

# Dia Internacional da Mulher, 2004

INTERNACIONAL DO TRABALHO

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OIT / INTERNACIONAL

## O Escritório da OIT em Portugal associa-se à celebração do Dia Internacional da Mulher - 8 de Março

Deu agora meio dia; o sol é quente  
Beijando a urze triste dos outeiros.  
Nas ravinas do monte andam ceifeiros  
Na faina, alegres, desde o sol nascente.

Cantam as raparigas meigamente,  
Brilham os olhos negros, feiçeiros;  
E há perfis delicados e trigueiros  
Entre altas espigas d'ouro ardente.  
(...)  
Florbela Espanca

### FACTOS SOBRE As Mulheres no Trabalho

Hoje em dia, as mulheres representam mais de 40% da população activa mundial. Cerca de 70% das mulheres nos países desenvolvidos e 60% nos países em vias de desenvolvimento estão empregadas. Em todo o mundo, mais mulheres do que nunca obtêm habilitações de nível superior. Melhores oportunidades de emprego aumentaram a independência de muitas mulheres e resultaram num novo estatuto e papel junto das suas famílias e na sociedade.

Contudo, os progressos em três indicadores-chave, inter-relacionados, em termos de igualdade dos géneros, ainda não são os adequados: nomeadamente o "tecto de vidro" (mulheres em lugares administrativos de topo), o fosso dos salários entre os sexos, e o "chão pegajoso" (mulheres nos trabalhos mais mal remunerados). Quanto mais elevada a posição numa organização ou numa empresa, mais evidente se torna o fosso entre os sexos – as mulheres só ocupam cerca de 1% a 3% dos lugares executivos de topo nas maiores empresas. O papel fundamental do trabalho não-remunerado, em grande medida assegurado por mulheres, continua a não ser reconhecido. Os indicadores macroeconómicos continuam a ignorar a "economia da assistência à família" como algo de fundamental para os resultados económicos. Os mercados laborais em todos os países, tanto nas economias formais como informais, continuam a estar muito segregados por sexos. As Tendências Globais de Emprego (2003) da OIT mostram que as mulheres continuam a ter taxas de participação mais baixas no mercado de trabalho, maiores taxas de desemprego e diferenças significativas de remuneração na maioria das regiões.

Site:[http://www.ilo.org/public/portugue/region/eurpro/lisbon/html/portugal\\_dia\\_mulher\\_pt.htm](http://www.ilo.org/public/portugue/region/eurpro/lisbon/html/portugal_dia_mulher_pt.htm)

# GLOBAL EMPLOYMENT TRENDS FOR WOMEN

## 1. Overview

One of the most striking phenomena of recent times has been the increasing proportion of women in the labour force, enabling women in many regions to use their potential in the labour market and to achieve economic independence. Section 2 looks at the trends in female labour force participation. But does the fact that women increasingly enter the labour market really mean that the gap between male and female participation is closing? And does it mean that women who look for work are successful in finding it? If they do find work, what are the typical characteristics of female work compared to that of male counterparts?

An analysis of six additional labour market indicators (female unemployment rates, female youth unemployment rates, employment-to-population ratios, status of employment, employment by sector and wages/earnings) makes it clear that the questions asked cannot be answered with a definitive yes. More women work today than ever before: in 2003 out of the 2.8 billion people that had work, 1.1 billion were women (table 1.1). The share of women with work in total employment has risen slightly in the past ten years to just above 40 per cent. However, improved equality in terms of quantity of male and female workers has yet to result in real socioeconomic empowerment for women, an equitable distribution of household responsibilities, equal pay for work of equal value, and gender balance across all occupations. In short, true equality in the world of work is still out of reach.

### Is the labour force participation gap closing?

The labour force participation rate (LFPR) expresses the share of employed plus unemployed people in comparison with the working-age population. It gives an indication of how many people of working age are actively participating in the labour market. The gap between the LFPR for men and women has been decreasing in all regions during the past ten years. But apart from the transition economies (where 91 women are economically active per 100 men) and East Asia (with a proportion of 83 women per 100 men), all other regions still face a difference of fewer than 80 economically active women per 100 men. In the Middle East and North Africa region and also in South Asia for every 100 men in the labour force, only around 40 women are economically active (table 2.1).

Table 1.1  
Global labour market indicators, 1993 and 2003

	Female		Male		Total	
	1993	2003	1993	2003	1993	2003
Labour force (millions)	1,006	1,208	1,507	1,769	2,513	2,978
Employment (millions)	948	1,130	1,425	1,661	2,373	2,792
Unemployment (millions)	58.2	77.8	82.3	108.1	140.5	185.9
Labour force participation rate (%)	53.5	53.9	80.5	79.4	67.0	66.6
Employment-to-population ratio (%)	50.4	50.5	76.1	74.5	63.3	62.5
Unemployment rate (%)	5.8	6.4	5.5	6.1	5.6	6.2

Source: ILO, Global Employment Trends Model, 2003; see also ILO, *Global Employment Trends 2004*, Technical note.

### Do women who look for work find any?

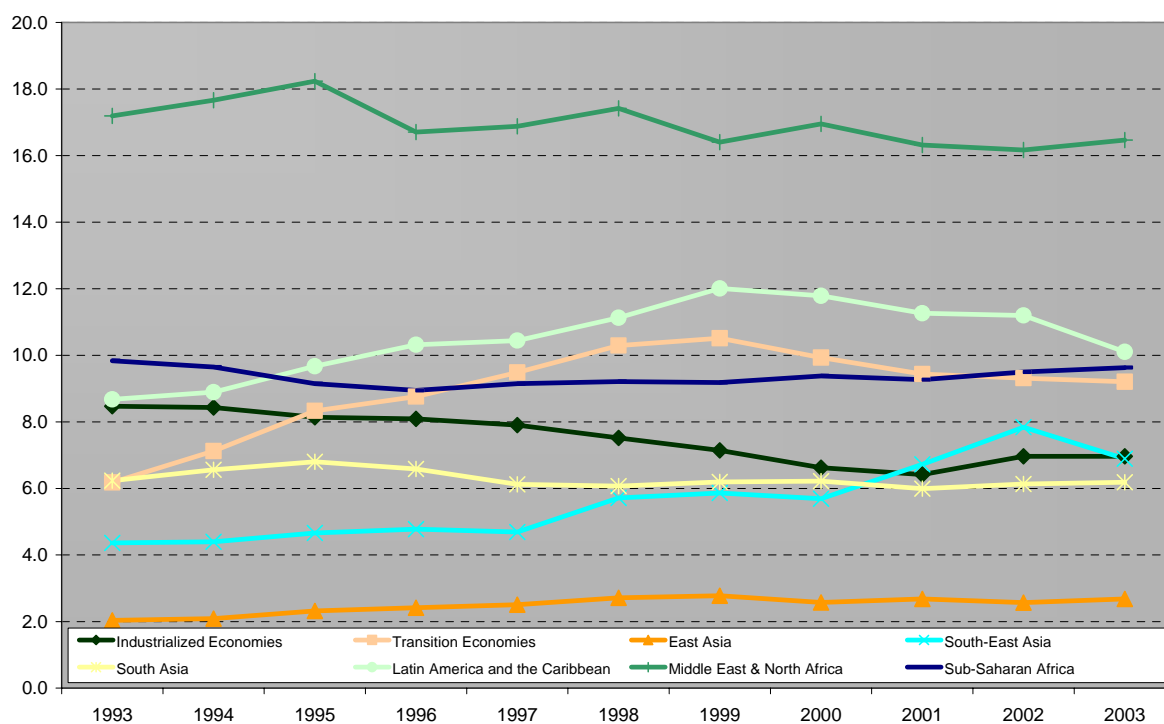
The female unemployment rate in 2003 was slightly higher than the male rate for the world as a whole (6.4 per cent for female, 6.1 per cent for male), leaving 77.8 million women who are willing to work and actively looking for work without employment. The picture is more dramatic in some regions of the world. The region that showed the greatest differential in rates was Latin America and the Caribbean with a difference of 3.4 percentage points and the Middle East and North Africa where the female unemployment rate was 6 percentage points higher than the male rate. Unemployment rates for women are lower than for men in sub-Saharan Africa (at a high level of around 10 per cent) and East Asia (at below 5 per cent).

Nor does the unemployment situation for women seem to have improved over the past ten years, with the exceptions of three regions - industrialized economies, the Middle East and North Africa and South Asia (figure 1.1). The majority of regions saw little or no change in female unemployment rates over the period 1993 to 2003. In South-East Asia the unemployment rate of women increased by more than 2 percentage points (from 4.7 per cent to 6.9 per cent).

The difficulty of finding work is even more drastic for young women (aged 15 to 24 years). Overall, 35.8 million young women are involuntarily without work. In all regions youth unemployment rates for both sexes are higher than adult unemployment rates. Again in all regions except East Asia and sub-Saharan Africa the regional female rate exceeds the male rate.

Employment-to-population ratios reflect the capacity of an economy to provide employment for the working-age population (generally 15 years and older). They can also be interpreted as an indication of how efficiently economies make use of the productive potential of their working-age population. In all regions of the world, employment-to-population ratios are much smaller for women than for men. The difference is devastating in the Middle East and North Africa where only two out of every ten women at working-age work (compared to seven out of ten for men). The situation is only slightly better in South Asia.

Figure 1.1  
Female unemployment rates, by region, 1993 to 2003



Source: ILO, Global Employment Trends Model, 2003; see also ILO, *Global Employment Trends 2004*, Technical note.

### What characterizes female work?

Women have a smaller likelihood of being in regular wage and salaried employment than men. Also, the female share of contributing family workers exceeds the male rate in almost all economies where data are available. In economies with a high share of agriculture, women work more often in this sector than men. Women's share of employment in the services sector also exceeds that of men. Additionally, women are more likely to earn less than men for the same type of work, even in traditionally female occupations.

The results of the analysis of the three indicators (status, sector and wages/earnings) underlines the fact that women are more likely to find employment in the informal economy than men, outside legal and regulatory frameworks, with little, if any, social security benefits and a high degree of vulnerability. (See box 4.1 for more information on the informal economy.)

As a consequence, women have a higher share in the number of working poor in the world – those people who work but do not earn enough to lift themselves and their families above the US \$1 a day poverty line. Out of the 550 million working poor in the world, an estimated 330 million are women – a share of 60 per cent.<sup>1</sup> Adding the 330 million female working poor to the 77.8 million women who are unemployed means that at least 400 million decent jobs would be needed to satisfy women's demand for decent work. It is probably safe to say that even this is a conservative estimate and if one were to address the issue of women who are involuntarily outside the labour force, the deficit of decent work opportunities for

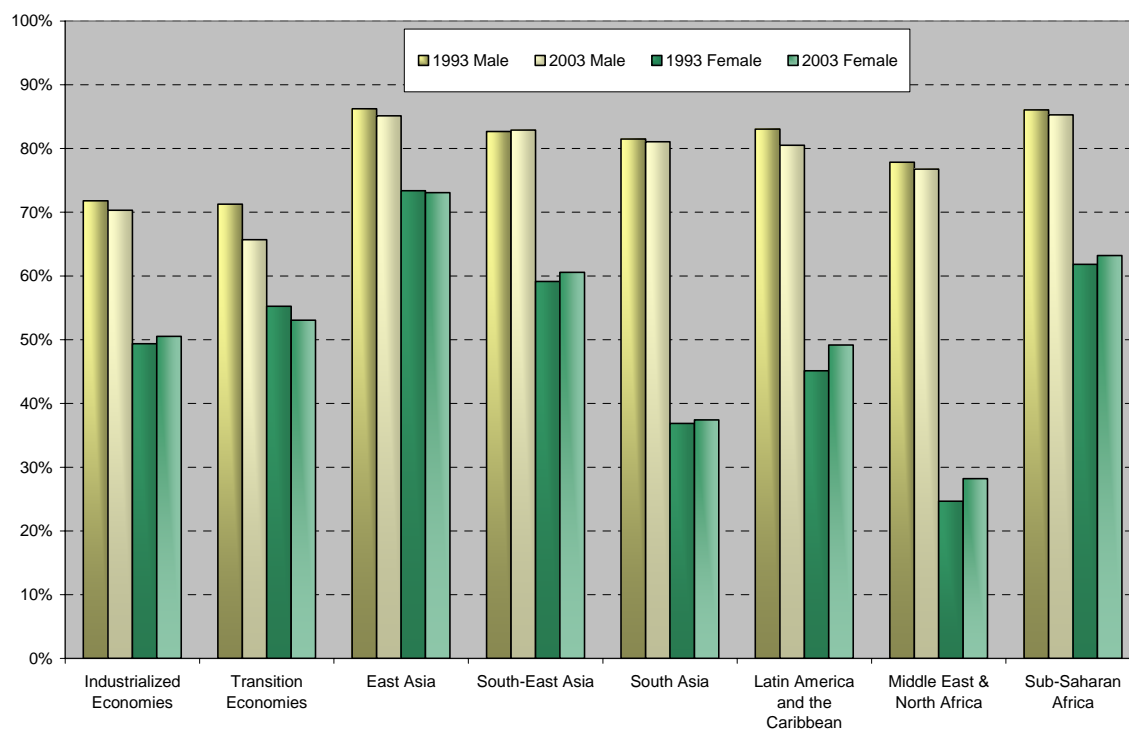
<sup>1</sup> The claim that 60 per cent of the total working poor are women is derived from a basic assumption that the distribution by sex of world poverty is approximately one-third men and two-thirds women. See, for example, UNDP, *Human Development Report 1995*. The 1995 UNDP report, in fact, placed the number at 70 per cent. It is important to note, however, that this so-called "feminization of poverty" has yet to be resolutely substantiated by the data and the assumption is not without its detractors. See also footnote 5.

women would be even greater. Creating adequate decent work for women is only possible if policy-makers not only place employment at the centre of social and economic policies but also recognize that women's problems in the world of work are even more substantial than men's. Unless progress is made to take women out of working poverty by creating employment opportunities to help them secure productive and remunerative work in conditions of freedom, security and human dignity and thereby giving women the chance to work themselves out of poverty, the UN Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of halving poverty by 2015 will not be reached in most regions in the world.

## 2. Trends in female labour force participation

The growing proportion of women in the labour force has been one of the most striking labour markets trends of recent times especially in the 1980s and to a lesser extent until today. Never before have so many women been economically active: the female labour force (the sum of unemployed plus employed women) was 1.2 billion women in 2003 up from 1 billion in 1993 (table 1.1). In addition, the LFPR for men has decreased in most regions of the world. As a result, the gap between the sexes in terms of labour force participation rates has decreased considerably. Still, in no region of the world is the gender gap anywhere near to being closed.

Figure 2.1  
Labour force participation rates, by sex and region, 1993 and 2003



Source: ILO, Global Employment Trends Model, 2003; see also ILO, *Global Employment Trends 2004*, Technical note.

Table 2.1  
**Male and female labour force participation rates (%) and the gender gap in economically active females per 100 males, 2003**

	Male LFPR (%)	Female LFPR (%)	Gender gap in economically active females per 100 males
World	79.4	53.9	68
Middle East and North Africa	76.8	28.2	36
South Asia	81.1	37.4	44
Latin America and the Caribbean	80.5	49.2	64
Industrialized Economies	70.3	50.5	76
Transition Economies	65.7	53.1	91
South-East Asia	82.9	60.5	75
Sub-Saharan Africa	85.3	63.2	77
East Asia	85.1	73.1	83

Source: ILO, Global Employment Trends Model, 2003; see also ILO, *Global Employment Trends 2004*, Technical note.

In 2003 for the world as a whole there were only 63 women in the labour force per every 100 men. The gap is the largest in the Middle East and North Africa (where there were 36 economically active women per 100 men) and in South Asia (where 44 women per 100 men were active). At the same time, these two regions showed the lowest female LFPR: only about one working-age woman in three was either working or looking for work, leading to participation rates of only 28.2 per cent in the Middle East and North Africa and 37.4 per cent in South Asia. This was most likely the result of the traditional role placed on women in many economies in these regions. In contrast, East Asia had the highest female LFPR and at the same time a small gender gap between the male and female LFPR (83 women in the labour force per 100 men) (table 2.1 and figure 2.1). Women's participation in the labour force in relation to fertility is discussed in box 2.1.

It is important to keep in mind that either an increase in or a high level of LFPR per se does not always have positive connotations. The LFPR in itself does not indicate anything regarding (a) the likelihood of being employed (see section 3 on unemployment rates and employment-to-population ratios) and (b) the characteristics of work (see section 4 on status of employment, employment by sector and wages/earnings).

## Box 2.1

## Labour force participation and fertility

The experience of industrialized economies suggests that increased employment of women is likely to go hand in hand with sustained declines in fertility rates. This is confirmed by the data in the table below, showing a decline in fertility in all regions of the world between 1995 and 2000 and, in most cases, an accompanying increase in the likelihood of women working.

High fertility rates can give an indication that labour markets are not sufficiently attractive for women to enter as an alternative to playing their traditional role as stay-at-home mother and care-giver. Research has shown that women find it more attractive to work instead of having many children when at least one of the following conditions applies:

- Women's employment is "empowering" or "status enhancing", so that women have control over income and resources, and a greater say in family decision-making, including fertility decisions.
- The opportunity costs for staying at home and having children increases as women are able to find well-paid jobs.
- The returns and satisfaction that women derive from participating in economic activities are substantially higher than the returns and satisfactions of having additional children.
- Women become less dependent on children as a form of security for old age or against adverse economic conditions.
- Women's economic role and contribution to family welfare lead to reduced sex preferences for children and changing attitudes towards the value of daughters.
- Women's increasing participation in the labour force is linked to increasing investments in girls' education.
- Women have the opportunity to work and build up careers before marriage, leading to an age increase for the first marriage and pregnancy.

In some developing economies fertility rates declined but still remained at a level above the reproduction rate, indicating that not enough of the conditions mentioned above are in place. In South Asia and the Middle East and North Africa, for example, fertility rates remained relatively high in 2000 at 4.2 and 3.6 respectively, whereas female labour force participation in the regions rated amongst the world's lowest. In contrast, in sub-Saharan Africa, female labour force participation was very high (63 per cent), accompanied by the highest fertility rates in the world. In this region, where there are no social safety nets and low household incomes, women simply cannot afford not to work despite a heavy family burden.

## Fertility rates and labour force participation rates of women, 1995 and 2000

	Female LFPR (%)		Change	Total fertility rate (births per woman)		Change
	1995	2000		1995	2000	
Industrialized Economies	50.0	50.7	+	1.7	1.7	none
Transition Economies	52.6	52.3	-	1.9	1.6	-
East Asia	73.8	73.5	-	1.9	1.7	-
South-East Asia	59.1	60.1	+	3.6	3.2	-
South Asia	36.9	38.0	+	4.6	4.2	-
Latin America and the Caribbean	46.5	49.0	+	2.9	2.7	-
Middle East and North Africa	26.0	27.9	+	4.1	3.6	-
Sub-Saharan Africa	61.9	63.0	+	5.5	5.1	-

Sources: Background paper "Female labour force participation" prepared by Lin Lean Lim for the United Nations Population Division, Expert Group Meeting on Completing the Fertility Transition, held in March 2002. All papers are available at website:

<http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/completingfertility/completingfertility.htm>.

Labour force participation rates are from ILO, Global Employment Trends Model, 2003 and fertility rates from

### 3. Trends in female unemployment and employment-to-population ratios

#### Female unemployment and female youth unemployment

More women as a proportion of their labour force are seeking work but unable to find it than men in almost all regions of the world, resulting in a global female unemployment rate of 6.4 per cent compared to 6.1 per cent for men in 2003. Only in East Asia and sub-Saharan Africa did the regional male unemployment rate exceed that of the female (the rates are equal in the transition economies) (figure 3.1). The regions that showed the greater differential in rates were Latin America and the Caribbean, where the female unemployment rate was 10.1 per cent, compared to the male rate of 6.7 per cent, and the Middle East and North Africa where the female unemployment rate of 16.5 per cent was 6 percentage points higher than the male rate of 10.6 per cent. The female-to-male unemployment rate gap was even wider in the subregions of the Caribbean (female, 14.5 per cent; male, 7.3 per cent) and North Africa (female, 16.2 per cent; male, 8.4 per cent).

The difficulty of finding work is even more drastic for young females (aged 15 to 24 years). Being female and being young can represent a double source of discrimination - young women appear to have the greatest difficulty in entering the labour market and retaining their jobs in periods of economic downturn. Youth unemployment rates for both sexes are higher than adult unemployment rates in all regions of the world (figure 3.2). Again, in all regions except East Asia and sub-Saharan Africa the regional female rate exceeded that of the male rate. Also, in keeping with the trend for the total unemployment rate, the regions of Latin America and the Caribbean and the Middle East and North Africa showed the greatest difference between the unemployment rates for young women and young men.

It is important to note that unemployment information in itself is a rather limited indicator for the inadequacy of the labour market situation, and should not be used in isolation of other indicators such as employment-to-population ratios, employment by status and sector data, as well as wage and earning indicators. Many national definitions of unemployment exclude persons who want to work but do not actively “seek” work either because they feel that no work is available to them or because such persons have restricted labour mobility, or face discrimination or structural, social or cultural barriers. These are the so-called “discouraged workers”, the majority of which are generally women. Although data on discouraged workers are hard to come by, a review of the data available for industrialized economies revealed that females made up approximately two-thirds of total discouraged workers in Australia, Austria, Belgium, Germany, Greece, the Netherlands, Norway and Portugal and the female share of total discouraged workers was near 90 per cent in Italy and Switzerland.<sup>2</sup>

Caution is therefore needed in interpreting a trend of falling unemployment for women because it could indicate a situation in which women are adjusting to deteriorating economic conditions by opting out of the labour market altogether or by accepting shorter working hours rather than not working at all.

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<sup>2</sup> OECD, *Employment Outlook* June (Paris, 2003).



Figure 3.1  
World and regional unemployment rates, by sex, 2003

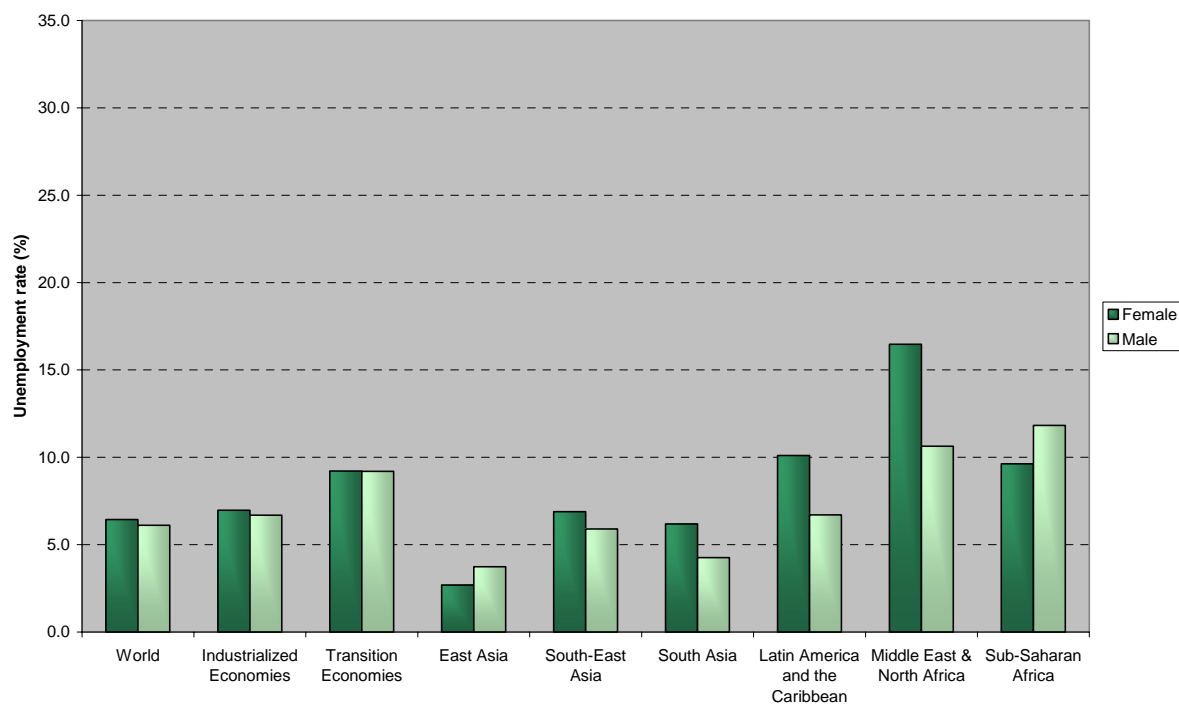
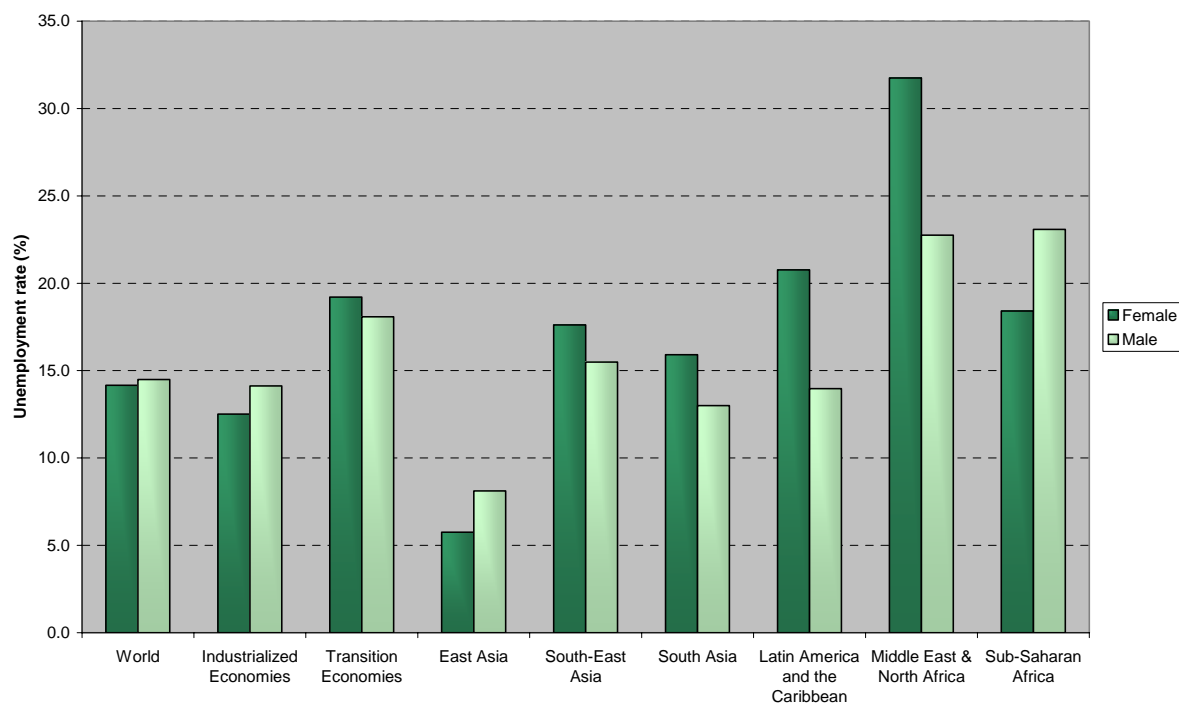


Figure 3.2  
World and regional youth unemployment rates, by sex, 2003

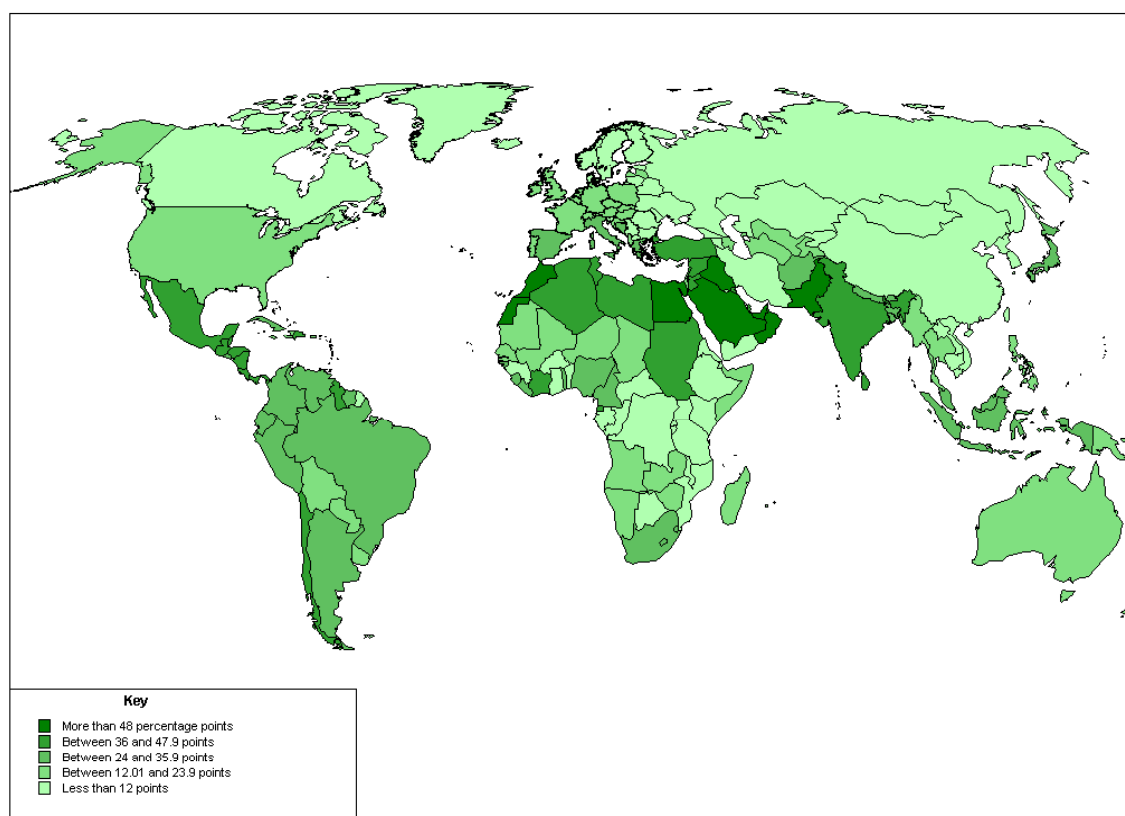


Source: ILO, Global Employment Trends Model, 2003; see also ILO, *Global Employment Trends 2004*, Technical note.

### Trends in employment-to-population ratios

Employment-to-population ratios indicate the capacity of economies to create employment opportunities for their population - the higher employment-to-population ratio, the more people in the working-age population are working. As figure 3.3 shows, this indicator is higher for men in all regions of the world. Also in all regions the ratios for women have increased during the past ten years, but the gap persists.

Figure 3.3  
Differential between male and female employment-to-population ratios, 2003



Source: ILO, Global Employment Trends Model, 2003; see also ILO, *Global Employment Trends 2004*, Technical note.

The biggest gap exists in the Middle East and North Africa and South Asia, once again possibly reflecting a societal lack of interest in employment for women (figure 3.3). In the Middle East and North Africa, three times more jobs exist for men compared to their population than for women, and in South Asia the share is twice as high for men than for women. The smallest gap is observed in the transition economies (where women have traditionally taken a more equal part in labour markets) and in East-Asia.

Latin America and the Caribbean region showed the biggest improvement in terms of closing the gap between male and female employment-to-population ratios. The gap in 2003 was over 6 percentage points smaller than in 1993. In all Asian regions the gaps remained almost as wide as in 1993.

One might argue that not all women of working age want to work, but the simple fact that unemployment exists indicates that there are women who want to work but are unable to find work. And since overall unemployment has been higher for women than for men, it is clear that more employment opportunities need to be created for women to satisfy their willingness to work. In addition, some of the employment gaps that remain in industrialized economies can be attributed to the fact that some women might freely choose to stay at home

because they can afford it. But in other regions of the world it is more likely that women would work if there were opportunities for them to do so. Of course attracting more women into the labour force also requires as a first step the provision of equal access to education for women and equal opportunities in gaining the skills necessary to compete in the labour market.

#### 4. Trends in employment by sector and status, wages/earnings and working poverty

No agreed-upon single indicator exists for assessing the conditions of employment. However, some insights can be gained by analyzing three indicators: status of employment, employment by sector and wages/earnings. An initial assessment of these indicators reveals that although progress has been made in terms of female labour force participation, this has not necessarily been paralleled with progress in the creation of decent work opportunities for women. There are, of course, other indicators that would be of interest – hours of work and the presence of female labour in the largely unprotected informal economy (see box 4.1), for example. However, given the difficulties in the standardization of definitions, methodology of collection and data availability, these topics are not considered.

##### Indicator 1: Employment by status of women

Family responsibilities are still very much assigned to women. When they have to combine child-raising activities with work activities, women are required to find a solution for balancing these two roles. Role incompatibility is likely to be a greater problem for women in wage employment, less for those in self-employment and least for contributing family workers who are unpaid (but still count as employed people according to the standard definition of employment). Unfortunately, many developing economies do not have consistent data on employment status broken down by sex. Where available, this information suggests that in the poorest regions of the world the share of female contributing family workers in total employment is much higher than men's and that women are less likely to be wage and salaried workers. Table 4.1 cites some examples.

Table 4.1  
Employment by status, selected economies, latest available year

Economy and latest year of data availability	Wage and salaried workers (employees)		Contributing family workers		Self-employed workers	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Bangladesh 2000	8.3	15.2	73.2	10.1	11.0	49.8
Pakistan 2000	33.1	36.0	50.1	16.7	16.8	47.3
Cambodia 2001	13.6	19.1	53.3	31.6	33.0	40.9
Thailand 2000	38.8	40.2	39.8	16.4	21.4	43.3
Zimbabwe 1999	22.0	50.8	n.a.	n.a.	58.0	29.2
West Bank and Gaza Strip 2001	63.9	61.9	27.3	6.0	8.8	32.2
Yemen 1999	13.8	50.7	0.3	0.3	63.4	49.0
Egypt 2000	57.2	60.6	26.0	8.2	16.8	31.1

n.a. = Data not available.

Source: ILO, *Key Indicators of the Labour Market, 3rd Edition* (Geneva, 2003), table 3.

This trend is expected to continue in most parts of the developing world. Especially at times of economic crises or downturns, women are the first to withdraw from wage and salaried work. They may then be forced to enter the informal economy as own-account or unpaid family workers (see box 4.1).

#### Box 4.1

##### Working in the informal economy

The informal sector represents a significant part of the economy, and certainly of the labour market, in many economies, especially developing economies, and plays a major role in employment creation, production and income generation.<sup>1</sup> In economies with high rates of population growth or urbanization, the informal economy tends to absorb most of the expanding labour force in the urban areas. Informal economy employment is a necessary survival strategy in economies that lack social safety nets.

Although national implementation of a universally agreed upon definition of the informal economy is still erratic there is general agreement that work in the informal economy means being outside the legal and regulatory frameworks, and is thus normally characterized by a high degree of vulnerability. Workers have little or no legal or social protection and are excluded from or have limited access to public infrastructure and benefits. Informal economy workers are rarely organized for effective representation and have little or no voice at the workplace or in the socio-political arena. Informal employment is normally unstable and insecure – consisting of very long hours and high pressure periods to finish contract orders within short deadlines, followed by “inactive” periods waiting for orders. Most informal economy employment is self-employment. There is a link – although not a perfect correlation – between working in the informal economy and being poor. This stems from the lack of labour legislation and social protection covering workers in the informal economy, and from the fact that informal economy workers earn, on average, less than workers in the formal economy.

Statistics on employment in the informal economy are essential for obtaining a clear picture of the contributions of all workers, women in particular, to the economy. Indeed, the informal economy has been considered as a possible fallback position for women who are excluded from paid employment. It is often the only source of income for women in the developing world, especially in those areas where cultural norms bar them from work outside the home or where, because of conflict with household responsibilities, they cannot undertake regular employee working hours.

<sup>1</sup>For additional information, see ILO, *Women and men in the informal sector: A statistical picture*, Geneva, 2002; website: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/infeco/download/menwomen.pdf>; as well as the ILO website on the Informal Economy at <http://www.ilo.org/infeco>.

Even among wage and salaried workers, more and more women are likely to be in non-regular or atypical employment. Whereas men are more likely to be hired in core or regular and better-paid positions, women are increasingly being hired in peripheral, insecure, less-valued jobs including home-based, casual or temporary work. These jobs are normally characterized by very low pay, irregular income, little or no job or income security and lack of social protection (see box 4.2).

#### Box 4.2

##### Home-based work as a solution for role incompatibility?

Although official statistics on home-based work are scarce, there is evidence that home-based work is becoming increasingly common, especially for women, due to the growing use of subcontracting and industrial outsourcing systems and the spread of ICT. Home-based workers are defined in the 1993 international Classification of Status in Employment as those who work for an enterprise to supply goods or services by prior arrangement with that enterprise, and whose place of work is not within any of the enterprise's establishments.<sup>1</sup> Home-based workers may be classified as wage or salaried employees or self-employed.

While women may benefit from new independence in terms of work location and flexible working hours that allow them to balance work and family roles according to their own arrangements, there are growing concerns about conditions of low-pay and the lack of protection which can accompany home-based work. In addition, there is also concern that home-based work can create a sense of isolation and exclusion from career choices.

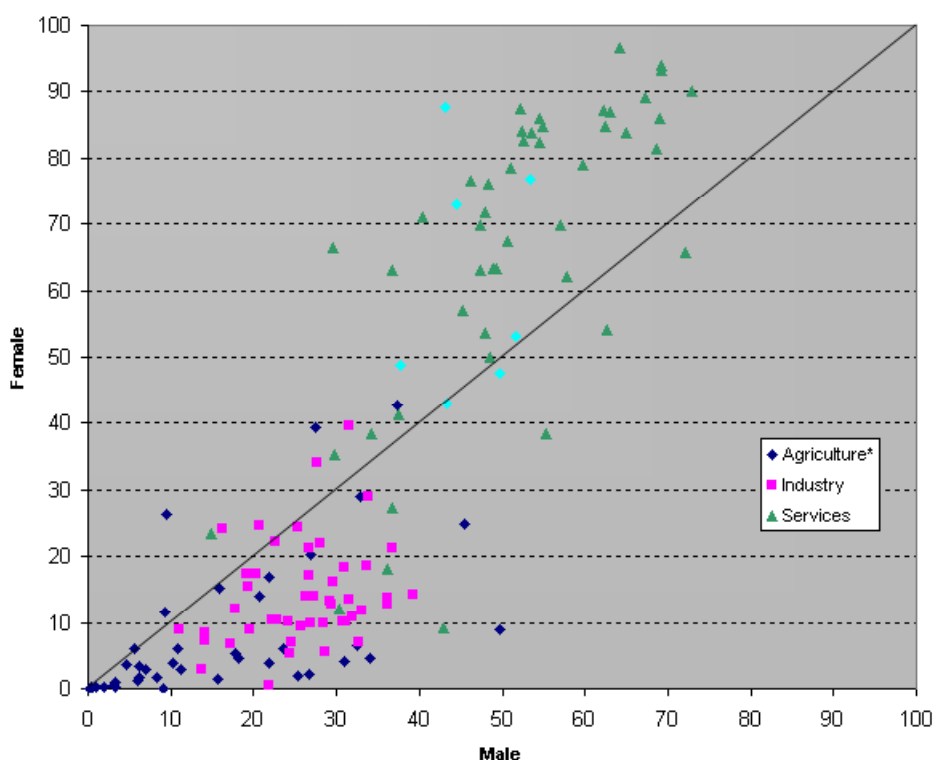
<sup>1</sup> For information on the definition and measurement of home-based work, see ILO, *Bulletin of Labour Statistics*, 1993-2.

### Indicator 2: Employment by sector of women

An analysis of the sectoral data gives an additional indication that women's work is not likely to be status-enhancing or empowering for them. Women have a higher share in agricultural employment in Asia, sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East and North Africa and some economies in Latin America and the Caribbean, especially in economies with low per capita income (figure 4.1). In all developing regions women's share in industry is lower than men's. This is despite the fact that export-led industrialization has been strongly female-intensive, particularly in the export-processing zones (EPZs) of developing economies. EPZs have created an important avenue for women to enter the formal economy at better wages than in agriculture and domestic service. However, there is evidence that as the nature of employment in EPZs evolves, with higher technology inputs, the gender profile of the workforce changes.<sup>3</sup>

Within the services sector, women are still concentrated in sectors that are traditionally associated with their gender roles, particularly in community, social and personal services, whereas men dominate the better-paid sector jobs in financial and business services and real estate.

Figure 4.1  
Employment distribution, by sector and sex, developing economies,  
latest available year



\* The light-blue diamond indicates an economy in which the highest proportion of workers is employed in the agricultural sector. These include Bangladesh, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Yemen.

Source: ILO, *Key Indicators of the Labour Market*, 3rd Edition (Geneva, 2003), table 4a.

<sup>3</sup> For more information on the employment and social implications of export-processing zones, see ILO, Governing Body Report "Employment and social policy in respect of export-processing zones (EPZs)", GB.286/ESP/3, March 2003; available at website: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/reIm/gb/docs/gb286/pdf/esp-3.pdf>.

The sex segregation of occupations is changing, but only slowly. Female stereotypes, such as caring, docile care-giver and home-based worker, are still being reinforced and may be perpetuated into the next generation if restricted and inferior labour market opportunities for women continue to lead to underinvestment in women's education, training and experience.

### Indicator 3: Wages and earnings

Can wage equality be achieved? The evidence is not favourable in the short term. Women everywhere typically receive less pay than men. This is in part because women often hold low-level, low-paying positions in female-dominated occupations. A review of data available for six diverse occupation groups shows that in most economies, women still earn 90 per cent or less of what their male co-workers earn (figure 4.2).<sup>4</sup> In a typically male-dominated occupation such as welding in metal manufacturing, the wage disparities are even greater. Female welders in the industrialized economies earned, on average, 79 per cent of what male welders earned, and in developing economies even less at 75 per cent. Even in "typically female" occupations such as nursing and teaching, gender wage equality is still lacking. In Singapore, for example, male first-level education teachers earned approximately 6 per cent more than female teachers, and male nurse 21 per cent more.

Traditionally there has been greater wage equality in the transition economies than in industrialized or developing economies. This is still the case today. For example, the wages of female welders and female teachers in transition economies are nearly equitable to those of males (98 per cent of the male rate) and female nurses earned even more than their male counterparts in the same occupations (2 percentage points more than the male rate).

One might expect to find near wage equality in high-skill occupations where the education and training level of applicants would presumably be comparable (accountant in the banking sector or computer programmer in the insurance sector, for example). This is not the case. Even in these occupations the average female wage is still only 88 per cent of the male wage. One of the reasons identified for the wage differential is women's lack of negotiating capability as well as bargaining power.<sup>5</sup>

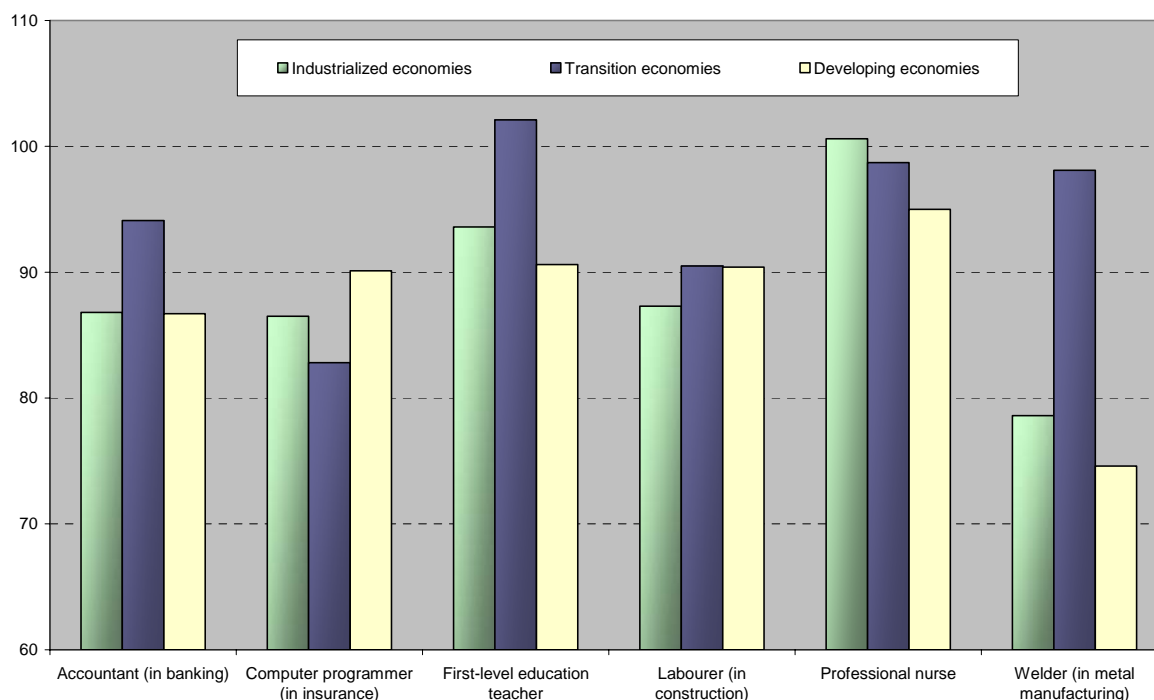
Is the situation improving? In a word, no, or at least the results are mixed according to occupation. In table 4.2, a higher percentage change for females than males in the same occupation would imply that female wages increased faster than male wages and were thus catching up to the male level. In the majority of cases where time-series analysis was possible, "catching up" did not occur. Female wages were catching up to male wages in only five of 12 economies with available data for accountants in the banking sector, four of ten economies for the computer programmers in insurance, five of 12 for teachers, six of ten for labourers, four of 11 for nurses and two of six for welders. The occupations that showed the greatest deterioration in the male-to-female wage situation over time were first-level education teacher and welder.

---

<sup>4</sup> In this section, "wages" refers first to wages defined as the "rates paid for normal time of work, comprising: basic wages and salaries, cost-of-living allowances and other guaranteed and regularly paid allowances". Earnings are used in countries where only data on earnings and not wages are available. Earnings extend beyond wage rates to include as well "remuneration for time not worked, such as for annual vacation or other paid leave or holidays, and including those elements of earnings which are usually received regularly, before any deductions are made by the employer in respect of taxes, contributions of employees to social security and pension schemes, life insurance premiums, union dues and any other obligations of employees." See ILO, *Statistics on occupational wages and hours of work and on food prices: October Inquiry results, 2000 and 2001* (Geneva, 2002).

<sup>5</sup> For a study on the gender difference in negotiating capacity, see Linda Babcock, et al., "Nice girls don't ask", in *Harvard Business Review*, October 2003, p. 14.

Figure 4.2  
Average female wages/earnings as percentage of male wages/earnings in selected occupations, latest available year



Note: Average in this chart denotes a basic average of the countries with available data; 12 economies in the industrialized economies, 17 in the developing economies and 7 in the transition economies amongst the various occupations.

Source: ILO, *Key Indicators of the Labour Market, 3rd Edition* (Geneva, 2003), tables 16a and 16b.

Table 4.2  
Percentage change in real wages/earnings, men and women, selected occupations

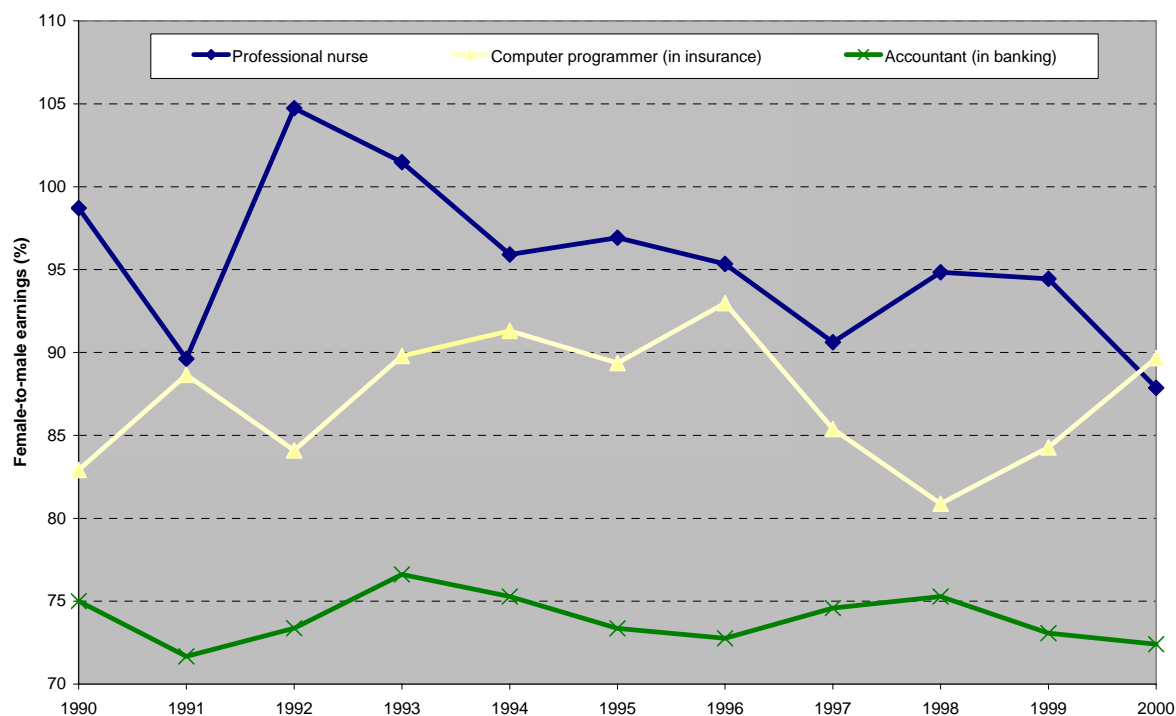
	Accountant (in banking)		Computer programmer (in insurance)		First-level education teacher		Labourer (in construction)		Professional nurse		Welder (in metal manufacturing)	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Bahrain (1993-98)	16	16	n.a.	n.a.	-7	3	26	24	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Belarus (1996-2000)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	100	35	307	323	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Cyprus (1990-2001)	n.a.	n.a.	44	60	23	12	49	37	26	9	n.a.	n.a.
Finland (1990-98)	67	96	44	66	-7	-4	1	8	-7	-6	-10	-1
Jordan (1988-97)	29	20	-63	-51	25	13	n.a.	n.a.	-21	-17	n.a.	n.a.
Korea, Republic of (1990-2001)	91	46	94	73	29	60	115	37	71	229	46	49
Kyrgyzstan (1998-2001)	4	-26	n.a.	n.a.	-14	-39	4	20	-19	-32	n.a.	n.a.
Latvia (1997-2001)	39	31	561	142	82	45	36	18	60	33	1	26
Peru (1997-2001)	15	35	-13	-20	34	37	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Poland (1998-2001)	28	31	103	70	53	53	13	20	26	29	45	25
Romania (1995-2001)	126	73	7	38	-7	-6	-19	-24	27	17	-22	-20
Singapore (1995-2000)	-3	-24	24	43	n.a.	n.a.	26	16	9	24	24	19
United Kingdom (1996-2001)	16	19	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	10	12	n.a.	n.a.
United States (1990-2000)	9	12	15	6	4	14	n.a.	n.a.	-2	10	n.a.	n.a.

n.a. = Data not available.

Source: ILO, *Key Indicators of the Labour Market, 3rd Edition* (Geneva, 2003), tables 16a and 16b.

Figure 4.3 shows a specific economy example of the movement in female-to-male earning differentials over time: in the United States in 1990 the earnings of female nurses were almost equivalent to that of male nurses. By 2000, however, female nurses were earning less than 90 per cent of their male counterparts. There was a similar decrease in the earnings gap by gender for accountants in the banking sector.

Figure 4.3  
Female occupational earnings as a percentage of male earnings in the United States, 1990 to 2000



Source: ILO, *Key Indicators of the Labour Market, 3rd Edition* (Geneva, 2003), table 16b.

### Women have a high likelihood of being working poor

The assumption that, in the process of socioeconomic development, women increasingly enter the modern sector, permanent, full-time wage employment does not hold – at least not for the time being. Increases in labour force participation rates have so far not been matched by improvements in job quality and the working conditions of women have not led to their true socioeconomic empowerment.

As a result the share of women that are employed but still are unable to lift themselves and their family above the US \$1 a day poverty line – the so-called working-poor share – is higher for women than it is for men. Out of the total number of 550 million estimated working poor, around 60 per cent or 330 million are women.<sup>6</sup> Only if future creation of decent jobs extends even more to women than to men, can this share be reduced.

There is mounting evidence that women's ability to fully enjoy human rights – indeed, even to demand such rights – is integrally linked to their economic empowerment. The ability

<sup>6</sup> The calculation of the number of people that are working poor is based on the poverty figures given by the World Bank. Unfortunately these figures don't exist disaggregated by region. But many experts assume a female poverty rate of 60-70 per cent (see footnote 1). This is the rate used for the calculation of female working poor in the world for this publication. For details on the calculation of working poor see Kapsos, S., "Estimating growth requirements for reducing working poverty: Can the world halve working poverty by 2015", Employment Paper (Geneva, ILO, forthcoming).



to take decisions – on marriage, on childbearing and on contraception, among others – requires a sense of personal autonomy, which develops in tandem with the self-knowledge that women can provide for themselves and their children. Their sense of personhood is sparked by motherhood and nurtured by participation in organized groups, but fundamentally depends on having their own decent income. Whether women work out of need or choice, the focus should be on giving them decent jobs, so that in the long run they can work themselves and their families out of poverty. At the same time childcare facilities are a necessary precondition for women to be able to go to work and use their productive potential effectively.

Employment Strategy Papers

# Global employment trends for women, 2004

**By Sara Elder**

and

**Dorothea Schmidt**

Employment Trends Unit  
Employment Strategy Department

2004/8



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## Preface

The increasing participation of women in the labour market has been one of the most striking phenomena of recent times. It has enabled women in many regions to prove their potential in the labour market and placed them on the path towards achievement of their economic independence.

But this improvement in the quantity of women at work has yet to result in real socioeconomic empowerment for women, an equitable distribution of household responsibilities, equal pay for equal work and gender balance across occupations. The analysis of a set of labour market indicators in the present paper underlines this point: unemployment rates are higher for women than they are for men in most regions of the world, and this is particularly true for young women. In addition, women are more likely to work in lower paid sectors and often have a lower status in employment than their male counterparts. Finally, the gap between male and female wages still exists, even in some professions where females dominate.

The paper was originally prepared for the International Women's Day, 2004. Following the strong interest in this subject, the decision was taken to publish it as an ILO Employment Strategy Paper, in the hope of making it more widely available to colleagues within the Office, to our constituents and to a wider external audience.

The report is also available on [www.ilo.org/trends](http://www.ilo.org/trends).

Duncan Campbell  
Director a.i.  
Employment Strategy Department

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## 1. Overview

One of the most striking phenomena of recent times has been the increasing proportion of women in the labour force, enabling women in many regions to use their potential in the labour market and to achieve economic independence. Section 2 looks at the trends in female labour force participation. But does the fact that women increasingly enter the labour market really mean that the gap between male and female participation is closing? And does it mean that women who look for work are successful in finding it? If they do find work, what are the typical characteristics of female work compared to that of male counterparts?

An analysis of six additional labour market indicators (female unemployment rates, female youth unemployment rates, employment-to-population ratios, status of employment, employment by sector and wages/earnings) makes it clear that the questions asked cannot be answered with a definitive yes. More women work today than ever before: in 2003 out of the 2.8 billion people that had work, 1.1 billion were women (table 1). The share of women with work in total employment has risen slightly in the past ten years to just above 40 per cent. However, improved equality in terms of quantity of male and female workers has yet to result in real socioeconomic empowerment for women, an equitable distribution of household responsibilities, equal pay for work of equal value, and gender balance across all occupations. In short, true equality in the world of work is still out of reach.

### Is the labour force participation gap closing?

The labour force participation rate (LFPR) expresses the share of employed plus unemployed people in comparison with the working-age population. It gives an indication of how many people of working age are actively participating in the labour market. The gap between the LFPR for men and women has been decreasing in all regions during the past ten years. But apart from the transition economies (where 91 women are economically active per 100 men) and East Asia (with a proportion of 83 women per 100 men), all other regions still face a difference of fewer than 80 economically active women per 100 men. In the Middle East and North Africa region and also in South Asia for every 100 men in the labour force, only around 40 women are economically active (table 2).

**Table 1: Global labour market indicators, 1993 and 2003**

	Female		Male		Total	
	1993	2003	1993	2003	1993	2003
Labour force (millions)	1,006	1,208	1,507	1,769	2,513	2,978
Employment (millions)	948	1,130	1,425	1,661	2,373	2,792
Unemployment (millions)	58.2	77.8	82.3	108.1	140.5	185.9
Labour force participation rate (%)	53.5	53.9	80.5	79.4	67.0	66.6
Employment-to-population ratio (%)	50.4	50.5	76.1	74.5	63.3	62.5
Unemployment rate (%)	5.8	6.4	5.5	6.1	5.6	6.2

Source: GET Model, 2003; see also GET, 2004, Technical note

### Do women who look for work find any?

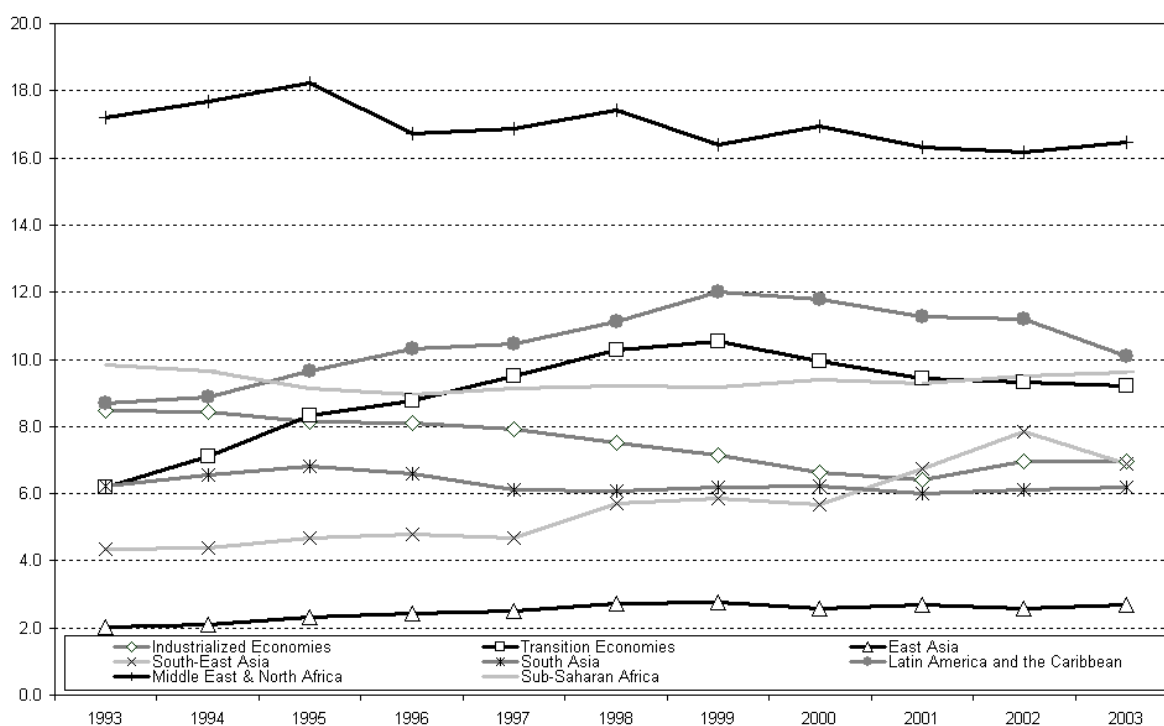
The female unemployment rate in 2003 was slightly higher than the male rate for the world as a whole (6.4 per cent for female, 6.1 per cent for male), leaving 77.8 million women who are willing to work and actively looking for work without employment. The picture is more dramatic in some regions of the world. The region that showed the greatest differential in rates was Latin America and the Caribbean with a difference of 3.4 percentage points and

the Middle East and North Africa where the female unemployment rate was 6 percentage points higher than the male rate. Unemployment rates for women are lower than for men in sub-Saharan Africa (at a high level of around 10 per cent) and East Asia (at below 5 per cent).

Nor does the unemployment situation for women seem to have improved over the past ten years, with the exceptions of three regions – industrialized economies, the Middle East and North Africa and South Asia (figure 1). The majority of regions saw little or no change in female unemployment rates over the period 1993 to 2003. In South-East Asia the unemployment rate of women increased by more than 2 percentage points (from 4.7 per cent to 6.9 per cent).

The difficulty of finding work is even more drastic for young women (aged 15 to 24 years). Overall, 35.8 million young women are involuntarily without work. In all regions youth unemployment rates for both sexes are higher than adult unemployment rates. Again in all regions except East Asia and sub-Saharan Africa the regional female rate exceeds the male rate.

**Figure 1: Female unemployment rates, by region, 1993 to 2003**



Source: GET Model, 2003; see also GET, 2004, Technical note.

Employment-to-population ratios reflect the capacity of an economy to provide employment for the working-age population (generally 15 years and older). They can also be interpreted as an indication of how efficiently economies make use of the productive potential of their working-age population. In all regions of the world, employment-to-population ratios are much smaller for women than for men. The difference is devastating in the Middle East and North Africa where only two out of every ten women at working-age work (compared to seven out of ten for men). The situation is only slightly better in South Asia.

### **What characterizes female work?**

Women have a smaller likelihood of being in regular wage and salaried employment than men. Also, the female share of contributing family workers exceeds the male rate in almost all economies where data are available. In economies with a high share of agriculture, women work more often in this sector than men. Women's share of employment in the services sector also exceeds that of men. Additionally, women are more likely to earn less than men for the same type of work, even in traditionally female occupations.

The results of the analysis of the three indicators (status, sector and wages/earnings) underlines the fact that women are more likely to find employment in the informal economy than men, outside legal and regulatory frameworks, with little, if any, social security benefits and a high degree of vulnerability. (See box 2 for more information on the informal economy.)

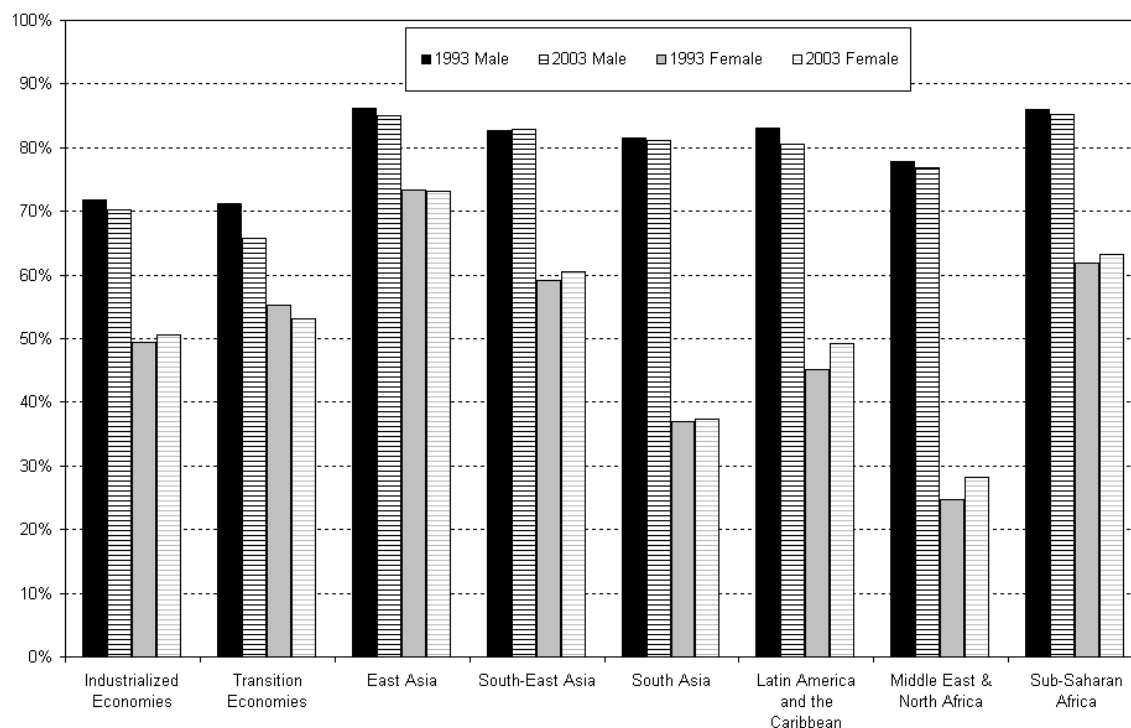
As a consequence, women have a higher share in the number of working poor in the world – those people who work but do not earn enough to lift themselves and their families above the US \$1 a day poverty line. Out of the 550 million working poor in the world, an estimated 330 million are women – a share of 60 per cent.<sup>1</sup> Adding the 330 million female working poor to the 77.8 million women who are unemployed means that at least 400 million decent jobs would be needed to satisfy women's demand for decent work. It is probably safe to say that even this is a conservative estimate and if one were to address the issue of women who are involuntarily outside the labour force, the deficit of decent work opportunities for women would be even greater. Creating adequate decent work for women is only possible if policy-makers not only place employment at the centre of social and economic policies but also recognize that women's problems in the world of work are even more substantial than men's. Unless progress is made to take women out of working poverty by creating employment opportunities to help them secure productive and remunerative work in conditions of freedom, security and human dignity and thereby giving women the chance to work themselves out of poverty, the UN Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of halving poverty by 2015 will not be reached in most regions in the world.

## **2. Trends in female labour force participation**

The growing proportion of women in the labour force has been one of the most striking labour markets trends of recent times especially in the 1980s and to a lesser extent until today. Never before have so many women been economically active: the female labour force (the sum of unemployed plus employed women) was 1.2 billion women in 2003 up from 1 billion in 1993 (table 1). In addition, the LFPR for men has decreased in most regions of the world. As a result, the gap between the sexes in terms of labour force participation rates has decreased considerably. Still, in no region of the world is the gender gap anywhere near to being closed.

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<sup>1</sup> The claim that 60 per cent of the total working poor are women is derived from a basic assumption that the distribution by sex of world poverty is approximately one-third men and two-thirds women. See, for example, UNDP, 1995. The 1995 UNDP report, in fact, placed the number at 70 per cent. It is important to note, however, that this so-called "feminization of poverty" has yet to be resolutely substantiated by the data and the assumption is not without its detractors. See also footnote 6.

**Figure 2: Labour force participation rates, by sex and region, 1993 and 2003**

Source: GET Model, 2003; see also GET, 2004, Technical note.

**Table 2: Male and female labour force participation rates (LFPR) (%) and the gender gap in economically active females per 100 males, 2003**

	Male LFPR (%)	Female LFPR (%)	Gender gap in economically active females per 100 males
World	79.4	53.9	68
Middle East and North Africa	76.8	28.2	36
South Asia	81.1	37.4	44
Latin America and the Caribbean	80.5	49.2	64
Industrialized Economies	70.3	50.5	76
Transition Economies	65.7	53.1	91
South-East Asia	82.9	60.5	75
Sub-Saharan Africa	85.3	63.2	77
East Asia	85.1	73.1	83

Source: GET Model, 2003; see also GET, 2004, Technical note.

In 2003, for the world as a whole there were only 63 women in the labour force per every 100 men. The gap is the largest in the Middle East and North Africa (where there were 36 economically active women per 100 men) and in South Asia (where 44 women per 100 men were active). At the same time, these two regions showed the lowest female LFPR: only about one working-age woman in three was either working or looking for work, leading to participation rates of only 28.2 per cent in the Middle East and North Africa and 37.4 per cent in South Asia. This was most likely the result of the traditional role placed on women in many

economies in these regions. In contrast, East Asia had the highest female LFPR and at the same time a small gender gap between the male and female LFPR (83 women in the labour force per 100 men) (table 2 and figure 2). Women's participation in the labour force in relation to fertility is discussed in box 1.

It is important to keep in mind that either an increase in or a high level of LFPR per se does not always have positive connotations. The LFPR in itself does not indicate anything regarding (a) the likelihood of being employed (see section 3 on unemployment rates and employment-to-population ratios) and (b) the characteristics of work (see section 4 on status of employment, employment by sector and wages/earnings).

### Box 1: Labour force participation and fertility

The experience of industrialized economies suggests that increased employment of women is likely to go hand in hand with sustained declines in fertility rates. This is confirmed by the data in the table below, showing a decline in fertility in all regions of the world between 1995 and 2000 and, in most cases, an accompanying increase in the likelihood of women working.

High fertility rates can give an indication that labour markets are not sufficiently attractive for women to enter as an alternative to playing their traditional role as stay-at-home mother and care-giver. Research has shown that women find it more attractive to work instead of having many children when at least one of the following conditions applies:

- Women's employment is "empowering" or "status enhancing", so that women have control over income and resources, and a greater say in family decision-making, including fertility decisions.
- The opportunity costs for staying at home and having children increases as women are able to find well-paid jobs.
- The returns and satisfaction that women derive from participating in economic activities are substantially higher than the returns and satisfactions of having additional children.
- Women become less dependent on children as a form of security for old age or against adverse economic conditions.
- Women's economic role and contribution to family welfare lead to reduced sex preferences for children and changing attitudes towards the value of daughters.
- Women's increasing participation in the labour force is linked to increasing investments in girls' education.
- Women have the opportunity to work and build up careers before marriage, leading to an age increase for the first marriage and pregnancy.

In some developing economies fertility rates declined but still remained at a level above the reproduction rate, indicating that not enough of the conditions mentioned above are in place. In South Asia and the Middle East and North Africa, for example, fertility rates remained relatively high in 2000 at 4.2 and 3.6 respectively, whereas female labour force participation in the regions rated amongst the world's lowest. In contrast, in sub-Saharan Africa, female labour force participation was very high (63 per cent), accompanied by the highest fertility rates in the world. In this region, where there are no social safety nets and low household incomes, women simply cannot afford not to work despite a heavy family burden.

#### Fertility rates and labour force participation rates of women, 1995 and 2000

	Female LFPR (%)		Change	Total fertility rate (births per woman)		Change
	1995	2000		1995	2000	
Industrialized Economies	50.0	50.7	+	1.7	1.7	none
Transition Economies	52.6	52.3	-	1.9	1.6	-
East Asia	73.8	73.5	-	1.9	1.7	-
South-East Asia	59.1	60.1	+	3.6	3.2	-
South Asia	36.9	38.0	+	4.6	4.2	-
Latin America and the Caribbean	46.5	49.0	+	2.9	2.7	-
Middle East and North Africa	26.0	27.9	+	4.1	3.6	-
Sub-Saharan Africa	61.9	63.0	+	5.5	5.1	-

Sources: Lim, Lin Lean, 2002. Labour force participation rates are from GET Model, 2003 and fertility rates from UNESCO and available from website <http://qesdb.cdie.org/ged/index.html>.

### 3. Trends in female unemployment and employment-to-population ratios

#### Female unemployment and female youth unemployment

More women as a proportion of their labour force are seeking work but unable to find it than men in almost all regions of the world, resulting in a global female unemployment rate of 6.4 per cent compared to 6.1 per cent for men in 2003. Only in East Asia and sub-Saharan Africa did the regional male unemployment rate exceed that of the female (the rates are equal in the transition economies) (figure 3). The regions that showed the greater differential in rates were Latin America and the Caribbean, where the female unemployment rate was 10.1 per cent, compared to the male rate of 6.7 per cent, and the Middle East and North Africa where the female unemployment rate of 16.5 per cent was 6 percentage points higher than the male rate of 10.6 per cent. The female-to-male unemployment rate gap was even wider in the subregions of the Caribbean (female, 14.5 per cent; male, 7.3 per cent) and North Africa (female, 16.2 per cent; male, 8.4 per cent).

The difficulty of finding work is even more drastic for young females (aged 15 to 24 years). Being female and being young can represent a double source of discrimination - young women appear to have the greatest difficulty in entering the labour market and retaining their jobs in periods of economic downturn. Youth unemployment rates for both sexes are higher than adult unemployment rates in all regions of the world (figure 4). Again, in all regions except East Asia and sub-Saharan Africa the regional female rate exceeded that of the male rate. Also, in keeping with the trend for the total unemployment rate, the regions of Latin America and the Caribbean and the Middle East and North Africa showed the greatest difference between the unemployment rates for young women and young men.

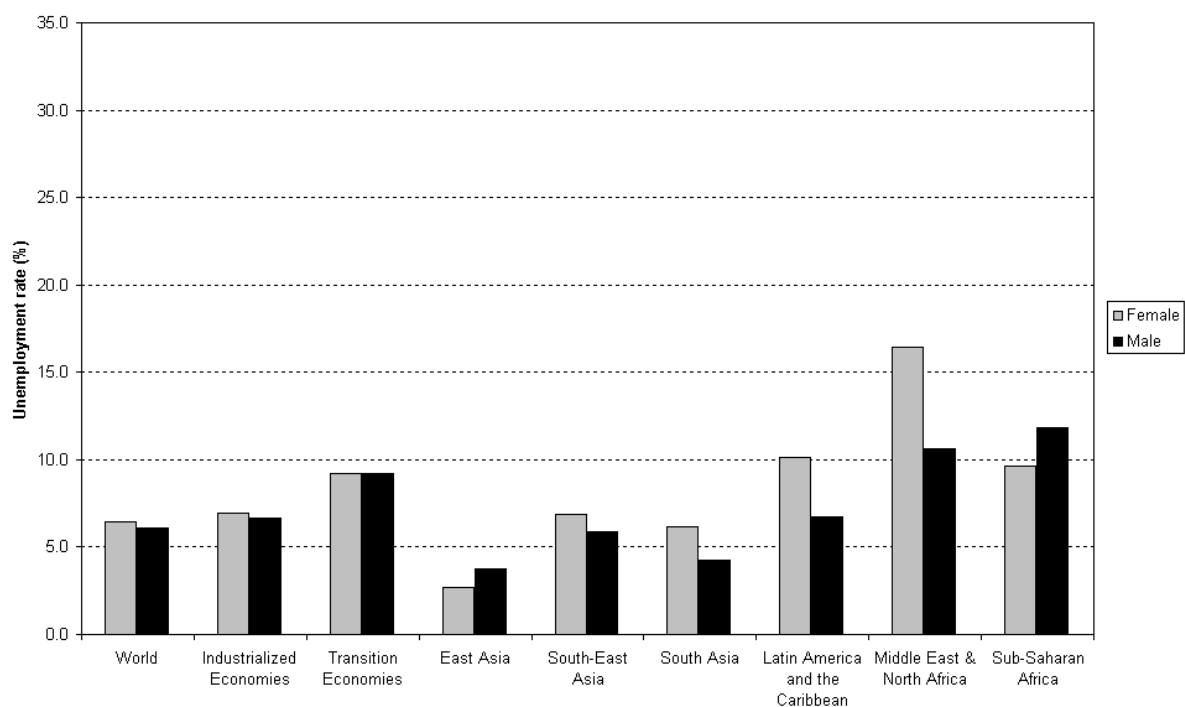
It is important to note that unemployment information in itself is a rather limited indicator for the inadequacy of the labour market situation, and should not be used in isolation of other indicators such as employment-to-population ratios, employment by status and sector data, as well as wage and earning indicators. Many national definitions of unemployment exclude persons who want to work but do not actively “seek” work either because they feel that no work is available to them or because such persons have restricted labour mobility, or face discrimination or structural, social or cultural barriers. These are the so-called “discouraged workers”, the majority of which are generally women. Although data on discouraged workers are hard to come by, a review of the data available for industrialized economies revealed that females made up approximately two-thirds of total discouraged workers in Australia, Austria, Belgium, Germany, Greece, the Netherlands, Norway and Portugal and the female share of total discouraged workers was near 90 per cent in Italy and Switzerland.<sup>2</sup>

Caution is therefore needed in interpreting a trend of falling unemployment for women because it could indicate a situation in which women are adjusting to deteriorating economic conditions by opting out of the labour market altogether or by accepting shorter working hours rather than not working at all.

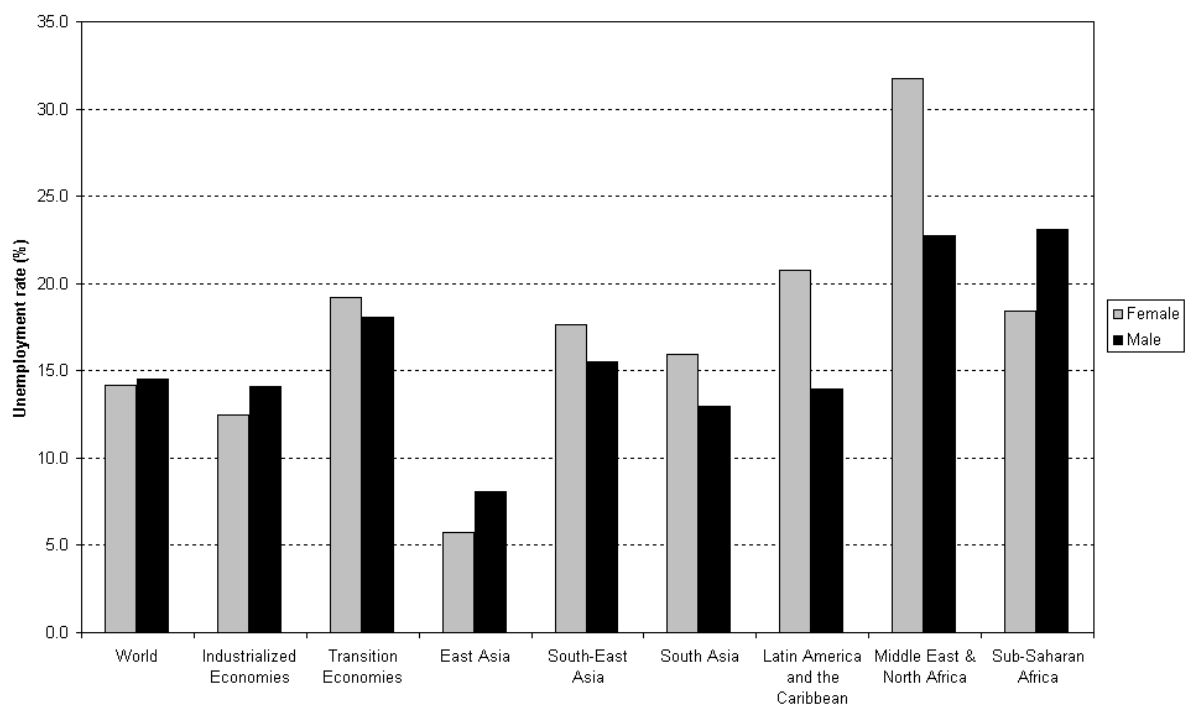
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<sup>2</sup> OECD, 2003.

**Figure 3: World and regional unemployment rates, by sex, 2003**



**Figure 4: World and regional youth unemployment rates, by sex, 2003**



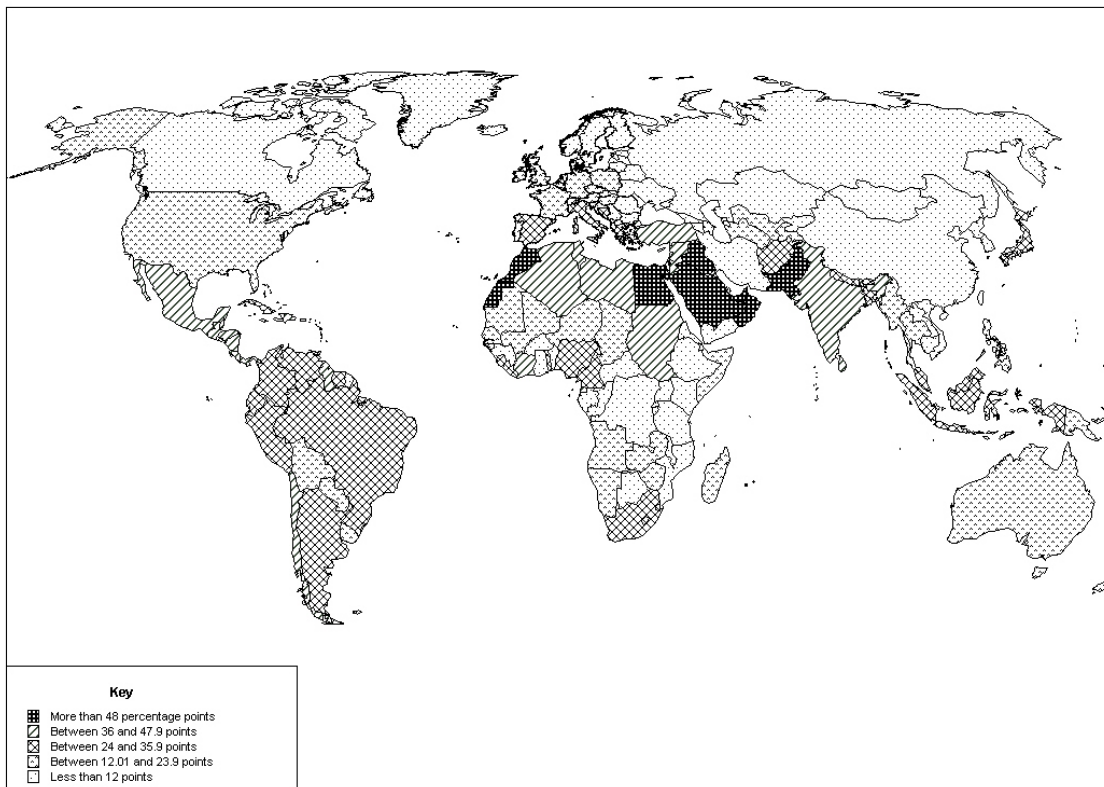
Source: GET Model, 2003; see also GET, 2004, Technical note.



### Trends in employment-to-population ratios

Employment-to-population ratios indicate the capacity of economies to create employment opportunities for their population - the higher employment-to-population ratio, the more people in the working-age population are working. As figure 5 shows, this indicator is higher for men in all regions of the world. Also in all regions the ratios for women have increased during the past ten years, but the gap persists.

**Figure 5: Differential between male and female employment-to-population ratios, 2003**



Source: GET Model, 2003; see also GET, 2004, Technical note.

The biggest gap exists in the Middle East and North Africa and South Asia, once again possibly reflecting a societal lack of interest in employment for women (figure 5). In the Middle East and North Africa, three times more jobs exist for men compared to their population than for women, and in South Asia the share is twice as high for men than for women. The smallest gap is observed in the transition economies (where women have traditionally taken a more equal part in labour markets) and in East-Asia.

Latin America and the Caribbean region showed the biggest improvement in terms of closing the gap between male and female employment-to-population ratios. The gap in 2003 was over 6 percentage points smaller than in 1993. In all Asian regions the gaps remained almost as wide as in 1993.

One might argue that not all women of working age want to work, but the simple fact that unemployment exists indicates that there are women who want to work but are unable to find work. And since overall unemployment has been higher for women than for men, it is clear that more employment opportunities need to be created for women to satisfy their willingness to work. In addition, some of the employment gaps that remain in industrialized economies can be attributed to the fact that some women might freely choose to stay at home because they can afford it. But in other regions of the world it is more likely that women

would work if there were opportunities for them to do so. Of course attracting more women into the labour force also requires as a first step the provision of equal access to education for women and equal opportunities in gaining the skills necessary to compete in the labour market.

#### 4. Trends in employment by sector and status, wages/earnings and working poverty

No agreed-upon single indicator exists for assessing the conditions of employment. However, some insights can be gained by analyzing three indicators: status of employment, employment by sector and wages/earnings. An initial assessment of these indicators reveals that although progress has been made in terms of female labour force participation, this has not necessarily been paralleled with progress in the creation of decent work opportunities for women. There are, of course, other indicators that would be of interest – hours of work and the presence of female labour in the largely unprotected informal economy (see box 2), for example. However, given the difficulties in the standardization of definitions, methodology of collection and data availability, these topics are not considered.

##### Indicator 1: Employment by status of women

Family responsibilities are still very much assigned to women. When they have to combine child-raising activities with work activities, women are required to find a solution for balancing these two roles. Role incompatibility is likely to be a greater problem for women in wage employment, less for those in self-employment and least for contributing family workers who are unpaid (but still count as employed people according to the standard definition of employment). Unfortunately, many developing economies do not have consistent data on employment status broken down by sex. Where available, this information suggests that in the poorest regions of the world the share of female contributing family workers in total employment is much higher than men's and that women are less likely to be wage and salaried workers. Table 3 cites some examples.

**Table 3: Employment by status, selected economies, latest available year**

Economy and latest year of data availability	Wage and salaried workers (employees)		Contributing family workers		Self-employed workers	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Bangladesh 2000	8.3	15.2	73.2	10.1	49.8	11.0
Pakistan 2000	33.1	36.0	50.1	16.7	16.8	47.3
Cambodia 2001	13.6	19.1	53.3	31.6	33.0	40.9
Thailand 2000	38.8	40.2	39.8	16.4	21.4	43.3
Zimbabwe 1999	22.0	50.8	n.a.	n.a.	58.0	29.2
West Bank and Gaza Strip 2001	63.9	61.9	27.3	6.0	8.8	32.2
Yemen 1999	13.8	50.7	0.3	0.3	63.4	49.0
Egypt 2000	57.2	60.6	26.0	8.2	16.8	31.1

n.a. = Data not available.

Source: KILM, 2003, table 3.

This trend is expected to continue in most parts of the developing world. Especially at times of economic crises or downturns, women are the first to withdraw from wage and salaried work. They may then be forced to enter the informal economy as own-account or unpaid family workers (see box 2).

### **Box 2: Working in the informal economy**

The informal sector represents a significant part of the economy, and certainly of the labour market, in many economies, especially developing economies, and plays a major role in employment creation, production and income generation.<sup>1</sup> In economies with high rates of population growth or urbanization, the informal economy tends to absorb most of the expanding labour force in the urban areas. Informal economy employment is a necessary survival strategy in economies that lack social safety nets.

Although national implementation of a universally agreed upon definition of the informal economy is still erratic there is general agreement that work in the informal economy means being outside the legal and regulatory frameworks, and is thus normally characterized by a high degree of vulnerability. Workers have little or no legal or social protection and are excluded from or have limited access to public infrastructure and benefits. Informal economy workers are rarely organized for effective representation and have little or no voice at the workplace or in the socio-political arena. Informal employment is normally unstable and insecure – consisting of very long hours and high pressure periods to finish contract orders within short deadlines, followed by “inactive” periods waiting for orders. Most informal economy employment is self-employment. There is a link – although not a perfect correlation – between working in the informal economy and being poor. This stems from the lack of labour legislation and social protection covering workers in the informal economy, and from the fact that informal economy workers earn, on average, less than workers in the formal economy.

Statistics on employment in the informal economy are essential for obtaining a clear picture of the contributions of all workers, women in particular, to the economy. Indeed, the informal economy has been considered as a possible fallback position for women who are excluded from paid employment. It is often the only source of income for women in the developing world, especially in those areas where cultural norms bar them from work outside the home or where, because of conflict with household responsibilities, they cannot undertake regular employee working hours.

<sup>1</sup>For additional information, see ILO, 2002, as well as the ILO website on the Informal Economy at <http://www.ilo.org/infeco>.

Even among wage and salaried workers, more and more women are likely to be in non-regular or atypical employment. Whereas men are more likely to be hired in core or regular and better-paid positions, women are increasingly being hired in peripheral, insecure, less-valued jobs including home-based, casual or temporary work. These jobs are normally characterized by very low pay, irregular income, little or no job or income security and lack of social protection (see box 3).

### **Box 3: Home-based work as a solution for role incompatibility?**

Although official statistics on home-based work are scarce, there is evidence that home-based work is becoming increasingly common, especially for women, due to the growing use of subcontracting and industrial outsourcing systems and the spread of ICT. Home-based workers are defined in the 1993 international Classification of Status in Employment as those who work for an enterprise to supply goods or services by prior arrangement with that enterprise, and whose place of work is not within any of the enterprise's establishments.<sup>1</sup> Home-based workers may be classified as wage or salaried employees or self-employed.

While women may benefit from new independence in terms of work location and flexible working hours that allow them to balance work and family roles according to their own arrangements, there are growing concerns about conditions of low-pay and the lack of protection which can accompany home-based work. In addition, there is also concern that home-based work can create a sense of isolation and exclusion from career choices.

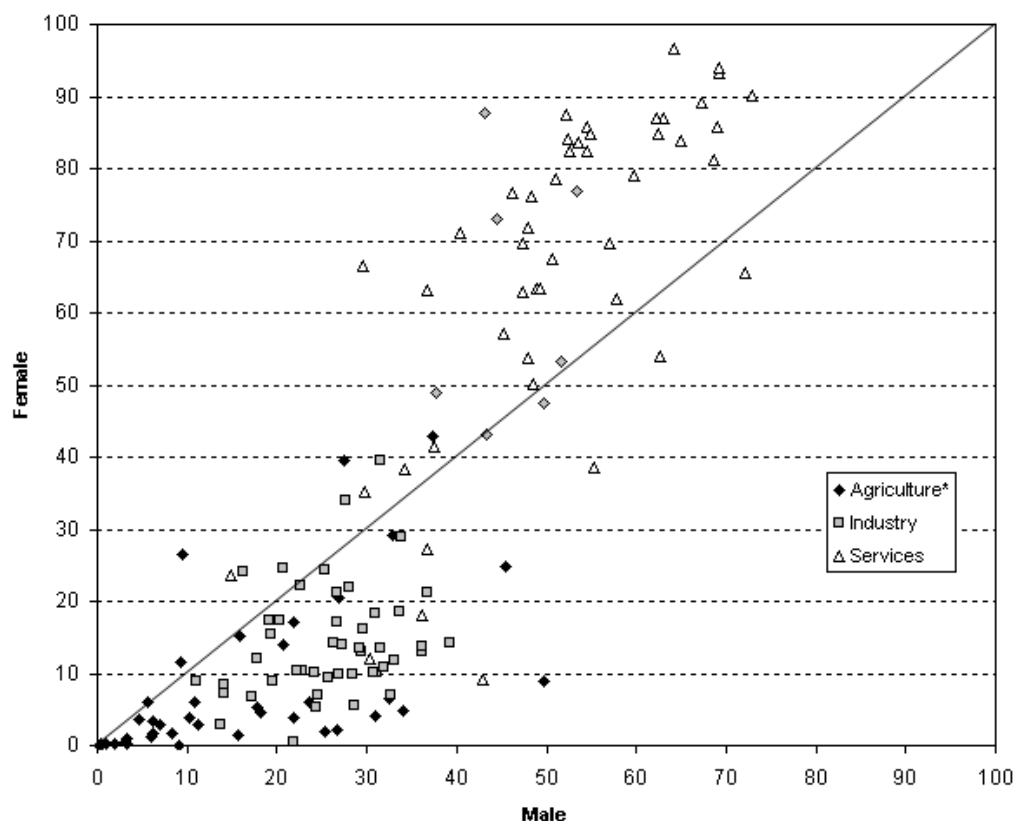
<sup>1</sup>For information on the definition and measurement of home-based work, see ILO, 1993.

## Indicator 2: Employment by sector of women

An analysis of the sectoral data gives an additional indication that women's work is not likely to be status-enhancing or empowering for them. Women have a higher share in agricultural employment in Asia, sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East and North Africa and some economies in Latin America and the Caribbean, especially in economies with low per capita income (figure 6). In all developing regions women's share in industry is lower than men's. This is despite the fact that export-led industrialization has been strongly female-intensive, particularly in the export-processing zones (EPZs) of developing economies. EPZs have created an important avenue for women to enter the formal economy at better wages than in agriculture and domestic service. However, there is evidence that as the nature of employment in EPZs evolves, with higher technology inputs, the gender profile of the workforce changes.<sup>3</sup>

Within the services sector, women are still concentrated in sectors that are traditionally associated with their gender roles, particularly in community, social and personal services, whereas men dominate the better-paid sector jobs in financial and business services and real estate.

