



Population Europe

# **DEVELOPING HUMAN CAPITAL OF THE ADULT POPULATION: THE CHALLENGE OF LIFE-LONG LEARNING**

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**RIDING THE POPULATION WAVE: POLICY OPTIONS FOR THE  
AGEING BABY-BOOMER GENERATION IN EUROPE**

**Warsaw, 17 May 2012**

# Lifelong learning in response to population ageing

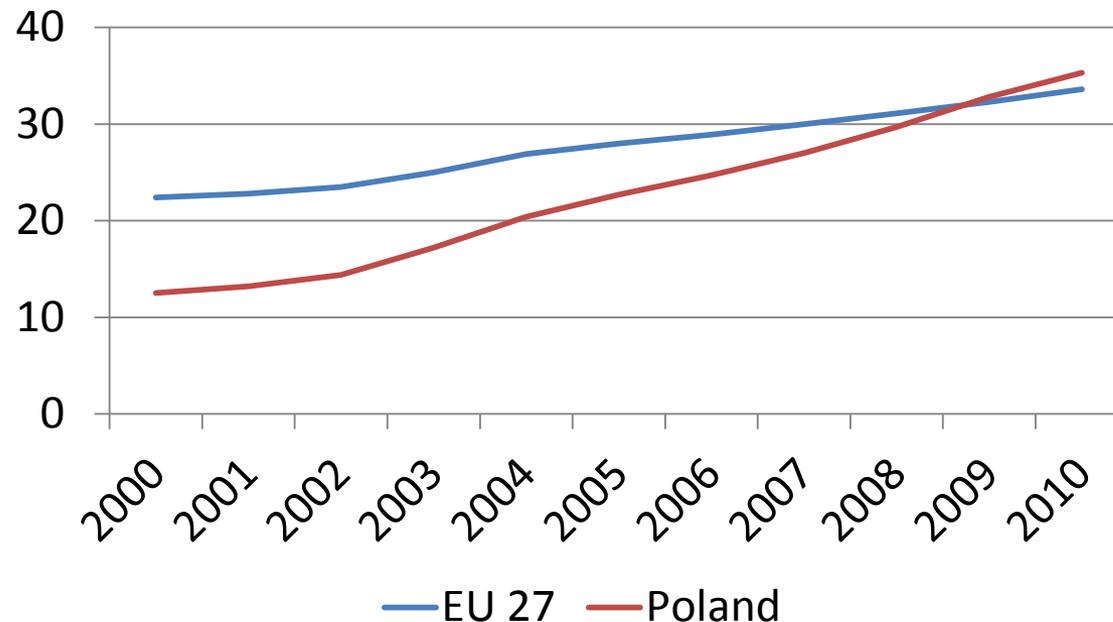
- The demographic change and ageing of baby-boom generation leads to changes of the age structure of working-age population
- Development of human capital should not rely only on increasing qualifications of younger workers
- Persistent differences in LLL participation across age groups can also lead to increasing inequality in human capital distribution
- Education and life-long learning policy should focus on adult learning and maintaining LLL activity throughout all ages

# Why lifelong learning perspective is necessary?

- Technological changes and globalisation also lead to dynamically changing demand for competencies at the labour market
- Competencies acquired during formal education tend to devalue in time
- LLL of adults can help to reduce the skill gap resulting from formal education
- It also helps to catch up with the changing demand on the labour market

