Corée — Femmes

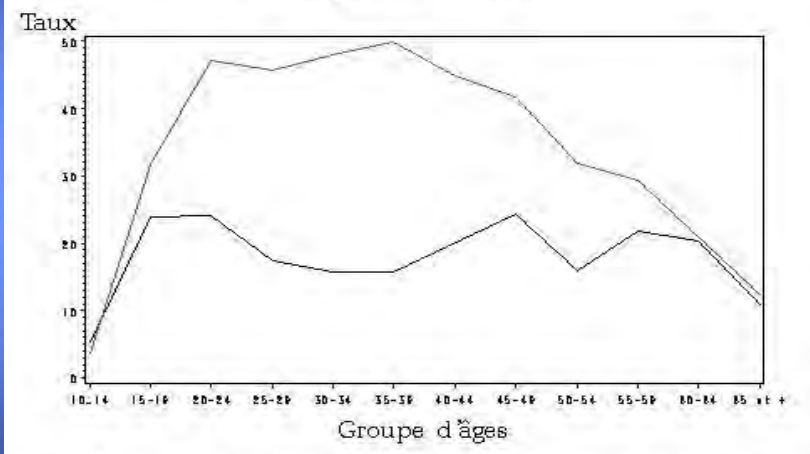


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Labour market participation rate by age: Mexico, Female

Taux d'activité par âge en 1970 et 2000 (rouge)
Mexique — Femmes

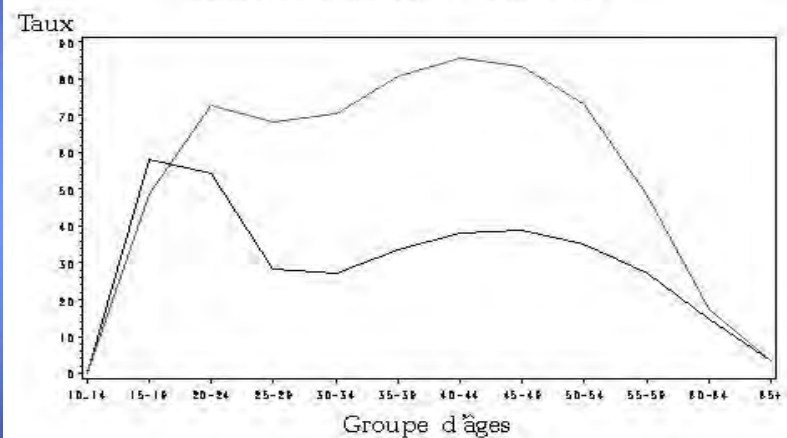


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Labour market participation rate by age: NZL, Female

Taux d'activité par âge en 1970 et 2000 (rouge)
Nouvelle Zélande — Femmes

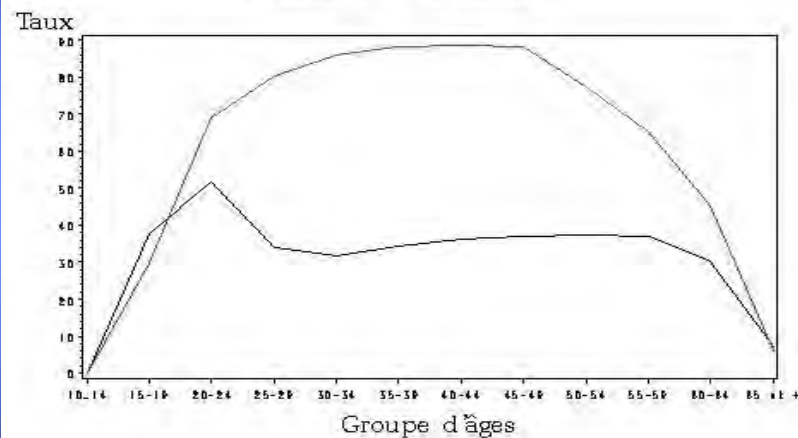


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Labour market participation rate by age: Norway, Female

Taux d'activité par âge en 1970 et 2000 (rouge)
Norvege — Femmes

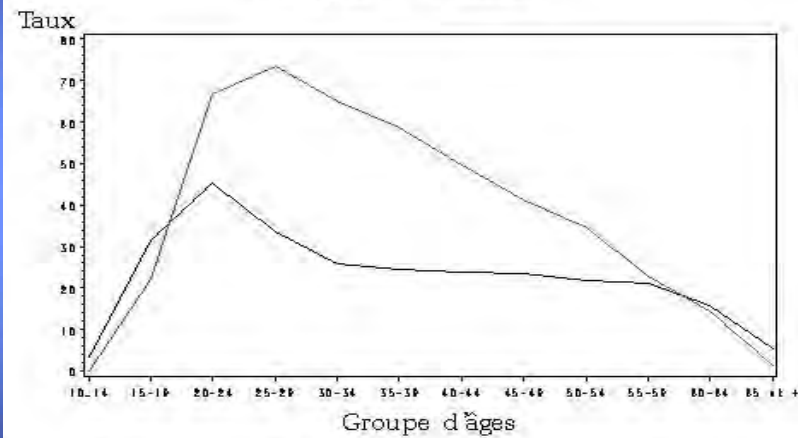


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Labour market participation rate by age: Spain, Female