**Figure 6: Employment distribution, by sector and sex, developing economies, latest available year**



\* The grey diamond indicates an economy in which the highest proportion of workers is employed in the agricultural sector. These include Bangladesh, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Yemen.  
Source: KILM, 2003, table 4a.

<sup>3</sup> For more information on the employment and social implications of export-processing zones, see ILO, 2003.

The sex segregation of occupations is changing, but only slowly. Female stereotypes, such as caring, docile care-giver and home-based worker, are still being reinforced and may be perpetuated into the next generation if restricted and inferior labour market opportunities for women continue to lead to underinvestment in women's education, training and experience.

### **Indicator 3: Wages and earnings**

Can wage equality be achieved? The evidence is not favourable in the short term. Women everywhere typically receive less pay than men. This is in part because women often hold low-level, low-paying positions in female-dominated occupations. A review of data available for six diverse occupation groups shows that in most economies, women still earn 90 per cent or less of what their male co-workers earn (figure 7).<sup>4</sup> In a typically male-dominated occupation such as welding in metal manufacturing, the wage disparities are even greater. Female welders in the industrialized economies earned, on average, 79 per cent of what male welders earned, and in developing economies even less at 75 per cent. Even in "typically female" occupations such as nursing and teaching, gender wage equality is still lacking. In Singapore, for example, male first-level education teachers earned approximately 6 per cent more than female teachers, and male nurses 21 per cent more than female nurses.

Traditionally there has been greater wage equality in the transition economies than in industrialized or developing economies. This is still the case today. For example, the wages of female welders and female teachers in transition economies are nearly equitable to those of males (98 per cent of the male rate) and female nurses earned even more than their male counterparts in the same occupations (2 percentage points more than the male rate).

One might expect to find near wage equality in high-skill occupations where the education and training level of applicants would presumably be comparable (accountant in the banking sector or computer programmer in the insurance sector, for example). This is not the case. Even in these occupations the average female wage is still only 88 per cent of the male wage. One of the reasons identified for the wage differential is women's lack of negotiating capability as well as bargaining power.<sup>5</sup>

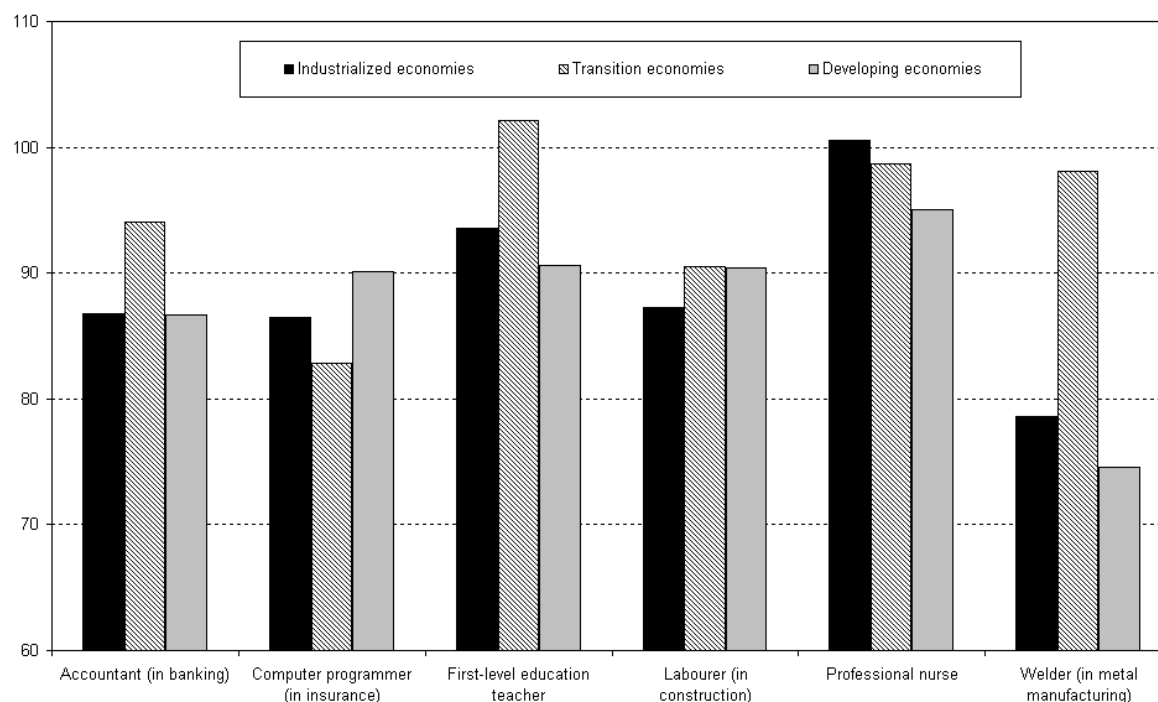
Is the situation improving? In a word, no, or at least the results are mixed according to occupation. In table 4, a higher percentage change for females than males in the same occupation would imply that female wages increased faster than male wages and were thus catching up to the male level. In the majority of cases where time-series analysis was possible, "catching up" did not occur. Female wages were catching up to male wages in only five of 12 economies with available data for accountants in the banking sector, four of ten economies for the computer programmers in insurance, five of 12 for teachers, six of ten for labourers, four of 11 for nurses and two of six for welders. The occupations that showed the greatest deterioration in the male-to-female wage situation over time were first-level education teacher and welder.

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<sup>4</sup> In this section, "wages" refers first to wages defined as the "rates paid for normal time of work, comprising: basic wages and salaries, cost-of-living allowances and other guaranteed and regularly paid allowances". Earnings are used in countries where only data on earnings and not wages are available. Earnings extend beyond wage rates to include as well "remuneration for time not worked, such as for annual vacation or other paid leave or holidays, and including those elements of earnings which are usually received regularly, before any deductions are made by the employer in respect of taxes, contributions of employees to social security and pension schemes, life insurance premiums, union dues and any other obligations of employees." See October Inquiry, 2002.

<sup>5</sup> For a study on the gender difference in negotiating capacity, see Babcock et al., 2003.

**Figure 7: Average female wages/earnings as percentage of male wages/earnings in selected occupations, latest available year**



Note: Average in this chart denotes a basic average of the countries with available data; 12 economies in the industrialized economies, 17 in the developing economies and 7 in the transition economies amongst the various occupations.

Source: KILM, 2003, tables 16a and 16b.

**Table 4: Percentage change in real wages/earnings, men and women, selected occupations**

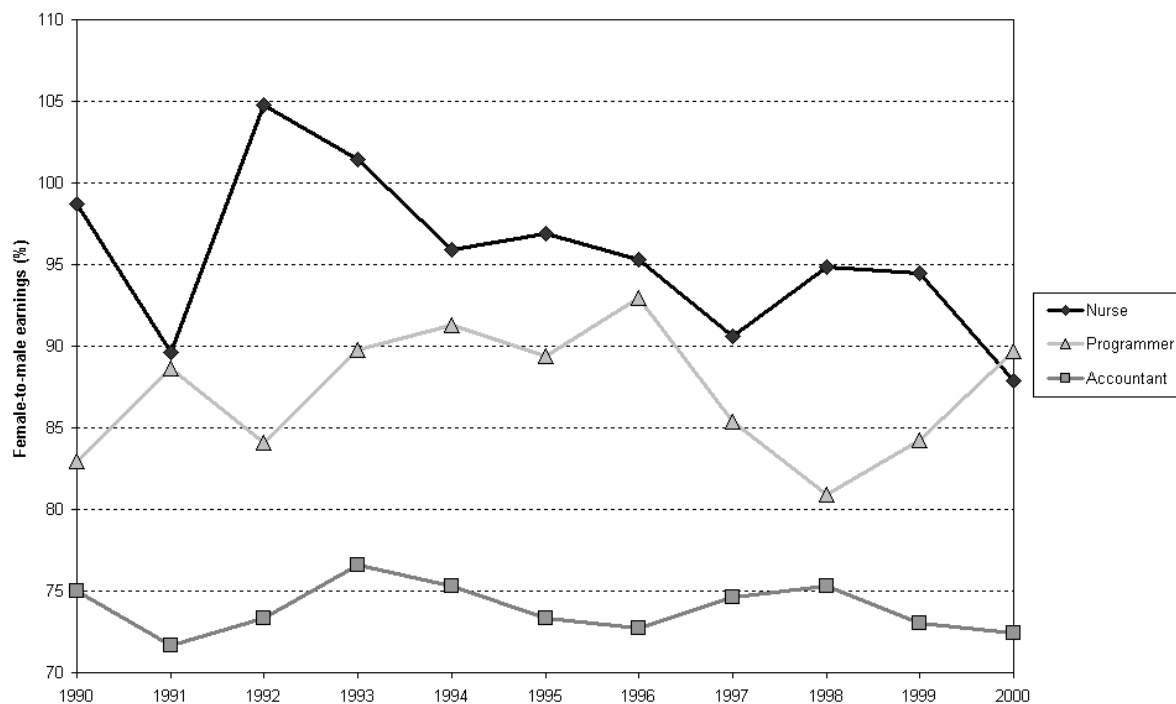
	Accountant (in banking)		Computer programmer (in insurance)		First-level education teacher		Labourer (in construction)		Professional nurse		Welder (in metal manu- facturing)	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Bahrain (1993-98)	16	16	n.a.	n.a.	-7	3	26	24	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Belarus (1996-2000)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	100	35	307	323	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Cyprus (1990-2001)	n.a.	n.a.	44	60	23	12	49	37	26	9	n.a.	n.a.
Finland (1990-98)	67	96	44	66	-7	-4	1	8	-7	-6	-10	-1
Jordan (1988-97)	29	20	-63	-51	25	13	n.a.	n.a.	-21	-17	n.a.	n.a.
Korea, Republic of (1990-2001)	91	46	94	73	29	60	115	37	71	229	46	49
Kyrgyzstan (1998-2001)	4	-26	n.a.	n.a.	-14	-39	4	20	-19	-32	n.a.	n.a.
Latvia (1997-2001)	39	31	561	142	82	45	36	18	60	33	1	26
Peru (1997-2001)	15	35	-13	-20	34	37	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Poland (1998-2001)	28	31	103	70	53	53	13	20	26	29	45	25
Romania (1995-2001)	126	73	7	38	-7	-6	-19	-24	27	17	-22	-20
Singapore (1995-2000)	-3	-24	24	43	n.a.	n.a.	26	16	9	24	24	19
United Kingdom (1996-2001)	16	19	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	10	12	n.a.	n.a.
United States (1990-2000)	9	12	15	6	4	14	n.a.	n.a.	-2	10	n.a.	n.a.

n.a. = Data not available.

Source: KILM, 2003, tables 16a and 16b.

Figure 8 shows a specific economy example of the movement in female-to-male earning differentials over time: in the United States in 1990 the earnings of female nurses were almost equivalent to that of male nurses. By 2000, however, female nurses were earning less than 90 per cent of their male counterparts. There was a similar decrease in the earnings gap by gender for accountants in the banking sector.

**Figure 8: Female occupational earnings as a percentage of male earnings in the United States, 1990 to 2000**



Source: KILM, 2003, table 16b.

### Women have a high likelihood of being working poor

In the process of socioeconomic development, the assumption that women increasingly enter the modern sector in permanent, full-time wage employment does not hold, – at least not for the time being. Increases in labour force participation rates have so far not been matched by improvements in job quality and the working conditions of women have not led to their true socioeconomic empowerment.

As a result the share of women that are employed but still are unable to lift themselves and their family above the US \$1 a day poverty line – the so-called working-poor share – is higher for women than it is for men. Out of the total number of 550 million estimated working poor, around 60 per cent or 330 million are women.<sup>6</sup> Only if future creation of decent jobs extends even more to women than to men, can this share be reduced.

There is mounting evidence that women's ability to fully enjoy human rights – indeed, even to demand such rights – is integrally linked to their economic empowerment. The ability to take decisions – on marriage, on childbearing and on contraception, among others – requires a sense of personal autonomy, which develops in tandem with the self-knowledge that women can provide for themselves and their children. Their sense of personhood is

<sup>6</sup> The calculation of the number of people that are working poor is based on the poverty figures given by the World Bank, 2003. Unfortunately these figures do not exist disaggregated by region. But many experts assume a female poverty rate of 60-70 per cent (see footnote 1). This is the rate used for the calculation of female working poor in the world for this publication. For details on the calculation of working poor see Kapsos, S., 2004.

sparked by motherhood and nurtured by participation in organized groups, but fundamentally depends on having their own decent income. Whether women work out of need or choice, the focus should be on giving them decent jobs, so that in the long run they can work themselves and their families out of poverty. At the same time childcare facilities are a necessary precondition for women to be able to go to work and use their productive potential effectively.





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## O Escritório da OIT em Portugal associa-se à celebração do Dia Internacional da Mulher - 8 de Março de 2005



A CITE (Comissão para a Igualdade no Trabalho e no Emprego) e o Escritório da OIT (Organização Internacional do Trabalho) em Lisboa vão assinar um Protocolo de Cooperação, cujos principais objectivos incidem na promoção da igualdade e da não discriminação entre homens e mulheres, em domínios considerados de interesse comum pelas duas instituições.

Dada a importância que este Protocolo assume na prossecução dos objectivos de ambas as partes, o seu âmbito tenderá a alargar-se aos diferentes países da CPLP, beneficiando desde logo de outras parcerias já firmadas.

### Instrumentos relevantes da OIT

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1958: Convenção sobre a Discriminação (Emprego e Profissão) (N.º 111)  
1981: Convenção sobre os Trabalhadores com Responsabilidades Familiares (N.º 156)  
2000: Convenção sobre a Protecção da Maternidade (N.º 183)

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## Dia Internacional da Mulher

8 de Março de 2006



**O Escritório da OIT em Portugal associa-se à celebração do Dia Internacional da Mulher**

A **Organização Internacional do Trabalho (OIT)** em reconhecimento ao Ano Internacional do Desporto para Paz e Desenvolvimento (2005) elegeu como tema para celebrar o **Dia Internacional da Mulher (8 de Março) «As mulheres e o desporto»**.

Este ano a OIT e o Comité Olímpico Internacional (COI) associaram-se para promover várias iniciativas alusivas ao Dia Internacional da Mulher.

Foi lançado o desafio aos Escritórios da OIT de todo mundo para que fossem indicados nomes de atletas para a realização de um vídeo que ficará disponível no site da OIT a partir do dia 8 de Março. **Dos 9 testemunhos escolhidos, um será da portuguesa Alfredina Silva, actual treinadora de futebol e ex-jogadora internacional.**

O **Escritório da OIT** em Lisboa participou activamente na indicação de uma atleta portuguesa para integrar o vídeo que será divulgado a nível mundial no dia 8 de Março.

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# Employment Strategy Papers

## Globalization, economic policy and employment: Poverty and gender implications

By

James Heintz

Employment Policy Unit  
Employment Strategy Department

2006/3



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## Foreword

This study - *Globalization, economic policy and employment: Poverty and gender implications* was initially commissioned in 2005 to take stock of recent literature and existing empirical evidence regarding economic growth, economic policies, employment and poverty through an engendered approach. Globalization is a process which affects all economies to varying degrees and has had both negative and positive influences on economic growth and employment, depending on the economic predisposition of a given economy, particularly in international trade, the set of macroeconomic policies adopted and how they are laid out in the overall development process and economic evolution. The study is, therefore, an attempt to analyse the overall impact of globalization and macroeconomic policies on employment and poverty trends with a specific gender perspective, or an attempt to engender employment and poverty implications of macroeconomic policies. The study also forms a part of the ILO's efforts to address the social dimension of globalization, in order to promote a fair and inclusive globalization through productive and decent employment for all.

The study demonstrates how the labour market and the world of work in general are clearly sex-disaggregated and how important it is to undertake analysis of the impact of macroeconomic policies on growth, employment and poverty reduction, with specific consideration of such segmentation. The study also demonstrates how different aspects of macroeconomic policies affect women's and men's work differently. The relevant implications should be taken into consideration for the formulation of economic and employment policies, adapting them to different economic disposition and evolution episode of various economies, as well as relative location of women and men in the world of work of that particular country.

The findings of this report suggest that the dominant economic policy regime will have to change if the problems of jobless growth are to be addressed. The current policy framework stresses a macroeconomic stability, freer markets, a smaller role for the public sector and uninhibited international flows of capital and goods, but not extending the same privilege to labour. Fortunately, alternatives exist for the responsible management of economies in a globally integrated context, alternatives that secure economic stability without sacrificing the welfare of working people or entrenching existing gender inequalities. The study has outlined, in broad terms, the elements of such a framework. The more difficult challenge is to marshal the political will to create the policy space necessary to move the global economy onto a development trajectory that supports sustainable poverty reduction, gender equity and decent work for all. We hope the paper will further stimulate the debate on relevant issues.

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Naoko Otobe, Senior Employment and Gender Specialist in the Employment Sector of the ILO, who conceived the initial research idea, has provided overall technical coordination for commissioning the research and overseeing the publication.

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# 1. Introduction

Sweeping changes have taken place in the world's economies in recent decades, changes which have reshaped the structure of employment on a global scale. National economies are now more integrated into the global system than at any other point in the recent past. The volume of international trade and the magnitude of cross-border capital flows have reached historically high levels. Advances in communications and transport technologies have led to the establishment of complex international production networks, with developing countries producing an unprecedented level of manufactured exports within global supply chains. Fundamental shifts in economic policies have accompanied the process of globalization. These policies have emphasized maintaining low rates of inflation, liberalizing markets, reducing the scope of the public sector and encouraging cross-border flows of goods, services and finance, but not labour.

It is commonplace these days to assert that globalization provides enormous challenges as well as opportunities. This observation is particularly relevant with regard to employment. The era of global integration has been associated with far-reaching changes in the structure of employment, including pressures for increased flexibility, episodes of "jobless growth," growing informalization and casualization, expanding opportunities for the highly skilled, but vanishing opportunities for the less skilled. New employment opportunities have been created in many developing countries due to the expansion of globally-oriented production, helping to reduce poverty and raise incomes. However, contradictions abound. Many of the new employment opportunities are precarious, and the size of the "working poor" population remains staggering.

The transformation of women's employment during this period has been similarly far-reaching. More women participate in paid employment than at any other time in history. The entry of women into the labour force has meant that, in many cases, the economic opportunities available to them have grown. However, equality of opportunity remains elusive. Sex segmentation of labour markets is endemic, with women concentrated in lower quality, irregular and informal employment. Economic stabilization programmes and the process of global integration have frequently squeezed household incomes, pushing women to enter the paid labour force. At the same time, economic reforms have intensified demands on women's unpaid work, creating a situation in which increasing the supply of women's labour is a central strategy by which families cope with fundamental economic change. At a basic level, women's employment, paid and unpaid, may be the single most important factor for keeping many households out of poverty.

Employment is the primary channel through which the majority of the population can share in the benefits of economic growth. In particular, employment plays a critical role in ensuring that economic growth translates into poverty reduction. However, the ability of employment to reduce poverty depends on prevailing gender relations and intra-household dynamics. Therefore, any analysis that seriously considers the connections between growth, employment and poverty reduction must incorporate a gender perspective or run the risk of reaching erroneous conclusions.

This study explores the growth-employment-poverty reduction nexus through a gender perspective. In particular, it explores how changes in economic policies affect



women's and men's employment and proposes ways of assessing the implications of these changes for poverty and gender equality.

The paper is structured as follows. The next section presents a conceptual framework for linking growth to employment and employment to poverty reduction within a gender perspective. The third section then reviews trends in labour force participation, women's and men's employment, informalization, earnings and poverty rates among the global working poor. The fourth part of the report extends the analysis by critically examining two frameworks used for understanding the gendered nature of work and poverty: the "feminization of labour" and the "feminization of poverty". The fifth section is in many ways the core of the report. It presents and reviews evidence concerning the impact of changes in economic policy on women's and men's employment. Four policy areas are explored: monetary policy, trade policy, exchange rate regimes and public sector restructuring. The sixth and final conclusion sections pull the analysis together and suggest ways of building an alternative policy framework of employment-centred development for poverty reduction.

## 2. Growth, employment and poverty reduction – a conceptual framework

When employment expands with economic production, the benefits of growth will be widely shared. Enhanced employment opportunities provide individuals with new, and often better, sources of income. In this way, improving the quality and quantity of employment opportunities directly links economic growth to poverty reduction. Low-income households possess few assets of their own. Instead, the most abundant resource the poor have at their disposal is their labour (Islam 2004, Squire 1993). A development strategy that more fully employs a country's human resources and raises the returns to labour becomes a powerful tool for reducing poverty.

Evidence from around the world suggests that the greater the employment focus, the more effective economic growth becomes in fighting poverty (Khan, 2001; Islam, 2004). The precise path to poverty reduction differs from country to country. However, most developing countries that have dramatically reduced their poverty levels have done so by improving employment opportunities. In these cases, low-income households have been able to participate in the improvements in the quality and quantity of paid work – for instance, by improving agricultural productivity or increasing jobs in labour-intensive production. Numerous examples exist – Indonesia, Vietnam, Chile, Bangladesh and South Korea (Osmani, 2004; Khan, 2001).

Economic growth alone can not be counted on to generate significant improvements in employment and poverty reduction (Osmani, 2004, 2003). The *type* of growth matters as much as the *level* of growth. Countries around the world have experienced periods of “jobless growth” in which output expands, but formal employment stagnates or declines. Informal employment frequently has grown more rapidly than formal employment, both during economic downturns and during periods of relatively rapid growth (Heintz and Pollin, 2003). Such “informalization” represents deterioration, on average, of the quality of remunerative work.

Employment is not the only means of translating growth into poverty reduction. Governments can utilize the additional resources that growth generates to provide basic services – such as education, health and income-support grants. Social provisioning policies supply public goods and services necessary for developing human potential. Therefore, as will be discussed later in the report, social policies must be an integral part of a viable employment-centred strategy for development. However, the principal focus here is on the growth-employment-poverty nexus.

The establishment of an employment-centred development path for poverty reduction requires the realization of three interrelated components:

- **A Growth Component** – sustaining adequate economic growth;
- **An Employment Component** - insuring that growth creates new employment opportunities and improves existing ones; and
- **A Poverty Component** - linking vulnerable or marginalized individuals and households to employment opportunities.

The connections between these three elements are not straight-forward. Economic growth alone is necessary, but not sufficient to achieve the ultimate objective of poverty reduction. Growth must be associated with improvements in employment opportunities if the efficiency with which growth reduces poverty is to be increased. Moreover, the generation of new employment is not enough to guarantee a decline in poverty. Policies must be designed so that the poor can take advantage of new opportunities.

In developing a conceptual framework for an employment strategy, it helps to examine each of these three components in more detail. Concrete suggestions for how these elements can be realised are contained in subsequent sections of the report.

## **2.1 The growth component**

Maintaining adequate rates of economic growth requires sustainable improvements in three areas: (1) expanding investment in productive capacity, (2) raising labour productivity (that is, the amount of output produced for a given quantity of labour), and (3) securing adequate demand. The expansion of productive capacity through new investments will generally raise labour demand, since increased production requires additional labour as well as capital. In addition, productivity improvements lay the groundwork for sustained improvements in living standards and wages. Higher productivity fuels growth by increasing the potential output from a given pool of resources.

However, higher rates of productivity may work against employment creation when less labour is needed to produce a given level of output. Similarly, new investments will not increase demand for labour if such investments simply add to excess capacity. To avoid these pitfalls, employment-intensive growth requires that demand for domestically-produced goods and services is matched with productivity improvements and investments in productive capacity. Therefore, access to markets – the ability to export to foreign markets and the expansion of domestic demand – is necessary to realise the benefits of greater productivity and investment. Achieving these objectives – greater productive capacity, productivity improvements and adequate demand – depends critically on the prevailing economic policy environment.

In recent decades, global economic performance has worsened in many regions of the world. Figure 1 presents average growth rates in world GDP per capita from 1961 to 2003. In addition, an estimate of the long-run trend in per capita GDP growth is presented.<sup>1</sup> In the 1960s and much of the 1970s, economic performance was volatile, much more so than in later periods. The long-run trend suggests a relatively steady decline in growth rates throughout this period. Beginning in the late 1970s, global growth stabilized, but at low levels relative to earlier periods.

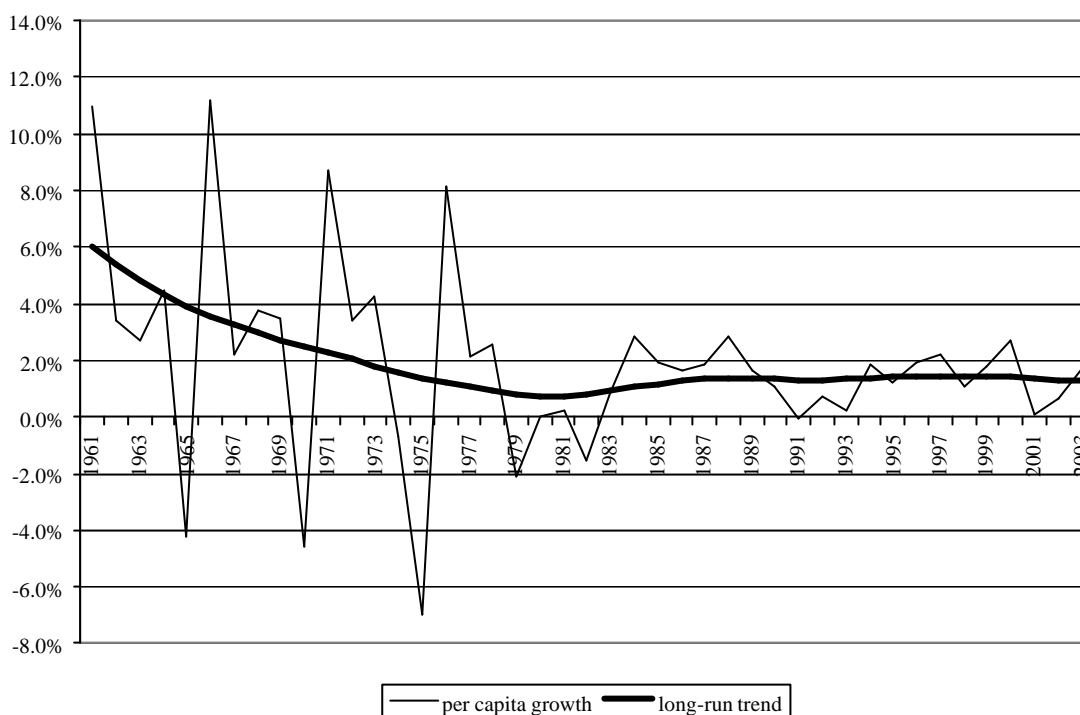
Similar trends in the long-run trajectory of economic growth are evident when growth is disaggregated and countries grouped by level of development. However, important differences also emerge. Figure 2 presents long-run trends in per capita GDP growth for (1) high-income countries, (2) low- and middle-income countries, excluding India and China, and (3) India and China. The World Bank's classification of countries into "high-income", "middle-income" and "low-income" groupings is used.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In both Figure 1 and Figure 2, the long-run trends is generated by applying a Hodrick-Prescott filter to the annual time series for per capita GDP growth. The Hodrick-Prescott filter is a statistical smoothing technique that is widely used to obtain an estimate of the long-term trend component of a series.

<sup>2</sup> *World Development Indicators 2005* CD-ROM, Washington, DC: World Bank.

Figure 1.  
World GDP growth per capita and its long-run trend, 1961-2003



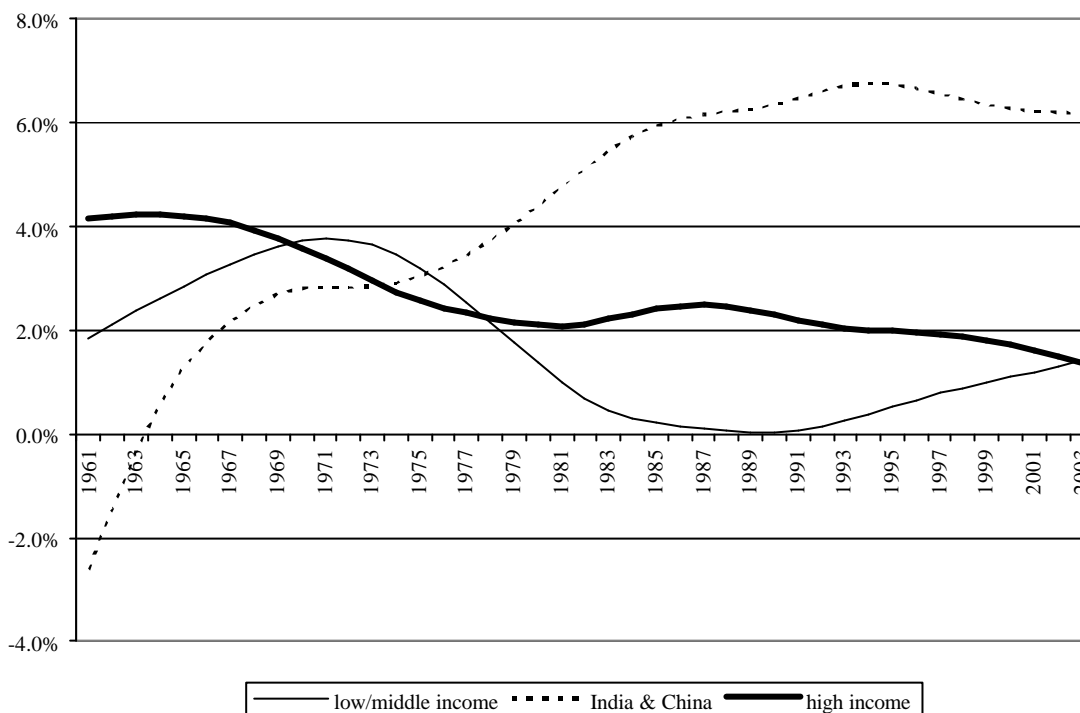
Source: [World Development Indicators 2005](#) (Washington, DC: World Bank).

The long-run trend in the growth rate of the high-income countries generally reflects the world trend – that is, declining from relatively high levels in the early 1960s to stable and low levels after the late 1970s. The low- and middle-income countries – excluding India and China – show a somewhat different pattern. Growth accelerates during the 1960s until the mid-1970s, at which time the growth rate begins to decline steeply. The long-run trend in the growth rate bottoms out at nearly zero in the early 1990s, after which time a modest recovery occurs. The growth pattern of India and China is dramatically different. The long-run trend in the growth rate climbs from relatively low levels in the 1960s to high and steady rates in the late 1980s/early 1990s.

The change in global growth corresponds with shifts in economic policy. In many countries around the globe, policies emphasizing trade liberalization, deregulated markets, monetary policy focused on low and stable inflation rates and fiscal restraint began to be introduced in the mid- to late 1970s and were consolidated in the 1980s and 1990s. In many cases, such policies were directly connected to structural adjustment programmes introduced at the time of the debt crisis in many African and Latin American countries. However, this characterization of the shift in economic policies risks over-generalizing. Different countries pursued various policy paths and had a variety of growth experiences. Interestingly, India and China did not pursue this same set of policies and had markedly different growth experiences.

Separating out the effects of policy shifts, global integration and other factors which influence economic performance is difficult. Moreover, these influences cannot be assumed to be independent – e.g. policy choices affect the pace of global integration and the degree of integration determines the scope for purposeful government intervention. Therefore,

*Figure 2.*  
*Long-run trends in average per capita GDP growth, select country groupings, 1961-2003*



Source: World Development Indicators 2005 (Washington, DC: World Bank).

the ways in which global integration, policy choices and economic growth interact continue to be debated. Specifically, dramatically different answers have been given in response to the question of whether global integration and associated policies have been good for growth (Dollar, 2005; Weisbrot *et al.*, 2001). Much depends on the selection of countries analyzed, the time period considered, and how the results are aggregated or summarized.

Later sections of this report will examine specific economic policies in more detail, but with an emphasis on their impact on employment, and women's employment in particular. At present, we should simply note that the slowdown in economic growth that many countries experienced in recent decades would have had a direct impact on the growth of employment opportunities. At the same time, it is important to recognize the diversity of development experiences. Exceptions do exist.

Finally, changes in inequality affect how growth impacts poverty. If inequality expands sufficiently, faster growth will have a muted impact on poverty and may be associated with high levels of poverty, measured across a variety of dimensions: income, consumption and human development (UN 2005; UNDP, 2005). In addition, it is important to acknowledge that, while growth is important for poverty reduction, poverty and inequality also affect economic performance (Deininger and Squire, 1998; Alesina and Rodrik, 1994; Easterly and Rebelo, 1993). The direction of causation runs in both directions.

## **2.2 The employment component**

Numerous factors influence the employment intensity of growth: the sectoral composition of output, the productive technologies utilized, downstream and upstream linkages to other activities in the domestic economy, and the size and trajectory of public employment. Sectoral interventions and productive sector strategies are needed to insure that growth is employment intensive. However, a purely sectoral approach artificially limits employment creation. Policies for the productive sector must be crafted to leverage downstream and upstream linkages in order to take advantage of larger employment multipliers. When these linkages to other value-adding activities are absent, the employment intensity of growth will be reduced.

Technologies must be appropriate to insure competitive market access and to absorb labour. In the short-run, there can be a trade-off between improving labour productivity and the growth of employment. However, such a trade-off is not a foregone conclusion and, in the long-run, labour productivity improvements are necessary for both more and better jobs (ILO, 2004c). Whether enhanced productivity leads to more opportunities depends in part on the economic environment in which the productivity improvements occur. When the broad economic policy environment is inappropriate – for example, when an overvalued exchange rate discourages the development of domestic linkages and limits market access – policy priorities should be adjusted appropriately if growth is to generate significant new employment opportunities.<sup>3</sup>

As mentioned previously, growth is not always associated with new employment opportunities. Research has suggested that the relationship between growth and employment generation has weakened in a large number of countries around the world in recent years (Kapsos, 2005). In other words, the additional employment created at a given level of economic growth appears to have fallen over time. Table 1 presents estimates of the “employment elasticity of growth” for the formal manufacturing sectors of 51 countries during two time periods: (1) the 1960s and 1970s, and (2) the 1980s onwards. The employment elasticity of growth describes the percentage change in employment associated with a 1 per cent change in value-added. For example, an employment elasticity of 0.5 indicates that a 10 per cent increase in the value of economic activity is associated with a 5 per cent increase in employment. In this way, the employment elasticity measures how responsive employment is to economic growth. A decline in the employment elasticity indicates that a given rate of growth is less employment intensive.

In two-thirds of the countries listed in Table 1, the estimated employment elasticity in manufacturing activities dropped in the later period, often significantly. This suggests that, for a given level of growth, the industrial sectors of many, but not all countries produced fewer jobs in recent years compared to the past. Some countries – e.g. Asian “tigers” like Korea and Singapore – experienced rapid growth rates that helped compensate for the decline in the employment intensity of that growth. However, a significantly large number of countries, both developed and developing, experienced both slower growth and a decline in the labour intensity of that growth in their industrial sectors.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> When fixed capital, such as computers, equipment, and machinery, are imported, an overvalued real exchange rate can also encourage overly capital-intensive investment by lowering the costs of these items. Through such mechanisms, macroeconomic policies impact the factor intensity of production.

<sup>4</sup> Kapsos (2005) finds a similar general decline in the employment intensity of growth in a study of 139 countries over the period 1991 to 2003. Kapsos disaggregates his estimates of employment elasticity by sex, age

*Table 1.*  
*Estimates of the Employment Elasticity of Growth.*  
*(the periods over which the elasticities were estimated are in parentheses)*

	<b>1960s/1970s</b>	<b>1980s +</b>
Algeria	0.97 (67-79)	0.40 (80-96)
Austria	0.32 (63-79)	-0.30 (80-99)
Bangladesh	0.56 (67-79)	1.00 (80-97)
Barbados	0.26 (70-79)	0.20 (80-97)
Bolivia	0.63 (70-79)	0.62 (80-97)
Cameroon	0.65 (70-79)	0.14 (80-98)
Canada	0.32 (65-79)	0.18 (80-01)
Chile	0.01 (63-79)	0.64 (80-00)
Colombia	0.72 (63-79)	0.39 (80-99)
Ecuador	0.81 (63-79)	0.26 (80-99)
Egypt	0.69 (64-79)	0.31 (80-96)
El Salvador	0.35 (63-79)	0.07 (80-98)
Finland	0.42 (63-79)	0.24 (80-00)
France	0.10 (63-79)	-1.13 (80-95)
Ghana	0.75 (63-79)	0.15 (80-95)
Greece	0.40 (63-79)	1.26 (80-98)
Hungary	0.17 (63-79)	1.00 (80-00)
Iceland	0.42 (68-79)	-0.57 (80-96)
India	0.66 (63-79)	0.18 (80-01)
Indonesia	0.58 (70-79)	0.63 (80-02)
Ireland	0.23 (63-79)	0.13 (80-99)
Israel	0.39 (63-79)	0.25 (80-01)
Italy	0.22 (63-79)	0.44 (80-94)
Jamaica	0.63 (63-79)	1.21 (80-96)
Japan	0.14 (65-79)	0.31 (80-01)
Kenya	0.71 (63-79)	0.63 (80-02)
Korea	0.73 (63-79)	0.14 (80-01)
Kuwait	-0.44 (67-79)	0.26 (80-01)
Malawi	0.45 (64-79)	-0.02 (80-98)
Malaysia	0.87 (68-79)	0.64 (80-01)
Malta	0.47 (63-79)	0.08 (80-01)
Netherlands	-0.44 (63-79)	-0.53 (80-00)
New Zealand	0.77 (63-79)	0.07 (80-96)
Norway	0.25 (63-79)	-0.26 (80-01)
Pakistan	0.34 (63-79)	0.35 (80-96)
Panama	0.74 (63-79)	-0.05 (80-00)
Philippines	0.96 (63-79)	0.38 (80-97)
Portugal	0.90 (63-79)	1.02 (80-00)
Singapore	0.78 (63-79)	0.24 (80-02)
South Africa	0.76 (63-79)	0.13 (80-99)
Spain	0.33 (63-79)	0.79 (80-00)
Sri Lanka	0.80 (66-79)	0.83 (80-00)

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(i.e. youth), and region. It is important to note that not all countries or regions experienced the same pattern of decline in their employment elasticity over this period.

*Table 1.*  
*Estimates of the Employment Elasticity of Growth (continued)*

Sweden	0.06 (63-79)	0.46 (80-00)
Syria	0.45 (63-79)	-0.28 (80-98)
Trinidad Tobago	0.26 (66-79)	0.21 (80-95)
Turkey	0.93 (68-79)	0.26 (80-97)
UK	-0.26 (63-79)	0.13 (80-95)
USA	0.17 (63-79)	-0.25 (80-95)
Uruguay	0.70 (68-79)	0.93 (80-97)
Venezuela	0.85 (63-79)	0.23 (80-98)
Zimbabwe	0.65 (63-79)	0.06 (80-96)

*Source: Author's calculations based on UNIDO data (INDSTAT3 2005 Rev.2 database). Simple bivariate regressions were used to generate the estimates. The regressions took the form:  $\ln Y_{it} = a_i + \beta_i \ln E_{it}$  in which  $Y_{it}$  represents manufacturing value-added for country 'i' in year 't' and  $E_{it}$  represents total manufacturing employment for country 'i' in year 't'. The coefficient,  $\beta_i$ , over the two time periods for each country is used as the estimate of the employment elasticity.*

Declining employment elasticity of growth suggests that productivity trends are increasingly influential in determining labour demand. As mentioned previously, growth of labour productivity is necessary, although not sufficient, for improving employment earnings and living standards (ILO, 2004a). These two dimensions of labour productivity present us with a dilemma: productivity improvements are necessary to improve the quality of employment, but may undermine efforts to increase the quantity of labour demanded. For developing countries with widespread underemployment in low-productivity activities, addressing this tension is of paramount importance.

If the objective is to improve employment opportunities in terms of both quality and quantity, then the policy framework must address the need to expand employment without compromising productivity improvements. This requires ensuring that the output of goods and services expands at least as rapidly as productivity. In other words, productivity improvements should be pursued in combination with strategies to relax demand constraints (e.g. inadequate market access), capital constraints (e.g. insufficient investment), or both types of constraints simultaneously.

Responses to the decline in the employment intensity of growth have been varied: for example, expansion of low-paid service employment, high and sustained levels of open unemployment, or an increase in the average number of household members working in low-productivity agricultural activities. Furthermore, although data limitations prevent us from making definitive statements, informalization appears to have increased in countries around the world during this period (Heintz and Pollin, 2003; ILO, 2002a; Benería, 2001; Castells and Portes, 1989).

The growth of informalization raises a concern over the quality, not just the quantity, of jobs created during this period. In many economies, the average quality of employment opportunities and associated social protections was eroded, a result of increased flexibility in labour markets (Standing, 1999a). Subsequent sections of this report will examine how specific policies impact these patterns of employment – not just in terms of economic growth, but also with regard to the quantity and quality of employment opportunities generated at a given rate of growth.



### **2.3 The poverty component**

Clearly, if poverty is to be reduced, then the poor must be able to benefit from employment creation. Policies should be designed to allow individuals' better access to a more diverse array of economic opportunities. Improving the effectiveness with which employment creation reduces poverty can be framed within the context of labour mobility, if mobility is conceptualized broadly enough. Three dimensions of labour mobility are particularly relevant: mobility within the labour market (i.e. across labour market segments); spatial mobility (i.e. domestic and international migration); and mobility within a given employment activity (upward and downward mobility in earnings and working conditions).

In general, policies that increase the positive aspects of mobility across these three dimensions will enhance the effectiveness of an employment-focused strategy in reducing poverty and raising living standards. Moreover, improvements in labour mobility are good for growth. A study of Latin American economies estimated that the benefits of eliminating sex-based segmentation in the labour market range from 2 to 9 per cent of GDP (Tzannatos, 1999). The potential benefits to developing countries of liberalizing international labour flows may greatly exceed the benefits these countries would realize through further liberalization of trade or capital flows (Rodrik, 2002).

Numerous policies can be implemented to increase mobility across these three dimensions. For example, reducing labour market segmentation may require improving skills and training and enhancing access to credit and capital assets of various kinds (Rakodi, 1999). As will be discussed at length later in this report, addressing gender inequalities in the division of market and non-market work is critical to reduce labour market segmentation and enhance mobility.

Improvements in the terms of trade for the working poor are necessary in order to enhance upward mobility within an employment activity and to discourage immiseration of employment - that is, employment that traps workers in a cycle of low-productivity and poverty. For example, prices that agricultural producers receive for their produce, are often much lower than consumer prices in the final market. Much of the value is captured by others along the distribution network that links the product to the market. Similarly, crowding in the urban informal marketplace intensifies competition and reduces the already low incomes that informal workers earn. In these cases, if poor workers could capture a larger share of the value of what they produce or sell - including their own labour - the poverty-reduction potential of employment would be enhanced.

The combination of slower growth and the falling employment intensity of growth described above have important implications for poverty outcomes. In the absence of new policies to assist low-income families, we would expect increasing poverty in those countries that experienced slower growth and poor performance with regard to employment creation.

The question of whether inequality and poverty have intensified over time has been the subject of much research and debate (Milanovic, 2005; Chen and Ravallion, 2004; Ghose, 2003; Sutcliffe, 2003; Deaton and Dreze, 2002; Sala-i-Martin, 2002). However, the answer to the question - have global poverty and inequality increased? - depends on the different experiences of countries around the world and how these divergent experiences are combined into a single assessment (Sutcliffe, 2003). Some populous countries, such as China, have shown a decline in poverty in recent years, and this is sufficient to influence global trends (Chen and Ravallion, 2004; Ghose, 2003). In other countries and regions, inequality and

poverty appear to have increased with globalization (*ibid.*). Moreover, the extent to which low-income countries have caught up to high income countries, in terms of reducing the gap in per capita income, has varied from country to country and region to region (Ghose, 2003). Both inter-country and intra-country trends need to be taken into account when assessing overall trends. We examine the employment-poverty linkages in more detail later in the report.

#### **2.4 Economic growth: implications on employment, poverty and gender**

The framework presented above – with growth, employment and poverty-reducing elements – is inadequate. Women and men occupy different positions in local, regional and global economies with important implications for the realization of the triple objectives of growth, employment and poverty reduction. Therefore, the gendered nature of economic institutions, the unequal distribution of assets and opportunities between men and women, and the division of labour between paid and unpaid work must be incorporated into the framework. Specifically, a gender perspective must be incorporated into the three components detailed above. A failure to do so would compromise the usefulness of the overall framework.

The growth-employment-poverty nexus, as outlined above, focuses exclusively on market-based transactions relating to employment and the income generated through these transactions. These market exchanges take on many forms. For instance, in wage labour markets, individuals exchange their labour directly for a salary or wage. The terms of this exchange has a direct impact on the living standards and poverty status of households.

However, this focus on the market relationships that govern remunerative employment ignores non-market activities that have an enormous effect on poverty status, development outcomes and the production of human potential. Much of this non-market work takes place in households, families and communities. In addition, intra-household dynamics directly influence the distribution of labour and resources in ways that impact access to employment opportunities in the short- and long-run.

Gender relations determine the ways in which market and non-market work is organized. Women often have primary responsibility for non-market (unpaid) housework and caring labour. This constrains their choices in terms of labour force participation and their access to paid employment, both formal and informal (Benería, 2003). The allocation of time to non-market as opposed to market work limits the household income that women control directly. Furthermore, with more time allocated to non-market work, women frequently have less paid work experience or interrupt their employment, factors which often translate into lower earnings.

As we will see in much more detail, sex segmentation is endemic in labour markets around the world, with women often concentrated in low-paid, unstable and poor-quality employment. Wage labour markets might not be the only, and often not the most important, form of market exchange relating to these forms of employment. For instance, quasi labour markets exist in which workers sell a product or service, but within a set of dependent relationships that limit their authority over the employment arrangement. Examples include subcontracted production, or home work, in which workers produce or assemble goods for a set of specification given by the work provider (often a middle man – quasi employer, or a factory) within a longer supply chain. Distinct market dynamics, apart from those of labour markets, govern various forms of self-employment or quasi wage employment. Often social benefits and protection are absent for these types of precarious and informal employment,

raising the economic risk that women working in these activities face, as they are undertaken outside the ambit of labour legislation.

This type of labour force segmentation reduces women's earning potential. With lower expected earnings, investment in girls' and women's education frequently lags behind that of male population. Similarly, perceived women's lower earning potential reinforces the gender division of labour within the household, since the opportunity cost, in terms of foregone income, of specializing in unpaid care work is lower for women than for men. Women who specialize in providing unpaid care work face enormous economic risks (Folbre, 1994). Such specialization not only lowers their earnings potential and reinforces dependencies on a male "breadwinner". Often women do not have the same access to social protections, such as pensions for old age, thereby increasing their risk of falling into poverty.

The gender division between market and non-market work, the unequal distribution of employment opportunities, and women's lower earnings potential reinforce established gender dynamics at household level. For example, women's influence over the distribution of resources and labour within the household is weakened when opportunities to earn income through employment are limited. Therefore, increasing women's access to paid employment has the potential to change gender roles and household dynamics, depending on the resilience of gender norms in society and the type of employment to which women have access (Benería and Floro, 2005; Benería, 2003; Kabeer, 2000). The relationship between paid market work and prevailing gender relations is complex. Access to remunerative employment does not always translate into control over a portion of the household's income. Similarly, labour market participation may involve costs as well as benefits (Elson 1999). These factors influence the extent to which women's access to employment alters gender dynamics.

Women's labour force participation is not only determined by prevailing gender norms. Women respond to adverse economic conditions – including rising unemployment – by increasing their rate of labour force participation. For instance, studies have shown that increases in women's labour force participation have corresponded to the implementation of structural adjustment programmes (Çagatay and Özler, 1995; Benería and Feldman, 1992). Women's labour force participation has been shown to increase with economic crises and policies that trigger labour displacement, job instability and higher rates of unemployment (Cerrutti, 2000; Arriagada, 1994). Women also increase their labour force participation in response to sustained structural unemployment. For instance, research into the determinants of women's labour supply in post-apartheid South Africa has shown that women's labour force participation responded to increases in household joblessness, thereby placing further upward pressure on the country's average unemployment rate (Casale, 2003).

The responsiveness of female labour force participation to worsening economic conditions highlights the impact of established gender norms on men. Not all men occupy identical positions within the global economy. Many men are employed in precarious activities with low earnings. In addition, racial and ethnic identity frequently circumscribes the economic opportunities available to both men and women. Growing earnings inequality, an erosion of the quality of paid work, or greater joblessness disproportionately affects those in more unstable forms of employment. The entire household – men, women and children – becomes susceptible to poverty. As noted above, increased risk of poverty can affect the survival strategies of the household in terms of women's participation in paid employment.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Not all coping strategies involve employment. See Benería and Feldman (1992) for in-depth analysis.

However, it can also affect men who have been socialized to think of themselves as “breadwinners.” In particular, established gender roles may cause men to see the deterioration in employment as a personal failing, instead of a systemic economic problem (Nurse, 2004).

The coping strategies adopted at the household level in response to negative economic shocks underscore the importance of taking these dynamics into account when considering the linkages between growth, employment and poverty. For countries with well-developed social welfare systems, government policies mitigate these negative consequences. However, for countries without publicly supported systems of social protection, households and communities become a safety net of last resort (Benería and Floro, 2005).

An additional link exists between paid employment, non-market work and human development. The ability to translate access to paid employment into new capabilities, greater freedom and improved investments in children depends on the nature of relationships within the household and the process by which decisions are made concerning the allocation of labour time and economic resources (Folbre, 1994; Sen, 1992). Indeed, increased gender inequalities, even in the short-run, can have long-term consequences for economic growth and human development (Seguino, 2005; Ranis, Stewart and Ramirez, 2000). Therefore, it is critical to incorporate the gender dimension into the growth-employment-poverty nexus. Otherwise, the picture will not be fully understood and the implementation of an effective development strategy will be compromised.

## ***2.5 Globalization, economic policy and employment***

Fundamental and far-reaching changes have taken place in the world economy over the past several decades that have had a profound impact on the global employment situation. The lives of women and men have been transformed, in different ways, during this period. Two fundamental aspects of the transformation are (1) the heightened and growing degree of global economic, social and cultural integration (i.e. the process of “globalization”) as reflected in such phenomena as the expansion of international trade<sup>6</sup> and (2) a shift in policy stance towards deregulated markets, privatization, a smaller role for the state and a relatively narrow focus on reducing inflation. These two trends are mutually reinforcing. For example, policies of liberalization and macroeconomic stabilization are often justified as necessary adjustments to the process of global integration. At the same time, deregulation and privatization frequently facilitates the integration of markets across national borders.

The remainder of this report will focus on how these changes impact employment and poverty for women and men. Specific policies will be examined in much greater detail, including monetary policy, trade policy, exchange rate regimes and fiscal policy. Gender dynamics are central to this entire discussion. Whether households stay out of poverty in this changing global environment may hinge on whether women participate in the labour force and have access to decent paid employment. As pointed out earlier, women’s labour force participation has been increasing almost everywhere around the world, a process described as “the feminization of labour”. However, these global changes have a fundamental impact on the allocation of labour time and economic resources in the household. Moreover, employment opportunities are unequally distributed, with women concentrated in lower-quality, more precarious forms of paid work. Taken together, all these factors have enormous implications for the vulnerability of households, the risk of poverty and achieving sustainable

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<sup>6</sup> The focus of this study is on economic globalization. Social and cultural aspects of globalization are frequently more difficult to quantify than the economic dimensions, and are frequently, and erroneously, deemed less significant.

human development. Therefore, the analysis in this report will incorporate a gender perspective when interpreting how global policy changes impact employment and poverty.

### 3. Employment and labour force trends

#### 3.1 Labour force participation

Over the past several decades, one of the most significant transformations of the employment situation in a large number of countries has been the dramatic increase in women's labour force participation. The growth of women's labour force participation rates relative to men's is a widely recognized trend in both developed and developing countries (ILO, 2004b; Blau, Ferber and Winkler, 2002; Tzannatos, 1999; Horton, 1999; Çagatay and Özler, 1995; Goldin 1994). The impact of this shift on total labour force participation – including men and women – is ambiguous. This is because, in many parts of the world, men's labour force participation rates have been falling, while women's rates have been increasing.

Table 2 presents estimates and projections of labour force participation by broad geographical regions from 1980 to 2010.<sup>7</sup> The data are taken from the Economically Active Population Estimates and Projections (EAPEA Version 5) of the ILO. According to these estimates, men's labour force participation rates have been declining on average in all regions. The extent to which women's labour force participation rates have increased varies significantly. Over the past 20 years, women's labour force participation rates have sustained their historical trend and increased significantly in the Americas and Western Europe. Sub-Saharan Africa, Southeast Asia and East Asia have exhibited more moderate increases in women's labour force participation over this same period.<sup>8</sup>

According to these estimates, women's labour force participation rates have fallen in some regions. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the labour force participation of both women and men in Eastern Europe appears to have dropped significantly; prior to the change, the labour force participation rates of women in Eastern Europe were among the highest in the world. In addition, women's labour force participation rates appear to have been declining in South Asia.<sup>9</sup>

If we define the “feminization of labour” to represent a situation in which the ratio of women's labour force participation rate to men's labour force participation increases over time, then all of the regions presented in Table 2, with the single exception of South Asia, could be said to have experienced a feminization of labour since the 1980s.<sup>10</sup>

Numerous factors explain the increase in women's labour force participation: improvements in female education, declining fertility, growing urbanization, shifts in the sectoral composition of production and changing gender norms. As noted earlier, economic performance can also affect women's labour force participation. When household resources are squeezed, women often increase the amount they work in income-generating activities. The fall in real per capita incomes in many sub-Saharan African countries during the 1980s

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<sup>7</sup> Figures for 1980, 1990, and 2000 are estimates of actual labour force participation rates. The figures for 2010 represent projections of future participation rates.

<sup>8</sup> In some countries and regions, there is evidence of an earlier increase in women's labour force participation, prior to the 1980s. However, changes in the ways in which historic estimates of labour force participation rates are generated makes comparisons between earlier data and the more recent ILO estimates problematic.

<sup>9</sup> There is some concern that women's labour force participation may not be accurately measured in South Asia. If true, undercounting makes cross-regional comparisons unreliable.

<sup>10</sup> This usage of “feminization of labour” differs somewhat from how the term is used in other contexts. See Standing (1989) and Vosko (2002).

Table 2.  
Labour force participations rates, disaggregated by sex, 1980-2010 (in percentage)

<u>Region</u>		1980	1990	2000	2010 (Projecti on)
<b>Latin American and the Caribbean</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	57.5%	61.3%	62.2%	65.9%
	<b>M</b>	82.1%	82.4%	80.3%	78.1%
	<b>F</b>	33.4%	41.0%	44.9%	54.3%
<b>North America</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	63.8%	66.2%	66.6%	65.7%
	<b>M</b>	77.4%	75.9%	74.2%	71.8%
	<b>F</b>	51.0%	57.1%	59.4%	59.9%
<b>Europe</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	61.6%	60.6%	57.4%	57.4%
	<b>M</b>	74.7%	71.7%	66.5%	64.7%
	<b>F</b>	50.0%	50.7%	49.3%	50.9%
<b>- Eastern Europe</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	68.3%	65.7%	58.3%	57.9%
	<b>M</b>	77.1%	74.1%	65.9%	65.1%
	<b>F</b>	60.9%	58.4%	51.8%	51.8%
<b>- Western Europe</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	56.6%	57.0%	56.8%	57.1%
	<b>M</b>	73.0%	70.0%	66.8%	64.4%
	<b>F</b>	41.6%	44.9%	47.5%	50.2%
<b>Africa</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	69.3%	70.1%	69.0%	68.8%
	<b>M</b>	84.5%	84.9%	84.1%	83.5%
	<b>F</b>	54.5%	55.7%	54.2%	54.2%
<b>- sub-Saharan Africa</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	78.8%	79.5%	79.6%	80.8%
	<b>M</b>	86.0%	85.6%	86.5%	85.8%
	<b>F</b>	71.7%	73.5%	73.0%	76.0%
<b>Asia</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	71.2%	70.1%	67.9%	66.4%
	<b>M</b>	85.4%	83.7%	82.5%	80.8%
	<b>F</b>	56.4%	55.9%	52.9%	51.6%
<b>- East Asia (excluding China)</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	62.8%	63.2%	62.3%	59.6%
	<b>M</b>	79.0%	77.1%	75.9%	71.4%
	<b>F</b>	47.2%	49.7%	49.2%	48.4%
<b>- South East Asia</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	70.8%	70.8%	70.1%	71.1%
	<b>M</b>	83.6%	83.1%	82.9%	82.7%
	<b>F</b>	56.5%	58.8%	57.6%	59.8%
<b>- South Asia</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	65.8%	62.8%	60.1%	59.8%
	<b>M</b>	85.7%	84.4%	82.6%	81.2%
	<b>F</b>	44.7%	40.0%	36.6%	37.6%
<b>WORLD</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	67.9%	67.7%	66.2%	65.5%
	<b>M</b>	83.0%	81.7%	80.3%	78.9%
	<b>F</b>	52.9%	53.7%	52.2%	52.1%

Source: EAPEA Version 5, ILO.

and 90s may partially explain why women's labour force participation rates in the region remain among the highest in the world.

### 3.2 Employment and unemployment

Various indicators are commonly used to assess trends in employment opportunities. Each measurement has its own limitations. The unemployment rate is perhaps the most common metric used, particularly in developed economies. However, the unemployment rate is sensitive to variations in the definition of who is employed, who is unemployed and who is in or out of the labour force. For example, the unemployment rate will fall when the number of discouraged workers increases. Discouraged workers – a category, under which women often fall, are individuals who have stopped looking for employment due to a sustained lack of opportunities. For this reason, many analysts prefer to use the ratio of employment to the

total population as an indicator of trends in employment opportunities. It is important to note that neither measure adequately captures the extent of *underemployment* among the employed, arguably the most significant employment issue in developing countries with a large share of informal employment.<sup>11</sup>

Over the past decade, the growth in employment has not kept pace with the growth in populations or the expansion of the labour force in most regions around the world. Table 3 illustrates these broad trends from 1993 to 2003. The global employment/population ratio fell from 63.3 per cent to 62.5 per cent over this period, indicating that employment growth fell short of population growth. Different groups of countries exhibit distinct trends. For example, the employment/population ratio grew in sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and North Africa and in the world's high income countries. However, the ratio either remained constant or declined in all other country groupings.

With declining employment to population ratios, it is not surprising that official unemployment rates increased in most regions. Only in the high-income countries did unemployment rates fall appreciably from 1993 to 2003. The ILO estimates that, in 2003, approximately 186 million people were jobless, the highest level recorded (ILO 2004a). Of the 186 million unemployed, 108 million (58%) were male and 78 million (42%) were female.

If employment increases at the same rate as GDP, the unemployment rate should not increase as long as the economic growth rate is equal to or greater than the combined growth rates of productivity and the labour force. In Table 3, this rule of thumb holds for all the country groups with the exception of the transition economies. From 1993 to 2003, the transition economies experienced the largest drop in the employment/population ratio and the biggest percentage point increase in the unemployment rate. Since unemployment rates increased in other country groupings, in which economic growth exceeded the combined growth rates of the labour force and productivity, this indicates that employment growth lags behind economic growth. This pattern is consistent with a decline in the employment intensity of growth, discussed earlier.

Women's employment has been growing as a share of total employment. This trend parallels the pattern observed with respect to women's labour force participation. Figure 3 graphs women's employment as a per cent of men's employment for five selected countries from 1970 to 2002.<sup>12</sup> Data collection and survey methodologies differ among these countries. Therefore, we should avoid direct comparisons of the percentages across countries and instead focus on common trends. To varying degrees, women's employment has been increasing faster than men's. This trend is broad-based and is not limited to those countries shown in Figure 3. Other studies also show that the gap between women's share of employment and men's share of employment have been narrowing (e.g. OECD, 2002).

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<sup>11</sup> Employed individuals who face inadequate demand for their labour, either directly or indirectly, are considered "underemployed." For example, employed workers who would like to work more hours per week would be underemployed.

<sup>12</sup> These countries are illustrative of wider trends. More countries were not included in the graph to avoid clutter and improve readability.

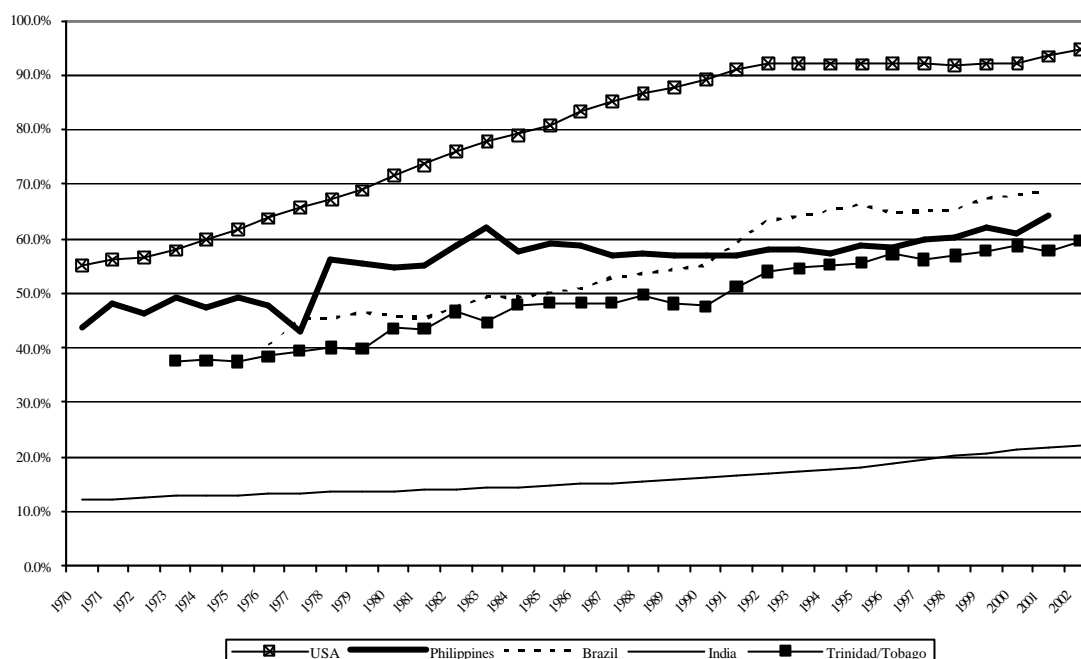


*Table 3.*  
*Selected statistics on employment and productivity in various regions and world*

Geographical region Type of economies	Employment- Population Ratio		Change in Employment- population Ratio	Annual labour force growth	Annual production growth	Annual GDP growth	Change in unemployment rate
	1993	2003	1993-2003	1993-2003	1993-2003	1993-2003	1993-2003
<i>Latin America and the Caribbean</i>	59.3%	59.3%	0.0%	1.8%	1.0%	3.5%	+1.1
<i>Sub-Saharan Africa</i>	65.6%	66.0%	0.4%	2.8%	-0.2%	2.9%	-0.1
<i>Middle East and North Africa</i>	45.4%	46.4%	1.0%	3.3%	0.1%	3.5%	+0.1
<i>East Asia</i>	78.1%	76.6%	-1.5%	1.3%	5.8%	8.3%	+0.9
<i>Southeast Asia</i>	68.0%	67.1%	-0.9%	2.4%	2.0%	4.4%	+2.4
<i>South Asia</i>	57.0%	57.0%	0.0%	2.3%	3.3%	5.5%	+0.0
<i>Transition Economies</i>	58.8%	53.5%	-5.3%	-0.1%	2.3%	0.2%	+3.1
<i>High-income economies</i>	55.4%	56.1%	0.7%	0.8%	1.4%	2.5%	-1.2
<b>WORLD</b>	<b>63.3%</b>	<b>62.5%</b>	<b>-0.8%</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	<b>1.0%</b>	<b>3.5%</b>	<b>+0.6</b>

Source: ILO (2004c), p. 27.

Figure 3.  
Ratio of women's employment to men's employment, selected countries, 1970-2003



Source: ILO LABORSTA database ([laborsta.ilo.org](http://laborsta.ilo.org)).

Women's unemployment rates are generally higher than men's (Table 4). However, women's unemployment rates have been remarkably stable in many regions of the world over the past decade, two exceptions being South Asia and the transition economies (ILO, 2004b).<sup>13</sup> This suggests that, in those parts of the world in which women's unemployment rates have held steady, women's employment has increased proportionately to the growth in

Table 4.  
Unemployment rates disaggregated by sex, 2003

	Female	Male	Total
Latin America and the Caribbean	10.1	6.7	8.0
Sub-Saharan Africa	9.6	11.8	10.9
Middle East and North Africa	16.5	10.6	12.2
East Asia	2.7	3.7	3.3
Southeast Asia	6.9	5.9	6.3
South Asia	6.2	4.3	4.2
Transition Economies	9.2	9.2	9.2
High-income economies	7.0	6.7	6.8
<b>WORLD</b>	6.4	6.1	6.2

Source: ILO (2004b).

<sup>13</sup> South Asia and the transition economies also experienced a decline in the rate of women's labour force participation since the 1980s (ILO, 2004b).

women's labour force participation. On a global scale, women's unemployment rate has grown from an estimated 5.8 per cent in 1993 to 6.4 per cent in 2003, but this is approximately comparable to the increase in men's unemployment rate over the same time period – from 5.5 per cent to 6.1 per cent (ILO, 2004b).<sup>14</sup>

Although women's employment appears to be increasing more or less proportionately to the growth in women's labour force participation in many parts of the world, unemployment rates say nothing about the *types* of employment women are engaged in. At the global level, women's employment has grown in all productive sectors – agriculture, manufacturing and services – with a particularly strong increase in the service sector (Mehra and Gammage, 1999).<sup>15</sup> Women have also made some inroads in occupations that have been traditionally dominated by men. These trends are not restricted to high-income countries. Some evidence exists for occupational mobility in middle-income countries as well (Horton, 1999). Nevertheless, around the world, employment, both formal and informal, remains highly segmented by sex (Chen *et al.*, 2005; OECD, 2002; Tzannatos, 1999; Elson 1996). Women are often concentrated in forms of employment with lower earnings and less stability. In particular, in developing countries, women are less likely to be wage and salary workers than are men (Chen *et al.*, 2005; ILO, 2004b). In developed economies, women are much more likely to work part-time or in forms of non-standard work (OECD, 2002). The growth in women's employment, therefore, has been shaped by the segmentation of labour markets.

The expansion of women's labour force participation has occurred during a time in which the nature of employment had undergone a significant transformation (Standing, 1999a). As discussed previously, growth has slowed in many countries around the world over the past several decades. At the same time, the number of new employment opportunities which traditional industrial sectors – with their higher earnings potential – are able to generate has generally fallen. Women have been entering the labour force at a time when the number of quality employment opportunities has been declining in many regions of the world. In most cases, these women are not joining the ranks of the openly unemployed. Instead, many work as informal workers in precarious and low-productivity activities.

Before examining patterns of formal and informal employment, it is worth noting that not all women have been marginalized in the labour market during this period of economic restructuring. Today many women have employment opportunities that would have been closed to them a generation ago. Better education, smaller households, new opportunities and changing gender norms have reduced, but certainly not eliminated, gender-based economic inequalities in many regions. At the same time, not all women are equally positioned to take advantage of these opportunities. Therefore, we would expect to see growing inequalities among women workers, just as evidence has pointed to greater inequality among workers in general.<sup>16</sup> It is important to keep in mind the inequalities that exist among women and among men, not just between women and men, in our analysis of employment, poverty and economic policies.

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<sup>14</sup> According to ILO estimates, the global unemployment rate, including both men and women, grew from 5.6% in 1993 to 6.2% in 2003 (ILO 2004a).

<sup>15</sup> This holds for most regions of the world with a few exceptions. For example, Mehra and Gammage (1999) show a modest decline in women's share of employment in agriculture in the Middle East and the transition economies. In addition, their figures suggest that women's share of manufacturing employment also fell slightly in the Middle East.

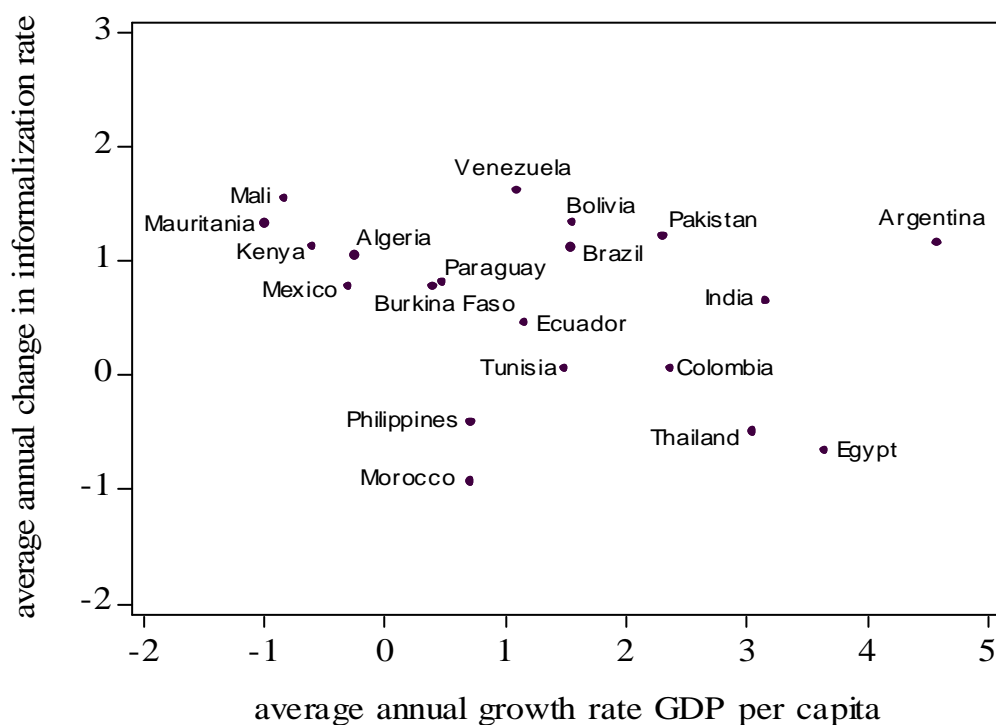
<sup>16</sup> McCrate (2000) documents growing class-based inequalities among women in the U.S.

### 3.3 Informal employment

Informal employment refers to employment which occurs outside of the formal legal and regulatory environment or which fails to give workers a minimum set of social protections. As discussed earlier, research suggests that informal employment has grown in many countries during the past several decades (Heintz and Pollin, 2003; ILO, 2002a; Benería, 2001; Castells and Portes, 1989). However, consistent and reliable statistics that track informal employment over time are only available for a handful of countries and for a limited period. This makes it difficult to generalize about the direction and speed of informalization.

Figure 4 presents a scatter diagram of changes in informalization – measured as informal employment expressed as a percentage of total employment – and average per capita GDP growth rates for a group of countries for which estimates over time are available. These estimates use an imperfect measure of informal employment. Informal employment is assumed to be equal to the difference between total employment estimated by household-level data (e.g. a labour force survey or a population census) and total employment estimated by a survey of registered firms or an economic census. This provides us with a rough estimate of how informal employment has changed over time – generally from the 1980s to the 1990s. Most all of the countries included in Figure 4 experienced a growth in informalization. Moreover, based on these estimates, informalization has increased in countries that have experienced respectable rates of per capita GDP growth.

*Figure 4.*  
*Average rates of per capita GDP growth*  
*and annual changes in informalization.*



Source: Heintz and Pollin (2003).

The trends shown in Figure 4, if accurate, are significant. One common assumption is that informal employment results from underdevelopment or poor economic performance. If this were true, then informalization should decline with economic growth and development. These patterns suggest that informal employment has been increasing faster than formal employment, even in countries with strong rates of growth. In other words, growth is not the only variable that matters. The *type* of growth is also significant.

However, economic growth is not irrelevant in determining how quickly informal employment expands. As suggested in Figure 4, the overall relationship between the rate of per capita GDP growth and the change in the degree of informalization is negative (Heintz and Pollin, 2003). That is, higher rates of growth are associated with smaller increases in the rate of informalization.<sup>17</sup> At very high levels of growth, informalization may decline.

Although we are limited in what we can say about changes in informalization over time, much more is known about patterns of informal employment as they exist today. Figure 5 presents estimates of non-agricultural informal employment as a per cent of total non agricultural employment for a range of countries in regions around the world.<sup>18</sup> What is striking about the estimates in Figure 5 is how significant informal employment is for developing countries. In many cases, informal employment accounts for the majority of non-agricultural employment. Moreover, informal employment frequently accounts for a larger share of women's non-agricultural employment than men's (Chen *et al.*, 2005; ILO, 2002b).<sup>19</sup> Figure 5 also suggests that the relative importance of informal employment declines as per capita GDP rises, although this relationship is not perfect.

Recent improvements in household surveys (e.g. labour force surveys and living standards surveys) in some countries allow a more detailed analysis of informal employment. Using such detailed data, informal employment can be measured directly, although gaps may still exist. Moreover, the data highlight differences in various forms of informal employment. Often, informal employment is assumed to represent an undifferentiated residual – that is, those who cannot find jobs in the formal economy are automatically employed informally. This conceptualization masks the heterogeneity that exists among informal workers.

A recent UNIFEM publication, *Progress of the World's Women 2005: Women, Work, and Poverty* (Chen *et al.*, 2005) presents new analysis of informal employment that explores these details, including the possibility of segmentation within the informal labour force itself. In particular, the report examines differences in employment by sex and employment status within both the formal and informal economies. Drawing on this research, Table 5 presents data on the distribution of informal employment by employment status, sector (agricultural

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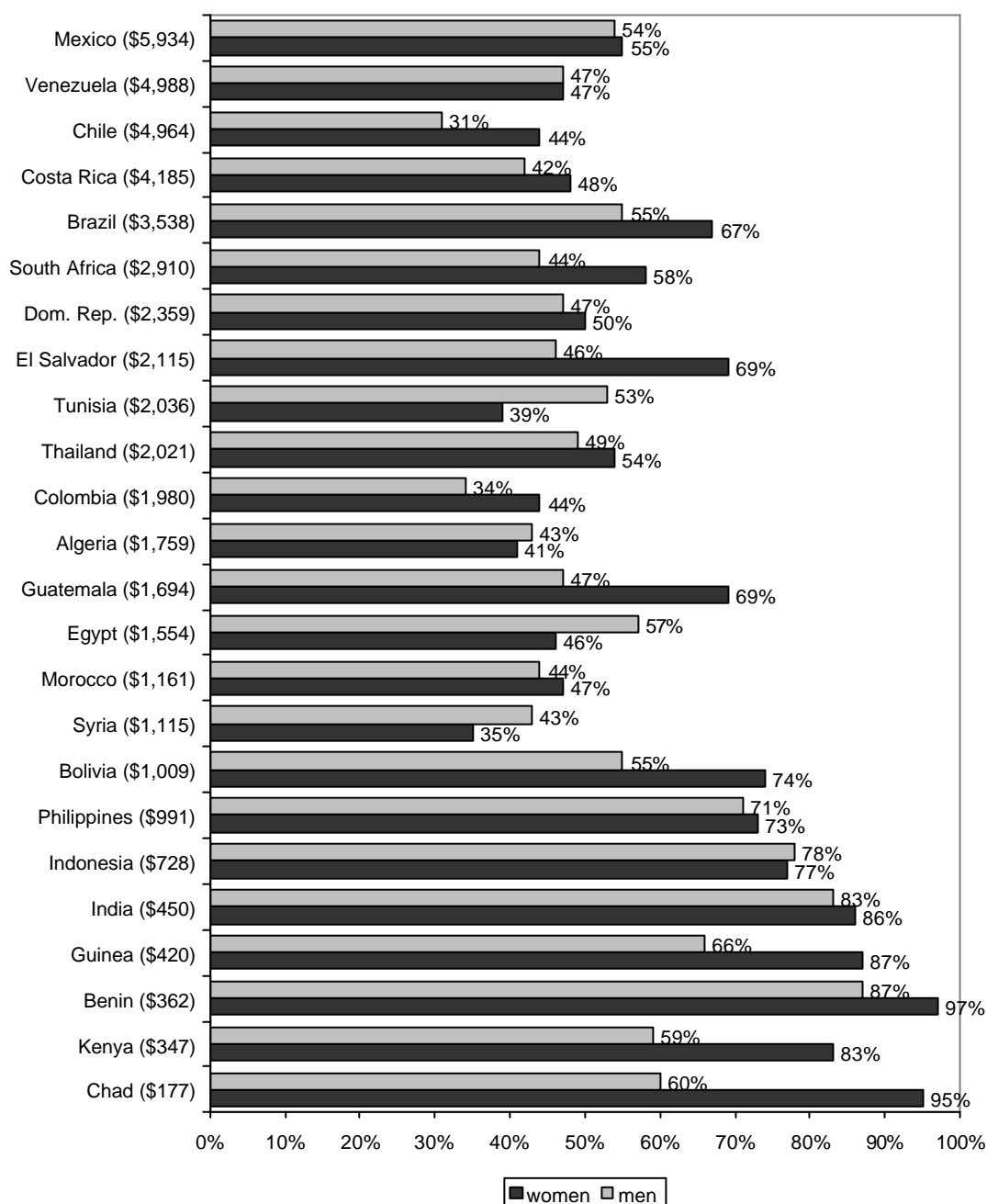
<sup>17</sup> The direction of causation is an issue that is difficult to resolve from the available data. That is, does the direction of causation run from economic growth to informalization or vice versa?

<sup>18</sup> For most countries in Figure 5, estimates are based on the differences in total non-agricultural employment as measured by household-level data and non-agricultural employment as measured by surveys of registered enterprises. For India, Kenya, Mexico, Tunisia, and South Africa, these estimates are refined using additional survey data on employment in informal enterprises (see ILO, 2002b). Note that some forms of informal employment may be excluded from these estimates – e.g. unpaid contributing labour on family enterprises – depending on the coverage of the surveys used to develop these estimates.

<sup>19</sup> In high-income, industrialized countries, women are disproportionately represented in non-standard and more precarious forms of wage employment. For example, part-time employment accounts for a much larger share of women's employment than men's in OECD countries (OECD 2002, p. 69). However, it should be noted that not all part-time jobs are informal. In some countries, e.g. Sweden, social protections are extended to part-time workers.

Figure 5.

*Estimates of informal non-agricultural employment as a percentage of total non-agricultural employment, 1994-2000 (GDP per capita, 2000, in parentheses)*



Source: ILO (2002b) and World Development Indicators 2005, Washington, DC: World Bank..

and non-agricultural) and sex for six developing countries – Costa Rica, Egypt, El Salvador, Ghana, India and South Africa.

According to these estimates, women and men are concentrated in different types of informal employment. For example, domestic workers and unpaid workers on family enterprises account for a larger share of women's informal employment than men's. In contrast, informal wage employment accounts for a larger share of men's informal

employment than women's.<sup>20</sup> In four out of the six countries listed in Table 5, non-agricultural own-account employment comprises a larger share of women's informal employment compared to men's, but informal agricultural employment accounts for a larger share of men's informal employment. In the two exceptions – Egypt and India – the most significant source of employment for women is working unpaid on a family enterprise – often in the agricultural sector.

In general, the types of informal employment in which women are concentrated – as non-agricultural own-account workers, domestic workers and unpaid workers on family enterprises – have lower hourly earnings and a higher risk of poverty than the types of informal employment in which men typically work – e.g. informal wage employment (Chen *et al.* 2005).

Informal agricultural employment does not exhibit a consistent pattern of sex segmentation in the countries featured here. Agricultural employment is particularly crucial for understanding the linkages between employment and poverty, since earnings are lowest and the risk of poverty highest for informal agricultural workers. In several of the countries featured in Table 5, informal agricultural employment accounts for a larger share of men's employment than women's employment. However, in some countries, there has been a "feminization of agriculture" (UNRISD, 2005; Deere, 2005; Mehra and Gammage, 1999). For example, in India, as men withdrew from agriculture into other occupations, women began to comprise an increasing share of agricultural labour (UNRISD, 2005).

In Latin America, women have often taken primary responsibility for smallholder production when men left the household to work as migrant labourers (Deere, 2005; Mehra and Gammage, 1999).

Even in those countries in which men are disproportionately represented in agricultural employment, a significantly large number of women are also employed in agricultural activities, frequently as own-account workers or unpaid workers on family farms. Also, it is important to recognize the growing importance of non-agricultural rural employment as means of diversifying livelihood strategies (Lanjouw and Lanjouw, 2001). Non-agricultural rural activities can be a particularly significant source of employment income for women (Deere, 2005).

Despite the recent improvements in data on informal employment, our understanding of the total employment picture remains incomplete. Some categories of informal employment are rarely captured in labour force surveys – in particular, industrial outworkers and home-based employment (Chen, Sebstad and O'Connell, 1999). These activities can be an important source of employment for women, but are frequently low-paid and highly precarious (Chen *et al.*, 2005). In addition, detailed household-level data on informal employment is currently only available for a limited number of countries. Comparable data compiled over several years is particularly hard to find, making any analysis of the impact of policy choices on informal workers difficult or impossible. Therefore, a better understanding of the effects of economic policies on all forms of employment for both men and women should be seen as a long-term project involving new sources of data and on-going research.

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<sup>20</sup> The single exception in Table 4 is agricultural wage employment in India.

*Table 5.*  
*Share of women's and men's informal employment by employment status category (per cent)*

		Non-Agricultural					Agricultural					Total
		Employer	Own-Account	Wage worker	Domestic	Unpaid Family	Employer	Own-Account	Wage worker	Domestic	Unpaid Family	
Costa Rica	W	8.0	37.4	20.2	24.9	6.0	0.6	1.0	0.6	0.0	1.2	100
	M	14.5	26.6	25.7	0.9	1.4	4.5	10.7	12.7	0.2	2.7	100
Egypt	W	0.4	3.9	6.2	n.a.	2.6	0.2	0.3	1.8	n.a.	84.6	100
	M	2.8	6.8	45.1	n.a.	4.5	11.3	4.4	15.4	n.a.	9.8	100
El Salvador	W	3.4	51.6	16.1	14.2	9.8	0.1	1.0	2.3	n.a.	1.4	100
	M	5.4	18.9	33.9	1.3	2.9	2.0	13.9	15.9	n.a.	6.0	100
Ghana	W	n.a.	39.0	4.6	n.a.	2.7	n.a.	33.1	0.3	n.a.	20.3	100
	M	n.a.	16.4	14.7	n.a.	1.4	n.a.	55.3	2.7	n.a.	9.5	100
India	W	0.0	6.3	8.0	n.a.	5.6	0.0	10.7	35.0	n.a.	34.4	100
	M	0.6	18.6	15.9	n.a.	3.7	0.1	24.0	25.6	n.a.	11.5	100
South Africa	W	3.0	16.2	43.0	25.6	1.6	1.4	2.0	7.1	n.a.	0.1	100
	M	6.3	9.5	57.8	1.2	0.7	1.9	2.6	19.8	n.a.	0.2	100

n.a. indicates that data were not available or that there were insufficient observations to derive statistically significant estimates.

Source: Chen et al. (2005)



### **3.4 Earnings and employment income**

Earnings are a central indicator of the quality of employment opportunities. Although people may have a variety of reasons for engaging in paid work, earning income is one of the most important. Most households around the world earn a living through some form of employment. Therefore, employment income is also an important determinant of the income poverty status of households. Even if we take a broad view of poverty – one that emphasizes capabilities and individual freedoms instead of just income (Sen, 1999) – employment earnings remain an important means to the ultimate goal of reducing poverty.

Wages and employment earnings vary enormously across countries. Differentials in labour productivity explain much of the variation in employment earnings observed – both across countries and over time. The relationship between higher earnings and improvements in labour productivity has been well-established (ILO, 2004c; Rama 2002a; Rodrik, 1999; Trefler, 1993). Long-run improvements in labour productivity are therefore necessary, but not sufficient, for sustainable increases in real employment earnings. For example, workers in highly competitive environments may not be able to capture a share of the benefits of productivity improvements. Instead, these benefits are captured elsewhere as lower consumer prices or higher profits. In these, and similar cases, productivity gains do not translate into better employment earnings. However, without improvements in average labour productivity, sustainable increases in average real earnings will remain unobtainable.

Have earnings been increasing in recent decades? This question has many possible answers, depending on the country, sector, type of employment and characteristics of the worker. In terms of aggregate wage employment on a global scale, Rama (2002a) found that real wages (expressed in U.S. dollars) have been increasing on average from the 1980s to the 1990s.<sup>21</sup> However, countries and regions show substantial variation. A recent ILO study, using similar data to Rama (2002a), found that real wages increased on average in both developing and developed countries, but the increase was significantly larger for developed economies (Majid, 2004). Variations become even more pronounced when comparing different country experiences. For example, the South Korean manufacturing sector has enjoyed real wage increases and productivity growth from 1990 to 2002 (ILO, 2004c, p. 40). In contrast, India has seen real wages in manufacturing drop significantly since 1980, despite steady productivity growth (ILO 2004c, p. 53).

Focusing on average wages obscures an important dynamic that has been observed in labour markets around the world – growing wage inequality, particularly between highly skilled and less skilled labour. More specifically, average wages may increase, even if the wages of low-paid workers stagnate or fall. Growing wage inequality in recent years has been documented for a number of countries and regions, both developed and developing (Majid, 2004; Mishel, Bernstein and Boushey, 2003; Rueda and Pontusson, 2000; Wood, 1997). When earnings inequality is expanding, changes in average real wages will not be a good indicator of the overall trends in the quality of employment if we are interested in uncovering the linkages between employment trends and poverty.

In addition, a narrow focus on wage employment and formal wage employment specifically, excludes shifts in earnings associated with growing informal employment and

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<sup>21</sup> Rama (2002a) uses data compiled by Freeman and Oostendorp (2000) which is based on the ILO's "October Inquiry" survey of wages.

the changing composition of employment. The analysis of trends in average real wages and wage inequality are limited to examining wage employment relationships. However, as pointed out in the previous section, informal employment accounts for a large share of total employment in many regions and the importance of informal employment appears to be growing over time, at least for a significant number of countries. Informal employment is not homogenous, but encompasses a variety of labour relationships and employment statuses. In particular, self-employment and own-account employment are widespread.

Earnings from informal self-employment and own-account work are not included in the analyses of real earnings described above, despite being an important source of income for a large number of households. In addition, earnings in these forms of employment are lower and more volatile on average than earnings from wage employment (Chen *et al.*, 2005). If these forms of employment expand rapidly relative to formal wage employment, then average real earnings from employment will fall, even if real wages are increasing. By failing to take into account the shifting composition of employment, the analysis of changes in real wages fails to provide us with a composite picture of what is happening to real earnings.

Consider the example of South Africa. Real wages for workers employed in the formal economy, based on data from national enterprise surveys, grew 15.4 per cent from 1995 to 2003.<sup>22</sup> However, analysis of labour force data from household surveys paints a very different picture. Using this data, researchers found that, over the same time period, real earnings fell by over 20 per cent (Casale, Muller and Posel, 2004). Although there are concerns about the accuracy of the earnings data in both surveys, two factors most likely account for the large discrepancies in the estimates of the change in real employment earnings over this period: (1) real earnings in informal employment fell on average and (2) informal employment accounted for a rising share of total employment (Casale, Muller and Posel, 2004). The statistics that exclude informal employment, therefore, are inadequate for describing overall trends in employment earnings.

Unfortunately, comprehensive measurements of employment earnings, both formal and informal, across all employment status categories over time are not readily available. Therefore, it is not possible to describe broad trends in earnings in recent years. Given the high levels of informal employment and the likelihood that informalization has been increasing as of late, the pattern of earnings observed in South Africa may also be observed elsewhere. More research is needed to more fully understand trends in employment earnings during this period of global integration.

Employed women generally earn less than men, on average and within specific employment categories (ILO, 2004b). There are a few exceptions to this generalization, but they tend to apply to very specific circumstances. For example, women engaged in formal wage employment in Egypt earn more on average than do men (Chen *et al.*, 2005). However, this is due to low labour force participation rates among women and patterns of labour market segmentation, in which large numbers of employed women work unpaid on family enterprises. Those few women that do have access to formal wage employment tend to be more highly educated on average than the much larger number of men who work in formal employment. Therefore, the fact that women in wage employment earn more than men is

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<sup>22</sup> Author's calculations based on data published by the Reserve Bank of South Africa and available on the Reserve Bank's website ([www.resbank.co.za](http://www.resbank.co.za)).

actually symptomatic of gender inequalities that tend to increase inequalities among women as well as between women and men.

Many factors are put forward to explain the gender gap in earnings – differences in education, shorter tenure in the labour market and interruptions in women's employment histories associated with raising children. Nevertheless, a large quantity of research has shown that, even controlling for education, age and job tenure, gender gaps in remuneration remain (OECD, 2002; Mehra and Gammage, 1999; Elson 1999). In part, this is due to the persistence of earnings gaps within occupational categories (Horton, 1999), suggesting that wage discrimination remains influential. Research suggests that earnings differentials between men and women are also apparent across the various forms of informal employment – including own-account employment and other forms of self-employment (Chen *et al.*, 2005). However, labour force segmentation is as important, if not more important, in determining the gap between women's and men's earnings. As noted earlier, women are disproportionately represented in lower paying forms of employment, often with fewer social protections and less stable incomes.

Has the gender gap in earnings narrowed over time? For developed economies, the evidence is fairly clear: the average gender wage gap appears to have narrowed, at least since the 1980s (OECD, 2002; Blau and Kahn, 1997). Improvements in women's educational attainment and labour force experience help explain the narrowing of the gap. The earnings gap between men and women may have narrowed in selected middle-income countries (Horton, 1999). However, some caution is warranted when interpreting these findings. For example, within specific occupations, the evidence is mixed across different countries (ILO, 2004b). In addition, much less is known about the gender earnings gap in low-income countries, where informal forms of employment, including widespread non-wage employment, dominate. If informal forms of employment comprise an increasing share of men's and women's employment, then the effect of the shift in employment composition, given the patterns of segmentation described above, needs to be taken into account in an assessment on the overall size of the gender earnings gap.

In addition, the structure of production and responses to global integration can impact changes in the gender wage gap. For example, Seguino (2000) notes that wage inequality between men and women in Taiwan increased while it decreased in Korea. She finds that capital mobility is one contributing factor to higher wage inequality in Taiwan. Since women are more concentrated in industries in which capital mobility is high, their bargaining power, and hence their wages, would fall relative to men as global integration progresses.

Women with access to formal wage employment may close the gender earnings gap while other women, excluded from these opportunities, may fall behind. This raises the importance of examining within-group, as well as between-group inequality. For example, studies of developed economies have shown that the degree of wage inequality among male workers varies along with the size of the gender wage gap (Blau and Kahn, 2001). That is, the more compressed the wage distribution for men, the smaller the gender wage gap is likely to be. Women tend to be disproportionately represented in the lower end of the wage distribution; therefore, a more compressed distribution can reduce the gender gap. This has a number of implications – for example, the greater the prevalence of collective bargaining, the lower the gender wage gap is likely to be. Similarly, if we are to understand the connections between employment and poverty from a gender perspective, then within-group inequality, among both women and men, is also important to take into account.

Employment income does not only depend on a standardized wage rate or earnings rate. It also depends on the conditions of employment – e.g. hours of work or days of work. The increase in women’s labour force participation in many countries means that women are spending more time in paid, market work. However, despite the increase in hours of paid work, evidence shows that women still work less on average in remunerative activities than do men (Chen *et al.*, 2005; OECD, 2001). Women’s total income from employment falls below that of men on average, not only because of lower earnings per hour or per day, but because women spend less time in paid work.

