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European Centre  
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**SECOND POLICY LEARNING FORUM**

# on upskilling pathways

**20-21 May 2019**

EESC | JDE building | Rue Belliard 99, Brussels

**Mapping low skilled adult populations**  
Lidia Salvatore, Cedefop



# Low skilled adults: a comprehensive analysis



Education

Digital skills

Literacy

Numeracy



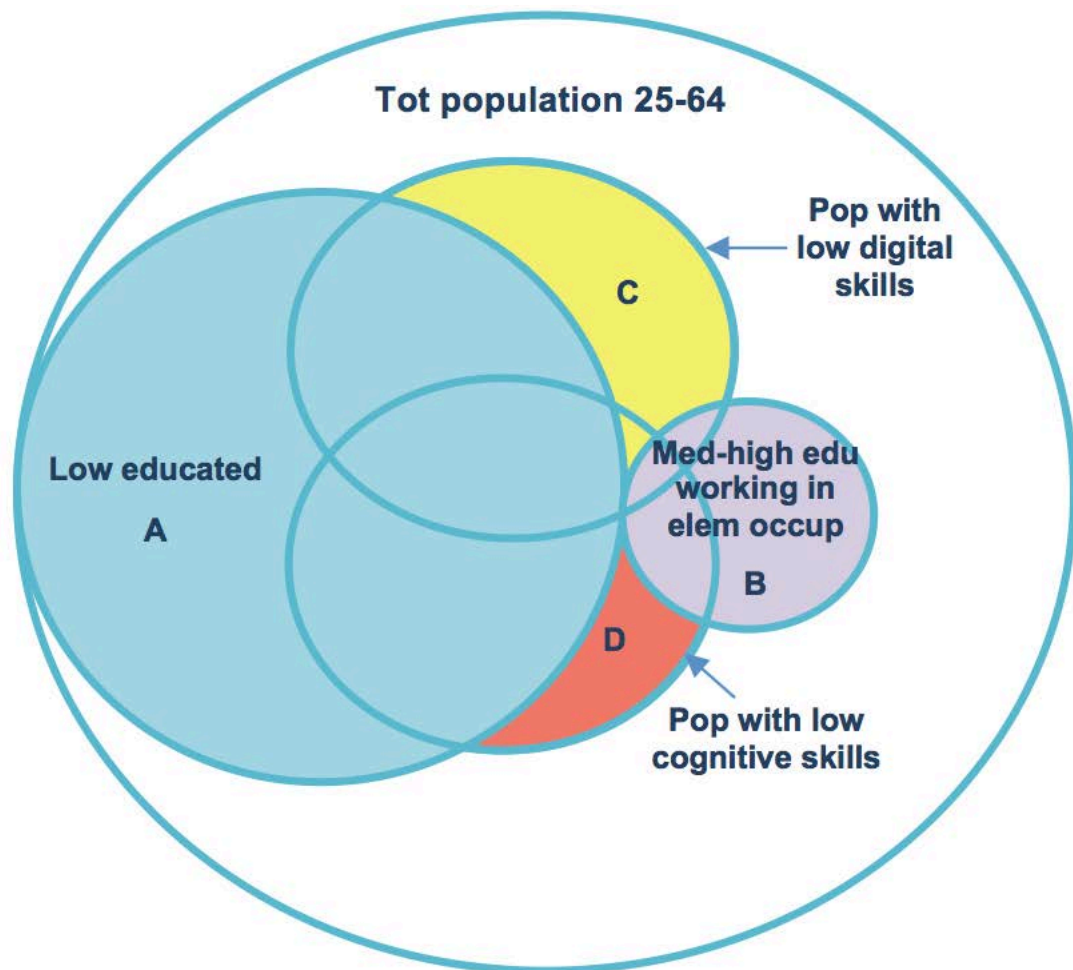
# Mapping low skilled adult populations: further analysis

## Skills domains:

- Educational attainment (LFS 2016);
  - Computer and digital skills (CSIS 2015)
  - Cognitive skills (numeracy, literacy, PIAAC 2012 & 2015)
- +
- adults with medium or high qualifications but working in elementary occupations (ISCO 88 - 09) as a proxy for skills obsolescence/skill loss.