Taux d'activité par âge en 1970 et 2000 (rouge)
Espagne — Femmes

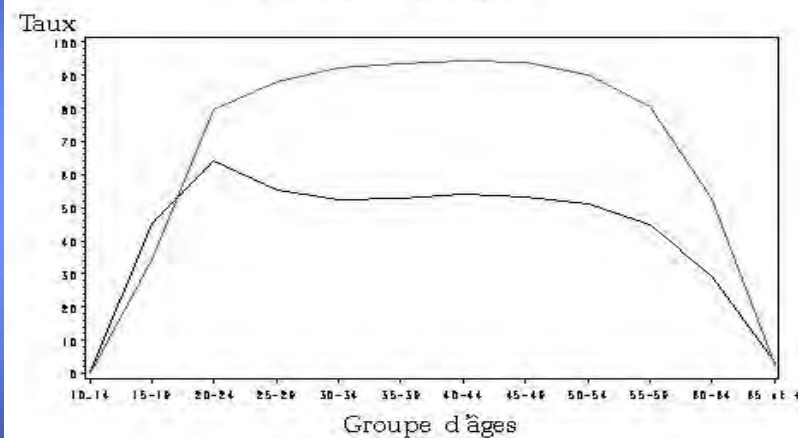


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Labour market participation rate by age: Sweden, Female

Taux d'activité par âge en 1970 et 2000 (rouge)
Suede — Femmes

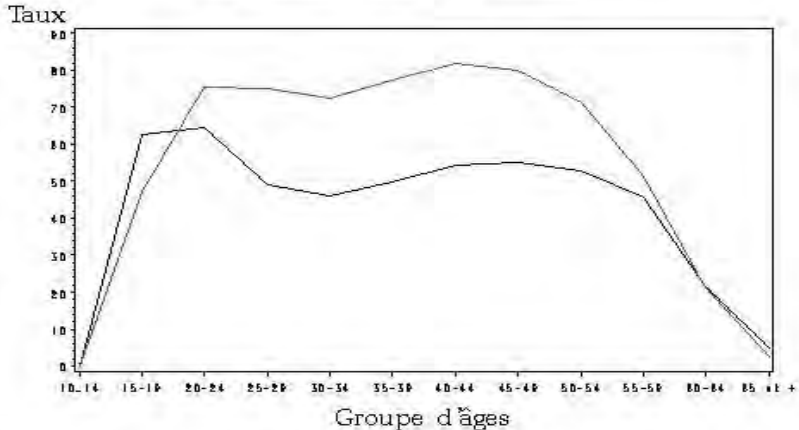


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Labour market participation rate by age: UK, Female

Taux d'activité par âge en 1970 et 2000 (rouge)
Royaume-Uni — Femmes

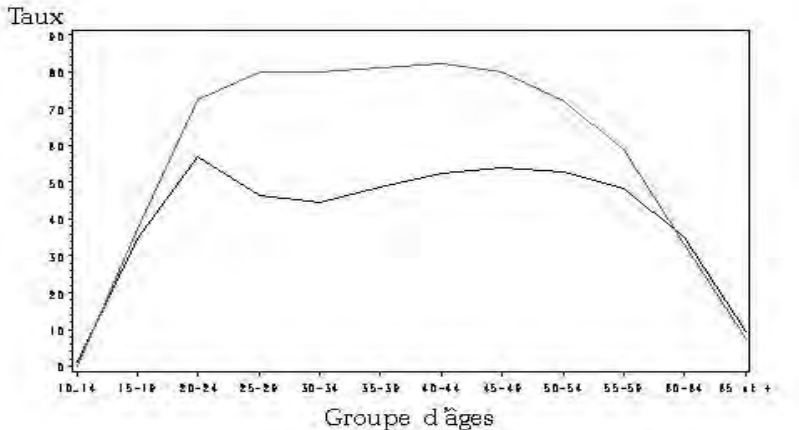


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Labour market participation rate by age: US, Female

Taux d'activité par âge en 1970 et 2000 (rouge)
Etats-Unis — Femmes

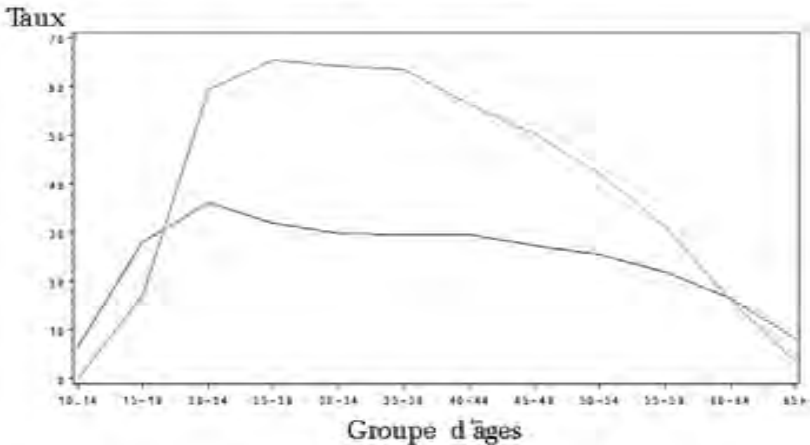


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Labour market participation rate by age: Greece, Female