Women work significantly more time in unpaid, non-market activities than do men (UNRISD, 2005; Benería, 2003; OECD, 2001; Folbre, 1994). This limits the time that they can spend in paid employment. However, the increase in women’s labour force participation and the time dedicated to income-generating work has not meant a one-for-one reduction in the time spent performing non-market labour. Although the distribution of women’s labour time between market and non-market work varies for a number of reasons – including household composition and number of dependents – data from developed countries suggests that women employed in a full-time job spend more total time working in both paid and unpaid activities than do men (OECD, 2001).<sup>23</sup>

Time spent in unpaid care work limits women’s options when it comes to remunerative employment. The need to balance market and non-market work may explain some of the observed patterns of labour market segmentation. For example, in some countries, women engaged in informal employment work longer hours in both paid and unpaid activities than women engaged in formal wage employment (Chen *et al.* 2005). One reason for these observed patterns of work is that own-account employment, for example, may give women added flexibility to combine remunerative employment with unpaid care work – even if it means longer hours of work and lower average earnings.

### **3.5 Employment and poverty**

A widely used poverty threshold for international comparisons is the “dollar-a-day” poverty line. A person is considered poor if he or she is living in a household that earns less than the equivalent of one U.S. dollar per day per person. Suppose we define the “working poor” to be those people who are (1) employed and (2) living in households that fall below the poverty line. In 2004, the estimated size of the global working poor population, using the dollar-a-day standard, was 535 million people, or 18.8 per cent of world employment (Kapsos, 2004). In 2003, women accounted for an estimated 60 per cent of the working poor, even though they comprised just 40 per cent of all employment (ILO, 2004b). In other words, according to these estimates, employed women are more likely to be poor than employed men.

The rate of income poverty among the world’s employed population has fallen in recent years (Table 6). This decline in poverty rates may be due to better access to higher quality employment opportunities, but it also may be a result of women’s growing labour force participation – that is, women’s employment helps keeps families out of poverty. Furthermore, global remittances from international migrants have increased significantly in recent years (IOM, 2005). This could also lower the working poor poverty rates in countries where remittances are sizeable, even if the quality of domestic employment opportunities

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<sup>23</sup> However, women who do not participate in the paid labour market at all may work fewer hours in total than do men (OECD 2001).

*Table 6.*  
*Working poor as a percentage of total employment, 1990 and 2004*  
*(based on US\$1/day poverty line, adjusted for purchasing power)*

	<b>1990</b>	<b>2004</b>
<i>Latin America and the Caribbean</i>	16.1%	13.2%
<i>Sub-Saharan Africa</i>	55.8%	55.4%
<i>Middle East and North Africa</i>	3.9%	2.8%
<i>East Asia</i>	35.9%	15.7%
<i>Southeast Asia</i>	19.9%	10.9%
<i>South Asia</i>	53.0%	35.9%
<i>Transition Economies</i>	1.7%	4.7%
<b><i>World</i></b>	<b>27.5%</b>	<b>18.8%</b>

*Source: Kapsos (2004).*

does not improve. As Table 6 demonstrates, working poor poverty rates vary significantly from region to region. East Asia, Southeast Asia and South Asia experienced substantial reductions in their working poverty rates from 1990 to 2004. Working poor poverty rates increased over this same time period in the transition economies and were virtually unchanged in sub-Saharan Africa. The dollar-a-day poverty line is useful for simple international comparisons. However, it falls short of capturing the true incidence of poverty among employed individuals. For example, this poverty standard is incapable of measuring the size of the working poor population in high-income, industrialized economies. In addition, the use of purchasing power parity adjustments to derive the dollar-a-day threshold may understate the true extent of income poverty in developing countries (Reddy and Pogge, 2005).

Despite the substantial size of the working poor population, research has shown that access to employment is an important determinant of poverty status and household-level income inequality in both developed and developing countries (e.g. Kapungwe, 2004; OECD, 2002; Leibbrandt, Woolard and Borhat, 2000). Access to employment lowers the risk of poverty. However, being employed provides no guarantee of escaping poverty, as the estimates of the working poor population demonstrate. The type, the quality and the stability of employment matter in determining how effectively improving access to employment opportunities reduces poverty.

Table 7 presents estimates of the differences in the relative poverty risk for workers in different employment status categories, disaggregated by sex, in Costa Rica, Egypt, El Salvador and Ghana. Relative poverty risk is defined as the poverty rate in a particular employment category expressed as a per cent of the poverty rate of formal, private, non-agricultural wage workers.<sup>24</sup> For example, if the poverty rate among domestic workers were three times the poverty rate among formal, private, non-agricultural wage workers, then the relative poverty measure would have a value of 300. From Table 7, one can see that poverty rates are higher in informal employment compared to formal employment, and in agricultural activities relative to non-agricultural activities. The types of informal work in which women are concentrated – e.g. own-account workers and unpaid workers on family enterprises – tend to have higher rates of poverty on average than wage employment.

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<sup>24</sup> National poverty lines, not the dollar-a-day poverty line, are used to calculate these figures.

Table 7.

Relative poverty rates: working poor poverty rates by sex and employment status category as a per cent of the poverty rate for formal, private non-agricultural private wage workers (F=female, M=male)

		Formal				Informal							
		Non-agricultural			Agric.	Non-agricultural					Agricultural		
		Own-acc'nt	Pvt. wage	Pub. wage	Pvt. wage	Own-acc'nt	Pvt. wage	Pub. wage	Domes tic	Unpaid	Own-acc'nt	Pvt. wage	Unpaid
Costa Rica	F	n.a.	100	n.a.	n.a.	735	330	n.a.	678	757	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
	M	n.a.	100	51	244	249	205	n.a.	n.a.	158	644	598	571
Egypt	F	n.a.	100	64	n.a.	416	293	n.a.	n.a.	219	n.a.	n.a.	281
	M	69	100	100	n.a.	218	200	n.a.	n.a.	86	192	263	205
El Salvador	F	n.a.	100	30	n.a.	233	207	145	193	206	372	338	398
	M	197	100	80	184	179	197	155	210	214	573	161	376
Ghana	F	233	100	164	n.a.	257	n.a.	177	n.a.	314	334	n.a.	394
	M	173	100	166	n.a.	146	n.a.	174	n.a.	226	275	215	305

n.a. indicates that data were not available or that there were insufficient observations to derive statistically significant estimates.

Source: Chen et al. (2005).

Poverty rates appear to vary significantly between different employment statuses and types of employment (Chen *et al.*, 2005; Kapungwe 2004). Women are frequently concentrated in types of employment with high risks of poverty. However, within a particular employment category, no systematic pattern may be evident in terms of the difference in poverty risk observed for employed men and employed women – despite a gender gap in terms of employment income (Chen *et al.*, 2005).

This, seemingly contradictory, result arises due to the complexities involved when analyzing gender dynamics, employment and poverty. These complexities emerge when connecting employment status (frequently analyzed at the individual level) with poverty status (influenced by household-level dynamics). For example, the fact that women spend time in paid work can lower the household's risk of income poverty, since the additional employment income determines whether the household is considered poor or not. In households in which women do not engage in market work, the risk of poverty may be higher. Therefore, the poverty rate among working women may be lower on average than that among working men, even if women are engaged in precarious work with low earnings. To fully understand the connections between gender, employment and poverty, we must incorporate an analysis of the household into the analysis of employment and labour markets, an issue addressed in the next section of this report.

## 4. Feminization of labour and poverty

Two important discourses have emerged in recent years that shape how the relationships between women's paid work, employment and the risk of poverty are understood: the "feminization of labour" and the "feminization of poverty". These analyses were developed during the period of global integration and economic liberalization and therefore they have had a fundamental influence on how the social dimensions of globalization are analyzed – particularly, in terms of how globalization has affected the economic reality facing women. However, both these discourses, as traditionally defined, have serious limitations that may obscure, rather than clarify, the links between employment and poverty. Therefore, it is important to take some time to interrogate the dual feminizations of labour and poverty.

### 4.1 *Feminization of labour*

The "feminization of labour" framework, as initially outlined by Standing (1989), focuses on the significant increase in women's labour force participation that was discussed and documented in the previous section.<sup>25</sup> Women's entry into the paid labour force was seen as an important factor behind the increase in flexible work arrangements, growing informality and the deterioration in the average quality of employment. Women provided a new and lower-cost source of labour that could substitute for men's labour. Jobs became "feminized" as they took on characteristics traditionally associated with women's work: pay was low, drudgery increased, occupational mobility declined and employment became more uncertain.

This conceptualization of the feminization of labour is subject to criticism. For example, the casual link presumed to exist between women's labour force participation and growing precariousness may be spurious. That is, the growth of women's labour force participation and the expansion of informal and non-standard work could have been parallel processes. Since labour markets remain highly segmented by sex, the expansion of women's low-wage employment simply resulted from the growth of poor quality employment opportunities that were available to women (Vosko, 2002; Elson, 1996). Instead of an erosion of labour market segmentation that we would expect to see if there were widespread substitution of women's labour for men's, we would see persistence of segmentation, at least in many categories of employment (Vosko, 2002).

Under this alternative explanation of the observed trends, women's labour force participation is not a significant cause of informalization and casualization. Instead, other economic forces, including macroeconomic policies and development strategies, simultaneously influenced the rise of precariousness and the expansion of women's labour force participation.

The original feminization of labour framework also fails to integrate the division of labour between paid (market) and unpaid (non-market) work into its analysis. Women's supply of labour to market activities certainly increased with greater labour force participation. However, the constraints under which labour was supplied differ markedly between men and women. On-going responsibilities for childcare and other unpaid activities limit the labour market opportunities available to women. Under these conditions, part-time, own-account, or home-based work might be the best options for remunerative employment

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<sup>25</sup> In a later paper, Standing (1999b) refined some of the arguments that he first advanced in the 1989 article.



available to women. The gender roles and relationships that structure household work have a direct impact on the inequalities between men and women in the labour market. However, these constraints are not explicitly recognized in the original feminization framework.

We need a more nuanced understanding of these issues if we want to more fully understand the underlying causes of the rise of precarious employment for both women and men. Since low and unstable earnings typically characterize much of informal and non-standard employment, these fundamental changes to the nature of global employment are likely to have a deep and long-lasting impact on patterns of work, average living standards and poverty risk. However, rethinking the feminization of labour is only part of the story. The link between employment, gender dynamics and poverty is complex and requires a re-examination of the second “feminization”: the feminization of poverty.

#### **4.2 Feminization of poverty**

The “feminization of poverty” refers to the assertion that women account for a disproportionately higher share (and a growing share) of the world’s poor. Since women’s economic position is almost everywhere inferior to men’s – in terms of earnings, opportunities and assets – it seems reasonable to assume that women should face a higher risk of poverty. Female-headed households are a particular focus of the feminization of poverty approach. Given the economic disadvantages facing women, female-headed households are expected to have a higher poverty rate on average than male-headed households. However, in reality, the determinants of the poverty risks that women face are more complex (Chant, 2003; Razavi, 1999).

The empirical evidence supporting the broad applicability of the feminization of poverty argument is not strong. Studies have often found no clear relationship between female headship and poverty rates (Chant, 2003; Marcoux, 1998; Quisumbing, *et al.*, 1995). There are numerous reasons why this may be the case. Female-headed households can be extremely diverse and the roads to female headship divergent (Razavi, 1999). Therefore, not all female-headed households are disadvantaged to the same degree or in the same way. It may be more appropriate to talk of particular types of female-headed households in the context of women’s poverty risk, e.g. a family with children maintained by a woman alone (Folbre, 1991). Also, intra-household dynamics must be taken into account. For example, in some cases women in female-headed households may face fewer labour market constraints and exert more direct control over employment income than other households (Chant, 2003). Women may improve their welfare in other ways by leaving male-headed households – e.g. by escaping domestic violence.

The types of employment available to women, and to other earners in the household, matter for determining the risk of income or consumption poverty. This holds true for female-headed households and households in which women account for the majority of employment income. Table 8a illustrates this point by presenting income poverty rates for various household types in Ghana. The households are divided into two categories: those that earn the majority of their income through informal employment and those that earn the majority of their income through formal employment. In all categories, income poverty rates are significantly higher for those households that primarily depend on informal employment. The higher poverty rates cannot be explained by differences in the ratio of non-earners to earners, as Table 8b demonstrates. When households with a majority of informal employment income are compared to those with a majority of formal employment income, the ratios of non-earners to earners are virtually identical.

Table 8a shows that female-headship does not systematically explain differences in income poverty in Ghana. For households that earn a majority of their income from informal employment, poverty rates for female-headed households are higher than those of male-headed households. But poverty rates are not consistently higher for households in which women account for the majority of employment income earned or for female-headed households that earn a majority of their income from formal employment.

The estimates presented in Table 8a share a common problem with many other approaches to assessing the risk of poverty: poverty is defined only in terms of income or consumption measured at the household level. However, the distribution of income within the household may be as important, or in some cases more important, than the total income available to the household as a whole. This is particularly critical for understanding women's risk of poverty, since men may control income and expenditures at home (Chant, 2003). In addition, income represents only one economic resource that affects the risk of poverty. Access to various kinds of assets – physical assets, education and skills, natural assets and financial assets – determine the livelihoods available to the members of the household and influence the distribution of resources within the household (Rakodi, 1999; Deere and Leon, 2003).

Table 8a. Poverty rates by household type, 1998/9, Ghana (earners aged 15+).

	Head of Household (identified in survey)		Primary Earner (largest share of earnings)		All households
	Female-Headed	Male-Headed	Female	Male	
	Majority of earned income from informal employment				
One earner	67.4	67.1	67.7	66.7	67.2
Two earners	70.4	64.3	65.2	65.3	65.3
More than two earners	75.7	61.8	59.8	66.1	64.2
	Majority of earned income from formal employment				
One earner	43.3	47.1	45.9	46.0	45.9
Two earners	45.6	45.4	53.6	43.3	45.4
More than two earners	---	30.1	---	32.4	34.6

Table 8b. Ratio of non-earners to earners (15+) by household type, 1998/9, Ghana

	Head of Household (identified in survey)		Primary Earner (largest share of earnings)		All households
	Female-Headed	Male-Headed	Female	Male	
	Majority of earned income from informal employment				
One earner	2.4	2.6	2.6	2.4	2.5
Two earners	1.5	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6
More than two earners	1.0	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.3
	Majority of earned income from formal employment				
One earner	2.2	2.7	2.3	2.7	2.5
Two earners	1.2	1.6	1.4	1.6	1.6
More than two earners	---	1.4	---	1.4	1.4

--- = insufficient observations

Source: Heintz (2005b).

As mentioned earlier, poverty is multi-dimensional and cannot be reduced to a metric based on income or consumption. In addition to market-derived income, definitions of poverty frequently take into account public goods and services, common-pooled resources and non-tangibles, such as health, safety and autonomy (Razavi, 1999). The non-income variables included as indicators of human development, which are compiled and analyzed by the UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), represent an effort to develop individual-level indicators of well-being that reflect this broader concept of poverty (Fukuda-Parr, 1999).

Since these indicators can be evaluated at the individual level, they may appear to solve the problem of the household/individual dichotomy that complicates the analysis of employment-poverty linkages. Recall that one of the problems with linking employment outcomes to poverty risk is that employment is defined at the individual level and income poverty is defined at the household level. Individual human development indicators do not have the same problem. However, household income and intra-household dynamics remain critical, since they influence the realization of these individual-level indicators of well-being. The way in which income, including employment income, translates (or fails to translate) into individual capabilities and human development matters greatly for any discussion of poverty (Sen, 1992).

Intra-household dynamics are important to take into account in terms of another link between employment and poverty: the division of labour between market and non-market work. Non-market work is essential for maintaining household's living standards and for sustaining human development. At the same time, women's paid employment can be essential for keeping household income above the poverty threshold. However, numerous trade-offs emerge when women extend their hours of market work. In some cases, women may work a "double-shift": extending their total hours of work without cutting back on the amount of unpaid labour they supply. In others, women may not be able to maintain the same level of caring labour once they enter the labour force. If men do not fill the gap, some of the gains in terms of market-based income will be lost in terms of non-market labour. Along similar lines, some forms of informal employment that allow women to combine market and non-market work may improve overall well-being, despite the low quality and precarious nature of such employment activities. Measurements of poverty and well-being should take these factors into account.

We have argued that the two feminizations – of labour and of poverty – do not provide an adequate framework for understanding the connections between employment (including women's employment) and poverty risk (including women's risk of poverty). Instead, we need a framework for linking employment and poverty, which takes into account interactions at three levels: (1) the household level; (2) at the level of intra-household dynamics; and (3) the individual level. Only by analyzing the employment-poverty nexus at each of these three levels, will an adequate analysis be produced. In addition, the gendered structure of informal and formal labour markets must be explicitly recognized. This involves acknowledging the sex segmentation of the labour force and the gender division of labour between paid and unpaid work. Finally, we need a better understanding of the determinants of women's and men's employment outcomes and the economic processes behind the rise of informal and precarious work.

Despite this call for a more complex analysis of the connections between gender relations, employment and poverty, one fact remains clear: women's paid employment is an

essential factor determining the risk of poverty that families face. Women's employment contributes to total household income; women's participation in the labour market can affect intra-household bargaining outcomes, conditional on decision-making processes and who controls the income; and access to employment has important implications for individual freedoms, capabilities and dignity. Exactly how women's employment affects social and economic well-being will depend on the institutional context and the gender relations that prevail in a given context. None of this diminishes the importance of understanding the economic factors that determine the quantity and quality of remunerative work.

This final issue is particularly critical. We need to understand to what extent the prevailing economic policy regime influences the "feminization of labour" – broadly defined – and the type of employment opportunities created for both women and men. It is to this issue that we now turn.



## 5. Economic policy regimes and employment

### 5.1 Macroeconomic policies and employment

As has already been stressed, the global economic landscape has undergone immense change in recent decades. Central to that process of change has been the adoption of a new set of economic policies, often seen as imperative for successful economic management in a globalized context. These policies have emphasized more rapid global integration, maintaining price stability, liberalizing markets, reducing the scope of the public sector, and encouraging cross-border flows of goods, services and finance (Pieper and Taylor, 1998).

This study is concerned with the impact of these changes on employment, and how policy choices have affected men's and women's employment differently. We have reviewed many of the broad trends in employment, labour force participation and informalization. However, we have not yet examined how economic policy regimes interact with, influence, and, in many cases determine, the trajectory of global integration and the shifting nature of employment worldwide. In this section, we examine what we know about the employment outcomes associated with four broad policy areas:

- monetary regimes and central bank policy;
- international trade;
- exchange rate policy; and
- fiscal policies and public sector restructuring.

These topics cover many of the policy tools that have been used to realize fundamental changes in the world economy – with enormous implications for global employment.

However, before delving into each of these policy areas individually, it is helpful to provide an overview of the impact of macroeconomic factors and international trade on employment more generally. To do this, we produced a series of econometric estimates that explore the relationships that exist between employment and a set of economic variables that are broadly indicative of the types of economic strategies that have been pursued in recent years. The objectives for looking into these relationships are twofold: (1) to provide a context for the more detailed policy discussion that follows and (2) to examine how these variables, taken together, influence employment outcomes.

In conducting this exercise, we examined the dynamics of total employment, women's employment and men's employment for 16 low- and middle-income countries from 1970 to 2003.<sup>26</sup> The selection of countries was based on those with reasonable long time series data on employment, disaggregated by sex. The economic variables used in the study were: (1) economic growth; (2) government expenditures; (3) exports of goods and services; (4) imports of goods and services; and (5) the short-term real interest rate. Trends in these variables provide a good description of the overall macroeconomic and policy environment. The variable definitions are summarized in Table 9.

We estimated how each of these variables affected the growth rate of total employment, women's employment and men's employment using an appropriate linear regression model. The technical details of the analysis, including the structure of the panel

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<sup>26</sup> The countries included Barbados, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, India, Jamaica, Kenya, Malawi, Malaysia, Mauritius, Panama, Philippines, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Trinidad & Tobago.

Table 9.  
List of employment and economic policy variables

Variable	Description
employment <sub>t</sub>	Total employment in time period t (natural logarithm).
men employ <sub>t</sub>	Men's employment in time period t (natural logarithm).
women employ <sub>t</sub>	Women's employment in time period t (natural logarithm).
govt spending <sub>t</sub>	Current government expenditures as a % of GDP in time period t (natural logarithm).
exports <sub>t</sub>	Exports of goods and services as a % of GDP in time period t (natural logarithm).
imports <sub>t</sub>	Imports of goods and services as a % of GDP in time period t (natural logarithm).
output <sub>t</sub>	Real GDP in time period t (natural logarithm).
interest <sub>t</sub>	Real short-term interest rates in time period t.

See appendix for more details.

Table 10.  
Impact of policy and economic variables on total employment, unbalanced dynamic panel estimates, 1970-2003, 16 low- and middle-income countries (dependent variable is employment<sub>t</sub>, variables expressed as first differences, coefficients of the Arellano-Bond 2-step estimation presented<sup>27</sup>)

Variable	Estimated Coefficient	P-values
		AB 1-step/AB 2-step
output <sub>t</sub>	0.007*	0.002/<0.001
govt spending <sub>t</sub>	0.119*	0.040/0.003
exports <sub>t</sub>	0.074***	0.200/0.014
imports <sub>t</sub>	-0.032***	0.483/0.020
interest <sub>t</sub>	-0.0008*	0.004/<0.001
employment <sub>t-1</sub>	-0.211*	0.005/<0.001
R <sup>2</sup>	0.074	
N	381	
Cross-sections	16	

\* significant at the 5% level, both Arellano-Bond 1-step and 2-step.

\*\* significant at the 5% level, Arellano-Bond 1-step.

\*\*\* significant at the 5% level, Arellano-Bond 2-step.

data, the stationarity of the variables and the estimation procedure used are described in the paper's appendix.

<sup>27</sup> Standard error estimates for the Arellano-Bond 2-step estimator may not always be reliable. Therefore, p-values for both 1-step and 2-step estimators are presented in both Table 10. The coefficient estimates correspond to the Arellano-Bond 2-step estimator.

How do these different economic factors impact real employment outcomes? Table 10 presents the estimates of the impact of changes in these policy/economic variables on *total* employment. The estimates in Table 10 are coefficient estimates. Therefore, a positive coefficient indicates that an increase in the value of variable in question – e.g. exports – is associated with faster employment growth. A negative coefficient indicates that the variable and employment move in opposite directions.

As would be expected, the results show that expansion of output (GDP) is associated with an increase in total employment, controlling for other factors. However, the estimations also show that the *type* and *composition* of growth matter for employment performance. For example, the higher the government share of GDP associated with a particular rate of economic growth, the greater the growth rate of employment. A stronger export orientation appears to improve employment performance, but import penetration, measured by the value of imports as a fraction of GDP, slows employment growth. Finally, a high interest rate tends to reduce employment growth, perhaps by discouraging fixed capital investment in the economy.

Table 11.

*Impact of policy and economic variables on women's and men's employment, unbalanced dynamic panel estimates, 1970-2003, 16 low- and middle-income countries (dependent variable is either women employ<sub>t</sub> or men employ<sub>t</sub>, variables expressed as first differences, coefficients of the Arellano-Bond 2-step estimation presented<sup>28</sup>)*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Women's employment</b>		<b>Men's employment</b>	
	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>p-value (1-step/2-step)</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>p-value (1-step/2-step)</b>
<i>output<sub>t</sub></i>	0.003	0.372/0.195	0.002	0.126/0.114
<i>govt spending<sub>t</sub></i>	-0.042	0.270/0.711	0.007	0.474/0.839
<i>exports<sub>t</sub></i>	0.069*	<0.001/0.058	-0.034	0.125/0.144
<i>imports<sub>t</sub></i>	0.004	0.943/0.820	-0.032***	0.282/<0.001
<i>interest<sub>t</sub></i>	-0.0005*	0.051/0.001	0.0003	0.387/0.071
<i>men employ<sub>t</sub></i>	0.925*	<0.001/<0.001		
<i>men employ<sub>t-1</sub></i>			-0.040	0.123/0.433
<i>women employ<sub>t</sub></i>			0.468*	<0.001/<0.001
<i>Women employ<sub>t-1</sub></i>	-0.102*	0.003/0.002		
R <sup>2</sup>	0.49		0.50	
N	381		381	
Cross-sections	16		16	

\* significant at the 5% level, both Arellano-Bond 1-step and 2-step.

\*\* significant at the 5% level, Arellano-Bond 1-step.

\*\*\* significant at the 5% level, Arellano-Bond 2-step.

<sup>28</sup> P-values for both 1-step and 2-step estimators are presented in Table 11. The coefficient estimates correspond to the Arellano-Bond 2-step estimator.



We would expect the various economic factors examined here to affect women's and men's employment differently. To see if this is the case, we examined the impact of the same economic variables on the growth rate of employment for women and men separately. These results are presented in Table 11. Again, a full discussion of the technical details of these estimates and the associated econometric model can be found in the paper's appendix.

The results in Table 11 suggest some interesting gender-based differences in the reaction of employment to the various economic factors. Women's employment responds positively to the level of exports and negatively to the real interest rate. The estimates do not show a statistically significant impact of these variables on men's employment, controlling for other variables. In contrast, men's employment may respond negatively to import penetration, while no such independent effect is found with respect to women's employment.

Why would the volume of imports and exports affect men's and women's employment differently? In many countries, the growth of women's employment – particularly formal employment and wage employment – has been concentrated in tradable sectors, in particular, in export-oriented production (Kabeer and Mahmud, 2004; Benería, 2003; Elson, 1996; Elson and Pearson, 1981). Export-producing sectors prefer to employ women for many reasons: to lower labour costs, to introduce flexible forms of employment, and to increase control over the workplace. Therefore, it is not surprising that an increase in export volume would be associated with faster growth of women's employment.

Interestingly, the estimates do not show that women's employment is a close substitute for men's employment. In the estimates of the determinants of women's employment, the coefficient on men's employment is very close to unity. This suggests that women's employment tends to increase proportionately to an exogenous increase in men's employment. However, in the estimates of the determinants of men's employment, the coefficient on women's employment is approximately 0.47. In other words, men's employment does not respond nearly as strongly to an exogenous change in women's employment. The fact that women's and men's employment appear to be complements, rather than substitutes, provides an additional piece of evidence for labour market segmentation. If there were no segmentation, we would expect to see more evidence of women's labour substituting for men's.

These estimates provide insight into the nature of the "feminization of labour" during this period of global integration. According to these estimates, increases in trade – both imports and exports – directly impact employment. But the net effect depends on the composition of trade. Exports generally have a positive impact on employment, while imports have a negative impact. The expansion of exports has a particularly noticeable positive impact on women's employment, while the expansion of imports negatively affects men's employment. If the expansion of trade involves an increase in both exports and imports, we are likely to see a "feminization of labour" as an outcome of global integration. In addition, the negative effect of import penetration on men's employment may squeeze household resources and lead to an increase in female labour force participation, depending on household-level decision-making over the division of labour between market and non-market activities. Moreover, if the growth in export sectors leads to an increase in women's employment, these estimates suggest that we should see a less-than-proportional increase in men's employment. All of these factors would contribute to the "feminization of labour" discussed earlier.

A number of variables were shown to affect total employment, but there was no evidence of a separate gender-specific effect. These variables include economic growth and government spending. The lack of a gender-specific impact of government spending on employment is somewhat surprising, since public employment is often an important source of jobs, particularly formal jobs, for women. Perhaps an aggregate measure of government spending is not sufficient for picking up these differences, due to variations in the composition of government spending and the details of budget allocations. We examine public sector reform and fiscal policy in more detail later in this section.

It is important to acknowledge that the data used in these estimates will most likely fail to capture the full extent of informal employment, particularly “hidden” types of informal employment, such as home-based work and domestic work. The incomplete coverage of informal employment raises some important concerns about the interpretation of these results. When we discuss “women’s employment” or “men’s employment” in the context of the analysis presented here, we must remain cognisant of the fact that we cannot generalize these results to encompass all employment. This remains a shortcoming of the exercise. Nevertheless, the estimates do suggest a connection between economic policies and informalization, to the extent that an expansion of the most precarious forms of employment is partially due to the lack of better opportunities elsewhere in the economy. Economic policies that slow growth, raise short-term interest rates, reduce government spending, or encourage imports without promoting a strong export response will likely reduce the growth rate of decent jobs. The specific impact on men and women would depend on the precise mix of policies adopted.

This empirical analysis provides some general insights into possible connections between economic policy choices, employment responses and gender-differentiated outcomes. However, the exercise is highly aggregated and based on pooled data from a diverse, yet limited, number of low- and middle-income countries. Therefore, we are constrained in terms of what we can really take away from such a study. In order to deepen out insights and analysis, it is helpful to examine each of the policy areas listed above in turn. We begin with monetary and central bank policies.

## ***5.2 Monetary and central bank policy***

In recent decades, monetary policy in most countries around the world has focused on price stability and inflation reduction. For some, this has meant adopting “inflation-targeting regimes” in which the central bank announces a target inflation rate – or a target range for inflation – and then crafts monetary policy to meet these publicly declared goals. Not all countries have formal inflation-targeting monetary regimes. However, a large number have inflation-reduction targets built into their macroeconomic strategies. For example, the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), which many low-income countries have produced, almost always have some form of inflation-reducing target as a guideline for monetary policy. Many advanced industrial economies manage monetary policy with a stated goal of keeping inflation rates low, even if they have not formally adopted inflation-targeting.

The rationale for maintaining low rates of inflation is straight-forward: low and stable inflation is assumed to support more rapid economic growth in the long-run. Often, it is recognized that, in the short-run, efforts to rein in inflation may involve real economic costs, in the form of slower growth or rising unemployment. However, the assumption is that, in the long-run, very low rates of inflation will support more rapid growth. Proponents of this view presume that, over time, the benefits of lowering inflation will outstrip the costs.

The evidence that the benefits of lowering inflation are greater than the costs is mixed. Both the costs and the benefits of reducing inflation depend on numerous factors, one of the most important being the prevailing rate of inflation (Epstein, 2003). Research suggests that annual rates of inflation above 15-20 per cent can have large negative consequences for economic growth. If initial inflation rates are significantly above 20 per cent, then inflation-reducing monetary policy would likely be beneficial to growth and employment. On the other hand, sustained inflation rates of around 20 per cent or lower do not appear to have significant negative impacts (Bruno and Easterly, 1998; Pollin and Zhu, 2005). Most inflation-targeting regimes and other inflation-reduction policies aim to keep inflation rates in the lower single digits (Epstein, 2003). Efforts to continually push inflation down to very low levels are likely to generate high costs and relatively few benefits.

There are a number of other concerns about very low target rates of inflation. In some cases, inflation reduction through tight monetary policy leads to an appreciation of the real exchange rate (discussed in more detail below). Real exchange rate appreciation reduces export competitiveness, encourages import penetration, shifts the distribution of resources towards non-tradable sectors, and can have a negative impact on employment and growth (Frenkel and Taylor, 2005). In many low-income countries, increases in domestic inflation often result from adverse supply-side shocks, particularly in terms of food and energy prices. Insofar as the central bank tightens monetary policy in response to such inflationary shocks, a pro-cyclical bias is introduced into macroeconomic policy formulation. That is, the reaction of the monetary authorities may make the negative impacts of an adverse external shock worse.

One of the justifications given for announcing formal inflation targets is that such policy declarations, coming from the central bank, can influence expectations if the policy announcements are deemed credible. If inflationary expectations are reduced as a result, lowering inflation would involve fewer costs, in terms of foregone growth or employment creation, relative to reducing inflation using direct monetary controls alone. However, there is little evidence that formal inflation targeting involves smaller short-run sacrifices in terms of output or employment (Epstein, 2003).

What is the impact of inflation-reducing monetary policy on employment, in general, and women's employment, specifically? Braunstein and Heintz (2005) have studied changes in the patterns of formal employment across periods of inflation reduction in order to see how central bank policy impacts employment opportunities. It is worthwhile examining this analysis in some detail.

The empirical exercise that Braunstein and Heintz (2005) conducted explores the effects of inflation reduction on women's and men's formal employment. We compiled data for 51 "inflation-reduction episodes" in 17 low- and middle-income countries.<sup>29</sup> To assess the employment effects of inflation-reduction periods, actual employment trends, disaggregated by sex, were compared to long-run employment trends, and estimated by applying a Hodrick-Prescott filter to the employment series.<sup>30</sup> In addition, the behaviour of short-term real interest rates and real exchange rates were analyzed across the various inflation reduction episodes. Again – long-run trends were estimated by applying a Hodrick-Prescott filter to the interest rate and exchange rate series.

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<sup>29</sup> The selection of countries was limited to those for which reliable, gender-disaggregated formal employment data were available over a sufficiently long time period.

<sup>30</sup> The Hodrick-Prescott filter is a statistical smoothing technique that is widely used to obtain an estimate of the long-term trend component of a series.

*Table 12.*  
*Inflation-reduction episodes and deviations from long-run  
employment trends, disaggregated by sex*

**A. Contractionary Inflation-Reduction Episodes**

	Episode	Deviations from Long Run Employment Trends			Ave. actual real short-term interest rates relative to long-run	Difference in ave. growth rates of actual and long-run real exchange rates
		W	M	Ratio		
Barbados	1980-86	-1.8%	-0.8%	-1.0%	above	-0.3%
	1990-94	-2.5%	-2.6%	0.1% <sup>*</sup>	above	+1.1%
	1996-99	-1.0%	0.3%	-1.4%	above <sup>**</sup>	-1.2%
Brazil	1993-99	-0.7%	-0.1%	-0.6%	n.a.	+1.1%
Colombia	1980-85	-3.2%	-2.5%	-0.7%	above <sup>**</sup>	+2.2%
Costa Rica	1982-85	-1.5%	-0.1%	-1.4%	neg.	-6.7%
India	1973-77	-0.2%	-0.4%	0.2% <sup>*</sup>	neg.	+1.6%
	1982-86	-0.1%	-0.2%	0.1% <sup>*</sup>	above	+0.8%
	1991-94	0.1%	-1.2%	0.2% <sup>*</sup>	below	+3.6%
	1997-02	-1.0%	0.9%	-0.2%	below	+0.4%
Jamaica	1974-76	-0.5%	-0.2%	-0.3%	neg.	-9.0%
	1992-00	-0.5%	0.1%	-0.6%	neg. <sup>**</sup>	-0.6%
Kenya	1975-80	-2.2%	-0.1%	-2.1%	neg.	-3.5%
	1981-87	0.8%	-0.3%	1.1% <sup>*</sup>	below	+1.7%
Malaysia	1981-86	-0.4%	-0.8%	0.4% <sup>*</sup>	above	+4.5%
Mauritius	1980-86	-0.6%	-1.6%	0.9% <sup>*</sup>	neg.	0.0% <sup>***</sup>
	1989-93	-1.3%	-0.3%	-0.9%	below	+1.8%
	1994-96	-1.8%	-0.9%	-0.8%	above	-4.0%
Philippines	1973-76	-1.6%	-0.4%	-1.2%	neg.	-3.9%
	1980-82	0.2%	-0.3%	0.5%	neg.	+0.8%
	1984-87	-2.4%	0.0%	-2.3%	neg.	0.0%
Singapore	1974-76	-6.7%	-0.7%	-5.9%	neg.	+3.9%
	1981-86	-1.8%	-2.0%	0.1% <sup>*</sup>	above	+2.8%
South Korea	1980-85	-1.4%	-0.9%	-0.5%	neg.	+7.0%
	1991-94	-0.4%	0.0%	-0.4%	neg.	-0.4%
	1997-00	-1.2%	-1.1%	-0.1%	neg.	+6.7%
Sri Lanka	1981-86	-0.7%	0.1%	-0.8%	above	-0.7%
	1997-99	-0.7%	-2.6%	1.9% <sup>*</sup>	above	+1.7%
Taiwan	1974-76	-4.9%	0.3%	-5.1%	neg.	n.a.
	1980-85	0.6%	-0.5%	1.1% <sup>*</sup>	above	n.a.
	1991-02	-0.4%	-0.2%	0.2% <sup>*</sup>	below	n.a.
Thailand	1974-76	-1.3%	-0.8%	-0.5%	n.a.	-0.2%
	1980-85	-2.6%	-0.7%	-1.8%	above	+3.7%
	1990-93	-0.8%	0.1%	-0.9%	above	-1.9%
	1997-00	-0.8%	-0.7%	-0.1%	above	+7.0%
Trinidad & Tobago	1980-87	-1.0%	-0.6%	-0.4%	neg.	+2.7%

Table 12(cont.)

**B.Expansionary Inflation Reduction Episodes**

		DEVIATIONS FROM LONG-RUN EMPLOYMENT TRENDS			Ave. actual real short-term interest rates relative to long-run	Difference in ave. growth rates of actual and long-run real exchange rates
	period	W	M	Ratio		
Brazil	1989-92	1.9%	-0.8%	2.8% <sup>*</sup>	n.a.	0.0%
Chile	1984-88	0.8%	2.3%	-1.5%	below	+2.9%
Costa Rica	1991-93	0.2%	1.6%	-1.4%	below	-4.8%
Jamaica	1979-82	0.1%	0.5%	-0.4%	neg.	-2.2%
	1985-88	2.9%	0.5%	2.3% <sup>*</sup>	neg.	-7.8%
Kenya	1993-96	0.9%	-0.3%	1.3% <sup>*</sup>	below	+5.7%
Malaysia	1992-96	0.6%	1.4%	-0.8%	below	-4.6%
Mauritius	1974-77	3.9%	1.6%	2.1% <sup>*</sup>	n.a.	n.a.
Philippines	1990-94	0.2%	0.3%	-0.1%	below	-1.8%
Singapore	1990-99	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	below	+0.4%
Sri Lanka	1974-76	1.9%	3.1%	-1.1%	neg. <sup>**</sup>	-1.0%
	1989-94	8.9%	3.6%	4.9% <sup>*</sup>	below	-0.3%
Trinidad & Tobago	1974-77	0.2%	1.0%	-0.8%	neg.	-1.0%
	1989-92	3.8%	1.6%	2.1% <sup>*</sup>	above	-3.8%
	1993-96	0.7%	0.6%	0.2% <sup>*</sup>	below	+1.4%

\* Inflation reduction episodes in which the ratio of women's to men's employment increased more rapidly than the long-run trend.

\*\* Interest rate behaviour reported for an alternative periodization: from one year before the inflation-reduction episode to half-way into the inflation-reduction episode. In these cases, this alternative better reflects monetary response to peak inflation.

\*\*\* Average real exchange rates were compared over the period 1981-86 for Mauritius, due to data limitations.  
Source: Braunstein and Heintz (2005).

The methodology used was drawn from the literature on measuring “sacrifice ratios” – that is, the loss of output or employment associated with a given reduction in inflation. Ball (1993) outlines an approach for identifying deflationary periods. For the purposes of this discussion, Ball's approach was adapted in order to examine the gender-specific effects of inflation reduction and central bank policy. A moving average of inflation – in this case, a three-year moving average, encompassing one previous year and one subsequent year – was used to smooth the series. Peaks and troughs in the smoothed inflation series were identified. Peaks occur when the value in a particular year exceeds the values of immediately adjacent years. Troughs occur when the value in a given year falls below the values of the adjacent years. A deflationary period runs from a peak year to the next trough year.

We use the term “inflation-reduction episode” to refer to these deflationary periods. The reason for this is that, during some of the periods identified, employment actually expands more rapidly than its long-run trend. It seems confusing to refer to these periods as “deflationary”. Therefore, we use the terms “expansionary inflation-reduction episode” and “contractionary inflation-reduction episode”. During contractionary inflation-reduction episodes, the rate of increase of total employment fell below its long-run trend. During expansionary inflation-reduction episodes, the rate of increase of total employment was equal to or greater than its long-run trend.

Data for this analysis came from the ILO's LABORSTA database, the IMF's *International Financial Statistics* and the World Bank's *World Development Indicators 2005*. Only countries that fulfilled the following criteria were included:

- Only low- or middle- income countries were examined;<sup>31</sup>
- Countries must have at least 20 years of employment data, disaggregated by sex; and
- In some cases, time series with a small number of missing values were used. Missing values were estimated by extrapolating between the previous and subsequent values in the series.

Changes in employment across inflation-reduction episodes were calculated as the annualized value of the overall rate of change in employment across the entire peak-to-trough period.

Table 12 summarizes the results for all the inflation-reduction episodes studied. The table shows the country name, the dates of each inflation-reduction episode and the deviation from the long-run trend for women's employment, men's employment and the female to male employment ratio. Negative values indicate that the series grew more slowly than the long-run trend (a negative value could also indicate a more rapid decrease in the actual value compared to the long-run trend). Table 12 is divided into contractionary and expansionary inflation reduction episodes.

The majority of the inflation-reduction episodes examined here were contractionary in terms of their effect on employment. Of the 51 employment reduction episodes, 36 (or 71%) were contractionary – meaning that total employment growth fell below its long-run trend.

Moreover, in 67 per cent of contractionary inflation-reduction episodes, the rate of change of the female to male employment ratio fell below its long-run trend, indicating that women's formal employment was disproportionately affected by the slowdown. However, in expansionary inflation reduction episodes, there was no clear pattern. The female to male employment ratio increased faster than trend in 53 per cent of cases and at or below trend in 47 per cent of cases – nearly an even split.

The difference in employment experiences across countries during inflation-reduction episodes – e.g. expansion or contraction of employment – might be explained, in part, by policy choices. For example, if real interest rates rose above the long-run trend in reaction to an acceleration of inflation, this could trigger a contractionary inflation-reduction episode. However, if real interest rates were not raised above the long-run trend (e.g. they were kept in line with the long-run trends of global interest rates), a contraction of employment might be avoided.

To examine this possibility, we looked at average real short-term interest rates across the inflation reduction episodes.<sup>32</sup> In most cases, short-term rates linked directly to monetary policy choices were used (e.g. a discount rate or bank rate). If these rates were unavailable,

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<sup>31</sup> The sample of countries includes Singapore which could arguably be classified as a high-income country today. However, for much of the period considered in this paper, 1970-2003, Singapore was considered a middle-income country.

<sup>32</sup> Due to its extreme volatility, Brazil was excluded from this analysis.

yields on short-term (3 month) Treasury bills were calculated instead.<sup>33</sup> Table 12 presents comparisons between average actual short-term interest rates and average long-run trend interest rates. If average actual short-term interest rates were above the long-run average and if actual rates were positive, Table 12 labels this pattern “above.” If average actual short-term interest rates were both positive and below the long-run average, Table 12 classifies this pattern “below.” However, if actual average real interest rates were negative, these inflation-reduction episodes are labelled as “neg.”

When inflation is controlled while maintaining positive raising real interest rates at or below their long run trend, inflation-episodes are more likely to be expansionary. In Table 12, in only one expansionary episode were short-term interest rates raised above the long-run average (Trinidad and Tobago, 1989-92). In 85 per cent of the contractionary inflation-reduction episodes, average real interest rates were either negative on average or maintained above the long-run trend. Why might a contraction of employment be associated with negative real interest rates? In many cases, negative real interest rates are associated with a “stagflationary” economy, in which a negative external shock drives up inflation and pulls down growth simultaneously. The high rates of inflation produce negative real interest rates. For example, many of the stagflationary inflation-reduction episodes presented in Table 12 can be connected with the oil price shocks of the 1970s.

There do not appear to be any systematic patterns with respect to changes in the real exchange rate across inflation reduction episodes and whether the episode was contractionary or expansionary. In 34 per cent of inflation reduction episodes, the average annual percentage point change in the real exchange rate was below that of the long-run exchange rate (i.e. the exchange rate appreciated relative to its long-run trend); in 60 per cent of the episodes, the difference in average growth rates was positive (i.e. the actual real exchange rate depreciated relative to the long-run trend); and in 6 per cent of the episodes there was no difference between the growth rate of the actual and long-run real exchange rates. These ratios were approximately the same for contractionary and expansionary inflation reduction episodes.<sup>34</sup>

Real exchange rates appear to have an impact on the gender bias observed in contractionary inflation-reduction episodes. Recall that, in the majority of cases, women’s formal employment was disproportionately affected by the slowdown in employment growth. However, about a third of the time, the ratio of women’s to men’s employment actually improved when compared to its long-run trajectory. In each of these cases, the real exchange rate either depreciated or showed no deviation relative to its long-run trend. In other words, maintaining a competitive exchange rate may offset some of the gender bias observed during contractionary inflation-reduction. This is not surprising given the fact, as noted earlier, that export-oriented production is an important source of employment for women in many countries. Maintaining a more competitive exchange rate would help protect employment in these sectors.

To sum up the results of this exercise: reducing inflation frequently has a negative impact on employment growth. When employment growth slows, women’s employment is often disproportionately affected. Employment growth is most likely to slow down when

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<sup>33</sup> Only in the case of Jamaica were the t-bills used to determine actual interest rates and to estimate long-run trends.

<sup>34</sup> In contractionary episodes, 36% of the episodes showed an appreciation, 58% a depreciation, and 6% no difference in the average growth of the real exchange rate relative to its long-run trend. In expansionary episodes, the percentages were 34%, 60%, and 7%, respectively.

interest rates are raised above their long-run trend in an effort to reduce inflation. “Stagflation” – often characterized by negative short-term interest rates and triggered by an external shock – also can cause a contraction in employment growth. There does not seem to be a systematic relationship between changes in the real exchange rate over inflation-reduction episodes and patterns of aggregate employment growth. However, maintaining a competitive exchange rate could help to counter the disproportionately negative impact on women’s employment when total employment growth slows down.

A few caveats should be kept in mind when interpreting these results. The empirical analysis presented here concerns the short-run, gender-specific impacts of policy responses during inflation-reduction episodes. The results say little about the long-run impact of different policy responses. Supporters of inflation-targeting frequently acknowledge that short-run trade-offs might exist, but the long-run benefits of low inflation for growth and development are more significant. This argument is problematic when transitory policy shocks have long-run consequences for real economic variables (Fontana and Palacio-Vera 2004). Similarly, short-term gender-specific shocks can have long-run effects for a country’s human and economic development. For example, such short-run disruptions could reduce the investment in women’s education and skills development. More research is needed to examine the long-run consequences of the short-run adverse outcomes for women.

Second, as with much of the analysis presented in this report, the data used may not capture the full extent of informal employment. Therefore, the degree to which these findings are applicable to all forms of employment remains uncertain. More needs to be known about the entire range of informal activities and the relationships that exist between informal employment, formal activities and the global economy in order to accurately describe the consequences of the dominant monetary regime for informal workers. Nevertheless, the analysis presented here is a first step along this path.

### **5.3 Trade and employment**

The rapid increase in international trade is one of the defining features of modern economic globalization. The growth in world trade is indisputable. Most countries around the world have embraced a general policy of trade liberalization in recent decades – i.e. the removal of trade quotas and the lowering of tariff trade barriers. Although there has been a move towards greater trade liberalization, numerous controls, protections and subsidies still exist and are the focus of on-going negotiations. The impact of trade and trade liberalization on employment and earnings inequalities is one of the best-researched topics relating to the broader question of the impact of globalization and related policy shifts on employment and labour market outcomes. Despite the volume of research in this area, definitive conclusions or generalizations that are broadly applicable remain elusive. Nevertheless, much can be learned by reviewing what is known and where the gaps in our understanding may be found.

Much of the research on the employment effects of trade is framed within the context of standard trade theory in the Heckscher-Ohlin tradition (Heckscher and Ohlin, 1991).<sup>35</sup> The simple Heckscher-Ohlin model assumes two countries, two factors of production and two products. Let us consider an example in which the two factors of production are labour and

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<sup>35</sup> Heckscher-Ohlin trade theory refers to a set of theoretical propositions developed by two Swedish economists in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The theory asserts that patterns of trade are based on differences in comparative production costs. Cost differentials are linked to the relative abundance of resource endowments. In this model, countries should specialize in goods that utilize their most abundant resource and trade with other countries for goods that depend on scarcer factors of production.



capital.<sup>36</sup> In one country, capital is the abundant resource. In the other, just the opposite holds: the availability of capital is constrained, but the supply of labour is relatively plentiful. In addition, one of the two products is produced with labour-intensive technology while the other is produced with capital-intensive techniques. With uninhibited flows of goods between the two countries and well-functioning markets, each country will specialize in producing the product that utilizes its abundant resource and, as a result, aggregate income will be improved. In particular, wages should increase in the labour-abundant economy, raising the employment incomes of workers.

Trade theory in the Heckscher-Ohlin tradition provides a useful analytical framework for making theoretical predictions of the likely impacts of trade liberalization. However, numerous real-world complications confound the employment outcomes that are actually observed (Ghose, 2003). For example, the predictions of the model become much more uncertain when the number of countries, products and factors of production are greater than two. Market failures and imperfections impede the realization of the theoretical predictions. Most importantly for the purposes of this paper, if labour is not fully mobile within a country and if employment opportunities are rationed (i.e. involuntary unemployment exists), the type of specialization needed within the Heckscher-Ohlin framework may not take place, especially not in the short-run. It is important to note that labour market regulations are not the only source of imperfections in the labour market. Information asymmetries, contracts that are costly to enforce, and some degree of market power among employers are commonplace in most labour markets.

The empirical efforts to understand the impact of trade on employment and labour market outcomes have a number of problems. Many studies do not have a good measurement of the extent of trade openness which is comparable across different countries. Often, total trade volume is used instead – i.e. the total value of exports and imports combined. However, trade volume may be a poor indicator of trade openness. In addition, total trade volume may obscure critical differences in the types of trade flows. As suggested by the empirical estimates presented at the beginning of this section, the volume of exports and imports have different effects on employment, with distinct impacts on men's and women's employment. Therefore, the effect of "trade openness", defined as increases in trade volumes, depends on whether such openness is dominated by export growth or import penetration. Finally, studies that do focus on actual trade liberalization (e.g. reductions in tariffs) may not control for other policy variables when assessing the effects of freer trade. For example, if depreciation in the exchange rate accompanies trade liberalization, the reported effects of liberalization may be understated if the offsetting impact of exchange rate movements is not taken into account.

Despite these numerous cautions and caveats, the literature on the impact of trade openness on employment provides numerous useful insights. Country-specific studies are particularly useful, since they provide a level of detail frequently missing in large cross-country or cross-industry analyses. A common finding is that the impacts of the expansion of trade are diverse. The effects of greater openness vary among different types of firms, different industries, countries with different industrial structures and the types of policy changes pursued. In addition, aggregate trends in employment or unemployment often fail to capture the dislocation and churning that significant change in the trade regime can cause (Rama, 2002a; Levinsohn, 1999).

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<sup>36</sup> A common variation on this example of the Heckscher-Ohlin type argument assumes that the two factors of production are skilled labour and unskilled labour.

Many studies, both at the firm level and using more aggregated data show a negative impact of trade liberalization on employment, at least in the short run (Revenga, 1997; Edwards, 2003; Levinsohn, 1999; Márquez and Pagés, 1997; Moreira and Najberg, 2000). However, the effect of liberalization varies significantly. Different sized firms appear to have different responses to liberalization in different countries (Edwards, 2003; Levinsohn, 1999). The type of liberalization also matters: for example, fewer restrictions on imported inputs were shown to raise employment among manufacturing firms in Mexico (Revenga, 1997). Real exchange rate dynamics may be more important in explaining the employment decline in tradable sectors than trade policy (Levinsohn, 1999). Finally, it is important to acknowledge that such studies are essentially short-run, static analyses and may ignore dynamic effects (Lall, 2004). For example, post-liberalization shifts towards more labour-intensive activities may mitigate these employment losses in the long-run, depending on the response of the productive structure over time (Moreira and Najberg, 2000).

The scale of the export response relative to the import response appears to determine the impact of trade openness on employment. For example, a study of the process of global integration in Vietnam showed that net employment responded vigorously to the growth of the country's export-oriented sector (Jenkins, 2004). However, the rapid growth of the export sector occurred while many restrictions on imports were firmly in place, limiting the negative impact of import penetration. The experience of Vietnam is similar to the successful employment records of many of the "Asian tigers" during the period in which high rates of economic growth were sustained. Many of these countries pursued an export-oriented strategy while protecting domestic producers from imports (Amsden, 2001). In contrast, analysis of aggregate employment in South Africa during the country's recent trade reforms showed an almost negligible employment effect (Edwards, 2001). This is because the positive effects of export growth were nearly entirely offset by the negative consequences of import penetration.

For many countries, the employment impacts of trade openness are gender-specific. Many countries that experience net employment gains due to the increase in exports also see rapid increases in women's employment in these burgeoning export sectors (Kabeer and Mahmud, 2004; Jenkins, 2004; Benería, 2003; Rama, 2002a; Standing, 1999b; Elson and Pearson, 1981). The importance of women's employment in export-oriented production has been stressed repeatedly in other sections of this report. It was also evident in the results of the brief empirical study presented at the beginning of this section. As mentioned in the discussion of those results, it may be the case that men are disproportionately impacted by the employment losses associated with import penetration while women disproportionately gain from the jobs created through export growth.

Because of this dynamic, the connections between women's employment, the gender division of labour and trade liberalization are complex. If men's employment declines with import penetration, women's labour supply may increase as a survival response to falling household incomes. In some circumstances, some of these women may find jobs in the expanding export sectors. However, not all women are employed in the export sector; others work informally or in other precarious jobs. The net impact on the unemployment rate is ambiguous. Many countries experience an increase in their unemployment rates following liberalization (Rama, 2002a). This is likely a result of the combined impact of increased labour force participation and job losses from import penetration.

Trade liberalization affects the composition of employment. In many cases, the quality of new jobs in export sectors falls below that of formal jobs elsewhere in the economy (Rama,

2002a). Growth of casual employment may also be associated with trade liberalization. For example, a study of the impact of trade liberalization in Morocco found little net change in aggregate employment, but a significant increase in the use of part-time and temporary workers by some firms (Currie and Harrison, 1997). Lower-quality and more precarious jobs frequently account for a large share of the increase in women's employment during this period of global integration (Chen, *et al.*, 2005; Standing, 1999b). Moreover, women frequently take on the higher levels of employment risk associated with global integration (Benería, 2001). For example, in Chile, the amount of employment dislocation and churning associated with economic liberalization was significantly higher for women than for men (Levinsohn, 1999).

Wages are often used as an indicator to track changes in job quality associated with international trade. One hotly debated topic is the impact of trade on wage inequality – in both developed and developing countries. The theoretical argument relies on the Heckscher-Ohlin reasoning outlined above. However, instead of capital and labour, the two factors of production are skilled labour (assumed to be abundant in developed economies) and unskilled labour (assumed to be abundant in developing economies). As trade openness increases, the theory predicts that we should see a fall in the earnings of unskilled labour in developed countries and a rise in the wages of unskilled labour in developing countries. This should result in growing wage dispersion in developed economies and a narrowing of the wage distribution in developing countries.

As described earlier, growing wage inequality has been documented in many high-income countries and numerous studies have shown that this could be a result of the expansion of international trade (for a review of the core studies and alternative explanations, see Cline, 1997). This evidence would seem to confirm the predictions of the Heckscher-Ohlin theory. However, other researchers have argued that skills-biased technological change better explains the growth of wage dispersion than does the increase in trade. It is very difficult to quantify the nature of technological change over time. Therefore, it becomes nearly impossible to accurately control for technological change when assessing the impact of trade. The debate over the impact of trade on the wage distribution in affluent countries remains unresolved. The growth of trade has likely added to wage inequality, but it is difficult to say how large the contribution actually has been.

The usefulness of the simple Heckscher-Ohlin framework for predicting trends in wage inequality became more questionable when wage inequality was found to be growing in a number of *developing* countries that were well-integrated into the global economy (Milberg, 2004; Wood, 1997; Robbins, 1996). As in the case of developed economies, it is difficult to untangle the effects of technological change and global integration. Furthermore, not all developing countries with highly integrated markets experienced a growth of wage inequality. In many East Asian economies during the period of rapid economic growth, the expansion of trade was associated with declining wage inequality (Wood, 1997). Some research has suggested that trade openness tends to increase wage inequality in developing countries, but if higher levels of trade are associated with more rapid economic growth, these secondary growth effects may counteract rising inequalities over time (Majid, 2004).

The impact of trade on earnings inequality also has a gender dimension. As we have seen, export-producing sectors have provided women with new opportunities for employment. Among other factors, the ability to cut labour costs provides employers with an incentive to

employ women. In some cases, the growth of export sectors has led to a narrowing of the wage gap between women and men (Benería, 2003; Berik, 2000; Seguino, 2000).

However, the narrowing of the gender wage gap may take place in the context of growing precariousness of jobs for both women and men (Berik, 2000). As mentioned previously, whether increased trade leads to a narrowing of the gender wage gap or not depends on the nature of labour force segmentation, the structure of the economy and the relative bargaining power of men and women in the sectors where they work (Seguino, 2000). In other cases – as shown by a study of women working in the Mexican *maquila* sector – jobs in exporting sectors may provide a more stable, but not a higher income for women, compared to informal employment (Fussell, 2000). In other words, whether liberalization raises or lowers the wage gap depends on the impact of openness on the relative bargaining power of men and women.

Equally importantly, studies of trade openness and wage inequality do not tell us much about the relationship between trade openness and the overall level of inequality in employment earnings. This is because the earnings of self-employed workers, informal own-account workers and some informal wage workers are often excluded from the analysis, due to the paucity of data. More broadly, we cannot make generalizations about the impact of globalization on the average quality of employment or shifts in the composition of employment – in which precarious work becomes more common. Such changes will affect the overall inequality in employment earnings. Moreover, changes in the overall distribution of employment earnings are likely to exhibit a highly gendered pattern, given the extent of labour market segmentation documented in the previous section. As discussed early, this makes it difficult to analyze the impact of trade openness on the gender gap in earnings.

We know little about the impact of trade on informal workers, particularly own-account workers and home-based workers. A few studies have explored the impact of trade liberalization on informal employment. These studies found some connection between trade reforms and certain aspects of informality, but they found no general relationship between trade liberalization and growing informalization (Soares, 2005; Goldberg and Pavlenik, 2003). However, we need more detailed time series data on informal employment before being able to make definitive statements one way or another.

Discussions of trade, liberalization and employment tend to emphasize the amount of trade that takes place, but often do not pay attention to how international production is currently organized. However, the organization of global production networks has a profound effect on how the benefits of cross-border exchanges are distributed. Lead corporations in global production networks subcontract out lower value added activities to producers and suppliers further down the global supply chains. In many cases, numerous intermediaries coordinate this outsourcing activity. A number of activities are typically subcontracted out: for example, low-wage production of brand-name consumer goods, labour-intensive assembly operations using high-technology imported component parts and telecommunications-based customer services. Some degree of market power exists among the multinational lead corporations, but highly competitive conditions prevail among the subcontracted firms. Under such conditions, much of the value produced along the global supply chain is captured as higher profits among lead firms or lower prices for relatively affluent consumers in higher income markets (Heintz, 2005a; Milberg, 2004; UNCTAD 2002).

The structure of global commodity chains and the expansion of outsourcing and subcontracting have important implications for employment outcomes. In developed economies, the growth of outsourcing has been linked to growing wage inequality (Feenstra and Hanson, 1999). This is a variation on the idea of trade-induced wage inequalities. However, in this case, it is not an outcome of within-country specialization *per se*, but rather a result of the profit-maximizing restructuring of large multinationals.

In developing countries, outsourcing can provide new employment opportunities (Heintz, 2005a; Milberg, 2004). These opportunities are concentrated in low-wage/low value-added activities. In many cases, countries do not specialize in producing a particular product; instead, they specialize in supplying low-cost labour (UNCTAD 2002). Moreover, workers in such productive activities face intense competitive pressures from other workers around the globe. Under such conditions, countries stand a real risk of running a “race to the bottom” in which competitive conditions keep the returns to labour low. By specializing in the supply of low-wage labour, workers can find themselves in a low-wage/low value-added “trap” in which the benefits of any productivity improvements are captured, not as higher standards of living, but as lower prices or higher profits elsewhere along the supply chain.

In many countries, jobs integrated into global commodity chains provide important sources of employment for women. These opportunities are not restricted to wage employment in formal export sectors, as has been highlighted frequently. Many home-based workers, who earn piece-rate wages, also are tied into global production networks (Chen, *et al.*, 2005; Carr, Chen and Tate 2000; Chen, Sebstad and O’Connell, 1999). Such employment often provides women with economic opportunities that may have been inaccessible in the past. However, the prospect for improving the quality of these activities over time is not encouraging. Moreover, different actors along the supply chain capture the benefits produced in proportion to their market power. Subcontracted women workers have little market power and therefore receive a small fraction of value produced.

What can we say about the impact of trade liberalization on employment, in general, and women’s economic opportunities, in particular? This report has argued that there is no single answer or simple generalization. A great deal of heterogeneity is evident in terms of experiences, and different groups bear the costs of liberalization unequally. In particular, the gender-specific effects of trade and globalization are necessarily sensitive to specific socio-economic, historical and institutional circumstances (Benería, 2003). Furthermore, the effects of trade reforms depend on how such changes are coordinated with macroeconomic policies. One crucial link is the impact of exchange rates on employment outcomes.

#### **5.4 Exchange rate policy and capital flows**

Exchange rates impact employment by influencing the distribution of economic resources between tradable and non-tradable sectors. Monetary policy, international trade, foreign exchange markets and cross-border capital flows all influence exchange rates and, in turn, employment outcomes. Moreover, movements in exchange rates affect men’s and women’s employment differently, depending on the structure of the economy and the nature of labour market segmentation. As we have seen, women in wage employment are often concentrated in export-oriented sectors. An appreciation of the exchange rate – which directs resources away from traded sectors and towards non-traded sectors – can have a disproportionately negative impact on women.

Monetary policy and exchange rate regimes have undergone numerous changes in recent years. We have already reviewed one of the major targets of modern monetary regimes – maintaining low inflation. However, it is helpful to see low inflation targets in a broader policy context. Currently, the dominant trend is to move to a monetary/exchange rate regime characterized by:

- free capital flows – no capital controls or other restrictions on capital mobility;
- a floating, market-determined exchange rate – i.e. non-intervention in the foreign exchange market; and
- monetary interventions to keep inflation low, often by influencing short-term interest rates through money market interventions.

In the macroeconomics component of many poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs), this is the monetary/exchange rate policy adopted.

Under this regime, low inflation targets can lead to the appreciation of the real exchange rate over time. The real exchange rate is defined as the nominal exchange rate adjusted for the domestic price level relative to the price level prevailing among a country's major trading partners. Both the nominal exchange rate and the domestic price level influence global competitiveness. An appreciation in the nominal exchange rate or an increase in domestic prices reduces export competitiveness and makes imports more attractive. Similarly, a depreciated exchange rate and lower domestic prices improves competitiveness and discourages import penetration. The real exchange rate is a combination of these two factors – the relative price level and the market exchange rate.

Why does this set of policies lead to an overvaluation of the real exchange rate? As mentioned earlier, monetary authorities frequently use short-term interest rates as a weapon against inflation. However, short-term capital flows are attracted to high real interest rates. As capital flows into a country, the nominal exchange rate appreciates. If inflation rates do not change, then the real exchange rate will also appreciate. However, high short-term interest rates may lower inflation while bidding up the nominal exchange rate.<sup>37</sup> Nevertheless, if the appreciation of the nominal exchange rate outweighs the deflationary impact of short-term interest rates, real exchange rates will still appreciate.

The connection between low-inflation rates and over-valued real exchange rates can be framed another way. In many countries, changes in the exchange rate lead to increases in the domestic price level due to higher prices for imported goods, or increases in the prices of commodities traded on world markets but expressed in the domestic currency. If a country has a reasonable degree of this kind of price pass-through, then an inflation target implies a real exchange rate target. Specifically, an appreciated real exchange rate is consistent with low inflation.

We have seen that the impact of trade flows on employment and wage inequality depends on the composition of those flows. The expansion of exports may generate new employment opportunities, but import penetration can undermine these employment gains. We know that export growth can have a positive impact on women's employment opportunities. The results of the empirical model developed at the beginning of this section

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<sup>37</sup> High short-term interest rates are not always deflationary. In many developing countries, they may be inflationary. This occurs if higher interest payments are passed on as higher prices. This will occur when interest payments are sensitive to the prevailing market rate and when producers has sufficient market power to pass on price increases to consumers or other domestic producers.

suggested that import penetration may have a stronger negative impact on men's employment. Therefore, an over-appreciated real exchange rate is likely to be bad for both women's and men's employment, by decreasing exports and encouraging import penetration. In addition, we saw in the analysis of inflation reduction and monetary policy that the disproportionately negative impact of anti-inflation policies on women may be partially countered by maintaining a competitive real exchange rate during inflation-reduction episodes.

The liberalization of capital markets associated with modern monetary and exchange rate regimes presents a second set of problems: the increased economic volatility associated with short-term capital flows. Inflows of short-term capital can devastate an economy if the flows suddenly reverse, leading to a rapid depreciation of the currency. The examples of economic and financial crises over the past decade that were triggered by short-term capital flows are numerous, and include Mexico, East Asia, Brazil, Russia, Turkey and Argentina. A rapid and uncontrollable depreciation of the currency can lead to a large-scale economic contraction, mass displacement of workers and failure of the banking and financial system.

Few in-depth studies exist of the labour market response to such crises, including the employment response for men and women. A recent review of the literature suggests that, in most cases, the biggest impact may be the decline in real wages, not a crisis in terms of aggregate employment (Fallon and Lucas, 2002). In other words, the impact on the returns to labour was the most significant factor affecting workers' risk of poverty. A recent study by McKenzie (2004) of the 2002 Argentine crisis, using household panel data, showed a dramatic decline in real employment incomes as a result of the crisis and a general rise in unemployment rates. However, only 10 per cent of the fall in income could be explained by job loss – the real wage effect dominated the impact on incomes.

The employment response to the crisis in Argentina was different for men and women. Male workers experienced a larger net decline in employment due to the crisis. Women increased their labour force participation in response to the deterioration of real household incomes caused by the crisis. Therefore, women's net employment fell relatively less than men's because the loss of women's jobs was partially offset by an increase in women's labour force participation (McKenzie, 2004). However, the average quality of jobs – measured in terms of returns to labour – fell at the same time, suggesting that more women may have found themselves in low-paid, precarious employment. For low-income households, a portion of the negative effect on employment incomes of the crisis was off-set by government work relief programmes.<sup>38</sup>

In contrast, women's employment seems to have declined disproportionately during the East Asian economic crisis of 1997-8 (Aslanbeigui and Summerfield, 2000). Women were often the first to lose their jobs in South Korea, Thailand and Indonesia. In addition, there were large decreases in real earnings as a result of the crisis, placing downward pressures on household incomes. As in Argentina, women's participation in both unpaid and paid work increased as a result of dwindling household resources (Aslanbeigui and Summerfield, 2000).

The impact of exchange rate regimes and financial crises on informal employment is under-researched. Much more needs to be known about the detailed types of informal employment, the relationships that exist with the formal economy and the distribution of informal activities between tradable and non-tradable sectors. For example, street vendors

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<sup>38</sup> The *Jefas y Jefes* work relief programme was established in 2002 to address the negative employment consequences of the Argentine crisis.

who sell imported goods may see their returns to labour increase with a real exchange rate appreciation, especially if domestic demand is not overly reduced. However, a home-based garment worker linked into a global supply network may experience a decline in her employment earnings due to the same appreciation. Therefore, the heterogeneous nature of informal employment and pervasive labour market segmentation must be taken into account when analyzing the effects of exchange rates on the entire spectrum of employment. Unfortunately, in most cases, we do not yet have enough information to make good, educated guesses about the impact of these important policies on the most vulnerable workers.

### **5.5 Fiscal and public sector policies**

The public sector plays a critical role in employment creation, both as a direct source of opportunities and in facilitating the provision of employment elsewhere in the economy. During the period of market-oriented economic reforms, there has been an emphasis on reforming the public sector to redefine and often reduce the role of the state in the economy. There have been two dominant interventions associated with public sector reform: (1) changes to fiscal policy, the budget and direct government taxation and expenditures and (2) restructuring of state-owned enterprises, often involving whole or partial privatization. In both cases, cuts to public sector employment are often part of the package. However, these two policy areas have different implications for employment – particularly if gender dynamics are taken into account – and we examine each in turn.

During the recent era of economic liberalization, there has been an emphasis on limiting deficit financing for public expenditures and simultaneously minimizing the tax burden. The net effect of these policy directions is to reduce public spending relative to overall economic activity. In addition, other policies pursued under the general rubric of “economic reform” – such as trade liberalization – further reduced government resources by eliminating important sources of revenues (Toye, 2000). The justifications for public sector reform emphasize promoting private sector performance and maintaining a sustainable fiscal stance. Two general explanations are often advanced for why government spending may impede private sector growth – depending on whether spending is debt-financed or financed through tax revenues. First, expansion of public borrowing may raise interest rates, reduce private investment and curtail consumer expenditures. The public sector “crowds out” economic activity in the private sector. Second, higher tax burdens may discourage private investment, particularly when capital is mobile across borders.

Numerous assumptions lurk behind these “crowding-out” arguments that may or may not hold in reality. First, the argument assumes that government spending leads to a decrease, rather than an increase, in private sector activity. Particularly in developing countries, appropriate government spending can “crowd-in” private investment. Second, some of the channels through which crowding-out is assumed to occur may not function as theory predicts. For example, government deficits may not have a strong effect on interest rates, depending on the nature of the financial sector and monetary policy. Tax regimes can differ greatly in their effect on private sector activity. Finally, even if the resources available to the public sector represent a loss to the private sector, public sector activity may not always be less efficient than private sector activity. In a world of externalities, incomplete markets, transactions costs, imperfect property rights, concentrated market power and economies of scale, this assumption is often not valid.

Even if crowding-out is minimal or non-existent, constraints to deficit-financed spending remain. Deficit financing can lead to high levels of public debt that demand an



increasing share of public resources for interest payments, leaving a smaller share of the budget for productive expenditures. The expansion of debt-servicing costs is likely to become unsustainable when growth is low (limiting revenue collection) and interest rates are high (raising the cost of debt). Therefore, other policies, including monetary policy and the overall growth strategy, affect the sustainability of public expenditures.

The primary concern of this report is the quantity and quality of employment generated under different policy regimes. The empirical estimates presented at the beginning of this section suggested that, for a given rate of economic growth, a higher share of government expenditures relative to GDP is associated with more employment. Put another way, the public sector is an important direct source of job opportunities. Cuts in government expenditures, therefore, are likely to have a negative impact on employment, unless changes in other variables produce an off-setting positive effect. Indeed, government sector retrenchments frequently are a necessary complement to reform programmes that aim to reduce the role of government (Haltiwanger and Singh, 1999).

The estimates from the highly-aggregated model did not reveal a gender-differentiated impact of government spending on the growth of total employment for women and men. However, public employment has been an important source of formal, regular employment for women in many developed and developing countries (Chen, *et al.*, 2005; Adserà, 2004).<sup>39</sup> Therefore, austere fiscal policies that reduce public employment are likely to limit the number of relatively high-quality formal jobs available to women. Due to sex segmentation in the labour market, a similar quality of wage employment may not be as accessible to women in the private sector.

Fiscal policy also has a number of indirect impacts on employment. As mentioned above, public spending – particularly expenditures on infrastructure, education and skills-building – can have “crowding-in” effects, increasing private investment and promoting economic growth. Poor quality infrastructure and underinvestment in human resources raises the cost of production and reduces productivity, harming competitiveness and lowering the growth rate of incomes. Public investment and provision of services can be particularly crucial for informal employment (Chen *et al.*, 2005). For example, when municipal governments arrange to make space and basic services available to street vendors, the quality of the working environment improves significantly.

Other categories of budgetary expenditures can have indirect impacts on employment outcomes. Social services, income support measures and the provision of public goods impact labour force participation and employment in highly gendered ways (Budlender, 2004). When such services are cut, households adjust in numerous ways that affect men and women differently (UNIFEM, 2002; Benería and Feldman, 1992). The amount of both paid and unpaid work that women perform may increase with fiscal reform. For example, public cutbacks can reduce the number of clinics in a region and therefore increase the unpaid time needed to walk to the next facility to access basic health services. Similarly, public cutbacks that reduce household monetary resources (e.g. cutting transfer programmes or raising fees) create pressures to increase the amount of remunerative work performed. The recent reforms to family income support programmes in the United States makes women’s participation in

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<sup>39</sup> “Government employment” is frequently defined as a subset of “public employment”. Therefore, the terms should not be used synonymously. Women may be disproportionately represented in the provision of public services, such as education or healthcare, but under represented in core government administrative positions (OECD, 2002; Budlender, 1997)

paid work (or an acceptable substitute) compulsory in order to receive certain forms of public aid.

Public sector reform is not limited to changes in fiscal policies and budgetary frameworks. The restructuring of state-owned enterprises – often through a process of privatization – is another policy area that has moved forward in the majority of economies around the world. The arguments for privatization are frequently similar to those for government sector downsizing. Public enterprises are often seen to be inefficient relative to private enterprises, due to poor incentive structures, bloated work forces and mismanagement. Private enterprises are assumed to be less prone to these problems. In addition, the issue of fiscal sustainability remains relevant. Loss-making public enterprises are a drain on public resources and their debt is a public liability. Privatization is often pursued as one strategy for addressing these challenges.

Privatization and government divestment almost always involve a reduction in the work forces of the enterprises in question, although the size of the retrenchments varies (Rama, 1999; Kikeri, 1998). For example, a study of the employment impacts of reducing state ownership in Vietnam found that, if the level of state ownership were reduced to zero, roughly half of all employees in the affected enterprises would lose their jobs (Belser and Rama, 2001). In some cases, the retrenchments occur in preparation for privatization. When this is the case, actual state divestment may not reduce employment further, since most of the job losses occurred prior to privatization (Kikeri, 1998).

The net effect of privatization on employment depends on numerous factors. In some cases, privatization may involve new investments in productive capacity. Under these circumstances, the negative impact on employment may be offset, at least in part. However, the overall effect on employment is complex. Many public enterprises are responsible for supplying essential economic services that affect production costs and competitiveness – such as transport facilities, basic utilities and telecommunication services. If the cost of these services rises after privatization, or access is limited in terms of small or informal producers, employment and earnings could suffer.

The gender-specific effects of the restructuring of public enterprises differ markedly from that of government downsizing. This is a result of the patterns of segmentation of the public sector labour markets. Many public firms are involved in capital-intensive activities with male-dominated workforces. In these cases, privatization would have a disproportionate impact on men's employment (Rama, 2002b). The effect on women's employment is likely to be more indirect. The loss of men's jobs will affect household earnings and could increase women's labour force participation. Similarly, if privatization negatively affects informal activities through changes in economic services, this could have gender-specific effects due to the patterns of labour force segmentation observed in the informal economy.

Outsourcing to private firms represents another aspect of public sector restructuring that has significant implications for employment. Outsourcing within the public sector represents a partial privatization of targeted government activities. There has been a rise in the outsourcing of public sector activities in both developed and developing countries in recent years. Outsourcing is primarily pursued as a cost-saving strategy, often as a strategy for public sector downsizing (Burgess and Macdonald, 1999; Young, 2002). Therefore, working conditions and the quality of employment deteriorate on average following outsourcing (Burgess and Macdonald, 1999). In some cases, outsourcing involves a transition from

regular, full-time employment to non-standard, part-time, or contingent work. In this respect, outsourcing contributes to the growing informalization of the labour market.

Although public sector restructuring and shifts in the fiscal policy stance clearly have enormous implications for the level and quality of employment in a country, surprisingly little research exists to document the implications. Even less is known about how these fundamental changes to the public sector affect men's and women's employment differently. In current development thinking, much more emphasis is placed on the role of the private sector in creating employment opportunities. The relative lack of attention to the appropriate role of the public sector in terms of supporting and sustaining adequate employment represents a noticeable gap that should be filled.

## 6. Policy alternatives for employment-centred development

The previous section presented a critical overview of the impact of the dominant trends in economic policies on the quantity and quality of employment. The general diagnosis is not encouraging. In general, many of the policies adopted during the past few decades of market-based reforms would have had an overall negative impact on employment, and frequently a disproportionately strong effect on women's employment. The consequences of these policies extend beyond employment outcomes, with important implications for poverty, women's unpaid labour and the long-run trajectory of human development. However, the dominant policy model does not represent the only, and arguably not the best option available to countries, even in a globally integrated context. Alternatives exist.

Before examining the elements of an alternative employment-centred policy, it is helpful to layout some general principles, drawn from the discussion and analysis presented in this report, for creating a strategy aimed at improving employment opportunities for poverty reduction. As has been stressed throughout, these principles must necessarily incorporate a gender perspective. We suggest three overarching themes that should inform the development of an alternative framework: (1) the need for policy coordination and an integrated approach; (2) the explicit recognition of the importance of all types of employment, particularly informal employment; and (3) the need to take into account unpaid labour as well as paid employment.

***Policy coordination and integration:*** This report has shown that a multitude of factors influence employment dynamics: macroeconomic policies, trade regimes, budgetary constraints, gender segmentation of the labour force, skills and education, household-level bargaining and the interaction between market and non-market work, among others. No one single policy area can address the challenge of creating decent employment opportunities geared towards poverty reduction. Moreover, uncoordinated policies undermine the attainment of specific employment-oriented objectives. For example, an over-valued exchange rate can doom an effort to generate employment opportunities for women through the development of non-traditional exports. Therefore, a coherent approach to employment policy is needed. This requires the integration of gender-specific interventions and analysis into the entire employment framework. Without such a coordinated framework, the success of specific strategies to improve employment opportunities will be compromised.

***Recognition of all forms of employment:*** Often discussions of employment or labour market policies assume a standard form of wage employment. However, "standard" or "typical" forms of employment may not be the most relevant for achieving equitable growth or reductions in poverty. As pointed out in this document, informal employment – including forms of self-employment, such as own-account remunerative work – may be more central. Often, information about these forms of employment is lacking. As this report has repeatedly argued, it is difficult to assess the impact of different policies on informal and irregular employment due to a lack of comparable data over time. For example, debates on whether globalization has increased or decreased inequalities in employment earnings are frequently incomplete, since significant segments of the labour force are effectively excluded from the analysis. Therefore, 'employment' must be interpreted more broadly and inclusively.

***Taking into account both paid and unpaid work:*** The burden of unpaid, non-market, caring labour is unequally distributed. Women continue to perform the majority of this work. This traditional division of labour introduces constraints and restrictions that influence access to employment opportunities, reinforce patterns of labour force segmentation, circumscribe earnings potential, and, in certain circumstances, increase poverty risk. Moreover, pressures to increase household employment earnings through greater labour force participation among women may affect the supply of human resources available for non-market caring labour when male household members fail to make up the difference, with important implications for human development outcomes. Failure to take into account these dynamics could result in misinformed policy choices and a gender-biased employment strategy.

These three principles should inform the development of a coherent employment strategy for poverty reduction. However, they do not, by themselves, constitute a policy framework. Therefore, we examine in more detail three policy areas that correspond generally to the growth, employment and poverty reduction components described in the conceptual framework laid out in the beginning of this report. Although a comprehensive exposition of the intricacies of the various policy options is beyond the scope of this report, a common approach to developing an appropriate policy framework can be described. The three policy areas are: (1) establishing an employment-friendly macroeconomic environment; (2) cultivating employment-centred growth; and (3) making employment policy “pro-poor”.

### **6.1 Establishing an employment-friendly macroeconomic framework**

Standard macroeconomic stabilization programmes, such as those described in this report, pose two important problems: (1) the short-term objectives may impede long-run development targets, such as the creation of decent employment opportunities for men and women and (2) the policy objectives and instruments used for meeting those objectives are too narrow and limited in number and scope. For example, the typical inflation-reducing monetary and exchange rate regime emphasizes one intermediate objective – price stability – and one instrument – money market interventions to influence short-term interest rates.<sup>40</sup> Other intermediate objectives – for example, those relating to exchange rates or capital flows – are coordinated through liberalized markets. However, as argued in the previous section of this report, such policies often have negative effects on employment, in general, and women’s employment, in particular, due to high real short-term interest rates and over-valued exchange rates.

What is needed instead is a policy framework that allows for multiple policy instruments and multiple intermediate targets, all aimed at supporting long-run development objectives, such as explicit targets for employment. Consider the following three macroeconomic objectives:

- maintain a competitive real exchange rate;
- limit macroeconomic volatility due to unstable capital flows; and
- control inflation in a range consistent with long-run economic growth.

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<sup>40</sup> In reality, the practices of macroeconomic policy markets are more nuanced and the types of policy regimes more diverse. We present a stylized version of these macroeconomic regimes because they represent a dominant trend in macroeconomic policy-making and they are often the frameworks adopted in poverty-reduction strategy papers (PRSPs) and other government policy documents.

We can imagine three intermediate policy instruments for achieving these objectives:

- interventions in the foreign exchange market to influence exchange rates;
- capital controls and capital management techniques to reduce volatility; and
- interventions in money markets to balance inflation control with the promotion of economic growth.

This policy regime would be significantly more employment-friendly than the dominant macroeconomic model. It would address two central concerns of policy-makers: macroeconomic stability and inflation control. And, with multiple instruments available to macroeconomic authorities, the targets could be pursued simultaneously. Long-run objectives, including specific employment targets, could be incorporated into this framework and macroeconomic policies would be coordinated with other policy initiatives to attain these goals.

One of the arguments in support of the orthodox framework is that, in the context of free capital mobility, policymakers cannot simultaneously maintain a fixed exchange rate and pursue an independent monetary policy. This is frequently interpreted to mean that policies should not seek to intervene in both the money market and the foreign exchange market at the same time. However, there is no reason why these tools could not potentially be used together to pursue the types of intermediate objectives outlined above (Taylor, 2004). Policy makers have great deal of flexibility in the ways they manage the macroeconomic environment. This flexibility could be leveraged to support long-run objectives. A narrow focus on one primary objective and one instrument represents a missed opportunity.

Similarly, the rationale for uninhibited capital flows between countries has become questionable in the wake of the financial disasters of the 1990s and early 21<sup>st</sup> century (Palma, 2003). It is hard to maintain the claim that these crises represented an efficient, growth-enhancing distribution of resources (Gabel, 2003a). Prudent capital-management techniques, including well-design capital controls, can play an important role in maintaining macroeconomic stability (Epstein, Gabel and Jomo, 2003; Gabel, 2003b). Ironically, most “stabilization programmes” argue for just the opposite: liberalization of capital flows.

Why might these policies be particularly good for women’s employment? The evidence reviewed in the previous section suggests that women bear a disproportionate burden of the costs of adjustment to lower inflation rates in terms of foregone employment growth. An over-appreciated exchange rate can also discourage exports which, in many countries, may negatively impact employment opportunities for women – both formal and informal. In general, an employment-friendly environment that supports stable economic growth would reduce household resource constraints and, depending on intra-household distributive dynamics, could improve the welfare of women and children. This would come about by reducing or eliminating the negative costs of adjustment that women bear and that are associated with more austere economic policies.

However, a better macroeconomic policy regime is not sufficient for addressing gender inequalities. Macroeconomic policies can be powerful, but relatively crude, tools for influencing economic outcomes. In particular, a change in macroeconomic management is unlikely to address the structural issues of labour market segmentation, the distribution of asset ownership and the division of labour between market and non-market work that underpin many gender-based inequalities. It is also unclear that a macroeconomic environment that supports better economic performance will automatically improve the

employment opportunities available to men and women. For example, faster growth alone may not be sufficient for addressing the trend towards greater informalization (Heintz and Pollin, 2003). Therefore, we need to supplement changes to macroeconomic management with other interventions to achieve development outcomes, such as poverty reduction, growth with equity and decent work for all.

## **6.2 Cultivating employment-centred growth**

Strategies for developing the productive sectors of an economy must supplement the establishment of an employment-friendly macroeconomic environment. Purely market-based allocations of investment and productive resources often do not achieve core social objectives such as employment creation – as demonstrated by the “jobless growth” experiences or growing informalization witnessed in many countries. Instead, interventions led by government and non-state institutions will be instrumental in solving some of the allocation and coordination failures of markets (Chang, 2003, 1994). Therefore, a combination of market-based coordination and non-market interventions is necessary to achieve an employment-friendly growth path. Pro-active industrial, agricultural and trade policies must complement the development of a macroeconomic framework that maintains stability and supports long-run growth (Ocampo, 2005).

The precise set of policies for achieving these broad objectives must be case-sensitive and country-specific. Here we simply outline a number of strategic areas for intervention. One set of policies can be labelled “horizontal” strategies – in that these represent broad-based initiatives that are not targeted at specific sectors. These include public investment in creating and maintaining strategic economic infrastructure; the improvement of human resources through investments in skills-building and education; engaging in trade negotiations for reforms that support development objectives; and establishing institutions to support innovation and the diffusion of technological knowledge to formal, informal and agricultural activities. If appropriately designed, such measures will simultaneously improve productivity, enhance competitiveness, raise average earnings and improve employment opportunities.

“Vertical” strategies comprise a second set of policies – that is, interventions targeted at particular sectors, groups of firms, or economic activities. Vertical interventions can be used to encourage the growth of activities with high employment multipliers, to cultivate dynamic competitive advantage in strategic sectors, and to build the productive capacity that already exists. There can be a conflict between the structure of a county’s productive sector and the ability of the economy to generate new and better employment opportunities in a globally integrated context. Under these conditions, targeted interventions can facilitate the transformation of the productive sector in order to achieve long-run development objectives.

Vertical strategies for the productive sector must also take into account the nature of global production networks. In particular, strategies for capturing a higher share of the value produced along global supply chains can play a critical role in raising incomes and avoiding a low-earnings/low-productivity trap. For example, supply-side policies to support industrial up-grading are a viable means of raising export earnings. Industrial up-grading refers to the movement up in supply chains to capture a larger share of the total income generated throughout the production and distribution network (Gereffi 1999, Kaplinsky 1998). If producers in the lower reaches of supply chains share in the rents captured elsewhere, their average incomes will rise (Kaplinsky 1998).

Industrial and agricultural policies should not be restricted to the formal economy. Specific policy interventions are also necessary to address the consequences of growing informalization. This involves pursuing multiple strategies simultaneously: targeting structural changes in the production system that strengthen the relationship between growth and formal job creation; introducing directed programmes to raise the returns to labour (and productivity) of informal activities; and securing a strong social safety net to protect the most vulnerable workers (Carnegie Council, 2005).

Development finance institutions (DFIs) – such as development and agricultural banks – have been used by many countries to pursue productive sector strategies. In many countries, DFIs are underutilized as institutions that could support an employment-centred development strategy. Nevertheless, they have a potentially pivotal role to play in fostering a dynamic productive sector. DFIs are able to supply low-cost financial resources to priority sectors, to extend the capacity needed for risk management associated with innovative and dynamic investments, and to leverage resources needed for larger-scale projects that can take advantages of the economies of scale existing in the global marketplace. Often DFIs restrict their activities to the formal economy. However, DFIs can be designed to service the needs of informal operations as well.

The budget remains the central tool of government to pursue the objectives of productive sector development. The toolkit is varied: tax incentives, trade credits, appropriate subsidies, extension programmes, training and education, public investment, the provision of public goods, and research and development efforts. However, these tools will only be effective if adequately financed. Therefore, coordination between fiscal policies, budget prioritization and productive sector policies is essential.

Segmentation of labour markets and exclusion from employment opportunities must be taken into account when designing an integrated strategy for the productive sector. As has been stressed throughout this report, women's access to employment opportunities – especially decent formal wage employment – is frequently constrained, particularly in higher-paid occupational categories. The economic cost of limiting women's economic mobility can be high (Tzannatos, 1999). Therefore, the factors behind the sex segmentation of the labour force must be identified and addressed: for example, differences in educational attainment, access to finance, the distribution of assets, or employment/family conflicts.

As with agricultural and industrial policies, the budget can be an effective tool for addressing gender inequalities, including those relating to employment and the productive sector. However, budgets – on both the tax and expenditure sides – often contain gender biases. The practice of “gender budgeting” reveals the gender-specific impacts of tax policies and expenditure programmes, and can be used as a tool for addressing gender inequalities (Budlender, 2004; UNIFEM 2002). Specifically, productive sector policies can be coordinated with gender-aware budgeting in order to insure that the employment opportunities created are accessible to women. Moreover, industrial and agricultural policies can be crafted so as to improve employment in activities where women are disproportionately concentrated. Finally, budgetary priorities should support social policies that address constraints women face in terms of responsibility for unpaid care work.

Although the budget is a critical tool for realizing productive sector strategies and addressing gender inequalities in the labour market, the sustainability of fiscal policy must be taken seriously into consideration. Debt servicing obligations and weak tax collection systems



have constrained the developmental role the budget could play. As mentioned previously, trade liberalization has also contributed to the erosion of the revenue base of many developing countries. To be sustainable in the long-run, fiscal policies should promote income and productivity growth. Long-run stability requires that deficit financing and revenue targets be calibrated to changes in the productive potential of the economy over time. An alternative macroeconomic framework – such as the one outlined above – could enhance long-run sustainability by lowering interest rates and increasing economic growth. Once again – policy coordination is critical for transforming the productive sector to support better employment with improved gender equity.

### **6.3 Making employment “pro-poor”**

Ensuring that growth is employment-friendly will go a long way towards ensuring that it is also poverty-reducing. However, employment does not provide a guaranteed path out of poverty. As documented earlier, the estimated size of the global working poor population (based on the dollar-a-day standard) in 2004 was estimated 520 million people, or nearly a fifth of total world employment. Therefore, if growth must be made “pro-employment”, then employment must be made “pro-poor.” This report has tended to emphasize the demand-side of the problem – that is, focusing on the number of employment opportunities available. However, this represents only half of the story. As stressed earlier, labour mobility – and women’s mobility in particular – must be enhanced in order to allow workers from poor households to take advantage of opportunities as they become available.

For example, labour standards and social protections for working people can contribute to enhanced labour mobility if appropriately designed, implemented, and enforced. Labour standards have a role to play in setting minimum social protection and reducing social exclusion (and thereby raising mobility) by curtailing discriminatory practices, helping to manage the risks associated with global integration and workplace hazards, and enhancing productivity by building a foundation of trust and cooperation. Most importantly labour standards could play a role in setting a “social floor” in development for ensuring a minimum quality and standard for employment, or decent work. The development of appropriate labour market policies and institutions also contributes to the efficient function of markets, which will improve access to employment and increase competitiveness. There need not be a trade-off between efficient labour market institutions and effective social protection. In addition, social policies play a fundamental role in sustaining economic growth by directly contributing to the long-run development of a country’s human resources – through education, healthcare and support for the care of children.

However, labour standards and social protection measures must be crafted to take into account the current realities of the global employment situation. Individuals in informal employment mostly fall outside of the protective coverage of labour standards. If such social protection measures are to play a significant role in poverty reduction, this gap must be filled. In part, those engaged in informal employment are excluded by definition – they are informal precisely because they have not been incorporated into a formal legal and regulatory protective framework. However, the exclusion of informal workers may be a consequence of how labour standards and social protections have been designed. Many social protection measures – for example, minimum wage legislation – often presume a wage employment relationship. Such relationships may account for a minority of informal employment arrangements – own-account work or various forms of subcontracting arrangements often are more significant. Therefore, there is a need to re-think social protections and employment

standards in light of the diversity and changing patterns of employment relationships, particularly if such policies are to support poverty reduction.

If we are concerned about reducing the prevalence of income poverty among people engaged in remunerative employment, then we must find ways of improving upward mobility within a given type of productive activity – that is, increasing the returns to labour of the working poor. In particular, increasing the returns to labour of agricultural, informal and women workers will likely have a direct impact on the living standards of households most at risk.

This report has mentioned a number of constraints that keep earnings low. Removing these constraints through direct policy interventions should raise the returns to labour. Three key constraints are: (1) basic infrastructure and appropriate economic services; (2) access to markets; and (3) access to finance and capital assets.

Inadequate infrastructure constrains productivity in agricultural and informal activities, reducing the earnings potential of workers engaged in these forms of employment. Poor infrastructure can also raise demands on the amount of unpaid work that women perform – for example, women often must carry water long distances when they do not have access to taps closer to where they live. Increasing the burden of unpaid work increases the risk of poverty and reduces access to employment opportunities. The precise types of infrastructure needed will vary depending on the context. For example, street vendors may have very different requirements from home-based garment workers. Therefore, the public sector should undertake a needs assessment for employment-centred infrastructure projects for poverty reduction.

