

Changing the way we age

Lessons about active ageing from Europe

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Overview

1. Introducing active ageing

- 1.1 Active and healthy ageing as a policy approach
- 1.2 The EY2012 and the Active Ageing Index (AAI) project
- 1.3 Measuring active ageing outcomes: 22 Indicators, 4 domains
- 1.4 Findings for EU countries: Country rankings / Gender differences
- 1.5 Pairwise comparison between the UK and the NL

2. Changing the way we age!

- 2.1 Identifying essential features of a comprehensive AA strategy.
- 2.2 How conventional life course approach needs adjustment?
- 2.3 Why rhetoric failed to deliver a comprehensive policy response?
- 2.4 What additional evidence required?

Part 1

Introducing Active Ageing

1.1 Active ageing as a policy approach

- The underlying grand idea is that **active people contribute to their own health, wellbeing and autonomy** as well as to the (economic and social) welfare of the society in which they live.
- If population ageing is to become a positive experience, for individuals and for societies, then the **increase in life expectancy must be accompanied by active and healthy years added to life.**
- Activities that include paid work as well as unpaid activities and participation are influenced by public policies and welfare state institutions, by work organisations as well as by our own behaviour (healthy diet, regular exercise).

1.2 The EY2012 and the AAI project

- Designation of 2012 as the EY for active ageing is a strong sign of acknowledgement of its importance at the highest level!
- The AAI project was undertaken in the framework of activities of European Year 2012 on Active Ageing and Solidarity;
- Jointly managed by the European Commission and UNECE, undertaken by researchers at European Centre Vienna;
- Advised by a large group of international Experts.

Its aims have been:

- to develop and launch the **AAI**, using **the latest comparative data**, on the **current generation of older people**.
- to serve as a tool **to monitor active ageing outcomes and potential** at the national level, for men and women, and **for mutual learning and advocacy of making of ageing policies**.

Measurement framework of the AAI



Active Ageing Index

The Active Ageing Index (AAI) is a tool to measure the untapped potential of older people for active and healthy ageing across countries. It measures the level to which older people live independent lives, participate in paid employment and social activities as well as their capacity to actively age.

OVERALL INDEX
DOMAINS
INDICATORS

 Employment	 Participation in Society	 Independent, Healthy and Secure Living	 Capacity and Enabling Environment for Active Ageing
Employment Rate 55-59	Voluntary activities	Physical exercise	Remaining life expectancy at age 55
Employment Rate 60-64	Care to children and grand children	Access to health services	Share of healthy life expectancy at age 55
Employment Rate 65-69	Care to older adults	Independent living	Mental well-being
Employment Rate 70-74	Political participation	Financial security (three indicators)	Use of ICT
		Physical safety	Social connectedness
		Lifelong learning	Educational attainment

Actual experiences of active ageing

Capacity to actively age

Datasets used for the AAI indicators

Indicators available from three prime datasets

- ✓ EU Labour Force Survey, 2012
- ✓ European Quality of Life Survey, 2011-12
- ✓ EU Survey of Income and Living Conditions, 2012
- ✓ European Social Survey, Round 5 2010 dataset

2 indicators 'RLE at 55' and 'HLE at 55'

Joint Action: European Health & Life Expectancy Information system (JA EHLEIS)

'Use of ICT by older persons aged 55-74' (4th domain)

- Eurostat ICT survey (2010)

Measurement blocks of the Active Ageing Index 2012

In summary, there are four domains of AAI 2012:

1. Employment of older workers;
2. Social activity and participation of older people;
3. Independent and secure living of older persons;
4. Capacity for active and healthy ageing and enabling environment

Importantly, the focus is on **the current generation of 'older' population**; thus using a snapshot of their ageing experiences, on the basis of the latest data available (no life course perspective!).