Taux d'activité par âge en 1970 et 2000 (rouge)
Grèce — Femmes



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More facts

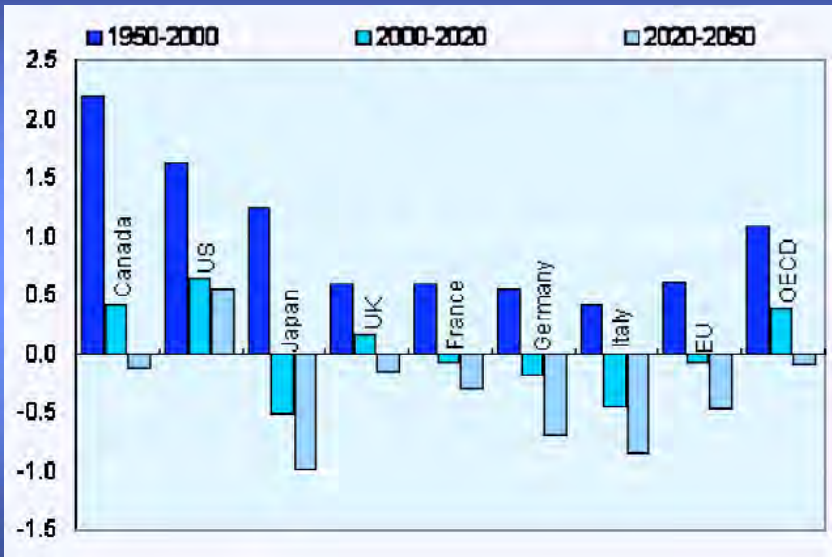
The labour force is shrinking

Adult literacy levels are somewhat worrying

Migration is an issue

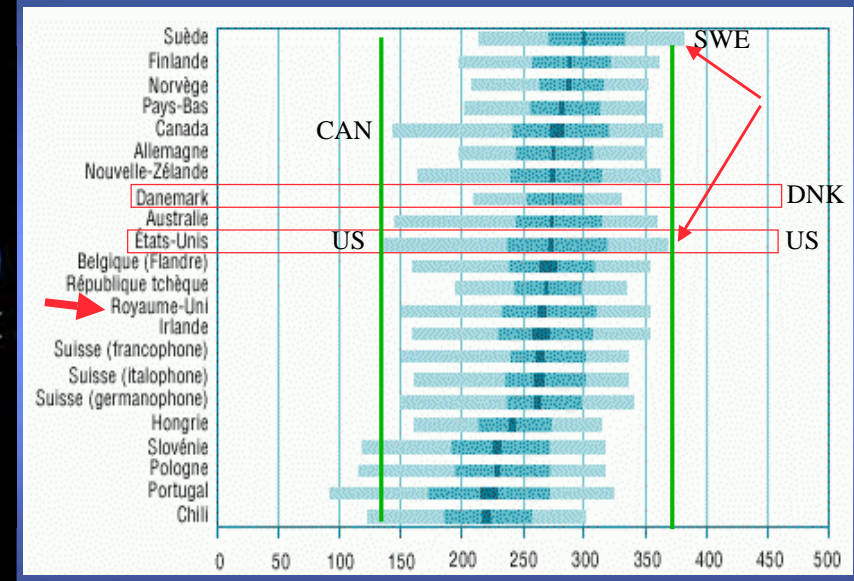
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The size of the labour force will grow little or even fall in some G7 countries



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Distribution of Literacy



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Impact of ageing and migration on education

- Less skills coming from young people because less young people
- Need for skilling, reskilling and upskilling of the adult population
- Need to give basic competencies (literacy) to new comers
- Evidence that increasing average level impact more on economic growth than focussing on high level individuals
- Need to make all skills visible: qualifications system as a policy tool

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More Facts and Some Questions

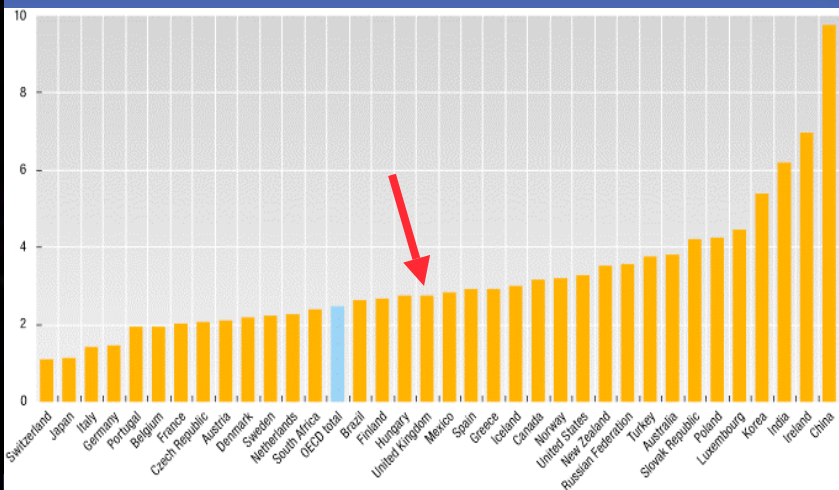
Economic Growth

GDP [growth] and human capital?

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Real GDP Growth

Average annual growth in percentage, 1991-2004

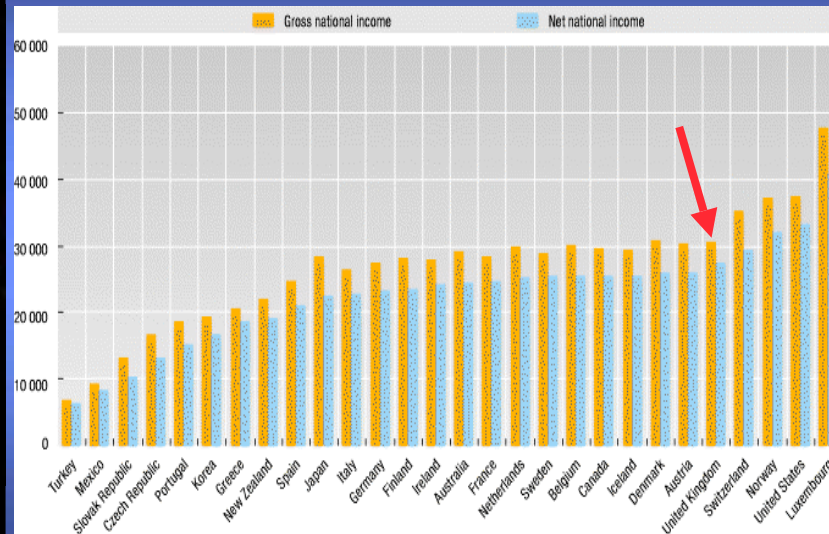


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Gross/Net National Income per Capita