The working poor often face demand-side constraints as well. For example, smallholder farms may have no incentive to increase production if they cannot sell the surplus produced. This limits the potential returns to labour for these workers. Policies to increase market access may involve interventions at the macro, institutional and micro levels. Appropriate macroeconomic policies are necessary to insure adequate domestic demand and competitiveness in external markets. Development-centred trade negotiations are critical to give low-income countries greater access to world markets. At the institutional level, provision of basic transport, storage and marketing facilities can remove demand constraints. At the micro level, governments can offer market facilitation and extension services to bring buyers and sellers together and to improve the quality of products.

A lack of access to assets limits the range of livelihood strategies that households can pursue and thereby increases the risk of poverty (Rakodi, 1999). Women are often disadvantaged in terms of asset holdings. For example, in Latin America, patterns of inheritance and gender-biased government programmes of land distribution mean that many more men than women have title to land (Deere and Leon, 2004). Unequal distribution of assets also has important implications for access to financial services, since banks are often unwilling to lend to individuals without asset-based collateral. Therefore, programmes to build assets – at the individual, household and community level – are important components of the overall policy framework. As part of this process, financial sector reforms may be needed to insure that small-scale producers and informal operators have access to basic financial services.

The ways in which production is organized could also be transformed in order to raise returns to labour by increasing the “terms of trade” that workers enjoy. As has been discussed earlier, small, individual producers often receive only a fraction of the value produced along supply chains. Cooperative organizations – in which producers come together – can begin to change this dynamic (ILO, 2003). By pooling resources, workers in cooperatives can buy inputs on more favourable terms, increase market access, and raise the revenues they receive. Moreover, cooperatives can relax constraints that individual producers may face in terms of access to credit or economic services. There are numerous examples of informal women workers organizing to improve employment conditions and well-being (Chen, *et al.*, 2005).

Social policies are frequently seen as distinct from employment-centred approaches within a poverty reduction policy framework. For example, in many poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs) policies for the ‘social sector’ and policies for the ‘productive sector’ are seen as separate sets of interventions. This divide is artificial, particularly if one develops employment policies that incorporate a gender perspective. Social policies on the supply side are necessary for the long-run success of an employment-centred development strategy. In particular, public investments in education, skills-building and health services are essential for bolstering productivity and employment incomes.

Unpaid caring labour accounts for a large fraction of the total labour necessary to maintain and reproduce a country’s human resources. Without this investment in human resources, a country’s growth and development potential would be severely compromised. Social policy interventions must explicitly consider the importance of unpaid work and support the provision of care through appropriately designed policies. Numerous examples exist and such policies could include cash transfer programmes, subsidized childcare and public employment schemes aimed at supporting non-market work. Although social policies should support the provision of caring labour, they must do so in a way that does not reinforce existing gender inequalities.

Social policies that support unpaid care work could also be instrumental in relaxing or removing some of the obstacles to labour market participation and mobility that women face. Women would then have a broader range of choices in terms of the employment opportunities open to them. Addressing these constraints to employment and income opportunities is essential, if women are to benefit from an alternative policy framework that stresses employment for poverty reduction.

#### **6.4 Summary**

This section of the report has laid out a number of suggestions for how an alternative policy framework could be developed – one that supports employment and accelerates poverty reduction. In doing so, it draws on the conceptual framework presented at the beginning of the report, which explores the growth-employment-poverty nexus from a gender perspective. The exact mix of policies will vary from country to country. Moreover, how established gender dynamics will interact with the proposed alternatives will be context-specific. There is no “one size fits all” approach. Instead, different combinations of alternative policies will be relevant in different circumstances. Nevertheless, this section has attempted to present how policy alternatives could be developed from the critical analysis presented here.

## 7. Conclusions

The current global employment situation poses enormous challenges to achieving sustainable poverty reduction, growth with equity and decent work for all. Slower growth and a declining labour intensity of productive activity contribute to a situation in which the generation of employment opportunities, particularly quality (or “decent”) employment opportunities, lags behind the growth of the world’s labour force. The manifestations of these trends are various: increased open unemployment, growing informalization, widespread casualization, crowding in subsistence activities and marginalization in low-productivity employment. As has been argued in this report, employment is perhaps the most important channel through which growth can translate into poverty reduction and less income inequality. Therefore, the challenges confronting the global employment situation have far-reaching implications.

This report has documented these trends, with a particular emphasis on gender dynamics. Women’s employment is central to the story. As has been stressed repeatedly, altering the quantity and composition of women’s labour has become a primary strategy through which households cope with the fundamental economic changes that the past decades of global integration and shifting economic policies have ushered in. However, participation in the paid labour force has important costs for women, as well as benefits and equal opportunity remains an unrealized goal, ten years after the UN World Conference on Women, 1995 held in Beijing. This report has made clear that these gender dynamics have a direct impact on how well our economies perform, who gets what jobs and our chances of success in eliminating the worst forms of economic deprivation.

The findings of this report suggest that the dominant policy regime will have to change if the problems discussed here are to be addressed. The current policy framework stresses macroeconomic stability, freer markets, a smaller role for the public sector and uninhibited international flows of capital and goods, but not extending the same privilege to labour. At best, these policies are insufficient to tackle the global employment challenge. At worst, they have contributed to the erosion of employment opportunities and the quality of working life. Fortunately, alternatives exist for the responsible management of economies in a globally integrated context, alternatives that secure economic stability without sacrificing the welfare of working people or entrenching existing gender inequalities. This report has outlined, in broad terms, the elements of such a framework. The more difficult challenge is to marshal the political will to create the policy space necessary to move the global economy onto a development trajectory that supports sustainable poverty reduction, gender equity and decent work for all.



## Appendix

This appendix describes, in more detail, the data and techniques used to generate the econometric estimates presented in Tables 10-12. The estimates were based on an unbalanced panel covering 16 low- and middle-income countries over the years 1970 to 2003. The countries included were Barbados, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, India, Jamaica, Kenya, Malawi, Malaysia, Mauritius, Panama, Philippines, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Trinidad and Tobago. Data on employment, disaggregated by sex, were taken from the ILO's on-line database, LABORSTA (laborsta.ilo.org). Data for the policy and economic variables were taken from the *World Development Indicators 2005* CD-ROM (Washington, DC: World Bank) and the *International Financial Statistics* (October 2005) (Washington, DC: International Monetary Fund).

For the estimates of the determinants of total employment, we began with the following econometric model:

$$(1) E_{i,t} = \mathbf{a} + \mathbf{g}E_{i,t-1} + \mathbf{b}_1 y_{i,t} + \mathbf{b}_2 g_{i,t} + \mathbf{b}_3 x_{i,t} + \mathbf{b}_4 m_{i,t} + \mathbf{b}_5 r_{i,t} + \mathbf{e}_{i,t}$$

in which  $E_{i,t}$  is total employment for country 'i' in year 't',  $y_{i,t}$  represents real GDP,  $g_{i,t}$  – current government expenditures as a per cent of GDP,  $x_{i,t}$  – exports as a per cent of GDP,  $m_{i,t}$  – imports as a per cent of GDP,  $r_{i,t}$  – the real short term interest rate and  $e_{i,t}$  is a stochastic error term. For estimation purposes, all variables were expressed in natural logarithms with the exception of the real interest rate, which takes on negative values and, therefore, the natural logarithm may be undefined.

For the estimates of the determinants of women's employment, we used the following basic model:

$$(2) F_{i,t} = \mathbf{a} + \mathbf{g}F_{i,t-1} + \mathbf{b}_1 M_{i,t} + \mathbf{b}_2 y_{i,t} + \mathbf{b}_3 g_{i,t} + \mathbf{b}_4 x_{i,t} + \mathbf{b}_5 m_{i,t} + \mathbf{b}_6 r_{i,t} + \mathbf{e}_{i,t}$$

The variables are defined as in Equation (1), with  $F_{i,t}$  representing women's employment and  $M_{i,t}$  representing men's employment. A parallel structure was used for the estimates of men's employment:

$$(3) M_{i,t} = \mathbf{a} + \mathbf{g}M_{i,t-1} + \mathbf{b}_1 F_{i,t} + \mathbf{b}_2 y_{i,t} + \mathbf{b}_3 g_{i,t} + \mathbf{b}_4 x_{i,t} + \mathbf{b}_5 m_{i,t} + \mathbf{b}_6 r_{i,t} + \mathbf{e}_{i,t}$$

Macroeconomic time series data are frequently non-stationary – that is, they possess a unit root and the means of the series change over time. This violates the assumptions of ordinary least-squares estimation procedures and may lead to spurious conclusions. Therefore, it is critical to test all the variables used in the above models for unit roots. Table A1 presents the results of unit root tests for panel data, using the Im, Pesaran and Shin (IPS) procedure. The IPS technique allows for individual unit root processes for each of the countries included in the panel. The null hypothesis is that a unit root exists. Therefore, we must reject the null hypothesis if the variable is to be treated as stationary.

*Table A1.*  
*Critical Values of Panel Unit Root Tests, Im, Pesaran*  
*and Shin technique (p-values in parentheses)*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Levels</b>	<b>First Differences</b>
$E_{i,t}$	0.79 (0.78)	-15.44 (<0.01)
$y_{i,t}$	1.86 (0.97)	-10.45 (<0.01)
$g_{i,t}$	-1.09 (0.14)	-13.11 (<0.01)
$x_{i,t}$	-0.12 (0.45)	-14.75 (<0.01)
$m_{i,t}$	-0.67 (0.25)	-15.54 (<0.01)
$r_{i,t}$	-7.79 (<0.01)	n/a
$F_{i,t}$	2.58 (0.99)	-19.07 (<0.01)
$M_{i,t}$	1.54 (0.94)	-11.78 (<0.01)

*All variables except  $r_{i,t}$  expressed as natural logarithms.*

All of the variables, expressed in their original levels, are non-stationary, with the single exception of the real interest rate. Non-stationary variables can frequently be made stationary by taking first differences. Table A1 also presents the results of the panel unit root test for the first differences of the non-stationary variables. In all cases, the unit roots vanish when expressed as first differences.

Because of the problem of non-stationarity, Equations (1), (2) and (3) are transformed and all variables are expressed in first differences. A fixed effects estimation procedure was used to control for unobserved country-specific effects. However, the inclusion of a lagged dependent variable on the right-hand side of the models introduces problems of endogeneity. Therefore, the Arellano-Bond General Method of Moments (GMM) estimation procedure for dynamic panels is used in all cases. The values of the dependent variable, lagged 2 to 4 periods, were used as instruments. In addition, potential problems of endogeneity exist with respect to the independent variables as well. Issues of endogeneity are perhaps most serious with respect to the estimates of the determinants of men's and women's employment (since changes in women's employment may affect men's employment and vice versa). Therefore, one period lagged values of the independent variables are therefore also used as instruments in the estimation procedure. The lagged values of the independent variables are assumed to be predetermined and, therefore, exogenous for estimation purposes.

There are two versions of the Arellano-Bond estimation technique – the one-step procedure and the two-step (iterative) procedure. The two-step procedure may be more efficient than the one-step procedure. However, the standard errors generated by the two-step procedure may not be reliable. Therefore, statistical inference based on the two-step estimates could be questionable. In Tables 11 and 12 of the main text, the coefficient estimates from the iterative two-step procedure are presented, but the p-values for both the 1-step and 2-step techniques are included, due to the possible problems associated with the iterative technique.

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# Dia Internacional da Mulher, 2007

OIT Lisboa - Microsoft Internet Explorer

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## 8 de Março de 2007 - Dia Internacional da Mulher

À semelhança de anos anteriores a Organização Internacional do Trabalho (OIT) assinala o dia 8 de Março, (Dia Internacional da Mulher) homenageando as mulheres trabalhadoras de todo o mundo.

Para comemorar este dia, a OIT preparou um estudo sobre as tendências mundiais sobre a situação das mulheres no mercado de trabalho, contendo novos dados sobre o número de mulheres activas e o número de mulheres desempregadas. O estudo intitulado a «feminização dos trabalhadores pobres» analisa a evolução do acesso das mulheres ao mercado de trabalho nos últimos dez anos. Nele pode ler-se que em número absolutos, mais do que nunca as mulheres participam no mercado de trabalho, mas ao mesmo tempo mais do que nunca há mais mulheres no desemprego. O relatório que agora se divulga destaca a persistência das desigualdades salariais, as mulheres continuam a receber menos para desempenhar a mesma função dos seus colegas homens e mesmo nas ocupações de predominância feminina, de que é exemplo a enfermagem e o ensino sectores em que as mulheres ganham menos.

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O Escritório da OIT em Lisboa assinala nesta data, o 40º aniversário da ratificação por Portugal da Convenção 100 (1951) relativa à igualdade de remuneração Link para [http://www.ilo.org/public/portugue/region/eurpro/lisbon/pdf/conv\\_100.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/public/portugue/region/eurpro/lisbon/pdf/conv_100.pdf) e destaca a iniciativa que está a ser desenvolvida em Portugal no sentido de efectivar o princípio «salário igual para trabalho de igual valor» no âmbito do Projecto EQUAL «Revalorizar o Trabalho para Promover a Igualdade» link [http://www.ilo.org/public/portugue/region/eurpro/lisbon/html/portugal\\_equal\\_pt.htm](http://www.ilo.org/public/portugue/region/eurpro/lisbon/html/portugal_equal_pt.htm) E que conta com a assistência técnica da OIT.

A OIT preparou, ainda para este dia, uma publicação reunindo os artigos publicados entre 1999 e 2006 na revista Trabalho sobre «a igualdade entre homens e mulheres no mundo». São ainda, divulgados dados recentes sobre a violência contra as mulheres e as crianças (custos da violência, incluindo, no local de trabalho).

<http://www.ilo.org/dyn/gender/docs/RES/521/F404602261/FACT%20SHEET%20March%208%20Final%20Violence.pdf>

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## GLOBAL EMPLOYMENT TRENDS for WOMEN *BRIEF, March 2007*

### 1. Overview

During the 1980s and 1990s women's participation in labour markets worldwide grew substantially. This gave rise to expectations that increased opportunities and economic autonomy for women would bring greater gender equality. To help determine the extent to which such hopes are being realized, it is necessary to analyse women's labour market trends in more detail. To this end, the *Global Employment Trends for Women Brief 2007* focuses on whether the tendency toward increased participation has continued more recently and whether women have found enough decent and productive jobs to really enable them to use their potential in the labour market and achieve economic independence.

The approach is based on updates and analysis of a number of major labour market indicators. These include: labour force participation; unemployment; sector and status of employment; wages/earnings; and education and skills. Taken together, they show whether women who want to work actually do so, whether women find it harder to get a job than men, differences in the type of work done by women and men and equality of treatment in areas ranging from pay to education and training.

Main findings are:

- In absolute numbers, more women than ever before are participating in labour markets worldwide. They are either in work or actively looking for a job.
- This overall figure only tells part of the story, however. During the past ten years, the labour force participation rate (the share of working-age women who work or are seeking work) stopped growing, with many regions registering declines. This reversal is notable, even though it partially reflects greater participation of young women in education.
- More women than ever before are actually in work<sup>1</sup>. The female share of total employment stayed almost unchanged at 40 percent in 2006 (from 39.7 per cent 10 years ago).
- At the same time, more women than ever before are unemployed, with the rate of women's unemployment (6.6 per cent) higher than that of men (6.1 per cent).
- Women are more likely to work in low productivity jobs in agriculture and services. Women's share in industrial employment is much smaller than men's and has decreased over the last ten years.
- The poorer the region, the greater the likelihood that women work as unpaid contributing family members<sup>2</sup> or low-income own-account workers. Female

<sup>1</sup> The expression "in work" summarizes all people employed according to the ILO definition, which includes self-employed, employed, employers as well as unpaid family members. The words "employed" and "in work" are used as synonyms in this *GET for Women Brief 2007*.

contributing family workers, in particular, are not likely to be economically independent.

- The step from unpaid contributing family worker or low-paid own-account worker to wage and salaried employment is a major step toward freedom and self-determination for many women. The share of women in wage and salaried work grew during the past ten years from 42.9 per cent in 1996 to 47.9 per cent in 2006. However, especially in the world's poorest regions, this share is still smaller for women than for men,
- There is evidence that wage gaps persist. Throughout most regions and many occupations women get less money for the same job. But there is also some evidence that globalization can help close the wage gap for some occupations.
- Young women are more likely to be able to read and write than 10 years ago. But there is still a gap between female and male education levels. And there is considerable doubt that women get the same chances as men to develop their skills throughout their working lives.

These trends show that despite some progress, there is no cause for complacency. Policies to enhance women's chances to participate equally in labour markets are starting to pay off, but the pace with which gaps are closing is very slow. As a result, women are more likely than men to become discouraged and give up hope of being economically active. And for women who work, there is a greater likelihood to be among the working poor – they work but they do not earn enough to lift themselves and their families out of poverty. Given finally the persisting lack of socio-economic empowerment for women and unequal distribution of household responsibilities, there remains some way to go to achieve equality between men and women.

At a time when the world increasingly realizes that decent and productive work is the only sustainable way out of poverty, analyzing women's role in the world of work is particularly important. Progress on full, productive and decent employment, a new target within the Millennium Development Goals, will only be possible if the specific needs for women in labour markets are addressed.<sup>3</sup>

## 2. Female participation in labour markets

The growing proportion of women in the labour force and narrowing gap between male and female participation rates has been one of the most striking labour market trends of recent times. During the past ten years, however, a more nuanced picture has emerged regarding female participation, with considerable differences among age groups and regions.

Overall, there have never before been so many economically active women. The total female labour force, which is made up of both employed and unemployed women, was 1.2 billion in 2006, up from 1.1 billion in 1996 (see table 1). The gap between female and male labour force participation rates (the labour force as a share of working age population) diminished somewhat during the 10-year period. Whereas ten years ago there were 66 active women per 100 active men, in 2006 this number was still at almost the same level, with 67 women per 100 men (see table 2). At the same time, the female labour force participation rate decreased slightly to 52.4 per cent from 53.0 per cent in 1996. However, rather than this being a sign of stagnation, it is the result of two positive counterbalancing trends. As education among young women spreads more widely, young women's labour force participation decreases. At the same time, the participation rate for adult women was slightly higher in 2006 than ten years earlier.

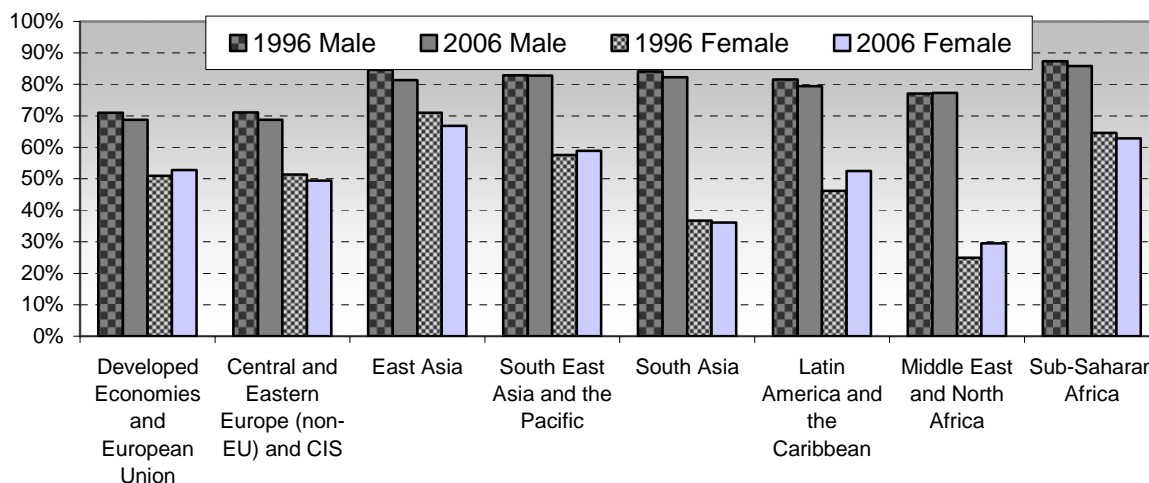
Meanwhile, trends at the regional level vary noticeably. Increases in women's economic activity were particularly high in Latin America, Middle East and North Africa, and Developed

<sup>2</sup> The expressions "unpaid contributing family workers", "unpaid contributing family members", "contributing family workers" and "contributing family members" are used as synonyms.

<sup>3</sup> This brief is a condensed version of the ILO working paper "Global Employment Trends for Women 2007", forthcoming 2007.

Economies and the EU. This led in all three cases to a smaller gap between male and female labour force participation rates. On the other hand, there are also regions where the gap widened. In sub-Saharan Africa the gap was 0.3 percentage points larger in 2006 than 10 years earlier and in East Asia it increased by almost 1 percentage point (see figure 1).

Figure 1  
Labour force participation rates, by sex and region, 1996 and 2006



Source: ILO, Global Employment Trends Model, 2006.

However, regardless of these regional variations, the difference between male and female economic activity remains conspicuous throughout the world. In the Developed Economies and EU, Central and Eastern Europe (non-EU) and CIS<sup>4</sup> and in East Asia, about 80 women per 100 men are economically active. In sub-Saharan Africa, the ratio is 75 women per 100 men, in South East Asia and the Pacific it is 73 to 100 and in Latin America and the Caribbean, 69 to 100. The biggest gaps are found in South Asia, with 42 to 100, and Middle East and North Africa, with 37 to 100 (see table 2).

Taken on their own, rising or high labour force participation rates do not necessarily mean that labour markets are developing positively for women. The labour force participation rate does not provide an insight into the likelihood of being employed, nor does it indicate the quality of jobs. It also does not show how many people are participating in education, which is a good reason to be out of the labour force. The following sections, therefore, provide a more detailed analysis of the employment situation for women and their conditions of work.

### 3. Unemployment among women

In 2006, women globally still had a higher likelihood of being unemployed compared with men. The female unemployment rate stood at 6.6 per cent, compared to a male rate of 6.1 per cent (see figure 2a). In addition, women's unemployment rate rose over the ten-year period from 6.3 per cent in 1996. In total 81.8 million women who were willing to work and actively looking for work were without a job. This was up 22.7 per cent from 10 years earlier.

The difficulty of finding work is even more pronounced for young women (aged 15 to 24 years), with 35.6 million young women seeking an employment opportunity in 2006. Youth unemployment rates, both male and female, are higher than adult unemployment rates in all regions. In five, the regional female youth unemployment rate exceeds that of men. This is not the case in East Asia, Developed Economies and EU and sub-Saharan Africa (see figure 2b).<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Given that this *Global Employment Trends for Women Brief 2007* analyses the period until 2006 Bulgaria and Romania were kept in this region despite the fact that since January 2007 they are new EU member states.

<sup>5</sup> For more details see *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2006*, <http://www.ilo.org/trends>.

Figure 2a  
World and regional unemployment rates, by sex, 2006

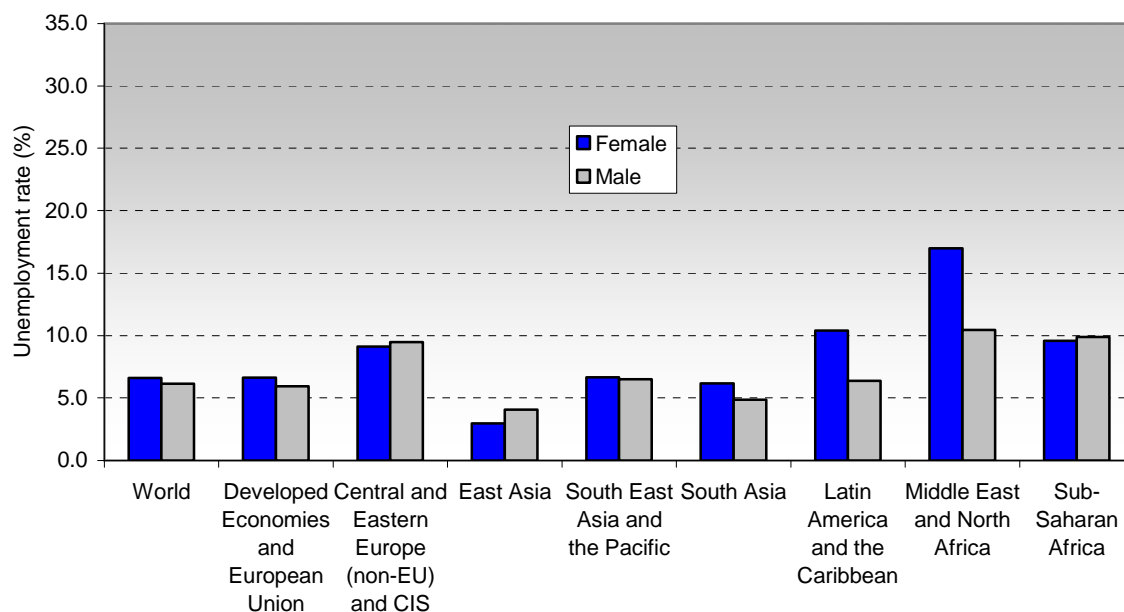
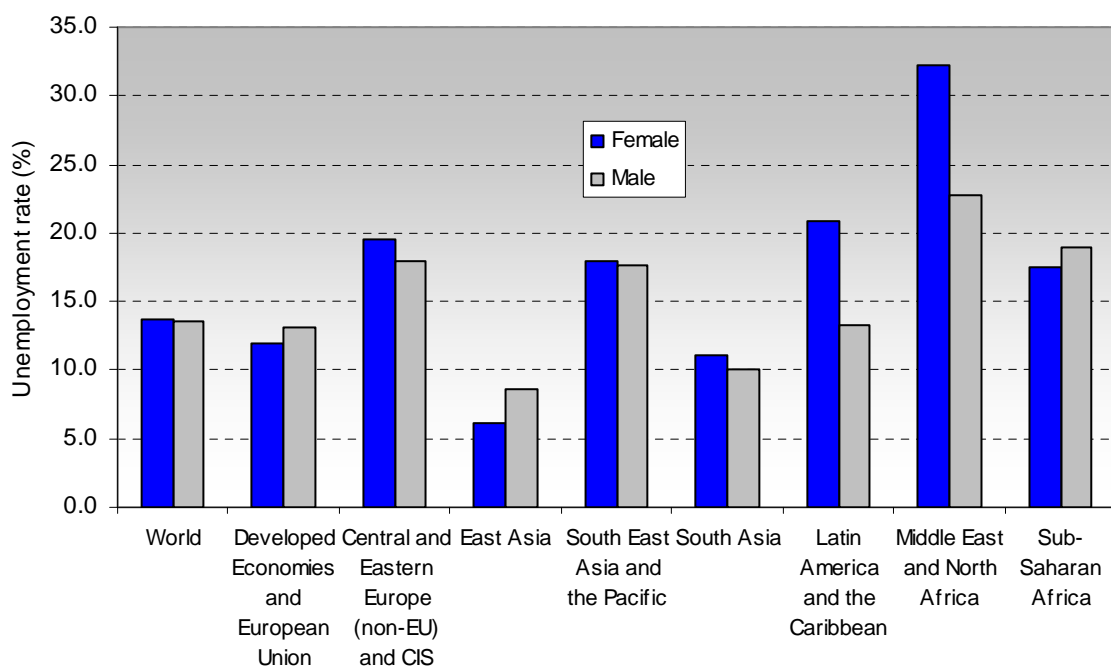


Figure 2b  
World and regional Female youth unemployment rates, by sex, 2006



Source: ILO, Global Employment Trends Model, 2006.

Unemployment indicators provide a limited picture of the condition of labour markets. For a clearer image, they should be viewed in conjunction with employment-to-population ratios, data on employment by status and sector as well as wage and earning indicators. Ideally they should also be interpreted together with working poor numbers, as these give a good indication of whether the jobs created are of decent enough quality to give women a chance to work themselves and their families out of poverty. However, as discussed in box 1, it is not yet possible to estimate women's working poverty at a regional level. Finally, unemployment estimates exclude people who want to work but may not actively "seek" work because they feel there is none available, have restricted labour

mobility or face discrimination or structural, social or cultural barriers. These are known as discouraged workers. Although there is a dearth of data on discouraged workers, a review of data available for industrialized economies revealed that females made up approximately two-thirds of discouraged workers in Australia, Austria, Belgium, Germany, Greece, the Netherlands, Norway and Portugal, with the female share of total discouraged workers near 90 per cent in Italy and Switzerland.<sup>6</sup> Given that women face higher unemployment rates, have far fewer opportunities in labour markets than men and often face social barriers to enter labour markets, it is very likely that discouragement among women is higher than among men in most countries in the developing world.

### Box 1 Women and poverty

Poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon. Poor people can suffer from material deprivation, lack of money, dependency on benefits, social exclusion or inequality. Despite these many aspects, the most common measurements of poverty focus on monetary income. Usually poverty is measured as the share of people in a country living below US\$1 or US\$2 a day. The main sources for poverty statistics are income and expenditure data collected through national household surveys. Unfortunately such information is inadequate for measuring gender differences, because it concerns entire households rather than individuals. In addition, results give a snapshot of household poverty at a particular moment and do not capture changes over time. As a result, poverty data is not disaggregated by sex, making it impossible to estimate poverty among women that work. However, the statistical and anecdotal evidence that does exist has led to a growing perception that poverty is becoming feminized, with women accounting for an increasing proportion of the world's poor and working poor. The findings of this report support this view. As long as there are inequalities in labour markets, women will find it harder than men to escape poverty.

Sources: Spicker, Paul, "The idea of poverty", Bristol, 2007; UNIFEM, "Report on "Progress of the World's Women, 2005", New York, 2005, <http://www.un-ngls.org/women-2005.pdf>; UNIFEM, "The World's Women 2005: Progress in Statistics", New York, 2005, <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/indwm/wwpub.htm>

A closer look at the employment situation for women is also not encouraging. Employment-to-population ratios – which indicate how efficiently economies make use of the productive potential of their working-age population – are in all regions of the world much lower for women than for men (see table 3). Only half of working-age women (15+) actually work. For men, the proportion is more than seven out of ten. The difference is most notable in the Middle East and North Africa, where only slightly more than two out of every ten working-age women are employed, compared to seven out of ten for men. The situation is only slightly better in South Asia. The gap between female and male employment-to-population ratios decreased for the world as a whole over the past decade. However, in East Asia it widened and in sub-Saharan Africa it was unchanged.

While not all women of working age may wish to work, the existence of significant unemployment indicates that there are many women who want a job but are unable to find one. Part of the employment gaps that remain in industrialized economies may be attributed to the fact that some women choose to stay at home because they can afford not to enter the labour market. But in other regions of the world, it is more likely that women would work if there were opportunities for them to do so. Attracting more women into the labour force also requires as a first step equal access to education and equal opportunities in gaining the skills necessary to compete in the labour market. As is discussed in box 2, this equality in education is still far out of reach in most regions.

<sup>6</sup> OECD, *Employment Outlook*, Paris, 2003.



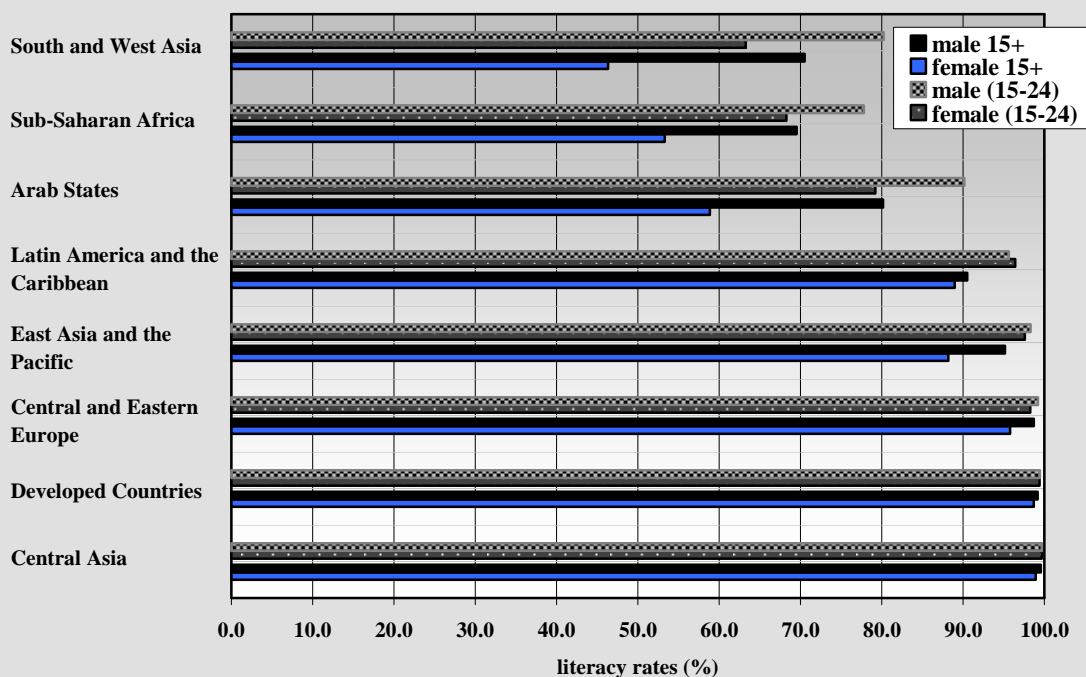
## Box 2 Women and education

Education is a basic right. It is essential for development, as education can help people to find solutions to their problems and can provide new opportunities. It opens chances to participate in labour markets or to look for more decent employment opportunities. Still, almost 800 million adults have not had the opportunity to learn how to read and write, about two third of whom are women. In addition, 60 percent of school drop-outs are girls, as they often have to leave school at early ages to help in households or to work. Moreover, there are often cultural restrictions that prevent girls from finishing even basic education, severely limiting their chances to determine their own future.

The lowest literacy rates for women can be found in South and West Asia, sub-Saharan Africa and the Arab States. Even though these have increased in recent times, their comparatively low levels reflect the disadvantages faced by women in these regions.

Unfortunately basic education does not always translate into better employment opportunities. This is why it is important for women to continue to gain knowledge and skills beyond those acquired during youth. An underlying reason for the discrepancy in decent work opportunities between adult men and women could well be the lack of lifelong learning opportunities for many women.

Literacy rates\* by region (2000-2004)



\*Traditionally, UNESCO has defined literacy as 'a person's ability to read and write, with understanding, a simple statement about one's everyday life'. The grouping of countries into regions is taken as provided by UNESCO and differs slightly from the groupings used in this publication.

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics, September 2006, [http://www.uis.unesco.org/ev.php?ID=5020\\_201&ID2=DO\\_TOPIC](http://www.uis.unesco.org/ev.php?ID=5020_201&ID2=DO_TOPIC).

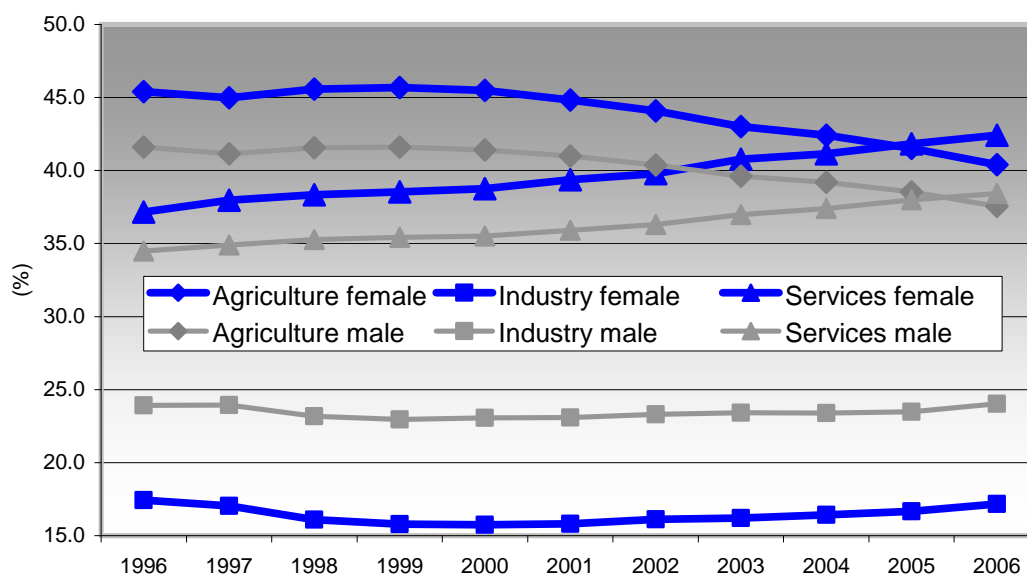
## 4. Women's working conditions

There is no single agreed-upon indicator for assessing the conditions of decent and productive employment.<sup>7</sup> However, some insights can be gained by analyzing three indicators: employment by sector; status of employment (see box 5); and wages/earnings.

### 4.1 Sectors of employment

For the first time in 2005 agriculture was no longer the main sector of employment for women, and this trend continued in 2006. The service sector now provides most jobs for women. Out of the total number of employed women in 2006, 40.4 per cent worked in agriculture and 42.4 per cent in services. Meanwhile, 17.2 per cent of all women working were in the industry. (The comparable male rates were 37.5 per cent in agriculture, 38.4 per cent in services and 24 per cent in industry). (See figure 3 and table 4).

Figure 3  
Female and male sectoral employment shares  
as percentage of total employment, 1996-2006



Source: ILO, Global Employment Trends Model, 2006.

Women have a higher share of agricultural employment than men in East Asia, South Asia, sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East and North Africa. In the other regions, it is usually the poorer countries that show a higher share of female employment in agriculture. Box 3 discusses the special challenges women face when working in this sector.

In all regions, women's share of employment in industry is lower than that of men. The difference is particularly marked in the Developed Economies and EU, where only 12.4 per cent of women work in this sector compared to 33.6 per cent of men. Within developing regions, the differences are considerable in Central and Eastern Europe (non-EU) and CIS as well as in Middle East and North Africa and, to a lesser extent, in Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa. Within the Asian regions, shares are more balanced between men and women. (See table 4).

The service sector has overtaken agriculture for women's employment in 4 out of the 8 regions: Developed Economies and EU; Central and Eastern Europe (non-EU) and CIS; Latin

<sup>7</sup> A compelling and comprehensive collection of articles that highlight good practices regarding working conditions for women and gender equality in the world of work can be found in: ILO, "Gender Equality Around the World", Articles from World of Work Magazine, 1999-2006, March 2007.

[http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/inf/event/women/2007/gender\\_equality.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/inf/event/women/2007/gender_equality.pdf)

America; and Middle East and North Africa. On the other hand, in East Asia, South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa agriculture is by far the most important sector of women's employment. Within services, women are still concentrated in areas traditionally associated with their gender roles, particularly in community, social and personal services. Men dominate the better-paid jobs in financial and business services and real estate.<sup>8</sup>

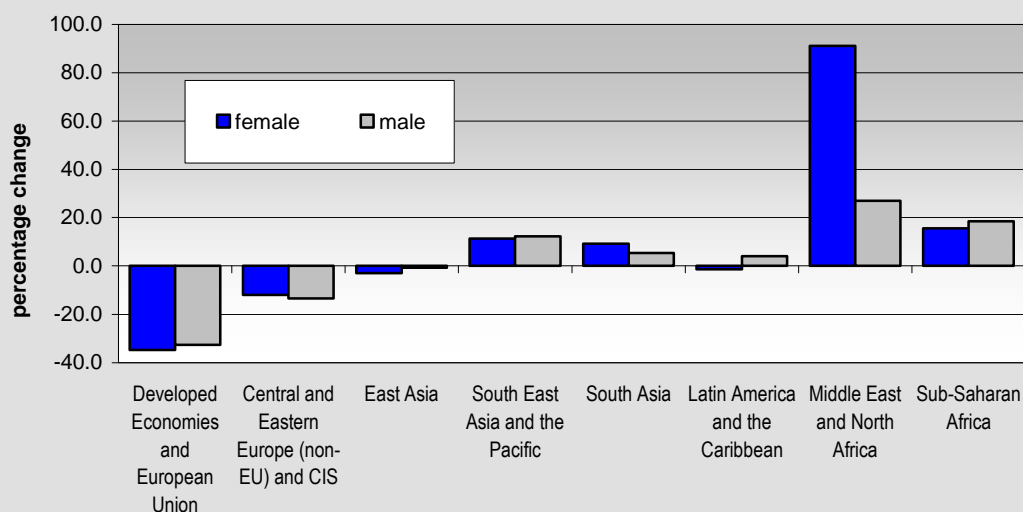
### Box 3 Women and agriculture

Women agricultural workers are responsible for half of the world's food production. They are the main producers of staple crops such as rice, maize and wheat, which account for 60 to 80 percent of the food intake in most developing countries. It is almost always women who are responsible for ensuring that children get enough to eat. They are key players in day-to-day agricultural tasks, the instigators of activities that generate agricultural and non-agricultural income and the custodians of natural and productive resources.

Despite their importance women agricultural workers continue to be a marginalized group. What specific problems do they have to face?

- Women in agriculture generally lack education, decision-making power and rights at work.
- Women often have more difficulty than men getting good land, credit, training and access to markets.
- Women lack access to the equipment required for food production on a large scale.
- Women in agriculture in developing countries also face real challenges with the spread of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Nearly 95 per cent of people with HIV are in developing countries. The majority are poor people in rural areas, and women outnumber men.
- Wars, migration of men for paid employment and rising mortalities due to HIV/AIDS have led to a rise in the number of female-headed households especially in the rural areas of the developing world. This leaves women with even more responsibilities.
- A growing number of women work in the informal agricultural sector, largely as street vendors in local food markets.
- Many women must have second jobs in order to survive. These are often jobs in off-farm industries including homework at piece rates that yield very low additional earnings.

Percentage change in employment in agriculture between 1996 and 2006



Source: ILO, Global Employment Trends Model, 2006.

Sources: Spieloch, Alexandra, "A Row to Hoe" - A Study on the Gendered Impact of Trade Liberalization on our Food System, on Agricultural Markets and on Women's Human Rights", IATP (Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy), Geneva, 2006, <http://www.iatp.org/tradeobservatory/library.cfm?refID=96833>; United Nations FAO, Website fact sheet: "Gender and Food Security: Agriculture", <http://www.fao.org/GENDER/en/agri-e.htm>; FAO-ILO-IUF, Agricultural workers and their contribution to sustainable agriculture and rural development, Geneva, 2005, <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/actrav/new/061005.pdf>.

The sex segregation of occupations is changing, but progress is slow. Female employment stereotypes, such as carers and home-based workers, are still being reinforced. They may be

<sup>8</sup> For more details see *Global Employment Trends for Women 2004*, <http://www.ilo.org/trends>.

perpetuated into the next generation if restricted and inferior labour market opportunities for women continue to lead to underinvestment in women's education, training and experience. It is notable that these trends continue even when women migrate. Within host countries they occupy the same type of jobs as at home and are often faced with the same discrimination patterns. (See box 4)

#### Box 4 Women and migration

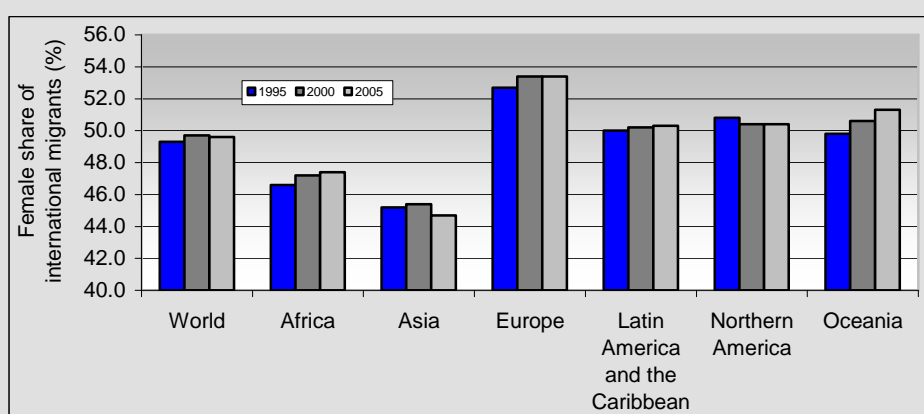
Over the past decade the number of women who migrated increased significantly. The UNFPA "State of World Population 2006" estimates that there are 95 million female migrants, accounting for almost half of all international migrants. Every year millions of women work overseas and send hundreds of millions dollars back to their homes and communities. In addition, working women leave to marry or rejoin migrant husbands or their families. Migration of women is common in all age groups. Some women are well educated and searching for opportunities more consistent with their qualifications. Others are from low-income or poor rural backgrounds and are seeking a better life for themselves and their children. Women also migrate to flee abusive marriages and patriarchal traditions in their home countries that limit their opportunities and freedom.

The experiences of migrant women workers are as different as their backgrounds and destinations. While migration benefits many women, it does not come without challenges. Millions of women face substantial risks. They often lack adequate opportunities to migrate legally and safely. Women migrants can become trapped in dangerous situations, ranging from the modern enslavement of trafficking to prostitution and severe exploitation in domestic work. As women and migrant workers, they can be highly disadvantaged after their arrival in the destination country, especially if other factors, such as race, class and religion also come into play. Moreover, many migrant women are unaware of their rights.

Women migrant workers can make their best contribution when enjoying decent working conditions and when their fundamental human and labour rights are respected in the host countries. Labour migration policies should aim to eradicate discrimination and gender inequality and to tackle other vulnerabilities. Not only should host countries make sure that women get a fair chance in labour markets, but home countries should address the disruptive impact that migration of women, especially mothers, has on the family unit and children.

Recent studies have shown that appropriate policies and rules can help to make migration a "triple-win" situation that benefits host countries, home countries and migrants and their families. For this to happen, however, it is important that women and men profit to the same extent.

#### Trends in female migration, 1995-2005



Source: Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, Trends in Total Migrant Stock: The 2005 Revision <http://esa.un.org/migration>.

Sources: ILO Theme paper on Globalization, International Labour Migration and Rights of Migrant Workers, Geneva, December 2006. [http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/migrant/download/pws\\_new\\_paper.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/migrant/download/pws_new_paper.pdf) ; ILO Statement to the United Nations High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, New York, 14-15 September, 2006. International Labour Migration and Development: The ILO Perspective. <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/migrant/download/perspectives.pdf>; UNFPA State of world population 2006 on women and international migration. [http://www.unfpa.org/upload/lib\\_pub\\_file/650\\_filename\\_sowp06-en.pdf](http://www.unfpa.org/upload/lib_pub_file/650_filename_sowp06-en.pdf)

## 4.2 Status of women's economic activity

Although there has been progress toward more even sharing of family responsibilities in some economically developed countries, such responsibilities are still very much assigned to women. When women work, it is usually up to them to find solutions that balance child-raising with employment. This is likely to be a greater challenge for women in wage employment, less for those in self-employment and least for contributing family workers who are unpaid (but still count as employed people according to the standard definition of employment). At the same time, economic independence, or at least co-determination in resource distribution within the family, is highest when women are in wage and salaried work, lower when they are own-account workers and lowest when they are unpaid family workers.

The move from being an unpaid contributing family worker or a low paid own-account worker into wage and salaried employment is a major step forward in terms of freedom and self-determination for many women – even though it does not always entail getting a decent job right away. The importance of this step in fostering gender equality is recognized in the UN Millennium Development Goal 3 “Promote gender equality and empower women”. One of the indicators to measure progress is the share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector. This indicator was developed by the ILO and shows clearly that the poorer a country or a region, the smaller this share is.<sup>9</sup>

When evaluating progress made by women in the world of work, trends regarding status of employment help provide more detailed information. For the first time the ILO has released estimates at regional level on the status of employment for men and women (see box 5 for further explanation and table 5 for detailed numbers), tracking changes over time.

These show that the share of female wage and salaried workers has increased over the past ten years. In 2006, 47.9 per cent of working women were in wage and salaried employment compared with 42.9 per cent ten years earlier. The share of own-account workers increased from 22.4 per cent in 1996 to 25.7 per cent in 2006 and the share of contributing family workers dropped from 33.2 per cent to 25.1 per cent during the same period. However, in the poorest regions of the world the share of female contributing family workers in total employment is still much higher than men's, with women less likely to be wage and salaried workers. In sub-Saharan Africa as well as in South East Asia, four out of ten working women are classified as contributing family workers compared with two out of ten men. In South Asia, six out of ten working women are classified as contributing family workers, but again only two out of ten working men have this status. In the Middle East and North Africa, the proportions are three out of ten women and one out of ten men.

Even though the flexibility when working on their own account can allow women to combine work and family duties, female own account workers as a share in total female employment is smaller in all regions than men's share. But in the two poorest regions in the world, more women work as own-account workers than as wage and salaried workers. In sub-Saharan Africa, four out of ten women work as own-account workers and only two out of ten work as wage and salaried workers. In South Asia, two out of 10 are own-account workers and 1.5 out of ten belong to the group of wage and salaried workers. In all other regions, more women work as wage and salaried workers than as own-account workers.

An expected result of economic development would be for people to move from being contributing family workers and own-account workers to wage and salaried employment. Ideally women should profit from this trend as much as men. A look at one of the fastest developing regions – East Asia – shows that women do profit, with the share of women working as contributing family workers dropping by 18 percentage points from 38.8 per cent in 1996 to 20.9 per cent in 2006. At the same time, the share in wage and salaried employment rose by 9.5 percentage points and the share in own-account work went up by 8.7 percentage points. In parallel, there was a substantial decline in the proportion of women employed in agriculture and an increase in the

<sup>9</sup> For more details on this indicator see <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mdg/Host.aspx?Content=Data/Trends.htm> and [http://ddp-ext.worldbank.org/ext/GMIS/gdmis.do?siteId=2&contentId=Content\\_t11&menuId=LNAV01HOME1](http://ddp-ext.worldbank.org/ext/GMIS/gdmis.do?siteId=2&contentId=Content_t11&menuId=LNAV01HOME1).

percentage working in industry and services. Men followed the same pattern, but the increase in wage and salaried work was smaller, as was the increase in own-account work.

While status per se does not necessarily shed light on quality of jobs, contributing family workers and own-account workers are less likely to work in decent conditions. Research comparing figures on the working poor and employment status showed a very strong correlation between the total number of people classified as contributing family workers and own-account workers and the number of working poor at the US\$2 a day level. The poorer the region, the stronger this correlation was. This underlines the inadequate working conditions of these status groups in poor countries.

In summary, the status of women in the world of work has improved, but gains have been slow. While women have slightly closed the status gap with men, the sluggish pace of change means that disparities remain significant.

### Box 5 Women and status

The indicator of status in employment distinguishes between types of employment by dividing people into three categories. These are wage and salaried workers (also known as employees); self employed workers; contributing family workers (also known as family workers).

For the first time this report gives regional estimates of the employment status of men and women. This indicator can contribute to a better understanding of labour markets. It provides information on the distribution of the workforce by status in employment and can be used to assess the proportion of employed persons in a country who (a) work for wages or salaries; (b) run their own enterprises, with or without hired labour; or (c) work without pay within the family unit. According to the International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE), the basic criteria used to define the status groups are the types of economic risk that they face in their work, an element of which is the strength of institutional attachment between the person and the job, and the type of authority over establishment and other workers that the job-holder has or will have as an explicit or implicit result of the employment contract.

Employment status may be used to evaluate whether there is increasing informalization of labour markets, indicated by a decline in numbers of employees with formal working agreements. Companies may try to create more flexible enterprises to meet fluctuating demand, using temporary labour rather than permanent staff. Examination of data on numbers of temporary workers in conjunction with this indicator could help determine whether temporary jobs are crowding out more stable forms of employment.

The indicator is strongly linked to another indicator on employment by sector. For example, economic growth could be expected to bring a shift in employment from the agricultural sector to industry and services, which in return would be reflected in an increase in the number of wage and salaried workers. In addition, a shrinking share of employment in agriculture would result in a lower proportion of contributing family workers, who are often found in rural areas of developing countries.

Source: Key Indicators of the Labour Market 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, International Labour Organization, Geneva, 2006,  
<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/strat/kilm/>

## 4.3 Continuing wage gap

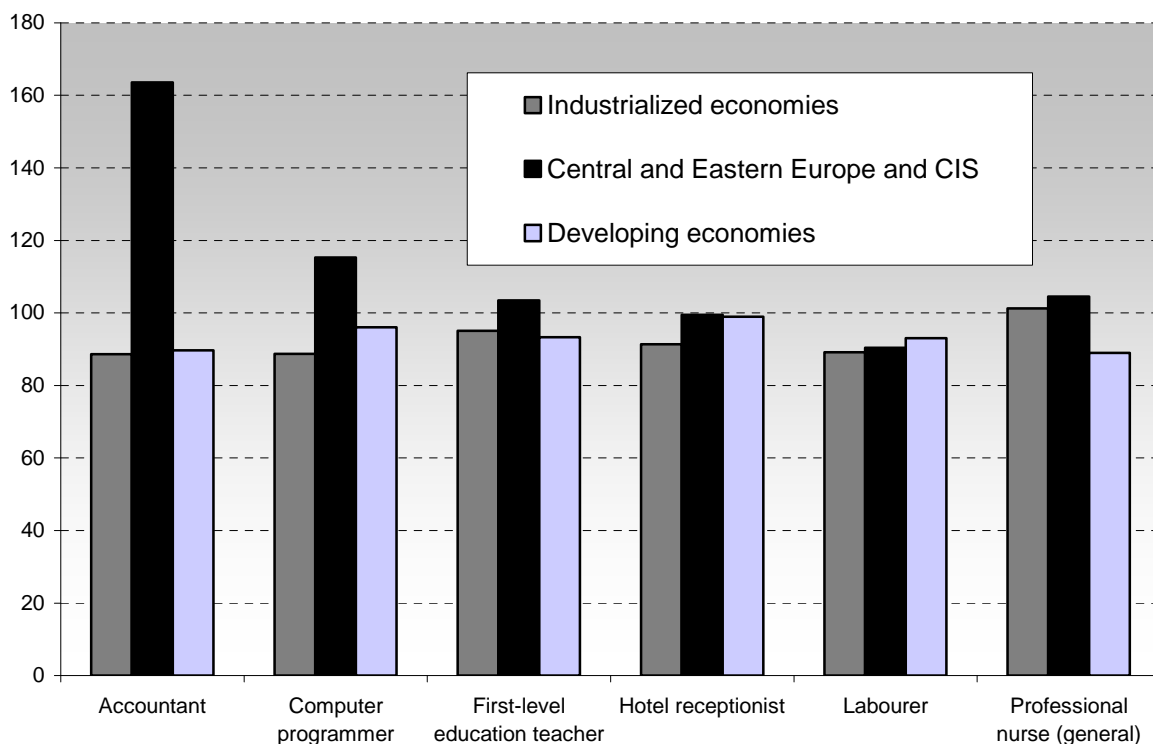
In the last Global Employment Trends for Women in 2004 it was argued that inadequate data on wages/earnings for men and women made it difficult to reach conclusions on wage/earnings inequalities. It was not easy to make comparisons between countries and regions, because wage and earning indicators tended to be based on country-specific criteria that were not always comparable. For example, there were differences regarding the definition of wage rates and earnings, payment methods, time units (hourly, weekly), data sources and methods of collection.<sup>10</sup> Unfortunately this situation has not changed. Nevertheless, the little evidence that exists shows that wage gaps persist. A review of data available for six occupation groups shows that in most economies, women still earn 90 per cent or less of what their male co-workers earn (see figure 4). Even in “typically female” occupations such as nursing and teaching, gender wage equality is lacking.

<sup>10</sup> For more details see Corley, M, Perardel, Y and Popova, K, “Wage inequality by gender and occupation: A cross-country analysis”, Employment Strategy Paper 20/2005, ILO, Geneva, 2005,  
<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/strat/download/esp2005-20.pdf>.

Historically, there was greater wage equality in the planned economies of Central Eastern Europe and the CIS than in industrialized or developing economies. This has remained the case in recent years. For example, the female wages of accountants, computer programmers, teachers and nurses in transition economies were actually higher than male wages for the latest years with data available (see figure 4). It will be interesting to see if this trend continues or if it reflects the fact that a few women have successfully managed the transition process, but after their retirement, wage gaps reflect trends in industrialized economies.

The European Commission<sup>11</sup> recently published findings showing that the pay gap between men and women has remained virtually unchanged at 15 per cent across all sectors in recent years. The weak performance of women's wages has been attributed to slower economic growth in the EU and, in particular, worsening labour market conditions in the new Member States. In addition, even in many European countries, women are still disproportionately employed in sectors where wages/earnings are lower and have been declining. For example, in the United Kingdom, 60 per cent of women workers are found in ten occupations, with the majority concentrated in "the five Cs": caring, cashiering, catering, cleaning and clerical. Many of these jobs are in smaller non-unionized firms, where women have less bargaining power and less possibility to improve their economic situation vis-à-vis their male counterparts.

Figure 4  
Average female wages/earnings as percentage of male wages/earnings in selected occupations, latest available year



Note: Average in this chart denotes a basic average of the countries with available data.

Source: ILO, *Key Indicators of the Labour Market, 4th Edition* (Geneva, 2005), tables 16a and 16b.

Corley (2005, op.cit.) found that wage inequality is found in high-skill occupations, even though applicants in fields such as accounting and computer programming presumably have comparable education and training. Even in these occupations the average female wage is still only 88 per cent of the male wage. It was shown that countries with a higher relative gender wage gap in low-skilled occupations also had a high gender gap in high-skilled occupations. Nonetheless, in

<sup>11</sup> European Commission, "On Equality between Women and Men", Brussels, 2005.

most countries the wage gap was wider in low-skilled than in high-skilled occupations. In addition, in a number of countries the gap was shown to be increasing. This study was based mainly on data from industrialized countries.

A study by Oostendorp<sup>12</sup> focuses on the impact of globalization on wages from a gender perspective. Using the October Inquiry database of the ILO he finds that in low-skilled occupations where women are generally more highly represented, globalization has helped to improve wages vis-à-vis their male counterparts. At the same time, because there are significant gender gaps in human capital within high-skilled occupations in developing economies, growing demand for such skills due to globalization disproportionately favours male workers, leading to a widening of the wage gap in this category of workers.

In summary, gender pay gaps still exist across all occupations and there is no clear trend that they are narrowing.

## 5. Conclusions

The findings of this year's Global Employment Trends for Women are only partly encouraging. The assumption that in the process of socio-economic development women increasingly enter modern sector, permanent, full-time wage employment does not hold – at least not for all regions. Increases in labour force participation so far have not always been matched by improvements in job quality, and working conditions of women have not led to true social and economic empowerment, especially in the world's poor regions.

Women have more difficulties not only in participating in labour markets but also in finding decent and productive work. Women are still less likely to be in regular wage and salaried employment. In addition, the female share of contributing family workers exceeds the male rate in all regions of the world. In economies with large agricultural sectors, women work more often in this sector than men. Women's share of employment in the services sector also exceeds that of men. Additionally, women are more likely to earn less than men for the same type of work, even in traditionally female occupations.

All these findings point to the greater vulnerability of women in the world of work. It is therefore very likely that women are disproportionately affected by working poverty – they work but do not earn enough to lift themselves and their families above the US \$1 a day line. The results are consistent with the estimates made in the last Global Employment Trends for Women (2004) that women make up at least 60 per cent of the world's working poor. There is no reason to believe that this situation has changed considerably.

Creating adequate decent and productive work for women is possible, as shown by some of the progress detailed above. But policy-makers not only need to place employment at the centre of social and economic policies, they also have to recognize that the challenges faced by women in the world of work require intervention tailored to specific needs. Women must be given the chance to work themselves and their families out of poverty through creation of decent employment opportunities that help them secure productive and remunerative work in conditions of freedom, security and human dignity. Otherwise the process of feminization of poverty will continue and be passed on to the next generation.

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<sup>12</sup> Oostendorp, R.H, "Globalization and the Gender Wage Gap", World Bank Policy Research Working Paper No. 3256, Washington, D.C., 2004.



## Annex 1

Table 1  
Global labour market indicators, 1996 and 2006

	Female		Male		Total	
	1996	2006	1996	2006	1996	2006
Labour force (millions)	1052.0	1238.9	1592.2	1852.0	2644.2	3090.9
Employment (millions)	985.4	1157.1	1497.5	1738.6	2482.8	2895.7
Unemployment (millions)	66.7	81.8	94.7	113.4	161.4	195.2
Labour force participation rate (%)	53.0	52.4	80.5	78.8	66.7	65.5
Employment-to-population ratio (%)	49.6	48.9	75.7	74.0	62.6	61.4
Unemployment rate (%)	6.3	6.6	5.9	6.1	6.1	6.3

Source: ILO, Global Employment Trends Model, 2006.

Table 2  
Male and female labour force participation rates (%)  
and the gender gap in economically active females per 100 males, 2006

	Female LFPR (%)	Male LFPR (%)	Gender gap in economically active females per 100 males
World	52.4	78.8	66.9
Developed Economies	52.7	68.8	81.4
Transition Economies	49.4	68.7	81.0
East Asia	66.8	81.4	79.3
South-East Asia	58.9	82.8	72.7
South Asia	36.0	82.2	41.8
Latin America and the Caribbean	52.4	79.4	69.5
Middle East and North Africa	29.5	77.3	36.7
Sub-Saharan Africa	62.8	85.9	74.8

Source: ILO, Global Employment Trends Model, 2006.

Table 3  
Male and female employment-to-population ratios  
and unemployment rates 1996 and 2006

	Female employment-to-population ratio (%)		Male employment-to-population ratio (%)		Female unemployment rate (%)		Male unemployment rate (%)	
	1996	2006	1996	2006	1996	2006	1996	2006
World	49.6	48.9	75.7	74.0	6.3	6.6	5.9	6.1
Developed Economies and European Union	46.6	49.2	65.8	64.7	8.4	6.6	7.3	5.9
Central and Eastern Europe (non-EU) and CIS	46.4	44.9	64.2	62.2	9.6	9.1	9.7	9.5
East Asia	68.8	64.9	81.1	78.1	3.1	3.0	4.2	4.1
South East Asia and the Pacific	55.3	55.0	80.0	77.4	4.0	6.6	3.6	6.5
South Asia	34.9	33.8	80.6	78.3	4.9	6.2	4.2	4.9
Latin America and the Caribbean	41.5	47.0	76.2	74.3	10.2	10.4	6.5	6.4
Middle East and North Africa	20.4	24.5	68.3	69.3	18.1	17.0	11.5	10.4
Sub-Saharan Africa	58.7	56.8	79.2	77.4	9.0	9.6	9.3	9.9

Source: ILO, Global Employment Trends Model, 2006.

Table 4  
Male and female share in total employment by sector 1996 and 2006

	Employment in agriculture (%)		Employment in industry (%)		Employment in services (%)	
	1996	2006	1996	2006	1996	2006
<b>Females</b>						
World	45.4	40.4	17.4	17.2	37.2	42.4
Developed Economies and European Union	4.3	2.5	16.8	12.4	78.9	85.1
Central and Eastern Europe (non-EU) and CIS	25.5	21.6	22.1	19.7	52.4	58.7
East Asia	58.4	52.1	24.0	24.7	17.6	23.3
South East Asia and the Pacific	52.5	47.2	13.7	15.4	33.8	37.3
South Asia	72.6	64.5	12.0	17.7	15.4	17.9
Latin America and the Caribbean	14.0	9.9	14.5	14.3	71.5	75.8
Middle East and North Africa	33.0	39.1	17.7	11.7	49.2	49.2
Sub-Saharan Africa	69.4	64.2	5.8	5.5	24.7	30.3
<b>Males</b>						
World	41.6	37.5	23.9	24.0	34.5	38.4
Developed Economies and European Union	5.8	3.7	37.3	33.6	56.9	62.7
Central and Eastern Europe (non-EU) and CIS	26.8	22.4	32.7	34.3	40.5	43.3
East Asia	50.4	45.3	26.2	26.8	23.3	27.9
South East Asia and the Pacific	49.9	46.8	18.3	19.5	31.8	33.6
South Asia	53.9	46.4	16.8	19.3	29.3	34.3
Latin America and the Caribbean	28.5	24.7	23.7	23.4	47.9	51.9
Middle East and North Africa	28.8	26.7	22.8	26.5	48.4	46.8
Sub-Saharan Africa	67.0	62.1	11.4	11.3	21.5	26.6

Source: ILO, Global Employment Trends Model, 2006.

Table 5  
Male and female status of employment 1996 and 2006

Total (%)	Wage and salaried worker		Employers		Own-Account Workers		Contributing family workers	
	1996	2006	1996	2006	1996	2006	1996	2006
<b>Females</b>								
World	42.9	47.9	1.5	1.4	22.4	25.7	33.2	25.1
Developed Economies and European Union	86.7	89.5	3.4	3.0	6.4	5.4	3.5	2.1
Central and Eastern Europe (non-EU) and CIS	78.5	79.0	0.5	0.8	10.2	12.4	10.8	7.8
East Asia	31.4	40.8	1.1	0.8	28.7	37.4	38.8	20.9
South East Asia and the Pacific	28.8	34.9	1.0	1.0	22.9	27.1	47.2	37.1
South Asia	10.3	15.3	0.5	0.4	16.3	21.7	72.8	62.6
Latin America and the Caribbean	66.6	67.5	2.0	1.7	24.2	25.6	7.2	5.1
Middle East and North Africa	47.5	56.2	2.4	4.1	17.1	11.3	33.0	28.4
Sub-Saharan Africa	13.8	17.0	1.1	1.4	49.0	42.3	36.2	39.3
<b>Males</b>								
World	45.7	49.2	3.8	3.3	34.7	35.9	15.8	11.6
Developed Economies and European Union	81.9	83.1	6.9	6.9	10.2	9.3	1.0	0.7
Central and Eastern Europe (non-EU) and CIS	76.5	76.2	2.6	2.9	15.8	17.5	5.1	3.4
East Asia	42.1	48.7	2.9	1.5	34.7	37.0	20.4	12.8
South East Asia and the Pacific	37.6	41.4	3.1	2.6	41.2	41.4	18.1	14.6
South Asia	19.5	27.2	2.3	1.4	55.8	55.2	22.4	16.2
Latin America and the Caribbean	59.3	60.7	5.0	4.4	29.5	31.1	6.2	3.7
Middle East and North Africa	52.2	55.4	9.7	11.4	23.4	21.2	14.7	11.9
Sub-Saharan Africa	26.8	29.5	2.7	2.7	43.6	44.4	27.0	23.3

Source: ILO, Global Employment Trends Model, 2006.

## Annex 2. Key regional labour market indicators for women and issues for consideration

The following tables present the most current labour market indicators for women and offer a general assessment of the most pressing issues in each region.<sup>13</sup> These tables can be used as a starting point for policy makers and international agencies as indication of the true challenges that need to be focused on regarding women. The variations of indicator results and issues for consideration presented in each regional table are a reminder that it is better to discuss female labour market trends on the regional level rather than the global level.

### Developed Economies and European Union

Indicators	
<u>Labour market indicators</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Female labour force participation rate: 52.7%</li> <li>Female employment-to-population ratio: 49.2%</li> <li>Female unemployment rate: 6.6%</li> <li>Female share of total employment: 44.7%</li> <li>Women in agriculture/industry/services: 2.5% / 12.4% / 85.1% of total female employment</li> <li>Main status of female employment: Wage and salaried workers (89.5%)</li> <li>Gap between female and male labour force participation rates: -16.1 percentage points</li> </ul>	<u>Demographics</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share of women in working-age population: 51.5%</li> <li>Fertility rate below replacement level</li> </ul> <u>Other</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Average GDP growth rate 2001-06: 2.1%</li> <li>Educational enrolment at secondary and tertiary levels: high</li> </ul>
Some issues for consideration	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Job quality, contracts, hours of work</li> <li>Balancing flexibility with security</li> <li>Gender wage gaps</li> <li>Declining employment content of growth</li> </ul>	

### Central and Eastern Europe (non-EU) and CIS

Indicators	
<u>Labour market indicators</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Female labour force participation rate: 49.4%</li> <li>Female employment-to-population ratio: 44.9%</li> <li>Female unemployment rate: 9.1%</li> <li>Female share of total employment: 44.9%</li> <li>Women in agriculture/industry/services: 21.6% / 19.7% / 58.7% of total female employment</li> <li>Main status of female employment: Wage and salaried workers (79.0%)</li> <li>Gap between female and male labour force participation rates: -19.3 percentage points</li> </ul>	<u>Demographics</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share of women in working-age pop: 53.0%</li> <li>Fertility rate below replacement level</li> </ul> <u>Other</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Average GDP growth rate 2001-2006: 6.1%</li> <li>Working poverty rates: US\$1 a day 2.1%, US\$2 a day 10.5%</li> <li>Poverty rates: US\$1 a day 1.5%, US\$2 a day 7.2%</li> <li>Educational enrolment at secondary and tertiary levels: medium to weak</li> </ul>
Some issues for consideration	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High numbers of women who are not employed</li> <li>Discouragement</li> <li>Invisible underemployment based on skills mismatch, namely women taking jobs that do not make use of their skills</li> <li>Managing external migration – brain drain</li> <li>Encouraging investment and job creation</li> <li>Balancing flexibility with security</li> <li>Child labour</li> </ul>	

<sup>13</sup> Unless otherwise stated data are for 2006. It is important to bear in mind when reviewing this table that the regional assessments mask a great deal of regional variation and readers should be wary of assuming a particularly country “fits” perfectly all of the characterizations defined.

### East Asia

Indicators	
<u>Labour market indicators</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Female labour force participation rate: 66.8%</li> <li>Female employment-to-population ratio: 64.9%</li> <li>Female unemployment rate: 3.0%</li> <li>Female share of total employment: 44.5%</li> <li>Women in agriculture/industry/services: 52.1% / 24.7% / 23.3% of total female employment</li> <li>Main status of female employment: Wage and salaried workers (40.8%)</li> <li>Gap between female and male labour force participation rates: - 14.5 percentage points</li> </ul>	<u>Demographics</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share of women in working-age pop: 49.1%</li> <li>Fertility rate slightly below replacement level</li> </ul> <u>Other</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Average GDP growth rate 2001-06: 8.6%</li> <li>Working poverty rates: US\$1 a day 12.1%, US\$2 a day 44.2%</li> <li>Poverty rates: US\$1 a day 10.1%, US\$2 a day 36.2%</li> <li>Educational enrolment at secondary and tertiary levels: high</li> </ul>
Some issues for consideration	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Job quality – social protection, social dialogue, hours of work</li> <li>Inequity in rural and urban development</li> <li>Managing external and internal (rural to urban) migration</li> <li>Job security in small and medium enterprises</li> <li>Child labour</li> </ul>	

### South East Asia and the Pacific

Indicators	
<u>Labour market indicators</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Female labour force participation rate: 58.9%</li> <li>Female employment-to-population ratio: 55.0%</li> <li>Female unemployment rate: 6.6%</li> <li>Female share of total employment: 42.1%</li> <li>Women in agriculture/industry/services: 47.2% / 15.4% / 37.3% of total female employment</li> <li>Main status of female employment: Contributing family workers (37.1%)</li> <li>Gap between female and male labour force participation rates: - 23.9 percentage points</li> </ul>	<u>Demographics</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share of women in working-age pop: 50.5%</li> <li>Fertility rate above replacement level</li> </ul> <u>Other</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Average GDP growth rate 2001-06: 5.1%</li> <li>Working poverty rates: US\$1 a day 11.1%, US\$2 a day 56.9%</li> <li>Poverty rates: US\$1 a day 8.9%, US\$2 a day 44.2%</li> <li>Educational enrolment at secondary and tertiary levels: medium to low</li> </ul>
Some issues for consideration	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invisible underemployment base on skills mismatch, namely women taking jobs that do not make use of their skills</li> <li>Improving education enrolment rates</li> <li>Improving job quality in the agricultural sector and development within the rural non-farm sector</li> <li>Encouraging investment and job creation</li> <li>Managing external and internal (rural to urban) migration</li> <li>Formal sector growth</li> <li>Child labour</li> </ul>	

### South Asia

Indicators	
<u>Labour market indicators</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Female labour force participation rate: 36.0%</li> <li>● Female employment-to-population ratio: 33.8%</li> <li>● Female unemployment rate: 6.2%</li> <li>● Female share of total employment: 29.2%</li> <li>● Women in agriculture/industry/services: 64.5% / 17.7% / 17.9% of total female employment</li> <li>● Main status of female employment: Contributing family workers (62.6%)</li> <li>● Gap between female and male labour force participation rates: 46.2 percentage points</li> </ul>	<u>Demographics</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Share of women in working-age pop: 48.8%</li> <li>● Fertility rate high above replacement level</li> </ul> <u>Other</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Average GDP growth rate 2001-06: 6.2%</li> <li>● Working poverty rates: US\$1 a day 34.4%, US\$2 a day 87.2%</li> <li>● Poverty rates: US\$1 a day 25.6%, US\$2 a day 75.0%</li> <li>● Educational enrolment at secondary and tertiary levels: medium to low</li> </ul>
Some issues for consideration	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Graduate unemployment</li> <li>● Invisible underemployment based on skills mismatch, namely women taking jobs that do not make use of their skills</li> <li>● Barriers to labour market entry high for young females</li> <li>● Improving job quality in the agricultural sector and development within the rural non-farm sector</li> <li>● Managing external and internal (rural to urban) migration</li> <li>● Investment and job creation</li> <li>● High poverty</li> <li>● Formal sector growth</li> <li>● Improving education enrolment rates</li> <li>● Child labour</li> </ul>	

### Latin America and the Caribbean

Indicators	
<u>Labour market indicators</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Female labour force participation rate: 52.4%</li> <li>● Female employment-to-population ratio: 47.0%</li> <li>● Female unemployment rate: 10.4%</li> <li>● Female share of total employment: 39.9%</li> <li>● Women in agriculture/industry/services: 9.9% / 14.3% / 75.8% of total female employment</li> <li>● Main status of female employment: Wage and salaried workers (67.5%)</li> <li>● Gap between female and male labour force participation rates: -27.0 percentage points</li> </ul>	<u>Demographics</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Share of women in working-age pop: 51.3%</li> <li>● Fertility rate slightly above replacement level</li> </ul> <u>Other</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Average GDP growth rate 2001-06: 1.5%</li> <li>● Working poverty rates: US\$1 a day 11.3%, US\$2 a day 30.9%</li> <li>● Poverty rates: US\$1 a day 8.8%, US\$2 a day 23.3%</li> <li>● Educational enrolment at secondary and tertiary levels: medium</li> </ul>
Some issues for consideration	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Barriers to labour market entry high for young women</li> <li>● Improving education enrolment rates and education system</li> <li>● Encouraging investment and job creation</li> <li>● Formal sector growth</li> <li>● Improving education enrolment rates</li> <li>● Job quality</li> <li>● Child labour</li> </ul>	

### Middle East and North Africa

Indicators	
<u>Labour market indicators</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Female labour force participation rate: 29.5%</li> <li>Female employment-to-population ratio: 24.5%</li> <li>Female unemployment rate: 17.0%</li> <li>Female share of total employment: 25.4%</li> <li>Women in agriculture/industry/services: 39.1% / 11.7% / 49.2% of total female employment</li> <li>Main status of female employment: Wage and salaried workers (56.2%)</li> <li>Gap between female and male labour force participation rates: - 47.8 percentage points</li> </ul>	<u>Demographics</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share of women in working-age pop: 49.1%</li> <li>Fertility rate high above replacement level</li> </ul> <u>Other</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Average GDP growth rate 2001-06: 5.0%</li> <li>Working poverty rates: US\$1 a day 2.8%, US\$2 a day 34.7%</li> <li>Poverty rates: US\$1 a day 2.1%, US\$2 a day 23.7%</li> <li>Educational enrolment at secondary and tertiary levels: medium to high</li> </ul>
Some issues for consideration	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Barriers to labour market entry high for all females</li> <li>Invisible underemployment based on skills mismatch, namely women taking jobs that do not make use of their skills</li> <li>Stagnant income poverty</li> <li>Graduate unemployment</li> <li>Job quality</li> <li>Managing external and internal migration</li> <li>Investment and job creation</li> <li>Informal job search / hiring networks</li> <li>Civil conflicts</li> <li>Child labour</li> </ul>	

### Sub-Saharan Africa

Indicators	
<u>Labour market indicators</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Female labour force participation rate: 62.8%</li> <li>Female employment-to-population ratio: 56.8%</li> <li>Female unemployment rate: 9.6%</li> <li>Female share of total employment: 42.9%</li> <li>Women in agriculture/industry/services: 64.2% / 5.5% / 30.3% of total female employment</li> <li>Main status of female employment: Own account workers (42.3%)</li> <li>Gap between female and male labour force participation rates: - 23.1 percentage points</li> </ul>	<u>Demographics</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share of women in working-age pop: 50.6%</li> <li>Fertility rate high above replacement level</li> </ul> <u>Other</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Average GDP growth rate 2001-06: 4.6%</li> <li>Working poverty rates: US\$1 a day 55.4%, US\$2 a day 86.3%</li> <li>Poverty rates: US\$1 a day 46.1%, US\$2 a day 73.8%</li> <li>Educational enrolment at secondary and tertiary levels: low</li> </ul>
Some issues for consideration	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invisible underemployment based on skills mismatch, namely women taking jobs that do not make use of their skills</li> <li>High poverty</li> <li>Civil conflicts, child soldiers</li> <li>Improving education enrolment rates and education system</li> <li>Nutrition and disease, including HIV-AIDS</li> <li>Improving job quality in the agricultural sector and development within the rural non-farm sector</li> <li>Encouraging investment and job creation</li> <li>Managing external and internal (rural to urban) migration</li> <li>Formal sector growth</li> <li>Improving infrastructure</li> <li>Child labour</li> </ul>	



International  
Labour  
Organization

A global review

# WORKING CONDITIONS LAWS 2006-2007

 **TRAVAIL**  
Global Monitoring and Analysis



WORKING  
CONDITIONS  
LAWS 2006-2007  
A global review

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# PREFACE

As the set of economic and social changes characterized as globalization are revealed to generate vast inequalities as well as immense wealth, the debates around the outcomes and future directions of these trends are beginning to acknowledge that many individuals are subject to unacceptable working conditions.

This recognition hints at a growing sense of dissatisfaction among many workers. Yet, the basic conditions of our working lives – for example, our wages, the hours we work, the protection we receive on the birth of our children – are too often absent from the policy debates on the benefits of economic growth. As a result, insufficient attention is being directed towards ensuring that increasing economic integration benefits everyone.

These concerns are at the heart of the work of the ILO, as part of its historical role in encouraging its member States to adopt what the Organization's Constitution defines as “humane conditions of labour”, and what has been expressed more recently in the notion of “decent work”.

Part of the challenge of improving conditions of work is a lack of reliable data on both actual working conditions and the policies, including laws, which have been designed to address them, especially in countries beyond the industrialized world. This report

aims to respond to this lack of data as it emerges with respect to legal measures, by comparing national laws on three of the most significant conditions of work: wages, working hours and maternity protection.

The report is intended to offer a concise and accessible picture of working conditions laws in the early years of the 21st century. Since these laws do not undergo radical change on an annual basis, we expect the analysis in this report to remain relevant for a number of years, although it is our intention to update it periodically. It is our hope that this work towards documenting working conditions laws will encourage policy efforts to be directed towards ensuring that the legal standards are more firmly reflected in workplace practice. This objective will be advanced in the work of the Conditions of Work and Employment Programme's Global Monitoring and Analysis (GMA) initiative, which has been designed with the aim of tracking trends in both actual working conditions and legal standards, and exploring the relationship between them.<sup>1</sup>

Manuela Tomei,  
Chief,  
Conditions of Work and Employment Programme,  
Social Protection Sector

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<sup>1</sup> For further details on the Global Monitoring and Analysis Programme, see [www.ilo.org/travail](http://www.ilo.org/travail).

# INTRODUCTION

## Working conditions laws in the 21st century

Working conditions laws are among the primary techniques for advancing the decent treatment of workers and have occupied a central place in labour law systems since their origins in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. At the international level, working hours and maternity protection were among the subjects of the first set of ILO Conventions in 1919, while the first standard on the minimum wage was adopted within the following decade. In addition to the protective goals that underpin these laws, however, it has also long been recognized that improving workers' terms and conditions can enhance productivity and improve firm performance, and for this reason efforts have been made, including by the ILO, to identify the regulatory regimes that can best merge the goals of worker protection and advancing productivity.

Given the significance of working conditions laws, it is essential to track their development in domestic legal regimes. This report contributes to such efforts by reviewing the extent and content of three of the primary working conditions standards: wages, working hours and maternity protection. It examines the working conditions laws of more than 100 countries across all regions, drawing on the International Labour Organization's *Database of Conditions of Work and Employment* ([www.ilo.org/travail/database](http://www.ilo.org/travail/database)).

It is worth stressing that the purpose of the report is to provide an overview of national legal provisions, not to assess compliance with the relevant ILO standards. The standards embodied in the most recent ILO Conventions on each subject have generally been selected as the basis of the analysis. As a result, in a number of instances, countries that are indicated not to meet these standards have enacted laws that are in line with the Conventions they have ratified, which were adopted at an earlier stage in the ILO's history.

The report builds on previous research efforts of the Conditions of Work and Employment Programme, in particular on a recent set of reports devoted to laws on maternity protection,<sup>2</sup> minimum wages<sup>3</sup> and working time.<sup>4</sup> By reviewing legal developments across these fields, this report hopes to build on this work by offering a more comprehensive picture of the regulation of working conditions. In particular, it is designed to situate maternity protection standards at the centre of working conditions policies, in an effort to ensure that work/family conciliation and gender equality are not excluded from the global debates on working conditions.

As will become clear, the report reveals a continuing commitment on the part of national governments to establish legal minimum standards on working conditions. The vast majority of countries included in this report have adopted legal standards on working conditions, most of them at levels designed to ensure a high degree of protection. The report also highlights, however, some marked differences in the form and content of these legal standards in different regions. With respect to minimum wages, for example, there is significant variation in modes of regulation. While a number of industrialized countries specify minimum wages in collective agreements, for example, these standards are more likely to be set out in legislative measures in Africa and Latin America. In the field of working time, there is notable regional variation in the level at which the primary standards are set. Most prominently, the 40-hour week dominates in industrialized countries, Central and Eastern Europe and Africa, while the 48-hour standard is more prominent in Asia and Latin America. Similar regional variation can be found in maternity protection laws, in which the longest leave periods – of 18 weeks or more – are more prominent in industrialized countries and Central and Eastern Europe, and 14-week leave periods are more common in Africa than in other regions.

<sup>2</sup> Ida Öun and Gloria Pardo Trujillo: *Maternity at work: A review of national legislation. Findings from the ILO's Conditions of Work and Employment Database* (Geneva, ILO, 2005).

<sup>3</sup> François Eyraud and Catherine Saget: *The fundamentals of minimum wage fixing* (Geneva, ILO, 2005).

<sup>4</sup> Deirdre McCann: *Working time laws: A global perspective. Findings from the ILO's Conditions of Work and Employment Database* (Geneva, ILO, 2005).

This report contributes to the contemporary international debates on the role and content of labour standards, then, by providing a source of comparative information on domestic legal measures. It also, however, dispels certain myths about working conditions standards that appear to be emerging in some contexts. Most significantly, it contradicts any assumption that the contemporary processes of globalization are involved in a retreat from a commitment to legal minimum labour standards on working conditions.

The report does not, however, permit conclusions to be drawn about the actual working conditions in the countries it covers. Measuring working conditions, and the extent to which they converge with, or diverge from, the domestic and international legal standards, is a necessary part of efforts to ensure decent work in the globalizing economy. Yet this is an element of contemporary working life on which there is very limited data available beyond the industrialized world. To shed light on this subject, the Conditions of Work and Employment Programme has established a Global Monitoring and Analysis (GMA) unit to gather and improve data on working conditions across the world. This report marks the first contribution towards the GMA's research, and will be drawn on in its future work towards exploring the relationship between working conditions and the legal standards that govern them.



# Minimum Wages

Setting minimum wages has been a role for labour regulation since the outset of modern labour law regimes. Today, the regulation of wages remains central to the debates on worker protection, globalization, development and poverty reduction. Minimum wages advance a range of policy goals, including ensuring decent wages, eliminating exploitative working conditions, reducing poverty, combating unfair competition and promoting economic growth. Minimum wages are designated in the laws of almost all countries and at the international level, including in the International Labour Organization's Minimum Wage Fixing Convention, 1970 (No. 131).<sup>5</sup>

This section reviews the minimum wage laws of 103 countries, including 21 industrialized countries, 16 from Central and Eastern Europe, 19 from Asia, 18 from Latin America and 20 from Africa (see the methodologies used in Annex 1 and detailed country information in Annex 2).

Three central features of minimum wage laws are addressed: minimum wage rates, wage-setting mechanisms and the level of the minimum wage.

## Minimum wage rates<sup>6</sup>

### GLOBAL

Almost all countries across the world mandate legal minimum wages<sup>7</sup> (see Graph 1, Table 1 and Map 1).

In over one-third, monthly minimum wage rates are between USD 100 to 499 per month.<sup>8</sup> Monthly wages of at least USD 30 to 99 are found in just under one-third of countries; and slightly less than one-fifth of countries, primarily in western Europe, have a minimum wage of more than USD 1,000 per month.

### REGIONAL

The majority of **industrialized countries** have a minimum wage rate of more than USD 1,000 per month.

In most **Central and Eastern European countries** and two-thirds of countries in **Latin America**, minimum wages are set at USD 100 to 499 per month.

Most **Asian** countries have minimum wages of USD 30 to 99 per month.

In most **African** countries, minimum wage rates are around USD 30, although a number of countries (including Algeria, Morocco and South Africa) have minimum wages of more than USD 100 per month.

<sup>5</sup> Available at [www.ilo.org/ilolex](http://www.ilo.org/ilolex).

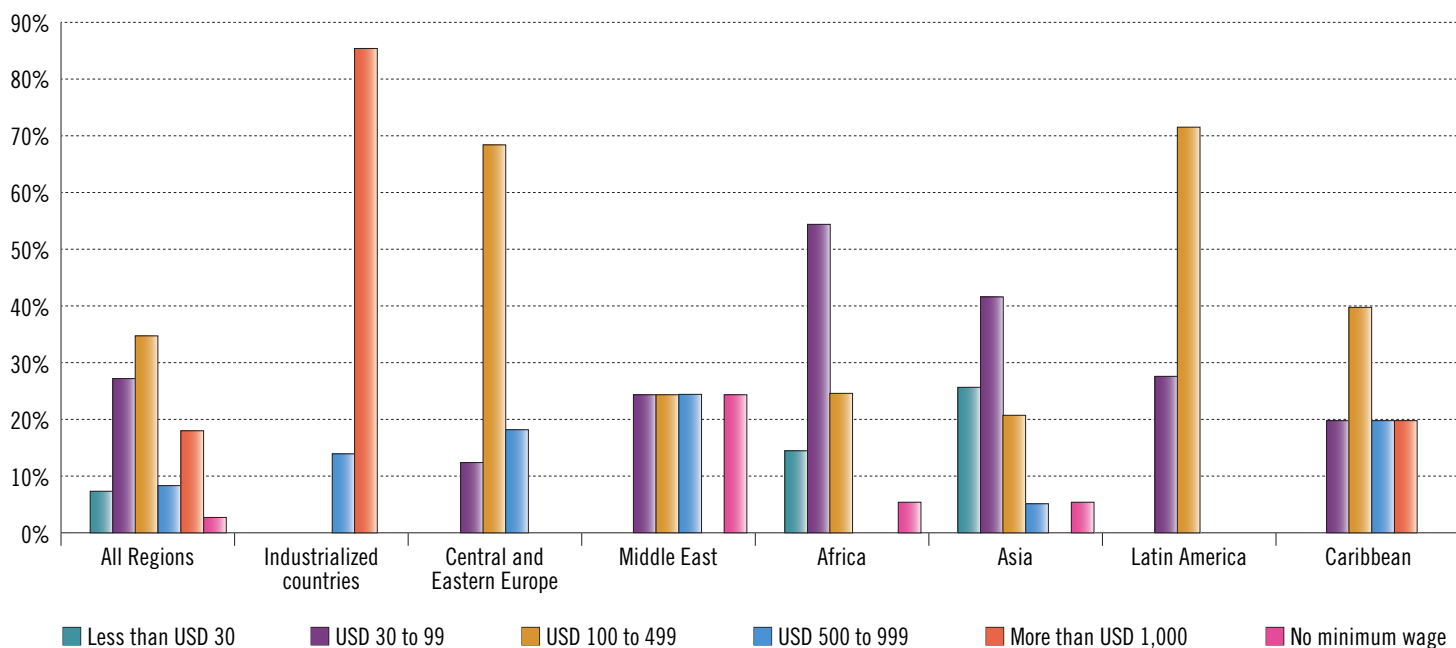
<sup>6</sup> For details on the methodologies used to calculate the minimum wage rates, see Annex 1.

<sup>7</sup> Of the 103 countries covered by this report, only Cape Verde, Saudi Arabia and Singapore do not have minimum wage laws.

<sup>8</sup> Throughout this section, where more than one minimum wage is in operation, the lowest has been selected. See Annex 1 for more details on the report methodology.



**Graph 1: Monthly minimum wages by region (USD), 2006-2007**



**Table 1: Monthly minimum wages by region (USD), 2006-2007**

Region	No minimum wage	Less than USD 30	USD 30 to 99	USD 100 to 499	USD 500 to 1,000	More than USD 1,000
Industrialized countries					Malta, Portugal, Spain	Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States
Central and Eastern Europe			Russian Federation, Ukraine	Albania, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Turkey	Cyprus, Greece, Slovenia	
Asia	Singapore	Bangladesh, Laos, Nepal, Viet Nam, Sri Lanka	Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands	Fiji, India, Philippines, Thailand	Republic of Korea	
Latin America			Bolivia, Brazil, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua	Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela		
Caribbean			Haiti	Belize, Trinidad and Tobago	Bahamas	Dominican Republic
Middle East	Saudi Arabia		Syrian Arab Republic	Lebanon	Israel	
Africa	Cape Verde	Guinea-Bissau, São Tomé and Príncipe, Madagascar	Angola, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Chad, Gabon, Ghana, Lesotho, Senegal, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria	Algeria, South Africa, Tunisia, Morocco, Namibia		

# Minimum wage fixing: Mechanisms

The mechanisms by which minimum wage rates are set can be classified as:

- the government alone;
- the government in consultation with each of the social partners;
- the government on the recommendation of a specialized body;
- a specialized body (usually a bipartite<sup>9</sup> or tripartite<sup>10</sup> body established to determine minimum wage rates);
- collective bargaining.

