



Programme for the International Assessment of
Adult Competencies (PIAAC)

Progress with the JRA pilot

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Joint OECD-Cedefop Workshop on Employers' Surveys as a
Tool for Identification of Skill Needs
Paris, 22 – 23 May 2008.

Outline of presentation

- Reminder:
 - What is PIAAC?
 - What does the JRA module in PIAAC measure?
 - Why do we need it?
- Progress with JRA pilot
- Next steps

Key elements of PIAAC: A multi-cycle international survey of adult skills

Measures of
literacy, numeracy
& problem-solving
skills

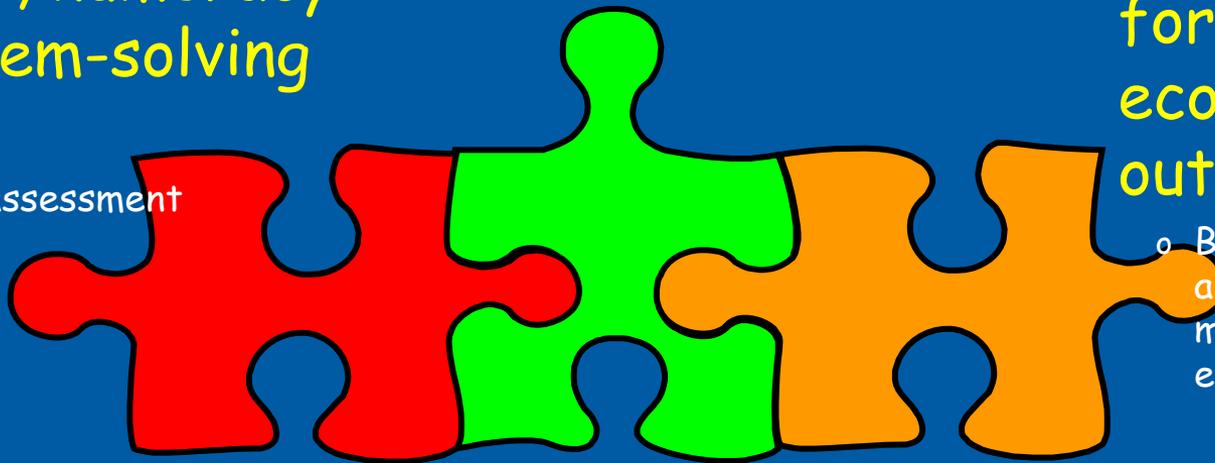
- o Direct assessment

Measures of
generic work skills

- o Based on Job Requirements Approach (JRA)