US dollars, current prices and PPPs, 2003



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Main Driving Forces of GDP per Capita Growth

Average annual percentage change (1990-2004)

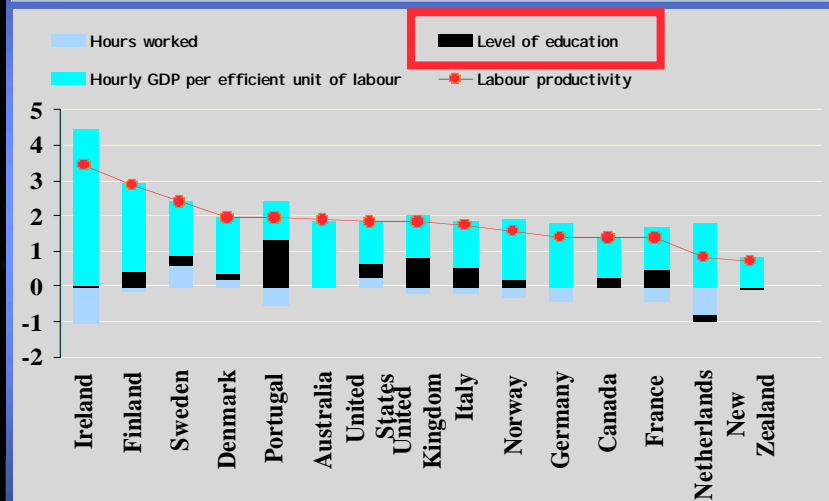


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Enhancements in Human Capital (level of education) contribute to labour productivity growth

Average annual percentage change (1990-2000)



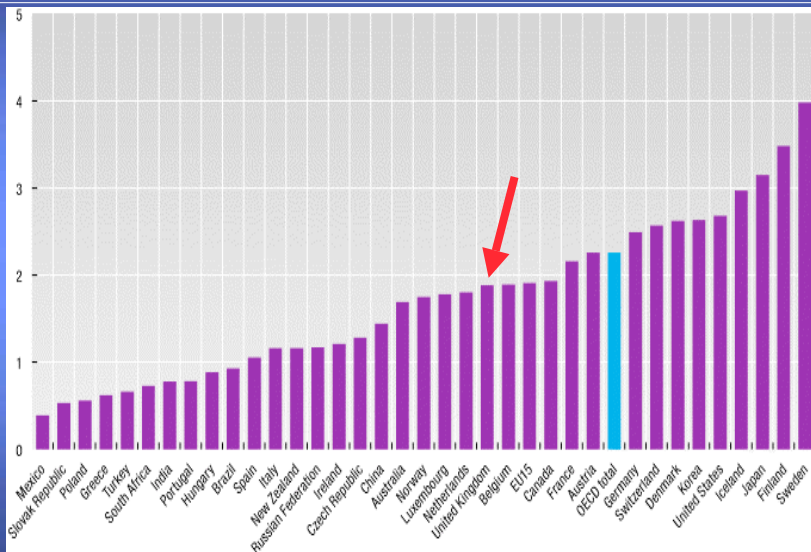
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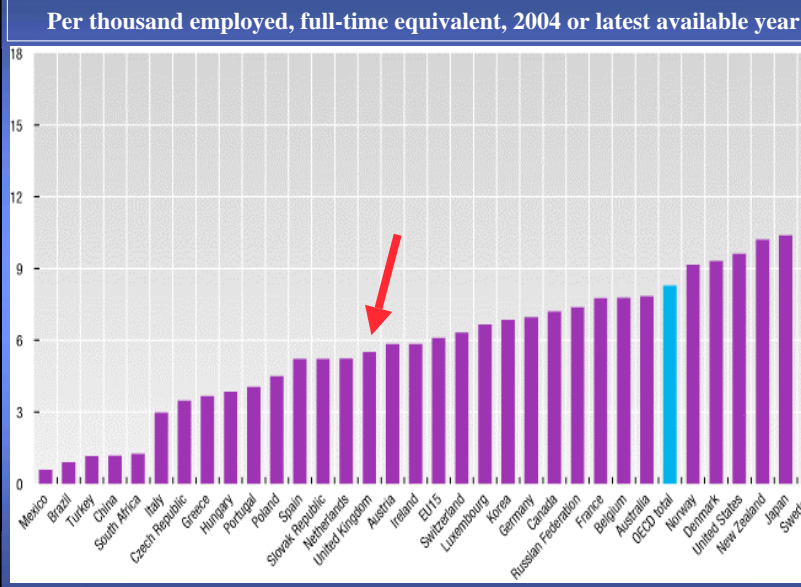
And human capital
partly comes from
education!