# Rising share of young people with higher education

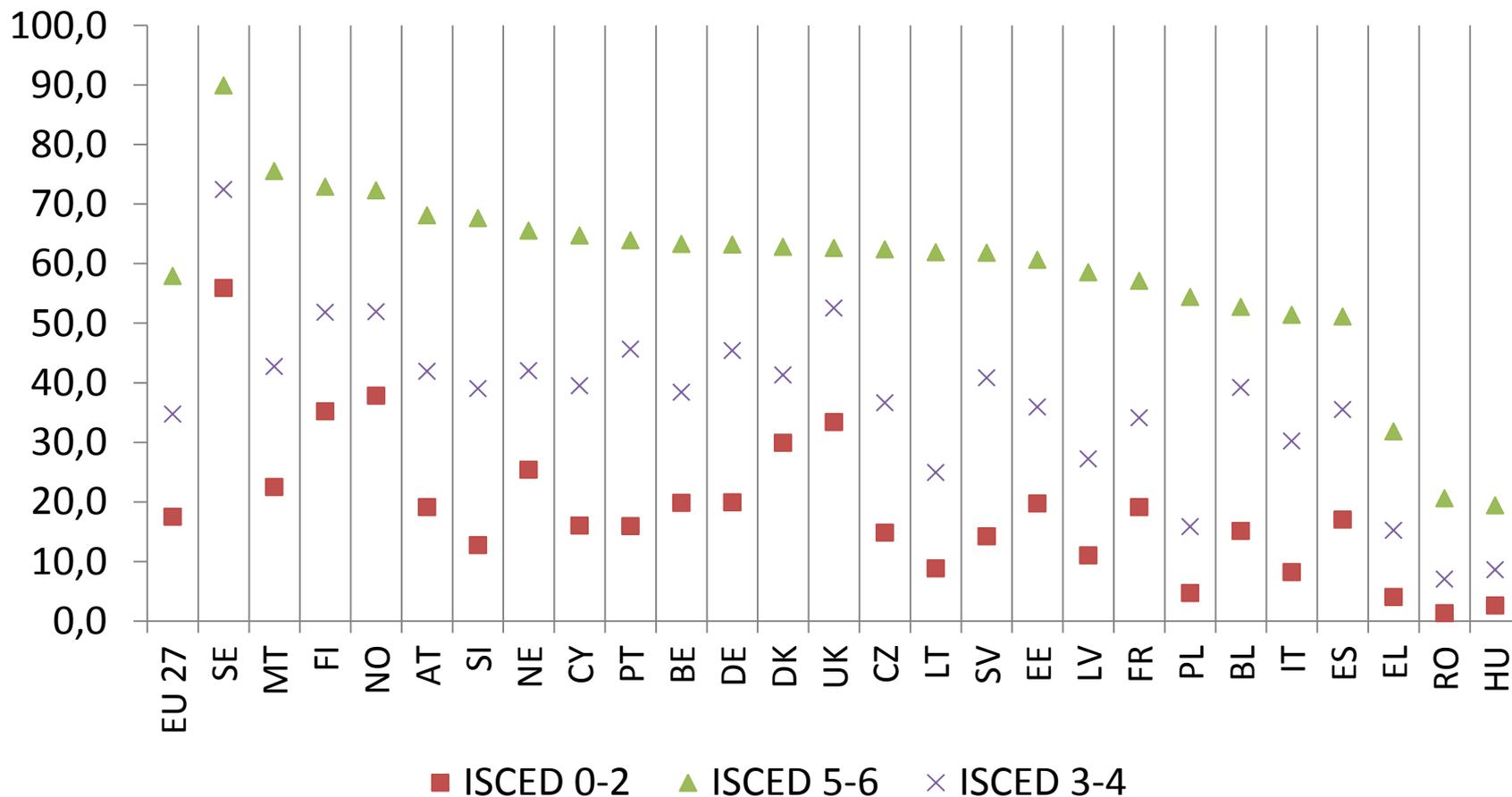
Tertiary educational attainment  
age group 30-34



- Rising share of young people with higher education attainment, which is also one of the aims of the EU strategy
- While it is generally positive, it leads to increasing skill gaps between generations