Measures of skill
formation &
economic & social
outcomes

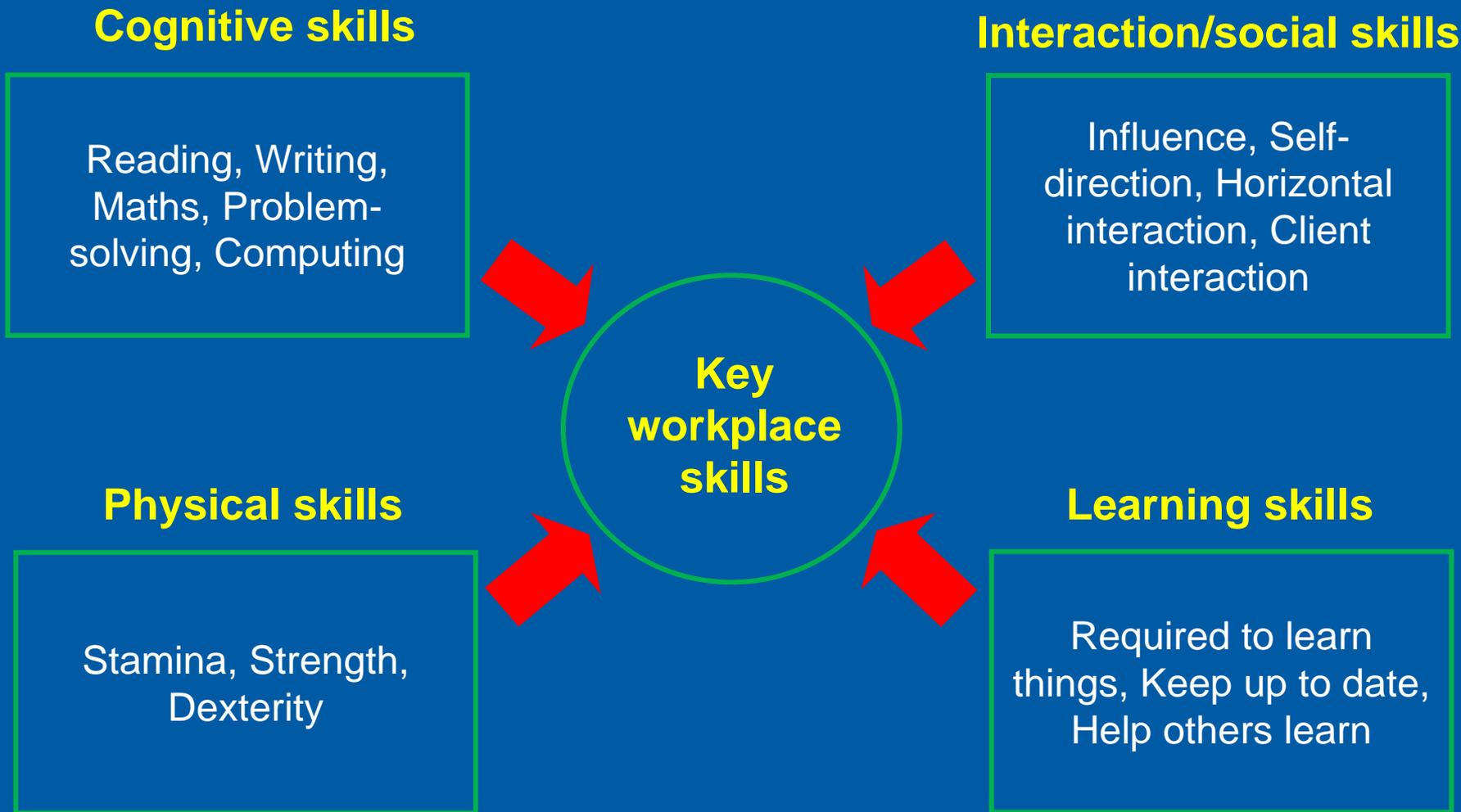
- o Background questions on adult learning, labour-market experience, earnings, health ...



The JRA module: what does it measure?

- ✓ Measures a wide range of generic work skills being used in jobs
- ✓ Based on reports by individuals of the importance (or frequency) of various job requirements
- ✓ Used in national surveys such as O*NET and the UK Skill Survey but no international survey using this approach exists
- ✓ PIAAC will be a world-first survey in being able to compare key generic skills of workers across a wide range of countries

Key generic works skills measured by the JRA module



The JRA module: Why do we need it?

- ✓ Technological change and globalisation are placing a growing premium on certain generic work skills
- ✓ The JRA module will help identify what these skills are, how they are acquired and how countries compare
 - e.g. is the proportion of workers who use computers for complex tasks higher in Finland than in Germany?
- ✓ Can characterise both low-skilled and high-skilled jobs more precisely
 - Formal qualifications becoming an increasingly crude proxy of skills
 - Even among workers with college or university degrees, large variation in earnings and employment outcomes

The JRA module: Why do we need it?