# Estimation of the magnitude of the adult population in need of upskilling

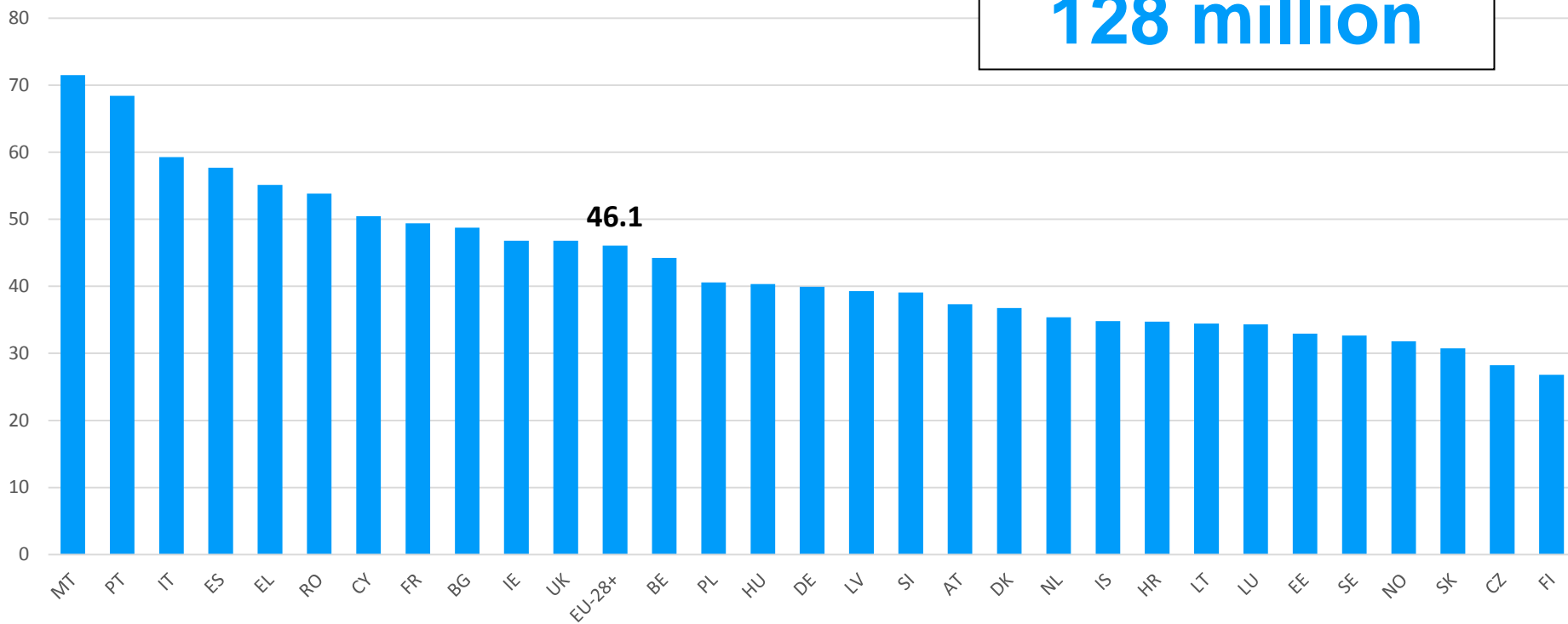


1. Low educational attainment **(A)**
2. Medium- high qualified (ISCED 3-8) adults 25-64 working in elementary occupations (ISCO 88 -09) **(B)**
3. Low digital skills **(C)**
4. Low cognitive skills **(D)**



# Estimated adult population in potential need of upskilling by country (%), EU-28+ (\*)

128 million



(\*) EU-28+ = EU-28 + IS, NO

Source: Cedefop calculation on LFS 2016, CSIS 2015, OECD PIAAC 2012, 2015.