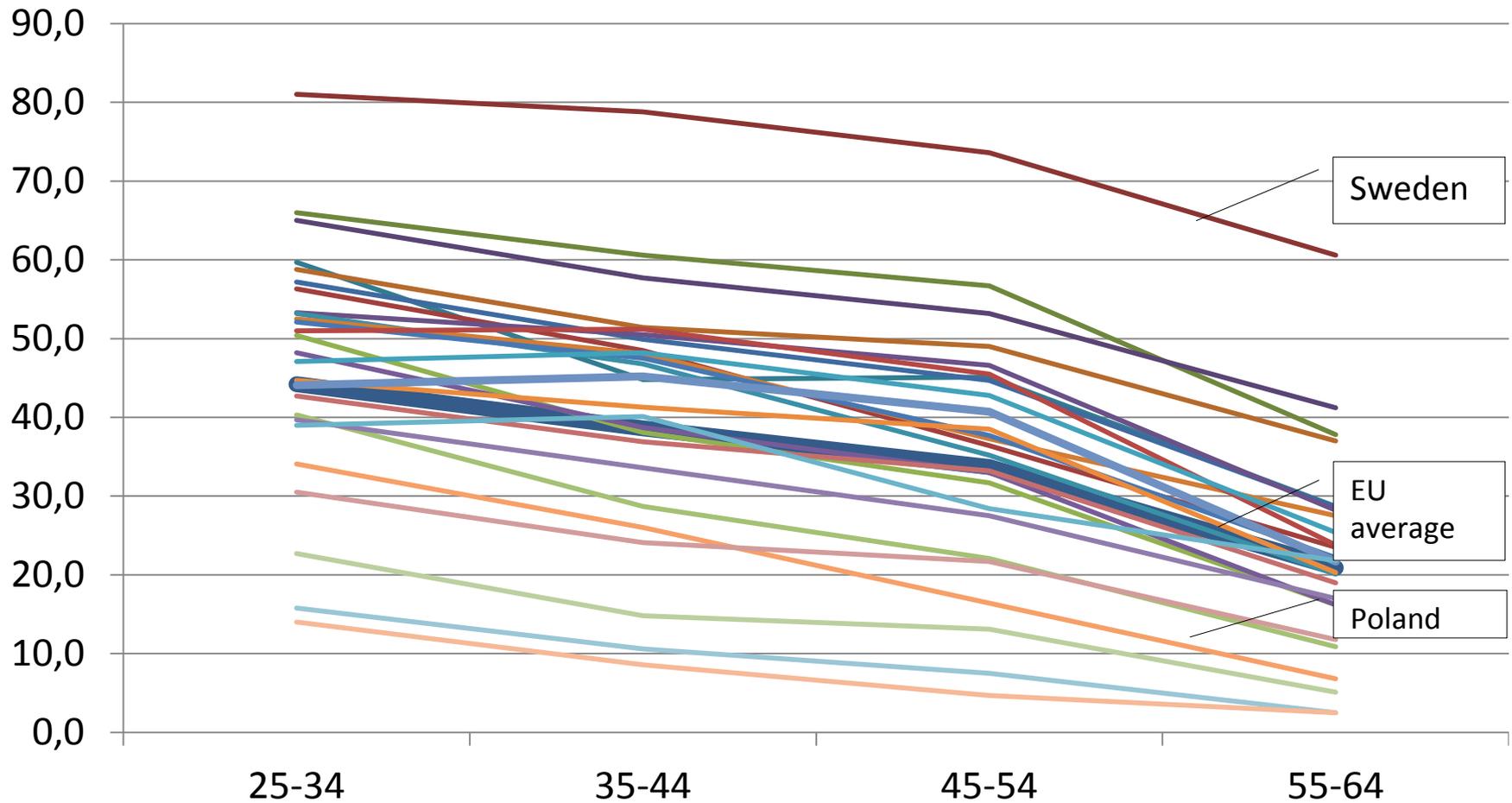
Source: Eurostat, LFS

# Participation in formal and non-formal learning by education level



Source: Adult Education Survey, Eurostat