And also from
technological progress

Gross domestic expenditure on R&D As a percentage of GDP, 2004 or latest available year



Number of researchers Per thousand employed, full-time equivalent, 2004 or latest available year



But using technological progress requires up-to-date competences (education enhances the capacity to use innovation)

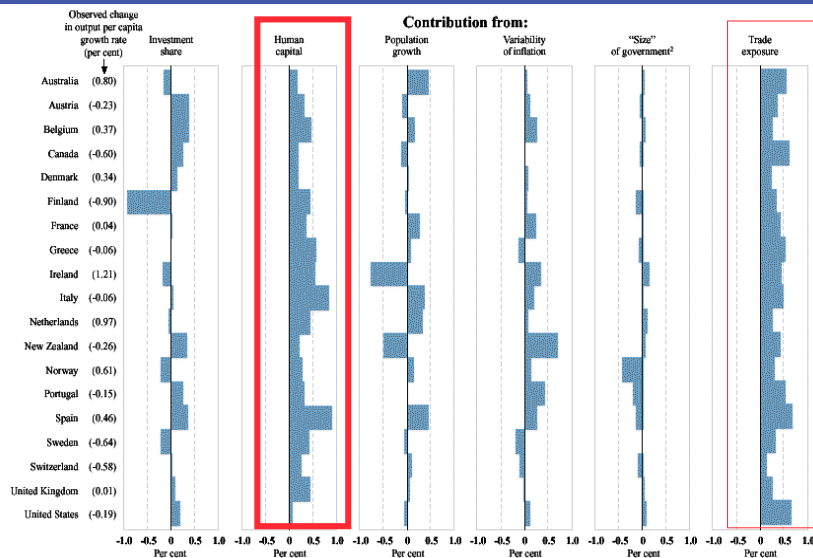
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Key Findings: A Summary

- One additional year of education => a raise of GDP growth by 0.3% per year (Barro)
- Raising the education attainment of the labour force by one year can raise GDP per capita by 3-6%, in the long run (OECD)
- Countries which have massively invested in education (Korea, Ireland) have reached an unprecedented economic success.
- OECD Growth Study investigated changes in output per capita growth rates in the 1980s and 1990s and showed that:

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Contribution to Growth (OECD)



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Participation in Adult Learning: Evidence

- Scandinavian countries on top
- United Kingdom, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Germany not far
- Adult literacy levels clearly much higher in Scandinavian countries

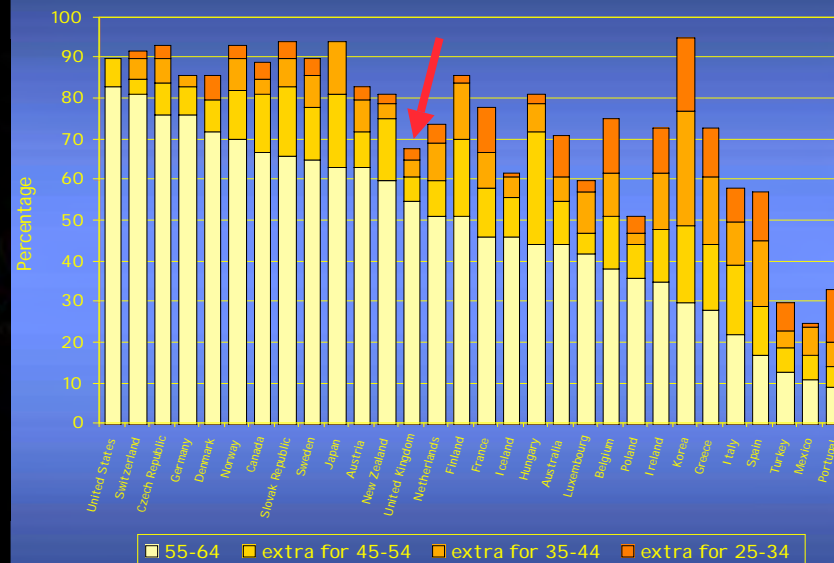
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Participation in Adult Learning: More Evidence

- Upper secondary level is clearly a threshold
- At the individual level, adult learning happens only for people that have initially reach upper secondary level ([First] Matthew effect)
- Less clear at macro level but still, there is convincing evidence:

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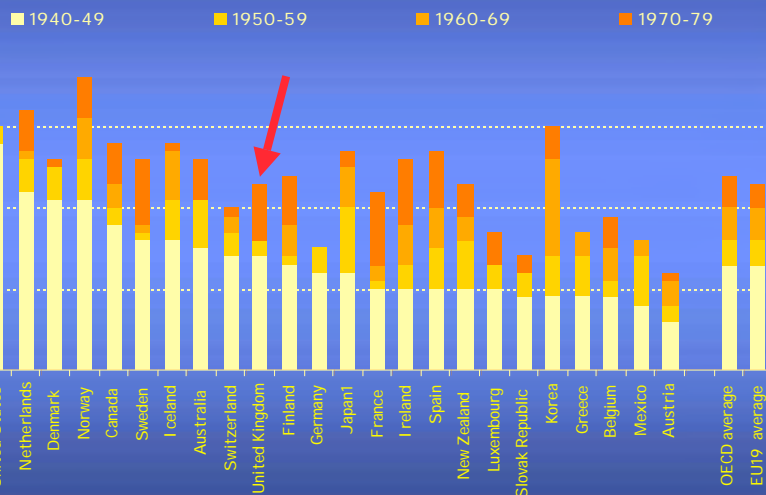
Educational Attainment: Upper Secondary Education



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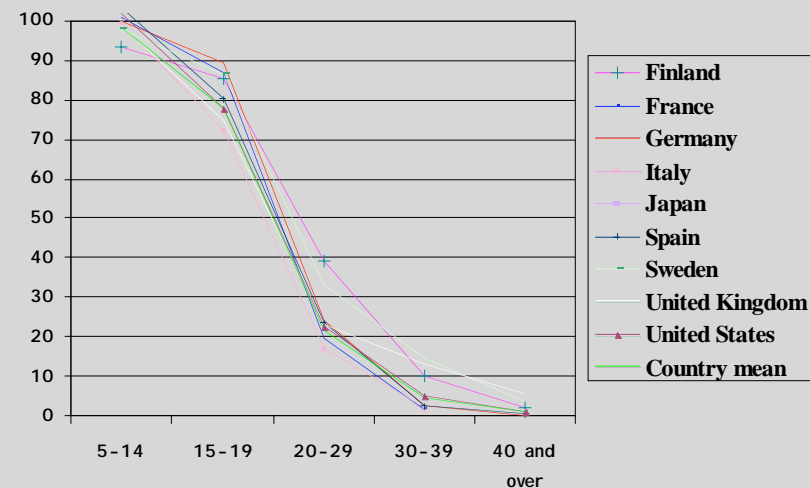
Attainment in University Education