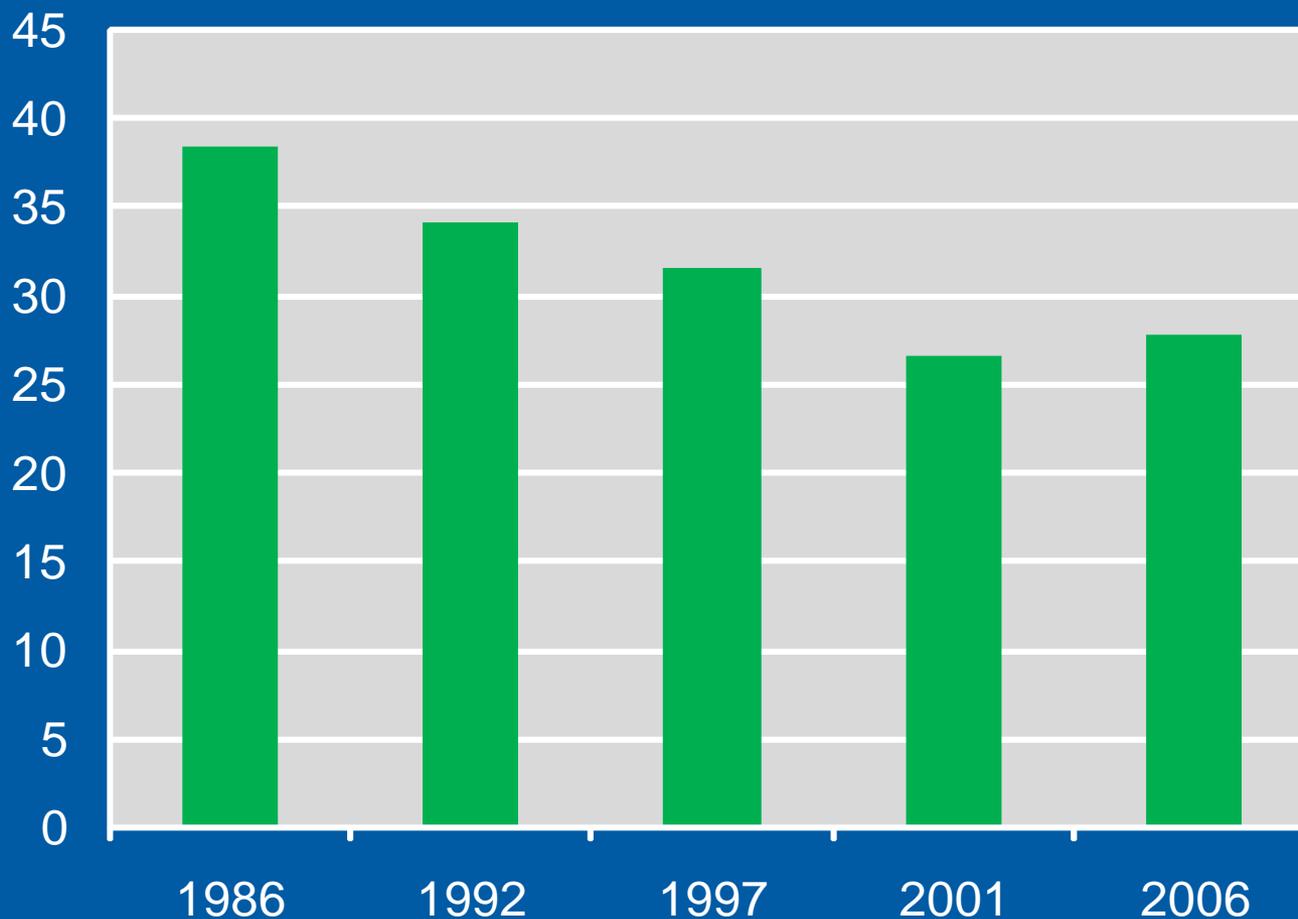
- ✓ Provides indicators of skills mismatch:
 - Qualifications required in job versus qualifications held by worker in that job
 - Direct test of workers' literacy versus literacy skills required in their jobs

- ✓ Improves our understanding of the links between:
 - Skills and the education/training system
 - Skills and employer human resource practices