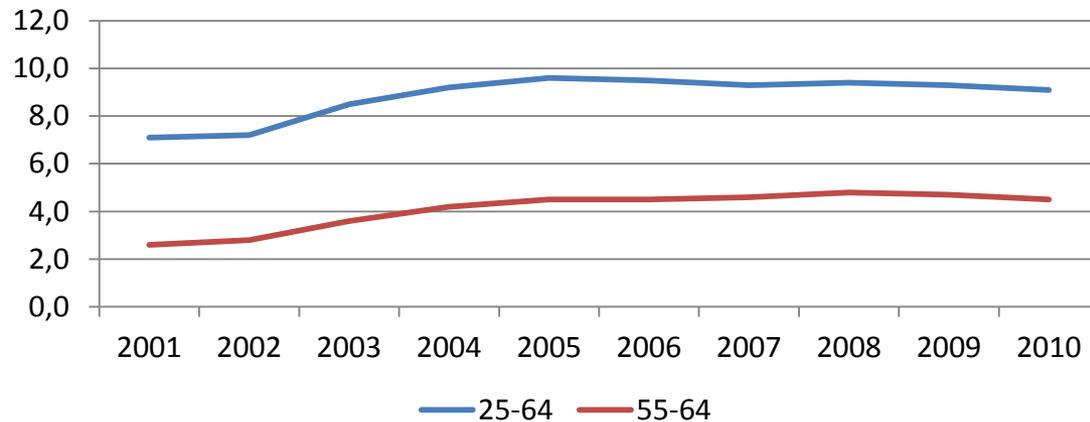
# Participation in formal and non-formal learning by age (2006)



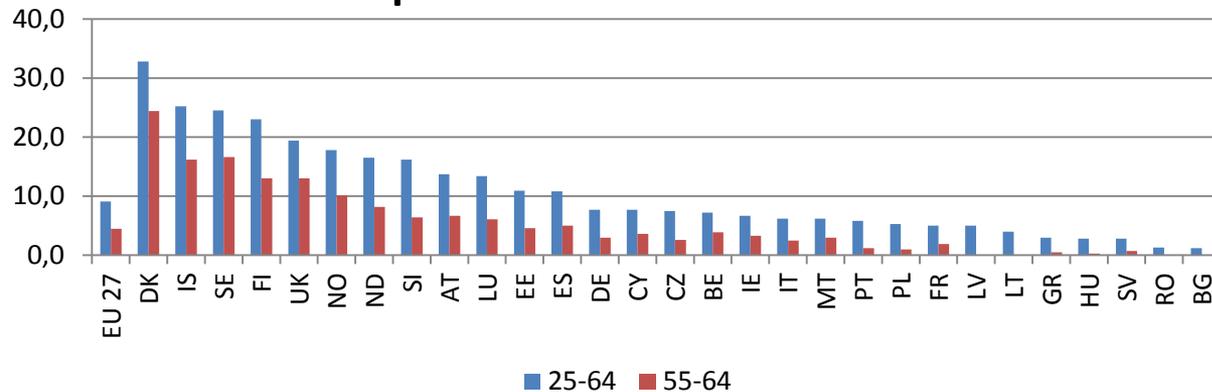
Source: Adult Education Survey, Eurostat