# Risk of being low skilled

**Age**

**25-34  
Employed**

**25-34  
Unemployed**

**25-34  
Inactive**

**35-54  
Employed**

**35-54  
Unemployed**

**35-54  
Inactive**

**Labour  
market status**

**55-64  
Employed**

**55-64  
Unemployed**

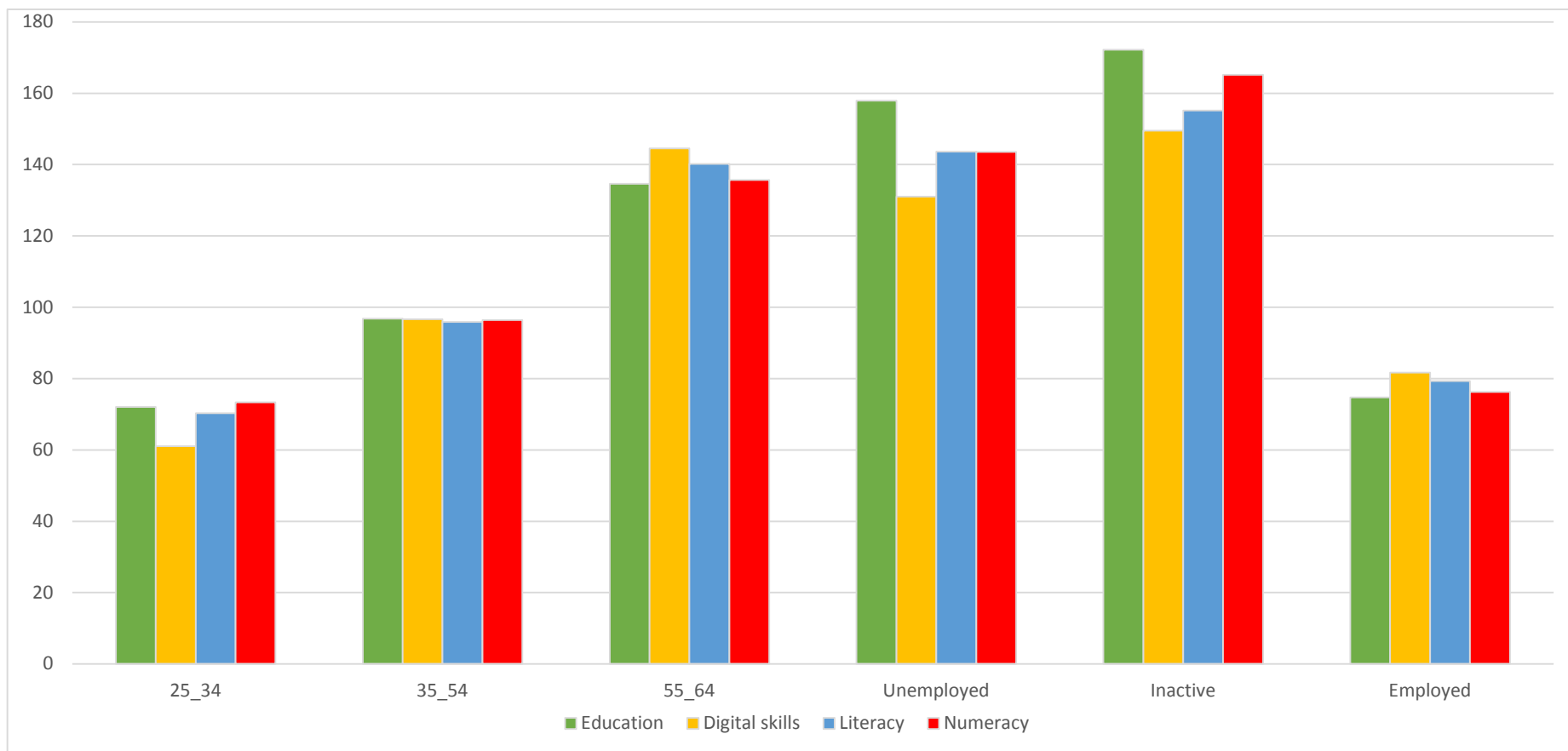
**55-64  
Inactive**

**Gender**

**Nationality**



# Risk of being low skilled

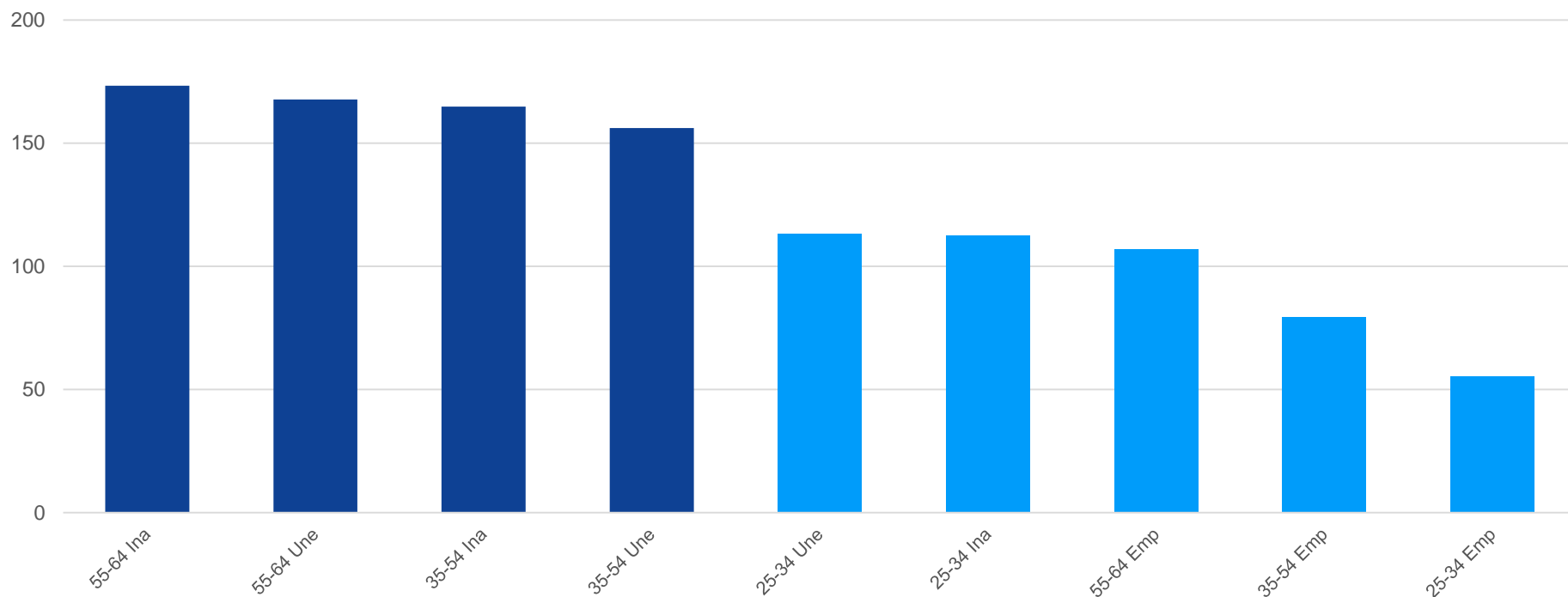


Note: European average: EU28+ for education; EU28 and NO for digital skills, PIAAC countries for literacy and numeracy.

Source: Cedefop calculation on LFS 2016, CSIS 2015, OECD PIAAC 2012, 2015



# Risk of being low skilled, composite index (\*), EU-28+



Note: (\*) Low skilling composite index: calculated as the unweighted average of the relative risk of being low skilled in four domains: education, digital skills, literacy and numeracy.

Source: Cedefop calculation on LFS 2016, CSIS 2015, OECD PIAAC 2012, 2015.