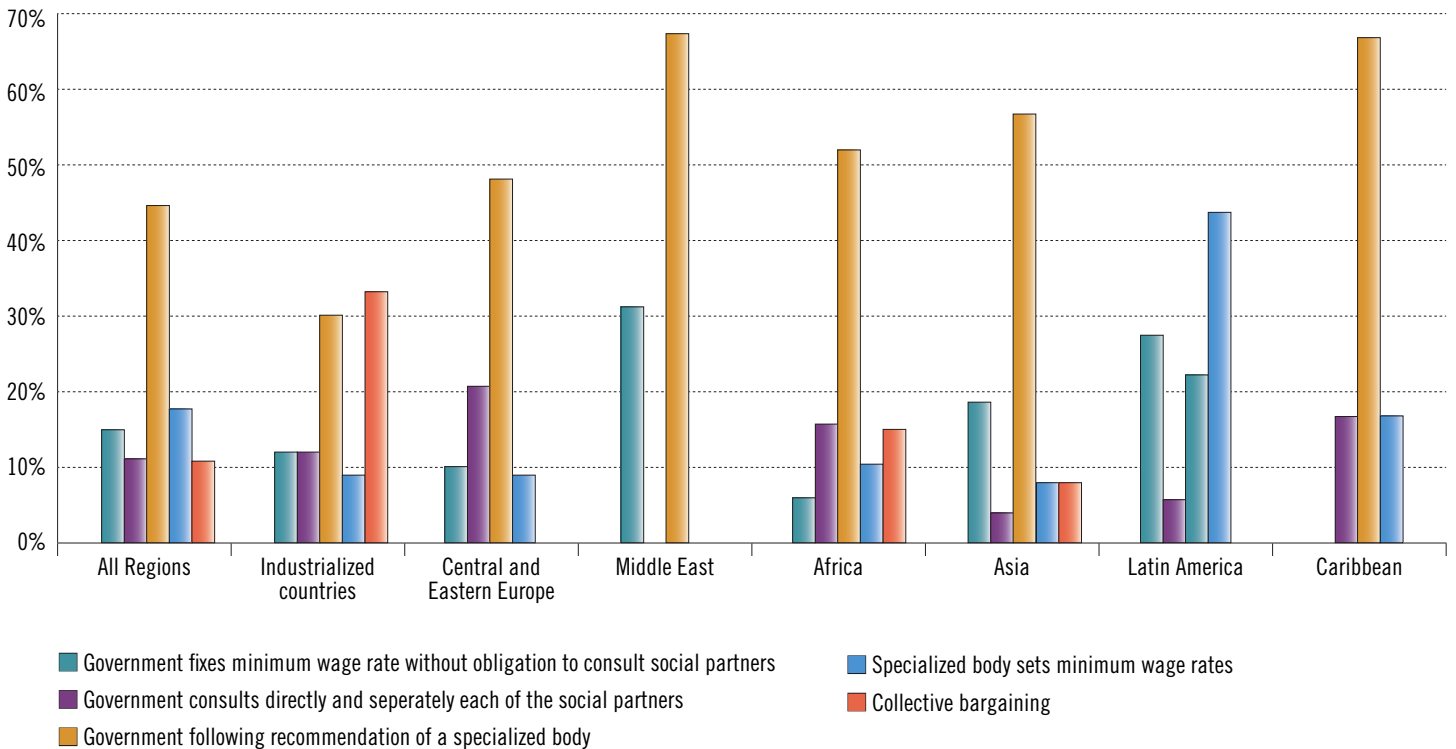
## GLOBAL

In the vast majority of countries, the government plays a central role in setting minimum wage rates. It is set solely by collective bargaining in only nine countries (see Graph 2 and Table 2).

Generally, a single mechanism is relied on to determine minimum wage rates. However, a combination of techniques is used in some countries, including Belgium, India, the Russian Federation, South Africa and the United States.

The most prevalent approach, in more than 40 per cent of countries, is for the minimum wage to be set in consultation with a specialized body.

**Graph 2: Minimum wage-fixing mechanisms by region, 2006-2007**



<sup>9</sup> A bipartite body is composed of employers' and workers' representatives, usually trade unions and employers' associations.

<sup>10</sup> A tripartite body is composed of employers' and workers' representatives together with government representatives.

## REGIONAL

There are no significant regional variations in the mechanisms used to set the minimum wage.

In one-third of **industrialized countries**, the minimum wage is fixed by the government on the recommendation of a specialized body. There are a number of prominent exceptions; in Luxembourg, New Zealand and the United States, for example, there is no obligation on the government to consult the social partners. In contrast, minimum wages are determined solely by the social partners in a

number of countries, including Italy, Germany, Sweden and Switzerland.

In other regions, it is also most common for governments to set minimum wage rates on the recommendation of a specialized body, including most countries in **Asia, the Caribbean, the Middle East and Africa**.

In **Latin America**, tripartite negotiations are common.

**Table 2: Minimum wage-fixing mechanism by region and country, 2006-2007**

Region	Government without consultation	Government consulting the social partners	Government following the recommendation of a specialized body	Specialized body	Collective bargaining
Industrialized countries	Luxembourg, New Zealand, United States*	Austria*, Canada, Spain	France, Ireland, Japan, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, United Kingdom	Australia, Belgium*	Austria*, Belgium*, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Sweden, Switzerland
Central and Eastern Europe	Russian Federation*, Ukraine	Czech Republic, Romania, Spain, Tunisia	Albania, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Russian Federation*, Slovenia	Greece, Poland, Slovakia, Turkey	Cyprus, Greece, Slovenia
Middle East	Israel		Lebanon, Syrian Arab Republic		
Africa	São Tomé and Príncipe	Algeria, Chad, Morocco	Angola, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Gabon, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, South Africa*, Madagascar, Mauritius, Nigeria	Ghana, Mozambique	Senegal, South Africa*, Namibia
Asia	Laos, Pakistan*, Solomon Islands, Viet Nam	Mongolia	Bangladesh*, Cambodia, China, Fiji, India*, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan*, Papua New Guinea, Thailand	Bangladesh*, Philippines	India*, Singapore
Latin America	Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay	Cuba	El Salvador, Guatemala, Panama, Venezuela	Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru	
Caribbean		Bahamas	Belize, Haiti, Trinidad and Tobago	Dominican Republic	

\* Some countries have several types of mechanisms. For more details, see Annex 2.

## Minimum wage fixing: Levels

Minimum wages can be introduced as a single national rate or a range of different rates that vary among sectors and/or occupations.

Between these extremes, a range of approaches are possible. It is possible to identify five levels at which the minimum wage can be set:

- by sector and/or occupation;
- national – single rate;
- national by sector and/or occupation;
- regional – single rate;
- regional by sector and/or occupation.

Minimum wages are often set at the **regional level** in federal systems. In **Canada** and the **United States**, for example, the provincial and state governments have a degree of autonomy in determining minimum wage levels. Although it is not constitutionally a federal

system, minimum wage rates in **China** are also set by region: provincial, regional and municipal governments stipulate separate rates for their respective locales and allowances are made for differences in living standards between regions.

The **Indian** system exhibits both a sectoral and occupational approach at both the **national and regional levels**. The central government in India sets minimum wage rates for 45 occupations, and the regional governments fix minimum wage rates for additional occupations. As a result, there are currently 1,230 occupational and sectoral minimum wage rates in India.

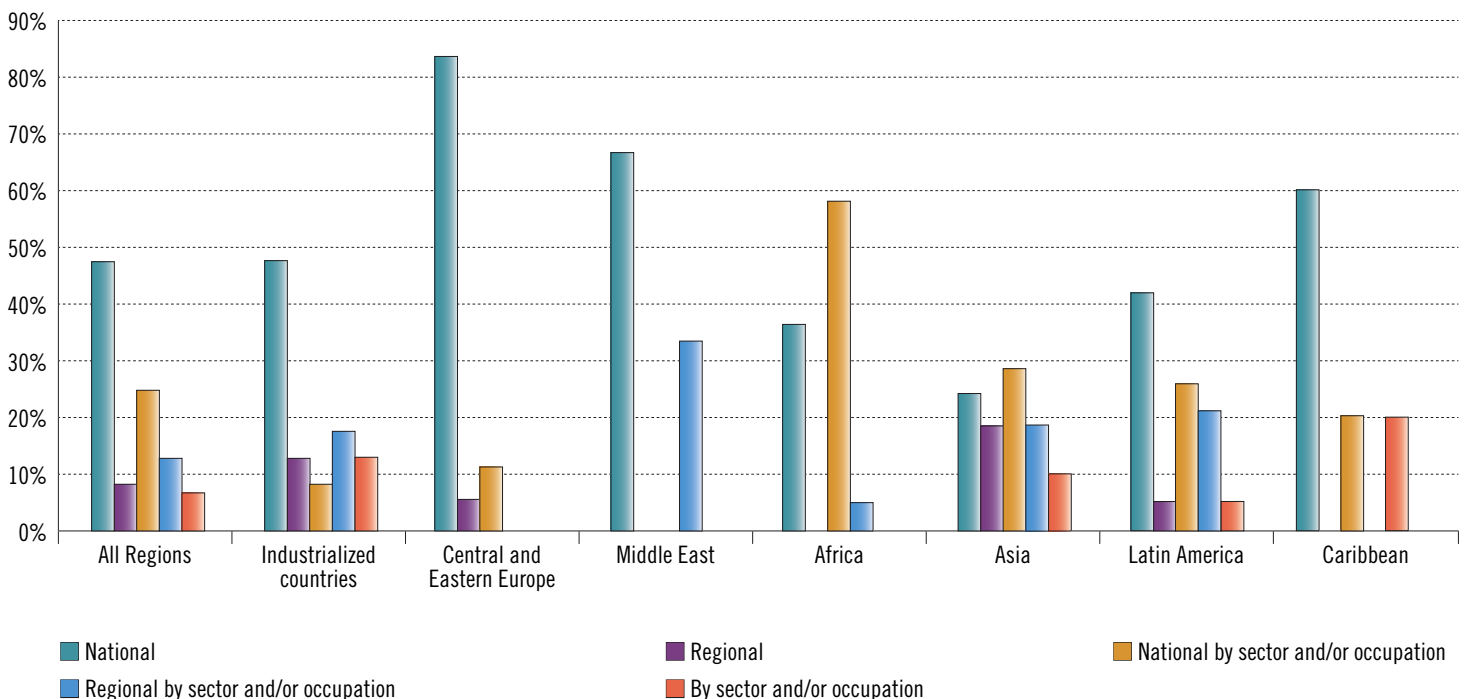
**Sweden** and **Namibia** are examples of countries in which minimum wage rates are set at the **sectoral or occupational levels**. In these countries, almost all wages are established through sectoral agreements.

## GLOBAL

The setting of a single national-level minimum wage is the most prevalent approach across the world. It is used in around 45 per cent of the countries examined in this report (see Graph 3 and Table 3).

In all regions, more than half of minimum wages are fixed only at the national or regional level. They are fixed solely by sector or occupation in less than 10 per cent of countries.

**Graph 3: Minimum wage-fixing levels by region, 2006-2007**



## REGIONAL

More than three-quarters of countries in **Central and Eastern Europe** and around 45 per cent of **industrialized countries** fix the minimum wage at the national level.

In **Africa**, more than half of countries set a minimum wage at the national level by sector and/or occupation, compared to less than a third of **Asian** countries.

No single technique dominates in **Latin America**. The most prevalent approach, among more than one-third of these countries, is to mandate a minimum wage at the national level. A significant number of countries, however – just less than 30 per cent – prescribe sectoral and/or occupational rates at the national level; and around 10 per cent set minimum wages at the sectoral or occupational level.

**Table 3: Minimum wage-fixing levels by country and region, 2006-2007**

Region	National	Regional	National by sector and/or occupation	Regional by sector and/or occupation	By sector and/or occupation
Industrialized countries	Australia, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, New Zealand, Portugal, Spain, United Kingdom, United States	Canada, Japan*, United States	Finland, Iceland	Austria, Germany, Japan*, Switzerland	Belgium, Italy, Sweden*
Central and Eastern Europe	Albania, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Turkey, Ukraine, Russian Federation*	Russian Federation*	Slovakia, Czech Republic		
Middle East	Israel, Lebanon			Syrian Arab Republic	
Africa	Algeria, Angola, Burkina Faso, Gabon, Ghana, São Tomé and Príncipe, Nigeria		Botswana, Chad, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho*, Senegal, Tunisia, Madagascar, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Tunisia	South Africa	Namibia
Asia	Republic of Korea, Laos, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands	China, Thailand, India	Bangladesh, Fiji, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, Viet Nam*	Cambodia, Indonesia, Pakistan, Philippines	India
Latin America	Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Peru, Uruguay	Mexico	Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua	Guatemala, Panama*, Venezuela*	Mexico, Paraguay
Caribbean	Bahamas, Haiti, Trinidad and Tobago		Belize		Dominican Republic*

\* Some countries have an additional component; for example, size of company, tax area, etc. For more details, see Annex 2.

# Working hours and holidays

**L**imiting working hours is essential for protecting workers' health and safety and ensuring that they have sufficient time available to devote to their families and other responsibilities and interests. Working hours have been addressed by domestic labour laws since the 19<sup>th</sup> century and were the subject of the International Labour Organization's first Convention in 1919.<sup>11</sup> This element of working life remains central to contemporary debates on various elements of social and economic policy, including on improving worker protection, advancing productivity and facilitating work/life balance.

This chapter examines the working hours laws of 109 countries, including 24 industrialized countries, 15 from Central and Eastern Europe, 14 from Asia, 18 from Latin America and 29 from Africa (see the methodologies used in Annex 1 and detailed country information in Annex 3).

Three features of working time laws are addressed in this chapter: weekly hours limits, overtime limits and annual leave.

## Weekly hours limits

The primary technique for curbing working hours is to mandate limits on “normal hours” (the hours that can be worked each week before overtime payments become due). There are two primary standards: the 48-hour and 40-hour weekly limits.

### GLOBAL

Almost all countries have limits on weekly working hours (see Graph 4, Table 4 and Map 2).<sup>12</sup>

The 40-hour week is the dominant weekly hours standard. More than 40 per cent of countries have a limit of 40 hours or less. Among the others, there is an almost even divide between those that have 42- to 45-hour limits and those that adopt the 48-hour week.

### REGIONAL

There are substantial regional differences in legislated weekly hours limits. The majority of **industrialized countries** adopt a 40-hour limit, including half of the EU-15, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Norway and the United States. Two countries have a lower threshold: Belgium (38 hours) and France (35 hours).

In **Central and Eastern Europe**, the 40-hour limit is also prevalent. It features in the labour laws of almost all of these countries. The exceptions are Cyprus (38 hours), Hungary (38 hours) and Turkey (45 hours).

<sup>11</sup> Hours of Work (Industry) Convention, 1919 (No. 1), available at [www.ilo.org/ilolex](http://www.ilo.org/ilolex).

<sup>12</sup> Of the 109 countries covered by this chapter, six do not have a universal legislated weekly hours limit at the national level: Australia (the limit is 38 hours “and reasonable additional hours”), India, Jamaica, Nigeria, Pakistan and Seychelles. In addition, five European countries (Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Malta and the United Kingdom) have no limit on normal hours, instead adopting a 48-hour maximum limit on total working hours, including overtime.

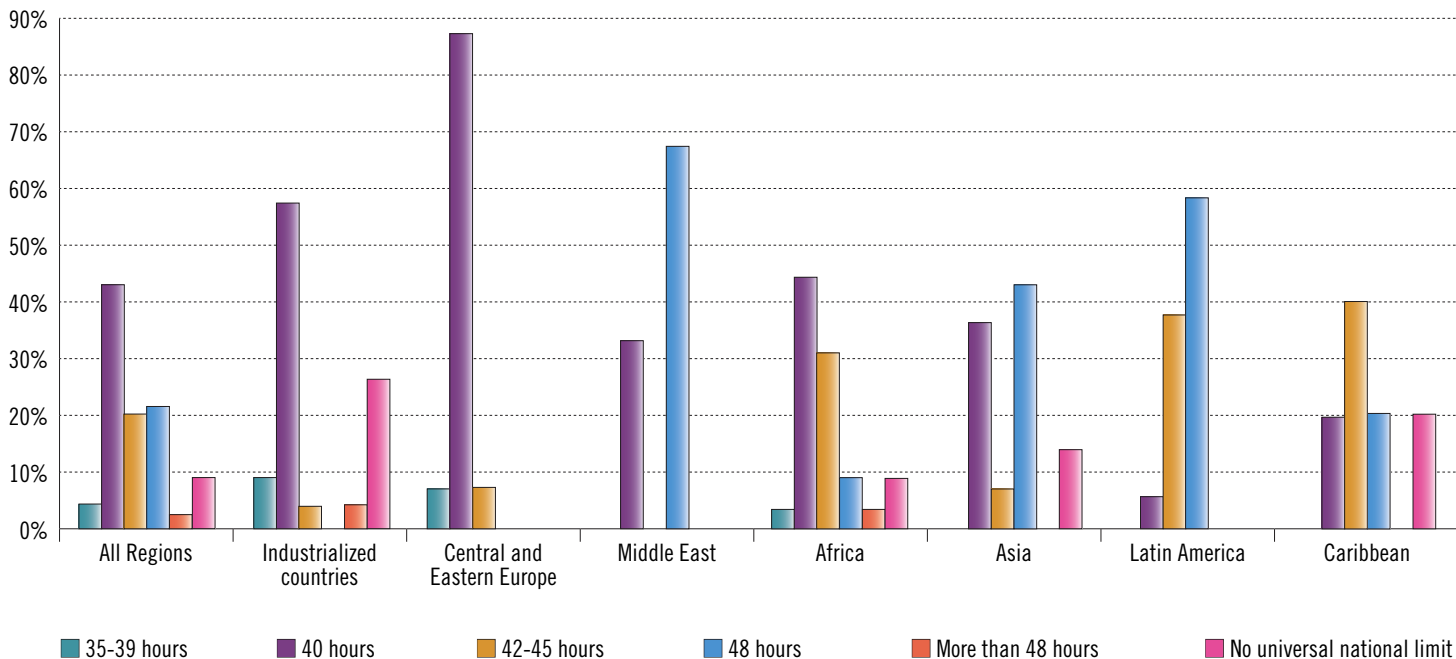
In **Asia**, the 48-hour limit is also dominant, although not to the same extent as in Latin America. More than half of the Asian countries that have a universal weekly hours limit adopt this standard. The remainder of countries in this region have enacted the 40-hour week, with the exception of Singapore (44 hours).

**African** labour legislation also tends to favour the 40-hour week, with just less than half of these

countries having a limit of 40 hours or less. Most of the other countries in this region have weekly hours limits within the 42- to 45-hour range.

In **Latin America**, the 48-hour standard is more prominent than in other regions. It is the legal standard in the majority of these countries, with limits in the 42- to 45-hour range being the next most prevalent standard.

**Graph 4: Normal weekly hours limits by region, 2006-2007**



**Table 4: Normal weekly hours limits by country and region, 2006-2007**

Region	No universal national limit	35-39 hours	40 hours	42-45 hours	48 hours	More than 48 hours
Industrialized countries	Australia, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Malta, United Kingdom	Belgium, France	Austria, Canada, Finland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, United States	Switzerland*		Switzerland**
Central and Eastern Europe		Hungary	Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Croatia, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia	Turkey		
Asia	India, Pakistan		China, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Republic of Korea, Mongolia	Singapore	Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Viet Nam	
Latin America			Ecuador	Belize, Brazil, Chile, El Salvador, Honduras, Uruguay***, Venezuela	Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay****	
Caribbean	Jamaica		Bahamas	Cuba, Dominican Republic	Haiti	
Middle East			Egypt		Jordan, Lebanon	
Africa	Nigeria, Seychelles, Zimbabwe	Chad	Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Togo	Angola, Burundi, Cape Verde, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Morocco, Namibia, South Africa, Republic of Tanzania*****	Djibouti, Mozambique, Tunisia	Kenya

\* Workers in industrial enterprises, offices, technical posts and sales staff in large commercial enterprises

\*\* All other workers

\*\*\* Commerce

\*\*\*\* Industry

\*\*\*\*\* Mainland and Zanzibar

## Overtime limits

Most labour laws place an upper limit on overtime hours (beyond the weekly hours limit). These laws limit overtime by:

- placing direct limits on overtime hours (usually on a daily, weekly or annual basis, or as a combination of these limits);
- limiting total working hours; or
- specifying minimum daily rest periods.

See Annex 3 for more details on individual countries.

This section compares the limits on weekly overtime hours, irrespective of their form (see Annex 1 for the methodology).



## GLOBAL

More than two-thirds of the countries have some kind of maximum limit on weekly working hours. The most common approach, in more than one-third

of countries that have legal maximums, is to specify a limit of between 48 and 60 hours (see Graph 5 and Table 5).

## REGIONAL

There are significant differences between regions with respect to maximum hours limits (see Graph 5 and Table 5).

The lowest limits are found in **industrialized countries**. Just under one-half of these countries have a 48-hour upper limit, while five (Austria, France, Netherlands, Spain and Sweden) have limits below 48 hours.

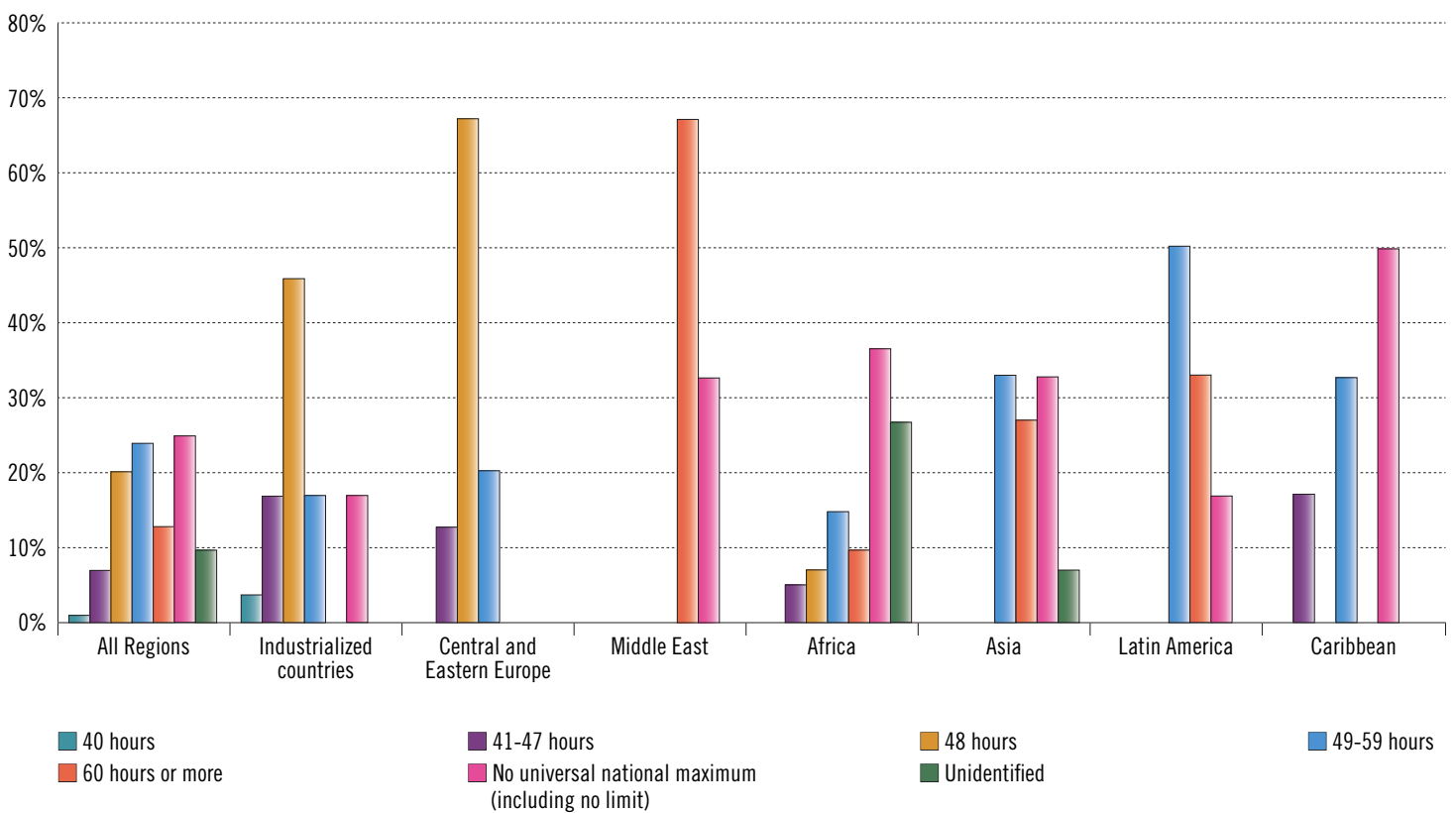
Among countries that have universal working time laws, only Australia, Japan, New Zealand and the United States do not impose a maximum limit.

The majority of countries in **Central and Eastern Europe** have a 48-hour maximum weekly limit.

Maximum hours limits are set at similar levels in **Asia** and **Latin America**. In both regions, all countries that have maximum limits set them at 48 hours or more.

The dominant approach among **African** countries is to have no maximum limit. Among those that have ceilings on overtime hours, most have limits of more than 48 hours, including four with limits of 60 hours or more.

**Graph 5: Maximum weekly hours limits by region, 2006-2007**



**Table 5: Maximum weekly hours by country and region, 2006-2007**

Region	No universal national limit	40 hours	41-47 hours	48 hours	49-59 hours	60 hours or more
Industrialized countries	Australia, Japan, New Zealand, United States	Sweden	Austria*, France, Netherlands, Spain*	Canada, Denmark, Finland*, Germany*, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Norway, Portugal, United Kingdom	Belgium, Ireland, Italy, Switzerland	
Central and Eastern Europe			Bulgaria, Russian Federation*	Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia*, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia	Croatia*, Macedonia, Turkey	
Asia	Cambodia, India, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Philippines				China*, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Laos*, Viet Nam*	Malaysia*, Mongolia*, Singapore*, Thailand
Latin America	Belize, El Salvador, Peru				Argentina*, Chile*, Ecuador, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay*, Uruguay, Venezuela	Bolivia*, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica*, Guatemala*, Honduras*
Caribbean	Bahamas, Grenada, Jamaica		Cuba		Dominican Republic, Haiti	
Middle East	Jordan					Egypt, Lebanon*
Africa	Burkina Faso, Burundi, Republic of the Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Madagascar, Mali*, Mauritania*, Morocco, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, Togo, Zimbabwe		Cape Verde*, Guinea-Bissau*	Algeria*, Angola*, Niger	Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Republic of Tanzania (mainland)	Benin, Cameroon, Gabon*, Tunisia

\* On average. See Annex 3.

# Annual holidays

In addition to limiting weekly hours, working time laws generally also provide for minimum holidays (or “annual leave”) periods, to allow workers to take longer periods of rest. These legislated standards are

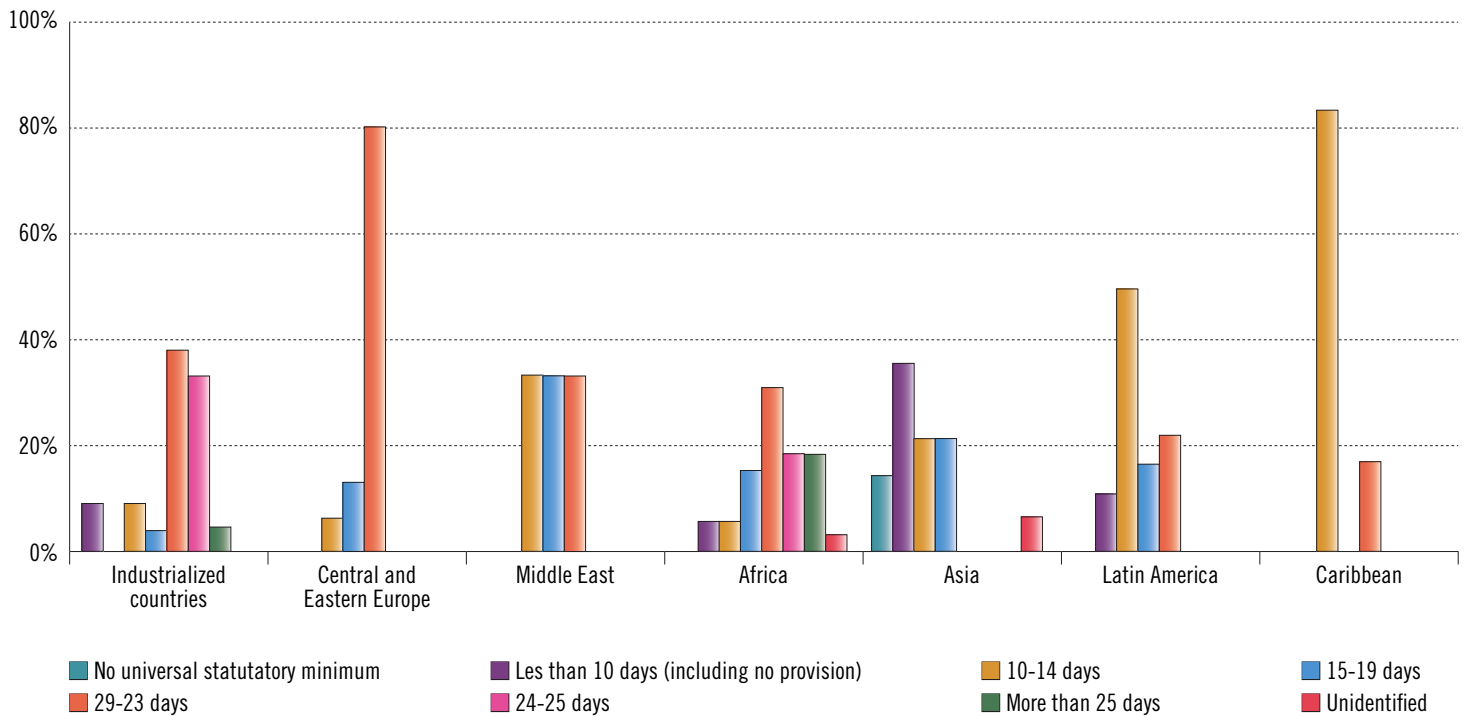
minimums and can be extended by workplace policies. They are also in addition to days that are designated as public holidays.

## GLOBAL

Almost all countries extend to their workers a right to a minimum period of annual holidays (see Graph 6 and Table 6).

The most common approach is to extend a right to 20 to 23 days of holiday per year, a standard found in one-third of countries. The second most prominent range of entitlements, in around one-fifth of countries, is ten to 14 days of leave.

**Graph 6: Minimum annual leave by region, 2006-2007**



## REGIONAL

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Among **industrialized countries**, annual holiday entitlements range from ten days in Japan to 30 days in Denmark. The most prevalent approach is to extend a right to between 20 and 23 days of leave, followed by statutory entitlements of between 24 and 25 days. Only Australia and the United States have no statutory minimum leave period at the national level.

In **Central and Eastern European countries**, annual leave entitlements are less diverse. All these countries require 20 days of vacation, with the exception of Croatia and Macedonia (18 days) and Turkey (12 days).

**Asian** countries have the least extensive annual holiday provisions, generally requiring 15 days of leave or less.

**Latin America** has the same range of annual leave entitlements as the African region, from six days in Bolivia and Mexico to 30 days in Panama. Average leave entitlement is lower, however. Half of these countries provide for annual leave of ten to 14 days, and only three have adopted a right to annual leave of more than 20 days.

There is greater diversity in the **African** region, where statutory minimum leave ranges from six days [Nigeria, Republic of Tanzania (Zanzibar)] to 30 days (Algeria, Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Togo). One-third of African countries provide for annual leave of 20 to 23 days, and many prescribe minimum leave periods above this level.

**Table 6: Minimum annual leave by country and region, 2006-2007**

Region	No universal statutory minimum	Less than 10 days	10-14 days	15-19 days	20-23 days	24-25 days	More than 25 days
Industrialized countries	Australia, United States		Canada, Japan	New Zealand	Belgium, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom	Austria, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Malta, Norway, Sweden	Denmark
Central and Eastern Europe			Turkey	Croatia, Macedonia	Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia		
Asia	India, Pakistan	Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand	Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Viet Nam	Cambodia, Laos, Mongolia			
Latin America		Bolivia, Mexico	Argentina, Belize, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Paraguay	Guatemala, Chile, Venezuela	Brazil, Peru, Uruguay		Panama
Caribbean			Bahamas, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica		Cuba		
Middle East			Jordan	Lebanon	Egypt		
Africa		Nigeria, Republic of Tanzania (Zanzibar)	Democratic Republic of the Congo, Tunisia	Cameroon, Mauritania, Morocco, Rwanda, South Africa	Angola, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cape Verde, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Seychelles, Republic of Tanzania (mainland), Zimbabwe	Benin, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Namibia, Senegal	Algeria, Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Togo



## Maternity protection

The protection of pregnant workers and mothers is central to efforts to advance the rights, health and employment of women. Maternity protection initiatives help to ensure the well-being of women and children, contributing to both the reduction of child mortality rates and the improvement of maternal health. Maternity protection measures advance gender equality, not only by ensuring that women can take time-off to have children and return to their jobs without discrimination, but also by requiring the development of gender-sensitive social security schemes. These measures also contribute to efforts to promote the better conciliation of work and family life, a policy objective that has become more prominent in recent decades. For these and other reasons, maternity protection was among the earliest elements of national labour laws and was included among the first set of standards adopted by the International Labour Organization in 1919.

This chapter focuses on legal rights to maternity leave – the period of leave taken by mothers on the birth of a child.<sup>13</sup> This standard has been selected due to its

role at the heart of maternity protection laws and its presence in the labour laws of almost all countries. Inevitably, however, the chapter omits other dimensions of maternity protection that are also vital to advancing the policy objectives outlined above, not least the prevention of exposure to health and safety hazards, entitlement to breastfeeding breaks, and protection against discrimination and dismissal.

The chapter reviews the maternity protection laws of 167 countries, including 24 industrialized countries, 22 from Central and Eastern Europe, 27 from Asia, 18 from Latin America and 49 from Africa (see the methodologies used in Annex 1 and detailed country information in Annex 4).

This comparison takes into account three aspects of maternity leave laws: the minimum duration of leave, the amount of benefits available during the leave, and the source of funding of these benefits.

### Duration of maternity leave

A central element of maternity protection legislation is the duration of leave. International instruments embody the primary standards that are adopted in domestic regimes. The Maternity Protection Convention, 1919 (No. 3), and Maternity Protection Convention (Revised), 1952 (No. 103), mandate a 12-week leave period. The more recent Maternity

<sup>13</sup> Maternity leave is one of various forms of family leave. It is often accompanied by parental leave, which is available to both parents for more extensive periods.

Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183), provides for a leave period of not less than 14 weeks, while its accompanying Recommendation (No. 191) encourages the extension of this leave period to at least 18 weeks.<sup>14</sup> The analysis in this report is framed

around these 14-week and 18-week standards, although it is worth noting that Conventions Nos. 3 and 103 have been ratified by a significant number of countries and that the 12-week standard they embody remains influential.

## GLOBAL

All of the countries included in this chapter have enacted statutory rights to a period of maternity leave (see Graph 7, Table 7 and Map 3).

Slightly more than 50 per cent of these countries mandate leave of a duration of less than 14 weeks, while one-fifth provide for leave of 18 weeks' duration.

## REGIONAL

Among **industrialized countries**, just over 40 per cent provide for maternity leave of 18 weeks or more, while just less than 40 per cent extend a right to 14 weeks of leave. Only the United States has statutory maternity leave of less than 14 weeks.

central Asian countries, which provide for maternity leave of at least 18 weeks.

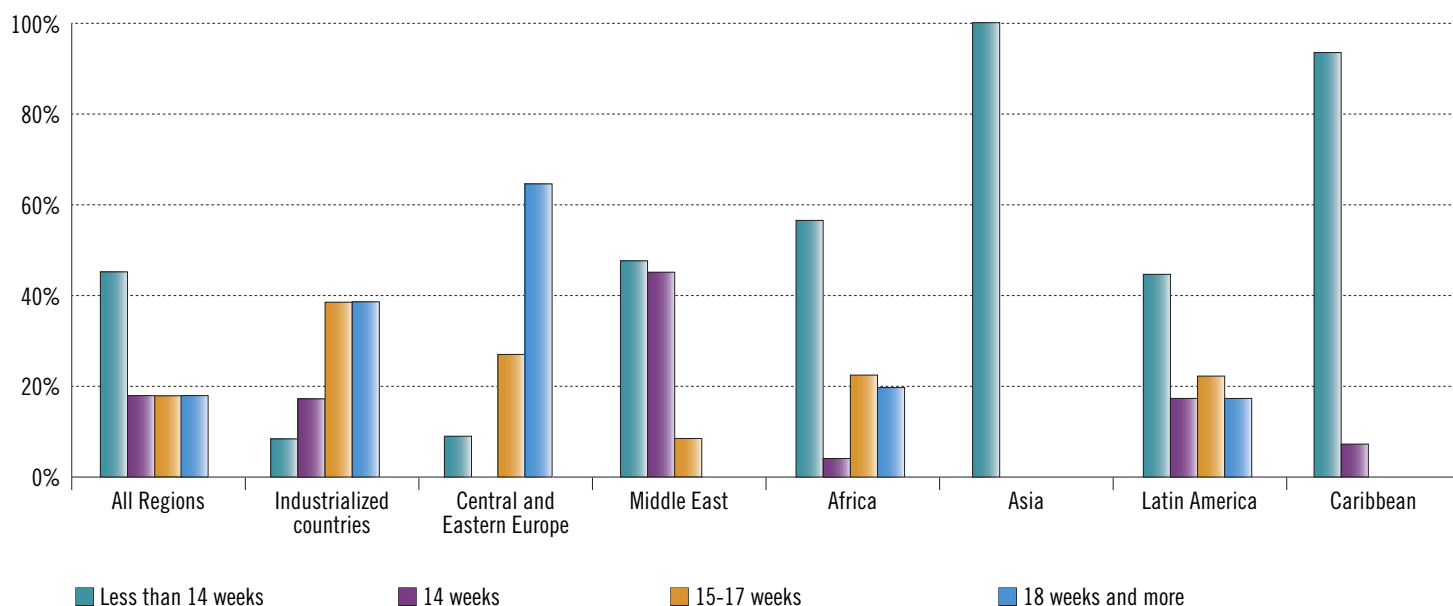
The vast majority of countries in **Central and Eastern Europe** require maternity leave of 18 weeks or more.

In **Latin America**, the majority of countries provide a right to maternity leave of less than 14 weeks.<sup>15</sup> Leave periods of 18 weeks are required in Chile, Cuba and Venezuela.

The primary standard in **Asia** is a minimum period of maternity leave of less than 14 weeks, where the laws of around two-thirds of countries embody standards in this range. The most prominent exceptions are the

More than half of **African** countries mandate a minimum maternity leave period of less than 14 weeks, while slightly less than half require leave of 14 weeks or more. None of these countries specify a leave period of 18 weeks or more.

**Graph 7: Minimum duration of maternity leave by region, 2006-2007**



<sup>14</sup> Available at [www.ilo.org/ilolex](http://www.ilo.org/ilolex).

<sup>15</sup> A number of these countries have ratified Conventions Nos. 3 and 103 and embody a 12-week standard. See Table 7.

**Table 7: Length of maternity leave by country and region, 2006-2007**

Region	Less than 14 weeks	14 weeks	15 to 17 weeks	18 weeks or more
Industrialized countries	United States	Germany, Japan, Malta, New Zealand	Austria, Belgium, Canada, France, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland	Australia, Denmark, Finland, Iceland*, Ireland, Italy, Norway, San Marino, Sweden**, United Kingdom
Central and Eastern Europe	Bosnia and Herzegovina***, Macedonia***		Cyprus, Greece, Latvia, Poland, Slovenia, Turkey	Albania, Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Ukraine
Asia	Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Kiribati, Republic of Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka***, Thailand, Vanuatu		Mongolia, Viet Nam	Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan
Latin America	Argentina***, Bolivia***, Colombia***, Ecuador***, El Salvador, Guatemala***, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua***, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay	Panama	Brazil, Costa Rica	Chile, Cuba, Venezuela
Caribbean	Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago	Belize		
Middle East	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, United Arab Emirates			
Africa	Angola, Botswana, Burundi, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, São Tomé and Príncipe, Sudan, Swaziland, Republic of Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe	Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Gabon, Guinea, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Senegal, Seychelles, Somalia, Togo	Republic of the Congo, South Africa	

\* Icelandic legislation requires nine months of parental leave, of which three months are to be taken by the mother, three by the father, and the additional three-month period to be taken by either parent or shared.

\*\* Swedish law requires parental leave of 480 days in total, with each parent required to take a minimum of 14 weeks.

\*\*\* Country has ratified Convention No. 3 or Convention No. 103 (12-week standard).



## Maternity leave benefits: Amount

The value of a period of maternity leave depends not only on its duration, but also on the level of benefits available during the leave. Two elements of these benefits are significant:

- the proportion of the worker's earnings to be paid; and
- the period over which they are to be paid.

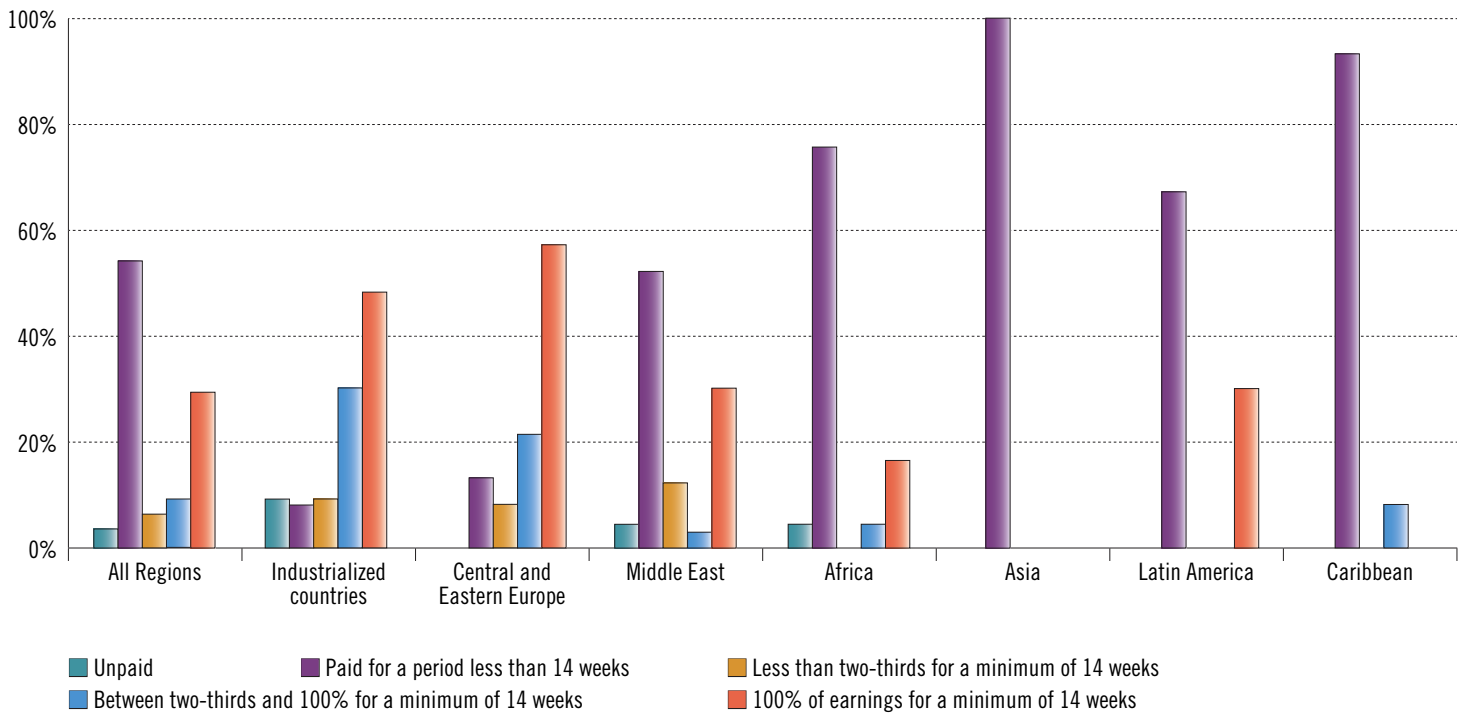
In this chapter, domestic legal provisions on maternity benefits are classified in line with the approach of Convention No. 183, which requires that at least two-thirds of a worker's prior earnings be paid for at least 14 weeks. It should be noted that this does not imply that countries that do not meet this standard are in breach of international standards. In particular, Convention No. 103 requires that two-thirds of prior earnings be provided throughout the 12-week maternity leave period that it mandates.<sup>16</sup>

### GLOBAL

Across the world, the dominant legal standard is that maternity leave be paid for less than 14 weeks. This is the approach adopted in more than half of the countries covered by this report. The second most

prevalent standard is that of full pay for at least 14 weeks, which is found in just less than 30 per cent of countries (see Graph 8 and Table 8).

**Graph 8: Maternity leave benefits by region, 2006-2007**



<sup>16</sup> See also Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102).

## REGIONAL

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Among **industrialized countries**, the dominant standard is full wages for at least 14 weeks in 46 per cent of these countries. Just less than 30 per cent require that at least two-thirds, but less than 100 per cent, of a worker's wages are paid during this period. Statutory maternity leave is unpaid in Australia and the United States.

The same standard dominates in **Central and Eastern European** countries, more than half of which require maternity benefits equal to the worker's full earnings for a 14-week period.

In contrast, in **Asia**, the most prevalent approach is for full pay to be required for less than 14 weeks, an

approach adopted in three-quarters of these countries. The central Asian countries and Viet Nam require full pay for 14 weeks.

Two-thirds of **Latin American** countries mandate full pay for less than 14 weeks, while the remaining countries specify this amount for at least a 14-week period.

In **Africa**, the most common approach is also to require full pay for less than 14 weeks, which is the standard in more than half of these countries. A further 30 per cent of countries provide for full pay during a 14-week period.

**Table 8: Maternity leave benefits by country and region, 2006-2007**

Region	Unpaid	Full pay for less than 14 weeks	Less than two-thirds pay for a minimum of 14 weeks	At least two-thirds but less than 100% for 14 weeks	Full pay for 14 weeks or more
Industrialized countries	Australia, United States	Iceland, Malta	Canada, Japan	Belgium, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom	Austria, Denmark, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, San Marino, Spain
Central and Eastern Europe		Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Turkey	Hungary, Slovakia	Albania, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Romania	Belarus, Croatia, Estonia, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Russian Federation, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia, Ukraine
Asia	Papua New Guinea	Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Kiribati, Republic of Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Thailand		Mongolia	Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam
Latin America		Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay			Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Panama, Venezuela
Caribbean		Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago		Belize	
Middle East		Afghanistan, Bahrain, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, United Arab Emirates, Yemen			
Africa	Lesotho, Swaziland	Angola, Botswana, Burundi, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, São Tomé and Príncipe, Seychelles, Sudan, United Republic of Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe	Central African Republic, Chad, Djibouti, Niger, Somalia, South Africa	Côte d'Ivoire	Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Comoros, Republic of the Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Guinea, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Senegal, Togo

## Maternity leave benefits: Source

The source of funding for maternity leave benefits is of some significance, given the concern that placing this obligation exclusively on individual employers could undermine the protection available to women. The earlier international standards require that these benefits be provided from public funds or a system of insurance,<sup>17</sup> although Convention No. 183 permits individual liability where the employer has specifically agreed, or where this approach is agreed at the national level by the government and the social partners.<sup>18</sup>

Systems for funding maternity leave can be classified as taking three forms:

- employer-funded (employers are solely responsible);
- social insurance or other public funds; or
- mixed systems (contributions from both employers and public funds, e.g. the social security system funds the benefits to a designated ceiling and the employer pays an additional amount to match the worker's previous earnings).

### GLOBAL

Half of the countries covered by this report rely entirely on social insurance or other public funds to finance maternity leave benefits, while in just over

one-quarter, maternity leave is funded solely by employers. Around one-fifth of countries have a mixed system (see Graph 9 and Table 9).

### REGIONAL

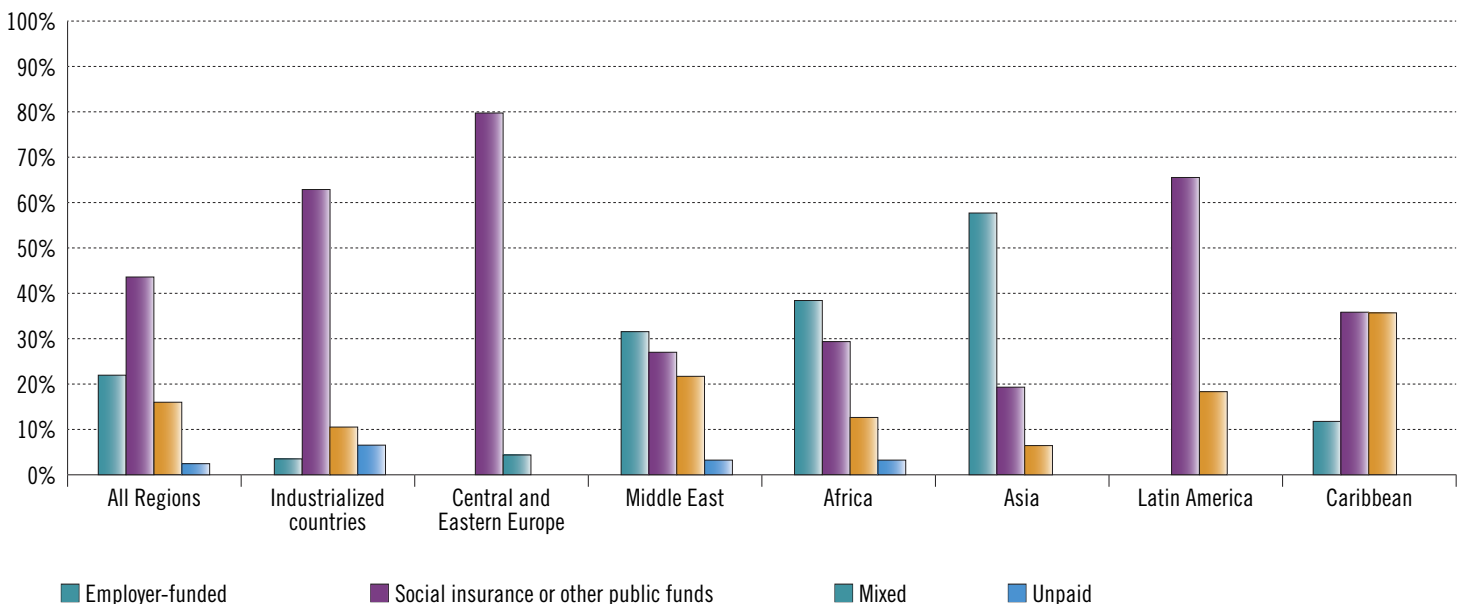
There are marked regional differences in the source of maternity leave benefits.

The vast majority of **industrialized countries** draw only on social insurance or other public funds.

This system is also adopted in almost all countries in **Central and Eastern Europe**.

Around 45 per cent of **Asian** countries require employers to fund maternity benefits, while just over one-third make these payments from social insurance or other public funds.

**Graph 9: Source of maternity leave benefits by region, 2006-2007**



<sup>17</sup> Maternity Protection Convention, 1919 (No. 3), Article 3(c); Maternity Protection Convention (Revised), 1952 (No. 103), Article 4(4). Both Conventions are available at [www.ilo.org/ilolex](http://www.ilo.org/ilolex).

<sup>18</sup> Article 8.

In more than three-quarters of **Latin American** countries, maternity benefits are drawn from social security systems or others funds, while the remainder have mixed systems.

In more than one-third of countries in **Africa**, maternity benefits are financed exclusively by employers, while just less than one-third are paid wholly from social insurance or other public funds. Around one-fifth of these countries have a mixed system.

**Table 9: Source of maternity leave benefits by country and region, 2006-2007**

Region	Unpaid	Employer-funded	Social insurance or other public funds	Mixed system
Industrialized countries	Australia, United States	Malta	Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, San Marino, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland	Germany, Japan, United Kingdom
Central and Eastern Europe			Albania, Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Turkey, Ukraine	Greece
Africa	Lesotho, Swaziland	Botswana, Comoros, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe	Algeria, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Namibia, Niger, Senegal, Seychelles, South Africa, Tunisia	Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, São Tomé and Príncipe, United Republic of Tanzania, Togo
Asia	Papua New Guinea	Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Fiji, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka	Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Mongolia, Myanmar, Philippines, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam	India, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Thailand
Middle East		Afghanistan, Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, United Arab Emirates, Yemen	Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Israel	Lebanon
Latin America			Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, El Salvador, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela	Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras
Caribbean		Haiti, Jamaica	Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Guyana, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Bahamas, Belize, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Trinidad and Tobago

# Annex 1

## Methodology

### GENERAL

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#### Conditions of work and employment database

This report draws on the ILO's Database of Conditions of Work and Employment, an online database containing information on working conditions laws from all regions. The database is available at [www.ilo.org/travail/database](http://www.ilo.org/travail/database)

#### Country coverage

The report covers 168 countries in total: 103 in Chapter One (minimum wages); 109 in Chapter Two (working hours and holidays); and 167 in Chapter Three (maternity protection). Annexes 2 to 4 list the countries included in each chapter.

#### Labour law coverage

Chapter One (minimum wages) contains information on both legislation and collective agreements.

Chapters Two (working hours and holidays) and Three (maternity protection) are confined to legislation. For the purposes of this report, labour laws have been classified as:

- universal: laws that are in principle applicable to all workers. These laws usually contain exceptions for specific categories of workers, sectors or occupations.
- national level: the research for Chapters Two (working hours and holidays) and Three (maternity protection) covers only legislation at the national level.

It does not include state or provincial laws. Chapter One (minimum wages) includes information on state and provincial laws.

In federal systems, the federal law has been used.

### MINIMUM WAGES (CHAPTER ONE)

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#### Minimum wage rates

For comparative purposes, minimum wage rates have been converted into US dollars. As a result, no account is taken of the purchasing power of the minimum wage in each country.

The minimum wage is calculated on a monthly basis and 2007 exchange rates were used.

Minimum wage rates are calculated on the assumption that an individual works five days a week, 40 hours a week and 4.33 weeks a month.

#### Multiple minimum wage rates

For countries with multiple minimum wages, the lowest rate has been selected. This is usually the minimum wage rate applicable to unskilled adult workers.

Where the minimum wage is set at a regional level, the most economically significant region has been selected, e.g. Shanghai (China), Ontario (Canada).

Where different minimum wages rates apply to agricultural and industrial workers, the industrial sector has been selected.

Where different minimum wage rates apply to probation periods (e.g. a lower rate for the first six months of service), the post-probation rate has been selected.

Where minimum wage rates vary by age (i.e. lower rates for young workers), the adult rate has been selected.

Where minimum wage rates vary by the size of the firm (e.g. lower rates for firms with less than 20 workers), the rate applicable to the smallest firm size has been selected.

## WORKING HOURS AND HOLIDAYS (CHAPTER TWO)

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### Exceptions

The normal and overtime hours limits identified in Chapter Two are general limits and can be subject to a variety of exceptions or exclusions, e.g. for specific occupations or the performance of certain tasks.

### Annual leave

In this report, statutory annual leave periods are expressed in working days and are calculated on the basis of a five-day working week.

In the national laws, annual leave is expressed in a range of ways, most often as working days or as calendar (or consecutive) days.

### Working days

Where the leave period is expressed in working days and a five-day working week applies (e.g. France), the figure in the legislation is used.

Where a six-day working week applies, the leave provision is converted into a five-day week. For example, the leave period of 30 working days required by Austrian legislation is expressed in Table 6 and Annex 3 as 25 working days.

### Calendar (or consecutive) days

Where the leave period is expressed as calendar days (or, more often, calendar weeks) or consecutive days, it has been converted into the equivalent number of working days. For example, the leave period of 30 calendar days required by Spanish legislation is expressed in Table 6 and Annex 3 as 22 days.

### Other techniques

For jurisdictions in which rights to leave are accrued according to the number of days worked, the leave period is calculated according to the 250-day year of the five-day workweek. For example, the “one day off for every 12 working days” formula of the Zimbabwean Labour Code is expressed in Table 6 and Annex 3 as 21 days.

## MATERNITY PROTECTION (CHAPTER THREE)

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### Maternity leave

The comparison of maternity leave periods is based on the methodology used for annual leave provisions (see above).

### Maternity benefits

Maternity leave benefits are expressed in this report as a percentage of the worker’s earnings immediately prior to the leave period.

In a number of countries, the benefit entitlement decreases across the leave period; for example, maternity benefits are mandated throughout the entire leave period in Thailand, but decrease from 100 per cent to 50 per cent.

In a number of countries, a flat-rate monthly benefit is required, regardless of prior earnings (e.g. El Salvador, Somalia, Spain). Since these benefits are usually less than the minimum wage, these countries have been classified as requiring less than two-thirds of full pay.

# Annex 2

## Minimum wage laws, 2006-2007

Country	Minimum wage in local currency	Monthly minimum wage in US dollars*	Minimum wage-fixing mechanism	Minimum wage-fixing level	Excluded workers
<b>INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES</b>					
Australia	511.86 Australian dollars per week (2,216.35 per month)	\$1,908.64 per month	Specialized body	National	Data not available
Austria	€1,366 per month	\$1,868.67 per month (geriatric care)	Government in certain sectors and collective agreements in others. Collective agreements dominate.	Regional, by sector and occupation	Homeworkers, agriculture workers, workers in the public sector
Belgium	€1,283.34 per month	\$1,755.60 per month (private sector)	Specialized body in the private sector and collective bargaining in certain sectors	Regional, by sector and by occupation	None
Canada	8.52 Canadian dollars per hour (1,499.52 per month)	\$1,499.52 per month (Ontario)	Provincial governments	Regional	Agriculture workers
Finland	€7.07 per hour (1,224.52 per month)	\$1,543.52 per month (unskilled electrical worker in metalworking sector)	Collective bargaining	National, by sector and occupation. The collective agreement for electrical workers in the metalworking industry does not set separate minimum wage rates by region.	None
France	€8.03 per hour (1,390.80 per month)	\$1,752.96 per month	Government on the recommendation of a tripartite body. The minimum wage increases by at least 2% when the Consumer Price Index (CPI) increases at this rate.	National	None
Germany	€1,371.98 per month	\$1,701.26 per month (metalworking industry in Baden-Württemberg)	Collective bargaining	Regional, by sector and occupation	None
Iceland	105,943 Icelandic krona per month	\$1,681.63 per month (store clerks)	Collective bargaining	Regional, by sector and occupation	None
Ireland	€7.65 per hour (1,324.98 per month)	\$1,841.86 per month	Government on the recommendation of a specialized body (tripartite or bipartite, depending on the sector)	National	Family workers
Italy	€995.60 per month	\$1,234.54 per month (unskilled worker in the metalworking sector)	Collective bargaining	By sector and occupation	None
Japan	719 yen per hour (126,500 per month)	\$1,072 per month (Tokyo)	Government on the recommendation of a tripartite body	Regional (applies to all workers in the region) or by industry (applies to all workers in the industry across the country or in a specific region)	None

\* Minimum wage rates calculated in US dollars can fluctuate due to changes in the exchange rates. Where relevant, the sector, region or workers selected are indicated (see further Annex 1).



Country	Minimum wage in local currency	Monthly minimum wage in US dollars*	Minimum wage-fixing mechanism	Minimum wage-fixing level	Excluded workers
Luxembourg	€1,503.42 per month	\$1,864.24 per month	Government	National	None
Malta	57.88 Maltese lira per week (250.62 per month)	\$798.15 per month	Government on the recommendation of a specialized body composed of government, workers' and employers' representatives, and an independent member	National	None
Netherlands	€1,264.80 per month	\$1,568.35 per month	Government on the recommendation of a specialized body (bipartite)	National	Apprentices, domestic workers
New Zealand	410.00 New Zealand dollars per week (1,775.30 per month)	\$1,355.19 per month	Government	National	None
Portugal	€374.70 per month	\$464.63 per month	Government on the recommendation of a tripartite body	National	None
Spain	€540.90 per month	\$670.72 per month	Government following direct consultation with workers' and employers' representatives	National	None
Sweden	12,747 Swedish krona per month	\$1,706.43 per month	Collective bargaining	National, by sector and occupation. Most sectoral agreements apply across the country.	
Switzerland	3,995.00 Swiss francs per month	\$3,196 per month (construction sector)	Collective bargaining	Regional, by sector and occupation	Workers not covered by a collective agreement
United Kingdom	£5.05 per hour (874.66 per month)	\$1,617.44 per month	Government on the recommendation of a specialized body (bipartite)	National	Family members, fishermen, members of the armed services
United States	\$5.15 per hour (1,029.60 per month)	\$1,209.60 per month (federal level)	Federal and state governments	National and regional	Employees of interstate commerce, public agencies, institutions providing care, and institutions providing education
<b>CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE</b>					
Albania	11,800 lek per month	\$118.12 per month	Government on the recommendation of a specialized body (tripartite)	National	None
Bulgaria	150 lev per month	\$104.89 per month	Government on the recommendation of a specialized body (tripartite)	National	None
Cyprus	385 Cyprus pounds per month	\$829.74 per month	Government on the recommendation of a specialized body (tripartite)	National	Minimum wage applies only to shop assistants, clerks, nursing aids and child-care workers. All other workers are excluded.
Czech Republic	7,570 Czech crowns per month	\$316.74 per month	Government after consultation with the central representatives of workers and employers	National or national by occupation	Data not available
Estonia	3,000 kroon per month	\$238.47 per month	Government on the conclusion of a bipartite agreement	National	None

Country	Minimum wage in local currency	Monthly minimum wage in US dollars*	Minimum wage-fixing mechanism	Minimum wage-fixing level	Excluded workers
Greece	€25.01 per day (€541.47 per month)	\$694.38 per month	Specialized body (tripartite)	National	None
Hungary	57,000 forints per month	\$285.60 per month	Government on the recommendation of a specialized body (tripartite)	National	None
Latvia	90 lat per month	\$157.89 per month	Government after consultation with a specialized body (tripartite)	National	None
Lithuania	555 Lithuanian litas per month	\$198.56 per month	Government after consultation with a specialized body (tripartite)	National	None
Poland	899.10 zloty per month	\$278.36 per month	Specialized body (tripartite)	National	None
Romania	310.00 leu per month	\$135.37 per month	Government after consultation with workers' and employers' representatives	National	None
Russian Federation	1,100 roubles per month	\$43.14 per month (national level)	National government or provincial governments following consultation with a specialized (tripartite) body	National or regional	None
Slovakia	6,900 Slovak koruna per month	\$222.44 per month	Specialized (tripartite) body. Where there is no agreement on the adjustment, the government unilaterally determines the minimum wage.	National, by occupation	None
Slovenia	122,600 tolar per month	\$636.22 per month	Government after direct consultation with a specialized (tripartite) body	National	None
Turkey	531.00 Turkish lira per month	\$395.09 per month	Specialized (tripartite) body	National	None
Ukraine	332.00 hryvnia per month	\$64.84 per month	Government	National	None
<b>ASIA</b>					
Bangladesh	900 taka per month	\$13.27 per month (garment industry)	Government on the recommendation of a specialized body (tripartite).  For workers in export processing zones, the minimum wage is set by a specialized (bipartite) body.	National, by sector	Workers employed by the federal and provincial governments
Cambodia	US\$45.00 per month	\$45.00 per month (textile, garment and footwear sectors)	Government on the recommendation of a specialized (tripartite) body	Regional, by sector	Domestic workers, judges and public sector workers
China	690 yuan per month	\$84.15 per month (Shanghai)	Government after consultation with a specialized (tripartite) body.  Separate minimum wages are stipulated by provincial, regional and municipal governments for their respective regions.	Regional	Public sector and agricultural workers

Country	Minimum wage in local currency	Monthly minimum wage in US dollars*	Minimum wage-fixing mechanism	Minimum wage-fixing level	Excluded workers
Fiji	2.59 Fiji dollars per hour (450.15 per month)	\$292.31 per month (heavy mobile crane drivers)	Government on the recommendation of a specialized (bipartite) body, where no effective collective bargaining mechanism is in place	National, by sector	Minimum wage applies to the construction, civil and engineering trades; the wholesale and retail trade; hotels and catering; road transport; mining and quarrying; the saw milling and logging industries; the printing trades; the garment industry; and the manufacturing industry. Workers in all other sectors are excluded.
India	203.86 Indian rupees per day (4,413.57 per month)	\$101.64 per month (West Bengal)	Central or local government (non-unionized occupations)/ collective bargaining (unionized occupations)	Regional or by sector or occupation	Disabled workers and family members
Indonesia	884,628 rupiah per month	\$98.02 per month (Jakarta)	Provincial governments on the recommendation of a specialized (tripartite) body	Regional, by sector	Domestic workers
Republic of Korea	3,100 won per hour (536,920 per month)	\$594.60 per month	Government on the recommendation of a specialized body (composed of workers' and employers' representatives and independent persons)	National	Domestic workers, seamen
Lao People's Democratic Republic	93,600 kip per month	\$8.78 per month	Government	National	None
Malaysia	155 Malaysian ringgits per month	\$45.45 per month (unskilled cinema workers)	Government on the recommendation of a tripartite body	National, by sector and occupation	None
Mongolia	42,500 tugrik per month	\$35.26 per month	Government on the recommendation of workers' and employers' representatives	National	None
Nepal	1,338 Nepalese rupees per month	\$23.81 per month (unskilled tea-estate workers)	Government on the recommendation of two specialized bodies (for non-agricultural and agricultural workers). Both bodies are tripartite.	National, by sector, occupation and size of company	None
Pakistan	2,500 Pakistani rupees per month	\$42.02 per month (rate for unskilled workers across Pakistan)	The national minimum wage for unskilled workers in commerce and industry is fixed by the national government.  Provincial governments set minimum wages for skilled workers on the recommendation of a specialized body (bipartite).	National by sector and regional by sector	Agricultural workers, public sector workers and coalminers
Papua New Guinea	24.68 kina per week (106.86 per month)	\$34.10 per month (adult workers)	Specialized (bipartite) body, to be approved and registered by the government	National	None
Philippines	325.00 Philippine pesos per day (7,150 per month)	\$158.61 per month (non-agricultural workers in the national capital)	Specialized (tripartite) body	Regional, by sector	Workers in enterprises that employ less than 10 workers

Country	Minimum wage in local currency	Monthly minimum wage in US dollars*	Minimum wage-fixing mechanism	Minimum wage-fixing level	Excluded workers
Singapore	No minimum wage				
Solomon Islands	1.50 Solomon Islands dollars per hour (259.80 per month)	\$35.20 per month	Government	National	Domestic workers, seamen
Sri Lanka	98.00 Sri Lankan rupees per day (2,121.70 per month)	\$19.17 per month (textile manufacturing trade)	Tripartite body	National, by sector and occupation	Workers in the commerce sector, domestic workers and fishermen
Thailand	184.00 baht per day (3,983.60 per month)	\$100.54 per month (Bangkok)	Government on the recommendation of a specialized (tripartite) body	Regional	Agricultural workers, homeworkers, domestic workers and workers in private schools
Viet Nam	350,000 dong per month	\$22.07 per month (state enterprises)	Government	Regional, by type of enterprise (local or foreign-invested)	None
<b>LATIN AMERICA</b>					
Argentina	630 pesos per month	\$200.00 per month	Specialized (tripartite) body	National	Homeworkers, domestic workers and agricultural workers
Bolivia	500 boliviano per month	\$64.19 per month	Government	National	Agricultural workers
Brazil	350 real per month	\$81.08 per month	Government	National	None
Chile	127,000 pesos per month	\$246.60 per month	Government	National	Apprentices, disabled workers
Colombia	408,000 Colombian pesos per month	\$175.79 per month	Specialized (tripartite) body	National	Public sector workers
Costa Rica	72,586 colones per month	\$151.92 per month (domestic workers)	Specialized (tripartite) body	National, by sector and occupation	None
Cuba	Unidentified	\$225 per month	Government after consultation with workers' representatives	National	The minimum wage applies only to labourers, administration and services workers, technicians and managers. All other workers are excluded.
Ecuador	US\$150.00 per month	\$150 per month	Specialized (tripartite) body). Where no consensus is reached, the minimum wage is set by the government.	National, by sector. Minimum wages apply only to workers in the small-scale industrial or agricultural sectors, and other general workers.	None
El Salvador	US\$5.16 per day (111.71 per month)	\$113.52 per month (industry)	Government after consultation with a specialized (tripartite) body	National, by sector	None
Guatemala	39.67 quetzals per day (858.85 per month)	\$114.51 per month (non-agricultural workers)	Government on the recommendation of a specialized body (composed of workers' and employers' representatives and a labour inspector)	Regional, by sector and occupation	Public sector workers
Honduras	54.50 lempiras per day (1,199.00 per month)	\$54.50 per month (general service firms employing 1 to 15 employees)	Specialized (tripartite) body	National, by sector and size of company	Disabled workers and trainees
Mexico	48.67 pesos per day (1,053.70 per month)	\$98.34 per month (geographic area A)	Specialized (tripartite) body	By area (Regions A, B and C) and occupation	Public sector workers
Nicaragua	1,578.04 cordoba oros per month	\$94.08 per month (construction sector)	Specialized (tripartite) body	National, by sector	None

Country	Minimum wage in local currency	Monthly minimum wage in US dollars*	Minimum wage-fixing mechanism	Minimum wage-fixing level	Excluded workers
Panama	1.68 balboas per hour (290.98 per month)	\$295.68 per month (construction sector)	Government on the recommendation of a specialized (tripartite) body	Region, by sector, occupation and size of company	Public sector workers
Peru	500.00 nuevos soles per month	\$151.70 per month	Specialized (tripartite) body	National	Public sector workers
Uruguay	1,242.00 Uruguayan pesos per month	\$50.71 per month	Government	National	None
Venezuela	426,917.72 bolivares per month	\$204.27 per month (companies employing less than 20 workers)	Government on the recommendation of a specialized (tripartite) body	Area (urban and rural) and size of company	None
<b>CARIBBEAN</b>					
Bahamas	150 Bahamian dollars per week (649.50 per month)	\$649.50 per month	Government after consultation with workers' and employers' representatives	National	Federal and provincial government workers
Belize	2.25 Belize dollars per hour (387 per month)	\$193.50 per month (export-oriented industries)	Government on the recommendation of a specialized body (composed of workers' and employers' representatives and independent persons)	National by occupation	None
Dominican Republic	3,000 pesos per month	\$1,111.11 per month (industrial, commercial and service companies with a net worth of up to 200,000 pesos)	Specialized (tripartite) body	Sectoral, by occupation and area (tax-free zone)	None
Haiti	70 gourde per day (1,515.50 per month)	\$40.04 per month	Government on the recommendation of a specialized (tripartite) body	National	Domestic workers
Trinidad and Tobago	1,386.64 Tobago dollars per month	\$220.10 per month (national level)	Government on the recommendation of a specialized (tripartite) body	National	Trainees
<b>MIDDLE EAST</b>					
Israel	3,456.58 new Israeli shekels per month	\$823.00 per month	Government	National	None
Lebanon	300,000 Lebanese pounds per month	\$200 per month	Government after consultation with a specialized (tripartite) body	National	Domestic workers, agricultural workers, family members, casual and temporary workers in the public sector, and young workers
Saudi Arabia	No minimum wage				
Syrian Arab Republic	3,500 Syrian pounds per month	\$65.00 per month	Government following consultation with a specialized (tripartite) body	Regional by occupation	None
<b>AFRICA</b>					
Algeria	10,000 dinar per month	\$146.00 per month	Government after consultation with workers' and employers' representatives	National	None
Angola	6,260 kwenza per month	\$83.71 per month	Government on the recommendation of a specialized (tripartite) body	National	None

Country	Minimum wage in local currency	Monthly minimum wage in US dollars*	Minimum wage-fixing mechanism	Minimum wage-fixing level	Excluded workers
Botswana	2.80 pula per hour (484.96 per month)	\$81.78 per month (night watchmen)	Government on the recommendation of a specialized body (composed of government, workers' and employers' representatives, and independent persons)	National, by sector and occupation	None
Burkina Faso	166.03 CFA francs per hour (28,557.16 per month)	\$59.56 per month	Government on the recommendation of a specialized (bipartite) body	National	None
Cape Verde	No minimum wage				
Chad	25,480 CFA francs per month	\$53.14 per month (non-agricultural workers)	Government after consultation with workers' and employers' representatives	National, by occupation	None
Gabon	44,000 CFA francs per month	\$83.29 per month	Government on the recommendation of a specialized (tripartite) body	National	None
Ghana	16,000 cedi per day (346,000 per month)	\$38.72 per month	Specialized (tripartite) body	National	None
Guinea-Bissau	14,800 CFA francs per month	\$28.05 per month, plus one bag of rice	Government after consultation with a specialized (tripartite) body	National, by sector	Domestic workers
Lesotho	421 loti per month	\$66.19 per month (unskilled workers employed by a small business)	Government on the recommendation of a specialized body (composed of workers' and employers' representatives and independent members)	National, by occupation and size of company	Trainees
Madagascar	56,713.60 ariarys per month	\$28.31 per month (non-agricultural workers)	Government on the recommendation of a specialized (tripartite) body	National, by sector and occupation	None
Mauritius	492.05 Mauritian rupees per week (2,130.58 per month)	\$69.31 per month (unskilled workers in export processing zones)	Government on the recommendation of a specialized (tripartite) body	National, by sector and occupation	Minimum wage applies only to 29 industries in the private sector. All other workers are excluded.
Morocco	9.66 dirham per hour (1,673.11 per month)	\$191.84 per month (industrial and commercial sectors and the liberal professions)	Government on the recommendation of the most representative workers' and employers' organizations	National, by sector (agriculture/industrial and commercial sectors and the liberal professions)	Public sector workers
Mozambique	1,120,000 metical per month	\$48.57 per month (civil service, industry and services sectors)	Specialized body	National, by sector (agriculture and industry)	Public sector workers
Namibia	7.58 Namibian dollars per hour (1,265.86 per month)	\$176.86 per month (construction sector)	Collective bargaining	National, by sector	Some categories of agricultural workers
Nigeria	5,500 neiras per month	\$41.20 per month	Government on the recommendation of a specialized (tripartite) body	National	Workers in enterprises that employ less than 50 workers; part-time, piece-rate and seasonal workers; and workers in merchant shipping and civil aviation
São Tomé and Príncipe	220,000 dobras per month	\$23.50 per month	Government	National	None

Country	Minimum wage in local currency	Monthly minimum wage in US dollars*	Minimum wage-fixing mechanism	Minimum wage-fixing level	Excluded workers
Senegal	209.10 CFA francs per hour (36,216.12 per month)	\$70.40 per month (non-agricultural sectors)	Collective bargaining	National, by sector (agricultural/non-agricultural)	None
South Africa	1,505 rand per month	\$209.03 per month (wholesale and retail sectors)	Government on the recommendation of a specialized (tripartite) body for certain sectors. Collective agreements set wages in sectors in which the minimum wage is not set by the government.	Regional, by sector and occupation	Seamen
Tunisia	164.83 dinar base salary	\$129.78 per month (non-agricultural sectors)	Government on the recommendation of workers and employers	National, by sector (agricultural/non-agricultural)	Domestic workers

\* Where relevant, the sector, region or workers selected are indicated (see further Annex 1).

# Annex 3

## Working hours and holidays laws, 2006-2007

Country	Normal weekly hours limits	Maximum weekly hours limits	Overtime limits	Minimum annual leave (in working days)
<b>INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES</b>				
Australia	38 hours	No universal national limit	No universal national limit	No universal national entitlement
Austria	40 hours	46 hours <sup>1</sup>	5 hours per week and 60 hours per year	25 days
Belgium	38 hours	50 hours	3 hours per day and 12 hours per week <sup>2</sup>	20 days
Canada	40 hours	48 hours	8 hours per week <sup>3</sup>	10 days
Denmark	No normal hours limit	48 hours	48 hours maximum (including overtime)	30 days
Finland	40 hours	48 hours <sup>1</sup>	138 hours over a 4-month period and no more than 250 hours per year	20 days
France	35 hours	44 hours	180 hours per year	25 days
Germany	No normal hours limit	48 hours <sup>4</sup>	48 hours maximum (including overtime)	24 days
Ireland	No normal hours limit	48 hours	48 hours maximum (including overtime)	20 days
Italy	40 hours	48 hours	250 hours per year	20 days
Japan	40 hours	No universal national limit	No universal national limit	10 days
Luxembourg	40 hours	48 hours	2 hours per day and 8 hours per week <sup>2</sup>	25 days
Malta	No normal hours limit	48 hours	48 hours maximum (including overtime)	24 days
Netherlands	40 hours	54 hours	2 hours per day and 5 hours per week on average over a 13-week period	20 days
New Zealand	40 hours	No universal national limit	No universal national limit	15 days
Norway	40 hours	48 hours	5 hours per day and 200 hours per year	25 days
Portugal	40 hours	48 hours	2 hours per day and - 175 hours per year (small enterprises) - 150 hours per year (medium and large enterprises)	22 days
Spain	40 hours	41.5 hours <sup>1</sup>	80 hours per year	22 days



Country	Normal weekly hours limits	Maximum weekly hours limits	Overtime limits	Minimum annual leave (in working days)
Sweden	40 hours	40 hours	48 hours over a 4-week period or 50 hours per calendar month and 200 hours per year	25 days
Switzerland	45 hours (industrial enterprises, offices and technical posts, and sales staff in large commercial enterprises) 50 hours (all other workers)	49 hours (workers in industrial enterprises, offices and technical posts, and sales staff in large commercial enterprises) 53 hours (all other workers)	2 hours per day and 170 hours per year (45-hour weekly limit)  140 hours per year (50-hour weekly limit)	20 days
United Kingdom	No normal hours limit	48 hours	48 hours maximum (including overtime)	20 days
United States	40 hours	No universal national limit	No universal national limit	None
<b>CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE</b>				
Bulgaria	40 hours	46 hours	150 hours per year, not exceeding 30 day hours or 20 night hours per month; 6 day hours or 4 night hours per week; 3 day hours or 2 night hours per day	20 days
Croatia	40 hours	50 hours	10 hours per week	18 days
Czech Republic	40 hours	48 hours	8 hours per week and 150 hours per year <sup>5</sup>	20 days
Estonia	40 hours	48 hours	4 hours per day and 8 hours per week on average <sup>6</sup>	20 days
Hungary	38 hours	48 hours	Maximum limit (including overtime) of 12 hours per day	20 days
Latvia	40 hours	48 hours <sup>1</sup>	144 hours on average over a 4-month period	20 days
Lithuania	40 hours	48 hours	8 hours per 7 working days	20 days
Macedonia	40 hours	50 hours	10 hours per week and 190 hours per year	18 days
Moldova	40 hours	48 hours	Maximum limit (including overtime) of 12 hours per day, 120 hours per calendar year	20 days
Poland	40 hours	48 hours	150 hours per calendar year	20 days
Romania	40 hours	48 hours	8 hours per week	20 days
Russian Federation	40 hours	42 hours <sup>7</sup>	4 hours over a 2-day period and 120 hours per year	20 days
Slovakia	40 hours	48 hours	8 hours per week on average over a 4-month period and 150 hours per year	20 days
Slovenia	40 hours	48 hours	8 hours per week, 20 hours per month and 180 hours per year <sup>8</sup>	20 days
Turkey	45 hours	57 hours	12 hours per week	12 days
<b>ASIA</b>				
Cambodia	48 hours	No universal national limit	Unidentified	18 days
China	40 hours	49 hours <sup>9</sup>	1 hour per day, 3 hours per week and 36 hours per month	Unidentified
India	No universal legislation	No universal legislation	No universal legislation	No universal legislation
Indonesia	40 hours	54 hours	3 hours per day and 14 hours per week	12 days

Country	Normal weekly hours limits	Maximum weekly hours limits	Overtime limits	Minimum annual leave (in working days)
Kazakhstan	40 hours	Unidentified	None	9 days
Republic of Korea	40 hours	52 hours	12 hours per week	10 days
Lao People's Democratic Republic	48 hours	55.5 hours <sup>9</sup>	30 hours per month	15 days
Malaysia	48 hours	74 hours <sup>9</sup>	104 hours per month	8 days
Mongolia	40 hours	60 hours <sup>10</sup>	None	15 days
Pakistan	No universal legislation	No universal legislation	No universal legislation	No universal legislation
Philippines	48 hours	No universal national limit	None	5 days
Singapore	44 hours	62 hours <sup>9</sup>	72 hours per month	7 days
Thailand	48 hours	84 hours	36 hours per week	6 days
Viet Nam	48 hours	52 hours <sup>7</sup>	4 hours per day and 200 hours per year	12 days
<b>LATIN AMERICA</b>				
Argentina	48 hours	52 hours <sup>7</sup>	3 hours per day, 30 hours per month and 200 hours per year	10 days
Belize	45 hours	No universal national limit	No universal national limit	10 days
Bolivia	48 hours	60 hours <sup>11</sup>	2 hours per day	5 days
Brazil	44 hours	60 hours <sup>11</sup>	2 hours per day	22 days
Chile	45 hours	57 hours <sup>12</sup>	2 hours per day	15 days
Colombia	48 hours	60 hours	2 hours per day and 12 hours per week	10 days
Costa Rica	48 hours	72 hours <sup>13</sup>	4 hours per day <sup>14</sup>	10 days
Ecuador	40 hours	52 hours	4 hours per day and 12 hours per week	10 days
El Salvador	44 hours	No universal national limit	No universal national limit	10 days
Guatemala	48 hours	72 hours <sup>13</sup>	4 hours <sup>14</sup>	15 days
Honduras	44 hours	72 hours <sup>13</sup>	4 hours <sup>14</sup>	10 days
Mexico	48 hours	57 hours	3 hours per day no more than 3 times per week	6 days
Nicaragua	48 hours	57 hours	3 hours per day and 9 hours per week	10 days
Panama	48 hours	57 hours	3 hours per day and 9 hours per week	30 days
Paraguay	48 hours	57 hours <sup>14</sup>	3 hours per day and 9 hours per week <sup>14</sup>	12 days
Peru	48 hours	No universal national limit	No universal national limit	22 days
Uruguay	48 hours (industry) 44 hours (commerce)	56 hours (industry) 52 hours (commerce)	8 hours per week	20 days
Venezuela	44 hours	54 hours	10 hours per week and 100 hours per year	15 days
<b>CARIBBEAN</b>				
Bahamas	40 hours	None	None	10 days

Country	Normal weekly hours limits	Maximum weekly hours limits	Overtime limits	Minimum annual leave (in working days)
Cuba	44 hours on average	47 hours <sup>7</sup>	4 hours over a 2-day period and 160 hours per year	22 days
Dominican Republic	44 hours	51 hours <sup>1</sup>	80 hours per trimester (industry) 2 hours per day and 300 hours per year (commerce)	14 days
Grenada	40 hours (agricultural, construction and industrial workers) 44 hours (clerical assistants, shop assistants and catering assistants) 60 hours (domestic workers and security guards)	No universal national limit	No universal national limit	10 days
Haiti	48 hours	55 hours (industry) 54 hours (commerce) <sup>15</sup>	80 hours per term (industry) 2 hours per day and 300 hours per year (commerce)	13 days
Jamaica	40 hours for minimum wage workers	No universal national limit	None	10 days
<b>MIDDLE EAST</b>				
Egypt	40 hours	60 hours	2 hours per day <sup>16</sup>	21 days
Jordan	48 hours	No universal national limit	No universal national limit	14 days
Lebanon	48 hours	72 hours <sup>17</sup>	24 hours per week <sup>17</sup>	15 days
<b>AFRICA</b>				
Algeria	40 hours	48 hours <sup>18</sup>	20% of normal hours to a maximum of 12 hours in total per day	30 days
Angola	44 hours	48 hours <sup>1</sup>	2 hours per day, 40 hours per month and 200 hours per year	22 days
Benin	40 hours	60 hours	240 hours per calendar year	24 days
Burkina Faso	40 hours	Unidentified	Unidentified	22 days
Burundi	45 hours	Unidentified	Unidentified	20 days
Cameroon	40 hours	60 hours	20 hours per week <sup>19</sup>	18 days
Cape Verde	44 hours	47 hours <sup>1</sup>	2 hours per day and 160 hours per year	21 days
Chad	39 hours	54 hours	15 hours per week <sup>20</sup>	24 days
Congo	40 hours	Unidentified	Unidentified	26 days
Democratic Republic of the Congo	45 hours	Unidentified	Unidentified	12 days
Côte d'Ivoire	40 hours	55 hours <sup>18</sup>	3 hours per day, 15 hours per week and 75 hours per year	24 days
Djibouti	48 hours	Unidentified	Unidentified	30 days
Gabon	40 hours	60 hours <sup>18</sup>	20 hours per week	24 days
Guinea-Bissau	45 hours	47 hours <sup>7</sup>	2 hours per day and 120 hours per year	30 days
Kenya	52 hours	Unidentified	Maximum limit of 116 hours (including overtime) per 2-week period	Unidentified

Country	Normal weekly hours limits	Maximum weekly hours limits	Overtime limits	Minimum annual leave (in working days)
Madagascar	40 hours	Unidentified	Unidentified	30 days
Mali	40 hours	No universal national limit	2 hours per day (urgent work) 75 hours per year (extraordinary workloads) 18 hours per week (overtime performed to maintain and increase production)	20 days
Mauritania	40 hours	Unidentified	Unidentified	18 days
Morocco	44 hours	Unidentified	Unidentified	18 days
Mozambique	48 hours	50 hours	2 hours per day and 100 hours per year	21 days
Namibia	55 hours	55 hours	3 hours per day and 10 hours per week	24 days
Niger	40 hours	48 hours	8 hours per week	20 days
Nigeria	No universal national limit	No universal national limit	None	6 days
Rwanda	40 hours	No universal national limit	No general limit <sup>21</sup>	18 days
Senegal	40 hours	Unidentified	Unidentified	24 days
Seychelles	None	No universal national limit	60 hours per month or an aggregate of 15 hours per day	21 days
South Africa	45 hours	55 hours	3 hours per day and 10 hours per week	15 days
United Republic of Tanzania	45 hours (mainland Tanzania) 48 hours (Zanzibar)	57.5 hours (mainland Tanzania)	50 hours over a 4-week period (mainland Tanzania) <sup>1</sup>	20 days (mainland Tanzania) 7 days (Zanzibar)
Togo	40 hours	Unidentified	Unidentified	30 days
Tunisia	48 hours	60 hours	12 hours per week <sup>21</sup>	12 days
Zimbabwe	No universal national limit	Unidentified	Unidentified	21 days

<sup>1</sup> An average derived from the overtime limit.

<sup>2</sup> Derived from the daily and weekly maximum hours limit.

<sup>3</sup> Derived from the maximum weekly hours limit.

<sup>4</sup> Derived from the daily maximum limit and minimum weekly rest period of one day.

<sup>5</sup> This overtime limit applies to work scheduled in a regular arrangement. The reference period for unevenly scheduled work is six consecutive calendar months.

<sup>6</sup> The limits can be averaged over a four-month reference period.

<sup>7</sup> An average derived from the annual overtime limit.

<sup>8</sup> The limit is expressed as 20 per cent of normal hours.

<sup>9</sup> An average derived from the monthly overtime limit.

<sup>10</sup> Derived from the daily maximum limit and the statutory five-day maximum workweek.

<sup>11</sup> Derived from the daily overtime limit and statutory six-day maximum workweek.

<sup>12</sup> Derived from the daily overtime limit.

<sup>13</sup> Derived from the daily maximum limit and statutory six-day maximum workweek.

<sup>14</sup> Derived from the normal and maximum daily limits.

<sup>15</sup> The 55-hour limit is an average derived from the overtime limit. The 54-hour limit is an average derived from the weekly overtime limit.

<sup>16</sup> Derived from the daily maximum limit.

<sup>17</sup> Derived from the normal weekly hours limit, maximum daily limit and minimum weekly rest period of one day.

<sup>18</sup> Derived from weekly overtime limit.

<sup>19</sup> Derived from the normal and maximum weekly limits.

<sup>20</sup> Derived from the normal and maximum weekly overtime limits.

<sup>21</sup> The applicable limit depends on the nature of the overtime work.