Growth in university-level qualifications, approximated by the % of persons with ISCED 5A/6 qualification, by year of birth (in 2004)



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But this level is attained when people are young (enrolment in education institution by age)



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**But this level is attained when people are young
(more evidence: upper secondary ed. by age)**

Percentage of the population that has attained tertiary education, by age group (2001)



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Agenda for today

- Facts (Demography, Literacy, Migrations, economic growth...)
- The OECD Thematic review of adult learning
- The role of national qualifications system in promoting Lifelong learning
- Recognition of non formal and informal learning



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1. Why Adult Learning?

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A Clear Rationale: A Reminder

Recovery/Upskilling or Reskilling

- Economic Growth
- Reserve labour force
- *Demographic changes*
- Industrial restructuring
- Technological progress
- *Skills shortages (literacy only an indicator)*
- Low skill unemployment
- The Matthew effect(s)

Citizenship and democracy

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Key Competences: Definitions ☹

- As many definitions as authors
- As many as international working groups
- As many as countries
- (many names too: core, key, soft/hard...)
- Some significant attempts:
- DeSeCo:
 - Interact in heterogeneous groups
 - Act autonomously
 - Use tools interactively
- IALS (Literacy Surveys)

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3a. Main findings (*Beyond Rhetoric, 2003*)



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Six Key Ideas

1. Holistic Approach
2. Financing
3. Attractiveness
4. Accessibility
5. Efficiency
6. Quality

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1. Holistic Approach

- Co-ordination
- Involving all actors
- Top-down...
- ... and bottom-up approaches
- Qualifications
- Partnerships!!!!!!!!

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2. Financing

- Shared
- Equity
- Joint decision (individual, employer, sponsor...)
- Incentives:
 - .Tax
 - .Grant/loans...

3. Attractiveness

- Useful (Needs of adults...)
- On going assessment for improvement
- Recognition of prior learning
- Validation of current learning...
 - ... or not (stepping stone)
- Pace (Modules...)
- Learner centred

4. Accessibility

- Location and building
- Scheduling
- Transport service
- Affordable
- New ICT
- Information and guidance

5. Efficiency

- National / Local
- Rational funding
- Monitoring
- Signals from LM
- Recognition of the demand
- Partnerships

6. Quality

- Evaluation (on going and ex-post)
- Statistics
- Accreditation
- Standards
- Quality control

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A Desirable System

- Holistic Approach
- Financing
- Attractiveness
- Accessibility
- Efficiency
- Quality

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3b. Main findings (*Promoting Adult Learning*, 2005)



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Promoting Adult Learning (2005)

1. Revisit the numbers (identify main barriers)
2. Increasing and promoting the benefits of adult learning
3. Financing
4. Improving delivery and quality control
5. Policy co-ordination and coherence for effective implementation

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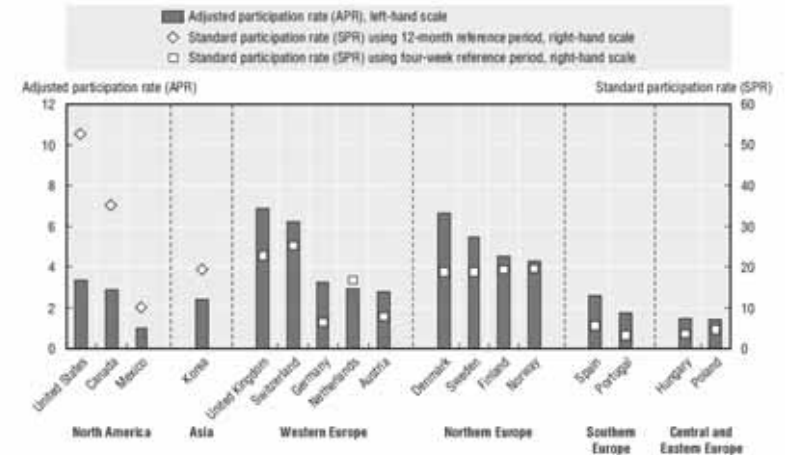
Promoting Adult Learning (2005)

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Participation Rate in Adult Learning

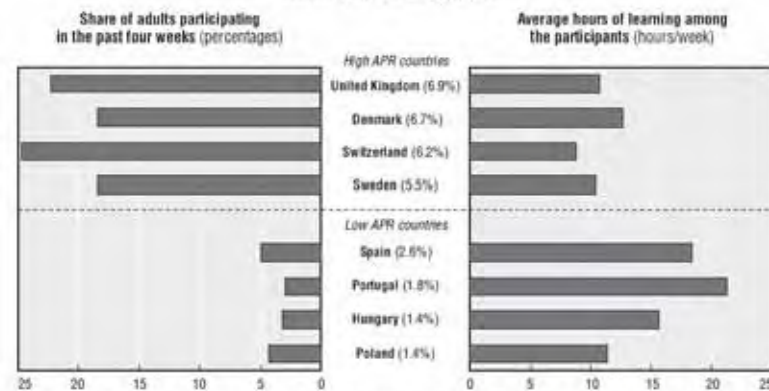
Figure 1.3. Adjusted participation rate (APR) in selected OECD countries, 2002
Percentages, 25 to 64 year olds^{a, b}



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Intensive or Extensive Approach to AL

Figure 1.4. Share versus intensity of adult learning, 2002
Percentages, 25 to 64 year olds^a



a) Figures in parenthesis correspond to the adjusted participation rate (APR). Countries are ranked in descending order of APR.