- Examples of comparisons using the JRA module

Jobs requiring no qualifications are declining in importance

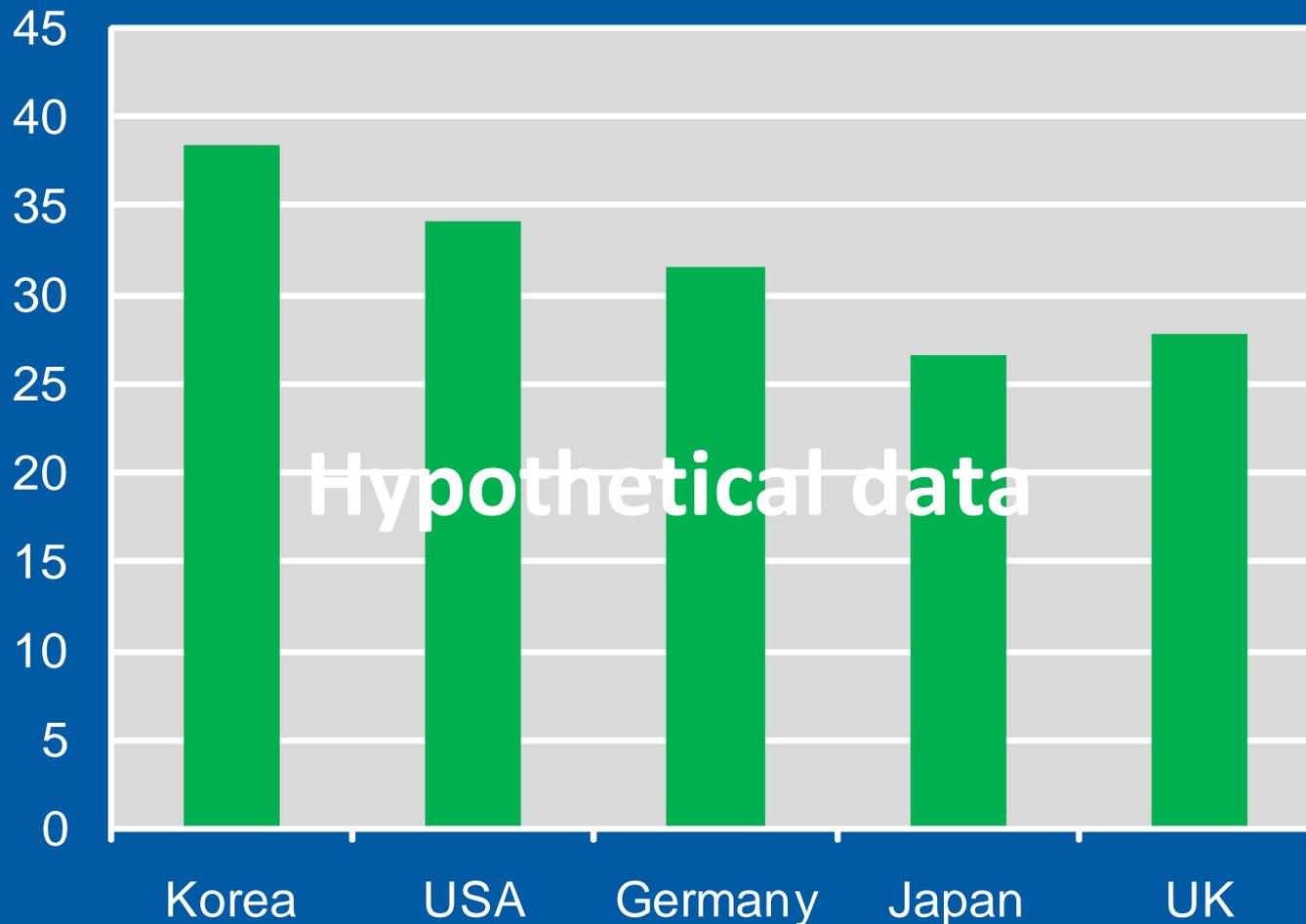
As a percentage of all jobs in the UK



Source: UK Skills Survey.

Are some countries more reliant on low-skilled jobs than others?

Percentage of all jobs that require no qualifications



Source: PIAAC 2011.

