

# **SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL SKILLS**

What education leaders need to know



**WORLD BANK GROUP**

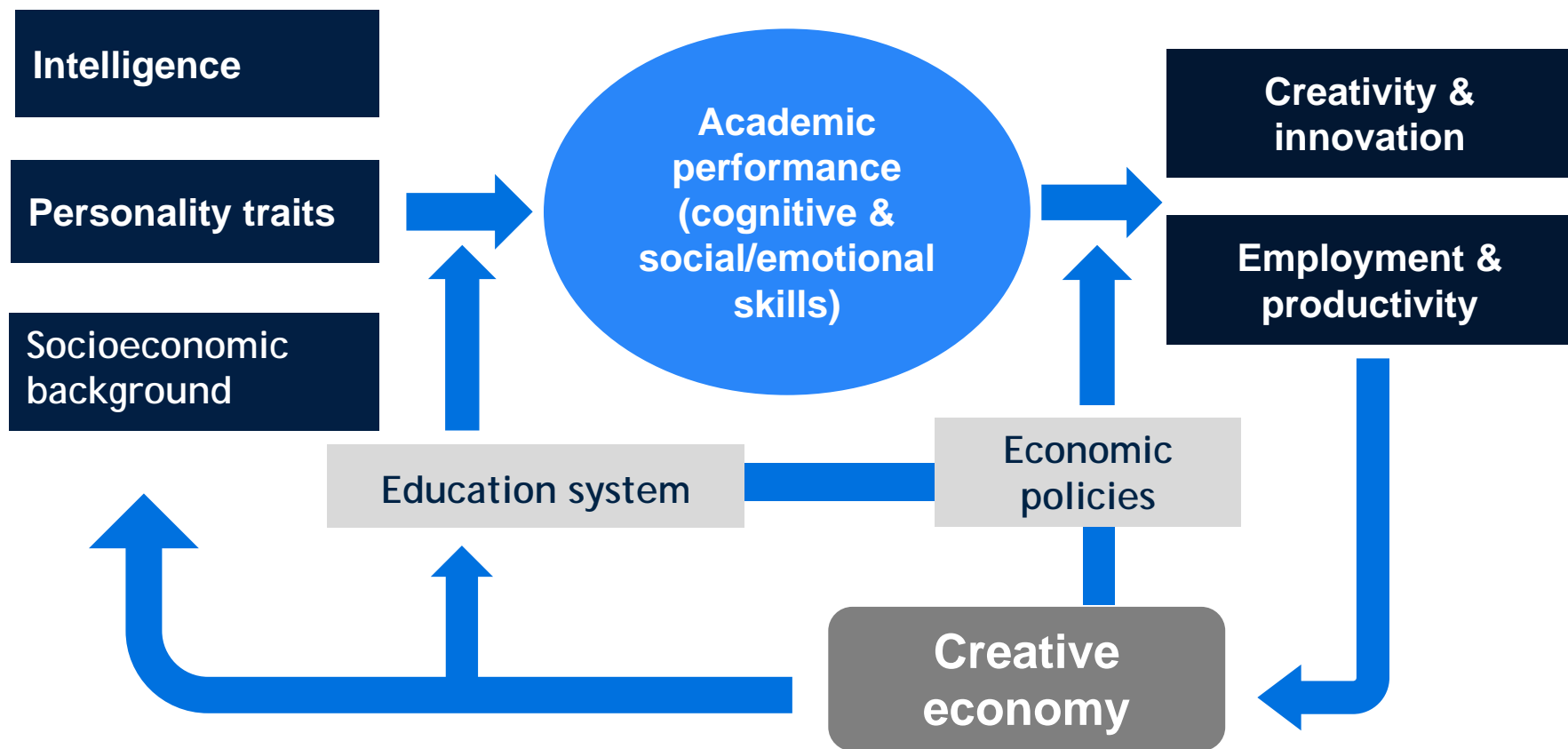
**Halsey Rogers**

Lead Economist  
Education

Education Innovations for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills  
Bishkek, June 2015