# Risk of being low skilled by skill dimension



**Education**

25-34  
Employed

35-54  
Employed

55-64  
Employed



**Digital skills**

25-34  
Unemployed

35-54  
Unemployed

55-64  
Unemployed



**Literacy**

25-34  
Inactive

35-54  
Inactive

55-64  
Inactive



**Numeracy**

25-34  
Inactive

35-54  
Inactive

55-64  
Inactive

# Risk of being low skilled by skill dimension

**Education**25-34  
Employed35-54  
Employed55-64  
Employed**Digital skills**25-34  
Unemployed35-54  
Unemployed55-64  
Unemployed**Literacy**25-34  
Inactive35-54  
Inactive55-64  
Inactive**Numeracy**25-34  
Inactive35-54  
Inactive55-64  
Inactive

# Risk of being low skilled by skill dimension



Education

25-34  
Employed

35-54  
Employed

55-64  
Employed



Digital skills

25-34  
Unemployed

35-54  
Unemployed

55-64  
Unemployed



Literacy

25-34  
Inactive

35-54  
Inactive

55-64  
Inactive



Numeracy

25-34  
Inactive

35-54  
Inactive

55-64  
Inactive

# Risk of being low skilled by skill dimension



Education

25-34  
Employed

35-54  
Employed

55-64  
Employed



Digital skills

25-34  
Unemployed

35-54  
Unemployed

55-64  
