

Age-related leadership.

An international comparison among managers' attitudes and behaviors towards age and ageing in four European countries

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Contents

- Relevance and aims of the research
- Theoretical background
- Individualised age-related leadership
- Empirical research
- Open questions

Relevance and aims

Age-related leadership, a Grundtvig learning partnership:

- The project aims at developing an intercultural workshop and training concept addressed to managers in order to improve their knowledge and competencies in leading aging employees.
- The partnership aims to arise awareness about the demographic ageing issue as well as to improve their knowledge and competencies about individual aging processes. The workshop development is based on an intercultural analysis of age-related leadership and cultural characteristics within the involved countries (Italy, Finland, Germany, Switzerland).

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Education and Culture DG

Lifelong Learning Programme

Relevance

- ***Age-related leadership*** is known as the ***only highly significant*** factor to enhance the work ability of employees aged between 51 and 62 (Tuomi et al., 1997; Ilmarinen, 2002).
- Many applied, practical studies and best practice examples, but ***few interdisciplinary research on leadership and ageing*** workforces.
- ***Persistent stereotypes and myths of ageing in societies*** and cultures influence the attitudes and behaviors of leaders and colleagues in social and professional contexts (Kruse, 2010).

Relevance: country-specific facts on ageing

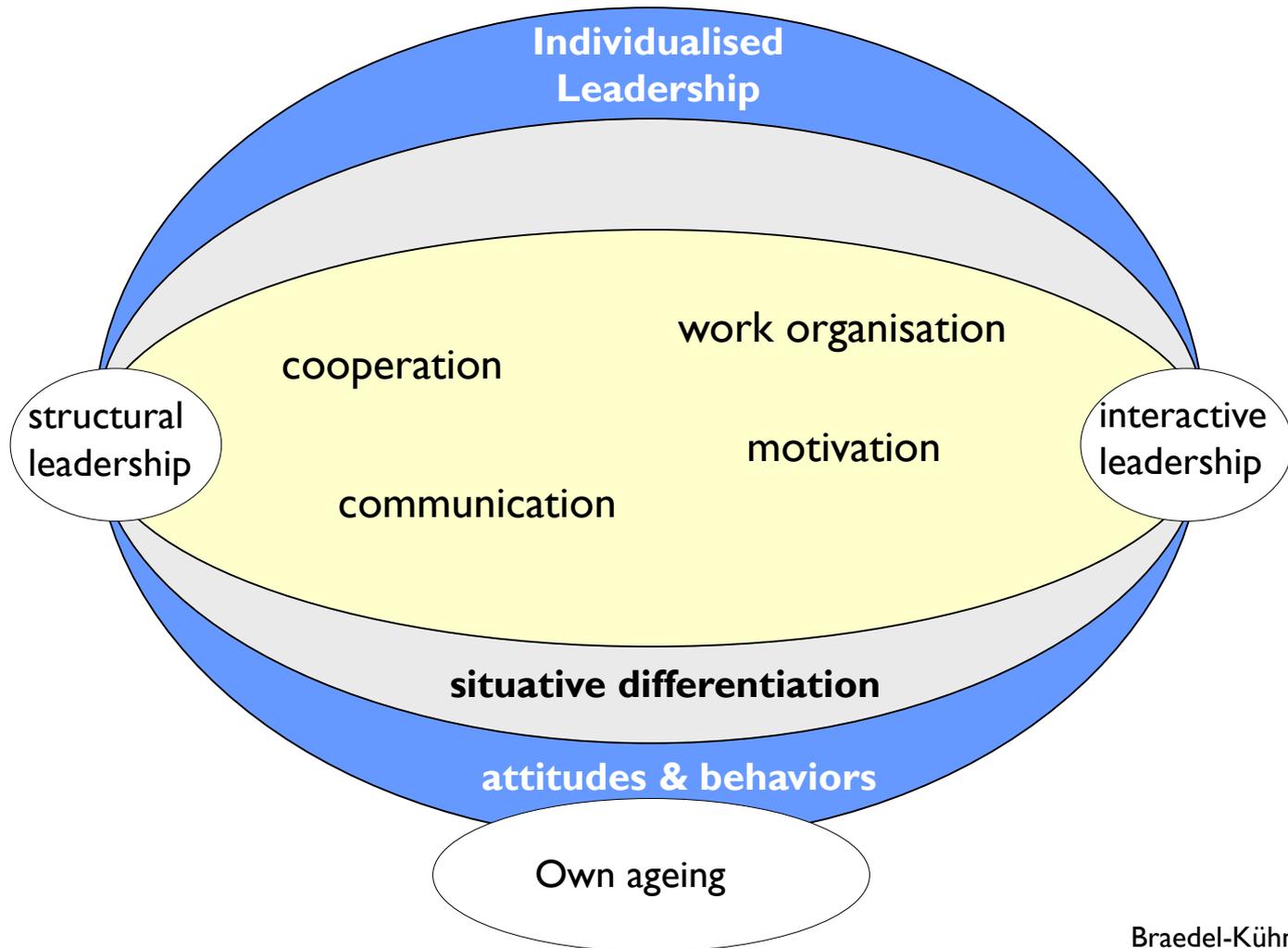
	Germany	Finland	Switzerland	Italy	EU27
Projected old age dependency ratio % time: 2015 / 2030 *	33 / 47	31 / 43	27 /38	33 / 41	28 / 38
Official retirement age 2012 (♂/♀)	67	63 - 68	65 / 64	66 / 62	N/A
Employment rate of 55-64 yrs. Total (♂/♀) 2011 * (2012 Q1 for Italy)	60 (67 / 53)	57 (57 / 57)	67 (79 / 60)	38(48 / 28)	47 (55 / 40)
Average exit age from the labour market Total (♂/♀) 2009 *	62 (63 / 62)	62 (62 / 61)	64 (65 / 62)	60 (61 / 59)	61 (62 / 61)
"Up to what age you recon to be able to continue in your current job?" ~ Total (♂/♀)	63,3	62,5	64 / 65	64	61,7
"Have you wittnesed / experienced discrimination due to high age at work place or during recruitment?" % ~	11 / 7	16 / 5	missing/ 22	missing/ 21	15 / 6
"At what age individuals are considered as 'old'?" ~	60	65	missing	67,6	64
"Is the general opinion about 55 + citizens positive / negative ?" ~	68 / 19	81 / 16	missing	67 / 18	61 / 28