# Participation in education and training (E&T)

Changes in participation in E&T, EU-27



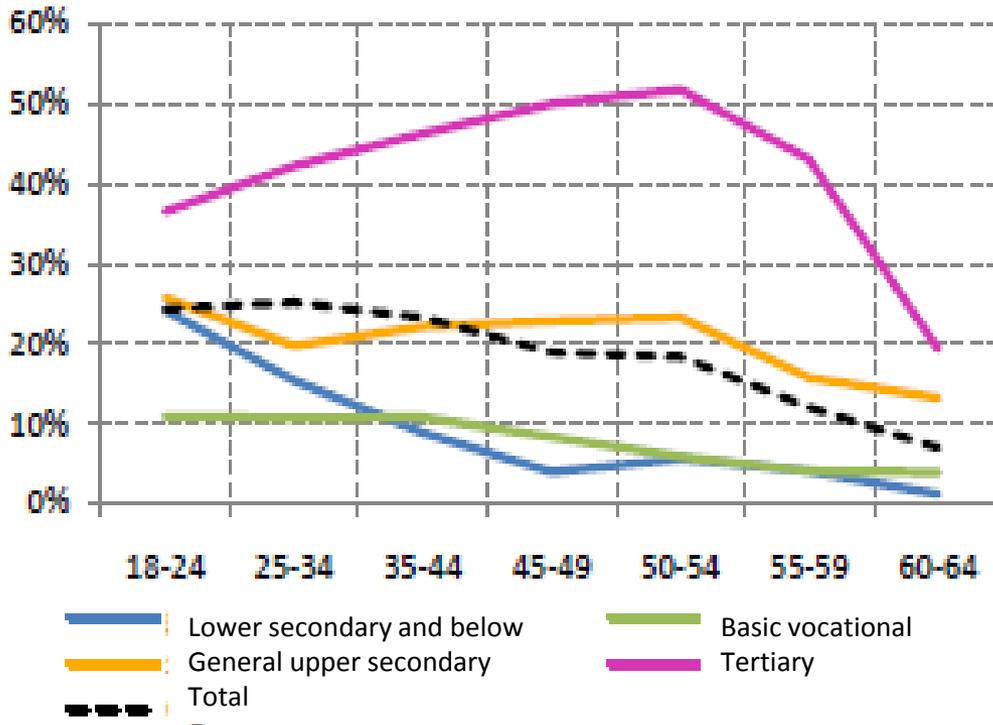
Participation in E&T in 2010



- Gap between participation in E&T for 55-64 does not change in time
- In countries with higher participation in E&T also older groups participate more
- But the gap persists in all EU countries