Computing skills are becoming increasingly important

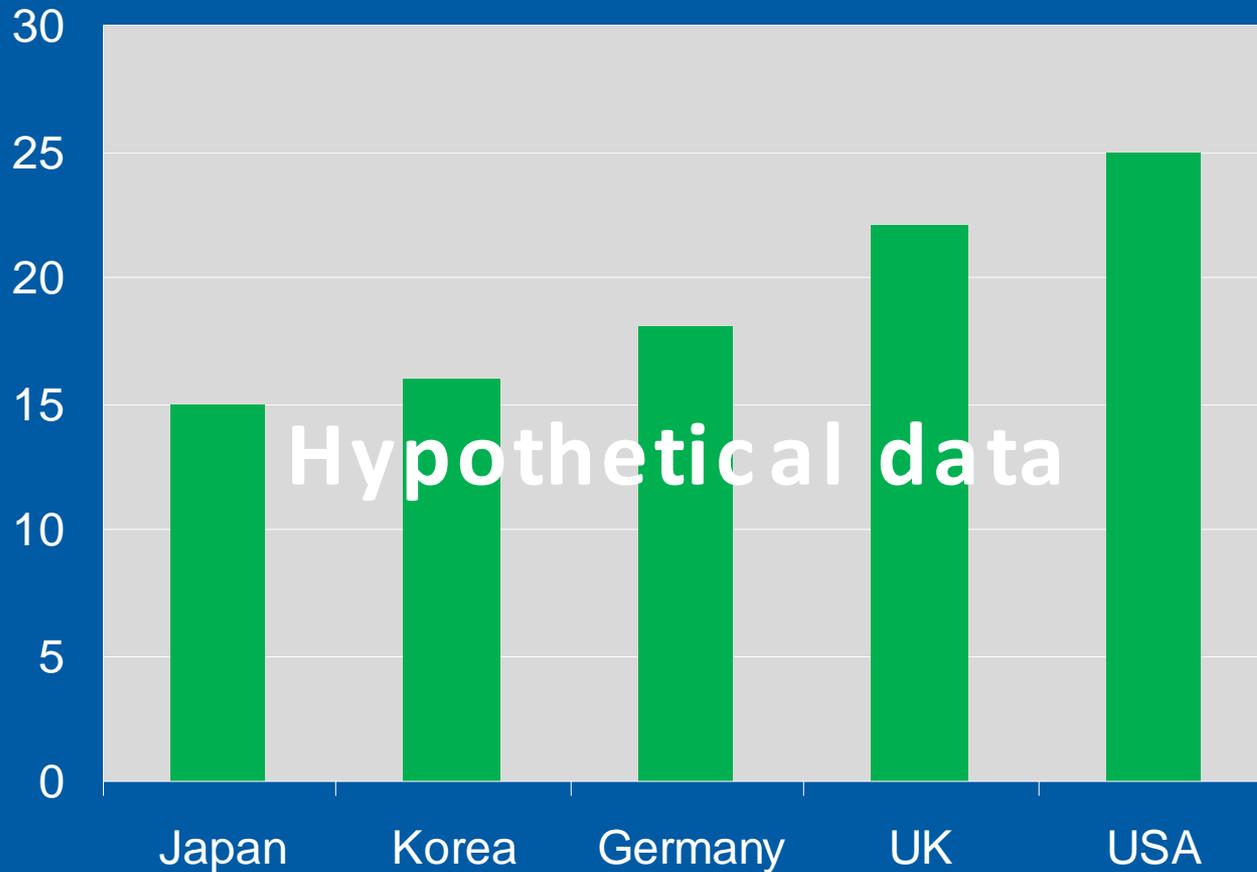
% of all jobs in the UK by importance of computing skills

	1997	2001	2006
Essential	30.8	39.7	47.2
Very important	14.8	14.8	14.7
Fairly important	12.2	13.8	11.6
Not very important	11.7	10.5	9.4
Not at all important	30.5	21.1	17.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: UK Skills Survey

Do some countries have a competitive edge in the use of high-level computer skills?