## Conceptual framework

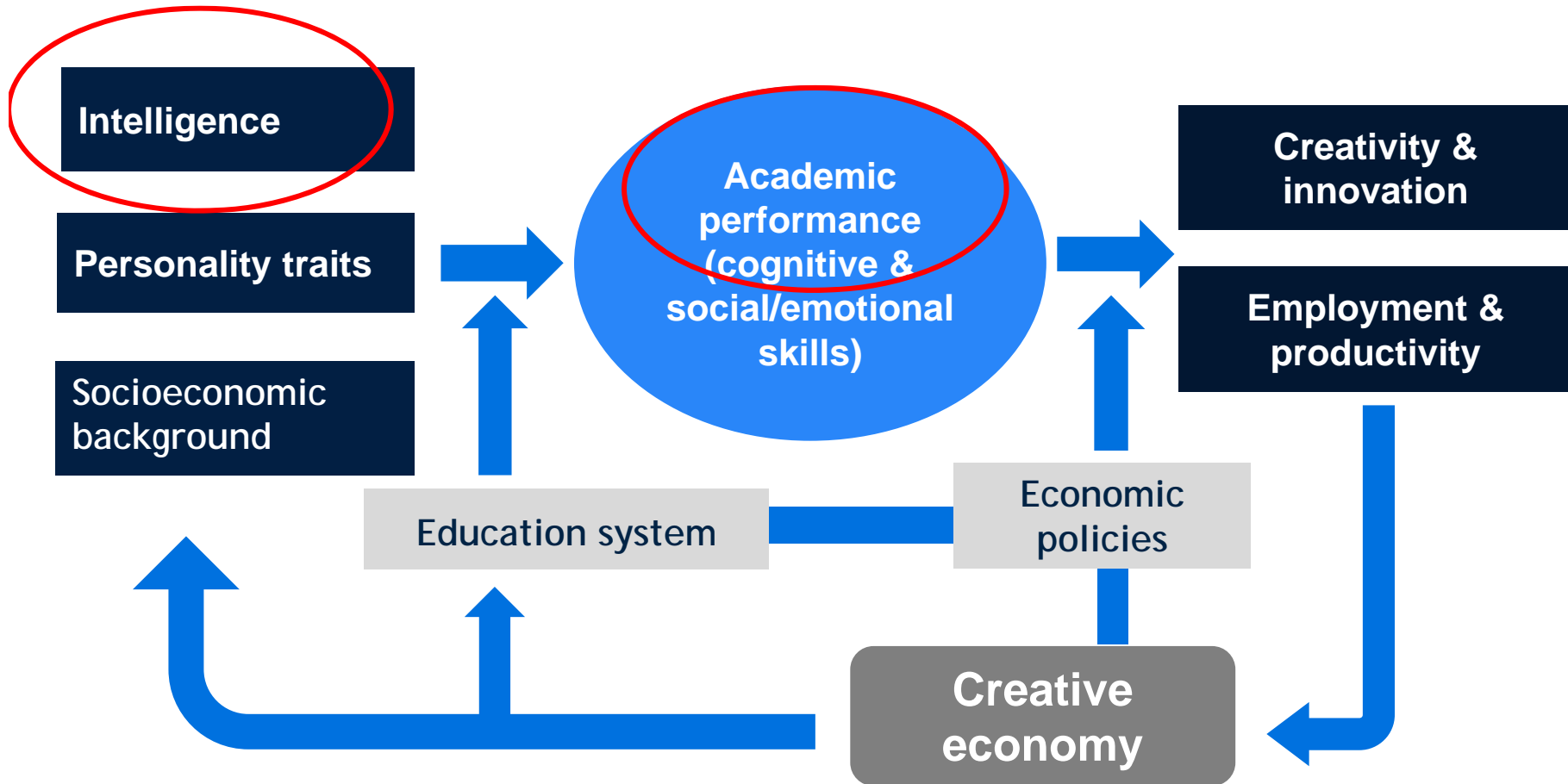
Building a creative economy through education