# Age and education combined: evidence from Poland

**LLL (in any form) by age and educational attainment in Poland, 2011**



- Educational activity reduces with age, both among employed and among unemployed

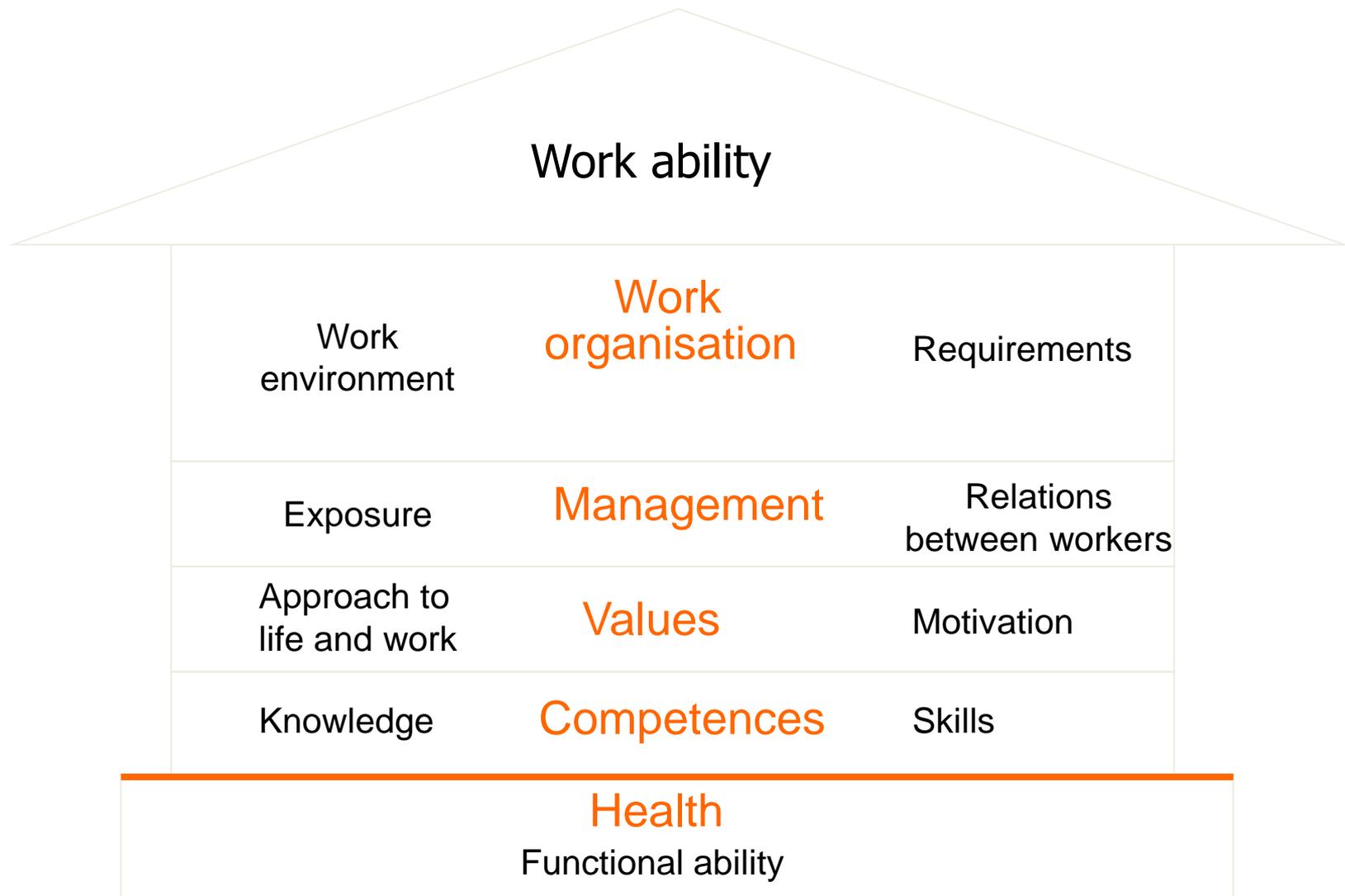
Even among those with tertiary education attainment, there is a significant drop in LLL participation at age 55+