Percentage of all jobs requiring use of high-level computer skills



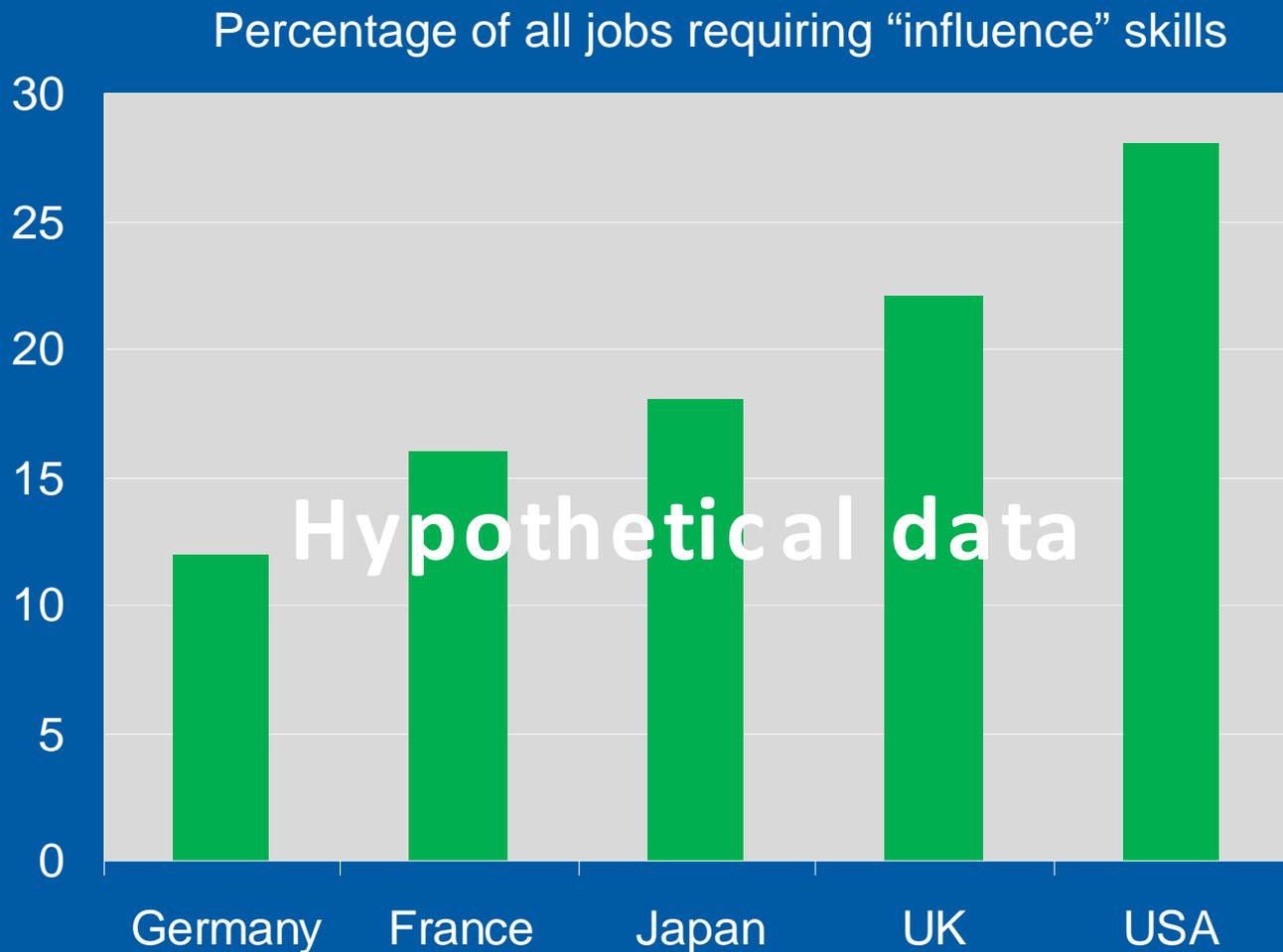
Source: PIAAC 2011.

Evidence of positive returns to certain generic work skills

- In the UK, a substantial wage premium is paid for jobs that require:
 - ✓ Longer learning and training times
 - ✓ Influence skills (e.g. persuading, making presentations, planning others' activities, teaching, etc.)
 - ✓ Computing skills

- Is the same true in other countries?