Source: Elizabeth King and Halsey Rogers, *Intelligence, personality, and creativity: Unleashing the power of intelligence and personality traits to build a creative and innovative economy* (World Bank, 2015)

# Traditional focus has been on intelligence (or initial cognitive ability) & cognitive skills

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Source: King and Rogers (2015)

# Social & emotional skills: What are they?

## Core idea:

Skills that aren't measurable through traditional cognitive-skill assessments

Also known as **non-cognitive** skills or **soft** skills or **personality** skills

Overlap with **transversal** skills and **core** skills

*Examples:* self-control, persistence, teamwork skills

## Challenges

Measurement challenges: self-report, experiment, behavioral observation

Research challenges: establishing predictive power

Policy challenges: how to build these skills

## Many others also grappling with these challenges; e.g.,

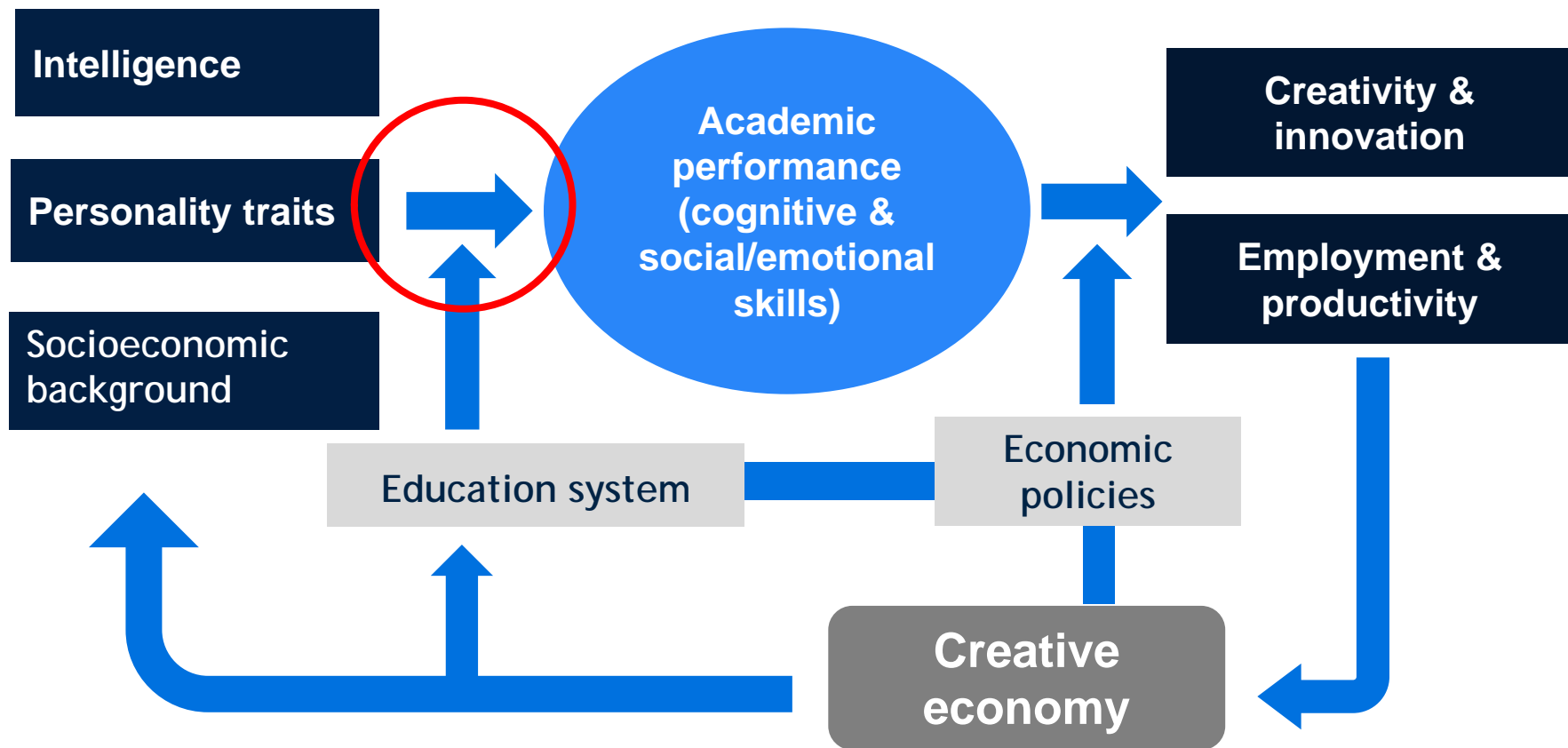
OECD and UNESCO-Bangkok

Governments (including in this region)

Social and emotional skills: What education leaders need to know

# Personality traits determine academic performance & skill formation

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Source: King and Rogers (2015)