The **gender disaggregation** has been considered most essential in understanding fully the active ageing and its determinants across EU countries

Overall AAI for 2012

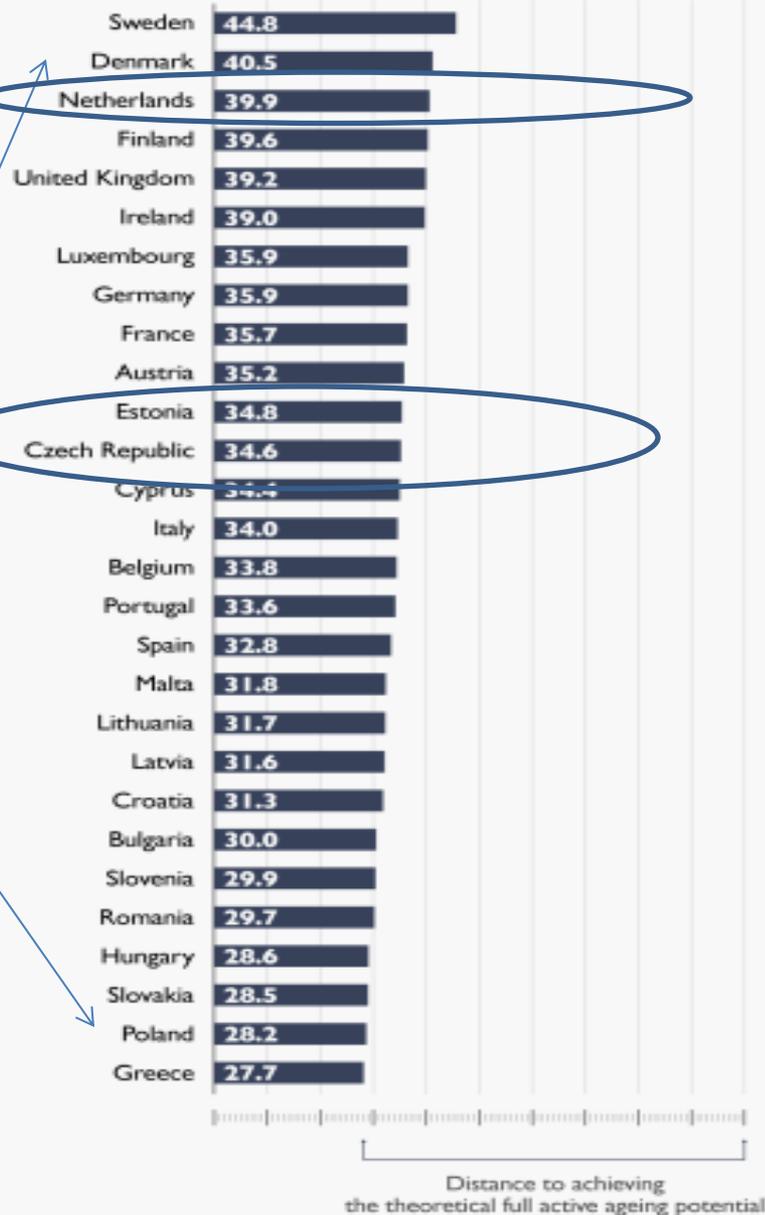
SE at the top, followed closely by DK, NL, FI, UK and IE

Top-ranked countries barely pass the 40 point mark!