Theoretical background

Social closure theory and the exclusion/inclusion debate:

- Theory of closure (Weber et al. 1978): ***open and closed relationships***.
- Interactive analysis of ***relations of dominance or power*** (Parkin, 1979; Murphy, 1986, 1988).
- ***Inclusion and exclusion*** in society (Luhmann, 2005).
- Inclusion and exclusion in ***organizations*** (Nassehi, 2006).
- ***Processes*** of exclusion and inclusion (Castel, 2008).
- New ***social structural segmentation*** (Böhnisch and Schröter, 2004).

Theoretical background: Individualised age-related leadership



Theoretical background

The main social dimensions of *individualised age-related leadership* are:

1. Attitudes towards the leadership of older or ageing employees,
2. Behavior with respect to leading older or ageing employees,
3. Perception of one's own ageing and the
4. Perception of older employees and their work ability

(cf. Braedel-Kühner 2005, Braedel-Kühner & van Elst 2012).

Empirical research

Quantitative research :

Online **IAF questionnaire** (Braedel-Kühner, 2005; Eberhardt & Meyer, 2011)

- 2005 Germany (n=275),
- 2009 Germany (n=114) and Switzerland (275)
- 2012 Finland (145), Germany (239), Italy (96)

Exploratory quantitative research

- Multivariate analysis: exploratory ***principle component analysis*** for each of the four social dimensions

Qualitative research

- Partly standardized guideline interviews and narrative interviews
- Development of codes and sub-codes based on the results of the principle component analysis
- Qualitative content analysis (Mayring, 2010)

Topics of individualized age-related leadership

Components/ dimensions	Attitude	Behaviour
Employability	X	X
Individualised age-related leadership	X	X
Leading older employees	X	X
Early retirement	X	X

Empirical research

Quantitative research :

N = 275 Swiss leaders, N = 239 German leaders, N = 145 Finnish leaders and N = 96 Italian leaders completed the questionnaire;

age mean = 49.5 years

Gender:

42.2 % female and 57.3 % male

Duration of employment:

Average 8 years

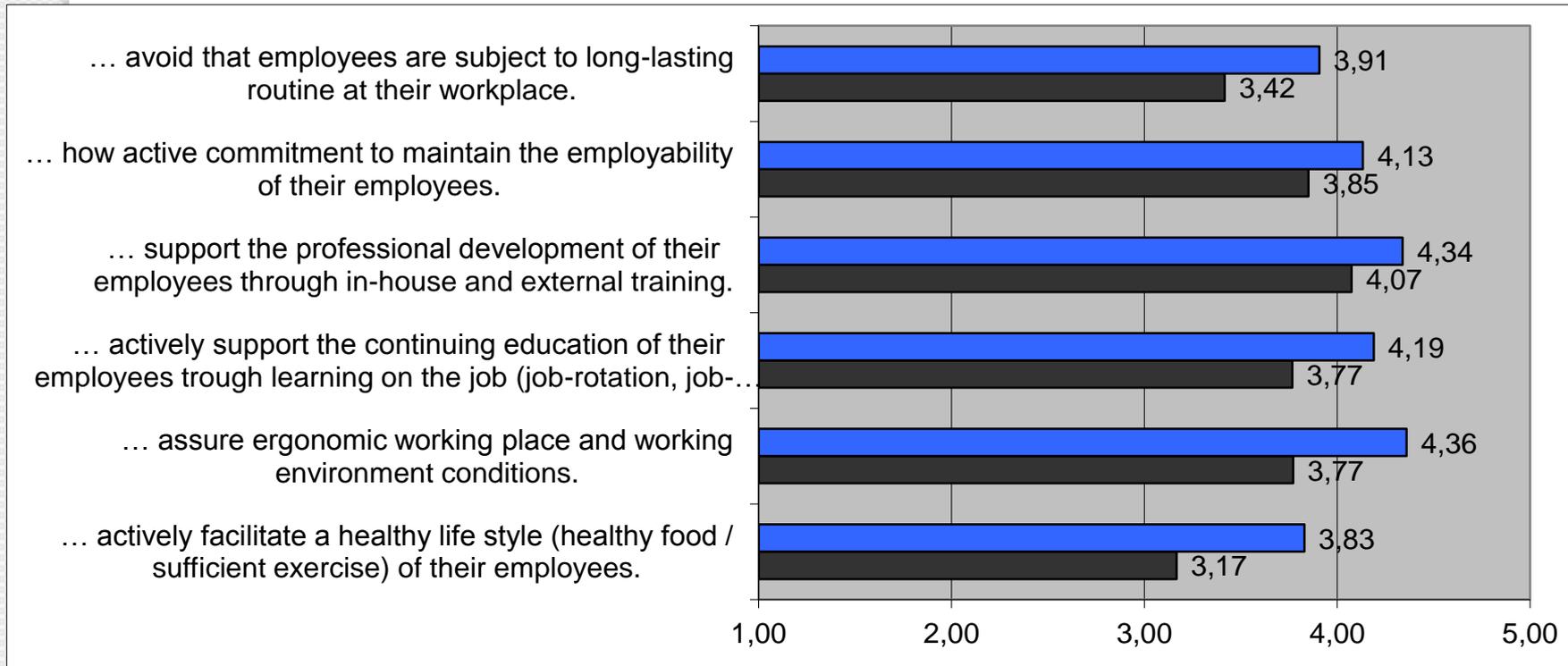
52.5% < 10 years, 22.8 % 11-20 years, 24.7% > 20 years

Management position:

51% middle management, 23% top management, 21% lower management, 5% other positions

5% Micro-enterprise, 13% Small-scale enterprise, 20% Medium-scale enterprise, 61% Large-scale enterprise