# Personality traits determine academic performance & skill formation

## Examples of personality traits: The “Big Five”

Openness to experience

Conscientiousness/perseverance

Extraversion

Agreeableness

Emotional stability

## These matter for success in schooling (beyond intelligence, SES)

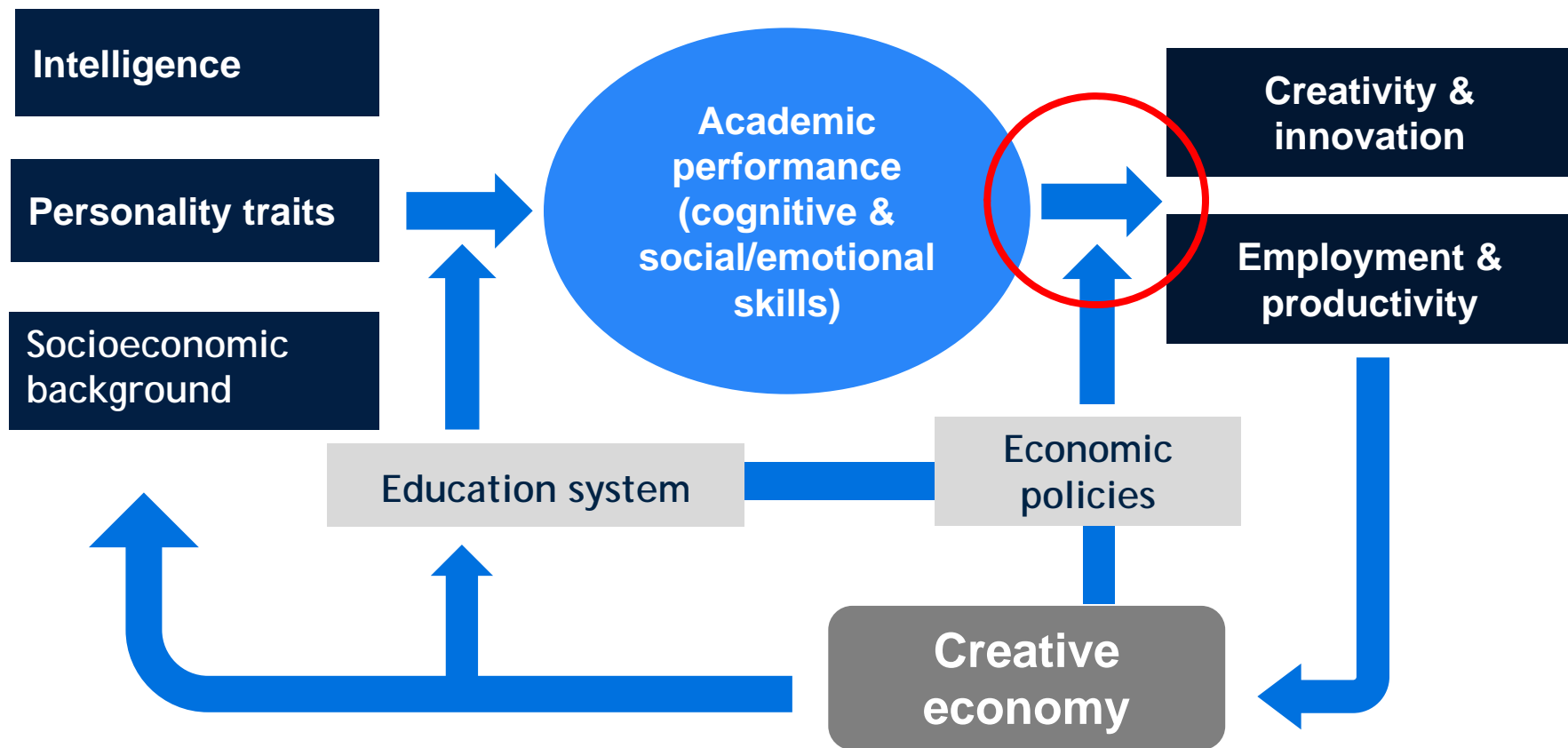
Conscientiousness is one example

Overall, can explain outcomes as well as intelligence does (Heckman et al.)

Social and emotional skills: What education leaders need to know

# Social/emotional skills determine economic outcomes

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Source: King and Rogers (2015)

# Social/emotional skills determine economic outcomes

## Social & emotional skills

Build on personality traits, but with emphasis on malleability

## SE skills are an important determinant of economic outcomes

Indirect effect, through cognitive skills

Direct effect on earnings, for example through extraversion and conscientiousness

## Both cognitive and non-cognitive skills contribute to creativity

What you know matters for creativity → cognitive skills are important

But non-cognitive skills likely matter too – e.g., openness to experience, persistence

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# The education system can promote social/emotional skills

## Early childhood development (ECD)

Conscientiousness and self-control develop early in life

Long-term effects on non-cognitive skills (e.g., Perry Preschool experiment)

## Curriculum and teaching

Effective programs targeted at social and emotional learning (e.g., Seattle Social Development program in primary, cognitive-behavioral intervention for at-risk teens)