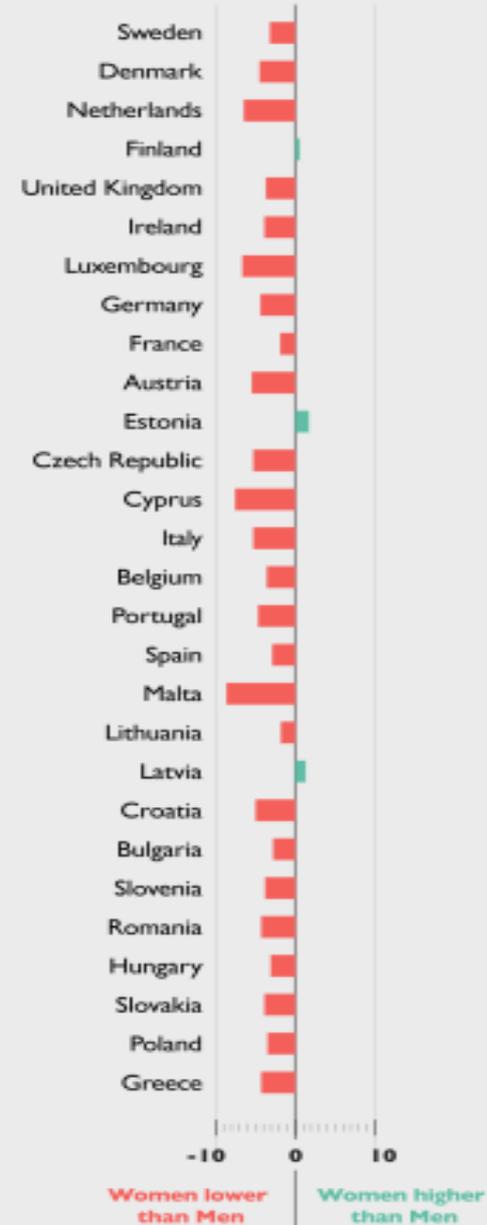
Greece and the majority of CEECs are at the bottom - much greater untapped potentials of active ageing among older people!