Attitude and behaviour: Component: employability

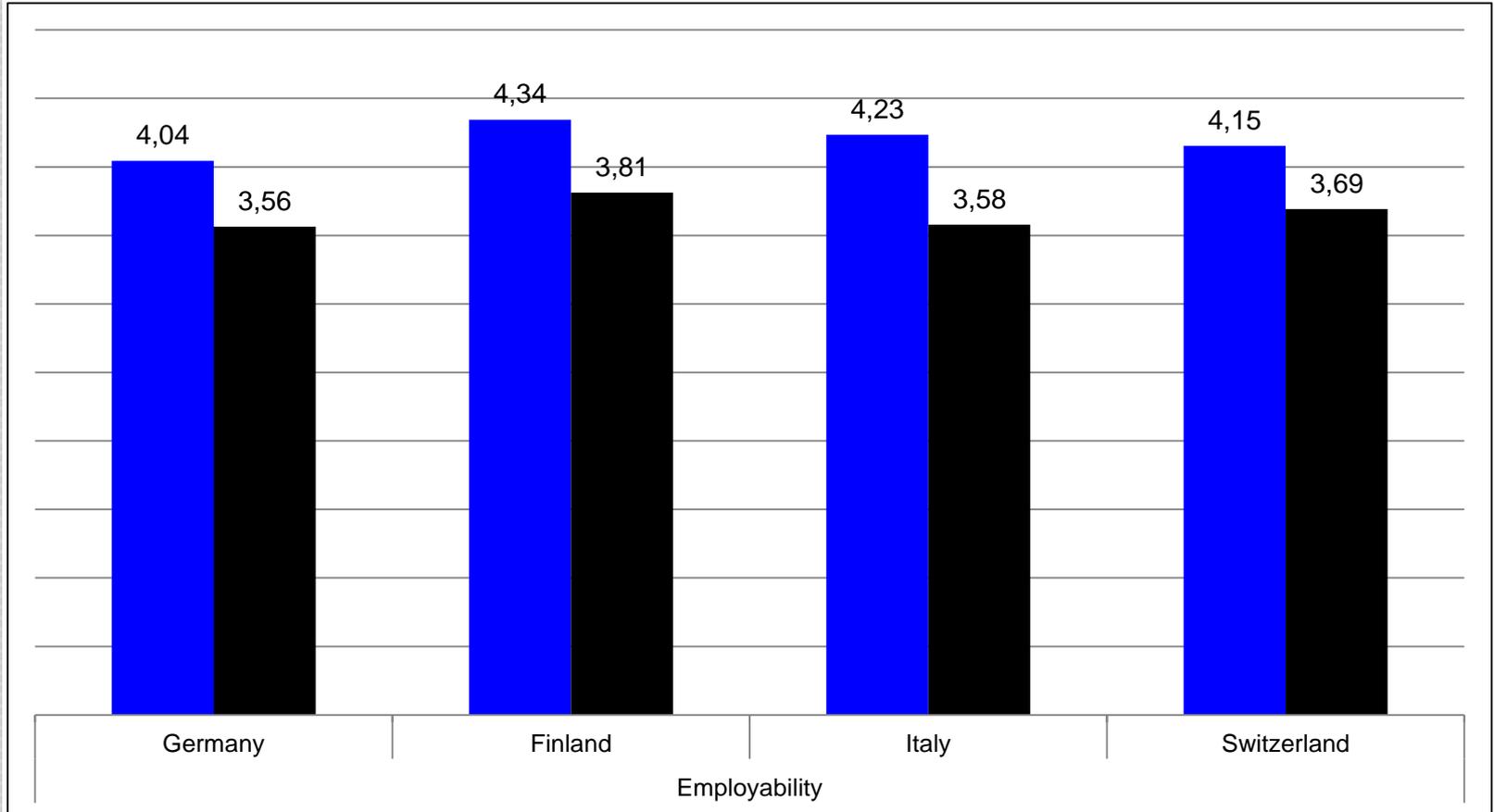


Legend Cronbach α

■ Attitude	.801
■ Behaviour	.807

1 = absolute disagreement / does not apply at all
5 = absolute agreement / applies completely

Attitude and behaviour: Component: employability

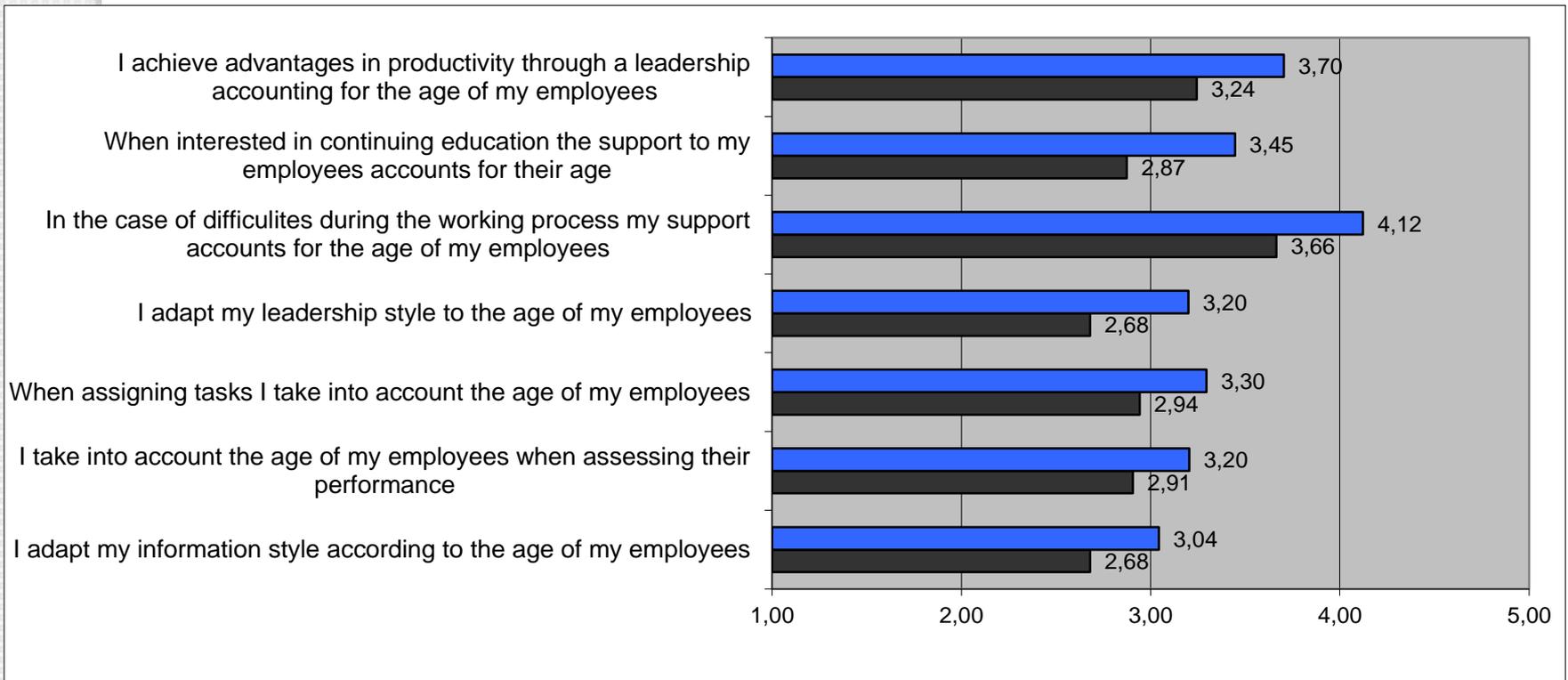


Legend Cronbach α
■ Attitude .729
■ Behaviour

1 = absolute disagreement / does not apply at all
5 = absolute agreement / applies completely