Programs to recruit and develop teachers with strong non-cognitive skills

## Education system structure

Timing of vocational tracking

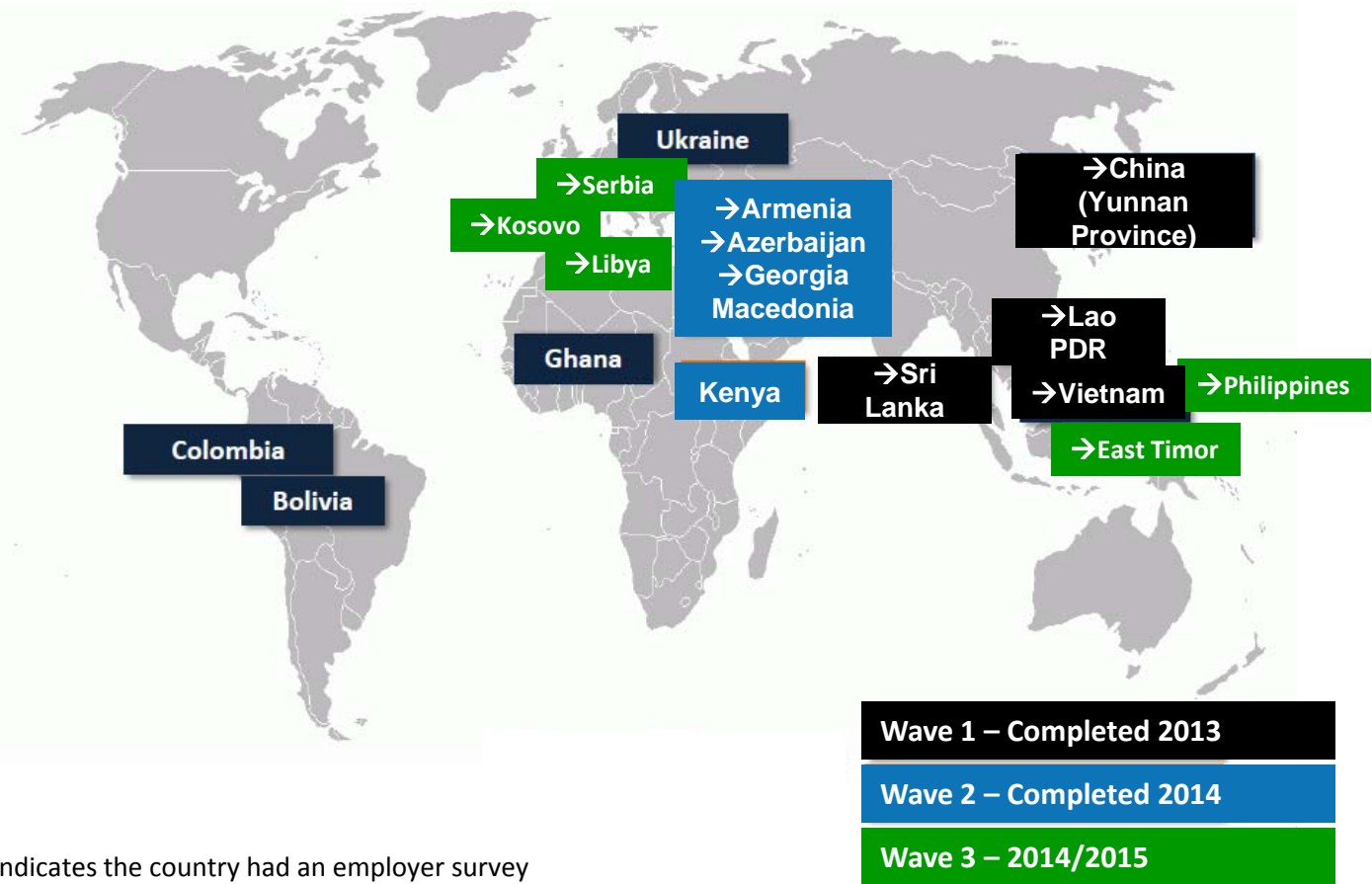
University admissions policies

## → Need to evaluate and measure

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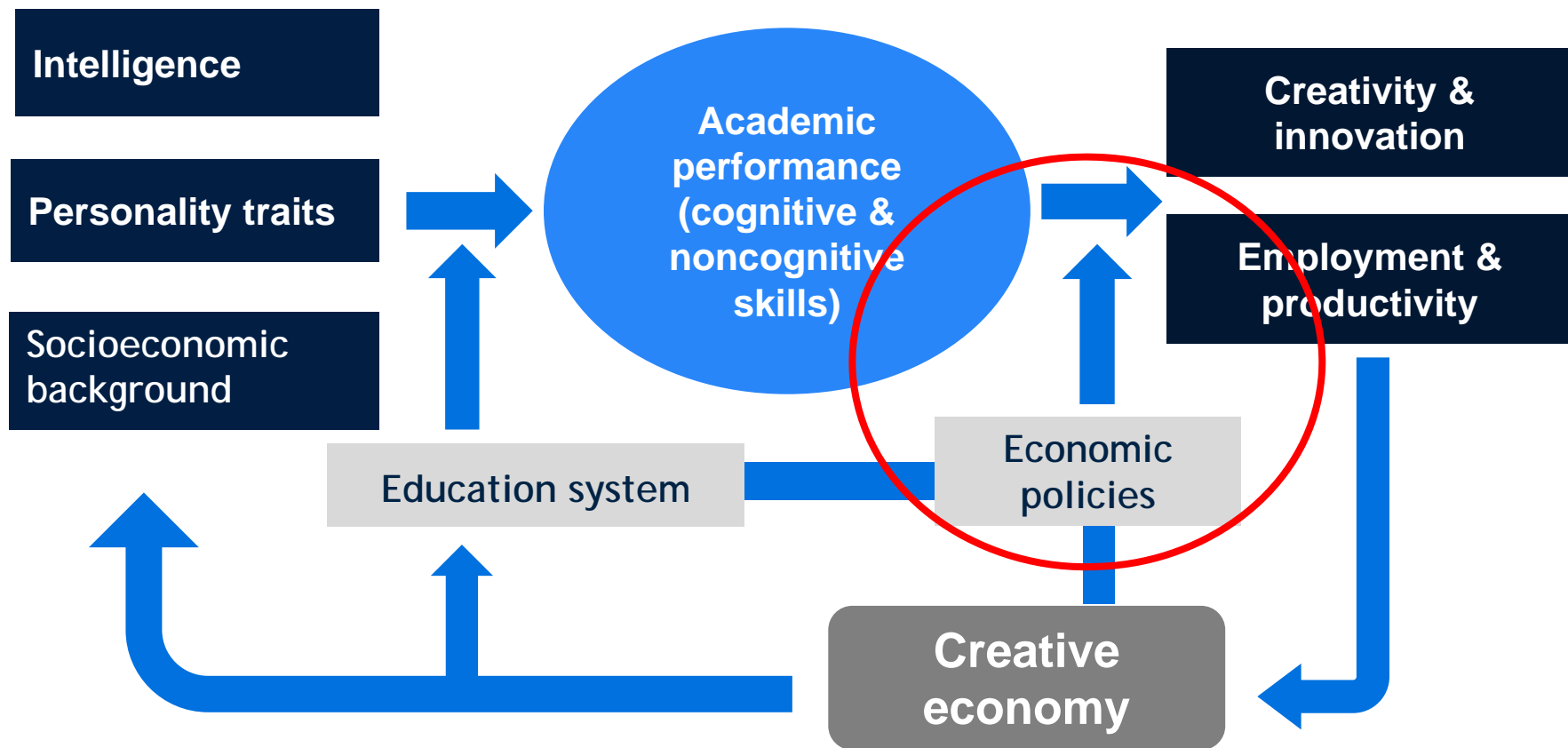
# What are the cognitive and social/emotional skills of adults? STEP skills measurement program

## 18 participating countries



# Economic policies can promote creative use of all skills

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Source: King and Rogers (2015)

# Country application to Korea

## Beyond cognitive skills to social/emotional skills and creativity

**Make formal-school learning more engaging and creative, e.g.:**

- Adopt curriculum and assessment reforms
- Improve teacher training

**Reform university admissions, e.g.:**

- Recognize that lasting change requires reorienting university admissions
- Use holistic admissions system to reduce costs and incentivize diverse skills

**Strengthen non-university pathways to job market , e.g.:**

- Create more attractive TVE (*meister* high schools, current reforms)

**Strengthen economic policies to make more creative use of skills, e.g.:**

- Promote competition in services sector, stimulate SMEs more efficiently
- Ensure that *everyone* (including women, youth) has full opportunity to use their skills

# Final word: How can this social/emotional lens guide innovation to promote 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills?

## **Social and emotional skills matter**

- Effects are both direct and indirect
- “Skills beget skills” (Heckman, OECD)

## **And they can be nurtured**

- Programs and practices can improve social & emotional skills (e.g., ECD, CBI)
- But we still need much more evidence on what works

## **Don't forget the basics**

- In many systems, students lack even most basic literacy/numeracy skills
- So make sure focus on social/emotional skills and creativity complements—and doesn't distract from—efforts to build these basic cognitive skills

## **And think about the costs of generating skills**

- Consider costs to families and students, not just to the public sector

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**Thank you!**

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