Young people with low educational attainment seem to compensate this lack at early stage of labour market careers, but it is not sustained in the case of older age groups

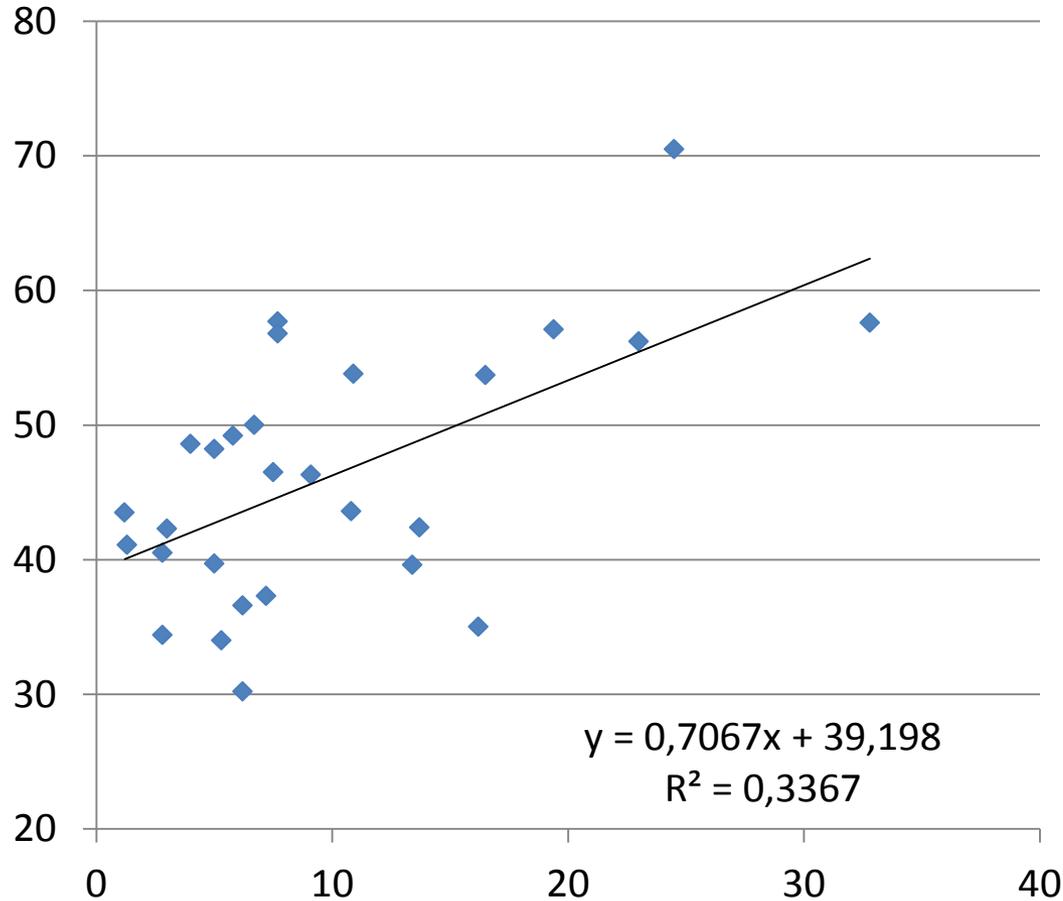
# Focus of LLL policy

- Current developments in LLL do not lead to reducing education inequalities between generations or groups with different educational attainment
- LLL policies should focus on older age groups as well as those with lower formal qualifications

# From functional ability to work ability



# Participation in E&T and employment rate of older workers (2010)



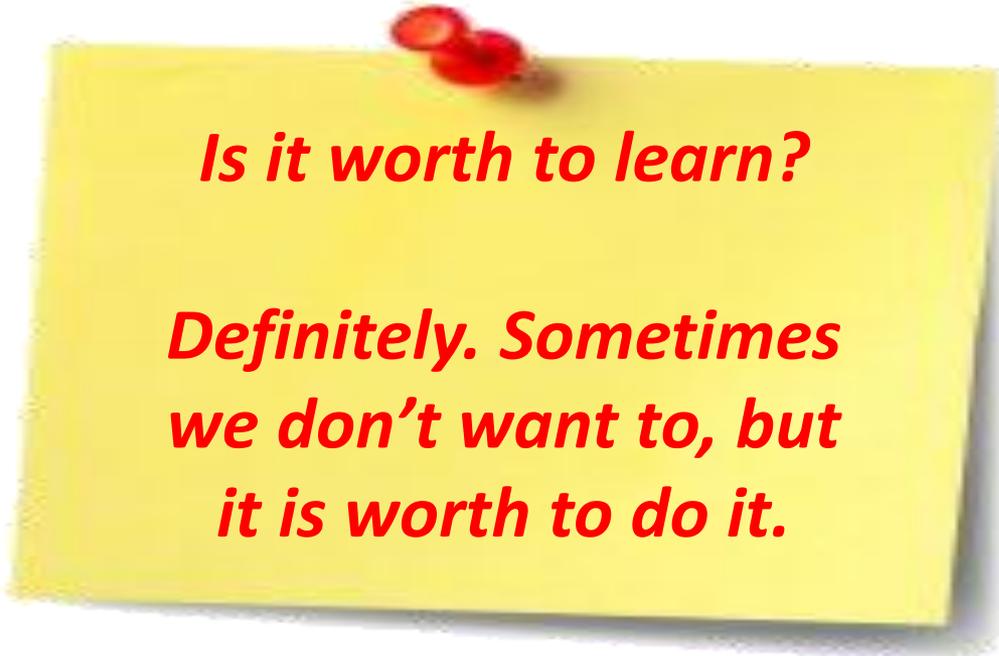
- In the light of increasing retirement ages in EU, there is a need to promote participation of adults in education and training

# Importance of non-formal and informal learning

- Evidence from Belgium shows that older workers are found to compensate for their lack of formal schooling (their 'under-education') by additional work experience and/or training
- Under-educated workers who are not able to catch up through training and work experience tend to exercise less demanding jobs as they get older  
(Stephan Kampelmann & François Rycx, 2012 )

# Conclusions: from work-life balance to **work-education-life balance?**

- Life-long learning is an important component of human capital development policy in the light of population ageing
- While young people are better educated today, they represent a relatively moderate share of total labour force
- There is a need to target LLL policy, with a focus on those in older age groups and those with low educational attainment
- LLL participation can also improve employability and work ability of older workers



*Is it worth to learn?*

*Definitely. Sometimes  
we don't want to, but  
it is worth to do it.*