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Useful Content and Clear Benefits

- Useful content
- Clear and immediate returns
- Ex:
 - Language programme for immigrants
 - Family literacy programmes
 - ...

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Clear Currency

- Growing awareness of national qualifications systems as a policy tools
- Qualification framework (Ireland, EQF) or other devices such as the *Europass*
- Double currency (adult learning system as well as labour market)
- Recognition of non formal and informal learning: a way forward (new OECD activity)

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Information and Guidance

- Adults might be unaware of potential benefits unless they are told
- When willing to undertake learning activities, lack of appropriate guidance might be a strong deterrent
- Ex:
 - Ambassador programmes
 - Learndirect (ICT)
 - Word of mouth

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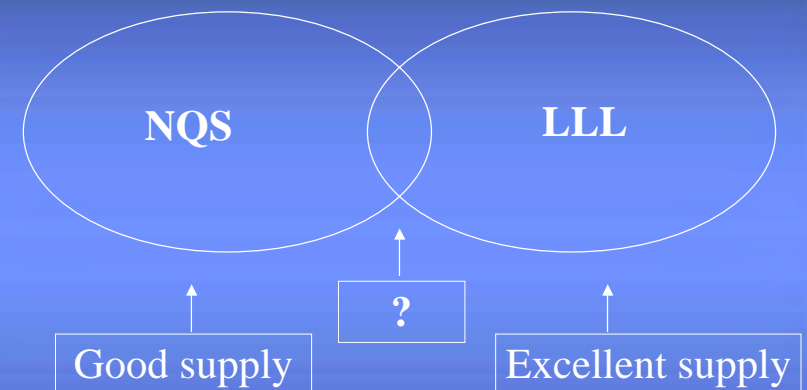
Agenda for today

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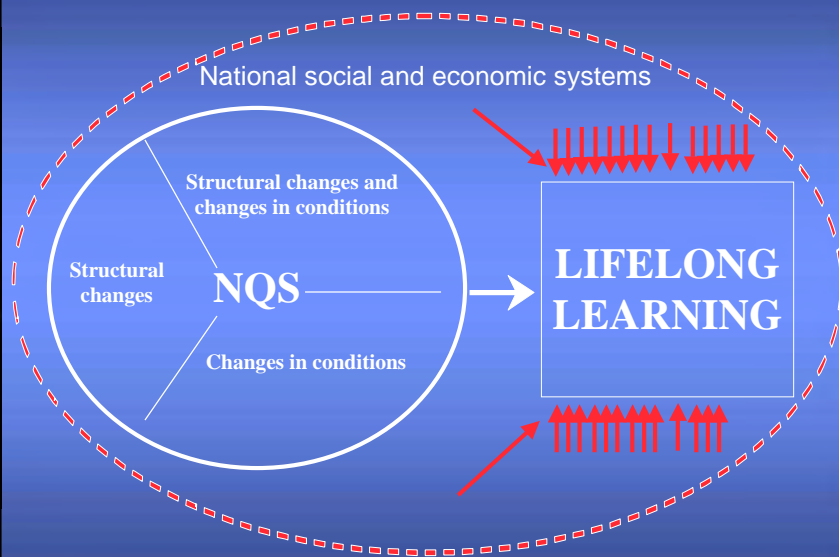
Synopsis.



This link is identified as *mechanisms*

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The approach.



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Assumption

There are mechanisms

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However

There are few conclusions
we can draw from
quantitative evidence

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Fortunately

There is substantial
qualitative evidence

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The 20 Mechanisms

- 1) Communicating returns to learning for qualification
- 2) Recognising skills for employability
- 3) **Establishing qualifications frameworks**
- 4) Increasing learner choice in qualifications
- 5) Clarifying learning pathways
- 6) Providing credit transfer
- 7) Increasing flexibility in learning programmes leading to qualifications
- 8) Creating new routes to qualifications
- 9) Lowering cost of qualification
- 10) **Recognising non-formal and informal learning**

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The 20 Mechanisms (cont'd)

- 11) Monitoring the qualifications system
- 12) Optimising stakeholder involvement in the qualifications system
- 13) Improving needs analysis methods so that qualifications are up to date
- 14) Improving qualification use in recruitment
- 15) Ensuring qualifications are portable
- 16) Investing in pedagogical innovation
- 17) Expressing qualifications as learning outcomes
- 18) Improving co-ordination in the qualifications system
- 19) Optimising quality assurance
- 20) Improving information and guidance about qualifications systems

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Background

- Lots of **evidence** about Recognition^o of Non Formal and Informal Learning^o (RNFIL), but **piecemeal**
- OECD activity on **Adult Learning^o**
- OECD activity on the role of national **qualifications systems** in promoting lifelong learning
- ...