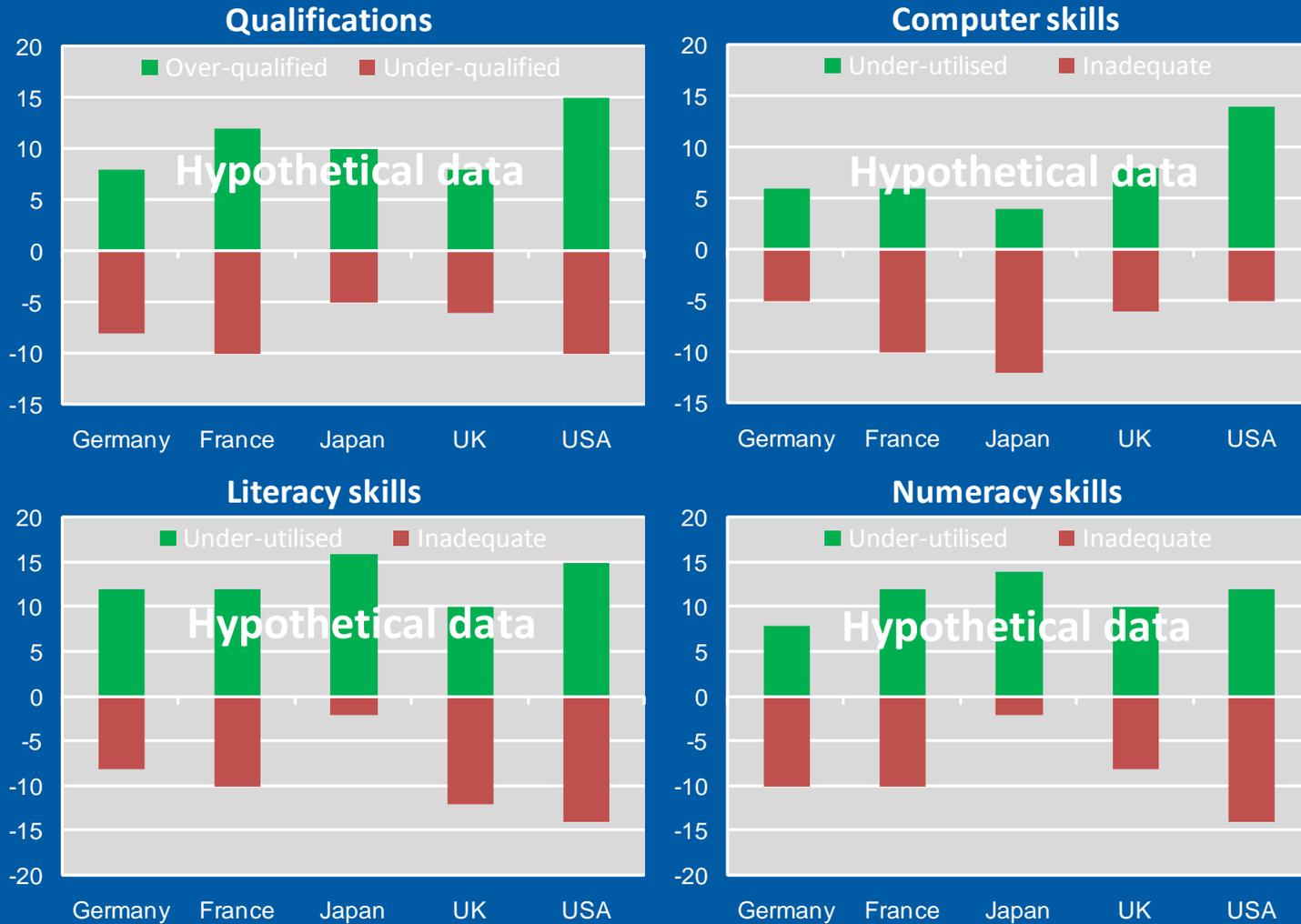
Is the education and training system in each country responding to changing skill demands such as the increasing demand for “influence” skills?



Source: PIAAC 2011.

How well does the education system perform in each country in giving skills to youth that match those demanded by employers?

Percentages of all employed youth (16-29)



Progress with JRA pilot

- ✓ Pilot JRA methodology and questionnaire developed by leading expert and vetted by JRA expert group
- ✓ Major innovation in using “objective” scales to capture importance of skill use
 - binary scale
 - frequency scale
 - time-spent scale
 - “cruciality” scale
- ✓ 5 countries participating: Australia, France, Greece, Korea and the United States
- ✓ In each country, pilot will cover 500 respondents randomly chosen plus 100 school teachers

Progress with JRA pilot

- ✓ Extensive pre-testing of the pilot questionnaire has been successfully completed
 - Reassuring to find that there was much similarity in the type of issues that arose during the cognitive interviews
 - Some modifications to the scales and the wording of a few questions
 - But otherwise questions well understood in all of the countries
- ✓ Following further testing, the Australian Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations concluded that “the pilot survey has the potential to produce insightful results on the skills used at work”

Next steps

Activity	2008										2009	
	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F
1. Conduct of pilot survey.	█	█	█	█	█							
2. Delivery of pilot country data sets to OECD.			█	█	█	█						
3. Preparation of each country's national report according to OECD template.				█	█	█	█	█				
4. Analysis of data by OECD and preparation of synthesis report.						█	█	█				
5. Bilateral meetings, as necessary, with country experts to review findings.							█	█	█			
6. Workshop with international experts to review country/synthesis reports.									█	█		
7. Presentation of findings at International Validation Seminar.											█	█

- ✓ Cedefop will be hosting the international validation seminar in Thessaloniki in January or February 2009

Conclusions

- ✓ The JRA pilot is on track to produce results by the end of 2008
- ✓ These results should establish the validity of the JRA to produce internationally comparable measures of generic work skills
- ✓ This will open up a new world for investigating the demand for a range of generic work skills and the implications for education and training policies