Unemployed



Literacy

25-34  
Inactive

35-54  
Inactive

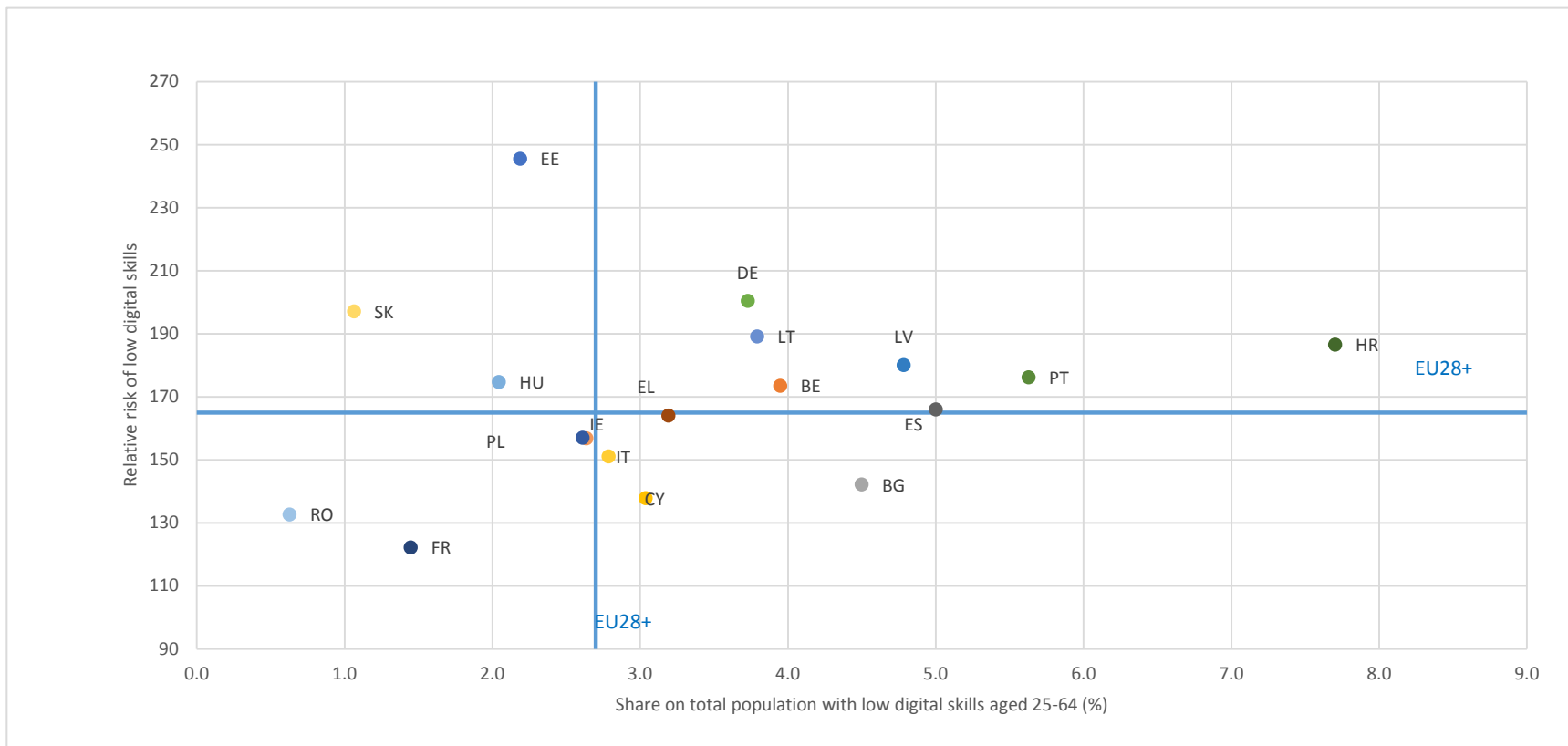
55-64  
Inactive



Numeracy



# Cross-country comparison of low digital skills among unemployed aged 55-64

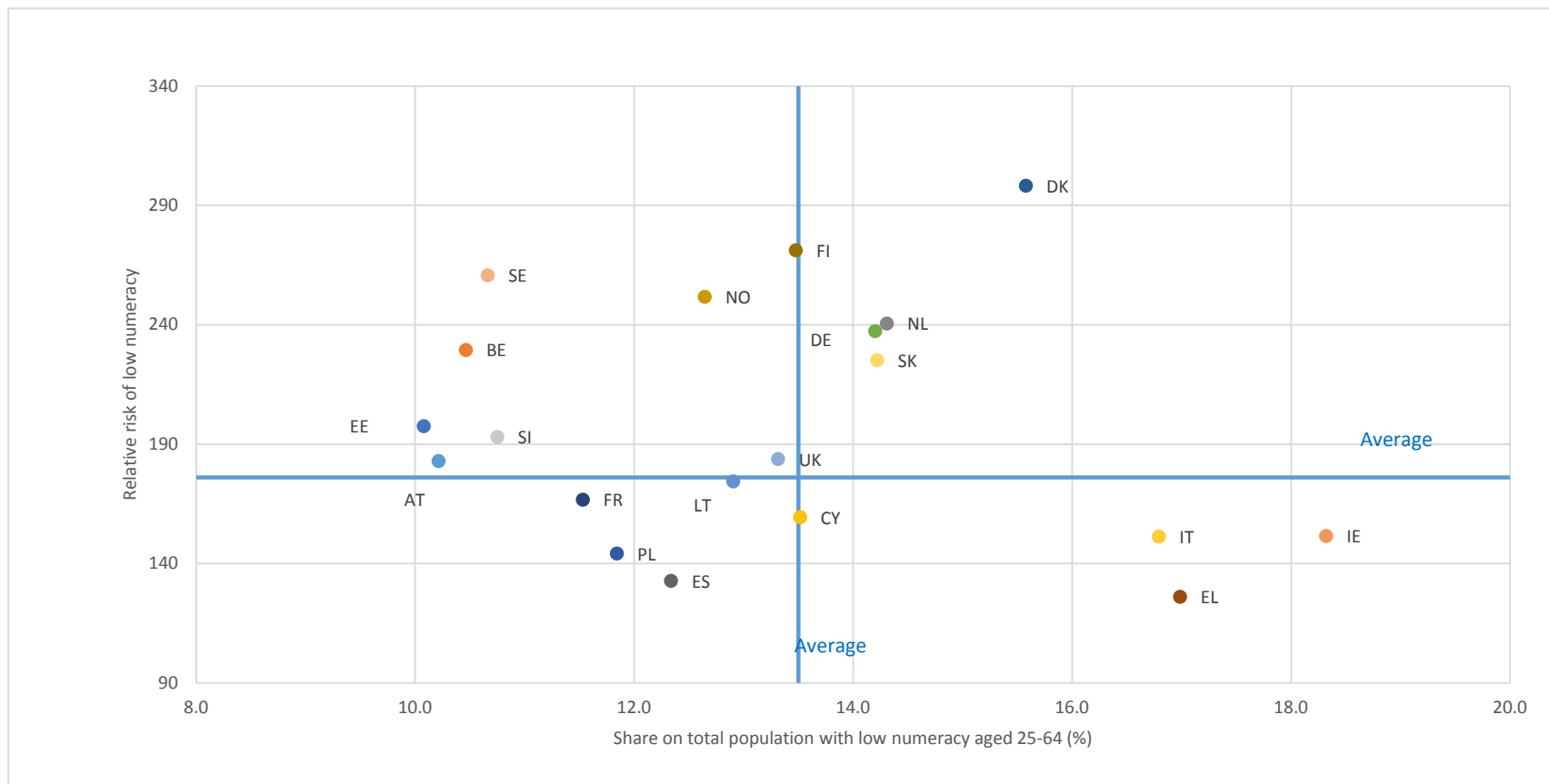


Note: unreliable data for AT, DK, FI, IS, LU, MT, NL, NO, SE, SI, UK

Source: Cedefop calculation on LFS 2016, CSIS 2015, OECD PIAAC 2012, 2015



# Cross-country comparison of low numeracy skills among inactive aged 35-54

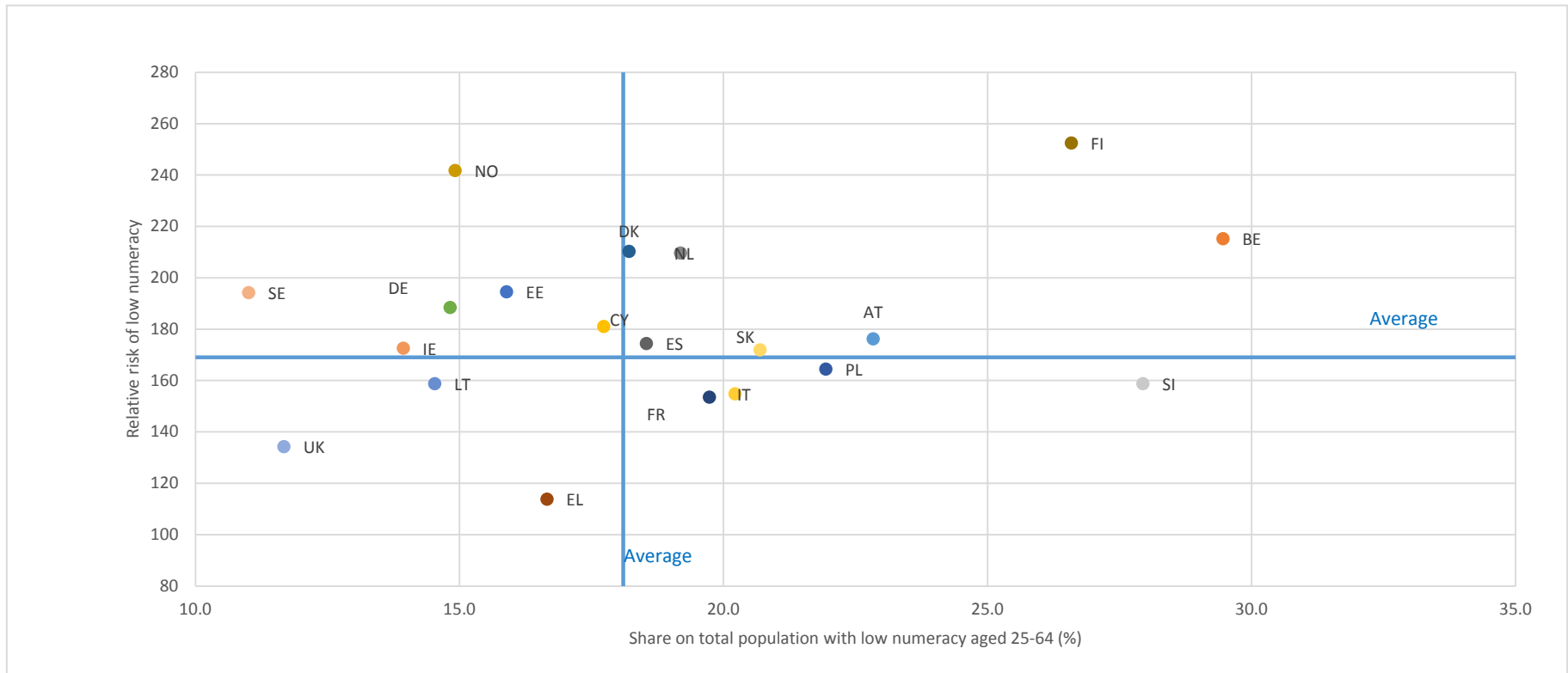


Note: No data: BG, HR, HU, IS, LU, LV, MT, PT, RO.

