



## GSA 65th Annual Scientific Meeting

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Location: Room 15A (San Diego Convention Center)

Time of Presentation: Nov 17 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM

Session Code: Life Course and Developmental Change

### National Variation in Cognitive Life Cycle Development

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After attending this session participants will be able to know how national level factors can be important in determining cognitive changes from the teens to the fifties.

After attending this session participants will be able to better understand the possible challenges stemming from population aging that contribute to a country's development of cognitive functioning over time.

Cognitive abilities are key determinants of productivity and well-being. This study highlights the importance of considering also national (and not only individual) influences on cognitive skill trajectories over the life course. We focus on the cognitive performance of the nationally representative cohorts born between 1944 and 1952 in eight countries: Belgium, England, France, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the United States. The cohorts are tested in their teens (with standardized tests from the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA)) and again when they are in their fifties (with harmonized tests from ELSA, HRS, JSTAR, and SHARE surveys). The results show substantial changes in the rank-ordering of the countries over this 40-year period. For instance, Sweden and the USA are in a better ranking position at older ages compared to their performance in their teenage years, while Japan worsens its relative position in the country ranking.

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