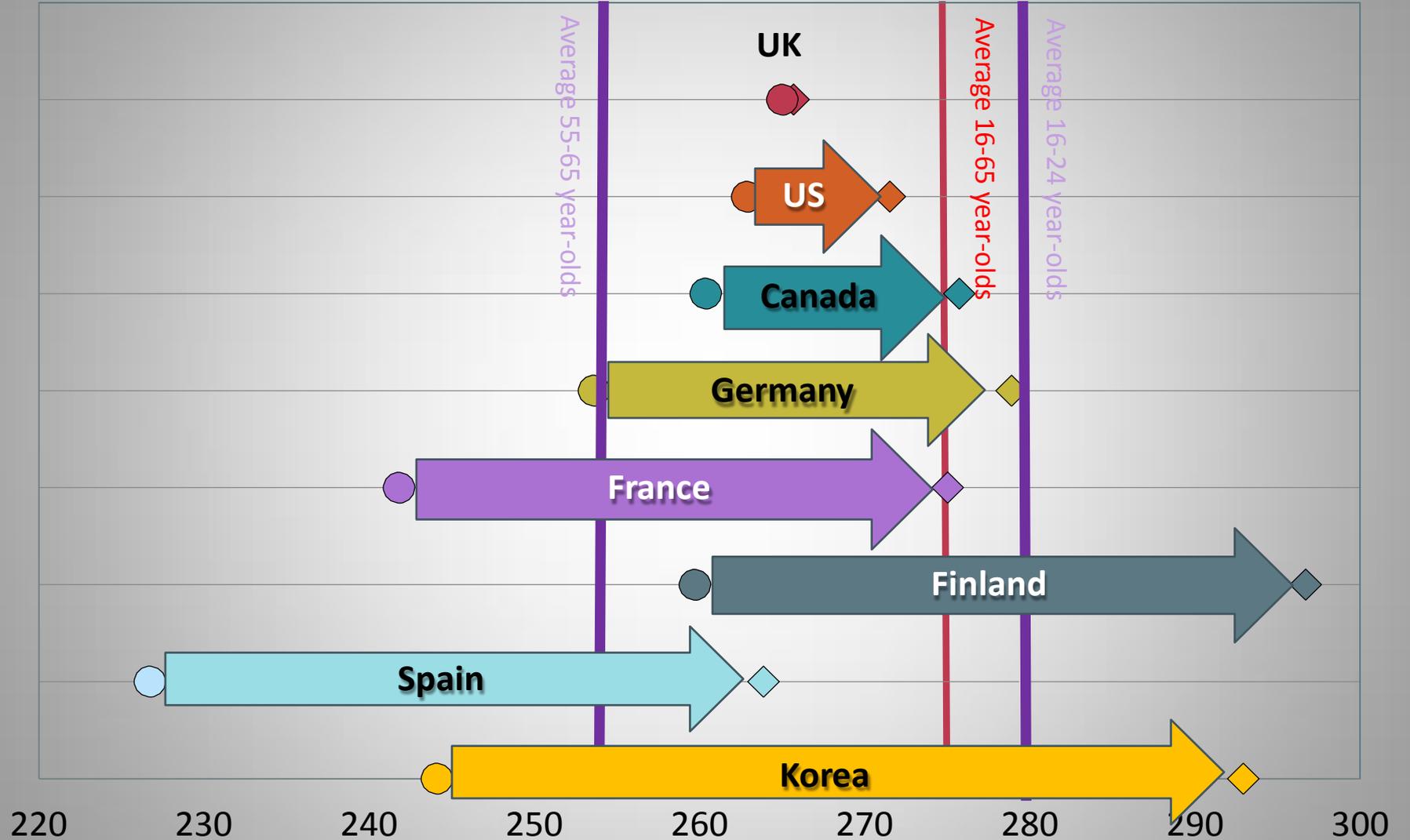


Aging lifelong learning and life course flexibility

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Literacy skills in younger and older generations



Lifelong learning: The fundamentals

- Learning not education
- Encompasses all life course stages (lifelong)
- Lifewide learning (learning for and in all spheres of life)
- Formal learning context
- Nonformal learning context
- Informal learning context (purposeful, incidental)

Focus on work, family, leisure, community, society as sites for learning

What learning opportunities does the context afford across life courses?

Research identifies not only quantitative but also qualitative inequalities in learning opportunities.

Life course changes as learning events

Lifelong learning as a policy tool

- Strength: potential to allow more holistic life course framework on learning to come into focus
- Problem: No clear institutional location; no clear policy audience is everyone's policy business but at the same time no-one's in particular

Thinking of public funding of education from a life course perspective

- Challenges present front end financing model
- Raises issue of slight rebalancing of public funds for education to better align with life course change and challenges

Key findings from research on participation in organised adult learning

- Mathew effect present in all countries (long arm of family and work)
- Substantial age differences in all countries (cohort changes: sharp decline coming later because of increased employer support for education and training)
- The size of the inequalities varies between countries at the same level of

Policy levers

- Earmarked public funding (not just level of public funding)
- Incorporating lifelong learning strategies into flexicurity schemes
- Level of minimum wage
- Promote corporate policy regime
- Funding of popular adult education (respond to life course challenges not addressed by the formal educational system)

Research findings on benefits of formal and non-formal adult learning

Economic: On the job training, labour market training, general education

Wider benefits: Positive relationship between adult learning and wellbeing (British Household Panel Survey). Improvements in: reported life satisfaction, self-confidence, reduction in self-reported depression, increase in satisfaction with social life and use of leisure time, reduction in visits to GP, improvement in self-reported health, improved relationship with children, greater involvement in voluntary work, greater desire to find better job. Health wellbeing effects largest for adults over 40

Benefit from informal learning

Countries skill pool can partly be explained by informal learning

PIAAC findings suggest benefits from reading activities and use of skills at work on competencies.

Engagement in relevant activities outside of work has an even stronger relationship with the skills assessed than engagement in the corresponding activities at work.

Lifelong learning and democratic participation

Participatory democracy requires citizens' capacity to advance persuasive claims and initiate public discussions about concerns. Study circles, provides such an arena where people can meet and dialogue in an informal way and provides an opportunity for individuals to transform their individuality to citizenship through participation.

Data on adult learning

PIAAC no attempt to measure informal learning, bias towards formal learning and learning for work.

EU/EUROSTAT AES, organised around learning activities and is constructed to capture and describe all learning activities.

Need for longitudinal and lifewide data on learning in different spheres of life (*Survey on living conditions*).