Source: Cedefop calculation on LFS 2016, CSIS 2015, OECD PIAAC 2012, 2015



# Cross-country comparison of low numeracy skills among inactive aged 55-64

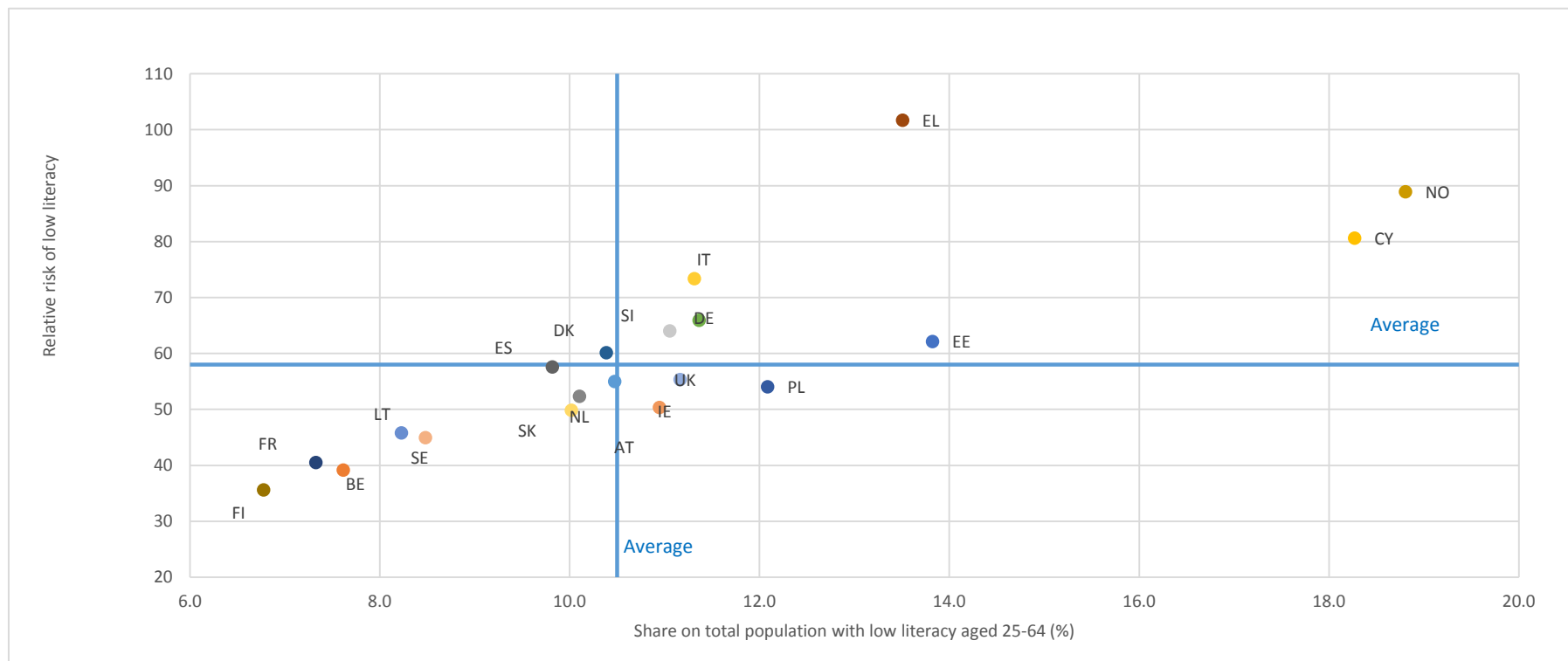


Note: No data: BG, HR, HU, IS, LU, LV, MT, PT, RO.

Source: Cedefop calculation on LFS 2016, CSIS 2015, OECD PIAAC 2012, 2015



# Cross-country comparison of low literacy among employed aged 25-34



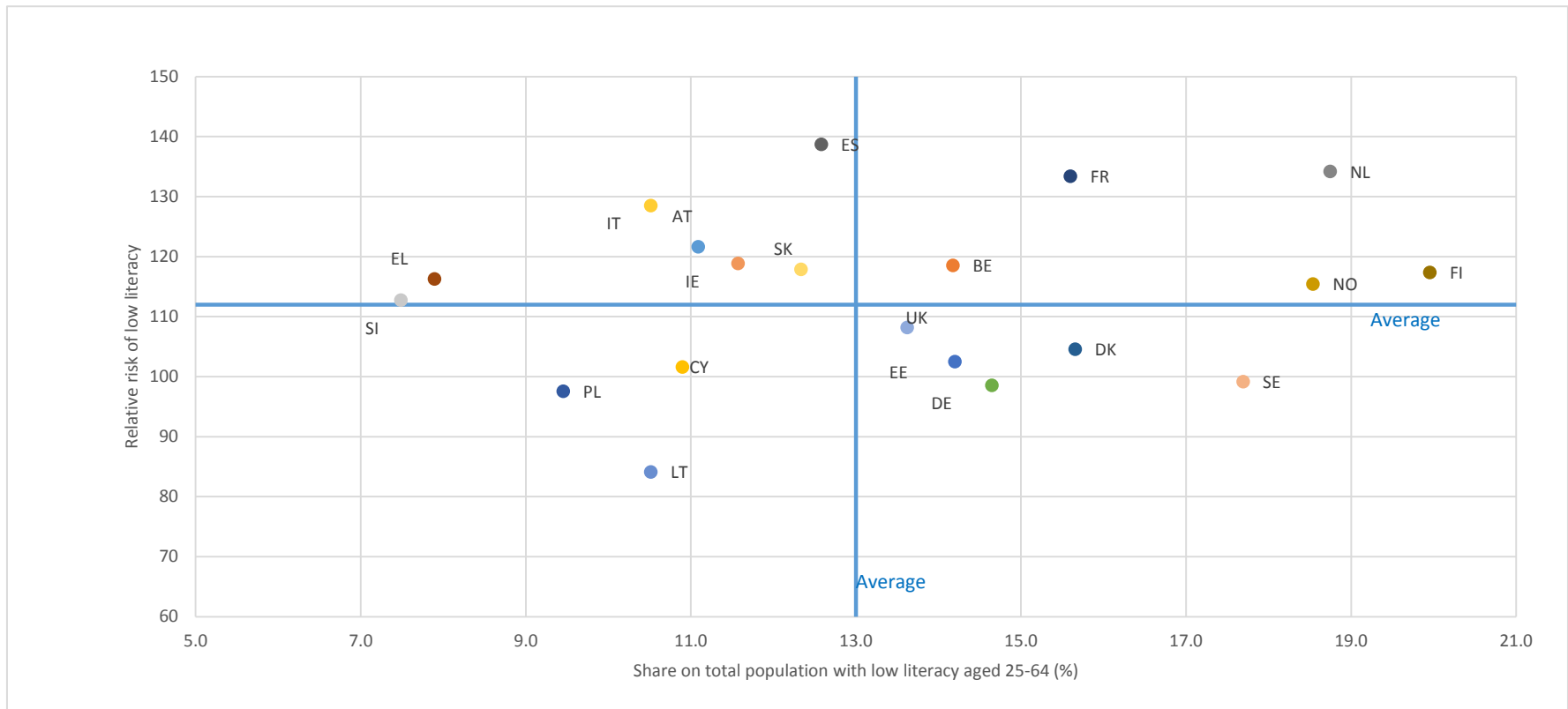
Note: No data: BG, HR, HU, IS, LU, LV, MT, PT, RO.