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Qualifications Systems

- RNFIL = mechanism to create more and better lifelong learning
- as well as:
 - credit transfer
 - qualifications framework*^o
 - stakeholders involvement
 - ...
- *Qualifications Systems: Bridges to Lifelong Learning* (OECD, 2006)

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Just Published ☺☺☺



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Literacy Level and Educational Attainment

Among Adults	Low Literacy	High Literacy
Low educational attainment	40%	10%
High educational attainment	10%	40%

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The OECD Activity

- RNFIL is high on most countries' agenda
- => "New" OECD activity on RNFIL:
 - 27 countries (21 BRs, 18 reviews)
 - One assumption: not always good (cost)
 - Research
 - Visits – fact finding approach
 - Data collection – if any

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Definitions

- Intentional learning:

- **Formal** (organised, learning objectives, most of the time leads to a qualification*)
- **Non formal** (does NOT usually lead to a qualification*, along side formal learning activities, semi structured)

- Non intentional learning:

- **Informal** (what we all do all the time without even knowing it, experiential)
- RPL (Australia), PLAR (Canada), VAE (France), APL, APEL ...
- In Australia, they even made RPL a verb: “I will RPL you”, “not everybody can be RPLed”... ☺

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More Definitions ☹

- Recognition, Validation, Certification

Recognition

=> Validation

=> Certification

=> Recognition*

- I would keep “**accreditation**” for institutions

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Definitions: Some Pieces of Advice

- Don't panic
- Don't waste too much time on them
- Choose the ones that meets your needs for the following 2-3 years and stop re-addressing the issue all the time
- If/whenever possible, use international definitions (OECD, 2007 – CEDEFOP/OECD, 2008)

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Participating countries

23 countries on 5 continents
(16 in Europe, 23 CBRs, 18 reviewed):

Australia, Austria, Belgium-Flanders, Canada, Chile, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Korea, Malta, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom

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Why do we want to organise recognition programmes?

- No more **lifetime jobs**
(Japan???)
- **Demography**
(Ageing, labour force shortages, work after retirement age, labour market, education system, tertiary education...)
- **Skills mismatch**
(make skills visible for governments to organise learning provision; for individuals to perform well in the labour market and/or to (re)enter LLL system at the most optimal level)

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Why do we want to organise recognition programmes?

- **Inequities**
(women in labour market, gender issues in the VET initial system, immigrants: unqualified to make their skills visible as well as qualified to organise equivalencies)
- **Immigrants**
do fill some skills gaps – UK – but there maybe issues in terms of safety, security or health (Nurses)

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Why do we want to organise recognition programmes?

- **Migration and mobility** in general
(workers, students)
 - **Second chance**
(identify skills of poorly qualified people to certify them) – safety net
- Second chance for **NEET** people, for instance

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Why do we want to organise recognition programmes?

- **Impact/role** of other devices/programmes
(such as qualifications frameworks (EQF typically) set in motion – based on learning outcomes, also the essence of RNFIL)
- May not create economic **growth**, but will help sustain it!!!
- RNFIL does NOT create skills, it make them visible if there are some!!!

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Why it doesn't necessarily work?

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Employers*

- **Employers** may see wider skills supply if more learning is recognised in the workforce
- May need workforce with qualifications (ISO, existing regulations and regulated labour market...)
- But:
- Is it less costly (time and money)?
- This might lead to a reduction in commitment to formal training programmes
- Ownership of the standards will may remain an issue for a long time; going beyond the standards even more of an issue

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Trade Unions

- Sceptical – at best ☹
- Shift of focus from learning to assessing

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Providers of learning

- Worried!!!! OF COURSE (US higher education institutions and universities)
- Nevertheless, **providers** may be encouraged to widen access to programmes if quality assured recognition systems are in place
- Documenting skills may save some subsystems (Folk high schools in Norway???)
- Although there may be increased direct and indirect costs involved in recognising non-formal and informal learning
- May create additional qualifications (Mexico)
- Ownership of the standards

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Providers of qualifications

- OK!!!! OF COURSE
- But same worries about cost...

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Individuals

- System not transparent
 - Access not easy
 - Information and guidance still lacking
 - Doesn't happen for low qualified people – second Matthew effect
- => Individuals are not fully convinced yet

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Governments

- ???
- ???
(Hungary...)
- We have to interest not only Ministry of Education, but also Ministries of Finance, Labour...
It must have to do with employment and unemployment*

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Some evidence and concluding remarks

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15 Country Background Reports and 4 Review Visits Done: First Evidence (1/3)

- Mexico, Norway, the Netherlands, Australia, Flemish Belgium, Hungary, Slovenia
- Labour market experience vs. Life experience
 - France (VAP in 1992->VAE in 2002), Iceland (nothing about working life, Slovenia: all about working life)
- Importance of the economic context
 - Virtually no unemployment Norway, Iceland
 - Sustainability?? Usefulness??
- Qualifications framework: does it help?
 - Learning outcomes, EQF // Australia, Ireland, UK, South Africa...
- Confusion between teachers and assessors, training?
 - Australia-Australia, Norway a bit better

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15 Country Background Reports and 4 Review Visits Done: First Evidence (2/3)

- Involvement of stakeholders: Key element
 - Norway // - if not: law (Flemish Belgium, Slovenia...)
- Creation of intermediary qualification: Way out
 - Partial qualification
 - But also full qualification at intermediate level (Mexico)
- Practical recognition vs. Formal recognition
 - Informal recognition ☺ // - UK, Australia
- Information and guidance
 - vs. Complexity // - All countries

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15 Country Background Reports and 4 Review Visits Done: First Evidence (3/3)

- Need for a clear rationale and a [national] rhetoric
 - Is it always good to codify all kind of learning?
 - Why do countries want to do it???
 - Norway, Australia, Slovenia
- Existence of, or need for, a legal framework
 - A lot of countries have one
- Standards for validating
 - Education vs. Labour market
 - Ownerships of the standards
 - Occupations standards to be up-to-date so that qualifications based on occupational standards do have value for employers

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merci

www.oecd.org/edu/lifelonglearning/nqs

www.oecd.org/edu/recognition

<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/10/2/38500491.pdf>

http://www.oecd.org/document/53/0,2340,en_2649_33723_38465013_1_1_1_1,00.html

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