# Annex 4

## Maternity protection laws, 2006-2007

Country	Length of maternity leave (as expressed in the legislation)	Amount of maternity leave benefits	Source of maternity leave benefits
<b>INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES</b>			
Australia	52 weeks	Unpaid	Unpaid
Austria	16 weeks	100%	Social security
Belgium	15 weeks	82% for the first 30 days and 75% for the remainder (up to a ceiling)	Social security
Canada	17 weeks	55% up to a ceiling	Employment insurance
Denmark	18 weeks	100%	State (municipality)
Finland	105 working days	70%	Social security
France	16 weeks	100% up to a ceiling	Social security
Germany	14 weeks	100%	Social security (up to a ceiling)/employer (pays difference)
Iceland	6 months	80%	Social security
Ireland	18 weeks	70%	Social security
Italy	5 months	80%	Social security
Japan	14 weeks	60%	Health insurance (private sector) or social security (public sector)
Luxembourg	16 weeks	100%	Social security
Malta	14 weeks	100% for 13 weeks	Employer
Netherlands	16 weeks	100%	Unemployment fund
New Zealand	14 weeks	100% up to a ceiling	State
Norway	42 or 52 weeks of parental leave (9 weeks reserved for the mother)	80% (52-week leave) or 100% (42-week leave)	Social security
Portugal	120 days	100%	Social security
Spain	16 weeks	100%	Social security
San Marino	5 months	100%	Social security
Sweden	480 calendar days	480 days' paid parental leave: 80% for 390 days and 90 days at a flat rate	Social security
Switzerland	16 weeks	80%	Social security
United Kingdom	26 weeks	90% for the first 6 weeks and flat rate thereafter	Employer (refunded for 92% by public funds)
United States	12 weeks	Unpaid	Unpaid
<b>CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE</b>			
Albania	365 calendar days	80% prior to birth and for 150 days after birth; 50% for the remainder of the leave	Social security
Belarus	126 days	100%	Social security
Bosnia and Herzegovina	70 days	Paid (no data on amount)	
Bulgaria	135 days	90%	Social security
Croatia	45 days before delivery and 1 year after	100% from 28 days before to 6 months after birth; a flat rate for the remainder of the leave period	Croatian Health Insurance Fund (percentage) /state budget (flat rate)

Country	Length of maternity leave (as expressed in the legislation)	Amount of maternity leave benefits	Source of maternity leave benefits
Cyprus	16 weeks	75%	Social security
Czech Republic	28 weeks	69%	Social security
Estonia	140 days	100%	Social security
Greece	119 days	100%	Social security/employer
Hungary	24 weeks	70% for pre-natal period (minimum of 4 weeks); flat rate for the remainder of the leave period	Social security
Latvia	112 calendar days	100%	Social security
Lithuania	126 calendar days	100%	Social security
Macedonia	73 days	Unidentified	
Moldova	126 days	100%	Social security
Poland	16 weeks	100%	Social security
Romania	126 days	85%	Social security
Russian Federation	140 calendar days	100%	Social security
Serbia and Montenegro	365 days	100%	Social security
Slovakia	28 weeks	55%	Social security
Slovenia	105 days	100%	State
Turkey	16 weeks	For 12 weeks	Social security
Ukraine	126 days	100%	Social security
<b>ASIA</b>			
Azerbaijan	126 calendar days	100%	Social security
Bangladesh	12 weeks	100%	Employer
Cambodia	90 days	50%	Employer
China	90 days	100%	Employer
Fiji	84 days	Flat rate of 1.50 Fijian dollars per day	Employer
India	12 weeks	100%	Social security or employer (for excluded workers)
Indonesia	3 months	100%	Employer
Kazakhstan	126 calendar days	No information unavailable	Employer
Kiribati	12 weeks	25%	Employer
Kyrgyzstan	126 days	100%	Social security
Republic of Korea	90 days	100%	Employer (60 days), social security (30 days)
Lao People's Democratic Republic	3 months	70%	Social security
Malaysia	60 days	100%	Employer
Mongolia	120 days	70%	Social security
Myanmar	12 weeks	Two-thirds	Social security
Nepal	52 days	100%	Employer
Pakistan	12 weeks	100%	Employer
Papua New Guinea	As necessary for hospitalization before confinement and 6 weeks afterwards	Unpaid	
Philippines	60 days	100%	Social security

Country	Length of maternity leave (as expressed in the legislation)	Amount of maternity leave benefits	Source of maternity leave benefits
Singapore	8 weeks	100%	Employer (first two children), government (third child)
Sri Lanka	12 weeks	100%	Employer
Solomon Islands	12 weeks	25%	Employer
Tajikistan	140 days	No information available	Social security
Thailand	90 days	100% for first 45 days; 50% for the remaining 45 days	Employer (first 45 days); the social security fund pays a maternity allowance at a rate of 50% for 90 days
Uzbekistan	126 days	100%	Social security
Viet Nam	4 to 6 months depending on the working conditions and nature of the work	100%	Social security
Vanuatu	3 months	50%	Unidentified
<b>LATIN AMERICA</b>			
Argentina	90 days	100%	Social security
Bolivia	12 weeks	100% of the national minimum wage and 80% of wages above the minimum	Social security
Brazil	120 days	100%	Social security
Chile	18 weeks	100%	Social security
Colombia	12 weeks	100%	Social security
Costa Rica	4 months	100%	Social security (50%), employer (50%)
Cuba	18 weeks	100%	Social security
Ecuador	12 weeks	100%	Social security and employer
El Salvador	12 weeks	75%	Social security
Guatemala	84 days	100%	Social security and employer
Honduras	84 days	100%	Social security
Mexico	12 weeks	100%	Social security
Nicaragua	12 weeks	60%	Social security
Panama	14 weeks	100%	Social security
Paraguay	12 weeks	50% for 9 weeks	Social security
Peru	90 days	100%	Social security
Uruguay	12 weeks	100%	Social security
Venezuela	18 weeks	100%	Social security
<b>CARIBBEAN</b>			
Antigua and Barbuda	13 weeks	60%	Social security
Bahamas	13 weeks	100%	Social security (two-thirds) and employer (one-third)
Barbados	12 weeks	100%	Social security
Belize	14 weeks	80%	Social security or employer (for women who are not entitled to receive social security benefits)
Dominica	12 weeks	60%	Social security (75%), employer (25%)
Dominican Republic	12 weeks	100%	Social security (50%), employer (50%)
Grenada	3 months	100% for 2 months and 60% for the final month	Social security (60% for 12 weeks), employer (40% for 2 months)
Guyana	13 weeks	70%	Social security

Country	Length of maternity leave (as expressed in the legislation)	Amount of maternity leave benefits	Source of maternity leave benefits
Haiti	12 weeks	100% for 6 weeks	Employer
Jamaica	12 weeks	100% for 8 weeks	Employer
Saint Kitts and Nevis	13 weeks	60%	Social security
Saint Lucia	3 months	65%	Social security
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	13 weeks	65%	Social security
Trinidad and Tobago	13 weeks	100% for 1 month, 50% for 2 months (employer) and a sum depending on the earnings (social security)	Social security and employer
<b>MIDDLE EAST</b>			
Afghanistan	90 days	100%	Employer
Bahrain	45 days	100%	Employer
Islamic Republic of Iran	90 days	Two-thirds for 16 weeks	Social security
Iraq	62 days	100%	Social security
Israel	12 weeks	100% up to a ceiling	Social security
Jordan	10 weeks	100%	Employer
Kuwait	70 days	100%	Employer
Lebanon	7 weeks	100%	Social security and employer
Qatar	50 days	100%	Employer
Saudi Arabia	10 weeks	50% or 100% (depending on the duration of employment)	Employer
Syrian Arab Republic	50 days	70%	Employer
United Arab Emirates	3 months	100%	Employer
Yemen	60 days	100%	Employer
<b>AFRICA</b>			
Algeria	14 weeks	100%	Social security
Angola	3 months	100%	Social security. If necessary, the employer has to pay the difference between the social security payment and the worker's wage.
Benin	14 weeks	100%	Social security (50%), employer (50%)
Botswana	12 weeks	25%	Employer
Burkina Faso	14 weeks	100%	Social security and employer
Burundi	12 weeks	100%	Social security (50%), employer (50%)
Cameroon	14 weeks	100%	Social security
Central African Republic	14 weeks	50%	Social security
Chad	14 weeks	50%	Social security
Comoros	14 weeks	100%	Employer
Congo	15 weeks	100%	Social security (50%), employer (50%)
Democratic Republic of the Congo	14 weeks	Two-thirds	Employer
Côte d'Ivoire	14 weeks	100%	Social security
Djibouti	14 weeks	50% (100% for public servants)	Employer
Egypt	90 days	100%	Social security and employer



Country	Length of maternity leave (as expressed in the legislation)	Amount of maternity leave benefits	Source of maternity leave benefits
Equatorial Guinea	12 weeks	75%	Social security
Eritrea	60 days	Paid (amount unidentified)	Employer
Ethiopia	90 days	100%	Employer
Gabon	14 weeks	100%	Social security
Gambia	12 weeks	100%	Employer
Ghana	12 weeks	100%	Employer
Guinea	14 weeks	100%	Social security (50%), employer (50%)
Guinea-Bissau	60 days	100%	Employer/social security subsidy and employer payment
Kenya	2 months	100%	Employer
Lesotho	12 weeks	Unpaid	Unidentified
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	50 days	50% (100% for self-employed women)	Employer (social security for self-employed women)
Madagascar	14 weeks	100%	Social security (50%), employer (50%)
Malawi	8 weeks (every three years)	100%	Employer
Mali	14 weeks	100%	Social security
Mauritania	14 weeks	100%	Social security
Mauritius	12 weeks	100%	Employer
Morocco	14 weeks	100%	Social security
Mozambique	60 days	100%	Employer
Namibia	12 weeks	100%	Social security
Niger	14 weeks	50%	Social security
Nigeria	12 weeks	50%	Employer
Rwanda	12 weeks	Two-thirds	Employer
São Tomé and Príncipe	70 days	100% for 60 days	Social security (employer for women not covered by social security)
Senegal	14 weeks	100%	Social security
Seychelles	14 weeks	Flat monthly allowance for 10 weeks	Social security
Somalia	14 weeks	50%	Employer
South Africa	4 months	Up to 60% depending on the level of income	Unemployment insurance fund
Sudan	8 weeks	100%	Employer
Swaziland	12 weeks	Unpaid	
United Republic of Tanzania	12 weeks	100%	Social security and employer
Togo	14 weeks	100%	Social security (50%), employer (50%)
Tunisia	30 days	Two-thirds	Social security
Uganda	8 weeks	100% for 1 month	Employer
Zambia	12 weeks	100%	Employer
Zimbabwe	90 days	100%	Employer

# Annex 5

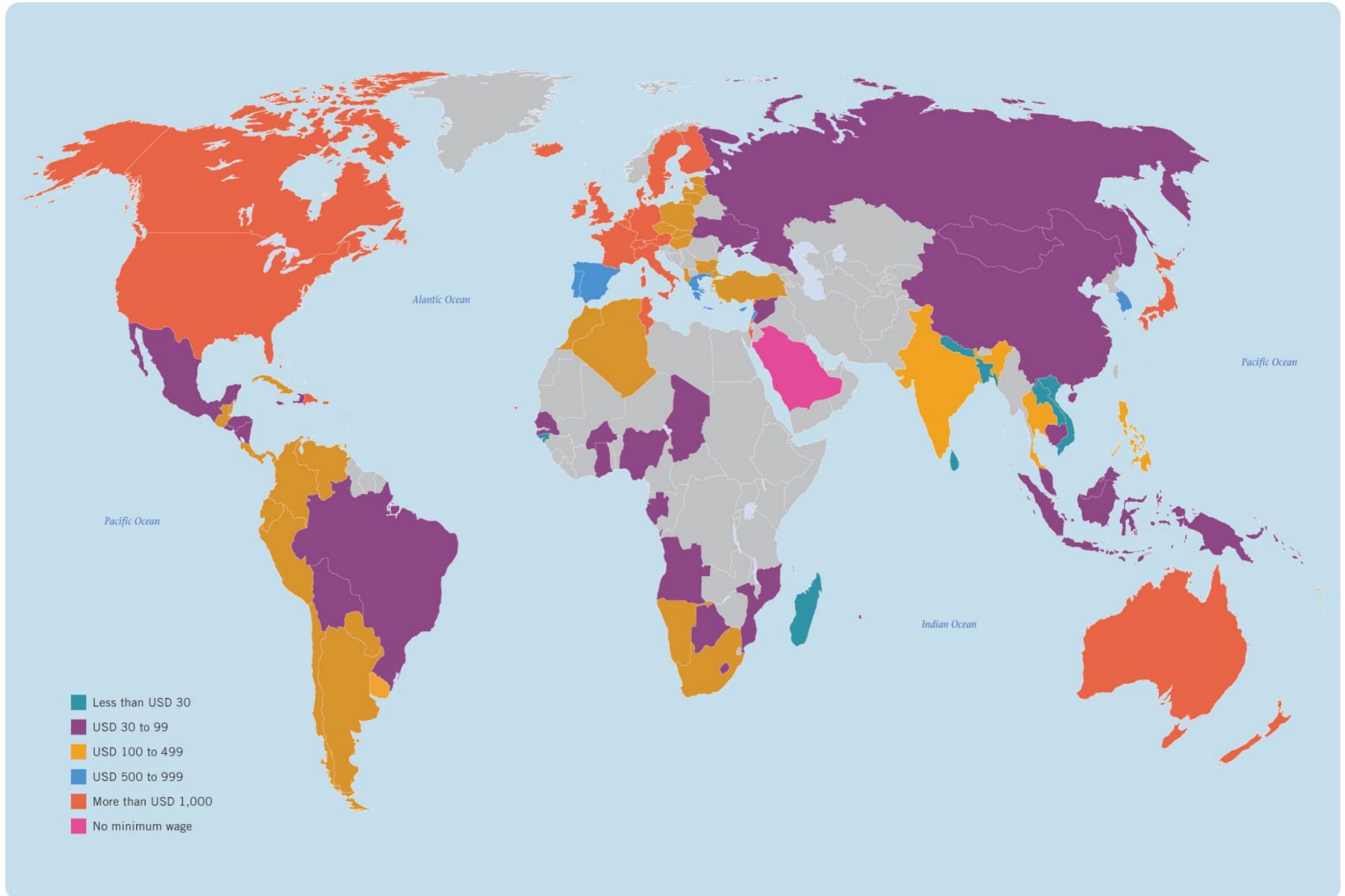
## Maps

Map 1: Monthly minimum wages, 2006-2007

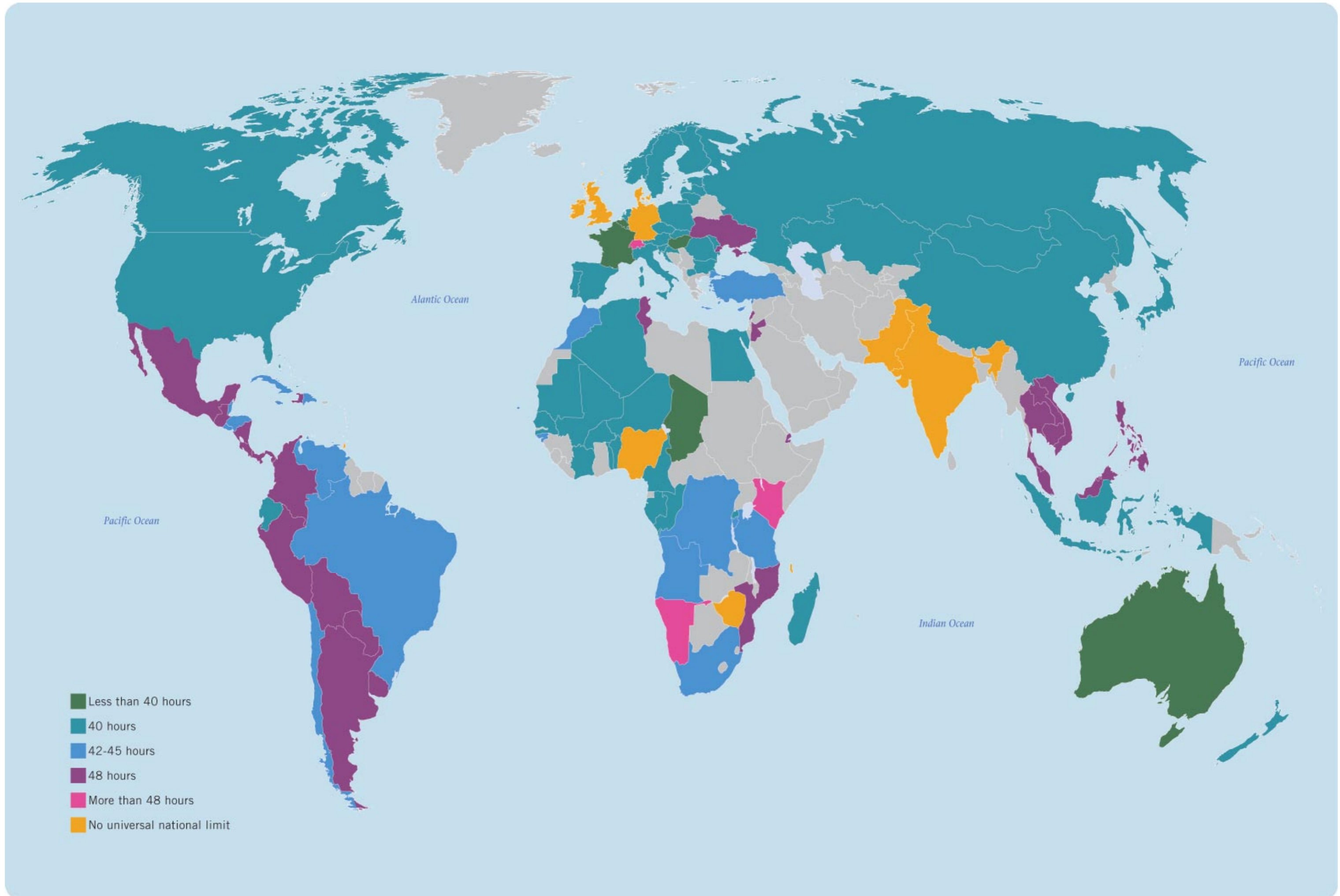
Map 2: Normal weekly hours limits, 2006-2007

Map 3: Length of maternity leave, 2006-2007

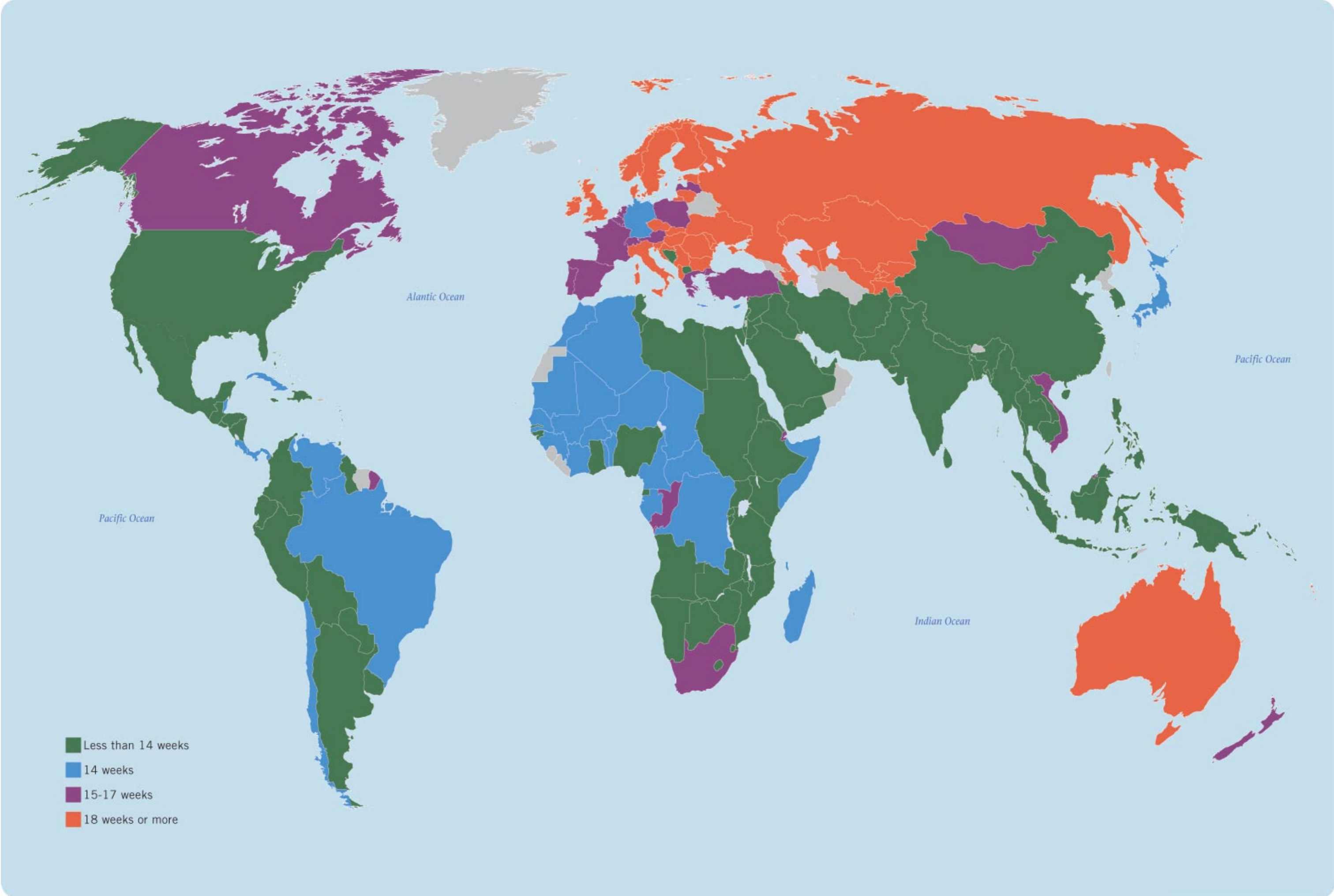
Map 1: Monthly minimum wages, 2006-2007



Map 2: Normal weekly hours limits, 2006-2007



Map 3: Length of maternity leave, 2006-2007



# WORKING CONDITIONS LAWS

## 2006-2007 A global review

There is widespread concern that substantial numbers of workers across the world are working in jobs that are harmful to their health, make it difficult for them to combine work and family life, and fail to lift them out of poverty. As a result, increasing attention is being paid to the legal standards that regulate working life; yet limited efforts have been made to identify and systematically compare working conditions laws around the world.

This report responds to this need by providing a global comparison of national working conditions standards. The report covers three of the central elements of working conditions laws: minimum wages, working hours and holidays, and maternity protection. It identifies the primary legal standards in more than 100 countries and the most significant global and regional trends.

*Working Conditions Laws 2006-2007* highlights a continuing commitment in countries across the world to minimum working conditions standards. By raising awareness of this convergence in the legal standards, the report aims to contribute towards efforts to harness these measures to the goal of realizing decent work.

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# Dia Internacional da Mulher, 2008

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**8 de Março de 2008**  
**Trabalho Digno para as Mulheres: Um Direito para elas, Um Bem para Todos!**



Este ano a OIT celebra o Dia Internacional das Mulheres (8 de Março) sob o lema do trabalho digno. O slogan adoptado para este ano: Trabalho Digno para as Mulheres: Um Direito para elas, Um Bem para Todos! visa alertar para o aprofundamento do debate à volta das quatro componentes fundamentais do trabalho digno: trabalho com direitos, em liberdade, com protecção social e sem discriminação.

Para assinalar esta que é a primeira data no ano que a OIT celebra, para além das várias iniciativas que por todo o mundo são realizadas, são difundidos um relatório com tendências mundiais do emprego das mulheres e uma ficha informativa sobre o micro-crédito.

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# ILO International Women's Day, 2008

**GENDER**  
Bureau for Gender Equality

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## ILO International Women's Day 2008: Investing in Decent Work for Women: Not Just Right, but Smart

Each year, ILO marks International Women's Day in Geneva with a major event to honour extraordinary women from all aspects of the world of work. This event has become a visible occasion for the people of Geneva as well as the international media to address women's rights and achievements in the world of work.

<i>When</i>	7 March 2008
<i>Where</i>	Geneva, Switzerland
<i>Type</i>	Meeting
<i>Regions and countries covered</i>	Global
<i>Unit responsible</i>	Bureau for Gender Equality
<i>Contact(s)</i>	Ms. Iselin Danbolt, IWD Coordinator, Tel: + 41 22 799 6281
<i>Subjects</i>	gender equality, gender, womens empowerment
<i>Other languages</i>	<a href="#">Español</a>

Each year, ILO marks International Women's Day in Geneva with a major event to honour extraordinary women from all aspects of the world of work. This event has become a visible occasion for the people of Geneva as well as the international media to address women's rights and achievements in the world of work.

In 2008, the slogan that set the basis for the ILO International Women's Day (IWD) was "Investing in Decent Work for Women: Not Just Right, but Smart". This was connected to the theme of the 52nd session of the Commission on the Status of Women and the official United Nations IWD theme "Financing

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Meeting documents

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**GLOBAL EMPLOYMENT TRENDS FOR WOMEN**  
*March 2008*

**International Labour Office, Geneva**

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## 1. Overview

### *Decent work for women is not just right, but smart*

In 2007, 1.2 billion women around the world worked, almost 200 million or 18.4 per cent more than ten years ago.<sup>1</sup> But, the number of unemployed women also grew from 70.2 to 81.6 million over the same period and in 2007, women at the global level still had a higher likelihood of being unemployed than men. The female unemployment rate stood at 6.4 per cent compared to the male rate of 5.7 per cent. (See table 3.) As for women who do find work, they are often confined to work in the less productive sectors of economies and in status groups that carry higher economic risk and a lesser likelihood of meeting the characteristics that define decent work, including access to social protection, basic rights and a voice at work. Also, as a result of the type of work where women can find employment (in terms of both sector and status), they often earn less than men.

But, is it all bad news concerning female labour market trends? Certainly not, there are some positive trends as well: education levels for women around the world continue to increase and gender gaps for certain labour market indicators are decreasing in many regions. To find which regions are making progress in the economic integration of women and in offering them an equal chance at attaining decent work, this year's *Global Employment Trends for Women*<sup>2</sup> is organized according to nine regional trends analyses.<sup>3</sup> The report shows clearly that most regions are making progress in increasing the number of women in decent employment, but that full gender equality in terms of labour market access and conditions of employment has not yet been attained.

Economic empowerment for women has a lot to do with their ability or inability to participate in labour markets and with the conditions of employment that the women who do manage to find work face. The international community stresses more and more the fact that promoting decent work is the only sustainable way out of poverty. In fact, a new target was recently introduced in the Millennium Development Goals calling for “full and productive employment and decent work for all”.<sup>4</sup> There is also growing recognition that labour markets are the key transmission mechanism through which the benefits of growth can be distributed to the poor and disadvantaged groups. Access to labour markets and, more specifically, to decent employment is thereby crucial in the process towards improving equality between men and women. *Decent work for women is also a precondition for economic development since, in the long run, economies cannot afford to ignore an untapped resource such as that which could be offered by female labour.*

In this context it is interesting to note that the most successful region in terms of economic growth over the last decade, namely East Asia, is also the region with the highest regional labour force participation rate for women, low unemployment rates for both women and men and relatively small gender gaps in sectoral as well as status distribution. Of course, there are many reasons that drive economic development – making the most of the productive potential of

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<sup>1</sup> The expressions “work” or “in work” summarizes all people employed according to the ILO definition, which includes self-employed, employed, employers as well as contributing family members. There is no distinction between formal sector employment and informal sector employment. The expressions “employed”, “in work”, “working” and “have a job” are used as synonyms in this publication. (See Annex 3, Glossary of labour market terms, for more information.)

<sup>2</sup> The ILO *Global employment trends* series have been published on a yearly basis since 2003. On occasion, special editions are produced to analyse labour market trends for segments of the population such as youth (2004 and 2006) and women (2004 and 2007), or for certain regions (for example, *Global employment trends supplement for Europe & Central Asia*, 2005 and *African employment trends*, 2007). These publications have become a regular medium to inform ILO constituents, the research community and also a wider public on labour market trends at the global and regional levels. Data are based on the Global Employment Trends Models, which are described in detail in Annex I. All past reports are available for download from [www.ilo.org/trends](http://www.ilo.org/trends).

<sup>3</sup> See Annex 2 for details of the regional groupings used in this and other ILO Global Employment Trends series.

<sup>4</sup> For more information on the new MDG, see ILO, *Key indicators of the labour market, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition* (Geneva, 2007), “Decent employment and the Millennium Development Goals”, Chapter 1; available for download from [www.ilo.org/kilm](http://www.ilo.org/kilm).

both male and female labour forces is an important one but certainly not the only determinant. *The model to aim for is one in which women are able to contribute to growth and, at the same time, profit from this growth as participants in labour markets, keeping in mind that the one does not automatically follow from the other.* If women remain stuck in low-paid, low-productive jobs they will not see the rightful returns of their labour. In short, increased labour force participation of women has great potential as a contribution to economic development, but only if the jobs in which women are engaged are decent. Most regions have a long way to go in working towards the economic integration of women and, therefore, a huge potential for economic development remains available to be tapped.

Despite the evident challenges involved in achieving gender equality in the world of work the goal remains a worthy one and the challenges well worth taking up. As of now, however, the fact remains that far fewer women participate in labour markets than men. At the global level less than 70 women (66.9) are economically active for every 100 men. (See table 2.) *While one should not assume that all women want to work, it is safe to say that women want to be given the same freedom as men to choose to work if they want to; and if they do choose to work, they should have the same chance of finding decent jobs as men.*

As stated earlier, this report focuses on female labour market trends at the regional level.<sup>5</sup> Regarding global trends, some significant trends are identified here:

- Of all people employed in the world, 40 per cent are women. This share has not changed over the last ten years.
- The share of women above the working age (15 years and over in most countries) who are employed (the employment-to-population ratio) was 49.1 per cent in 2007 compared to a male employment-to-population ratio of 74.3 per cent. (See table 4.) Both ratios decreased slightly over the decade. In six out of nine regions, however, female employment-to-population ratios increased over the last ten years. The three exceptions were East Asia, South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. Male ratios, in contrast, saw decreases in six of the nine regions.
- In absolute numbers, worldwide there were equal numbers of women and men above the age of 15 years in 2007 (2.4 billion of each), but among these only 1.2 billion women were employed as opposed to 1.8 billion men. (See table 1.)
- In developed countries a portion of the employment gap can be attributed to the fact that some women freely choose to stay at home because they can afford to not enter the labour market. Yet in some lesser-developed regions of the world, remaining outside of the labour force is not a choice for the majority of women but an obligation; it is likely that women would opt to work in these regions if it became socially acceptable to do so. This of course does not mean that these women remain at home doing nothing; most are heavily engaged in household activities. Regardless, because most female household work continues to be classified as non-economic activity, the women who are thus occupied are classified as outside of the labour force.
- Attracting more women into the labour force requires as a first step equal access to education and equal opportunity in gaining the skills necessary to compete in the labour

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<sup>5</sup> One known shortcoming of this approach is the fact that country-level variations can be masked due to the nature of world and regional aggregation. Regional aggregates are dominated by the trends of the most populous country, and without added information of trends at the country-level, knowledge of country-level variations becomes lost. Trends for East Asia, for example, are clearly those of China, whereas the labour market situation facing women in Mongolia, which is also a country in the region, might be quite diverse. Due to space constraints, few country-level examples are discussed in this report; however, our readers are encouraged to review country-level data from sources such as the ILO, *Key indicators of the labour market, op.cit.* with an aim to verifying or refuting employment trends for women at the country level. More country level analysis can also be found in ILO's various regional reports as well as a forthcoming working paper based on this report: S. Elder and D. Schmidt, "Global and regional employment trends for women", Economic and Labour Market Papers, ILO, forthcoming 2008.

market. More women are gaining access to education, but equality in education is still far from the reality in some regions.

- In addition, broadening access for women to employment in an enlarged scope of industries and occupations will be important to enhancing opportunities for them in the labour market. Society's ability to accept new economic roles for women and the economy's ability to create the jobs to accommodate them are the key prerequisites to improving labour market outcomes for women, as well as for economic development on the whole.
- Overall, there is not a significant difference between the sexes when it comes to young people's (aged 15 to 24 years) search for work. The unemployment rate of female youth at 12.5 per cent is only slightly higher than the male rate of 12.2 per cent. (See table 3.) A young person's likelihood to be unemployed continues to be three times higher than for adults.
- Whereas ten years ago agriculture was still the main employer for women, the services sector now provides the majority of female jobs: out of the total number of employed women in 2007, 36.1 per cent worked in agriculture and 46.3 per cent in services. Male sectoral shares in comparison were 34.0 per cent in agriculture and 40.4 per cent in services. (See table 5.)
- The poorer the region, the greater the likelihood that women are among the ranks of the contributing family workers or own-account workers.<sup>6</sup> The two statuses together make up the newly defined "vulnerable employment".<sup>7</sup> Female contributing family workers, in particular, are not likely to be economically independent.
- The move away from vulnerable employment into wage and salaried work can be a major step toward economic freedom and self-determination for many women. Economic independence or at least co-determination in resource distribution within the family is highest when women are in wage and salaried work or are employers, lower when they are own-account workers and lowest when they are contributing family workers. The share of women in wage and salaried work grew during the last ten years from 41.8 per cent in 1997 to 46.4 per cent in 2007 whereas the share of vulnerable employment decreased from 56.1 to 51.7 per cent. However, the vulnerable share is still larger for women than for men, especially in the world's poorest regions. (See table 6.)

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<sup>6</sup> The international classification of status in employment defines four statuses (all of which are defined in Annex 3): (1) Wage and salaried workers; (2) Employers; (3) Own-account workers; and (4) Contributing family workers. Two additional categories – members of producers' cooperatives and workers not classifiable by status – are not addressed in this report. For more information, see the Resolution concerning the international classification of status in employment, adopted by the 15th International Conference of Labour Statisticians, Geneva, 1993; website: [www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/class/icse.htm](http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/class/icse.htm).

<sup>7</sup> Vulnerable employment is a newly defined measure of persons who are employed under relatively precarious circumstances as indicated by the status in employment. Because contributing family workers and own-account workers are less likely to have formal work arrangements, access to benefits or social protection programmes and are more "at risk" to economic cycles, these are the statuses categorized as "vulnerable". The vulnerable employment rate, therefore, is calculated as the sum of own-account workers and contributing family workers as a percentage of total employment. The indicator is highly gender sensitive since, historically, contributing family work is a status that is dominated by women. There is also a connection between vulnerable employment and poverty: if the proportion of vulnerable workers is sizeable, it may be an indication of widespread poverty. The connection arises because workers in the vulnerable statuses lack the social protection and safety nets to guard against times of low economic demand and often are incapable of generating sufficient savings for themselves and their families to offset these times. The indicator is not without its limitations; some wage and salaried workers might also carry high economic risk and some own-account workers might be quite well-off and not vulnerable at all. But, despite the limitations, vulnerable employment shares are indicative of employment in the informal economy, especially for the less developed economies and regions, and the fact that a strong correlation has been established between high poverty rates for a region and high shares in vulnerable employment does substantiate the weight of the new indicator to measure progress towards the goal of decent employment for all. For more details on the indicator and its interpretation in tandem with other measures, see ILO, *Key indicators of the labour market*, *op.cit.*, Chapter 1.

- The status of women in the world of work has improved, but gains have been slow. While female shares in wage and salaried work versus vulnerable employment are approaching those of men, the sluggish pace of change means that disparities remain significant.

When undertaking a comparative analysis of labour markets at the global and regional levels, one is restricted by the labour market indicators that are available and comparable across regions. For the analyses undertaken in this report, the main indicators used are employment, unemployment, status in employment and employment by sector. *Analysing the four indicators together clearly shows that policies to enhance women's chances to participate equally in labour markets are starting to pay off, but the pace with which gaps are closing is slow.* Despite some progress in getting women into employment and under more secure statuses, there is no room for complacency.

If more indicators were available to allow one to better judge the quality of employment and other labour market issues, such as decision-making power, balancing work and family life, the glass ceiling, earnings, violence at the workplace, social protection, occupational injuries, credit market access, etc. one would certainly find out more about gender disparities and the harsh realities of many women's working lives around the world. *In short, the economic integration of women, which comes only when labour market barriers are lowered and women are given an equal chance to attain decent work, remains both a necessity for economic development and a worthy goal in its own right.*

## 2. Sub-Saharan Africa

### *Women continue to bear a heavier burden in the lack of decent jobs*

Despite recent signs of economic progress, sub-Saharan Africa continues to be the region with the highest poverty shares in the world. The insufficient creation of decent jobs in the region and widespread poverty continue to be heavy burdens on women. In this region women have little choice but to work – the female employment-to-population ratios are the second highest in the world (behind East Asia) – but, nonetheless, widespread poverty persists, implying a grave malfunction in the region's labour markets. Decent and productive employment with its implied decent earnings, social protection, fundamental rights at work and social dialogue is certainly the exception rather than the rule.

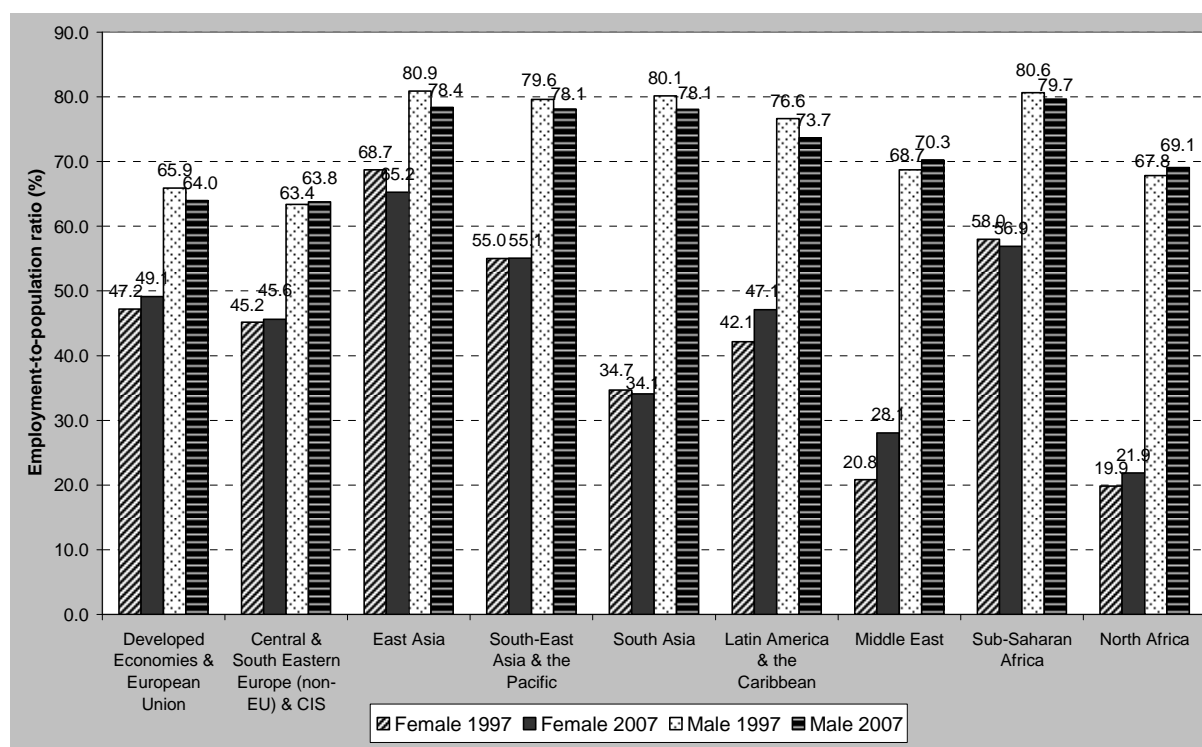
Employment-to-population ratios in the region were high for both women and men, 56.9 and 79.7 per cent, respectively, in 2007. (See table 4 and figure 1.) However, the fact that a large proportion of women are working in the region should not be interpreted as a positive development (as it might be in other regions with higher levels of development) since the comparably high shares of employment are strongly related to the elevated incidence of poverty in the region. A poor person will have to work in order to subsist and regardless of the quality of that work. In addition, a lack of educational alternatives means that a large proportion of young women, who might otherwise be in school, also work in order to contribute to the household income. This is reflected in the high employment-to-population ratio of 49 per cent for young women in the region. (See table 4.)

Even in a poverty stricken region where sustenance can depend on as many hands working as possible, presumably without deference to gender or age, a gender gap exists. In this poorest region of the world, the male employment-to-population ratio continues to be higher than that of females. Nor has the gender gap between men and women changed over the last ten years, either for youth or for the total labour force. The difference between female and male employment-to-population ratios was 22.7 percentage points in 2007 as well as in 1997. And for youth the gap stood at 14.5 points in 2007, almost unchanged from 1997. In sub-Saharan Africa the reasons for a continuing gender gap when it comes to employment are less likely to stem from discrimination at the workplace (although this does occur as well), but rather more from the necessity for some



females to occupy themselves at home with the daily subsistence activities of poor households (fetching water, preparing food, tending children, etc.).<sup>8</sup>

Figure 1  
Employment-to-population ratios, by sex and region, 1997 and 2007



Source: Annex table 4.

Despite the fact that poverty tends to dictate that people in sub-Saharan Africa take whatever job is available (hence the above average employment-to-population ratios), unemployment, whereby persons looking for work are unable to find any, remains a significant challenge as well.<sup>9</sup> A comparison of the rates by sex – 9.1 per cent for women and 7.5 per cent for men in 2007 – shows that the challenge is greater for women than for men. (See table 3 and figure 5.) Youth unemployment rates are even higher with 13.9 per cent for women and 13.6 per cent for men.

Agriculture continues to provide the vast majority of jobs for women: almost 7 out of 10 women (67.9 per cent) in the region work in the agriculture sector, mainly in subsistence-level agriculture under harsh conditions and with little or no economic security. This share has decreased over time (from 74.8 per cent in 1997 to 67.9 per cent in 2007), but the move of men away from agriculture in the region has occurred at a much quicker pace. (See table 5 and figure 3.)

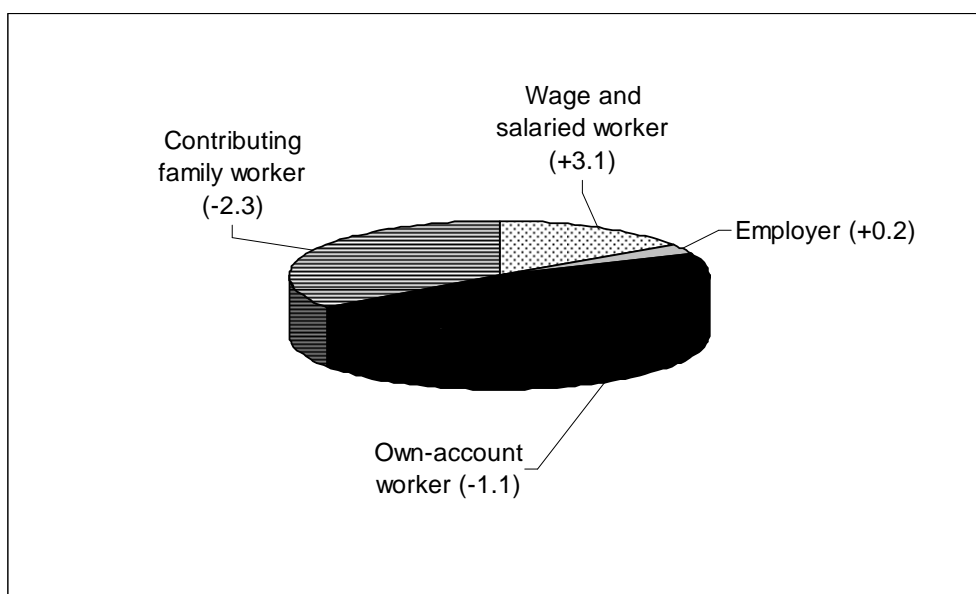
<sup>8</sup> In such cases, the boundary between economic and non-economic activities remains blurred; many argue that certain female-based household activities constitute an economic contribution to the household and should, therefore, be counted as productive activities within the statistical framework of the economically active population. But, until the (unlikely) event of a major revision to the SNA-defined production boundaries, most female household work continues to be classified as non-economic activity and the women who are thus occupied are classified as outside of the labour force.

<sup>9</sup> The existence of unemployed people in a poor region does not necessarily contradict the hypothesis that poor people cannot afford to remain looking for work (in which case they would be counted as unemployed), but rather must work in order to earn enough money for survival (in which case they would be counted as employed). There are varied degrees of wealth even within a poor region and what is likely to happen is that the unemployed person either comes from a higher income background and has the economic means to support themselves during the job search period or can be supported by the common income of a multi-earner household. The latter is likely to apply to young people from poor backgrounds as families often pull together resources so that the most educated can spend time looking for a good job that would enable them to support the family in the future. This is one of the reasons why the youth unemployment rate is generally much higher than the overall unemployment rate.

The female employment share in industry was almost unchanged during the last ten years at the world's lowest level of 5.8 per cent. In comparison, the men's share in industry is more than twice as high. In the services sector shares of women and men are very close at 26.4 and 25.2 per cent, respectively.

The share of persons in vulnerable employment in sub-Saharan Africa continues to be very high, and again, even higher for women than for men. (See table 6 and figure 8.) Of the women working in 2007, more than 8 out of 10 (81.7 per cent) were doing so under vulnerable conditions as either a (unpaid) contributing family worker or own-account worker. In other words, less than 2 out of 10 women had relatively higher economic security as either wage and salaried workers or employers. (See table 6 and figure 2.) The picture looks only slightly better for men: only 3 out of 10 men (30.3 per cent) in sub-Saharan Africa belong to the group of wage and salaried workers. But, at least unlike women, few are trapped as contributing family workers with no possibility of earning a direct income at all. The female share in this status group was 34.7 per cent compared to 18.4 per cent for men. The situation has improved over time with shares of persons in vulnerable employment falling for both sexes, although at a faster rate for men than for women (male shares between 1997 and 2007 fell from 71.4 to 66.4 per cent while female shares decreased from 85.0 to 81.7 per cent).

**Figure 2**  
**Distribution of female status in employment in sub-Saharan Africa, 2007**  
(percentage point change from 1997 in parentheses)



Source: Annex table 6.

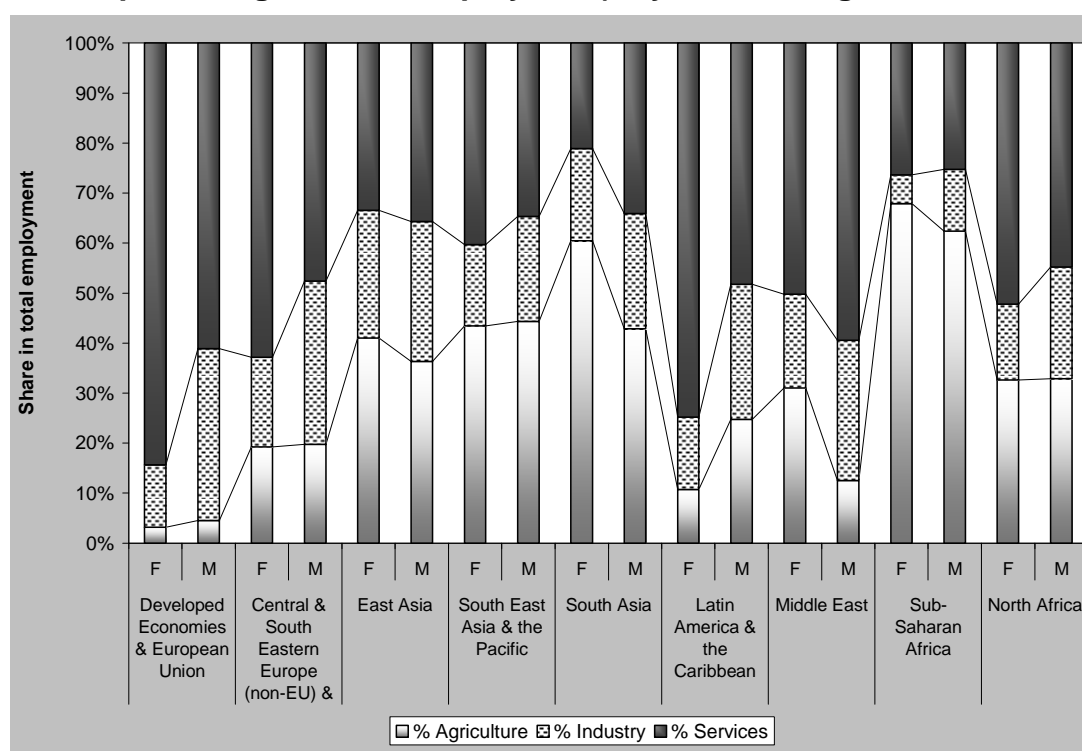
In short, the burden of vulnerable employment in the region continues to fall heavily on women who remain mainly in the agricultural sector and improvements in employment status and sectoral distribution seem to benefit mostly men. In 2007, the share of women with a wage and salaried job stood at only 15.5 per cent, which represents half of the same share of men. Also, women face a higher risk of finding themselves unemployed. Taking everything together, the situation seems to be one in which the few wage and salaried jobs that are created in the formal sector tend to go to men before women, which means women in the region are generally left with the options of taking up vulnerable employment positions or (although less viable given the necessity to earn some income) remaining unemployed. The high economic activity of sub-Saharan women can be a positive force for increasing economic growth rates for the region, but only if productivity and working conditions are improved.

### 3. North Africa

*Tremendous gap in labour market participation between women and men; unemployment rates for women are the highest in the world*

Unlike in sub-Saharan Africa, the main difficulties facing North African women vis-à-vis labour markets is less the poor quality of employment (although this applies as well) than the lack of access to labour markets altogether. Labour market activity – either working or looking for work – is still more the exception than the rule for women in the region. This is mainly a result of social traditions that remain static over time. For 100 economically active men in North Africa there are only 35 economically active women. (See table 2.) This represents the highest gender gap in the world. In addition, North Africa has the lowest employment-to-population ratio in the world. Only 2 out of 10 working-age women (21.9 per cent) are employed compared to 7 out of 10 men (69.1 per cent). (See table 4 and figure 1.)

Figure 3  
Distribution of employment by sector (sectoral employment as percentage of total employment), by sex and region, 2007



Source: Annex table 5.

Even fewer young women work; only 1.5 out of 10 women (14.7 per cent) between the age of 15 to 24 years are employed, a statistic that causes particular worry because it highlights the inefficiency of the economy to provide jobs for its youth, despite an increased investment in female education in the recent past and in the face of a very youthful population. Still, in 2015 the youth share in the working-age population in the region will make up more than 25 per cent of the total working age population.<sup>10</sup> Given the high level of waste the region faces in terms of lost economic contribution of young women, it is foreseen that this situation will not be affordable in the long run.

<sup>10</sup> See ILO, *Global employment trends, January 2008* (Geneva, 2008), p. 34; [www.ilo.org/trends](http://www.ilo.org/trends).

So, the region is one in which few women are given the right opportunity to look for work, but for those that do, the job search is a long and difficult one and oftentimes, ultimately unsuccessful. This is reflected in the female unemployment rate of 16.2 per cent (compared to 9 per cent for men), which is the world's highest. (See table 3 and figure 5.) And young women face the almost hopeless situation of a 32.3 per cent unemployment rate. The cause of high female unemployment rates in the region is twofold. On the one hand, some employers openly give preference to male jobseekers, and on the other hand, the women that have gained access to education often do not wish to take up the type of jobs that are available to them. Some employers do actually prefer female workers, but the jobs offered are low-skilled and low-paid. The overall result is that some women will remain unemployed while waiting for the "right" job (with some holding out for public sector work) and other women – the majority – have little choice but to fall outside of the labour force. The high inactivity rate of women, at 73.9 per cent, gives clear evidence of this.

Sectoral employment shifts in the region have been slow. Of the women that do work, approximately one-third (32.6 per cent) do so in agriculture. In fact, it was only in this region and in the Middle East that the employment share of women in agriculture increased over the last ten years. At the same time, the share of women in industry decreased from 19.1 to 15.2 per cent between 1997 and 2007. The services sector provides more than half of all the jobs for women in North Africa (52.2 per cent). (See table 5 and figure 3.)

In North Africa increases in productivity had a considerable impact on the number of people in vulnerable employment situations. The share of vulnerable employment in total employment was reduced from 36.9 to 30.7 per cent over the ten-year period. It is noteworthy that the decrease was mainly driven by the movement of women out of vulnerable employment situations. (See table 6 and figure 8.)

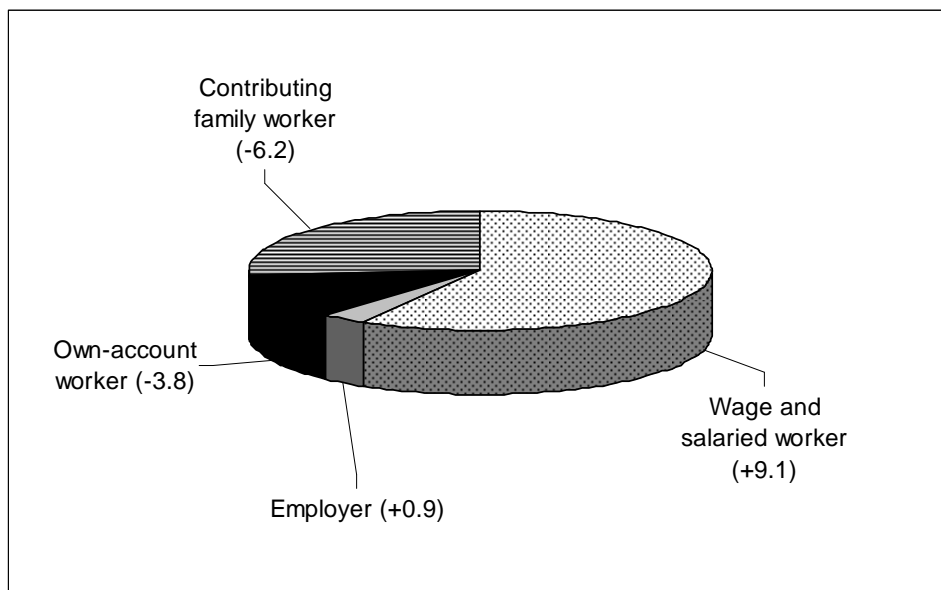
There has been a substantial increase in the share of women in wage and salaried work over the period to an extent that their share is now almost equal to men's at just below 60 per cent. Ten years ago the gap was still considerable (the female share in wage and salaried work was 49.3 per cent compared to the male share of 57.1 per cent). (See table 6 and figure 4.) The change is partly due to the heavy investment in female education in recent years, but also to the fact that many wage and salaried jobs are found in the public sector where women find it easier to get a job than in the private sector.<sup>11</sup> What the latter means is that those women who do find employment – and these tend to be women from higher income backgrounds with family connections – are typically well protected in terms of security and income. However, one cannot ignore the fact that 8 out of 10 women in the region remain economically inactive.

With little or no means of directly contributing to family income, these women are very often completely economically dependent on men, a situation which often impacts on their decision-making capacity within the household. Priority in the region should be to focus on integrating more women into the labour force and improving their chances of attaining decent jobs. A comparison of population versus employment numbers helps to visualize the challenge ahead: in North Africa there are 67 million women who are of working age and 65 million men, but only 15 million women have a job compared to 46 million men. The comparative advantage in the region is not cheap labour, but more its human capital that can be used to lead the way for a shift of industries towards higher productivity products and services. Well-educated economically active women have to be given a fair chance to contribute to the developmental process in the region.

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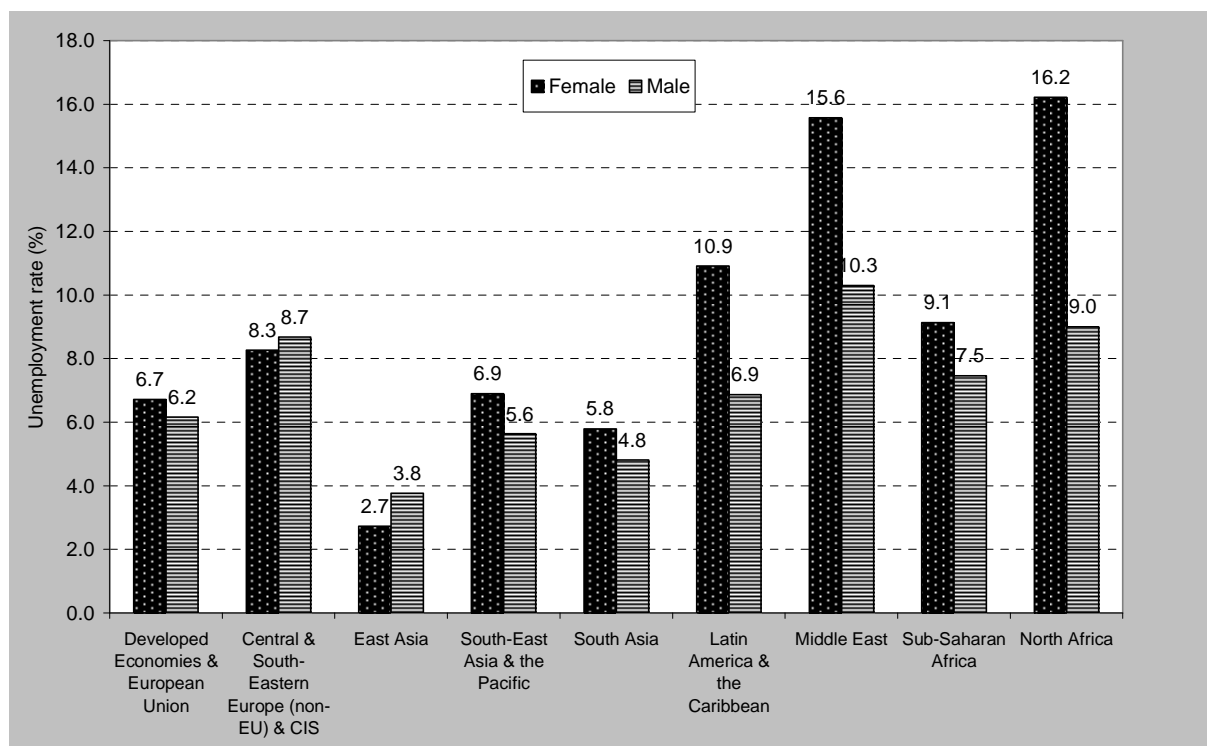
<sup>11</sup> This phenomenon is not unique to North Africa. In other regions as well, where social traditions tend to discourage female economic activity and discrimination is strong against hiring women in the private sector, the public sector offers the best opportunity for employment for women, especially for educated women. See, for example, South-East Asia & the Pacific and the Middle East.

**Figure 4**  
**Distribution of female status in employment in North Africa, 2007**  
 (percentage point change from 1997 in parentheses)



Source: Annex table 6.

**Figure 5**  
**Unemployment rates, by sex and region, 2007**



Source: Annex table 3.

## 4. Middle East

### *The few women participating in labour markets face unemployment or vulnerable employment*

Despite the considerable differences in the countries in this region, with high-income oil-producing Gulf States on the one hand and conflict-torn economies like Lebanon and Palestine on the other, when it comes to the labour market barriers women face, the story changes little from country to country. The region has the second lowest labour force participation rate for women (33.3 per cent) and the second highest gender gap in labour force participation: for every 100 men only 39 women are economically active. (See table 2.) But, on the positive side, the region also showed the highest increase in female labour force participation rates. Between 1997 and 2007, the rate increased by an impressive 7.7 percentage points.

The region also saw a considerable increase in female employment-to-population ratios during this period. The ratio stood at 28.1 per cent in 2007, up from 20.8 per cent in 1997. (See table 4 and figure 1.) But, even given the recent increase, female employment-to-population ratios in the Middle East remain below the world average of 49.1 per cent. And, once again, like in most other regions, young women face even greater challenges than older women: only 2 out of 10 (19.5 per cent) young women in the region actually have a job. For young men, slightly more than 4 out of 10 (44.3 per cent) are working.

The region's unemployment trend is also cause for concern. The total number of unemployed was more than one third higher in 2007 than ten years ago.<sup>12</sup> The increase in unemployed women was more than 50 per cent. The female unemployment rate was 15.6 per cent, making it the second highest in the world, behind only North Africa. (See table 3 and figure 5.) Youth unemployment is even more worrying as the risk of being unemployed is three times higher for young people than for adults. The female youth unemployment rate stood at 29.5 per cent (in comparison with 21.1 per cent for young men). But, there are some signs of improvement: at least the decrease of 4 percentage points for young women's unemployment rate between 1997 and 2007 was higher than that of all other regions.

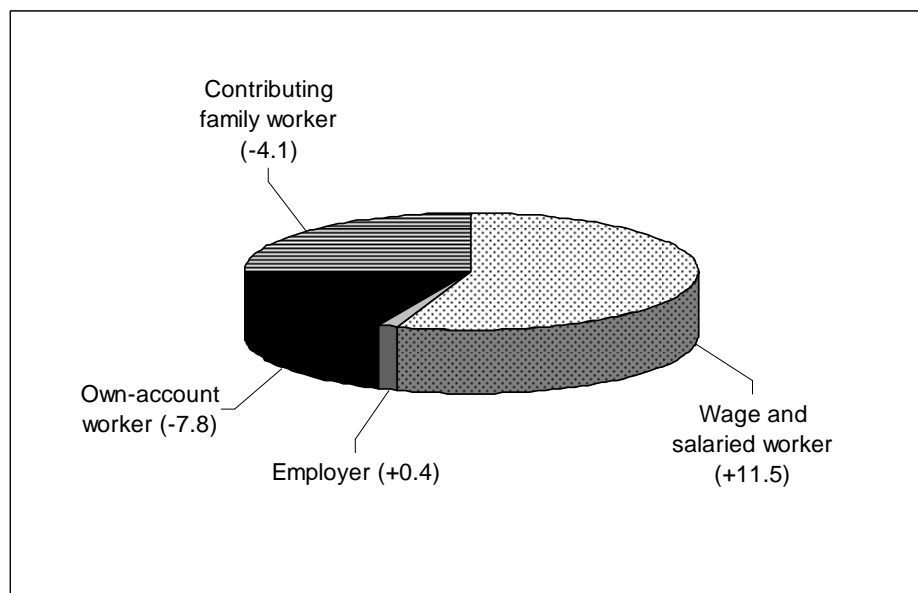
Of the women in the region who do work – remember it is only around one-third of those above the age of 15 years – approximately half work in the services sector (50.2 per cent), a slight decrease from ten years earlier. (See table 5 and figure 3.) And 31.0 per cent of female workers are engaged in agricultural work. As in North Africa, the share in agriculture represents an increase from that of ten years ago. These two regions, therefore, contradict a global trend towards rapidly shrinking agricultural sectors and increasing services sectors, at least for women (the male shares of employment in agriculture have shown decreases in every region of the world). Overall, the female situation in terms of sectoral employment shares showed very little change over time, making this region unique. This is a worrisome trend given that the chance to find a decent job is often much higher in the services sector and the highest in the industry sector. Sectoral shifts in male employment were much more pronounced. The already low level of male employment in the agricultural sector decreased further by over 7 percentage points and stood at 12.5 per cent in 2007. Most men moved out of agriculture into jobs in the services sector (the share in services increased from 53.3 to 59.4 per cent).

There is evidence of a gender bias in the Middle East when measured in terms of employment status. The share of women in vulnerable employment is much higher than that of men (43.2 per cent for women compared to 28.2 per cent for men in 2007). (See table 6 and figure 8.) Women are also more likely than men to be contributing family workers (25.3 per cent in

<sup>12</sup> See ILO, *Global employment trends, op.cit.* for world and regional data at the aggregated level.

comparison with 5.2 per cent for men) and less likely to achieve wage and salaried work (55.3 per cent versus 65.2 per cent for men). (See figure 6.)

**Figure 6**  
**Distribution of female status in employment in the Middle East, 2007**  
 (percentage point change from 1997 in parentheses)



Source: Annex table 6.

One should not, however, disregard the fact that in comparison to other regions this female share in wage and salaried work can be considered high or at least higher than the world average of 46.4 per cent, and that, likewise, the share of vulnerable employment is comparatively low. What this means is that, as in North Africa, female employment is encouraged mainly in the public sector and that the women who do manage to find work there can be considered relatively well off in terms of access to benefits and job security. What results is a phenomenon in which a minority of women has attained decent employment while the majority of the female working-age population – 66.7 per cent – remains outside of the labour force.

Even though over the ten-year period the region followed a highly employment-intensive growth path, the growth in employment was too low to avoid an increase in unemployment in the face of high labour force growth (on average 4.9 per cent annually between 1997 and 2007).<sup>13</sup> The situation in which a large supply of labour competes for a limited number of jobs is exacerbated by the steady inflow of cheap migrant labour in the region, especially in the Gulf States. It remains to be seen whether the employment intensive path of the region will motivate more women to participate in the labour market. For the time being the situation for women is difficult as can be seen from a comparison of population versus employment numbers for men and women: in the Middle East there are 61 million women who are of working age and 67 million men, but only 17 million women have a job compared to 47 million men. It is clear that increasing women's participation in the region will depend not only on their motivation, but also on the ability of society to accept new economic roles for women and remove existing barriers to economic integration.

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*

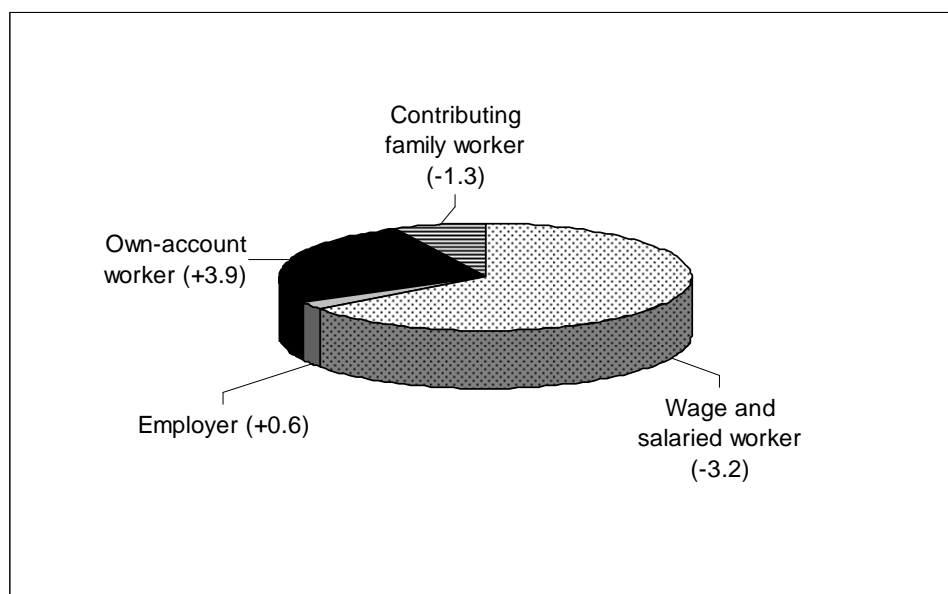
## 5. Latin America & the Caribbean

*Women dominate the services sector, which becomes an increasing source of vulnerable employment*

The increase of female labour force participation from 47.2 to 52.9 per cent between 1997 and 2007 was the second highest of all the regions (after the Middle East).<sup>14</sup> (See table 2.) This increase is especially remarkable given that the starting level was already not far from the world average in 1997. Both increasing female rates – the highest of all regions – and declining male participation rates in the region resulted in a decrease of the gender gap in economically active females compared to males. In 2007, 67 women were active per every 100 economically active men. Still, the question remains whether increased female participation implied improvements in their labour market conditions; a collective review of other indicators has shown that this has not necessarily been the case.

The employment-to-population ratio for women in Latin America & the Caribbean improved as well, increasing 5 percentage points from 42.1 per cent in 1997 to 47.1 per cent in 2007. (See table 4 and figure 1.) But, the female unemployment rate in the region remains far above the rate of men (the female unemployment rate was 10.9 per cent in 2007 compared to 6.9 per cent for men). The size of the gap in male and female unemployment rates is behind only those of the Middle East and North Africa. (See table 3 and figure 5.)

Figure 7  
**Distribution of female status in employment in Latin America & the Caribbean, 2007**  
 (percentage point change from 1997 in parentheses)



Source: Annex table 6.

The sectoral pattern of female employment reflects a higher degree of development in Latin America & the Caribbean compared with other developing regions. The agricultural sector is

<sup>14</sup> Regional data presented here and in other *Global employment trends* reports differ from that of the annual ILO *Panorama laboral* (Labour overview). The reason has to do with the diverse purposes of the publications and differing aggregation methodologies: data, analysis and regional estimations in the *Panorama laboral* cover mainly urban areas whereas analysis and regional estimates in the *Global employment trends* publications are based on country-level indicators in the region with national coverage.



rather small in terms of its share of employment and, contrary to trends elsewhere, the female share in agriculture is much smaller than that of men: 10.7 per cent for women compared to 24.7 per cent for men. (See table 5 and figure 3.) There is no other region in the world where the agricultural employment share of men exceeds that of women by so much. The picture is completely different in the industry sector where 14.5 per cent of all employed women work in comparison to 27.1 per cent of all employed men. The vast majority of women work in the services sector. The female share of employment in services, at 74.8 per cent, is the world's second highest behind only the Developed Economies & EU. For men the share was 48.2 per cent. Even in absolute numbers, more women work in this sector than men.

Although the gaps between female and male participation rates and employment ratios are narrowing in Latin America & the Caribbean and there is a relatively equal distribution in terms of employment status, the high female unemployment rates and the large number of women with vulnerable jobs in low-productivity services remain as indications of an unstable future for women's economic prospects. When finding work is known to be difficult, and when the types of jobs available are undesirable, women can easily become discouraged from participating in labour markets. Both more job creation and improving working conditions will be needed to brighten labour market prospects for women in the region.

## 6. East Asia

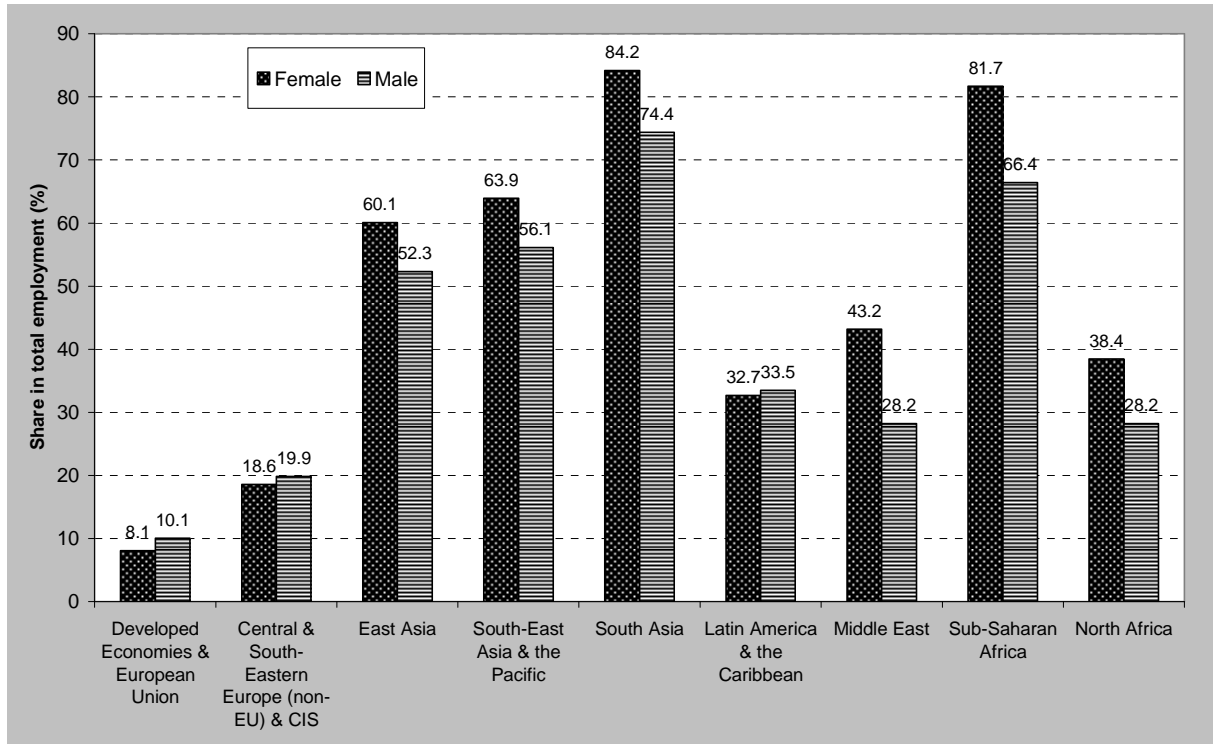
### *Employment opportunities for men and women abundant, but working conditions, social protection and social dialogue need improvement*

The gender gap in economically active females per 100 males continues to be among the smallest in the world in East Asia. Per 100 active men there are 79 women participating in labour markets. (See table 2.) In addition, the female employment-to-population ratios remained the world's highest in 2007, with 65.2 per cent of all working-age women employed. (The ratio was 78.4 per cent for men.) (See table 4 and figure 1.) The female ratio continued a downward trend over the last ten years. Given that levels remain high, the declining trend does not reflect a threat to growth and development, as it might in other regions. On the contrary, this decrease brings the region closer to the levels in the developed economies where one can assume that women have the highest degree of freedom to choose whether they want to work or not. Also, the decrease is partly the result of increased educational participation. That more young women are opting to stay in school is reflected in the larger decrease in the female youth employment-to-population ratios in comparison to the total. (See table 4.) Nevertheless, the female youth employment-to-population ratio is still the highest in the world, at 64.5 per cent in 2007. Also unique to the region is the higher employment-to-population ratios for young women in comparison to young men.

The unemployment rate in the region continues to remain at low levels. Overall, it stood at 3.3 per cent in 2007, a level that could be considered full employment. The female rate is even lower at 2.7 per cent in comparison to 3.8 per cent for men. (See table 3 and figure 5.) Also, youth unemployment is the lowest in the world, at 5.8 per cent for young women and 7.9 per cent for young men in 2007, continuing a decreasing trend. Obviously, given the quick pace of economic growth in the region and the fact that slow labour force growth rates result in shortages in the supply of labour, finding employment is not difficult for either men or women in East Asia.

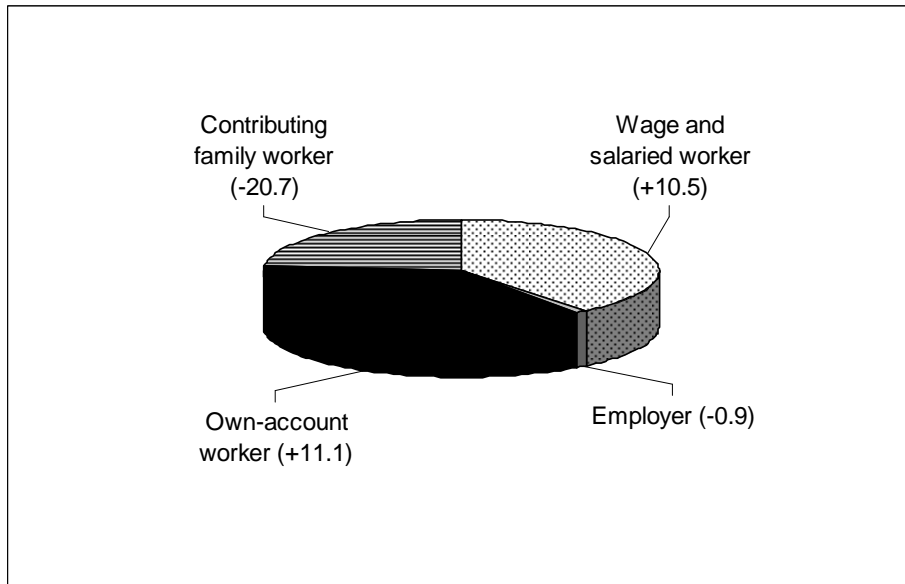
East Asians are quickly moving away from agriculture as the primary sector of employment and this is even truer for women than for men (although the female share continues to be higher at 41.0 per cent compared to men's 36.3 per cent). Women are moving to a large extent into the services sector, which has a female share of employment of 33.5 per cent, and to a lesser extent into the industry sector, where the female employment share is 25.5 per cent. There is very little difference in the sectoral shares between the sexes. (See table 5 and figure 3.)

Figure 8  
Persons in vulnerable employment  
as percentage of total employment, by sex, 2007



Source: Annex table 6.

Figure 9  
Distribution of female status in employment in East Asia, 2007  
(percentage point change from 1997 in parentheses)



Source: Annex table 6.

The move out of agriculture was paralleled with a move away from vulnerable forms of employment, although still as many as 6 out of 10 workers in the region can be classified as vulnerable (60.1 per cent of female workers and 52.3 per cent of male workers). Nonetheless, the shares of employed persons in vulnerable employment situations are decreasing for both sexes.

(See table 6 and figure 8.) The share of female contributing family workers decreased by an impressive 20.7 percentage points. (See figure 9.) Unfortunately, not all women moved into wage and salaried work, but also into own-account work. The female share in this status group is quite high at 36.8 per cent; only in sub-Saharan Africa is the share higher. Still, the share of women in wage and salaried employment increased by an impressive 10.5 percentage points between 1997 and 2007 and now makes up as much as 39.2 per cent of female employment. The level for men in this group also increased and was 46.4 per cent in 2007.

In short, there are both positive and negative developments in terms of changing employment statuses in the region: there are shifts away from contributing family work, increasing shares of wage and salaried work, but also increasing shares of own-account work. Overall though, vulnerable employment is decreasing and this is undecidedly a positive development for the region's workers, regardless of their sex.

Economic prospects for the region are good and some benefits of economic growth are filtering down to workers, as is evident by low unemployment rates and the decreasing share of vulnerable employment. However, there is still room for improvement. The majority of work is vulnerable and the vulnerable employment share for women is higher than for men. Also, if one were to look at other decent work components – those not measurable at the regional and global level – working conditions could be called into question. Average working hours are longer than in other regions and exceed 50 hours per week in some countries; safety and health at work, as well as rights at work have not progressed significantly; and, social dialogue between workers, employers and governments is far from being implemented everywhere.<sup>15</sup> We do not know whether women suffer more than men when it comes to the quality of employment. But, given that in this region, as throughout the world, family responsibilities are often still mainly a feminine domain, long working hours and other non-decent characteristics of employment can be particularly burdensome to women as they try to find a balance between family and working life.

## 7. South-East Asia & the Pacific

### *Women moving into wage and salaried jobs – but slowly*

In South-East Asia & the Pacific 59.1 per cent of working-age women participate in the labour market compared to 82.8 per cent of men. The resulting gender gap in economic activity is 73 active women per 100 active men, which is smaller than the world average. (See table 2.)

Female employment-to-population ratios in the region remained almost constant over the last ten years (at 55.1 per cent). This is the third highest employment-to-population ratio for women after East Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. (See table 4 and figure 1.) Whereas the adult employment-to-population ratio for women increased, the youth employment-to-population ratio decreased considerably by almost 5 percentage points to 40.3 per cent. This was mainly the result of more young women entering and staying longer in the education system. Employment-to-population ratios in the region are much lower for women than for men – 72 women work for every 100 men – but the difference is not as large as in other regions at the same level of development.

The overall unemployment rates in the region are comparably low and have stabilized in recent years. However, there is a worrisome trend of increasing unemployment rates for women. In 2007, unemployment rates were 6.9 per cent for women compared to 5.6 per cent for men. (See table 3 and figure 5.) Ten years earlier the female rate was 4.2 per cent and only 0.3 percentage points different from the male rate of 3.9 per cent. Whereas the total number of unemployed men increased by 78 per cent over the ten-year period, the total number of unemployed women

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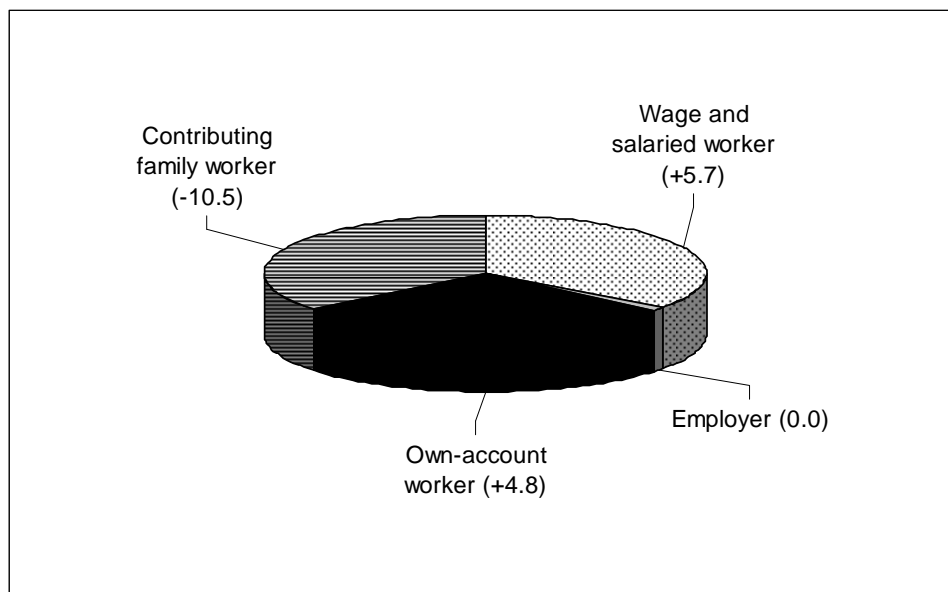
<sup>15</sup> ILO, *Labour and social trends in Asia and the Pacific 2007* (Bangkok, 2007); [www.ilo.org/public/english/region/asro/bangkok/library/download/pub07-04.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/public/english/region/asro/bangkok/library/download/pub07-04.pdf).

increased by 111 per cent. The increase of the female unemployment rate goes against the trend of declining rates for women in most other regions. And, whereas the upward trend came to a halt for men, women's rates have continued their increase over the ten-year period. What is happening is that some countries in the region are providing fewer and fewer opportunities for young people. Indonesia, which dominates the region in terms of population, showed an astonishing increase of 17 percentage points in the unemployment rate of young women between 1996 and 2006 (from 17.0 to 33.9 per cent).<sup>16</sup> Of all countries with available data, this represents the largest increase. The increase was higher for young women than for young men (the male youth unemployment rate saw a 13 percentage point increase). However, employment prospects for young Indonesian men were only slightly better than that of young women. The male youth unemployment rate in 2006 was also extremely high at 27.1 per cent.

Overall, the move of employment away from the agriculture sector is slower than in other regions in Asia, but as the result of a sizeable move of women out of agriculture in recent years, the employment shares in this sector are now almost equal between the sexes: in 2007, the male share stood at 44.3 per cent and the female share was 43.4 per cent. (See table 5 and figure 3.) Overall, only 19 per cent of all employed people work in industry, with a share considerably lower for women (16.3 per cent) than for men (21 per cent). The overall increase in employment in the services sector was driven by female trends. The female employment share increased by 4.5 percentage points to stand at 40.3 per cent in 2007. The male share in services increased by only 1.7 percentage points to 34.7 per cent.

The shift in terms of status of employment is slightly more impressive than the sectoral moves, especially the move of women out of the status group of contributing family workers. The share of this group in total female employment decreased by 10.5 percentage points to a level of 36.0 per cent in 2007. (See table 6 and figure 10.) Nevertheless, the region maintains the second highest share in the world of women engaged in employment as contributing family workers (after South Asia).

**Figure 10**  
**Distribution of female status in employment in South-East Asia**  
**& the Pacific, 2007**  
 (percentage point change from 1997 in parentheses)



Source: Annex table 6.

<sup>16</sup> ILO, *Key indicators of the labour market, op.cit.*, table 9.

It seems that some former female contributing family workers moved into own-account work, which can also be precarious although for different reasons. But, on the positive side, there has been an even larger gain in the status of wage and salaried work; there the female share increased by 5.7 percentage points between 1997 and 2007 (from 29.4 to 35.1 per cent). Movements in men's status shares have been less sizeable, but going in the right direction (increasing shares in wage and salaried work and decreasing shares in vulnerable employment). Overall, the share in vulnerable employment decreased by almost 6 percentage points for women and 3 for men. In 2007, out of 10 working women slightly more than 6 (6.4) were engaged in vulnerable employment. Vulnerable employment for both women and men continued to be the third highest in the world after only South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. (See table 6 and figure 8.)

Overall, gender inequality in the region is less of a challenge than in other developing regions, but there are some developments that need to be carefully watched, especially the fact that women's unemployment rates are increasing at a faster rate than men's and that women mainly move into jobs in the services sector, a sector where the gap between high- and low-productivity employment is quite significant. Policies can help to protect women from situations of occupational segregation that leave them with only the low-paid, low-productivity jobs in the services sector. In addition, the continuing high shares in vulnerable employment should not be ignored, and even though the gender gap there is narrowing, the trend should be monitored in the future to see whether or not this continues. Finally, there is a continued need to focus on improving productivity in the region through education and skills development, which should help to ensure that newly created jobs allow both women and men to improve their chances of escaping and/or staying out of poverty.

## 8. South Asia

### *Untapped female potential and sizeable decent work deficit*

Women continue to be an untapped potential in the region of South Asia. Overall labour force participation rates within the region have traditionally been low due to the low rates for women. Compared to 100 men active on labour markets only 42 women participate by either working or looking for work. (See table 2.)

The low participation is also reflected in the employment-to-population ratios: in 2007, only 3.4 out of 10 women of working-age actually worked (34.1 per cent), and over the last ten years the female employment-to-population ratio slightly decreased. (See table 4 and figure 1.) The decrease was led by a considerable downward trend in female youth employment. Fortunately, this is mostly the result of more young women participating in education, although the gender gap in access to education in some countries in the region is still large.<sup>17</sup> If education gaps between men and women persist it could lead to even more constraints for women in the future as they would face discrimination in attaining decent jobs based not just on their sex, but also on their relative lack of skills. In 2007, the employment-to-population ratio for young women was 26.2 per cent compared to 57.2 per cent for young men.

The difficult labour market situation of women compared to men is also reflected in their higher risk of being unemployed if they are economically active. The female unemployment rate in 2007 was 5.8 per cent compared to 4.8 per cent for men. (See table 3 and figure 5.) Fortunately, these rates are rather low compared with other regions and the concern that they might increase over time have, so far, not materialized.

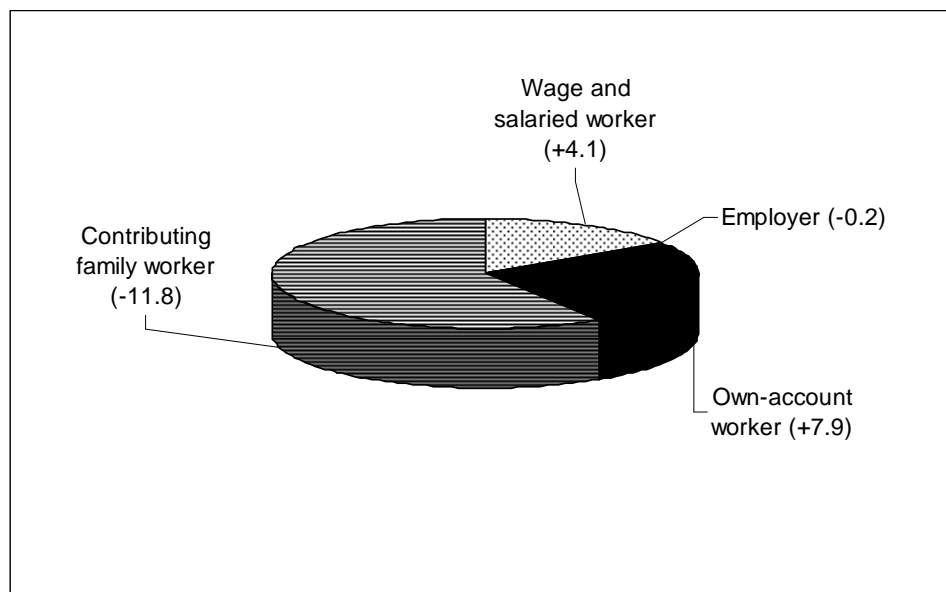
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<sup>17</sup> See for example, Oxfam, "9 girls' education in South Asia", Education and gender equality series, Programme Insights, Oxfam GB, February 2006; [www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/issues/education/downloads/edpaper9.pdf](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/issues/education/downloads/edpaper9.pdf) and UNICEF, *Gender achievements and prospects in education: The gap report* (New York, 2005); [www.ungei.org/gap/index.php](http://www.ungei.org/gap/index.php).

South Asian countries are still different from the rest of Asia in that their economies strongly depend on agriculture and, therefore, on weather conditions and the demand for agricultural products. The agricultural sector accounts for almost half of total employment (overall, 48 per cent of employment is in the agricultural sector), which is more than in any other region except sub-Saharan Africa. Women's employment share in agriculture is much higher than men's (60.5 per cent in 2007 compared to 42.9 per cent for men). (See table 5 and figure 3.) However, no other region in the world has seen as fast a decrease of agricultural employment as South Asia; over the last ten years, the share decreased by 13.6 percentage points for women and 10.6 for men.

Where did the jobs go? Surprisingly, given the large amount of attention paid to outsourcing of services sector jobs to India, it was the industrial sector that saw the biggest increase in its job share in the region: in 1997, 15.3 per cent of all jobs were found in this sector, while in 2007 the share was 21.7 per cent. And in terms of percentage points, the growth of employment in the industry sector was even bigger for women. Their share increased by 7.2 percentage points in comparison with 6.0 percentage points for men. The changes in this sector for both sexes are the most significant of all regions. The industry employment shares now stand at 18.4 per cent for women and 23.0 per cent for men and the male-female gap in this sector is now the second lowest in the world. In contrast, the share of employment in the services sector is growing at a slower pace than in most other regions; it increased by 6.3 percentage points for women and 4.6 percentage points for men between 1997 and 2007.

**Figure 11**  
**Distribution of female status in employment in South Asia, 2007**  
(percentage point change from 1997 in parentheses)



Source: Annex table 6.

Has the remarkable shift in sectoral employment shares been reflected in decreasing vulnerable employment in the region? Unfortunately, this has not been the case. The vulnerable employment shares of both men and women remained the highest in the world. And, even though the vulnerable employment share for women decreased by slightly more than for men (3.9 percentage points for women and 2.4 percentage points for men), women continue to carry a higher risk of finding themselves in a vulnerable employment situation: more than 8 out of 10 working women compared to more than 7 out of 10 working men are vulnerable. (See table 6 and figure 8.) An interesting development within the vulnerable employment sub-categories is that women are shifting out of contributing family work; however, it appears that the majority move into own-account work and not so much into wage and salaried work. This means that these

women move from one vulnerable group into another, only slightly increasing their chance for economic independence. (See figure 11.)

For the time being South Asia still has an enormous deficit in decent work; too many people in vulnerable employment situations and still 80 per cent of all working people living with their families in poverty on US\$2 a day. But, there are hopeful signs: people are moving out of the agricultural sector to work in more productive sectors, unemployment remains at low levels and productivity growth is leading to levels that may soon be sufficiently high to increase earnings of more workers to above the poverty threshold.

But do women profit from these positive trends? Those participating in labour markets do, but all those who remain outside the labour market, and this is the majority of the female population (63.8 per cent), may not benefit directly. Many women in the region continue their dependence on the male breadwinner, are still too often excluded from education systems and are trapped in situations where lack of labour market access does not allow them to move beyond their traditional role. One last figure should help illustrate the challenge: in South Asia there are 511 million women who are of working age and 540 million men, but only 174 million women have a job compared to 422 million men.

## 9. Central & South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS

### *Aspects of gender equality declining*

Whereas the first years after the transition were characterized by large decreases in labour force participation rates as well as employment-to-population ratios both for women and men in the region, the improved economic performance in recent years seems to have finally brought an end to the downward trends. The interesting question now is whether the historically high equality in labour markets will be reflected in current labour market indicators, or whether inequality has increased with the opening of market economies.

Approximately 80 women are economically active per 100 men and this ratio has not changed over the last ten years. This is the second smallest gap after the Developed Economies & EU. (See table 2.) Nor have there been significant changes over time in the gap between male and female employment-to-population ratios. The difference remains around 18 percentage points, with the female ratio at 45.6 per cent and the male ratio at 63.8 per cent in 2007. (See table 4 and figure 1.) Right after the beginning of the transition process in 1991, the gender gap in employment-to-population ratios was slightly higher, with a difference of more than 20 percentage points. Therefore, for the overall rates of participation and employment there is, so far, no indication of increasing inequality.

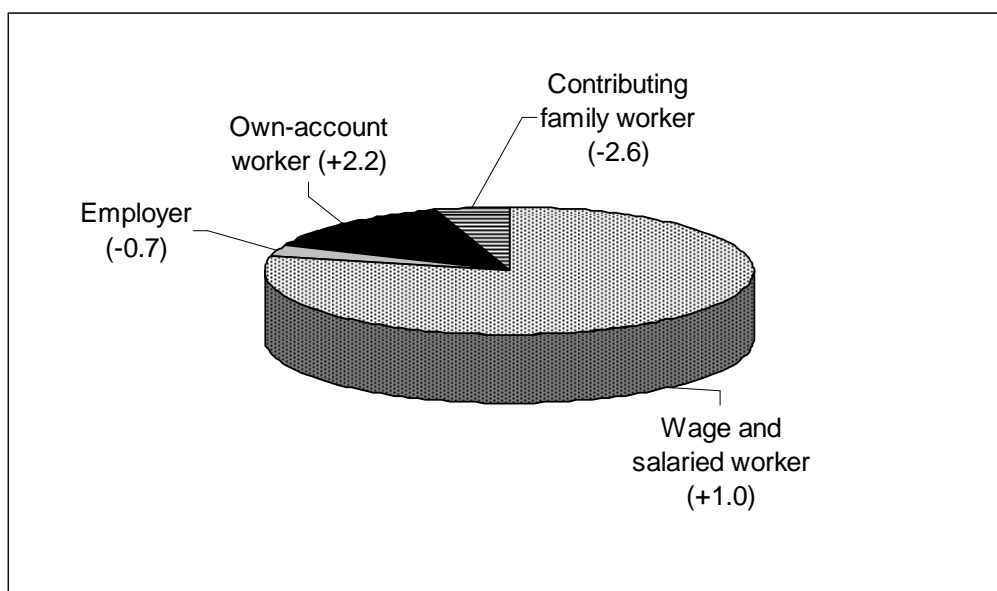
Employment-to-population ratios for young people also seem to have reached a turning point and are showing an upward trend in recent years, although the level remains low at 36.0 per cent. This is the third lowest employment ratio for young people in the world (after North Africa and the Middle East). But, unlike the latter two regions, the low ratios are not the result of non-economic barriers (social aspects, etc.) against the economic participation of women. In the case of Central & South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS, barriers to economic participation for young people, male and female, are more economic in nature. In this region, unemployment is quite high for both youth and adults. This means employers have a large pool of jobseekers to call upon, and it is the older jobseekers with some years of work experience who are likely to be employed first. Many young people, recognizing their chances of finding work are slim, become discouraged and fall outside of the labour market. The female youth employment-to-population ratio was low at 29.8 per cent in 2007 and the rate for young men was 42.0 per cent. (See table 4.) The gap between employment ratios of young women and young men has increased by more than 2 percentage

points within ten years, which should be seen as a first warning sign for increasing gender disparities in the future.

Unemployment rates in the region continue to remain above the global average. In 2007, the male unemployment rate of 8.7 per cent exceeded that of females (8.3 per cent). (See table 3 and figure 5.) Interestingly enough, the youth unemployment rates showed an opposite picture, with a higher rate for young women (17.9 per cent) than for young men (16.9 per cent). Again, this should be seen as a warning sign that gender equality in labour markets has started to deteriorate.

Even in many of the agriculture-oriented economies within the region, both male and female workers are moving quickly out of this sector. The regional share of workers in this sector decreased by 7.7 percentage points for women and 7.2 percentage points for men between 1997 and 2007. There were 19.2 per cent of women workers and 19.8 per cent of male workers engaged in agriculture in the latter year. (See table 5 and figure 3.) The share of people employed in industry also decreased over the ten-year period and this was almost completely driven by the move of women out of the sector: their share decreased by 4.3 percentage points to 17.9 per cent, whereas the male share stayed more or less constant at 32.6 per cent. As the only increasing sector in terms of employment shares, it is evident that it was the services sector that absorbed the majority of new workers, as well as some workers who moved out of agriculture and industry (others from these sectors would have flowed into unemployment). The share of female employment in services increased by 12 percentage points to 62.8 per cent while the male share grew by 7.8 percentage points to 47.6 per cent. For both sexes, this represents the highest sectoral increase of all the regions.