Attitude and behaviour:

Component: individualized age-related leadership

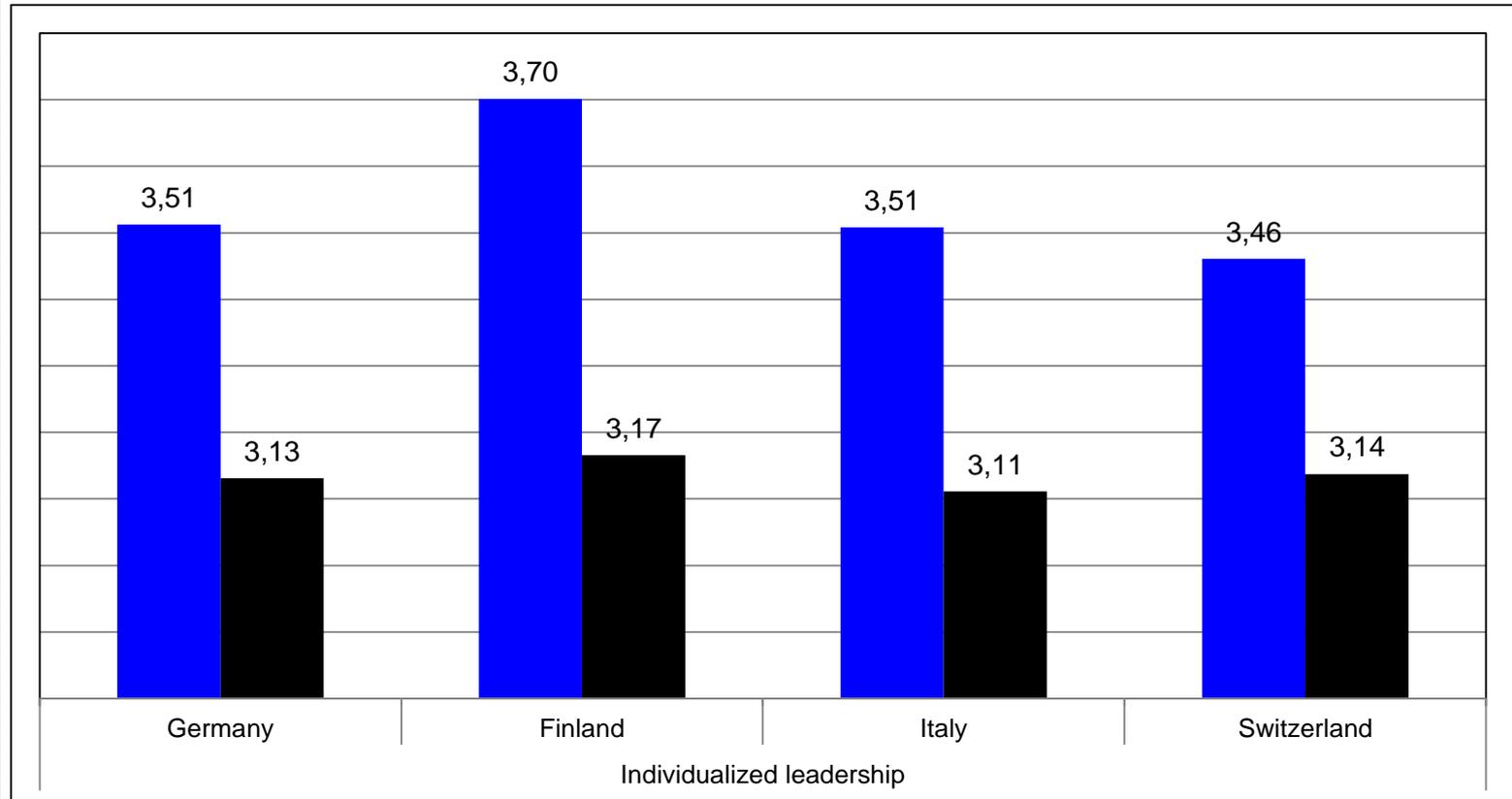


Legend Cronbach α

■ Attitude	.808
■ Behaviour	.814

1 = absolute disagreement / does not apply at all
 5 = absolute agreement / applies completely