Source: Cedefop calculation on LFS 2016, CSIS 2015, OECD PIAAC 2012, 2015





# Cross-country comparison of low literacy skills among employed aged 55-64

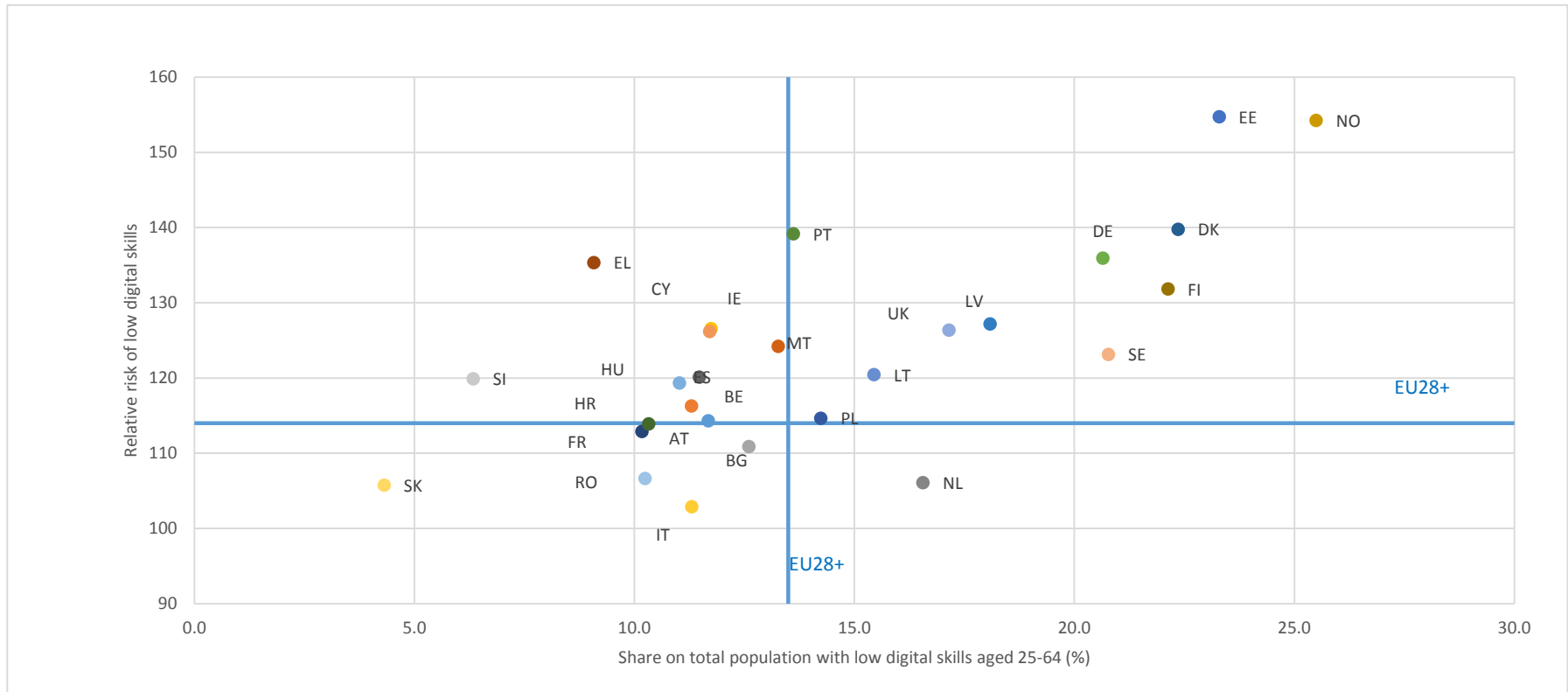


Note: No data: BG, HR, HU, IS, LU, LV, MT, PT, RO.

Source: Cedefop calculation on LFS 2016, CSIS 2015, OECD PIAAC 2012, 2015



# Cross-country comparison of low digital skills among employed aged 55-64



Note: unreliable data: IS, LU

Source: Cedefop calculation on LFS 2016, CSIS 2015, OECD PIAAC 2012, 2015



# Risk of being low skilled among adult women, EU-28 +

Females aged 25-64	Low education	Low digital skills	Low literacy	Low numeracy
Absolute risk of low skilling among fem 25-64 (%)	23.2	45.1	20.6	27.2
Relative risk of low skilling: total fem 25-64	100 (50.2)	105 (52.9)	99 (49.7)	112 (56.2)
Relative risk: unemployed fem 25-64	142 (4)	125 (5.8)	126 (3.9)	135 (4.2)
Relative risk: inactive fem 25-64	176 (24)	156 (20.7)	148 (21.4)	170 (24.5)
Relative risk: employed fem 25-64	66 (22.1)	81 (26.3)	74 (24.3)	84 (27.3)

(in brackets: incidence of low skilled females 25-64 on total low skilled population in %)



## In conclusion:

- Magnitude of low skills of particular concern: 46.1% of the EU28+ population aged 25-64 (**128 million adults**) in potential need of upskilling
- Data limitation do not allow us to investigate the full extent of low skills – more comparable data needed;
- **Older unemployed** and **inactive** adults are at particular risk of being low skilled in all the skills dimensions considered;
- **Employed** adults of all the age groups considered show relatively lower risks of low skilling;
- **Digital** skills remain particularly scarce among **older** adults aged 55-64 - even when employed;
- Significant **differences** exist among EU28+ countries – more on the national contexts in the Cedefop country factsheets.



# Thank you

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**Lidia Salvatore**

**Cedefop expert on adult learning**

[Lidia.Salvatore@cedefop.europa.eu](mailto:Lidia.Salvatore@cedefop.europa.eu)

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