**Figure 12**  
**Distribution of female status in employment in Central & South-Eastern Europe & CIS, 2007**  
(percentage point change from 1997 in parentheses)



Source: Annex table 6.

Status in employment shares have changed little between 1997 and 2007 for both men and women. The biggest shift was that of women out of contributing family work, but with a decrease of only 2.6 percentage points over ten years even that change is minimal. (See figure 12.) As a result of these slow movements, vulnerable employment in the region decreased by only 0.8 percentage points and stood at 18.6 per cent for women and 19.9 per cent for men. (See table 6 and figure 8.) Both shares are low in comparison to other regions. The fact that women have a lower share than men is, of course, favourable for women, but their advantage was even bigger ten



years ago and has started to decline more recently. Given that only 2 out of 10 people face vulnerable employment situations – the second lowest share in the world after the Developed Economies & EU – it is clear that vulnerable employment is not so much of an issue in the region.

Historically, gender equality was a major characteristic in the region and some indicators still confirm signs of this trend. As discussed in last year's *Global employment trends for women*,<sup>18</sup> there was greater wage equality in the planned economies of this region than in industrialized or developing economies. Also, unemployment rates are lower for women than for men, as are the share of those working in vulnerable employment. Nevertheless, labour market indicators for young women are less favourable than for men and that does not bode well for the future of gender equality in the world of work.

## 10. Developed Economies & European Union

### *Female employment gains prominent but inequality in workplace responsibilities and decision-making continue*

In terms of economic activity, 82 women per 100 men in the region of the Developed Economies & European Union were participating in the labour market in 2007. (See table 2.) This represents the smallest gap worldwide. Also, employment-to-population ratios of women have changed considerably in the last ten years, moving up from 47.2 per cent in 1997 to 49.1 per cent in 2007. (See table 4 and figure 1.) In contrast, male employment-to-population ratios decreased from 65.9 to 64.0 per cent. The statistics reflect the fact that employment creation was dominated by the increase in the number of jobs for women: employment grew by 12 per cent for women and by only 4.9 per cent for men between 1997 and 2007. At the same time, unemployment continues to be higher for women than for men with rates of 6.7 and 6.2 per cent, respectively. (See table 3 and figure 5.) Both rates are lower than ten years ago.

The overall picture for young people looks different. First of all, the employment-to-population ratios do not show as large a gap as the overall ratios: young women's employment-to-population ratio stood at 42.8 per cent, 0.6 percentage points higher than ten years ago, whereas the rate of young men was 45.6 per cent after a considerable decrease of 2.4 percentage points between 1997 and 2007. At the same time, a young person's risk of being unemployed continues to be 2.4 times higher than an adult's, although the risk for young women is smaller than that for young men (youth unemployment rates are 12.5 per cent for women and 13.8 per cent for men).

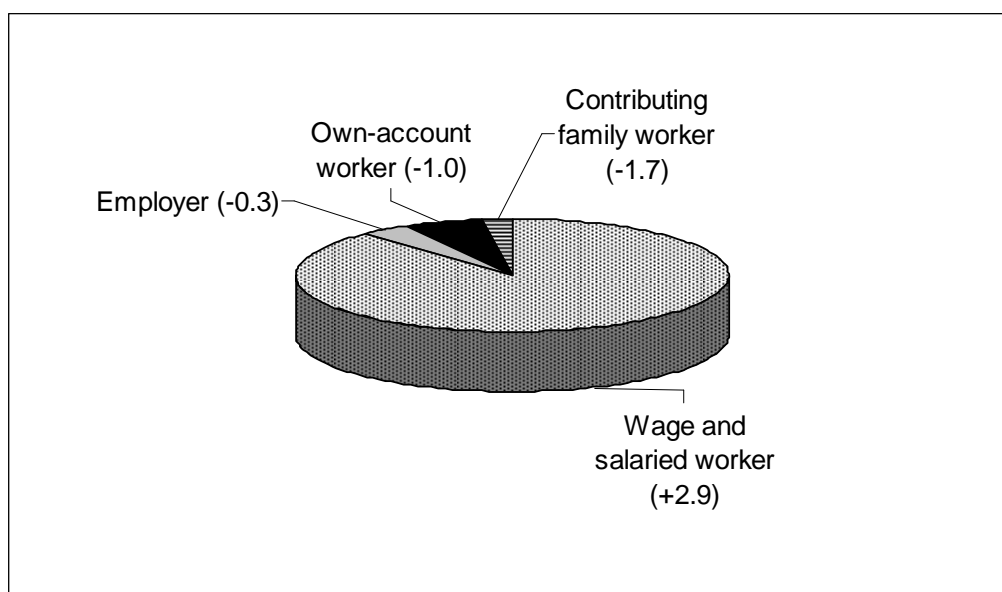
The move out of industry and into services continues in the region with a larger share of women leaving the sector than men. Even though the employment share in industry was already much lower for women than for men, it further decreased by 4.2 percentage points to a share of 12.5 per cent. (See table 5 and figure 3.) At the same time, employment of women in services increased to a share of 84.3 per cent. Men's industry share decreased to 34.3 per cent and the services sector share was 61.1 per cent in 2007.

Regarding status of employment, 88 per cent of all working women have gained access to a wage and salaried job, 3.9 per cent are employers, 5.8 per cent are own-account workers and 2.3 per cent are contributing family workers. (See table 6 and figure 13.) For men the shares are 82.1 per cent in wage and salaried jobs, 7.9 per cent employers, 9.3 per cent own-account workers and 0.8 per cent contributing family workers. The difference in the share of employers of men and women is particularly interesting, indicating that many more men are able and/or willing to carry the risks involved in engaging in self-employment with responsibility for employees. All status groups, with the exception of the wage and salaried group, have decreased their employment shares over time.

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<sup>18</sup> The report can be downloaded in English, French or Spanish from [www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/strat/global07.htm](http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/strat/global07.htm).

Figure 13  
**Distribution of female status in employment in  
 Developed Economies & European Union, 2007**  
 (percentage point change from 1997 in parentheses)



Source: Annex table 6.

Labour market analysis for the region of the Developed Economies & European Union will inevitably differ in comparison with the less developed regions in terms of the levels, trends and even significance of labour market indicators. The same is true for gender analysis. In this unique region, labour markets are well-defined and well-functioning in bringing together the supply and demand of labour. A broader array of labour market indicators is available in this region providing information on where inefficiencies in labour markets exist and where intervention is necessary to aid those whom the market itself cannot.<sup>19</sup> There is more information available in this region on, for example, the working conditions of women and participation in decision making in the world of work. That is why the authors of this report are able to discuss indicators such as pay gaps in this region and not in others.

The European Commission recently published findings showing that the pay gap between men and women has remained virtually unchanged at 15 per cent across all sectors in recent years and has narrowed by only one percentage point since 2000 in the EU.<sup>20</sup> Regarding wage gaps in the United States, several studies of the National Committee on Pay Equity show that wage gaps also continue to exist there.<sup>21</sup> As one of the main reasons for a stubborn pay gap, it is stated that women continue to be disproportionately employed in sectors where wages/earnings are lower and have been declining. (While the data is not available to support or refute gender pay gaps in other regions, the reason would certainly also apply to explain the existence of pay gaps worldwide.) Some evidence does exist to show that, at least in larger cities in the United States, wage equality has strengthened between well-educated men and women in certain high-skilled occupations.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>19</sup> The consistent investment in national statistical offices in the region means that reliable labour market statistics are produced on at least an annual basis.

<sup>20</sup> European Commission, "Equality between women and men - 2008" (Brussels, 2008); [http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/gender\\_equality/docs/com\\_2008\\_0010\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/gender_equality/docs/com_2008_0010_en.pdf).

<sup>21</sup> See the website of the National Committee on Pay Equity at [www.pay-equity.org/](http://www.pay-equity.org/).

<sup>22</sup> See, for example, "Young women earn more than men in big U.S. cities", Reuters, 3 August 2007; [www.reuters.com/article/domesticNews/idUSN0334472920070803](http://www.reuters.com/article/domesticNews/idUSN0334472920070803).

Another recently published study from the EU Commission<sup>23</sup> asserts that women account for just over 44 per cent of all workers, but they are more likely to be employed in junior positions. Women make up only 32 per cent of those considered as heads of businesses (chief executives, directors and managers of small businesses) in the EU (and keep in mind that the proportion is likely to be much less in all other regions). The under-representation of women at the top level is heightened in big business where men account for nearly 90 per cent of the board members of leading companies.

When it comes to participating in decision-making, the region saw improvements in the past and is leading when internationally compared. The same study states that the EU performs better than average in terms of female participation in government. The proportion of female members of parliament (single/lower house) rose from 16 per cent in 1997 to 24 per cent in 2007, though this is still well below the so-called critical mass of 30 per cent, deemed to be the minimum necessary for women to exert a meaningful influence on politics.

Besides the possibility of a slowdown in economic growth in 2008, the region faces other challenges: given the ageing of the population, there is a strong need to get more people – and especially women – into paid employment if governments are to secure living standards and maintain welfare systems. With only just more than 5 out of 10 women actively participating in labour markets, there is still an untapped potential that could, with the right policies in place, be better used. This can be done by moving away from policies that discourage people from working and companies from hiring, and by doing more to raise workers' skills. But no matter what measures are taken, they will only work if, in addition, conditions are set so that women are able to combine work and family life.

In summary, women in the Developed Economies & European Union, at least theoretically, have the same chance as men to participate in labour markets; however, there is still room for progress on matters such as equal pay, promotion and an increased facility to combine work and family life. It will be interesting to observe what will happen in the near future when growth and job creation are expected to slow down. Will women be the first to be pushed out of the labour market, as has happened during past periods of economic slowdown, or will men's employment be more negatively impacted?

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<sup>23</sup> European Commission. "Women and men in decision-making 2007. Analysis of the situation and trends" (Brussels, 2008); [http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/gender\\_equality/gender\\_mainstreaming/balancedparticipation/report\\_trends\\_final\\_2007\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/gender_equality/gender_mainstreaming/balancedparticipation/report_trends_final_2007_en.pdf).

## Annex 1. World and regional tables

The source of all tables in this report is ILO, Global Employment Trends Model, November 2007. The ILO Employment Trends Unit has designed, and actively maintains, three econometric models which are used to produce estimates of labour market indicators in the countries and years for which country-reported data are unavailable. The Global Employment Trends Model (GET Model) is used to produce estimates – disaggregated by age and sex as appropriate – of unemployment, employment-to-population ratios, status in employment, employment by sector, labour productivity and employment elasticities. Alternative econometric models are used to produce world and regional estimates of labour force participation and working poverty. The models use multivariate regression techniques to impute missing values at the country level, and are thus unique in giving the ILO the ability to produce regional labour market information for all regions in the world. For more information on the methodology of producing world and regional estimates, see [www.ilo.org/trends](http://www.ilo.org/trends).

Differences from estimates shown in past Global Employment Trends reports are due to revisions of the IMF and World Bank estimates of GDP and its components, which are used in the models, as well as to revisions in the labour market information used. The country-level input comes from ILO, *Key indicators of the labour market, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition* (Geneva, 2007).

\* 2007 data are preliminary.

Table 1  
Global labour market indicators, 1997 and 2007

	Female		Male		Total	
	1997	2007*	1997	2007*	1997	2007*
Labour force (millions)	1'071.7	1'267.7	1'625.0	1'895.3	2'696.7	3'163.0
Employment (millions)	1'001.6	1'186.1	1'530.3	1'787.0	2'531.9	2'973.1
Unemployment (millions)	70.2	81.6	94.6	108.3	164.8	189.9
Labour force participation rate (%)	52.9	52.5	80.4	78.8	66.7	65.6
Employment-to-population ratio (%)	49.5	49.1	75.7	74.3	62.6	61.7
Unemployment rate (%)	6.5	6.4	5.8	5.7	6.1	6.0

Table 2  
Male and female labour force participation rates, 1997 and 2007,  
and the gender gap in economically active females per 100 males, 2007

	Female LFPR (%)		Male LFPR (%)		Number of economically active females per 100 economically active males
	1997	2007*	1997	2007*	
WORLD	52.9	52.5	80.4	78.8	66.9
Developed Economies & European Union	51.3	52.7	70.8	68.2	82.0
Central & South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	50.7	49.7	70.9	69.8	80.5
East Asia	70.9	67.1	84.5	81.4	78.9
South-East Asia & the Pacific	57.4	59.1	82.8	82.8	73.2
South Asia	36.6	36.2	83.8	82.0	41.7
Latin America & the Caribbean	47.2	52.9	81.8	79.1	70.5
Middle East	25.6	33.3	77.5	78.3	38.7
Sub-Saharan Africa	64.1	62.6	87.4	86.1	75.0
North Africa	23.8	26.1	75.5	75.9	34.8

**Table 3**  
**Male and female unemployment rates, total and youth, 1997 and 2007**

	Unemployment rate (%)							
	Female total		Male total		Female youth		Male youth	
	1997	2007*	1997	2007*	1997	2007*	1997	2007*
World	6.5	6.4	5.8	5.7	12.3	12.5	12.0	12.2
Developed Economies & European Union	8.1	6.7	6.9	6.2	15.0	12.5	14.4	13.8
Central & South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	10.9	8.3	10.6	8.7	21.4	17.9	19.8	16.9
East Asia	3.1	2.7	4.2	3.8	6.3	5.8	8.7	7.9
South-East Asia & the Pacific	4.2	6.9	3.9	5.6	10.2	16.7	9.8	16.0
South Asia	5.3	5.8	4.4	4.8	10.9	9.9	9.9	9.8
Latin America & the Caribbean	10.7	10.9	6.3	6.9	19.3	21.6	11.9	14.0
Middle East	18.6	15.6	11.3	10.3	33.5	29.5	23.4	21.1
Sub-Saharan Africa	9.6	9.1	7.7	7.5	14.9	13.9	14.5	13.6
North Africa	16.5	16.2	10.1	9.0	30.3	32.3	22.2	21.2

**Table 4**  
**Male and female employment-to-population ratios, total and youth, 1997 and 2007**

	Employment-to-population ratio (%)							
	Female total		Male total		Female youth		Male youth	
	1997	2007*	1997	2007*	1997	2007*	1997	2007*
World	49.5	49.1	75.7	74.3	42.5	40.1	58.3	55.1
Developed Economies & European Union	47.2	49.1	65.9	64.0	42.1	42.8	48.0	45.6
Central & South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	45.2	45.6	63.4	63.8	30.9	29.8	41.0	42.0
East Asia	68.7	65.2	80.9	78.4	69.8	64.5	66.8	61.6
South-East Asia & the Pacific	55.0	55.1	79.6	78.1	45.0	40.3	58.5	53.7
South Asia	34.7	34.1	80.1	78.1	27.4	26.2	60.2	57.2
Latin America & the Caribbean	42.1	47.1	76.6	73.7	34.3	35.3	60.9	53.4
Middle East	20.8	28.1	68.7	70.3	15.3	19.5	42.3	44.3
Sub-Saharan Africa	58.0	56.9	80.6	79.7	50.4	49.0	64.8	63.5
North Africa	19.9	21.9	67.8	69.1	15.4	14.7	42.1	39.8

**Table 5**  
**Male and female employment by sector (as share of total employment),**  
**1997 and 2007**

	Employment in agriculture (%)		Employment in industry (%)		Employment in services (%)	
	1997	2007*	1997	2007*	1997	2007*
<b>Female</b>						
World	43.5	36.1	16.8	17.6	39.6	46.3
Developed Economies & European Union	5.3	3.2	16.7	12.5	78.1	84.3
Central & South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	26.9	19.2	22.2	17.9	50.8	62.8
East Asia	51.9	41.0	22.8	25.5	25.3	33.5
South-East Asia & the Pacific	50.3	43.4	13.9	16.3	35.8	40.3
South Asia	74.0	60.5	11.2	18.4	14.7	21.1
Latin America & the Caribbean	14.6	10.7	13.6	14.5	71.9	74.8
Middle East	28.4	31.0	20.0	18.8	51.6	50.2
Sub-Saharan Africa	74.8	67.9	5.9	5.8	19.2	26.4
North Africa	31.2	32.6	19.1	15.2	49.7	52.2
<b>Male</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>2007*</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>2007*</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>2007*</b>
World	40.0	34.0	24.0	25.6	36.1	40.4
Developed Economies & European Union	6.7	4.6	37.1	34.3	56.1	61.1
Central & South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	27.0	19.8	33.2	32.6	39.8	47.6
East Asia	44.6	36.3	25.6	28.0	29.8	35.7
South-East Asia & the Pacific	47.7	44.3	19.4	21.0	32.9	34.7
South Asia	53.5	42.9	17.0	23.0	29.5	34.1
Latin America & the Caribbean	28.6	24.7	24.8	27.1	46.5	48.2
Middle East	19.6	12.5	27.2	28.0	53.3	59.4
Sub-Saharan Africa	70.0	62.4	10.4	12.4	19.6	25.2
North Africa	36.6	32.9	20.1	22.3	43.3	44.8

**Table 6**  
**Male and female status in employment (as share of total employment),**  
**1997 and 2007**

	Wage and salaried workers (%)		Employers (%)		Own-account workers (%)		Contributing family workers (%)		Vulnerable employment (%)	
	1997	2007*	1997	2007*	1997	2007*	1997	2007*	1997	2007*
<b>Female</b>										
WORLD	41.8	46.4	2.1	1.8	21.6	26.9	34.5	24.9	56.1	51.7
Developed Economies & European Union	85.1	88.0	4.2	3.9	6.8	5.8	4.0	2.3	10.7	8.1
Central & South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	77.5	78.5	3.6	3.0	11.4	13.6	7.6	5.0	18.9	18.6
East Asia	28.7	39.2	1.6	0.7	25.7	36.8	44.0	23.3	69.6	60.1
South-East Asia & the Pacific	29.4	35.1	1.0	0.9	23.2	28.0	46.5	36.0	69.6	63.9
South Asia	11.4	15.5	0.5	0.3	17.4	25.2	70.7	58.9	88.1	84.2
Latin America & the Caribbean	67.8	64.6	2.1	2.7	21.7	25.5	8.4	7.1	30.1	32.7
Middle East	43.7	55.3	1.1	1.5	25.7	17.9	29.4	25.3	55.2	43.2
Sub-Saharan Africa	12.4	15.5	2.6	2.8	48.0	46.9	37.0	34.7	85.0	81.7
North Africa	49.3	58.4	2.2	3.2	16.2	12.4	32.3	26.0	48.4	38.4
<b>Male</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>2007*</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>2007*</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>2007*</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>2007*</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>2007*</b>
WORLD	44.9	47.9	4.3	3.4	37.2	37.4	13.5	11.3	50.7	48.7
Developed Economies & European Union	80.6	82.1	8.1	7.9	10.1	9.3	1.2	0.8	11.3	10.1
Central & South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	74.7	76.1	4.2	4.1	17.5	17.7	3.6	2.1	21.0	19.9
East Asia	38.4	46.4	3.7	1.3	39.8	40.5	18.1	11.8	57.9	52.3
South-East Asia & the Pacific	38.1	41.6	2.9	2.3	43.3	41.5	15.7	14.6	58.9	56.1
South Asia	21.0	24.4	2.2	1.2	58.0	56.1	18.8	18.3	76.7	74.4
Latin America & the Caribbean	62.4	60.6	5.5	5.9	26.6	29.7	5.6	3.8	32.1	33.5
Middle East	58.7	65.2	5.8	6.7	28.1	23.0	7.4	5.2	35.5	28.2
Sub-Saharan Africa	25.2	30.3	3.4	3.2	49.6	48.0	21.8	18.4	71.4	66.4
North Africa	57.1	59.9	9.4	11.9	17.9	16.2	15.6	12.0	33.5	28.2

## Annex 2. Global employment trends – regional groupings

<p><b>Developed Economies &amp; European Union</b></p> <p><b>European Union</b></p> <p>Austria Belgium Bulgaria Cyprus Czech Republic Denmark Estonia Finland France Germany Greece Hungary Ireland Italy Latvia Lithuania Luxembourg Malta Netherlands Poland Romania Portugal Slovakia Slovenia Spain Sweden United Kingdom</p> <p><b>North America</b></p> <p>Canada United States</p> <p><b>Other Developed Economies</b></p> <p>Australia Gibraltar Greenland</p>	<p>Isle of Man Israel Japan New Zealand San Marino St. Pierre and Miquelon</p> <p><b>Western Europe (non-EU)</b></p> <p>Andora Iceland Liechtenstein Monaco Norway Switzerland</p> <p><b>Central &amp; South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) &amp; CIS</b></p> <p><b>Central &amp; South-Eastern Europe</b></p> <p>Albania Bosnia and Herzegovina Croatia The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Serbia and Montenegro Turkey</p> <p><b>Commonwealth of Independent States</b></p> <p>Armenia Azerbaijan Belarus Georgia Kazakhstan Kyrgyzstan Republic of Moldova</p>	<p>Russian Federation Tajikistan Turkmenistan Ukraine Uzbekistan</p> <p><b>East Asia</b></p> <p>China Hong Kong, China Korea, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Republic of Macau, China Mongolia Taiwan, China</p> <p><b>South-East Asia &amp; the Pacific</b></p> <p><b>South-East Asia</b></p> <p>Brunei Darussalam Cambodia East Timor Indonesia Lao People's Democratic Republic Malaysia Myanmar Philippines Singapore Thailand Viet Nam</p> <p><b>Pacific Islands</b></p> <p>American Samoa Cook Islands Fiji French Polynesia Guam Kiribati Marshall Islands Nauru New Caledonia</p>	<p>Niue Northern Mariana Islands Papua New Guinea Samoa Solomon Islands Tokelau Tonga Tuvalu Vanuatu Wallis and Futuna Islands</p> <p><b>South Asia</b></p> <p>Afghanistan Bangladesh Bhutan India Maldives Nepal Pakistan Sri Lanka</p> <p><b>Latin America &amp; the Caribbean</b></p> <p><b>Caribbean</b></p> <p>Anguilla Antigua and Barbuda Aruba Bahamas Barbados Bermuda British Virgin Islands Cayman Islands Cuba Dominica Dominican Republic Grenada Guadeloupe Guyana Haiti Jamaica</p>	<p>Martinique Montserrat Netherlands Antilles Puerto Rico Saint Kitts and Nevis Saint Lucia Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Suriname Trinidad and Tobago Turks and Caicos Islands United States Virgin Islands</p> <p><b>Central America</b></p> <p>Belize Costa Rica El Salvador Guatemala Honduras Mexico Nicaragua Panama</p> <p><b>South America</b></p> <p>Argentina Bolivia Brazil Chile Colombia Ecuador Falkland Islands (Malvinas) French Guiana Paraguay Peru Uruguay Venezuela</p> <p><b>North Africa</b></p> <p>Algeria Egypt</p>	<p>Libyan Arab Jamahiriya Morocco Sudan Tunisia</p> <p><b>Sub-Saharan Africa</b></p> <p><b>Eastern Africa</b></p> <p>Burundi Comoros Djibouti Eritrea Ethiopia Kenya Madagascar Malawi Mauritius Mozambique Réunion Rwanda Seychelles Somalia Tanzania, United Republic of Uganda Zambia Zimbabwe</p> <p><b>Middle Africa</b></p> <p>Angola Cameroon Central African Republic Chad Congo Congo, Democratic Republic of Equatorial Guinea Gabon Sao Tome and Principe</p>	<p><b>Southern Africa</b></p> <p>Botswana Lesotho Namibia South Africa Swaziland</p> <p><b>Western Africa</b></p> <p><b>Eastern Africa</b></p> <p>Benin Burkina Faso Cape Verde Côte d'Ivoire Gambia Ghana Guinea Guinea-Bissau Liberia Mali Mauritania Niger Nigeria Senegal Sierra Leone St. Helena Togo</p> <p><b>Middle East</b></p> <p>Bahrain Iran, Islamic Republic of Iraq Jordan Kuwait Lebanon Oman Qatar Saudi Arabia Syrian Arab Republic United Arab Emirates West Bank and Gaza Strip Yemen</p>
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## Annex 3. Glossary of labour market terms

Labour market statistics and the indicators generated from the statistics can cause a great deal of confusion and, therefore, misinterpretation among users. The following glossary of labour market concepts should serve to clarify much of the terminology used in this report.

**Contributing family worker:** an own-account worker who works without pay in an establishment operated by a related person living in the same household.

**Currently active population:** the best known measure of the economically active population, also known as the “labour force” (see definition below).

**Discouraged worker:** a person who is without work and available for work but did not seek work (and therefore could not be classified as “unemployed”) because they felt that no work would be available to them. According to the standard classification system, the discouraged worker is counted among the inactive, although many analysts would like to see the number of discouraged workers added to the unemployed to give a broader measure of the unutilized supply of labour. “Discouraged” implies a sense of “giving up”, meaning the discouraged worker has simply given up any hope of finding work for reasons such as they feel they lack the proper qualifications, they do not know where or how to look for work, or they feel that no suitable work is available. The discouraged worker, therefore, could be said to be “involuntarily” inactive.

**Economically active population:** all persons who supplied labour for the production of goods and services in a specified reference period; in other words, all those who undertook economic activity (also known as “market activities”), as defined by the 1993 UN System of National Accounts (SNA),<sup>1</sup> during the measured time frame. Often used interchangeably with “labour force” (see definition below).

**Employed:** a person who performed some work – for at least one hour during the specified reference period – for wage or salary (paid employment) or for profit or family gain (self-employment). A person is also considered employed if they have a job but was temporarily not at work during the reference period.

**Employer:** a self-employed person with employees.

**Employment:** a measure of the total number of employed persons.

**Employment-to-population ratio:** the number of employed persons as a percentage of the working-age population. This indicator measures the proportion of the population who could be working (the working-age population) who *are* working, and as such provides some information on the efficacy of the economy to create jobs.

**Inactive:** a person who is neither employed nor unemployed, or, equivalently, is not in the labour force.

**Inactivity rate:** the sum of all inactive persons as a percentage of the working-age population. As an inverse to the labour force participation rate, the inactivity rate serves as a measure of the relative size of the population who do *not* supply labour for the production of goods and services.

**Job:** a paid position of regular employment. According to the standard definition, therefore, only the wage and salaried workers could have a “job”. Common usage, however, has extended the concept to encompass any work-related task, which means that any employed person, whether a paid employee or self-employed, could qualify as “with a job”.

**Labour force:**<sup>2</sup> the sum of all persons above a specified age (the nationally defined “working age”) who were either employed or unemployed over a specified short reference period; the labour force is the best known measure of the economically active population, and is also known as the “currently active

population”. The labour force (employment + unemployment) + the economically inactive population = total working-age population of a country.

**Labour force participation rate:** the sum of persons in the labour force as a percentage of the working-age population. The indicator serves as a measure of the relative size of the labour supply available for the production of goods and services.

**Labour market:** the virtual (non-tangible) arena where workers compete for jobs and employers compete for workers. Analysts use labour market information, including statistics such as the employment-to-population ratio, the unemployment rate, etc., to make assessments of how well the labour market functions and how and/or why the supply of labour and the demand for labour do not meet at perfect equilibrium.

**Own-account worker:** a person who is self-employed with no employees working for them.

**Unemployed:** a person who, during the specified short reference period, was (a) without work, (b) currently available for work, and (c) seeking work. A person is also considered unemployed if they are not currently working but have made arrangements to take up paid or self-employment at a date subsequent to the reference period.

**Unemployment:** a measure of the total number of unemployed persons.

**Unemployment rate:** unemployment as a percentage of the total labour force (employment + unemployment). The indicator is widely used as a measure of unutilized labour supply.

**Vulnerable employment:** the sum of own-account workers and contributing family workers.

**Wage and salaried worker:** persons in paid employment jobs, where the incumbent holds an explicit or implicit contract and receives a basic remuneration which is not directly dependent on the revenue of the unit for which they work; also known as “employee”.

**Work:** as a verb, a general term meaning to engage in “economic activity”, or, equivalently, to supply labour as input in the production of goods and services; as a noun, “work” has come to be used interchangeably with “job” and “employment” – for example, a person who supplies labour might say they “have work” or “have a job” or even “have employment”.

**Working:** an informal synonym for “employed”.

<sup>1</sup> See website <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/sna1993/introduction.asp> for additional information on the SNA and the guidelines for determining economic activity.

<sup>2</sup> The international standard that serves to guide statisticians in the definition of the economically active population and its categories is the Resolution concerning statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment, adopted by the 13th International Conference of Labour Statisticians, October 1982; [www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/download/res/ecacpop.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/download/res/ecacpop.pdf).





# ILO INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2008

## BACKGROUND

The ILO has firmly established itself in the Geneva community as the regular host for a major event commemorating International Women's Day (IWD). Over the past years, ILO headquarters and field offices have held events, often highlighting the role and/or achievements of women in a particular field of work, or associating the events with the ILO's ongoing work in gender equity and in improving the situation of women in the world of work.

## PLANNED INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY ACTIVITIES

In 2008, the slogan that will set the basis for ILO's International Women's Day is "Investing in Decent Work for women: Not just right, but smart", based on the overwhelming evidence that promoting equality is not only a matter of human rights, but it also makes good economic sense. Empowering women goes beyond the intrinsic value for women themselves, and has profound impacts on families, communities, national economies right through to achieving global goals such as all eight MDGs.

The ILO theme is also connected to the identified theme of the 52<sup>nd</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women theme and the official United Nations IWD theme **financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women**. The slogan that will set the basis for the UN's IWD celebrations is "Investing in women and girls".

- As with previous years, a panel discussion at ILO headquarters is planned for **Friday, March 7** (as March 8 falls on a Saturday).

The panellists are:

~ **Ms. Evelyn Oputu** (Managing Director - Bank of Industry and the former Executive Director of First National Bank, Nigeria)



~ **Ms. Michaela Walsh** (Founder of Women's World Banking and the first woman manager of Merrill Lynch International, United States)

~ **Ms. Rupa Manel Silva** (Founder of the Women's Development Service Cooperative Society/ Women's Bank of Sri Lanka)

~ **Ms. Agnes Jongerius** (President of the Trade Union Confederation of the Netherlands, and Vice President of the ITUC)

## RESOURCES AND MATERIALS

- An updated *Global Employment Trends for Women*, focusing on the situation of working women worldwide, will be made available in three languages (English, French and Spanish) on **March 7, 2008**. A press release discussing the report's main findings will be launched on March 6.

- A brochure focusing on Women and Microfinance and a Fact sheet on Decent Work for Women will be launched on **Friday March 7**. This material will be available online as well as in paper copy at the end of February.

# ILO International Women's Day, 2009

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window displaying the ILO website. The address bar shows the URL: [http://www.ilo.org/gender/Events/lang--en/WCMS\\_101670/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/gender/Events/lang--en/WCMS_101670/index.htm). The page header features the 'GENDER Bureau for Gender Equality' logo and navigation links for 'Español' and 'Français'. A left sidebar contains a menu with 'About us', 'Events', 'Information resources', 'Technical cooperation projects', and 'Links'. The main content area is titled 'ILO celebration of International Women's Day 2009 - 6 March 2009' with the theme 'Work and family: The way to care is to share!'. A table provides event details: 'When: 6 March 2009', 'Where: Geneva, Switzerland', 'Type: Campaign', 'Regions and countries covered: Global', 'Unit responsible: Bureau for Gender Equality', 'Contact(s): ILO Bureau for gender equality (gender@ilo.org)', 'Subjects: work life balance, child care, family responsibilities, gender equality, gender, womens empowerment', and 'Other languages: Español + Français'. A 'KEY RESOURCES' section lists: 'International Women's Day Poster - [pdf 242 KB]', 'Postcard - Work and family: The way to care is to share! - [pdf 997 KB]', 'Selected ILO publications on Work and Family', and 'Brochure - Work and Family: The way to care is to share! - [pdf 643 KB]'. The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the Start button and several open applications, including 'ILO Applic...', 'Document...', 'C:\Monica...', 'Gender eq...', 'ILO celeb...', and 'Document...'. The system clock indicates 12:17.

Site: [http://www.ilo.org/gender/Events/lang--en/WCMS\\_101670/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/gender/Events/lang--en/WCMS_101670/index.htm)

**Global Employment Trends  
for Women  
March 2009**

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## 1. Introduction

The *Global Employment Trends 2009* examined the most current information available in order to assess the impact of the financial crisis and slowdown in world economic growth on jobs and what we could expect from several possible scenarios for the way the situation might evolve in the year ahead. This issue of the *Global Employment Trends for Women* looks at the gender aspects of this impact, and updates indicators on the situation of women in labour markets around the world.

This report reconfirms that gender inequality remains an issue within labour markets globally. Women suffer multiple disadvantages in terms of access to labour markets, and often do not have the same level of freedom as men to choose to work. Gender differences in labour force participation rates and unemployment rates are a persistent feature of global labour markets. In 2008, an estimated 6.3 per cent of the world's female labour force was not working but looking for work, up from 6.0 per cent in 2007, while the corresponding rate for males was 5.9 per cent in 2008, up from 5.5 per cent in 2007.

Women also face constraints in terms of sectors of economic activity in which they would like to work and working conditions to which they aspire. Women are overrepresented in the agricultural sector, and if the more industrialized regions are excluded, almost half of female employment can be found in this sector alone. Women are also often in a disadvantaged position in terms of the share of vulnerable employment (i.e. unpaid family workers and own-account workers) in total employment. These workers are most likely to be characterized by insecure employment, low earnings and low productivity. Those women who are able to secure the relative comfort of wage and salaried employment are often not receiving the same remuneration as their male counterparts. Gender wage differentials may be due to a variety of factors, including crowding of women in low paying industries and differences in skills and work experience, but may also be the result of discrimination. Given the constraints women are facing, promoting gender equality and empowering women is not only an important goal of the Millennium Declaration in itself,<sup>1</sup> it is also pivotal to achieving the new target on full and productive employment and decent work for all, and virtually all remaining goals and targets.

By the end of 2008, working poverty, vulnerable employment and unemployment were beginning to rise as the effects of the economic slowdown spread. With the deepening of the recession in 2009, the global jobs crisis is expected to worsen sharply. Furthermore, we can expect that for many of those who manage to keep a job, earnings and other conditions of employment will deteriorate. The impact of the crisis will be felt by both men and women, but not necessarily in the same manner. This report presents alternative scenarios for selected labour market indicators in 2008 and 2009 in order to illustrate the effect on gender differentials in labour markets on the basis of changes in the economic environment.

A distinction should be made between the continued disadvantaged position of women in global labour markets, and the immediate impact of the current economic crisis. In developed economies, there are signals that the crisis may be at least as detrimental for men as for women, and possibly more so. This is suggested by the stronger increase of the unemployment rate in developed economies for men compared to women in 2008 (1.1 percentage points for men versus 0.8 points for women). This report highlights some factors at the country level that influence the gender impact in developed economies, as well as the variation in country experiences.

Access to full and productive employment and decent work is crucial for all, and decent work deficits are the primary cause of poverty and social instability. The trends summarized in this report are therefore extremely worrying for both women and men, and serve to highlight the continued importance of an internationally coordinated effort to stop the slowdown and start the global economy onto a much more sustainable path.

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<sup>1</sup> See: <http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.pdf> and <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>.

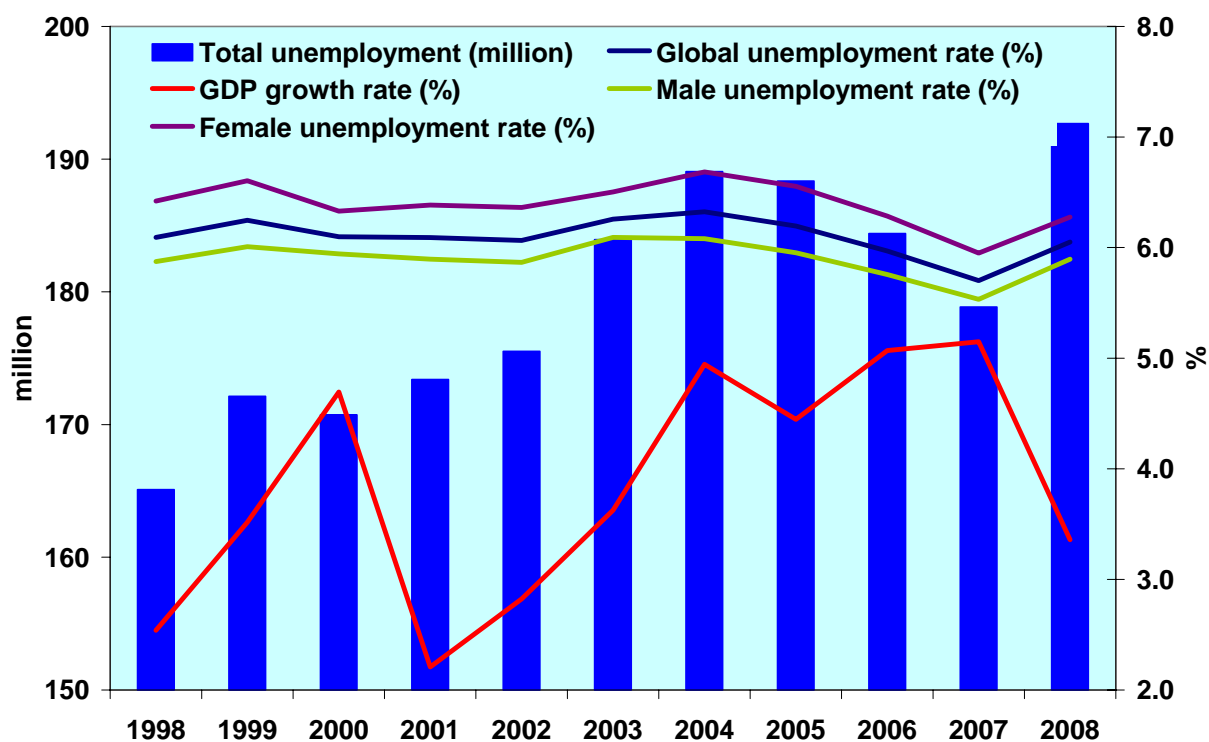
This issue of *Global Employment Trends for Women* starts with an analysis of recent labour market developments based on currently available information (Section 2; see Annex 1 for tables referred to in this report; Annex 2 for scenarios; Annex 3 for regional figures and groupings of economies; and Annex 4 for a note on the methodology used to produce world and regional estimates). Section 3 looks at the gender impact of the economic crisis in developed economies, followed by the projection of labour market indicators for 2008 and 2009 in Section 4 (see Annex 5 for methodological details). A final Section 5 concludes, and highlights a number of policy considerations.

## 2. Economic growth, the labour market and gender inequality

In January 2009, the IMF again revised the global economic outlook downward, following similar revisions in October and November of 2008. According to the new projections, global economic growth in 2009 will be only 0.5 per cent. This is considerably lower than was expected in November 2008, and the implications for the 2009 labour market projections published in the *Global Employment Trends* in January 2009 will be analysed in a later section below (see Table A1 for revised estimates of economic growth).

The new estimate for global economic growth in 2008 is 3.4 per cent, which is 0.4 percentage points lower than the estimate produced in late 2008.<sup>2</sup> As Figure 1 shows, global economic growth in 2008 was significantly below the rates seen in recent years, which resulted in a major weakening in a number of labour markets. After four consecutive years of decreases, the global unemployment rate increased from 5.7 per cent in 2007 to 6.0 per cent in 2008 (Table A2). The ranks of the unemployed increased by 13.8 million people between 2007 and 2008, which is the largest year-on-year increase in the period for which global estimates are available.<sup>3</sup> The global number of unemployed in 2008 is estimated at 193 million.<sup>4</sup>

**Figure 1**  
Global unemployment trends and economic growth, by sex, 1998-2008\*



\*2008 are preliminary estimates

Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, January 2009, see also source of Table A2

<sup>2</sup> World output in 2007 was revised upward (from 5.0 to 5.2 per cent), which also has an effect on the global and regional estimates of labour market indicators for previous years produced in this report in comparison with the *Global Employment Trends* 2009 released in January 2009. See IMF, *World Economic Outlook* (Washington, DC, October 2008), updated in January 2009; <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2009/update/01/index.htm>.

<sup>3</sup> Global and regional estimates are produced for the period 1991 to the present year.

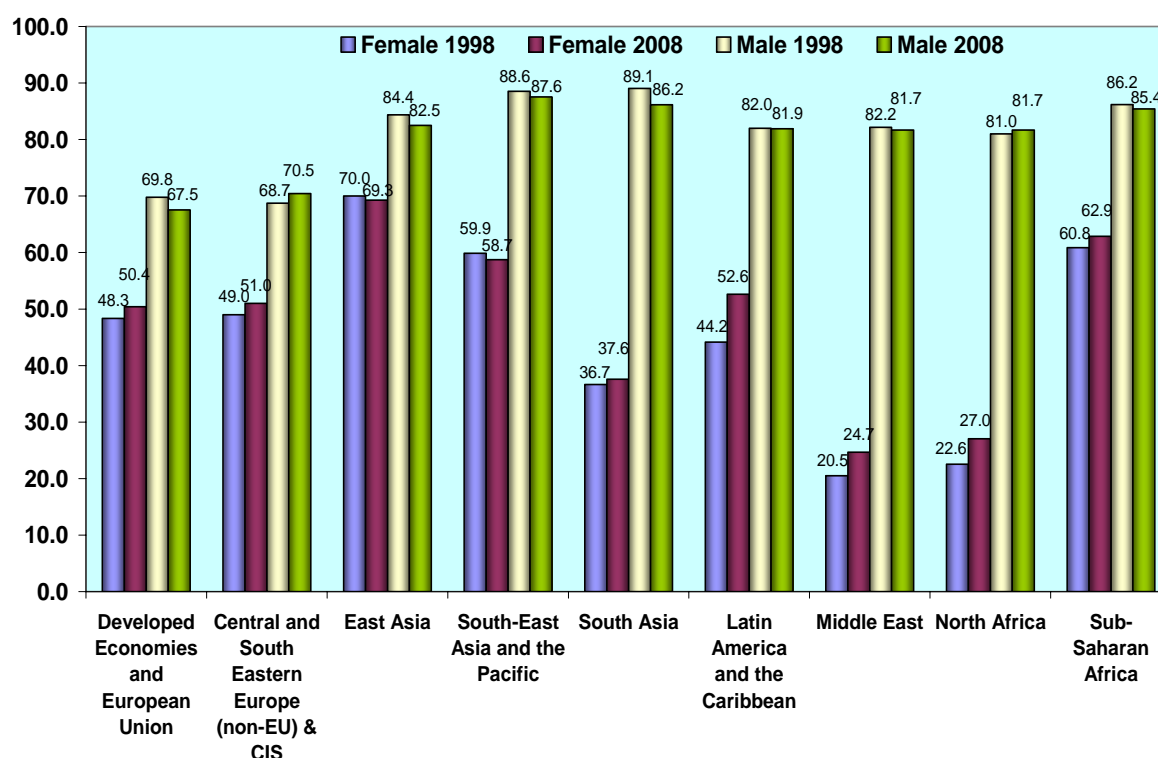
<sup>4</sup> For the definition of unemployment, and concepts and definitions of all labour market indicators discussed in this report, please see *Key Indicators of the Labour Market*, 5th Edition (Geneva, ILO, 2007), in particular the references to resolutions adopted by the International Conference of Labour Statisticians. See: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/strat/kilm/>.

The unemployment rate for women was 6.3 per cent in 2008, as compared to a rate of 5.9 per cent for men. Between 2007 and 2008, the unemployment rate increased for both men (0.4 percentage points) and women (0.3 percentage points), thus slightly reducing the gender gap in unemployment rates that has been seen in the past decade (Figure 1). In terms of numbers of unemployed, 112 million out of the total of 193 million are men, and 81 million are women (Table A3).

The gender gap in the unemployment rate is one indication of the gender inequality in global labour markets. Another important aspect of this inequality is the difference in access to labour markets, as labour market access has much to do with economic empowerment for women. Even though global male and female labour force participation rates show signs of convergence, the gap is narrowing at a very slow pace and it still amounted to almost 25 percentage points in 2008 (Table A4). Women made up 40.5 per cent of the global labour force in 2008, up from 39.9 per cent in 1998.

Similar to labour force participation, there is a large gender gap in employment-to-population rates, and this gap is narrowing also very slowly. Globally, the employment-to-population rate for the female adult population increased by 1.2 percentage points between 1998 and 2008, as opposed to a decrease by 1.1 percentage points for male adults (see Table A5).<sup>5</sup> Regional differences in both levels and changes over time are shown in Figure 2.

**Figure 2**  
**Adult employment-to-population ratios, by sex and region, 1998 and 2008\* (%)**



\*2008 are preliminary estimates

Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, January 2009, see also source of Table A2

<sup>5</sup> Excluding youth (aged 15-24), thus focusing on 'adults' (aged 25 and above), allows for an analysis which mostly excludes the effects of enrolment in educational and training programmes on labour force participation and employment-to-population rates.

The female adult employment-to-population rate increased in seven out of nine regions. The largest increases can be seen in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East and North Africa, but the rates remain well below 30 per cent for adult women in the latter two regions. Only East Asia and South-East Asia and the Pacific saw a decrease. In East Asia, however, the female adult employment-to-population rate is very high and the gender gap in employment-to-population rates is the smallest of all regions. In most regions, the male adult employment-to-population rate decreased between 1998 and 2008, North Africa and Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS being the exceptions. Annex 3 presents more detailed figures that show adult employment-to-population ratios in each region over time.

It is clear that, despite the progress made in many regions, far fewer women participate in labour markets than men. In developed economies, part of the gender gaps in participation and employment can be attributed to the fact that some women freely choose to stay at home and can afford not to enter the labour market. Yet in some developing regions of the world, remaining outside of the labour force is not a choice for the majority of women but an obligation; it is likely that women would opt to work in these regions if it became socially acceptable to do so. This of course does not mean that these women remain at home doing nothing; most are heavily engaged in household activities and unpaid family care responsibilities. Regardless, because most female household work continues to be classified as non-economic activity, the women who are thus occupied are classified as outside of the labour force. While it may not be correct to assume that all women want employment, it is safe to say that women want to be given the same freedom as men to choose to work and to earn a salary if they want to. This is unlikely to be the case.

### **Gender inequality in sectoral employment and vulnerable employment**

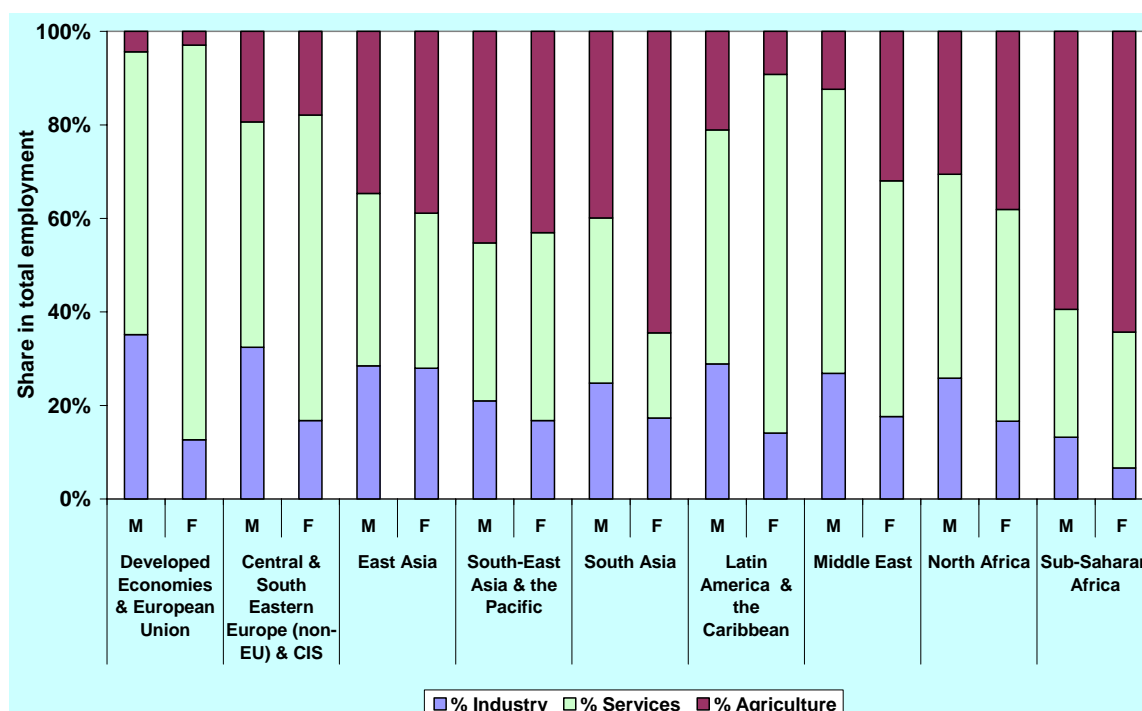
Out of the 3.0 billion people that were employed around the world in 2008, 1.2 billion are women (40.4 per cent). In which sectors are women working, and what are the working conditions faced by women? As shown in Figure 3, only a small proportion of employed women are working in industry (18.3 per cent in 2008, as compared to 26.6 per cent of men); the large majority are in agriculture and, increasingly, in the services sector. The services sector accounted for 46.3 per cent of all female employment in 2008, as compared to 41.2 per cent of male employment (Table A6a-c).

The global difference between the share of industrial employment in total male and female employment is found in all regions, ranging from a low of 0.5 percentage points in East Asia to 22.5 points in the Developed Economies and the European Union (see Figure 3). The picture with respect to the other two sectors is more varied. In three regions the share of services in total male employment exceeds the corresponding share in total female employment, and in four regions the same is true for the share of agriculture.

Overall, women are still overrepresented in the agricultural sector. Globally, the share of women employed in agriculture stands at 35.4 per cent, as compared to 32.2 per cent for men, but this proportion rises to almost half of all female employment, at 48.4 per cent, if the more industrialized regions such as the Developed Economies and the European Union, Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS and Latin America and the Caribbean are excluded. The corresponding percentage for males is 40.1, resulting in a difference of almost 8 percentage points in the remaining regions of the world. In Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia the agricultural sector makes up more than 60 per cent of all female employment.



**Figure 3**  
**Distribution of employment by sector (sectoral employment as percentage of total employment), by sex and region, 2008\***



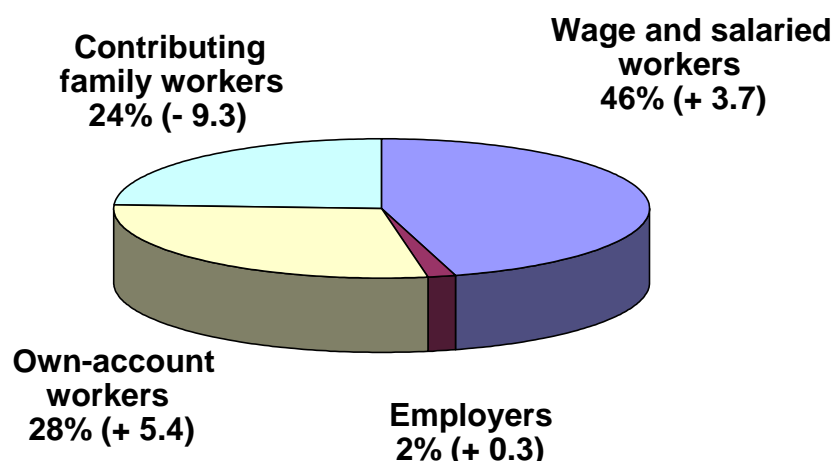
\*2008 are preliminary estimates

Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, January 2009, see also source of Table A2

Apart from differences in sectoral employment between men and women, there are important differences in working conditions. At the global level, the share of vulnerable employment in total female employment was 52.7 per cent in 2007, as compared to 49.1 per cent for men, which represents a decline of 0.6 percentage points over the previous year for both men and women (Table A7).<sup>6</sup> The move away from vulnerable employment into wage and salaried work can be a major step toward economic freedom and self-determination for many women. Economic independence or at least co-determination in resource distribution within the family is highest when women earn wages and salaries or are employers, lower when they are own-account workers and lowest when they are contributing family workers. The share of women in wage and salaried work grew from 41.8 per cent in 1997 to 45.5 per cent in 2007, but the status group of female own-account workers saw a stronger increase (see Figure 4).

<sup>6</sup> The indicator of vulnerable employment calculates the sum of own-account workers and contributing family workers as a share of total employment. Contributing family workers and own-account workers are less likely to have formal work arrangements, and often carry a higher economic risk, which allows for the usage of the indicator on vulnerable employment in an assessment of decent work. If the proportion of vulnerable workers is sizeable, it may be an indication of widespread poverty. The poverty connection arises because workers in the vulnerable statuses lack the social protection and safety nets to guard against times of low economic demand and often are incapable of generating sufficient savings for themselves and their families to offset these times. Some limitations of the indicator are: (1) there might be people that carry a high economic risk despite the fact that they have a wage and salary job, and the latter should not be equated to decent work; (2) unemployed people are not covered even though they are vulnerable; (3) there can be people in the two vulnerable status groups who do not carry a high economic risk, especially in developed economies. Despite these limitations, vulnerable employment shares are indicative for informal economy employment, particularly for the less developed economies and regions. However, vulnerable employment numbers should be interpreted in combination with other labour market indicators such as unemployment and working poverty. For more details see Chapter 1 in the *Key Indicators of the Labour Market*, 5th Edition (Geneva, ILO, 2007; see: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/strat/kilm/>) and *Employment Sector Working Paper No. 13*, "Assessing vulnerable employment: The role of status and sector indicators in Pakistan, Namibia and Brazil" (Geneva, ILO, 2008; see: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/download/wpaper/wp13.pdf>).

**Figure 4**  
**Distribution of female status in employment, 2007**  
**(percentage point change from 1997 in parentheses)**



Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, January 2009, see also source of Table A2

The gender gap in the share of vulnerable employment in total employment for males and females shows a diverse picture by region. In the Developed Economies and the European Union, Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS and Latin America, and the Caribbean, this gap was negative in 2007, meaning that women are often in less vulnerable jobs than men. The largest gaps can be found in North Africa and the Middle East. Empowering women is one of the most pressing challenges these regions have to face, and the main route to reaching this successfully is by giving women the chance of a decent job. Heavy investment in women's education, changes in the labour legislation and recognition and sharing of family responsibilities with men set the preconditions for women to equally participate in labour markets. Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, two of the poorest regions, have not only a relatively high share of vulnerable employment in total employment, but also a relatively large gender gap in vulnerable employment shares (exceeding ten percentage points).

The sectoral distribution of male and female employment, as well as the differences in vulnerable employment shares, underline the fact that widening access to labour markets is not the same as providing access to decent jobs. At the country level, the difference between labour market access and access to decent work can be illustrated by examining Pakistan. Labour markets in this country are characterized by large gender gaps (see Box 1), but recent industrialization has certainly expanded access to labour markets for women. From 2000 to 2006, the employment-to-population rate, for example, increased by almost six percentage points.<sup>7</sup> However, during the same period, the share of vulnerable employment in total employment of women increased by 6.5 points. This was principally due to the increase in the number of female contributing family workers. Whereas for men close to two thirds of the additional employment that was created during 2000 to 2006 consisted of wage employment, for women more than two thirds consisted of contributing family work. Even in manufacturing, which constitutes the key source of employment creation outside the agricultural sector, the share of women in vulnerable employment is increasing. The opposite trend can be observed for males.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> *Pakistan Employment Trends* No. 3 (Islamabad, Ministry of Labour and Manpower, 2008), Table 3.

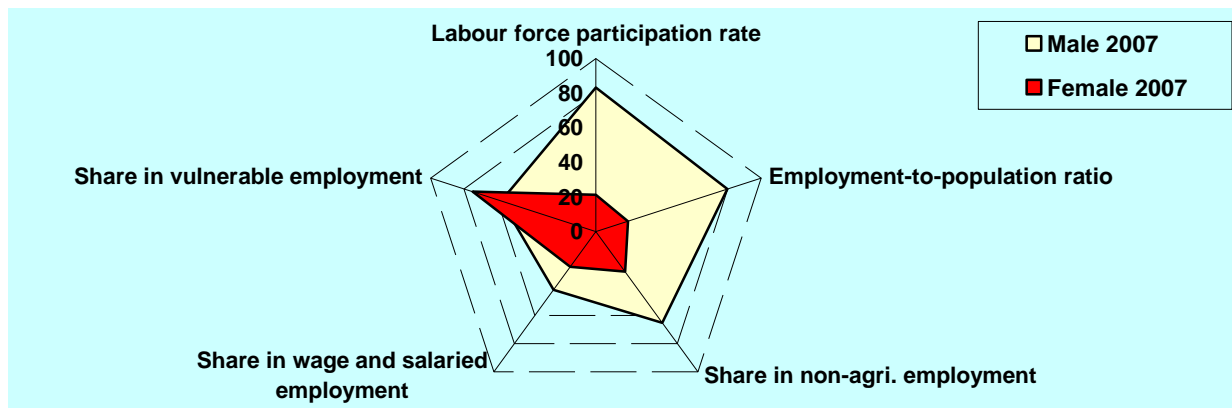
<sup>8</sup> "Assessing vulnerable employment: the role of status and sector indicators in Pakistan, Namibia and Brazil", *Employment Working Paper No. 13* (Geneva, ILO, 2008); see: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/download/wpaper/wp13.pdf>, Table 3.

### Box 1 Women in Pakistan's labour market

In 2007, more than nine million Pakistani women were employed, which is almost four million more than in 2000 (an increase of more than 80 per cent). Nevertheless, the employment-to-population ratio for women (19.9 per cent) is four times lower than for men (79.1 per cent) in the country and much lower than the ratio in South Asia as a whole (33.5 per cent).

Despite a significant widening of employment opportunities, gender equality in terms of labour market access has not yet been achieved in Pakistan, and the same is true for conditions of employment. As Figure B1-1 shows, women who did find work are often confined to the agricultural sector of the economy and in status groups that carry higher economic risk and a lesser likelihood of meeting the characteristics that define decent work, including social protection, basic rights and a voice at work.

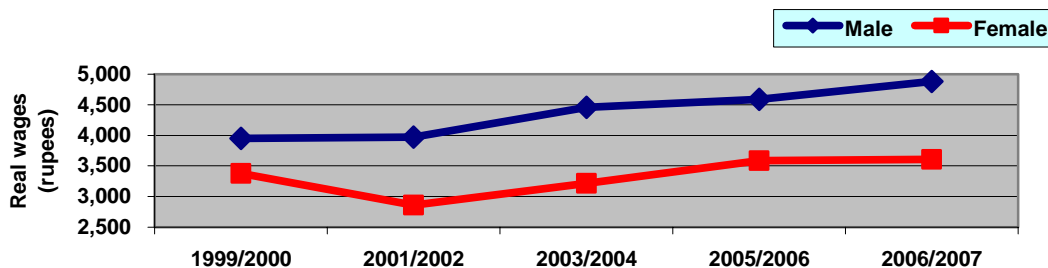
**Figure B1-1.**  
Five dimensions of Pakistan's gender gap in labour markets, 2007



Source: Calculated using *Pakistan Labour Force Survey, 2006/2007* (Islamabad, Federal Bureau of Statistics)

In general, women also have lower wages than men, and their wages increase less over time (Figure B1-2). This can be explained in part by the large gap in educational attainment of women and men. In 2007, just 26.8 per cent of economically active women had more than 1 year of formal education, compared to 61.5 per cent of men. As reflected in growing literacy rates (from 29.1 to 39.2 per cent between 2000 and 2007), relatively more women gained access to education, but equality in education is still far from being a reality in Pakistan.

**Figure B1-2.**  
Pakistan, average monthly wages of employees, by sex



Source: *Pakistan Employment Trends*, various issues (Islamabad, Ministry of Labour, LMIA Unit, see: [www.lmis.gov.pk](http://www.lmis.gov.pk))

## Gender inequality in African agriculture

The recent food crisis showed the risk of ignoring agriculture, not only for the people living in rural areas but for the world as a whole, and international organizations as well as some governments have recently put a stronger focus on the sector. It is more and more widely accepted that rural development is a key to poverty reduction. But it is also a key to more gender equality as many women make a living out of working in the agriculture sector. Despite a decline in the share of agriculture in total female employment, agriculture still provides a living for many women and their families – especially in Africa.

Africa suffered more severely from the recent food crisis than other continents. Remarkably, the food crisis hit not only the least developed, agriculture-based countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, but also the better-off countries in North Africa where agriculture is no longer the main sector in terms of employment and is contributing little to GDP. One of the reasons why economies in Africa were so hard hit was the desolate state of the agriculture sector in both parts of Africa. As a result, Africa, which was more than self-sufficient in food 50 years ago, is now a massive food importer.<sup>9</sup>

Many of the challenges facing Africa's agricultural sector stem from a few root causes, including poor political and economic governance, inadequate funding for agriculture, poor water resources management, and neglect of research and development. But throughout Africa another very important reason for the failure of the sector have been gender inequality and lack of empowerment of women, who are often running this sector.

As was noted before, Sub-Saharan Africa is – besides South Asia – the region with the highest share of female employment in the agricultural sector. Even though more women work in the service sector in North Africa, agriculture still plays an important role in providing jobs for women in this region as well. Whereas in sub-Saharan Africa the employment share decreased over the last ten years (by 6.6 percentage points between 1998 and 2008) as in almost all regions, it increased in North Africa by 6.8 points (see Table A6b).

There is little information available on the regional level regarding the key elements that would make employment in agriculture decent and productive. However, looking at vulnerable employment groups (own-account workers and unpaid contributing family workers) leads to interesting insights. Unfortunately, the indicator of vulnerable employment is not available by sector for many countries. But country level analysis does make it clear that the majority of jobs in agriculture are most likely lacking some elements of decent and productive work. Women mainly work as contributing family workers and men very often are own-account workers. And if women manage to change their status it often means moving from being an unpaid contributing family worker to being an own-account worker.

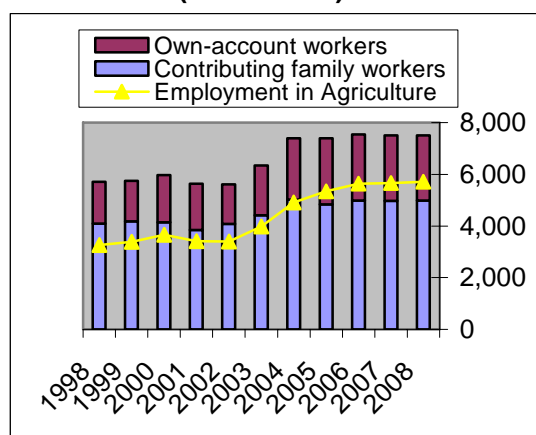
As Figures 5a and 5b show, vulnerable employment and employment in agriculture changed in parallel in both Sub-Saharan Africa and North Africa. The sharp increase since 2002 of vulnerable employment in North Africa is remarkable and not seen in any other region. It is also interesting to note that the total number of female unpaid contributing family workers and female agricultural workers in North Africa are very close, making it likely that this status group makes up the majority of jobs for women in agriculture.

In sub-Saharan Africa the picture looks very different (see Figure 5b). Here there are more female own-account workers than contributing family workers and overall there are many more agricultural workers than contributing family workers. But again, both categories increased in parallel with the increase of female workers in agriculture, indicating that the majority of jobs created in the sector continue to be vulnerable employment, outside of economically less risky wage and salary jobs.

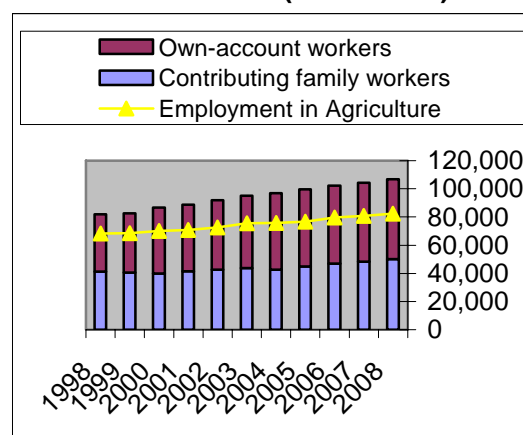
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<sup>9</sup> See: *The African Food Crisis: Lessons from the Asian Green Revolution*, ed. by Göran Djurefeldt, et al., Cambridge, 2005.

**Figure 5a: Female employment in agriculture, by status, 1998-2008, North Africa (thousands)**



**Figure 5b: Female employment in agriculture, by status, 1998-2008, Sub-Saharan Africa (thousands)**



\*2008 are preliminary estimates

Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, January 2009, see also source of Table A2

How can vulnerable employment be transformed into decent work? One precondition is that productivity must increase. This will not only lay the groundwork for earnings to rise sufficiently for people to escape poverty, but it is often the first step towards more social security and other components of decent work. Even though productivity in agriculture has increased in some countries, this increase has not been very impressive in many countries and the levels of output in economies in Sub-Saharan Africa remain very low.<sup>10</sup> Many countries have not seen an increase in productivity at all, making it almost impossible to take people in rural areas out of poverty. If one adds that women are often profiting less from wage increases induced by productivity increases than men as a result of the weaker status of women, it is obvious that there has been very little potential for women to improve their situation and the situation of their families.

Despite the differences in levels of productivity in North African countries and countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, and despite the different role agriculture plays in providing employment for women, women's daily work life characteristics all over Africa are similar. The majority of women in agriculture are smallholder subsistence farmers or spouses of smallholder subsistent farmers. They substantially contribute to national agricultural production and food security. Large scale farming and commercial production is less of an income source for women in rural areas, which is why structural adjustment programmes often do not reach women. It is estimated that rural women in Africa produce 80 per cent of the food.<sup>11</sup> They do most of the work in storing, processing, transporting and marketing food. It has been shown that when women receive the same levels of education, experience and farm inputs as men, they can increase yields of some crops by 22 per cent.<sup>12</sup> But the important contribution of women takes place under difficult circumstances, as highlighted in Box 2.

<sup>10</sup> *Key Indicators of the Labour market* (Geneva, ILO, 2007). See: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/strat/kilm/>.

<sup>11</sup> *World Employment Report 2004-05* (Geneva, ILO, 2005). See: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/strat/wer2004.htm>.

<sup>12</sup> International Food Policy Research Institute (2005): *Women: still the key to food and nutrition security*. (Issue brief 33) Washington, DC. See: <http://www.ifpri.org/pubs/ib/ib33.pdf>.

## **Box 2**

### **Characteristics of women in African agriculture**

Women generally own less land and the land they have is often of lower quality than the land owned by men. According to the International Development Research Centre, women in Africa only own 1 per cent of the land.(1)

Financial resources are limited for women: they receive 7 per cent of the agricultural extension services and less than 10 per cent of the credit offered to small-scale farmers.(1)

Population growth is still a pressing issue in Africa and families in rural areas have more children than in urban areas. Population in North Africa is currently growing at a rate of 2.2 per cent a year and in sub-Saharan Africa the rate is 2.7 per cent. This has forced farming families to sub-divide their land time and again, leading to tiny plots or families moving onto unsuitable, overworked land. This problem is compounded by the state of Africa's soils. In Sub-Saharan Africa, soil quality is classified as degraded in about 72 per cent of arable land and 31 per cent of pasture land.(2)

Male rural-to-urban migration continues to be an Africa-wide phenomenon. While this can increase remittances to rural areas and strengthen market linkages between urban and rural areas, it leaves rural women increasingly responsible for farming and for meeting their households' immediate needs. Women have to take over the tasks formerly carried out by men in addition to those for which they are traditionally responsible.

Women have to contend with limited access to financial and technical resources. They often must depend on local know-how and cannot access appropriate technology.

Women lack political influence. They are not represented when policies are formulated, when programmes are developed, when budgets are drawn or when decisions are made about their work and their life. Even within farming organizations, the pattern is frequently found: in Zimbabwe, for example, women constitute about 75 per cent of the members of the Zimbabwe Farmers Union, but only 5 per cent of the officers are female.(3)

Social protection systems are almost non-existent in rural areas in Africa, but if they exist they often discriminate against women.

Girls receive less education, especially in poor rural areas.

Social norms play a much stronger role in rural areas, often discriminating against women and girls.

Decision-making structures within families are not in favour of women, making it difficult for them to secure a better future for their daughters.

(1) Quoted from <http://www.new-ag.info/08/04/focuson/focuson6.php>. In some countries, legislation makes it impossible for women to inherit land when their husband dies. They can also often not pass the land on to their daughters (see, for example: Judy Oglethorpe, 'AIDS, women, land, and natural resources in Africa: current challenges', *Gender & Development*, Volume 16, Issue 1 March 2008, pages 85-100).

(2) Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), quoted from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/4662232.stm>.

(3) See: <http://www.new-ag.info/08/04/focuson/focuson6.php>.

Given the key role of women in the agricultural sector, improving their situation means progress for the sector and for the economy as a whole. And many of the measures that would be beneficial are not even costly to implement. The list of possible measures includes: increasing women's access to farming land and fertilizers, credit, and education; increasing women's participation in decision-making; and strengthening women's role within the family. All these measures are crucial to guaranteeing food security and improving the nutritional status of children. According to a study conducted by the International Food Policy Research Institute, if men and women had equal influence in decision-making, an additional 1.7 million children would be

adequately nourished in sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>13</sup> The impact would be of similar importance in North Africa.

The case of North Africa showed that agriculture can be a creator of new jobs for women, and even though they often enter the labour market under vulnerable conditions, being part of the labour force already gives them additional economic power. The potential which the sector offers in creating jobs for women should be used in other regions as well. However, job strategies have to be developed while keeping in mind that in the long run only decent jobs have a sustainable impact on poverty reduction.

An often discussed question is whether Africa can reach the MDGs by the year 2015. North Africa might be closer to reaching the goals than Sub-Saharan Africa. However, due to the current economic crisis, the likelihood of reaching the goals has diminished. Strengthening the role of women in agriculture and ensuring decent work for a growing number of women is one step to help economies to get back on track. This would help to reach the MDG 1 on halving the share of poor people, and especially the newly introduced target on productive employment and decent work for all. Policies and efforts to strengthen the role of women in agriculture need of course to be embedded into a broader strategy of rural development. Such a strategy should include reform of agricultural policies to strengthen the sector, and also reform of trade and tariffs. In addition, domestic subsidies, protective tariffs, and other trade barriers imposed by wealthy nations harm farmers in Africa and other poor developing nations. Investments are needed in rural infrastructure, education and social capital. Agricultural input and crop technologies should focus on land and natural resources conservation, while at the same time increasing agricultural productivity. Finally, dramatic increases in investment in agricultural research and extension are needed if any plan for food and nutrition security in Africa is to be successful.

## Gender inequality in wages

One of the dimensions of access to decent and productive employment is the measure of the gender pay gap (or gender wage differential), i.e. the difference between the wages earned by women and those earned by men. Gender wage differentials may be best explained by a variety of factors, such as occupation, age, education, work experience and seniority in job, job tenure, training, occupational segregation, etc. Other factors such as the regulations and practices concerning work-and-family life, childcare facilities and other social rights play a significant role in the participation of women in the labour force, in their occupational choices, and in the employment patterns that affect the gender wage gap. Important questions are whether there is equal remuneration for work of equal value, and whether occupational segregation and wage differentials within countries have widened or narrowed recently, but such questions are difficult to analyse in view of limitations in both research and data. For employees, an appropriate type of wage statistics would include detailed levels of occupational wages (either wage rates or earnings), as occupations can be taken as a proxy to similar or comparable levels of education, skills, etc. if not seniority in the job.

Recent analyses of labour markets in Europe and Central Asia reached the conclusion that although the reduction of the gender pay gap is a major political objective for governments and the social partners, progress remains slow and the situation has even deteriorated in certain countries. In 2007, the European Commission noted that one of the consequences of the differences and inequalities which women face on the labour market is the persistent gender pay gap. Women earn an average of 15 per cent less than men for every hour worked.<sup>14</sup>

In the United States, several studies of the National Committee on Pay Equity show that wage gaps continue to exist there and that the wage gap has been closing at a very slow rate.<sup>15</sup> According to an article produced by the International Poverty Centre in 2008 focusing on gender gap

<sup>13</sup> See: <http://www.unicef.org/sowc07/press/release.php>.

<sup>14</sup> Report on equality between women and men - 2007, European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, February 2007. See: [http://ec.europa.eu/employment\\_social/publications/2007/keaj07001\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/publications/2007/keaj07001_en.pdf).

<sup>15</sup> See: <http://www.pay-equity.org/>.

indicators among urban adults in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, El Salvador and Mexico, the female hourly wage was around 80 per cent of that of males for all countries, except Argentina with a ratio of 92 per cent.<sup>16</sup>

Evidence from Bangladesh suggests that women tend to be concentrated in lower-paying industries, and do not have access to the same type of jobs as men. Furthermore, even after controlling for differences in age, education, industry and other factors, there remains a gap in wages between men and women. Such a gap raises concerns about discriminatory practices (see Box 3).

### Box 3

#### Lower wages of Bangladeshi women raise concerns about discrimination

Why do Bangladeshi women earn so much less than their male counterparts? This question was the starting point for a recent ILO Working Paper, 'The gender wage gap in Bangladesh'.<sup>(1)</sup> The study analysed data from the largest ever national occupational wage survey in Bangladesh, which was conducted in 2007 by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) with technical and financial support from the ILO. The study focuses on data for approximately 41,000 workers for which hourly wage rates could be calculated from the survey data. Using econometric modelling techniques, the paper presents the first estimates of hourly gender wage gaps by level of education, establishment size and individual industry. It highlights the significant effect of gender-based occupational and industrial segregation in shaping men's and women's average wage rates in Bangladesh.

Even after controlling for factors such as differences in age, education, industry, occupational type and location, women earn 15.9 per cent less per hour than men. Furthermore, the survey data indicate that women tend to be grouped in lower-paying industries and do not have access to the same types of jobs as men. If this "segregation effect" is factored in, the gender wage gap increases by 7.2 percentage points – to an estimated 23.1 per cent. The largest male-female wage gaps are in the construction and hotel and restaurant industries (in which women earn an average of 30 per cent less than men per hour), and in small- to mid-sized enterprises (those with between 6 and 20 workers). The smallest gaps are in the service industries, such as education, health and social work.

The study showed that as women's education increases, the male-female wage gap decreases, because women tend to see more benefits from additional education in terms of earnings than men. Completing secondary education carries a major benefit: while women who have not completed primary education earn an average of 22 per cent less than their male equivalents, this differential narrows to only 4 per cent for those with secondary education.

It is evident that investment in education – at both primary and secondary levels – could play a substantial role in lowering the overall gender wage gap in Bangladesh. The survey results also indicate that if policy-makers focus on measures to reduce occupational segregation, this could go a long way to reduce gender-based earnings inequalities. Progress on these two fronts could promote broad-based social and economic development in Bangladesh, as higher levels of educational attainment would improve worker productivity, while breaking down occupational segregation would promote greater equity and efficiency in the labour market.

(1) S. Kapsos, 2008. "The gender wage gap in Bangladesh", *ILO Asia-Pacific Working Paper Series*, May 2008; [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/documents/publication/wcms\\_098063.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/documents/publication/wcms_098063.pdf).

In his Report prepared for the 8th European Regional Meeting, the Director-General focused on the trend in the wage gap, concluding that, on average, the gap between men's and women's wages narrowed in the EU between 1995 and 2006. It narrowed by over 10 percentage points in Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania and Romania. However, it widened in five of the EU-27 countries: Denmark, Germany, Italy, Portugal and Sweden. In 2006, the gender wage gap ranged between approximately 4 per cent in Malta and 25 per cent in Estonia. In Turkey, men employed in

<sup>16</sup> The Burden of Gender Inequalities for Society, by J. Costa, E. Silva and M. Medeiros, in *Poverty in Focus*, International Policy Centre, January 2008. See: <http://www.undp-povertycentre.org/pub/IPCpovertyInFocus13.pdf>.



manufacturing earn twice as much as women. The gender wage gap is also a cause for concern in the Russian Federation and Ukraine, at 39 and 28 per cent respectively.<sup>17</sup>

It is difficult to make inter-country comparisons on wage differentials; very often detailed statistics are inadequate, or simply country-specific. There is no definitive general conclusion as to the extent of differences in pay between men and women. However there is strong national evidence that wage gaps persist. Throughout most regions and many occupations, women are paid less money than men for the same job. In a majority of countries, women's wages represent between 70 and 90 per cent of men's wages, with even lower ratios in some Asian and Latin American countries.<sup>18</sup>

## Gender inequality in poverty

As was highlighted in the *Global Employment Trends 2009*, developing economies saw a continuation of the downward trends in working poverty witnessed in recent years up to 2007. Estimates of the proportion of the employed who are working but also fall below an accepted poverty line (the working poor) were included in that report and are repeated in this issue of *Global Employment Trends for Women* (see Table A8). Two regions that stand out in terms of high shares of extremely working poor are Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, while levels of working poverty are also considerable in South-East Asia and the Pacific, and East Asia. Table A8 also shows that around four fifths of the employed are classified as working poor in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia in 2007.

Although working poor indicators by sex are not yet widely available, there is some evidence that there are important gender-based differences. In India, for example, the latest national labour force survey, which was conducted in 2004/2005, not only gathered data on workers' labour force characteristics, but also on household consumption.<sup>19</sup> The survey reveals that only one out of three women aged 15 and above is classified as economically active versus more than 83 per cent of men. Those women that do work face a considerably higher incidence of poverty: 36.1 per cent of employed women are considered working poor on the basis of USD 1 per day versus a working poverty rate of 30 per cent for men. An astounding 86.4 per cent of employed women live with their families on less than USD 2 per person per day, versus 81.4 per cent of employed men.

Gender-based differences in working poverty may result from a number of factors that were highlighted before. These include gender inequalities in sectoral employment and vulnerable employment. In South Asia, women also have disadvantages in terms of access to education, which limits their chances on decent and productive work.<sup>20</sup>

The national labour force survey in India also captures information on children below the age of 15. These data provide evidence that young girls bear the brunt of poverty-induced child labour. First, it is clear that poverty drives child labour: 96 per cent of employed girls and boys live in households with per-capita consumption below USD 2 per person per day. But young girls are disproportionately affected: according to the survey, while women aged 15 and above comprise only 27 per cent of all employed persons in India, young girls account for 42 per cent of all children in employment. These findings raise grave concerns about the impact of the economic crisis on the working poor, and especially on women and children.

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<sup>17</sup> Delivering Decent Work in Europe and Central Asia, Report of the Director-General, Volume I, Part 2, 8th European Regional Meeting, Lisbon, February 2009; [http://www.ilo.org/public/english/region/eurpro/geneva/download/events/lisbon2009/dgreport11\\_en.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/public/english/region/eurpro/geneva/download/events/lisbon2009/dgreport11_en.pdf).

<sup>18</sup> *Global Wage Report 2008/09* (Geneva, ILO, 2008); [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms\\_100786.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_100786.pdf).

<sup>19</sup> National Sample Survey, 61<sup>st</sup> Round, India National Sample Survey Organisation; <http://chakkdeindia.org/2008/04/23/national-sample-survey-organisation-of-india/>.

<sup>20</sup> *Global Employment Trends for Youth* (Geneva, ILO, 2008); <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/strat/download/gety08.pdf>.

### 3. Gender impact of the economic crisis in developed economies

The unemployment rate in the Developed Economies and the European Union increased by 1.0 percentage points to 6.7 per cent in 2008, by far the largest increase of all regions. This year-on-year increase is a sharp divergence from the downward trend in unemployment that has been observed since 2002. The total number of unemployed increased by 4.9 million, reaching 33.7 million in 2008, and men accounted for the large majority of this increase (64 per cent). The male unemployment rate in the Developed Economies and the European Union was 6.6 per cent in 2008, an increase by 1.1 percentage points over 2007, as compared to 6.8 per cent for women, an increase of 0.8 percentage points over 2007. This means that there was a reduction in the gender gap in the unemployment rate in 2008, but only because the situation of men in the labour market worsened more than the situation of women (see Table A2).

Has the economic crisis therefore had more of an impact on men rather than women when it comes to the labour market in developed economies? The regional unemployment rate, which is based on a preliminary estimate for 2008, does clearly point in this direction. At the same time, as will be shown below, there are important variations in country-level experiences. The impact at the country level is not only a function of the extent to which a particular economy is affected by the crisis at the national and sectoral level (as reflected in value added), but also of the policy response, and influenced by the role of labour market institutions including social protection schemes and so on. It is therefore no surprise that research and media reports at times seem to point in different directions regarding the gender dimension of the economic crisis, depending on the region, country or period under consideration.<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, as was highlighted in the previous sections, there is a clear lack of gender equality in global labour markets, and this situation can easily be confused with the gender impact of the current crisis.

Examining quarterly and monthly unemployment rates at the country level, which are available for many developed economies up to at least the last months of 2008, contributes to an understanding of the gender impact of the economic crisis. Seasonally adjusted monthly unemployment rates by sex suggest that a distinction can be made between at least three groups of economies. In the first group, the impact of the economic/financial crisis is not clearly visible in monthly unemployment rates. Examples are the Netherlands and Poland, where monthly rates were on a downward trend from mid-2007 until very late in 2008 (see Figures 6A and 6B and Tables A9 and A10). Neither of these figures suggests that the economic slowdown does not have an impact on the labour market. The economy of the Netherlands is in a state of recession following two quarters of negative growth in the second half of 2008, and the number of vacancies decreased dramatically in the last quarter of 2008.<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, labour market conditions have prevented these developments from showing up in monthly unemployment rates, at least until the end of 2008. Similarly, in Poland monthly unemployment rates might have continued their downward trend for some time in the absence of the financial crisis, and the labour market effects of the crisis can only be fully assessed through in-depth country-level analysis.

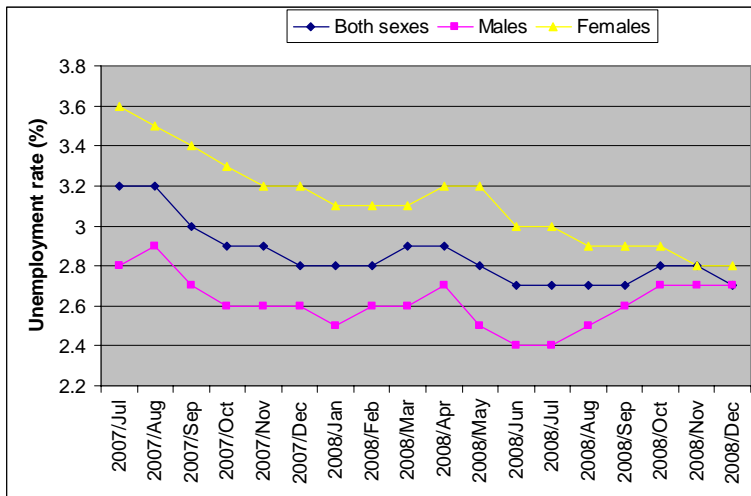
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<sup>21</sup> In the recent gathering of political and business leaders in Davos, the World Bank called for expanding economic opportunities for women, 'as they are expected to be among those who suffer the most from the ongoing economic crisis', (see: [http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:22048737~pagePK:34370~piPK:34424~theSitePK:4607.00.html?cid=I\\_SG\\_E\\_WBWeeklyUpdate\\_NL](http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:22048737~pagePK:34370~piPK:34424~theSitePK:4607.00.html?cid=I_SG_E_WBWeeklyUpdate_NL)). On the other hand, a recent explanation of the economic plan suggested by the then President Elect of the United States of America suggests that male workers tend to suffer disproportionately during recessions (see: [http://otrans.3cdn.net/ee40602f9a7d8172b8\\_ozm6bt5oi.pdf](http://otrans.3cdn.net/ee40602f9a7d8172b8_ozm6bt5oi.pdf)). Finally, in a report of the Trades Union Congress in the United Kingdom, it is cautiously suggested that women's jobs will be affected more than in previous recessions (see: [www.tuc.org.uk/extras/womenandrecession.pdf](http://www.tuc.org.uk/extras/womenandrecession.pdf)).

<sup>22</sup> See: [http://www.volkskrant.nl/economie/article1148213.ece/Daling\\_vacatures%2C\\_economie\\_in\\_recessie](http://www.volkskrant.nl/economie/article1148213.ece/Daling_vacatures%2C_economie_in_recessie) (in Dutch), accessed 13/02/09.

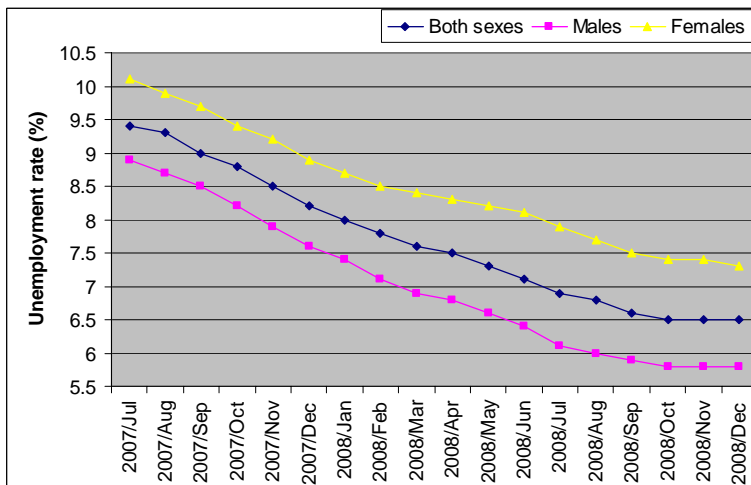
**Figure 6**  
**Seasonally adjusted monthly unemployment rates, by sex,**  
**July 2007-December 2008**

**A. Netherlands**



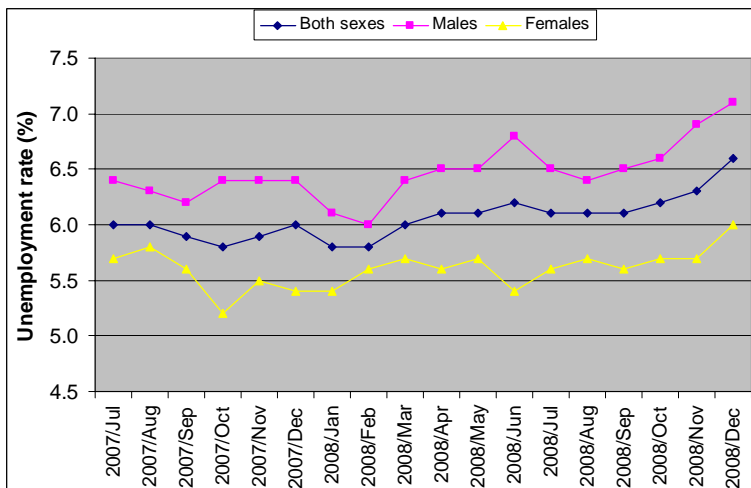
Source: Eurostat

**B. Poland**



Source: Eurostat

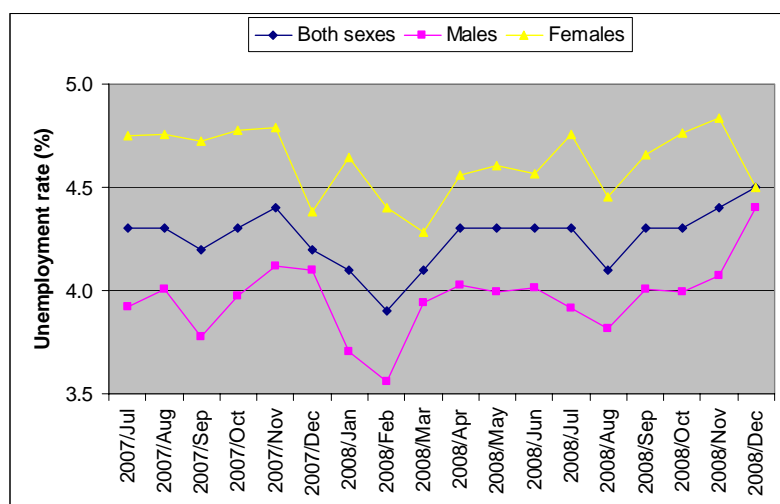
**C. Canada**



Source: Statistics Canada

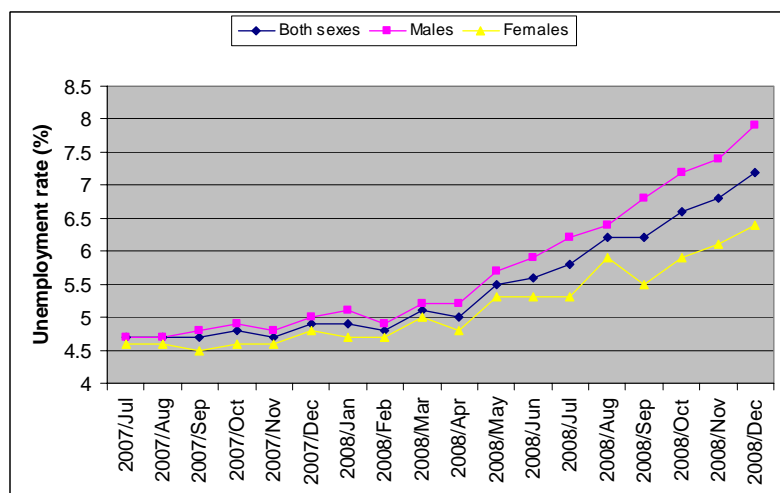
**Figure 6 (continued)**  
**Seasonally adjusted monthly unemployment rates, by sex,**  
**July 2007-December 2008**

**D. Australia**



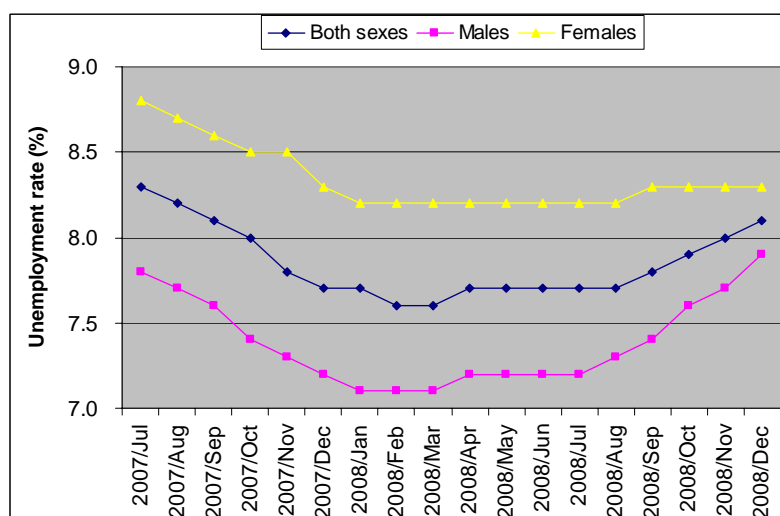
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics

**E. United States**



Source: Eurostat

**F. France**



Source: Eurostat

In a second group of countries, monthly unemployment rates do show a clear impact of the economic/financial crisis in the second half of 2008, but it is less obvious whether there is a specific gender impact. Examples are Canada and Australia (Figures 6C and 6D). In both countries, the unemployment rates are increasing in the last quarter of 2008, and changes in the second half of the year are much larger than in the same period in 2007 (Tables A11 and A12). In Australia, male and female rates diverged from September onwards, but then converged in December 2008.

Finally, in a third group of countries, including France and the United States, there is a rapid deterioration of labour markets in the second half of 2008 (Figures 6E and 6F). In the United States, the monthly unemployment rate from July to December 2008 went up by 1.4 percentage points for both sexes, while the increase for males was, at 1.7 percentage points, far greater than the increase for females (1.1 points). Similarly, in France the female unemployment rate increased by 0.1 points over the same period, while the male rate increased by 0.7 points (Tables A13 and A14).