Attitude and behaviour: Component: individualized age-related leadership

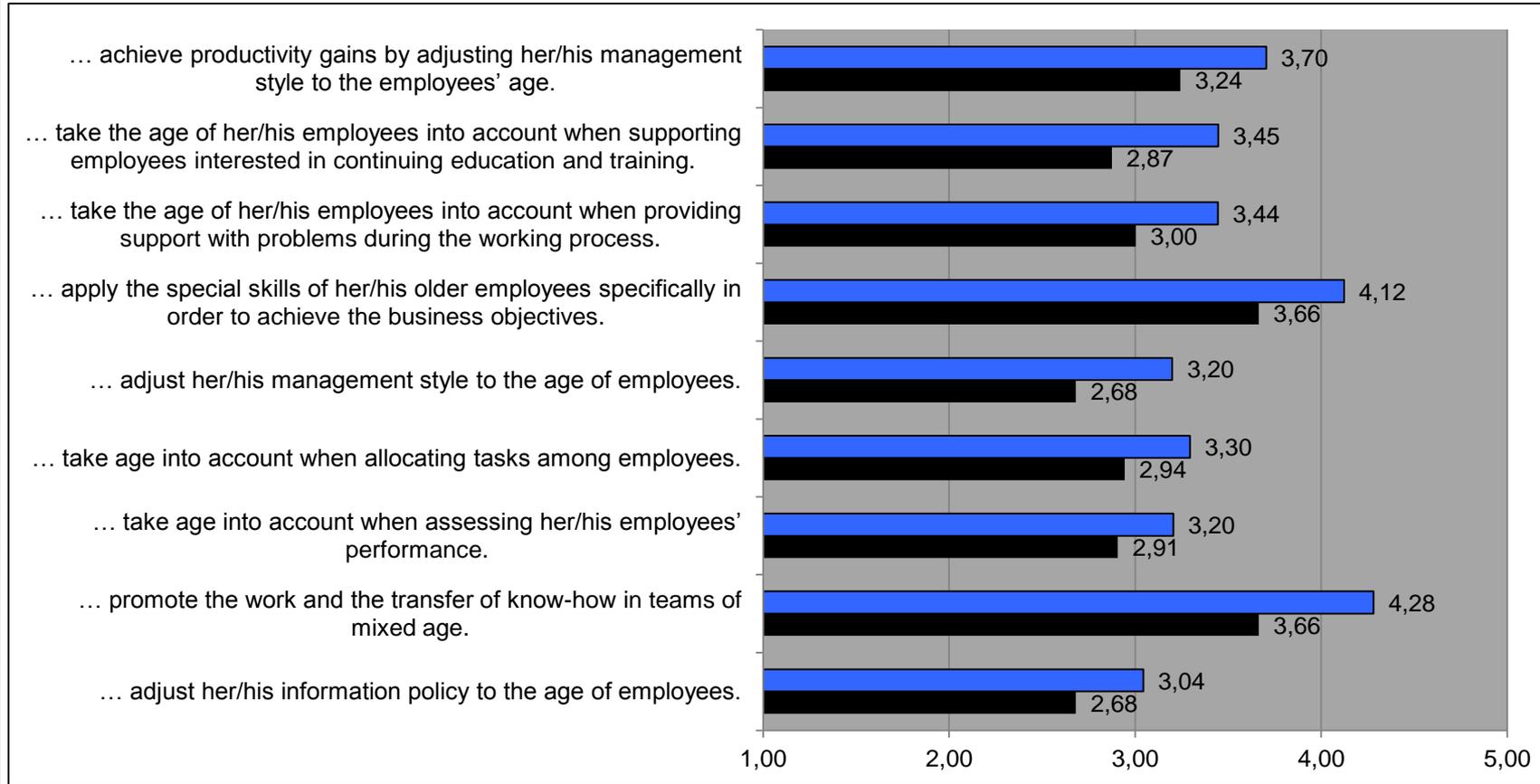


Legend Cronbach α
■ Attitude .818
■ Behaviour

1 = absolute disagreement / does not apply at all
5 = absolute agreement / applies completely

Attitude and behaviour:

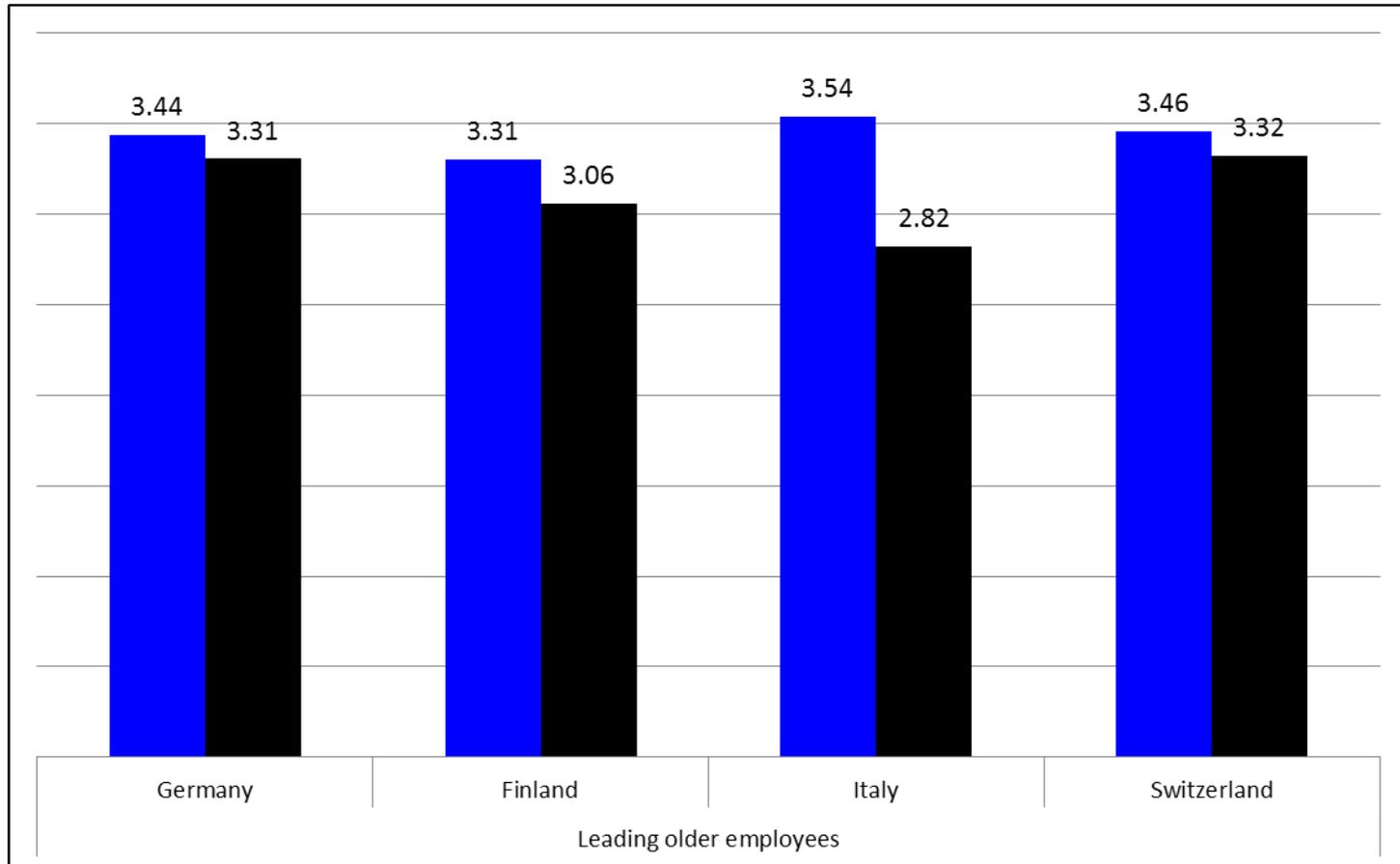
Component: leading older employees



Legend	Cronbach α
■ Attitude	.839
■ Behaviour	.831

1 = absolute disagreement / does not apply at all
 5 = absolute agreement / applies completely

Attitude and behaviour: Component: leading older employees



Legend Cronbach α
■ Attitude .661
■ Behaviour

1 = absolute disagreement / does not apply at all
5 = absolute agreement / applies completely

Attitude and behaviour: Component: early retirement

... apply the special skills of her/his older employees specifically in order to achieve the business objectives.

... motivate her/his older employees specifically to make use of existing offers for further education.

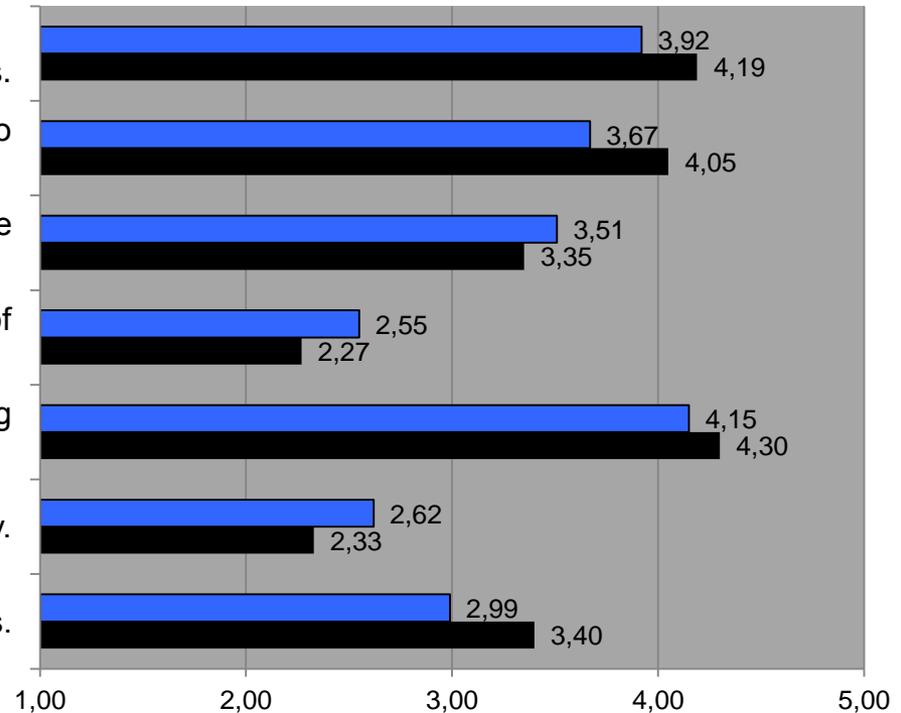
... dismiss older employees more frequently because their wage/labour value ratio is relatively poor.