Overall Active Ageing Index

The results across EU28 countries



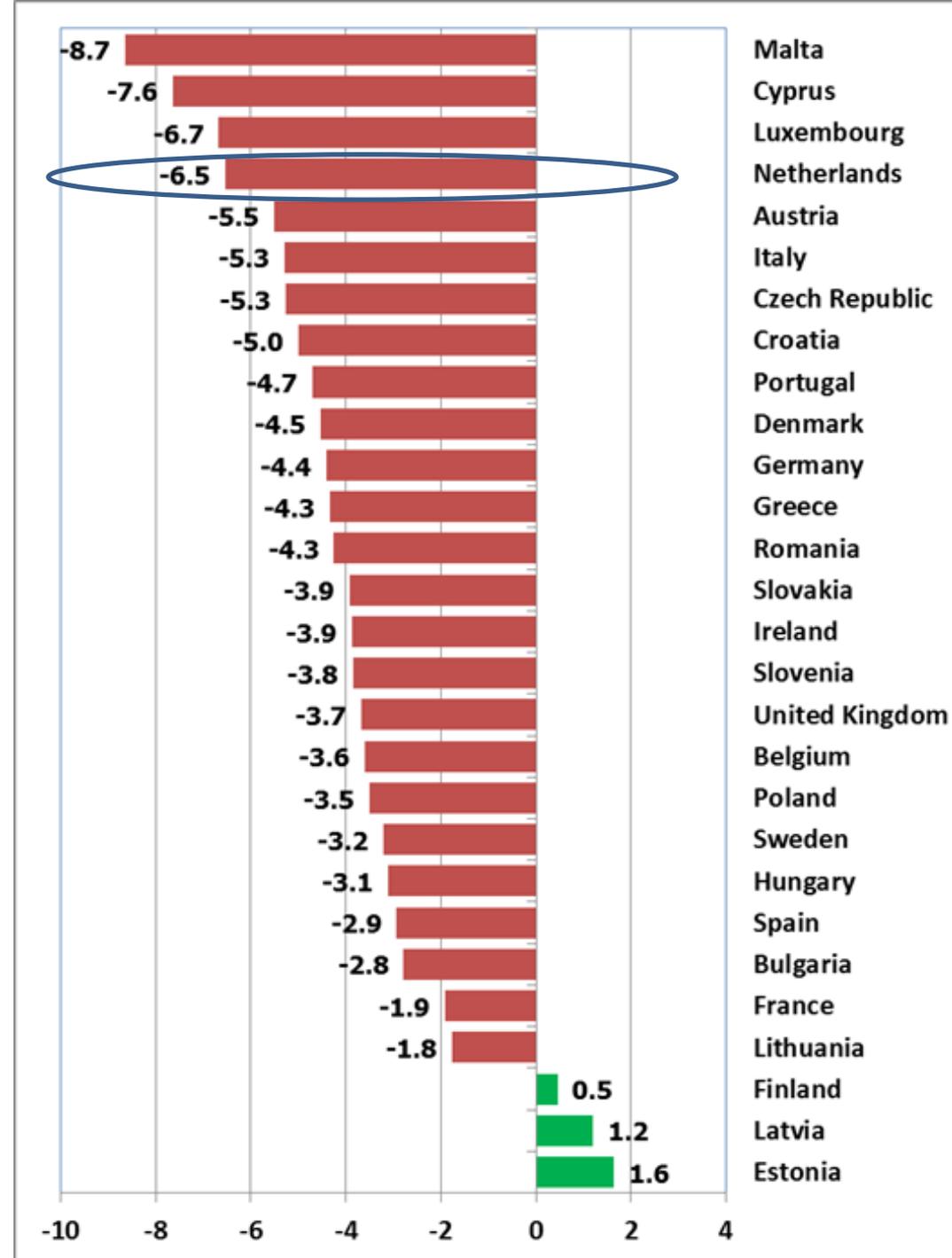
Gender gap



Overall AAI for 2012 – gender disparity

Women fare worse than men in almost all countries, particularly in **Malta** and **Cyprus**, but also in **Luxembourg** and **the Netherlands**

Only two EU Member States, **Estonia** and **Latvia**, have better AAI results for women than for men, while gender differences are minimal in **Finland**.



2.2 Pair-wise comparison between the UK and the NL

OVERALL			Employment			Social participation			Independent living			Capacity for active ageing		
Country	Index	Rank	Country	Index	Rank	Country	Index	Rank	Country	Index	Rank	Country	Index	Rank
Sweden	44.8	1	Sweden	43.4	1	Ireland	25.2	1	Denmark	79.0	1	Sweden	69.2	1
Denmark	40.5	2	Estonia	39.7	2	Italy	24.1	2	Finland	79.0	2	Denmark	65.1	2
Netherlands	39.9	3	Denmark	35.8	3	Luxembourg	22.6	3	Netherlands	78.9	3	Luxembourg	63.6	3
Finland	39.6	4	United Kingdom	35.8	4	Sweden	22.6	4	Sweden	78.6	4	Netherlands	61.8	4
UK	39.2	5	Germany	34.4	5	France	22.4	5	Luxembourg	76.7	5	United Kingdom	61.3	5
Ireland	39.0	6	Netherlands	33.9	6	Netherlands	22.4	6	France	75.9	6	Finland	60.5	6
Luxembourg	35.9	7	Finland	33.7	7	Finland	22.4	7	Ireland	74.9	7	Belgium	60.3	7
Germany	35.9	8	Portugal	32.6	8	Austria	21.4	8	Germany	74.4	8	Ireland	60.0	8
France	35.7	9	Latvia	32.0	9	Belgium	20.4	9	Slovenia	74.2	9	France	59.1	9
Austria	35.2	10	Cyprus	31.4	10	Denmark	20.1	10	Austria	73.8	10	Austria	58.2	10
Estonia	34.8	11	Romania	31.0	11	United Kingdom	20.0	11	United Kingdom	73.7	11	Malta	57.1	11

- They have almost the same AAI (overall) and show almost the same capacity and enabling environment for AA, despite the fact that the NL is ranked higher than the UK in terms of GDP per capita – **money isn't everything!**
- The UK does better than the NL in the employment domain index, but falls short in the social participation domain – **lessons drawn from comparative experiences**
- Policy urgency to reduce **gender disparity** in the NL (as can be seen for the overall index as well as for the employment and the social participation domains)

European Year for **Active Ageing**
and **Solidarity between Generations 2012**



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Part 2

Changing the way we age!