... use early retirement as a socially acceptable form of restructuring.

... actively support her/his older employees in adapting to new situations and technologies.

... actively support older employees in retiring early.

... hire older employees.



Legend Cronbach α

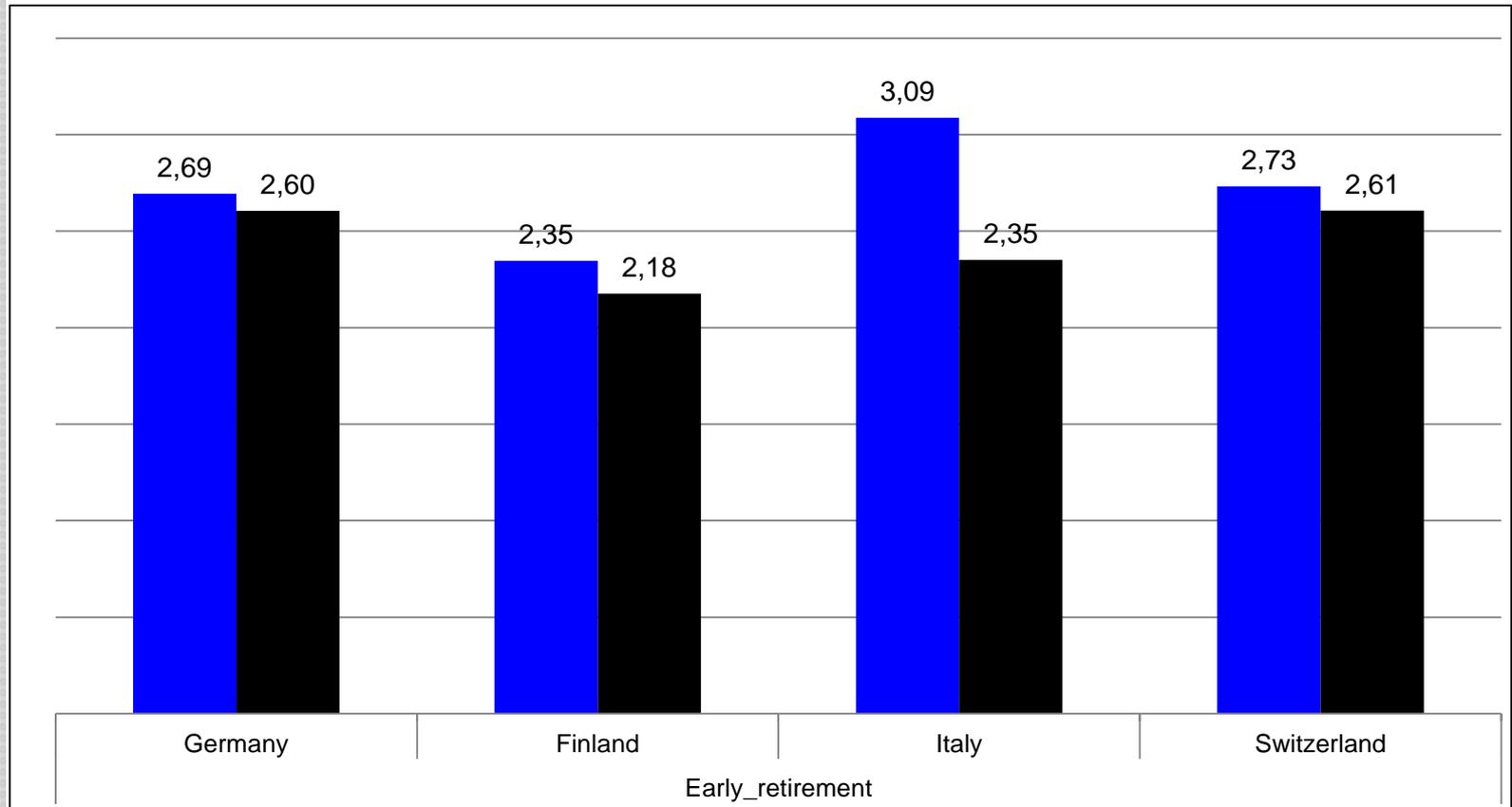
■ Attitude .434

■ Behaviour .483

1 = absolute disagreement / does not apply at all

5 = absolute agreement / applies completely

Attitude and behaviour: Component: early retirement



Legend Cronbach α
■ Attitude .707
■ Behaviour

1 = absolute disagreement / does not apply at all
5 = absolute agreement / applies completely

Open Questions

Methods: is it meaningful to continue with independent PCA for each country?

Starting from these data:

How do deepen the factors (culture, political or company specific) from which these differences arise ?

How to use these results to develop targeted and effective training concepts to raise leaders and managers awareness about leading an age diverse workforce.

Do you want to participate in the pilot workshop?

11.-12. of April 2012 at Karlshochschule, Germany, please ask us!

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