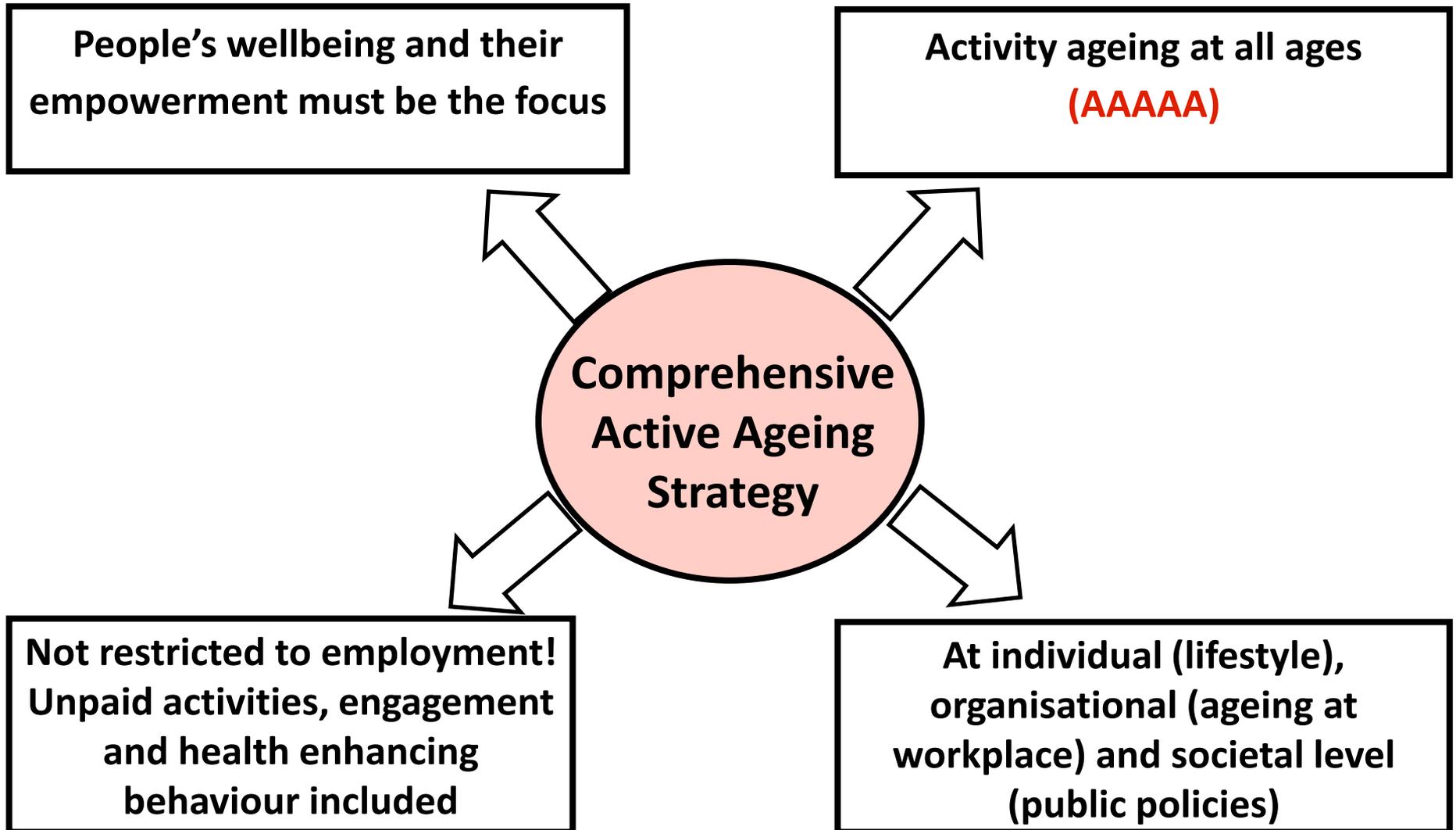
Key message from Part 2

Active ageing remains an aspiration even in the most advanced economies and welfare states – its realisation requires a comprehensive strategy, whose essential features include active-ageing-at-all-ages (AAAAA) and a specific focus on the **empowerment of older people.**

Sources:

Ervik and Lindén (2013) 'Introducing ageing policy: challenges, ideas and responses in Europe';
UNECE (2012a) 'Active Ageing'; UNECE (2012b) 'Active Ageing and Quality of Life In Old Age';
Walker (2002) 'A strategy for active ageing'; Walker (2009) 'The emergence and application of active ageing in Europe'; Walker and Maltby (2012) 'Active ageing: A strategic policy solution to demographic ageing in the EU';
WHO (2002) 'Active Ageing - A Policy Framework';
Zaidi et al. (2013) 'Active Ageing Index 2012: Concept, Methodology and Final Results'.

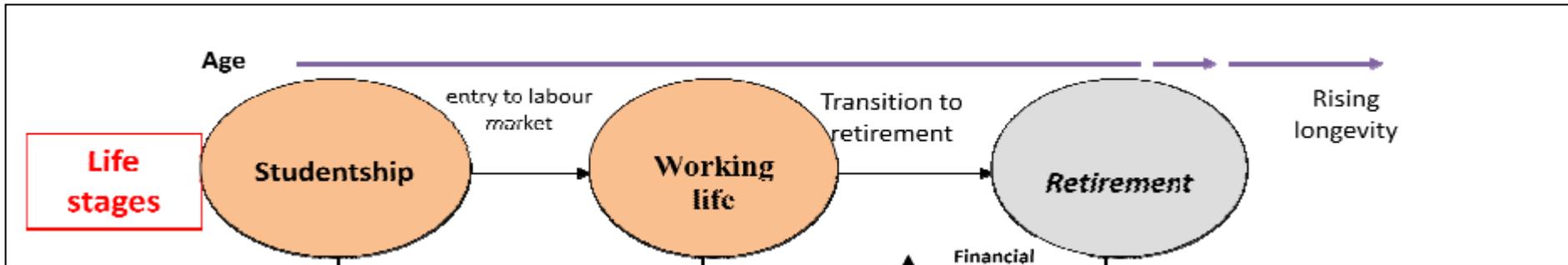
2.1 Essential features of a comprehensive active ageing strategy



Prerequisites: Enabling physical and social environment (e.g. WHO's AFC initiative; 'Rights and responsibilities' principles!)

2.2 How conventional life course approach needs adjustment?

Linkage of life stages and their outcomes: 'Studentship', 'Working life' and 'Retirement' (e.g. motherhood stage crucial for women's pension)



Adjusting the life course paradigm to suit the AAAAA strategy

Top-down
structural
changes
required at
the societal
level!

Education and training
Work and family
Community participation
Retirement and leisure
Health enhancement

Bottom-up
behaviour
changes by
individuals
are
essential!

Age

Under such a comprehensive AA policy settings, provisions for the elderly is seen as a big positive (not a burden), as they are a source to empower the aged to free themselves from dependency, insecurity and social isolation and be the net contributors to the society.

2.3 Why political rhetoric has failed to deliver a comprehensive policy response?

A joined-up approach is required for the AAAAA strategy:

.... by forming partnership between individuals, organisations and policymakers in which the state level initiatives and removal of barriers/disincentives meet with reinforcing positive responses from the individuals and their families and communities;

.... by joined-up initiatives in different areas of policymaking (labour market; social protection; health and social care; etc) – at the moment, they operate in silos and thus miss out on synergies and in reaping desired outcomes.

2.4 What additional evidence required?

1. What policies and strategies can be identified by comparing policy regimes and their outcomes?

.... What innovative social policies and contexts can be identified from the comparative analysis that offer mutual learning?

2. How the benefits of the AAAAA strategy are made available to all on equal basis?

.... What AA policies required for those who have physical and mental limitations?

.... How the benefits of the AA strategy can be shared, not meant just for the elites (better educated and more resourceful)?

2.4 What additional evidence required?

3. How contribution of older people in non-market unpaid activities could be promoted and highlighted?

.... What best ways to compare economic production (through employment) with the social production (through care provision) of older people?

Thank you

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