Apart from considering unemployment rates, there are several additional ways of gaining insight in the labour market effects of the current crisis in terms of gender. A starting point is the distribution and growth of male and female employment in each economic sector preceding the crisis. Between 1995 and 2005, the sector showing the highest employment growth in many developed economies, for both men and women, is real estate, renting and business activities, and employment growth rates for females exceeded those for males in all service sectors.<sup>23</sup> In financial intermediation, the sector where the crisis originated, the employment distribution is slightly in favour of women in terms of the proportion of female workers (52.2 per cent, see Table A15, which is based on a selection of 24 developed economies for which data are available). To the extent that the financial crisis first led to destruction of employment in this sector, and assuming that men and women are evenly distributed across activities within financial intermediation itself, a slightly stronger impact on job losses for women could be expected.<sup>24</sup> However, in real estate, renting and business activities, another sector close to heart of the financial crisis, the share of women was 44.6 per cent in 2005, suggesting the opposite effect.<sup>25</sup>

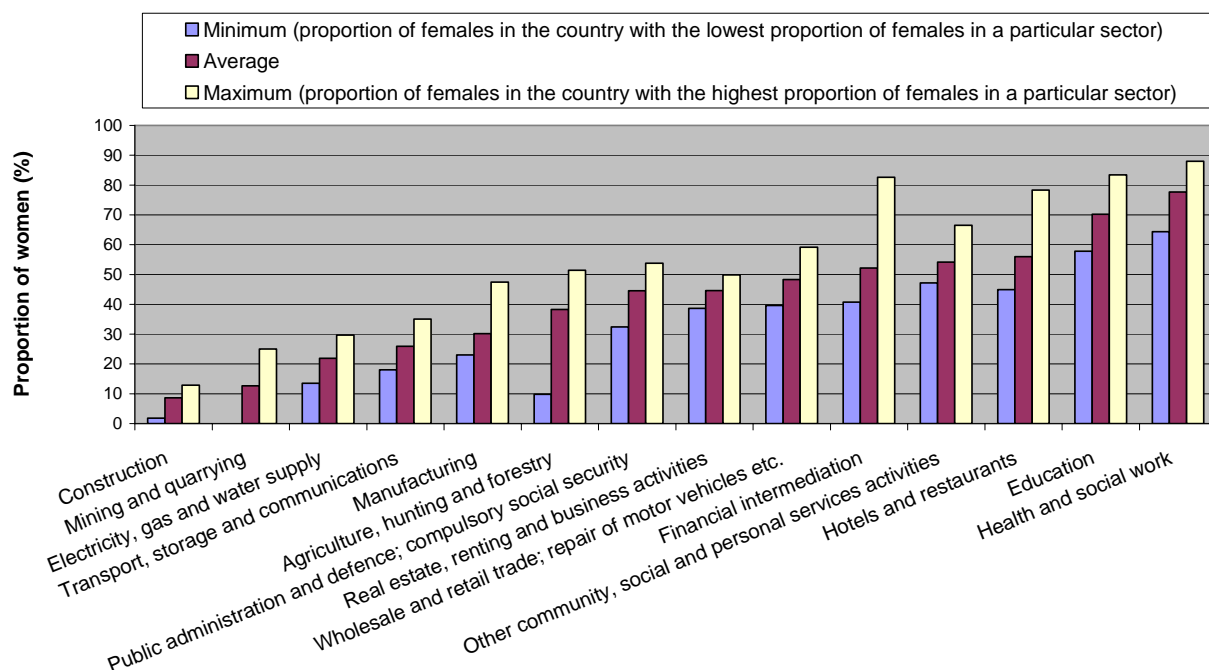
Many other sectors are of course linked to the financial sectors and were subsequently hit by the economic crisis through limitations in access to capital and/or declining demand. As shown in Figure 7, all industrial sectors (mining and quarrying, manufacturing, electricity, gas and water, and construction), as well as transport, storage and communication, are dominated by men with shares of two thirds or more, and the impact of the crisis is likely to be more severe for males in countries in which these sectors were among the first to be affected. Job losses in these sectors, for example large manufacturing plants producing branded goods, may also draw much attention from media and analysts, but it should be kept in mind that the effects of layoffs in smaller service companies that are serving these industries may be just as devastating. On the other side of the spectrum, women make up two thirds or more of the workforce in education, and health and social work. The latter two sectors, to the extent that these are in the public domain, are likely to be less affected by the economic crisis, at least in the short run. Figure 7 also illustrates the range of values for the proportion of female workers in each sector. The fact that in some economies this proportion can be more than 80 per cent in financial intermediation, which is far above the average, or almost half of employment in manufacturing, will influence the gender impact of the current crisis in these economies.

<sup>23</sup> *Key Indicators of the Labour Market* (Geneva, ILO, 2007), section on KILM 4: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/strat/kilm/>

<sup>24</sup> More detailed data on employment by gender in the sector, for example on occupational distribution, are not available.

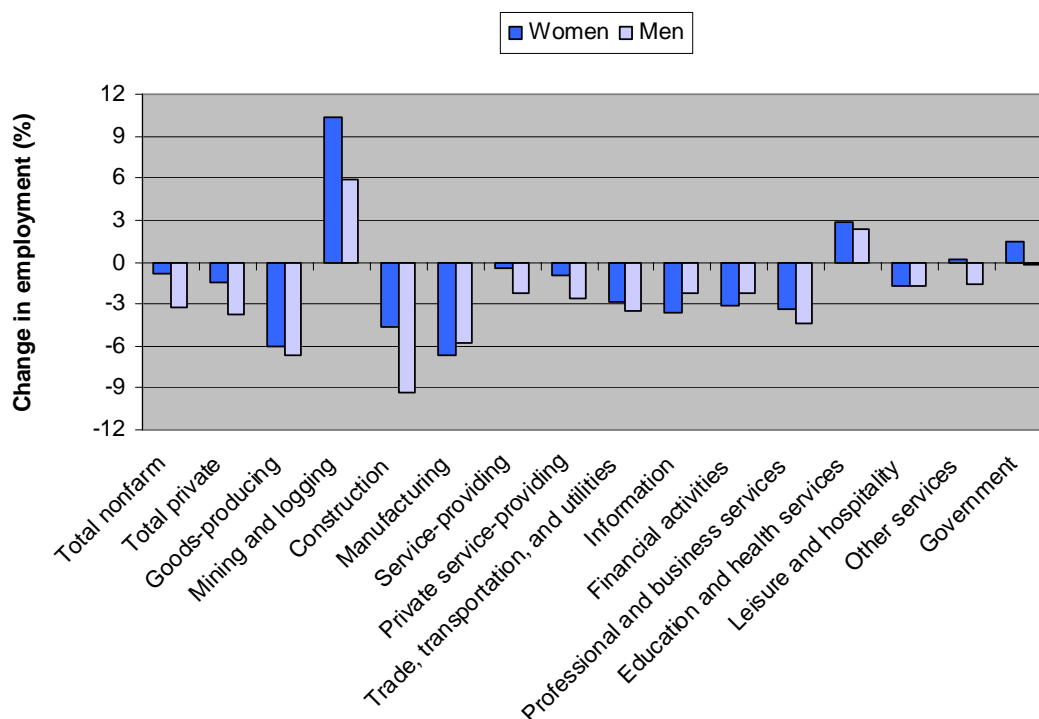
<sup>25</sup> In the United States, which is not included in Table A15, the female share of employment in financial intermediation in 2005 was 58.5 per cent, and in real estate, renting and business activities 43.9 per cent.

**Figure 7**  
**Female shares of sectoral employment in 24 developed economies, 2005**



Source: *Key Indicators of the Labour Market* (Geneva, ILO, 2007)

**Figure 8**  
**Change in sectoral employment in the United States, December 2007-December 2008p**



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, January 2009, Table B12 of "Employees on nonfarm payrolls by detailed industry", not seasonally adjusted establishment data (December 2008p are preliminary data), see source for additional notes, <http://www.bls.gov/web/empstoc.htm>

Differences in impact of the crisis on male and female employment can therefore be expected on the basis of the sectoral distributions of employment by sex, but the full impact can only be analysed when sufficient sectoral data become available, covering in particular the second half of 2008, which is not yet the case in most countries. However, in the United States, for which recent sectoral employment data are available, these data suggest that the sectoral distribution of male and female employment is not necessarily the most important factor in the analysis of the gender impact of the economic crisis.

In the United States, the number of employed people on nonfarm payrolls decreased by 2.1 per cent between December 2007 and December 2008 (see Table A16). As shown in Figure 8, the relative employment losses for men were larger than for women in most sectors of the economy. Exceptions are information, financial activities and, perhaps surprisingly, manufacturing. In other words, the loss of employment in the manufacturing sector was disproportional for women. Nevertheless, considering all sectors, it is clear that male employment suffered more, both in absolute and in relative terms. Nationally, male employment declined by 2.3 million, and female employment by 0.6 million.

Which factors can explain the relatively large job losses for men in comparison with women? Factors that may be important include gender differences in the occupational distribution, possible differences in contractual arrangements, and so on. Establishing the explanatory factors of the gender impact of the economic crisis that go beyond the sectoral distribution clearly warrants additional research once sufficient data are available.

## 4. Labour market outlook for 2008 and 2009: scenarios

The labour market outlook for 2009 depends on the effectiveness of coordinated government measures, and the time it will take for the global economy to find a path toward sustainable and socially equitable growth. Given the uncertainties, this section presents scenarios for labour markets in developed and developing economies, focusing on gender differences in the impact of the economic crisis. The aim is to illustrate a series of possibilities, both globally and regionally, based on different assumptions regarding what has happened in 2008 and what could transpire in 2009.

### Scenarios for 2009: unemployment

The first set of scenarios is constructed focusing on what may happen with unemployment. The results are summarized in Figure 9A-B and in Annex 2 (see Annex 5 for methodological details). The *first scenario* projects unemployment for men and women separately using the revised economic outlook published by the IMF in January 2009 and based on the relationship between economic growth and unemployment during 1991-2008.

The January 2009 update of the IMF's *World Economic Outlook* suggests a more dramatic slowdown in economic growth than was foreseen in November 2008, with global economic growth in 2009 projected at 0.5 per cent (2.2 per cent in November 2008). The group of advanced economies is expected to contract by 2.0 per cent, and the emerging and developing economies are expected to grow by 3.3 per cent, a much lower growth rate than in 2008. The slowdown in economic growth from 2008 to 2009 is significant in the newly industrialized Asian economies, the Commonwealth of Independent States and in particular the Russian Federation, and in Brazil (Table A1).

Based on current labour market trends, the first scenario would mean that the global unemployment rate may rise to 6.5 per cent for women in 2009, and to 6.1 per cent for men. Out of the total number of 203 million unemployed, 86 million are women and 118 are men. For women, this represents an increase of 10 million over the estimated number of unemployed in 2007, and for men an increase of 14 million (see Tables S1-S6 in Annex 2).

The *second scenario* is based on the historical relationship between economic growth and unemployment at times of economic crises. In this scenario, the negative impact on male and female unemployment is taken in each country at the time of the largest year-on-year drop in GDP, and this relationship is used to project global and regional unemployment for 2009.

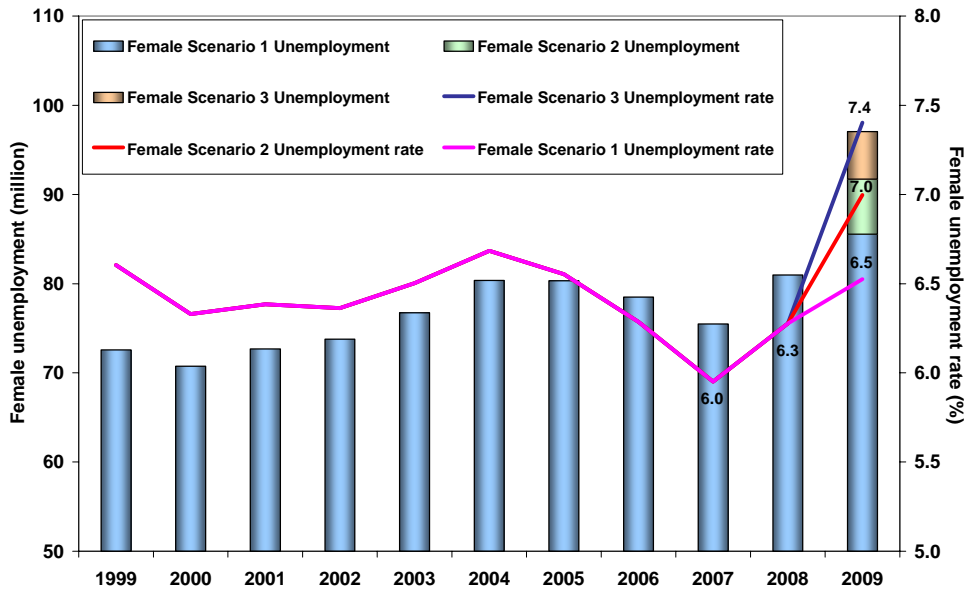
As shown in Figure 9, according to the second scenario, the global unemployment rate for women would rise to 7.0 per cent, and to 6.5 per cent for men, in both cases an increase of 1.0 percentage points over 2007. Similar to the impact on the unemployment rate for men and women combined, the largest impact on the male unemployment rate is seen in the Developed Economies and the European Union. For women, however, the largest impact on the unemployment rate is seen in Latin America and the Caribbean, reflecting both the sharp slowdown in economic growth and the severely disadvantaged position of women in labour markets in this region.

Finally, in the *third scenario*, the unemployment rate is projected in each country as the rate in 2008 based on the largest change in unemployment for males and females separately since 1991, taking the differences between developed economies and developing economies into account. In view of the fact that in developing economies the main impact of the current crisis is more likely to be seen in the vulnerable employment rate, the impact on unemployment can be expected to be less severe than in developed economies.

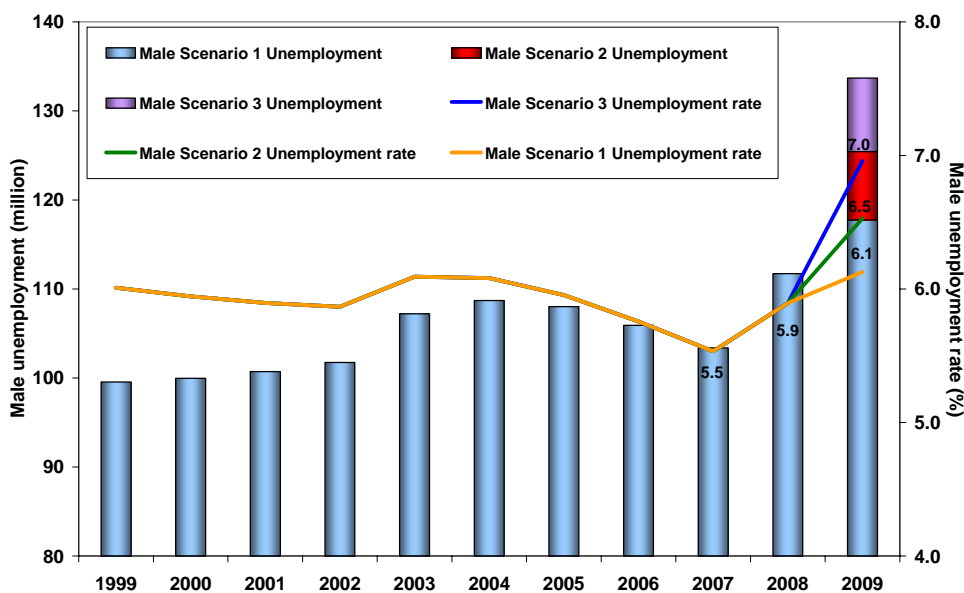


**Figure 9**  
Global unemployment according to three scenarios

**A. Female unemployment rate and level**



**B. Male unemployment rate and level**



Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, January 2009, see also source of Table A2  
 Figures for 2008 are preliminary estimates, figures for 2009 are projections based on the following assumptions:

- Scenario 1.* Projection on labour market data to date and IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).
- Scenario 2.* Projection on the historical relationship between economic growth and unemployment at times of crises in each economy; IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).
- Scenario 3.* Projection on the basis of a simultaneous increase in the unemployment rate in the Developed Economies and the European Union equal to 0.9 of the largest increase since 1991; 0.45 of the largest increase since 1991 in economies in other regions; IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).

According to the third scenario, the global unemployment rate would rise to 7.4 per cent for women, an increase by 1.5 percentage points over 2007, and to 7.0 per cent for men, an increase by 1.4 per cent. In the Developed Economies and the European Union, the female unemployment rate would rise to 7.8 per cent, and the male rate would rise to 7.9 per cent. This means that according to this scenario the gender gap in the unemployment rate would almost disappear in this region.

At this stage of the economic crisis, the unemployment rate is higher for men than for women according to all three scenarios in the Developed Economies and the European Union. The only other region for which this is the case is East Asia. As was highlighted in an earlier section, this is also a region with a small gender gap in terms of access to labour markets. In all other regions the three scenarios suggest that differences in impact on men and women are either very limited (such as in Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) and CIS), or less detrimental for men than for women (most clearly so in Latin America and the Caribbean).

## Scenarios for 2008 and 2009: vulnerable employment

Three scenarios on the development of vulnerable employment are presented, which are summarized in Figure 10A-B and Annex 2 (Tables S7-S12). The *first scenario* projects trends in the development of male and female vulnerable employment up to 2007 forward to 2008 and 2009, based on the revised economic outlook published by the IMF in January 2009. In the *second scenario* the vulnerable employment rate *in 2009* is projected based on the historical relationship between economic growth and the vulnerable employment rate at times of economic crises.<sup>26</sup> In this scenario, the negative impact on male and female vulnerable employment is taken in each country at the time of the largest year-on-year drop in GDP, and this relationship is used to project vulnerable employment in 2009.

Finally, in the *third scenario*, the vulnerable employment rate is projected *in 2008* in each country as the rate in 2007 plus half of the largest recorded increase in the vulnerable employment rate since 1991, for men and women separately. The rationale for taking half of the worst impact is that the financial crisis started late in the year, and did not immediately affect all developing economies. *In 2009*, the vulnerable employment rate is projected in each country on the basis of the largest increase in the vulnerable employment rate since 1991. In other words, the scenario shows what would happen if the worst labour market development at the country level would repeat itself simultaneously in all countries in 2009.

The projection of the global vulnerable employment rate according to the first scenario would result in a vulnerable employment rate for women of 51.4 per cent in 2008, and just below 50 per cent for men and women combined in 2008. The absolute number of people in vulnerable employment would show a decrease for both men and women, by ten and eight million persons, respectively. According to the first scenario, the decrease would continue in 2009, resulting in a total decrease by 11 million women and 16 million men in comparison with 2007. It is however expected that, in the light of recent economic developments, this trend will not materialize. In the second scenario, the vulnerable employment rate would still fall in 2009, but by only 0.4 percentage points for men. For women, the decrease would be 1.0 percentage points.

The third scenario suggests a strong rise in the proportion of both men and women in vulnerable employment in 2008 as well as 2009. According to this scenario, the female vulnerable employment rate would rise to 54.1 per cent in 2008, and the number of women in vulnerable employment would rise by 27 million to 654 million in 2008. For men, the corresponding proportion in 2008 would be 51.3 per cent, or 915 million men in vulnerable employment.

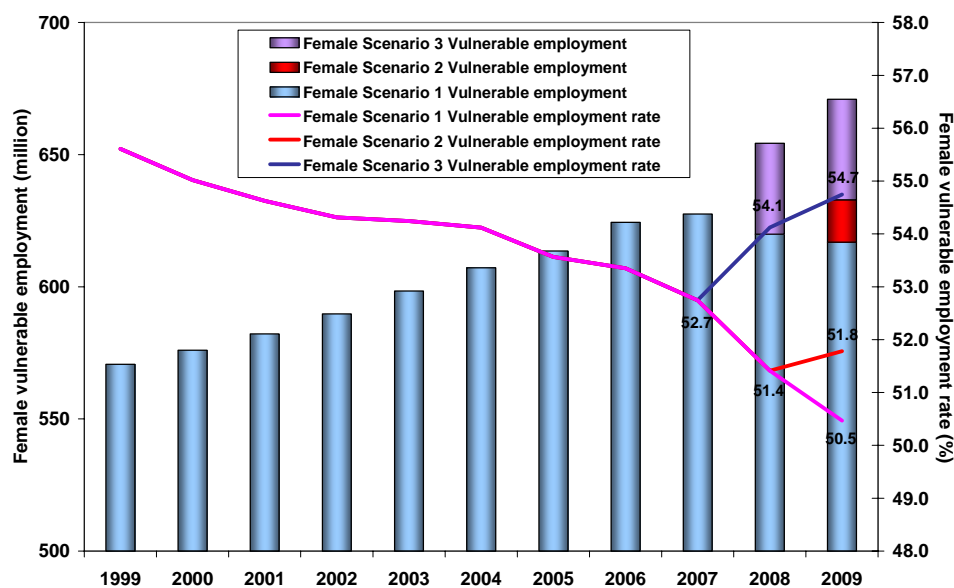
In 2009, the third scenario suggests a rise of the proportion of workers in vulnerable employment to 53.0 per cent, which would wipe out more than ten years in the reduction of decent work deficits as captured in the vulnerable employment rate. This proportion would rise by 2.0 points over the rate in 2007 for women, to 54.7 per cent, and by 2.7 points for men, to 51.8 per cent. East Asia is the only region that would still see a reduction in the female vulnerable employment rate in this scenario, and the vulnerable employment rate for males would rise in all regions.

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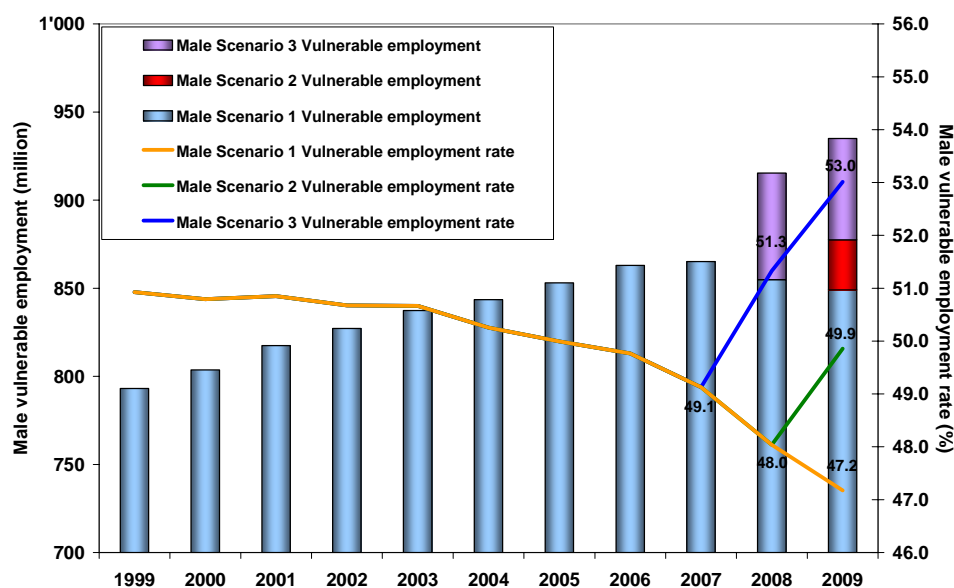
<sup>26</sup> The same methodology could be applied to 2008, but this would not result in a significant change in comparison with the first scenario, as the drop in growth rates between 2007 and 2008 was limited in most developing economies.

**Figure 10**  
**Global vulnerable employment according to three scenarios**

**A. Female vulnerable employment rate and level**



**B. Male vulnerable employment rate and level**



Source:

ILO, Trends Econometric Models, January 2009, see also source of Table A2

Figures for 2008 and 2009 are projections based on the following assumptions:

*Scenario 1.* Projection on labour market data to date and IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).

*Scenario 2.* 2009: Projection on the historical relationship between economic growth and vulnerable employment at times of crises in each economy; IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).

*Scenario 3.* 2008: Projection on the basis of a simultaneous increase in the vulnerable employment rate in all economies equal to half of the largest increase since 1991; IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth.

2009: Projection on the basis of a simultaneous increase in the vulnerable employment rate in all economies equal to the largest increase since 1991; IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).

In all three scenarios for 2009, the impact on the vulnerable employment rate is stronger for men than for women at the global level, in other words male vulnerable employment rates rise more than female rates. Latin America and the Caribbean is the only region in which in all three scenarios the opposite is true, that is, a more significant impact on vulnerable employment rate can be expected for women than for men. In the third scenario, the impact on the vulnerable employment rate is worse for women than for men in four of eight regions (excluding the Developed Economies and European Union). In the Middle East and North Africa, a very large gender difference in impact can be seen in this scenario. Whereas the male vulnerable employment rate rises by 5.3 and 3.2 points over the 2007 rate, respectively, the female rates rise by more than ten percentage points in each of these two regions.

In conclusion, and despite the stronger impact of the economic crisis on male vulnerable employment at the global level, the gender impact at the regional level is expected to show a varied picture. More important than gender differences in the impact of the crisis in developing regions may well be the existing disadvantages faced by women in labour markets as evident from large gender gaps in labour market indicators, and the fact that labour markets will deteriorate for both women and men due to the crisis.

## 5. Conclusions

The economic crisis is detrimental for both women and men, whether they are at work, looking for work or outside the labour force. However, as confirmed in this report, women are often in a disadvantaged position in comparison to men in labour markets around the world. Increased access to labour markets for women has great potential as a contribution to economic development, but only if the work in which women are engaged is decent and productive. This report highlights that women are too often trapped in insecure employment situations with low productivity and low earnings. This is particularly true for women in the agricultural sector, which in many developing economies is still the predominant source of employment and livelihoods. The analysis of women in African agriculture points at the potential to create decent and productive employment in this sector, if appropriate interventions are made. In wage and salaried employment across all sectors, women face persistent earnings gaps which cannot always be justified by differences in skills, experience, or tenure. Most regions have a long way to go in working towards the economic integration of women and, therefore, a significant potential for economic development remains available to be tapped.

The labour market scenarios for 2009 show a deterioration in global labour markets for both women and men. The female unemployment rate is expected to rise to at least 6.5 per cent in the most optimistic scenario, and to 7.4 per cent in the most pessimistic scenario. In most regions, the gender impact of the economic crisis in terms of unemployment rates is expected to be more detrimental for females than for males, and most clearly so in Latin America and the Caribbean. Only in East Asia and the Developed Economies and the European Union, both regions with limited gender gaps in terms of employment opportunities preceding the current crisis, the opposite is true. In the developed economies, male unemployment may reach 7.9 per cent, hardly different from the 7.8 rate for women in the worst case scenario for 2009. The gender impact of the economic crisis does however show much variation at the country level within the group of developed economies, and sectoral employment patterns of men and women explain only part of this variation.

Apart from the rise in unemployment, the economic downturn is likely to have more important impacts on labour markets in developing regions. Vulnerable employment is expected to rise in 2009 for both men and women, with the impact relatively more severe for men in all scenarios at the global level. The impact is expected to be more balanced between men and women at the regional level, with a less detrimental impact for women than for men expected in four out of eight developing regions.

### Policy orientations

#### Women's roles in economic recovery

The economic crisis makes the achievement of a path toward sustainable and socially equitable growth and decent work for all increasingly more difficult, and underlines the concerns over the social impacts of globalization for women. This calls for policy coordination and coherence integrating finance, trade, economic development and labour issues. Gender equality should be a key principle in any policy response, as the effects of the crisis go beyond the scope of women in the world of work, but impact on the overall stability of society considering the various roles that women play. Therefore, policy responses should help offset the unequal social and economic burden on women. The crisis is an opportunity to drive new ways of thinking on economic and social policies, since women are much more integrated into the world of work than ever before. When governments design and implement fiscal stimulus packages, it is important to recognize the labour market disadvantage that women face through the equity challenge, and to consider explicit employment growth targets for women. The impact on the unpaid family care work that women are mostly responsible for, which may expand as the crisis worsens, is another fundamental dimension to address. It may further limit their access to labour markets if policies to improve sharing of these responsibilities with men are not forthcoming.

## Investment in physical and social infrastructure

Policies to ensure equal gender representation in recovery could include investing in physical infrastructure as well as ‘social infrastructure’. An opportunity for employment generation is through construction and rehabilitation of physical infrastructure, such as roads, bridges, schools, hospitals and clinics, social care and community social infrastructure upgrading, in particular through labour-based approaches that include women. Investing in rural infrastructure creates employment and builds a foundation for sustainable growth. Furthering poverty alleviation through the construction and repairs of farm-to-market roads, post-harvest facilities, irrigation systems, portable water systems and other farm projects, will provide long-term advantages to a large percentage of women in agriculture, in particular those in vulnerable employment. It will also serve to provide opportunities for those migrants returning to the countryside and working as subsistence farmers. Priorities should not only be on infrastructure projects which create jobs in the short term, but social investments in care services which reduce the pressure on women performing unpaid work.<sup>27</sup> Other social infrastructure initiatives directed towards education and healthcare would inject financial and human capital into fields with high female employment, and ultimately provide much-needed services for children, the elderly and the sick.

## Social security issues

Access to, and extensions of, unemployment insurance are essential measures to help women endure the crisis. Unemployment insurance systems not only provide women time to seek new opportunities and to re-skill, but they also serve to maintain an adequate level of consumption in society. Strengthening employment placement services for women and investing in training women for non-traditional occupations, such as “green jobs”, are other supportive measures. Furthermore, the significance of a strong public social security system that includes women and spouses is highlighted in this crisis as women in developing countries do not often benefit from these schemes.

## Legal framework and gender equality

There are also legal frameworks that could be considered during this critical period. This is an appropriate time to increase the ratification and improve the application of international instruments regarding gender discrimination. More specifically, there are four key ILO gender equality Conventions.<sup>28</sup> In addition, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW),<sup>29</sup> adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly, has been ratified by 185 countries. It is often described as an international bill of rights for women as it defines what constitutes discrimination against women and sets up an agenda for national action to end such discrimination. Further legislation in existence includes the European Union’s laws on gender equality to ensure equal treatment in access to work, training, promotions and working conditions, including equal pay and social security benefits, as well as guaranteed rights to parental leave.<sup>30</sup>

## Millennium Development Goals and the Decent Work Agenda

With a jobs crisis at hand, the international community needs to rescue the human aspect of the crisis as well as the financial. A new charter for sustainable economic governance was called for in a joint press release on the global economic crisis by the German Chancellor, the OECD Secretary-General, the WTO Director-General, the ILO Director-General, the IMF Managing Director and the World Bank President. It recognized that the ‘ILO’s Decent Work Agenda provides complementary elements regarding employment and enterprise development, social protection,

<sup>27</sup> United Nations General Assembly: Interactive Panel on the Global Financial Crisis; see [http://www.un.org/ga/president/63/interactive/gfc/sakiko\\_p.pdf](http://www.un.org/ga/president/63/interactive/gfc/sakiko_p.pdf).

<sup>28</sup> The four key ILO gender equality Conventions are the Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100), Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (No. 111), Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention (No. 156) and Maternity Protection Convention (No. 183). Conventions 100 and 111 are also among the eight fundamental Conventions of the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.

<sup>29</sup> See United Nations; <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/cedaw.htm>.

<sup>30</sup> See European Commission; <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=370&langId=en&featuresId=39>.

human working conditions, sound labour relations and rights at work.<sup>31</sup> It also pointed out that the crisis has had extensive effects on developing countries, and that it is more important than ever for the international community to remain committed to advancing the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. These goals include achieving full and productive employment and decent work for all, and promoting gender equality and empowering women.

### **Globalization and the gender gap**

It is evident that the world is facing a dramatic and unprecedented crisis that calls for creative solutions to address the gender gap. This enormous challenge also gives rise to opportunities to address the negative social consequences of globalization for women. The crisis has raised attention for the need for a dramatic shift to an improved globalization that includes sustainable and quality jobs, broader social protection, and social dialogue. Social dialogue, which includes explicit representation of women on solutions to the economic crisis matters now more than ever. In the world, there remains a huge untapped labour potential of women, and economic growth and development could be much higher if social and economic readjustments are made so as to provide every women with the opportunity of decent employment.

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<sup>31</sup> See: [http://www.oecd.org/document/32/0,3343,en\\_2649\\_34487\\_42124384\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/32/0,3343,en_2649_34487_42124384_1_1_1_1,00.html).



## Annex 1. Tables

**Table A1. Economic growth, world and regions**

Region	GDP growth rate (%)		
	2007	2008	2009p
World	5.2	3.4	0.5
Advanced Economies	2.7	1.0	-2.0
United States	2.0	1.1	-1.6
Japan	2.4	-0.3	-2.6
United Kingdom	3.0	0.7	-2.8
Canada	2.7	0.6	-1.2
Euro area	2.6	1.0	-2.0
Germany	2.5	1.3	-2.5
France	2.2	0.8	-1.9
Italy	1.5	-0.6	-2.1
Spain	3.7	1.2	-1.7
Other advanced economies	4.6	1.9	-2.4
Newly industrialized Asian economies	5.6	2.1	-3.9
Emerging and developing economies	8.3	6.3	3.3
Africa	6.2	5.2	3.4
Sub-Sahara	6.9	5.4	3.5
Central and eastern Europe	5.4	3.2	-0.4
Commonwealth of Independent States	8.6	6.0	-0.4
Russia	8.1	6.2	-0.7
Excluding Russia	9.7	5.4	0.3
Developing Asia	10.6	7.8	5.5
China	13.0	9.0	6.7
India	9.3	7.3	5.1
ASEAN-5	6.3	5.4	2.7
Middle East	6.4	6.1	3.9
Western Hemisphere	5.7	4.6	1.1
Brazil	5.7	5.8	1.8
Mexico	3.2	1.8	-0.3

\*2009p are projections

Source: IMF, World Economic Outlook update, January 2009,  
see:

<http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2009/update/01/index.htm>

**Table A2. Unemployment rate, world and regions (%)**

<b>Both sexes</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008*</b>
World	6.1	6.2	6.1	6.1	6.1	6.3	6.3	6.2	6.0	5.7	6.0
Developed Economies and European Union	7.1	6.9	6.7	6.7	7.4	7.3	7.2	6.9	6.3	5.7	6.7
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	12.1	12.4	10.5	10.2	9.9	9.9	9.6	9.2	9.1	8.4	8.7
East Asia	4.3	4.3	4.1	4.1	4.0	3.9	3.8	3.8	3.6	3.4	3.9
South-East Asia and the Pacific	4.8	5.1	5.0	5.8	6.1	6.2	6.4	6.1	6.2	5.5	5.6
South Asia	3.7	4.0	4.5	3.8	3.3	4.5	5.3	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4
Latin America and the Caribbean	8.2	8.5	8.3	8.3	8.6	8.5	8.2	7.9	7.3	7.0	7.3
Middle East	11.1	10.6	10.1	11.6	11.7	11.8	9.2	9.8	9.8	9.4	9.4
North Africa	13.0	13.6	14.3	13.8	13.6	13.2	12.4	11.6	10.5	10.8	10.7
Sub-Saharan Africa	7.3	8.1	8.2	8.4	8.2	8.1	8.4	8.3	8.2	8.1	8.0
<b>Males</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008*</b>
World	5.9	6.0	5.9	5.9	5.9	6.1	6.1	6.0	5.8	5.5	5.9
Developed Economies and European Union	6.6	6.5	6.2	6.4	7.2	7.2	6.9	6.6	6.0	5.5	6.6
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	11.9	12.1	10.3	10.2	10.1	10.3	9.8	9.4	9.3	8.6	9.0
East Asia	4.9	4.9	4.7	4.7	4.5	4.4	4.4	4.3	4.1	3.9	4.5
South-East Asia and the Pacific	4.5	4.8	5.0	5.6	5.7	5.7	5.9	5.6	5.7	5.3	5.3
South Asia	3.6	3.9	4.4	3.7	3.1	4.3	5.0	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.2
Latin America and the Caribbean	6.7	7.0	6.9	6.8	7.1	6.9	6.5	6.3	5.7	5.6	5.8
Middle East	9.8	9.4	9.0	10.3	10.3	10.7	8.0	8.5	8.5	8.2	8.2
North Africa	11.3	12.0	12.4	11.8	11.5	11.1	10.2	9.4	8.4	8.7	8.5
Sub-Saharan Africa	7.3	7.7	7.9	8.1	8.2	8.1	8.1	8.0	7.9	7.7	7.7
<b>Females</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008*</b>
World	6.4	6.6	6.3	6.4	6.4	6.5	6.7	6.6	6.3	6.0	6.3
Developed Economies and European Union	7.8	7.5	7.3	7.1	7.6	7.5	7.5	7.2	6.6	6.0	6.8
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	12.3	12.7	10.8	10.2	9.6	9.4	9.4	9.0	8.9	8.1	8.4
East Asia	3.6	3.6	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.0	2.9	3.3
South-East Asia and the Pacific	5.2	5.5	4.9	6.1	6.6	7.0	7.2	6.9	6.8	5.8	6.0
South Asia	4.1	4.4	4.6	4.2	3.7	4.9	6.0	6.1	6.0	6.0	6.0
Latin America and the Caribbean	10.8	11.0	10.7	10.7	10.9	11.0	10.7	10.3	9.4	9.1	9.3
Middle East	16.1	15.2	14.1	16.6	16.6	15.9	13.1	14.1	14.0	13.4	13.4
North Africa	18.3	18.5	19.7	19.4	19.5	19.1	18.3	17.6	15.9	16.3	16.1
Sub-Saharan Africa	7.3	8.7	8.5	8.9	8.3	8.0	8.9	8.7	8.6	8.4	8.3

\*2008 are preliminary estimates

Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, January 2009; for further information see Annex 4 in this report and <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/strat/wrest.htm>. Differences from earlier estimates are due to revisions of World Bank and IMF estimates of GDP and its components that are used in the models, as well as updates of the labour market information used. The latter is based on ILO, *Key Indicators of the Labour Market*, 5th Edition, 2007.

**Table A3. Unemployment in the world (million)**

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008*
Total	165.1	172.1	170.7	173.4	175.5	183.9	189.1	188.3	184.4	178.9	192.7
Male	95.7	99.5	100.0	100.7	101.7	107.2	108.7	108.0	105.9	103.4	111.7
Female	69.3	72.5	70.7	72.7	73.8	76.7	80.3	80.3	78.5	75.5	81.0
Youth	67.6	70.7	71.1	70.5	71.0	74.0	76.3	76.4	74.9	73.1	77.2
Adult	97.4	101.4	99.6	102.8	104.5	110.0	112.7	111.9	109.5	105.7	115.5

**Table A4. Labour force participation rate in the world (%)**

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008*
Total	65.8	65.7	65.6	65.5	65.4	65.2	65.2	65.2	65.1	65.1	65.1
Male	79.2	79.1	78.9	78.7	78.4	78.2	78.0	77.9	77.7	77.6	77.5
Female	52.4	52.3	52.3	52.3	52.3	52.3	52.3	52.5	52.6	52.6	52.6
Youth	54.4	54.2	53.5	52.9	52.5	51.9	51.6	51.3	50.9	51.0	50.9
Adult	69.7	69.6	69.7	69.7	69.7	69.7	69.7	69.8	69.8	69.7	69.7

\* 2008 are preliminary estimates

Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, January 2009, see also source of Table A2

**Table A5. Adult employment-to-population ratio, world and regions (%)**

<b>Both sexes</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008*</b>
World	66.5	66.4	66.5	66.5	66.5	66.4	66.4	66.6	66.8	66.8	66.6
Developed Economies and European Union	58.6	58.7	58.8	58.7	58.3	58.3	58.4	58.7	59.1	59.2	58.7
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	58.1	56.5	57.6	58.1	58.5	58.5	58.6	59.1	59.1	60.0	59.9
East Asia	77.3	77.3	77.3	77.2	77.1	77.0	76.9	76.7	76.7	76.5	76.0
South-East Asia and the Pacific	73.9	73.9	73.8	73.2	73.3	73.2	73.0	73.0	72.6	73.0	72.8
South Asia	63.7	63.4	63.3	63.3	63.4	62.8	62.4	62.5	62.7	62.5	62.4
Latin America and the Caribbean	62.5	62.7	63.3	63.7	64.2	64.5	65.3	65.8	66.6	66.7	66.7
Middle East	53.2	53.5	53.8	53.4	53.5	53.2	54.6	54.4	54.5	54.7	54.7
North Africa	51.4	51.2	51.2	51.6	51.6	52.0	52.7	53.2	53.6	53.8	54.0
Sub-Saharan Africa	73.1	72.6	72.6	72.6	72.8	73.1	73.1	73.3	73.5	73.7	73.9
<b>Males</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008*</b>
World	81.4	81.2	81.2	81.0	80.9	80.7	80.6	80.7	80.7	80.7	80.3
Developed Economies and European Union	69.8	69.7	69.6	69.2	68.4	68.2	68.1	68.4	68.7	68.5	67.5
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	68.7	67.1	68.4	68.6	68.7	68.7	69.1	69.8	69.7	70.6	70.5
East Asia	84.4	84.2	84.2	84.0	83.9	83.7	83.5	83.3	83.2	83.1	82.5
South-East Asia and the Pacific	88.6	88.4	88.4	87.6	88.1	88.1	87.9	87.7	87.4	87.8	87.6
South Asia	89.1	88.7	88.3	88.4	88.6	87.7	87.0	86.8	86.7	86.4	86.2
Latin America and the Caribbean	82.0	81.5	81.6	81.5	81.4	81.4	81.9	82.0	82.3	82.2	81.9
Middle East	82.2	82.3	82.3	81.6	81.4	80.7	82.3	81.9	81.6	81.9	81.7
North Africa	81.0	80.3	80.2	80.6	80.6	80.8	81.3	81.5	81.7	81.8	81.7
Sub-Saharan Africa	86.2	85.9	85.6	85.4	85.3	85.4	85.3	85.3	85.3	85.5	85.4
<b>Females</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008*</b>
World	51.9	51.9	52.2	52.3	52.4	52.4	52.5	52.8	53.1	53.2	53.1
Developed Economies and European Union	48.3	48.7	49.0	49.1	48.9	49.2	49.4	49.7	50.3	50.6	50.4
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	49.0	47.4	48.3	49.2	49.8	49.8	49.7	50.1	50.1	51.1	51.0
East Asia	70.0	70.1	70.2	70.2	70.2	70.1	70.0	69.9	69.9	69.7	69.3
South-East Asia and the Pacific	59.9	60.0	59.8	59.3	59.1	58.8	58.7	58.9	58.4	58.9	58.7
South Asia	36.7	36.6	36.8	36.8	36.9	36.6	36.5	37.0	37.7	37.4	37.6
Latin America and the Caribbean	44.2	45.1	46.2	47.0	48.0	48.6	49.9	50.7	51.9	52.3	52.6
Middle East	20.5	21.0	21.6	21.5	21.9	22.3	23.3	23.6	24.0	24.3	24.7
North Africa	22.6	22.8	23.1	23.5	23.3	24.1	25.0	25.8	26.3	26.7	27.0
Sub-Saharan Africa	60.8	60.1	60.4	60.4	60.9	61.5	61.5	62.0	62.3	62.5	62.9

\* 2008 are preliminary estimates

Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, January 2009, see also source of Table A2

**Table A6a. Sectoral share in employment, world and regions, both sexes (%)**

	1998	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008*
<b>Agriculture</b>							
World	40.8	38.7	37.5	36.5	35.5	34.4	33.5
Developed Economies and European Union	5.8	4.6	4.3	4.2	4.0	3.9	3.7
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	26.8	22.7	22.1	21.2	20.4	19.5	18.7
East Asia	47.6	46.8	44.6	42.6	40.6	38.6	36.6
South-East Asia and the Pacific	50.1	47.9	46.0	45.7	45.3	44.8	44.3
South Asia	59.5	53.3	52.1	50.7	49.5	48.2	46.9
Latin America and the Caribbean	21.4	19.4	19.3	18.9	18.0	17.1	16.3
Middle East	20.8	19.5	18.8	18.3	17.8	17.3	16.8
North Africa	35.9	34.7	35.3	34.4	33.7	33.1	32.4
Sub-Saharan Africa	67.6	65.4	64.3	63.9	63.3	62.4	61.6
<b>Industry</b>							
World	21.1	20.7	21.1	21.6	22.1	22.7	23.2
Developed Economies and European Union	27.9	25.6	25.3	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.1
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	27.7	25.6	25.3	25.5	25.5	25.4	25.3
East Asia	24.4	22.5	23.3	24.5	25.7	27.0	28.2
South-East Asia and the Pacific	15.5	17.4	17.9	18.0	18.4	18.8	19.3
South Asia	15.4	18.8	19.4	20.2	21.0	21.8	22.6
Latin America and the Caribbean	21.8	21.6	21.8	22.2	22.4	22.6	22.9
Middle East	25.5	25.4	25.1	25.0	24.9	24.8	24.8
North Africa	20.1	19.2	19.6	20.8	21.7	22.6	23.6
Sub-Saharan Africa	9.5	9.5	9.7	9.7	9.9	10.1	10.3
<b>Services</b>							
World	38.1	40.7	41.5	41.9	42.4	42.9	43.3
Developed Economies and European Union	66.3	69.8	70.4	70.8	70.9	71.1	71.2
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	45.5	51.7	52.6	53.2	54.2	55.1	56.0
East Asia	28.0	30.8	32.0	32.9	33.6	34.4	35.2
South-East Asia and the Pacific	34.4	34.7	36.2	36.2	36.3	36.4	36.4
South Asia	25.1	27.9	28.5	29.1	29.5	30.0	30.4
Latin America and the Caribbean	56.8	59.0	58.9	58.9	59.6	60.2	60.8
Middle East	53.7	55.1	56.0	56.7	57.3	57.9	58.4
North Africa	44.1	46.2	45.1	44.8	44.5	44.3	44.0
Sub-Saharan Africa	22.8	25.2	26.0	26.4	26.8	27.5	28.1

\*2008 are preliminary estimates

Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, January 2009, see also source of Table A2

**Table A6b. Sectoral share in employment, world and regions, females (%)**

	1998	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008*
<b>Agriculture</b>							
World	42.9	40.6	39.4	38.4	37.5	36.4	35.4
Developed Economies and European Union	5.0	3.8	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.1	2.9
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	27.0	22.2	21.6	20.7	19.8	18.7	17.9
East Asia	51.6	50.6	48.2	45.9	43.5	41.2	38.9
South-East Asia and the Pacific	51.3	48.3	46.4	45.9	45.0	43.9	43.0
South Asia	74.4	66.9	66.5	65.8	65.5	65.1	64.5
Latin America and the Caribbean	12.6	11.0	11.0	11.0	10.3	9.7	9.2
Middle East	26.1	32.2	32.1	32.2	32.2	32.0	32.0
North Africa	31.3	31.6	36.8	38.8	39.3	38.9	38.1
Sub-Saharan Africa	71.0	68.1	66.8	65.3	66.0	65.1	64.3
<b>Industry</b>							
World	17.0	16.2	16.4	16.9	17.3	17.8	18.3
Developed Economies and European Union	16.3	13.9	13.5	13.1	12.9	12.8	12.7
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	21.8	18.3	17.8	17.8	17.4	17.1	16.8
East Asia	23.5	21.2	22.2	23.6	25.0	26.5	27.9
South-East Asia and the Pacific	12.7	14.9	15.0	15.3	15.8	16.3	16.8
South Asia	11.5	15.7	16.0	16.4	16.4	16.8	17.3
Latin America and the Caribbean	13.9	14.6	14.8	14.8	14.6	14.3	14.1
Middle East	21.6	18.6	18.1	17.8	17.6	17.6	17.6
North Africa	15.9	13.1	13.5	14.0	14.9	15.7	16.6
Sub-Saharan Africa	6.4	5.9	6.1	6.7	6.2	6.4	6.6
<b>Services</b>							
World	40.1	43.2	44.2	44.7	45.2	45.9	46.3
Developed Economies and European Union	78.6	82.3	83.0	83.5	83.8	84.1	84.4
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	51.1	59.5	60.5	61.5	62.8	64.1	65.3
East Asia	25.0	28.2	29.7	30.6	31.5	32.3	33.2
South-East Asia and the Pacific	36.0	36.8	38.7	38.8	39.2	39.8	40.2
South Asia	14.1	17.4	17.5	17.8	18.0	18.1	18.2
Latin America and the Caribbean	73.5	74.4	74.2	74.3	75.2	75.9	76.7
Middle East	52.4	49.2	49.8	50.1	50.1	50.4	50.4
North Africa	52.8	55.3	49.7	47.2	45.8	45.5	45.3
Sub-Saharan Africa	22.6	26.0	27.1	28.0	27.8	28.5	29.0

\* 2008 are preliminary estimates

Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, January 2009, see also source of Table A2

**Table A6c. Sectoral share in employment, world and regions, males (%)**

	1998	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008*
<b>Agriculture</b>							
World	39.4	37.4	36.2	35.3	34.1	33.1	32.2
Developed Economies and European Union	6.4	5.2	4.9	4.8	4.7	4.5	4.4
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	26.7	23.1	22.5	21.7	20.9	20.1	19.3
East Asia	44.3	43.5	41.7	39.9	38.2	36.4	34.7
South-East Asia and the Pacific	49.4	47.7	45.7	45.6	45.5	45.4	45.2
South Asia	53.7	48.0	46.4	44.7	43.0	41.5	39.9
Latin America and the Caribbean	26.4	24.7	24.6	24.2	23.1	22.1	21.1
Middle East	19.5	16.0	15.1	14.3	13.7	13.0	12.4
North Africa	37.2	35.6	34.8	33.0	31.9	31.2	30.6
Sub-Saharan Africa	65.1	63.2	62.3	62.8	61.2	60.3	59.5
<b>Industry</b>							
World	23.8	23.7	24.2	24.7	25.4	26.0	26.6
Developed Economies and European Union	36.8	35.0	34.7	34.6	34.7	35.0	35.2
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	32.5	31.7	31.4	32.0	32.1	32.3	32.4
East Asia	25.2	23.5	24.3	25.3	26.3	27.4	28.5
South-East Asia and the Pacific	17.5	19.1	19.9	19.9	20.3	20.6	21.0
South Asia	16.9	20.0	20.8	21.7	22.8	23.8	24.8
Latin America and the Caribbean	26.3	25.9	26.4	27.0	27.7	28.3	28.9
Middle East	26.4	27.3	27.1	27.1	27.0	26.9	26.9
North Africa	21.3	21.1	21.6	23.0	23.9	24.9	25.8
Sub-Saharan Africa	11.9	12.2	12.4	12.1	12.7	13.0	13.2
<b>Services</b>							
World	36.8	38.9	39.7	40.1	40.5	40.9	41.2
Developed Economies and European Union	56.8	59.8	60.3	60.6	60.6	60.6	60.5
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	40.9	45.2	46.1	46.4	47.0	47.6	48.2
East Asia	30.5	32.9	34.1	34.8	35.5	36.2	36.9
South-East Asia and the Pacific	33.2	33.2	34.4	34.4	34.2	34.0	33.8
South Asia	29.4	32.1	32.8	33.5	34.2	34.7	35.3
Latin America and the Caribbean	47.3	49.3	49.0	48.8	49.2	49.6	50.0
Middle East	54.1	56.7	57.8	58.6	59.4	60.1	60.7
North Africa	41.5	43.3	43.6	44.0	44.1	43.9	43.6
Sub-Saharan Africa	23.0	24.5	25.2	25.1	26.0	26.7	27.3

\* 2008 are preliminary estimates

Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, January 2009, see also source of Table A2

**Table A7. Vulnerable employment shares, world and regions (%)**

<b>Total</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>
World	53.5	52.1	52.1	51.8	51.4	51.2	50.6
Developed Economies and European Union	11.8	10.5	10.5	10.8	10.7	10.4	10.1
Central and South Eastern Europe (non- EU) & CIS	17.8	19.2	19.5	20.6	19.1	19.2	18.2
East Asia	63.7	58.1	57.7	57.6	57.2	56.9	55.9
South-East Asia and the Pacific	65.6	64.8	64.8	63.4	62.8	62.6	61.9
South Asia	79.8	79.1	79.3	79.0	78.8	78.4	77.5
Latin America and the Caribbean	32.4	35.2	35.1	34.4	33.0	32.1	31.9
Middle East	39.3	35.8	35.3	36.1	33.5	33.6	32.3
North Africa	43.1	40.2	40.0	41.1	41.0	38.7	37.3
Sub-Saharan Africa	80.2	78.7	78.5	76.8	77.1	77.8	76.8
<b>Males</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>
World	51.4	50.7	50.7	50.3	50.0	49.8	49.1
Developed Economies and European Union	12.2	11.4	11.5	12.0	11.9	11.6	11.4
Central and South Eastern Europe (non- EU) & CIS	18.4	19.2	19.8	21.2	19.6	19.5	18.6
East Asia	58.4	53.5	53.2	53.0	52.5	52.3	51.1
South-East Asia and the Pacific	61.5	61.3	61.4	59.9	59.7	59.6	58.9
South Asia	76.1	76.2	76.5	76.0	75.8	75.4	74.3
Latin America and the Caribbean	32.6	35.0	35.0	34.2	33.4	32.2	32.1
Middle East	35.8	32.4	32.0	33.1	30.2	30.3	29.1
North Africa	39.5	38.4	37.0	36.8	37.3	34.7	33.4
Sub-Saharan Africa	75.6	73.4	72.8	70.1	71.1	72.4	71.3
<b>Females</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>
World	56.7	54.3	54.2	54.1	53.6	53.3	52.7
Developed Economies and European Union	11.2	9.4	9.4	9.3	9.2	8.9	8.6
Central and South Eastern Europe (non- EU) & CIS	17.1	19.3	19.2	19.8	18.4	18.8	17.6
East Asia	70.1	63.6	63.1	63.1	62.6	62.3	61.4
South-East Asia and the Pacific	71.3	69.9	69.7	68.4	67.3	66.9	66.2
South Asia	89.1	86.4	86.5	86.4	86.1	86.0	85.1
Latin America and the Caribbean	32.0	35.5	35.3	34.6	32.5	31.9	31.5
Middle East	54.1	48.6	47.9	46.9	45.7	45.3	43.6
North Africa	54.9	45.8	49.0	54.2	52.0	50.0	48.4
Sub-Saharan Africa	86.3	85.7	85.8	85.4	84.9	84.6	83.9

Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, January 2009, see also source of Table A2



**Table A8. Working poor indicators, world and regions**

	1997	2002	2007	1997	2002	2007
	(million)	(million)	(million)	Share in total employment (%)	Share in total employment (%)	Share in total employment (%)
<b>USD 1.25 a day working poor</b>						
World	819.3	783.8	572.4	32.6	28.8	19.4
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	12.2	10.4	8.2	8.2	6.8	5.1
East Asia	278.7	231.6	90.3	38.4	30.3	11.2
South-East Asia and the Pacific	80.6	66.4	46.0	35.8	26.9	16.9
South Asia	273.4	284.3	234.1	56.5	52.7	39.5
Latin America and the Caribbean	24.9	25.8	17.0	12.9	11.8	6.8
Middle East	3.9	5.0	5.3	9.7	10.1	9.0
North Africa	5.2	6.0	5.9	11.7	11.8	9.8
Sub-Saharan Africa	140.3	154.4	165.6	65.0	62.7	58.3
<b>USD 2 a day working poor</b>						
World	1'360.6	1'350.0	1'197.3	54.2	49.7	40.5
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	32.1	27.4	22.6	21.5	17.9	13.9
East Asia	502.0	426.70	268.1	69.2	55.8	33.3
South-East Asia and the Pacific	143.0	145.5	127.7	63.4	59.0	46.8
South Asia	416.2	452.8	472.3	86.0	84.0	79.7
Latin America and the Caribbean	53.7	56.8	40.6	27.8	26.0	16.4
Middle East	10.6	12.9	14.3	25.8	26.1	24.0
North Africa	18.8	18.9	18.2	42.0	37.1	30.2
Sub-Saharan Africa	184.2	208.5	233.5	85.4	84.7	82.2

Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, January 2009, see also source of Table A2

**Table A9. Netherlands, seasonally adjusted unemployment, by sex,  
July 2007-December 2008**

		Unemployment rate (%)			Number of unemployed (000)		
		MF	M	F	MF	M	F
2007	July	3.2	2.8	3.6	280	135	145
	August	3.2	2.9	3.5	276	136	140
	September	3.0	2.7	3.4	264	129	135
	October	2.9	2.6	3.3	256	124	133
	November	2.9	2.6	3.2	251	121	130
	December	2.8	2.6	3.2	250	122	128
2008	January	2.8	2.5	3.1	245	120	125
	February	2.8	2.6	3.1	249	126	123
	March	2.9	2.6	3.1	252	126	126
	April	2.9	2.7	3.2	255	128	127
	May	2.8	2.5	3.2	250	121	129
	June	2.7	2.4	3.0	236	114	122
	July	2.7	2.4	3.0	235	115	120
	August	2.7	2.5	2.9	238	121	117
	September	2.7	2.6	2.9	242	125	117
	October	2.8	2.7	2.9	244	128	116
	November	2.8	2.7	2.8	245	129	116
	December	2.7	2.7	2.8	243	128	114
Difference July-December 2007 (percentage point)		-0.4	-0.2	-0.4			
Difference July-December 2008 (percentage point)		0.0	0.3	-0.2			
Difference July-December 2007 (000)					-30	-13	-17
Difference July-December 2008 (000)					8	13	-6

Source: Eurostat

**Table A10. Poland, seasonally adjusted unemployment, by sex, July 2007-December 2008**

	Unemployment rate (%)			Number of unemployed (000)			
	MF	M	F	MF	M	F	
2007							
	July	9.4	8.9	10.1	1,585	820	765
	August	9.3	8.7	9.9	1,556	805	751
	September	9.0	8.5	9.7	1,520	785	736
	October	8.8	8.2	9.4	1,477	757	720
	November	8.5	7.9	9.2	1,433	732	700
	December	8.2	7.6	8.9	1,388	705	683
	January	8.0	7.4	8.7	1,350	682	668
	February	7.8	7.1	8.5	1,311	658	653
	March	7.6	6.9	8.4	1,281	639	641
	April	7.5	6.8	8.3	1,263	628	635
	May	7.3	6.6	8.2	1,245	613	632
2008							
	June	7.1	6.4	8.1	1,212	591	621
	July	6.9	6.1	7.9	1,176	568	608
	August	6.8	6.0	7.7	1,149	554	595
	September	6.6	5.9	7.5	1,127	546	581
	October	6.5	5.8	7.4	1,114	542	572
	November	6.5	5.8	7.4	1,114	545	569
	December	6.5	5.8	7.3	1,115	548	567
<hr/>							
	Difference July-December 2007 (percentage point)	-1.2	-1.3	-1.2			
	Difference July-December 2008 (percentage point)	-0.4	-0.3	-0.6			
	Difference July-December 2007 (000)				-197	-115	-82
	Difference July-December 2008 (000)				-61	-20	-41

Source: Eurostat

**Table A11. Canada, seasonally adjusted unemployment, by sex, July 2007-December 2008**

		Unemployment rate (%)			Number of unemployed (000)		
		MF	M	F	MF	M	F
2007	July	6.0	6.4	5.7	1,083	605	478
	August	6.0	6.3	5.8	1,082	593	488
	September	5.9	6.2	5.6	1,064	586	477
	October	5.8	6.4	5.2	1,052	606	446
	November	5.9	6.4	5.5	1,075	609	467
	December	6.0	6.4	5.4	1,078	615	463
2008	January	5.8	6.1	5.4	1,051	588	463
	February	5.8	6.0	5.6	1,057	580	477
	March	6.0	6.4	5.7	1,099	614	485
	April	6.1	6.5	5.6	1,104	625	479
	May	6.1	6.5	5.7	1,117	630	487
	June	6.2	6.8	5.4	1,124	657	467
	July	6.1	6.5	5.6	1,105	627	479
	August	6.1	6.4	5.7	1,113	620	493
	September	6.1	6.5	5.6	1,119	634	485
	October	6.2	6.6	5.7	1,140	644	496
	November	6.3	6.9	5.7	1,162	671	491
	December	6.6	7.1	6.0	1,209	687	522
Difference July-December 2007 (percentage point)		0.0	0.0	-0.3			
Difference July-December 2008 (percentage point)		0.5	0.6	0.4			
Difference July-December 2007 (000)					-6	9	-15
Difference July-December 2008 (000)					104	61	43

Source: Statistics Canada, see <http://www40.statcan.gc.ca/index-eng.htm>

**Table A12. Australia, seasonally adjusted unemployment, by sex, July 2007-December 2008**

		Unemployment rate (%)			Number of unemployed (000)		
		MF	M	F	MF	M	F
2007	July	4.3	3.9	4.8	470	236	235
	August	4.3	4.0	4.8	477	242	235
	September	4.2	3.8	4.7	462	227	235
	October	4.3	4.0	4.8	478	239	239
	November	4.4	4.1	4.8	490	250	240
	December	4.2	4.1	4.4	468	249	219
2008	January	4.1	3.7	4.6	458	226	232
	February	3.9	3.6	4.4	438	217	221
	March	4.1	3.9	4.3	456	240	215
	April	4.3	4.0	4.6	477	246	231
	May	4.3	4.0	4.6	477	244	233
	June	4.3	4.0	4.6	477	246	230
	July	4.3	3.9	4.8	482	240	242
	August	4.1	3.8	4.5	460	234	226
	September	4.3	4.0	4.7	482	246	236
	October	4.3	4.0	4.8	489	246	243
	November	4.4	4.1	4.8	497	250	246
	December	4.5	4.4	4.5	501	273	229
Difference July-December 2007 (percentage point)		-0.1	0.2	-0.4			
Difference July-December 2008 (percentage point)		0.2	0.5	-0.3			
Difference July-December 2007 (000)					-2	14	-16
Difference July-December 2008 (000)					19	33	-13

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, see <http://www.abs.gov.au/>

**Table A13. United States, seasonally adjusted unemployment, by sex,  
July 2007-December 2008**

		Unemployment rate (%)			Number of unemployed (000)		
		MF	M	F	MF	M	F
2007	July	4.7	4.7	4.6	7,189	3,889	3,300
	August	4.7	4.7	4.6	7,135	3,876	3,259
	September	4.7	4.8	4.5	7,255	3,990	3,265
	October	4.8	4.9	4.6	7,210	3,953	3,257
	November	4.7	4.8	4.6	7,202	3,920	3,282
	December	4.9	5.0	4.8	7,555	4,116	3,439
2008	January	4.9	5.1	4.7	7,561	4,209	3,352
	February	4.8	4.9	4.7	7,463	4,098	3,365
	March	5.1	5.2	5.0	7,805	4,256	3,549
	April	5.0	5.2	4.8	7,662	4,247	3,415
	May	5.5	5.7	5.3	8,498	4,692	3,806
	June	5.6	5.9	5.3	8,614	4,798	3,816
	July	5.8	6.2	5.3	8,983	5,172	3,811
	August	6.2	6.4	5.9	9,570	5,312	4,258
	September	6.2	6.8	5.5	9,650	5,672	3,978
	October	6.6	7.2	5.9	10,112	5,875	4,237
	November	6.8	7.4	6.1	10,439	6,044	4,395
	December	7.2	7.9	6.4	11,110	6,459	4,651
Difference July-December 2007 (percentage point)		0.2	0.3	0.2			
Difference July-December 2008 (percentage point)		1.4	1.7	1.1			
Difference July-December 2007 (000)					366	227	139
Difference July-December 2008 (000)					2,127	1,287	840

Source: Eurostat

**Table A14. France, seasonally adjusted unemployment, by sex, July 2007-December 2008**

		Unemployment rate (%)			Number of unemployed (000)		
		MF	M	F	MF	M	F
2007	July	8.3	7.8	8.8	2,359	1,174	1,184
	August	8.2	7.7	8.7	2,330	1,161	1,169
	September	8.1	7.6	8.6	2,308	1,146	1,162
	October	8.0	7.4	8.5	2,280	1,124	1,156
	November	7.8	7.3	8.5	2,246	1,100	1,146
	December	7.7	7.2	8.3	2,212	1,081	1,132
2008	January	7.7	7.1	8.2	2,193	1,076	1,117
	February	7.6	7.1	8.2	2,182	1,071	1,111
	March	7.6	7.1	8.2	2,185	1,077	1,108
	April	7.7	7.2	8.2	2,196	1,085	1,111
	May	7.7	7.2	8.2	2,199	1,087	1,112
	June	7.7	7.2	8.2	2,210	1,093	1,116
	July	7.7	7.2	8.2	2,209	1,090	1,118
	August	7.7	7.3	8.2	2,223	1,100	1,123
	September	7.8	7.4	8.3	2,250	1,123	1,127
	October	7.9	7.6	8.3	2,290	1,157	1,133
	November	8.0	7.7	8.3	2,327	1,187	1,140
	December	8.1	7.9	8.3	2,361	1,214	1,147
Difference July-December 2007 (percentage point)		-0.6	-0.6	-0.5			
Difference July-December 2008 (percentage point)		0.4	0.7	0.1			
Difference July-December 2007 (000)					-147	-93	-52
Difference July-December 2008 (000)					152	124	29

Source: Eurostat

**Table A15. Female employment shares by sector, selected economies, 1995, 2000 and 2005**

	1995	2000	2005	1995-2000 change in percentage point	2000-2005 change in percentage point
	(%)	(%)	(%)		
Agriculture, hunting and forestry	41.7	40.2	38.2	-1.5	-2.0
Mining and quarrying	12.4	13.2	12.7	0.8	-0.5
Manufacturing	31.3	30.8	30.1	-0.5	-0.7
Electricity, gas and water supply	19.4	20.1	21.9	0.7	1.8
Construction	9.3	8.9	8.6	-0.5	-0.2
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles, motorcycles and personal and household goods	47.0	47.9	48.3	0.9	0.4
Hotels and restaurants	55.1	55.5	56.0	0.4	0.5
Transport, storage and communications	24.6	25.7	25.9	1.2	0.2
Financial intermediation	50.7	51.7	52.2	1.0	0.5
Real estate, renting and business activities	44.3	44.0	44.6	-0.3	0.6
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	38.7	41.3	44.5	2.5	3.3
Education	66.6	68.5	70.2	1.9	1.7
Health and social work	76.4	77.9	77.7	1.6	-0.3
Other community, social and personal services activities	51.5	52.7	54.2	1.2	1.5
All sectors	42.0	42.9	43.9	0.9	1.1

Source: *Key Indicators of the Labour Market* (Geneva, ILO, 2007)

Note: ISIC tabulation categories B (Fishing) and P (Private households with employed persons) are excluded because of lack of data for some countries; countries covered in the table are: Australia, Austria, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom



**Table A16. United States, employment by sector, by sex**

Sector		December 2007 (000)	December 2008p (000)	Difference Dec 08 – Dec 07 (000)	Difference Dec 08 – Dec 07 (%)
<b>Total nonfarm</b>	F	68,076	67,472	-604	-0.9
	M	70,799	68,475	-2,324	-3.3
	MF	138,875	135,947	-2,928	-2.1
<i>Total private</i>	F	55,024	54,233	-791	-1.4
	M	61,113	58,812	-2,301	-3.8
	MF	116,137	113,045	-3,092	-2.7
Goods-producing	F	5,016	4,715	-301	-6.0
	M	16,888	15,759	-1,129	-6.7
Mining and logging	F	97	107	10	10.3
	M	641	679	38	5.9
Construction	F	934	891	-43	-4.6
	M	6,456	5,851	-605	-9.4
Manufacturing	F	3,985	3,717	-268	-6.7
	M	9,791	9,229	-562	-5.7
Service-providing	F	63,060	62,757	-303	-0.5
	M	53,911	52,716	-1,195	-2.2
Private service providing	F	50,008	49,518	-490	-1.0
	M	44,225	43,053	-1,172	-2.7
Trade, transportation, and utilities	F	11,374	11,049	-326	-2.9
	M	16,005	15,436	-569	-3.6
Information	F	1,288	1,242	-46	-3.6
	M	1,751	1,712	-39	-2.2
Financial activities	F	4,897	4,747	-150	-3.1
	M	3,335	3,263	-72	-2.2
Professional and business services	F	8,152	7,880	-272	-3.3
	M	9,965	9,525	-440	-4.4
Education and health services	F	14,468	14,885	417	2.9
	M	4,261	4,361	100	2.4
Leisure and hospitality	F	6,965	6,845	-120	-1.7
	M	6,279	6,169	-110	-1.8
Other services	F	2,864	2,870	6	0.2
	M	2,629	2,587	-42	-1.6
<i>Government</i>	F	13,052	13,239	187	1.4
	M	9,686	9,663	-23	-0.2
	MF	22,738	22,902	164	0.7

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, January 2009, Table B12, Employees on nonfarm payrolls by detailed industry, not seasonally adjusted establishment data (December-08p are preliminary data), see source for additional notes, <http://www.bls.gov/web/empstoc.htm>

## Annex 2. Scenarios

**Table S1. 2009 Unemployment scenarios (rates)**

Region	2007	2008	2009		
	Rate (%)	Rate (%)	Scenario 1 Rate (%)	Scenario 2 Rate (%)	Scenario 3 Rate (%)
World	5.7	6.0	6.3	6.7	7.1
Developed Economies and European Union	5.7	6.7	7.0	7.8	7.9
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	8.4	8.7	9.3	9.6	9.7
East Asia	3.4	3.9	4.3	4.6	5.4
South-East Asia and the Pacific	5.5	5.6	6.0	6.3	6.3
South Asia	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.7	6.1
Latin America and the Caribbean	7.0	7.3	7.7	8.6	8.6
Middle East	9.4	9.4	9.4	9.5	10.8
North Africa	10.8	10.7	10.6	10.9	11.6
Sub-Saharan Africa	8.1	8.0	8.0	8.4	8.9
Region	Change between 2007-2008 (percentage point)		Change between 2007-2009 (percentage point)	Change between 2007-2009 (percentage point)	Change between 2007-2009 (percentage point)
World	0.3		0.6	1.0	1.4
Developed Economies and European Union	1.0		1.2	2.1	2.1
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	0.3		0.9	1.1	1.3
East Asia	0.5		0.8	1.1	1.9
South-East Asia and the Pacific	0.1		0.5	0.8	0.8
South Asia	0.1		0.1	0.4	0.8
Latin America and the Caribbean	0.2		0.7	1.6	1.6
Middle East	0.0		0.0	0.1	1.4
North Africa	-0.1		-0.1	0.1	0.8
Sub-Saharan Africa	-0.1		0.0	0.3	0.9

Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, January 2009, see also source of Table A2  
 Figures for 2008 are preliminary estimates, figures for 2009 are projections based on the following assumptions:

*Scenario 1.* Projection on labour market data to date and IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).

*Scenario 2.* Projection on the historical relationship between economic growth and unemployment at times of crises in each economy; IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).

*Scenario 3.* Projection on the basis of a simultaneous increase in the unemployment rate in the Developed Economies and the European Union equal to 0.9 of the largest increase since 1991; 0.45 of the largest increase since 1991 in economies in other regions; IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).

Note: Numbers may not add up due to rounding.

**Table S2. 2009 Unemployment scenarios (numbers of people)**

Region	2007	2008	2009		
	Number (million)	Number (million)	Scenario 1 Number (million)	Scenario 2 Number (million)	Scenario 3 Number (million)
World	179	193	203	217	231
Developed Economies and European Union	29	34	35	40	40
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	15	16	17	17	17
East Asia	29	33	36	39	46
South-East Asia and the Pacific	16	17	18	19	19
South Asia	33	35	35	37	40
Latin America and the Caribbean	19	20	21	24	24
Middle East	6	6	7	7	8
North Africa	7	7	8	8	8
Sub-Saharan Africa	25	25	26	27	29
Region	Change between 2007-2008 (million)		Change between 2007-2009 (million)	Change between 2007-2009 (million)	Change between 2007-2009 (million)
World	14		24	38	52
Developed Economies and European Union	5		7	11	11
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	1		2	2	3
East Asia	4		7	10	17
South-East Asia and the Pacific	1		2	3	3
South Asia	1		2	4	7
Latin America and the Caribbean	1		3	5	5
Middle East	0		0	0	1
North Africa	0		0	0	1
Sub-Saharan Africa	1		1	2	4

Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, January 2009, see also source of Table A2  
 Figures for 2008 are preliminary estimates, figures for 2009 are projections based on the following assumptions:  
*Scenario 1.* Projection on labour market data to date and IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).  
*Scenario 2.* Projection on the historical relationship between economic growth and unemployment at times of crises in each economy; IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).  
*Scenario 3.* Projection on the basis of a simultaneous increase in the unemployment rate in the Developed Economies and the European Union equal to 0.9 of the largest increase since 1991; 0.45 of the largest increase since 1991 in economies in other regions; IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).

Note: Numbers may not add up due to rounding.

**Table S3. 2009 Female unemployment scenarios (rates)**

Region	2007	2008	2009		
	Rate (%)	Rate (%)	Scenario 1 Rate (%)	Scenario 2 Rate (%)	Scenario 3 Rate (%)
World	6.0	6.3	6.5	7.0	7.4
Developed Economies and European Union	6.0	6.8	7.0	7.7	7.8
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	8.1	8.4	9.0	9.3	9.4
East Asia	2.9	3.3	3.6	3.9	4.4
South-East Asia and the Pacific	5.8	6.0	6.5	6.7	6.8
South Asia	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.3	6.8
Latin America and the Caribbean	9.1	9.3	9.8	11.0	11.0
Middle East	13.4	13.4	13.3	13.4	15.1
North Africa	16.3	16.1	16.1	16.6	17.3
Sub-Saharan Africa	8.4	8.3	8.3	8.9	9.7
Region	Change between 2007-2008 (percentage point)		Change between 2007-2009 (percentage point)	Change between 2007-2009 (percentage point)	Change between 2007-2009 (percentage point)
World	0.3		0.6	1.0	1.5
Developed Economies and European Union	0.7		1.0	1.7	1.8
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	0.3		0.9	1.2	1.2
East Asia	0.4		0.7	1.0	1.6
South-East Asia and the Pacific	0.2		0.6	0.9	1.0
South Asia	0.0		0.0	0.3	0.8
Latin America and the Caribbean	0.3		0.7	1.9	1.9
Middle East	0.0		-0.1	0.0	1.7
North Africa	-0.2		-0.2	0.3	1.0
Sub-Saharan Africa	-0.1		-0.1	0.5	1.2

Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, January 2009, see also source of Table A2  
 Figures for 2008 are preliminary estimates, figures for 2009 are projections based on the following assumptions:  
*Scenario 1.* Projection on labour market data to date and IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).  
*Scenario 2.* Projection on the historical relationship between economic growth and unemployment at times of crises in each economy; IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).  
*Scenario 3.* Projection on the basis of a simultaneous increase in the unemployment rate in the Developed Economies and the European Union equal to 0.9 of the largest increase since 1991; 0.45 of the largest increase since 1991 in economies in other regions; IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).

Note: Numbers may not add up due to rounding.

**Table S4. 2009 Female unemployment scenarios (numbers of people)**

Region	2007	2008	2009		
	Number (million)	Number (million)	Scenario 1 Number (million)	Scenario 2 Number (million)	Scenario 3 Number (million)
World	75	81	86	92	97
Developed Economies and European Union	14	15	16	18	18
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	7	7	7	8	8
East Asia	11	13	14	15	17
South-East Asia and the Pacific	7	7	8	8	8
South Asia	11	11	11	12	13
Latin America and the Caribbean	10	11	11	13	13
Middle East	2	2	2	2	3
North Africa	3	3	3	3	3
Sub-Saharan Africa	11	12	12	13	14
Region	Change between 2007-2008 (million)		Change between 2007-2009 (million)	Change between 2007-2009 (million)	Change between 2007-2009 (million)
World	5		10	16	22
Developed Economies and European Union	2		2	4	4
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	0		1	1	1
East Asia	2		3	4	6
South-East Asia and the Pacific	0		1	1	2
South Asia	0		1	1	2
Latin America and the Caribbean	1		1	3	3
Middle East	0		0	0	0
North Africa	0		0	0	0
Sub-Saharan Africa	0		1	1	3

Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, January 2009, see also source of Table A2  
 Figures for 2008 are preliminary estimates, figures for 2009 are projections based on the following assumptions:  
*Scenario 1.* Projection on labour market data to date and IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).  
*Scenario 2.* Projection on the historical relationship between economic growth and unemployment at times of crises in each economy; IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).  
*Scenario 3.* Projection on the basis of a simultaneous increase in the unemployment rate in the Developed Economies and the European Union equal to 0.9 of the largest increase since 1991; 0.45 of the largest increase since 1991 in economies in other regions; IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).

Note: Numbers may not add up due to rounding.

**Table S5. 2009 Male unemployment scenarios (rates)**

Region	2007	2008	2009		
	Rate (%)	Rate (%)	Scenario 1 Rate (%)	Scenario 2 Rate (%)	Scenario 3 Rate (%)
World	5.5	5.9	6.1	6.5	7.0
Developed Economies and European Union	5.5	6.6	7.0	7.9	7.9
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	8.6	9.0	9.5	9.8	10.0
East Asia	3.9	4.5	4.8	5.2	6.2
South-East Asia and the Pacific	5.3	5.3	5.7	6.0	6.0
South Asia	5.1	5.2	5.2	5.5	5.9
Latin America and the Caribbean	5.6	5.8	6.2	6.8	6.8
Middle East	8.2	8.2	8.2	8.3	9.5
North Africa	8.7	8.5	8.5	8.7	9.4
Sub-Saharan Africa	7.7	7.7	7.8	7.9	8.3
Region	Change between 2007-2008 (percentage point)		Change between 2007-2009 (percentage point)	Change between 2007-2009 (percentage point)	Change between 2007-2009 (percentage point)
World	0.4		0.6	1.0	1.4
Developed Economies and European Union	1.1		1.5	2.4	2.4
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	0.4		0.9	1.1	1.3
East Asia	0.5		0.9	1.3	2.2
South-East Asia and the Pacific	0.1		0.5	0.7	0.7
South Asia	0.1		0.1	0.4	0.8
Latin America and the Caribbean	0.2		0.6	1.2	1.2
Middle East	0.0		0.0	0.1	1.3
North Africa	-0.1		-0.2	0.0	0.7
Sub-Saharan Africa	0.0		0.0	0.2	0.5

Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, January 2009, see also source of Table A2  
 Figures for 2008 are preliminary estimates, figures for 2009 are projections based on the following assumptions:

*Scenario 1.* Projection on labour market data to date and IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).

*Scenario 2.* Projection on the historical relationship between economic growth and unemployment at times of crises in each economy; IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).

*Scenario 3.* Projection on the basis of a simultaneous increase in the unemployment rate in the Developed Economies and the European Union equal to 0.9 of the largest increase since 1991; 0.45 of the largest increase since 1991 in economies in other regions; IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).

Note: Numbers may not add up due to rounding.

**Table S6. 2009 Male unemployment scenarios (numbers of people)**

Region	2007	2008	2009		
	Number (million)	Number (million)	Scenario 1 Number (million)	Scenario 2 Number (million)	Scenario 3 Number (million)
World	103	112	118	125	134
Developed Economies and European Union	15	18	19	22	22
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	8	9	9	10	10
East Asia	18	20	22	24	28
South-East Asia and the Pacific	9	9	10	10	11
South Asia	23	24	24	25	27
Latin America and the Caribbean	9	9	10	11	11
Middle East	4	4	4	4	5
North Africa	4	4	4	4	5
Sub-Saharan Africa	13	14	14	14	15
Region	Change between 2007-2008 (million)		Change between 2007-2009 (million)	Change between 2007-2009 (million)	Change between 2007-2009 (million)
World	8		14	22	30
Developed Economies and European Union	3		4	7	7
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	0		1	1	1
East Asia	3		4	6	11
South-East Asia and the Pacific	0		1	2	2
South Asia	1		1	3	4
Latin America and the Caribbean	0		1	2	2
Middle East	0		0	0	1
North Africa	0		0	0	1
Sub-Saharan Africa	0		1	1	2

Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, January 2009, see also source of Table A2  
 Figures for 2008 are preliminary estimates, figures for 2009 are projections based on the following assumptions:  
*Scenario 1.* Projection on labour market data to date and IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).  
*Scenario 2.* Projection on the historical relationship between economic growth and unemployment at times of crises in each economy; IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).  
*Scenario 3.* Projection on the basis of a simultaneous increase in the unemployment rate in the Developed Economies and the European Union equal to 0.9 of the largest increase since 1991; 0.45 of the largest increase since 1991 in economies in other regions; IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).

Note: Numbers may not add up due to rounding.

**Table S7. 2008-2009 Vulnerable employment scenarios (rates)**

Region	2007	2008		2009		
	Rate (%)	Scenario 1 Rate (%)	Scenario 3 Rate (%)	Scenario 1 Rate (%)	Scenario 2 Rate (%)	Scenario 3 Rate (%)
World	50.6	49.4	52.6	48.4	49.9	53.0
Developed Economies and European Union	10.1	9.9	10.6	9.4	10.1	11.0
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	18.2	16.4	20.9	14.3	16.4	23.4
East Asia	55.9	52.9	58.4	51.1	53.0	56.2
South-East Asia and the Pacific	61.9	60.8	63.3	59.6	60.9	64.5
South Asia	77.5	76.3	78.1	75.3	77.2	78.2
Latin America and the Caribbean	31.9	31.9	35.0	32.2	32.6	38.0
Middle East	32.3	31.4	35.9	30.5	31.6	39.2
North Africa	37.3	35.8	40.3	34.7	36.0	42.6
Sub-Saharan Africa	76.8	76.0	79.4	75.6	77.0	81.8
Region		Change between 2007-2008 (percentage point)	Change between 2007-2008 (percentage point)	Change between 2007-2009 (percentage point)	Change between 2007-2009 (percentage point)	Change between 2007-2009 (percentage point)
World		-1.2	2.0	-2.2	-0.7	2.4
Developed Economies and European Union		-0.2	0.5	-0.7	0.0	0.9
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS		-1.8	2.7	-3.9	-1.8	5.2
East Asia		-2.9	2.5	-4.8	-2.9	0.3
South-East Asia and the Pacific		-1.1	1.3	-2.3	-1.0	2.5
South Asia		-1.1	0.6	-2.2	-0.3	0.7
Latin America and the Caribbean		0.0	3.1	0.3	0.7	6.1
Middle East		-1.0	3.6	-1.8	-0.7	6.8
North Africa		-1.5	3.0	-2.6	-1.3	5.3
Sub-Saharan Africa		-0.8	2.6	-1.2	0.2	5.0

Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, January 2009, see also source of Table A2  
 Figures for 2008 and 2009 are projections based on the following assumptions:  
*Scenario 1.* Projection on labour market data to date and IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).  
*Scenario 2.* 2009: Projection on the historical relationship between economic growth and vulnerable employment at times of crises in each economy; IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).  
*Scenario 3.* 2008: Projection on the basis of a simultaneous increase in the vulnerable employment rate in all economies equal to half of the largest increase since 1991; IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth.  
 2009: Projection on the basis of a simultaneous increase in the vulnerable employment rate in all economies equal to the largest increase since 1991; IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).

Note: Numbers may not add up due to rounding.



**Table S8. 2008-2009 Vulnerable employment scenarios (numbers of people)**

Region	2007	2008		2009		
	Number (million)	Scenario 1 Number (million)	Scenario 3 Number (million)	Scenario 1 Number (million)	Scenario 2 Number (million)	Scenario 3 Number (million)
World	1,493	1,475	1,570	1,466	1,510	1,606
Developed Economies and European Union	47	46	50	45	48	52
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	29	27	34	23	27	38
East Asia	450	428	472	414	430	456
South-East Asia and the Pacific	169	169	176	168	171	181
South Asia	459	462	472	466	477	484
Latin America and the Caribbean	79	80	88	82	84	97
Middle East	19	19	22	19	20	25
North Africa	22	22	25	22	23	27
Sub-Saharan Africa	218	222	232	227	231	245
Region		Change between 2007-2008 (million)	Change between 2007-2008 (million)	Change between 2007-2009 (million)	Change between 2007-2009 (million)	Change between 2007-2009 (million)
World		-18	77	-27	18	113
Developed Economies and European Union		-1	2	-3	0	5
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS		-3	4	-6	-2	9
East Asia		-22	22	-35	-20	6
South-East Asia and the Pacific		0	7	-1	2	12
South Asia		3	14	7	19	25
Latin America and the Caribbean		1	9	3	4	18
Middle East		0	3	0	1	5
North Africa		0	2	0	0	5
Sub-Saharan Africa		4	14	9	13	28

Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, January 2009, see also source of Table A2  
 Figures for 2008 and 2009 are projections based on the following assumptions:  
*Scenario 1.* Projection on labour market data to date and IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).  
*Scenario 2.* 2009: Projection on the historical relationship between economic growth and vulnerable employment at times of crises in each economy; IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).  
*Scenario 3.* 2008: Projection on the basis of a simultaneous increase in the vulnerable employment rate in all economies equal to half of the largest increase since 1991; IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth.  
 2009: Projection on the basis of a simultaneous increase in the vulnerable employment rate in all economies equal to the largest increase since 1991; IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).

Note: Numbers may not add up due to rounding.

**Table S9. 2008-2009 Female vulnerable employment scenarios (rates)**

Region	2007	2008		2009		
	Rate (%)	Scenario 1 Rate (%)	Scenario 3 Rate (%)	Scenario 1 Rate (%)	Scenario 2 Rate (%)	Scenario 3 Rate (%)
World	52.7	51.4	54.1	50.5	51.8	54.7
Developed Economies and European Union	8.6	8.3	8.7	8.0	8.5	9.2
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	17.6	15.6	19.3	13.5	15.8	23.3
East Asia	61.4	58.2	63.4	56.2	58.2	60.6
South-East Asia and the Pacific	66.2	65.0	66.8	63.6	65.0	68.6
South Asia	85.1	83.9	84.6	82.8	83.9	85.3
Latin America and the Caribbean	31.5	31.6	35.2	32.3	32.5	38.8
Middle East	43.6	42.4	48.8	41.2	42.4	55.3
North Africa	48.4	46.6	53.0	45.2	47.2	59.3
Sub-Saharan Africa	83.9	83.2	85.1	82.7	83.7	87.1
Region		Change between 2007-2008 (percentage point)	Change between 2007-2008 (percentage point)	Change between 2007-2009 (percentage point)	Change between 2007-2009 (percentage point)	Change between 2007-2009 (percentage point)
World		-1.3	1.4	-2.3	-1.0	2.0
Developed Economies and European Union		-0.3	0.1	-0.6	0.0	0.6
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS		-2.0	1.7	-4.2	-1.8	5.7
East Asia		-3.2	2.0	-5.2	-3.2	-0.8
South-East Asia and the Pacific		-1.2	0.6	-2.6	-1.2	2.4
South Asia		-1.2	-0.5	-2.3	-1.2	0.2
Latin America and the Caribbean		0.1	3.7	0.8	1.0	7.3
Middle East		-1.3	5.2	-2.5	-1.2	11.7
North Africa		-1.7	4.6	-3.1	-1.2	10.9
Sub-Saharan Africa		-0.7	1.2	-1.1	-0.2	3.3

Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, January 2009, see also source of Table A2  
 Figures for 2008 and 2009 are projections based on the following assumptions:  
*Scenario 1.* Projection on labour market data to date and IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).  
*Scenario 2.* 2009: Projection on the historical relationship between economic growth and vulnerable employment at times of crises in each economy; IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).  
*Scenario 3.* 2008: Projection on the basis of a simultaneous increase in the vulnerable employment rate in all economies equal to half of the largest increase since 1991; IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth.  
 2009: Projection on the basis of a simultaneous increase in the vulnerable employment rate in all economies equal to the largest increase since 1991; IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).

Note: Numbers may not add up due to rounding.

**Table S10. 2008-2009 Female vulnerable employment scenarios (numbers of people)**

Region	2007	2008		2009		
	Number (million)	Scenario 1 Number (million)	Scenario 3 Number (million)	Scenario 1 Number (million)	Scenario 2 Number (million)	Scenario 3 Number (million)
World	628	620	654	617	633	671
Developed Economies and European Union	18	17	18	17	18	19
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	13	11	14	10	12	17
East Asia	227	216	236	210	218	227
South-East Asia and the Pacific	75	75	77	74	76	80
South Asia	146	147	149	150	152	154
Latin America and the Caribbean	31	32	36	34	34	40
Middle East	6	6	7	6	6	8
North Africa	8	8	9	8	8	10
Sub-Saharan Africa	104	107	109	109	111	115
Region		Change between 2007-2008 (million)	Change between 2007-2008 (million)	Change between 2007-2009 (million)	Change between 2007-2009 (million)	Change between 2007-2009 (million)
World		-8	27	-11	5	43
Developed Economies and European Union		-1	0	-1	0	2
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS		-1	1	-3	-1	4
East Asia		-11	8	-17	-10	-1
South-East Asia and the Pacific		0	2	-1	1	5
South Asia		2	3	4	6	8
Latin America and the Caribbean		1	5	2	2	9
Middle East		0	1	0	0	2
North Africa		0	1	0	0	2
Sub-Saharan Africa		2	5	5	6	11

Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, January 2009, see also source of Table A2  
 Figures for 2008 and 2009 are projections based on the following assumptions:  
*Scenario 1.* Projection on labour market data to date and IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).  
*Scenario 2.* 2009: Projection on the historical relationship between economic growth and vulnerable employment at times of crises in each economy; IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).  
*Scenario 3.* 2008: Projection on the basis of a simultaneous increase in the vulnerable employment rate in all economies equal to half of the largest increase since 1991; IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth.  
 2009: Projection on the basis of a simultaneous increase in the vulnerable employment rate in all economies equal to the largest increase since 1991; IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).

Note: Numbers may not add up due to rounding.

**Table S11. 2008-2009 Male vulnerable employment scenarios (rates)**

Region	2007	2008		2009		
	Rate (%)	Scenario 1 Rate (%)	Scenario 3 Rate (%)	Scenario 1 Rate (%)	Scenario 2 Rate (%)	Scenario 3 Rate (%)
World	49.1	48.0	51.3	47.2	48.7	51.8
Developed Economies and European Union	11.4	11.2	12.0	10.8	11.6	12.6
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	18.6	17.1	21.7	15.3	17.2	23.4
East Asia	51.1	48.4	54.1	46.7	48.5	52.4
South-East Asia and the Pacific	58.9	57.9	60.8	56.8	58.0	61.5
South Asia	74.3	73.2	75.4	72.1	74.4	75.3
Latin America and the Caribbean	32.1	32.1	34.8	32.1	32.7	37.4
Middle East	29.1	28.2	32.2	27.3	28.4	34.4
North Africa	33.4	32.0	35.1	30.9	32.0	36.7
Sub-Saharan Africa	71.3	70.4	73.0	69.9	71.7	77.6
Region		Change between 2007-2008 (percentage point)	Change between 2007-2008 (percentage point)	Change between 2007-2009 (percentage point)	Change between 2007-2009 (percentage point)	Change between 2007-2009 (percentage point)
World		-1.1	2.2	-2.0	-0.4	2.7
Developed Economies and European Union		-0.2	0.7	-0.6	0.2	1.2
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS		-1.6	3.1	-3.4	-1.4	4.7
East Asia		-2.7	2.9	-4.5	-2.7	1.3
South-East Asia and the Pacific		-1.1	1.9	-2.1	-0.9	2.6
South Asia		-1.1	1.0	-2.2	0.0	0.9
Latin America and the Caribbean		-0.1	2.7	0.0	0.6	5.3
Middle East		-0.9	3.1	-1.7	-0.7	5.3
North Africa		-1.5	1.6	-2.5	-1.4	3.2
Sub-Saharan Africa		-0.9	1.7	-1.3	0.4	6.3

Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, January 2009, see also source of Table A2  
 Figures for 2008 and 2009 are projections based on the following assumptions:  
*Scenario 1.* Projection on labour market data to date and IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).  
*Scenario 2.* 2009: Projection on the historical relationship between economic growth and vulnerable employment at times of crises in each economy; IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).  
*Scenario 3.* 2008: Projection on the basis of a simultaneous increase in the vulnerable employment rate in all economies equal to half of the largest increase since 1991; IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth.  
 2009: Projection on the basis of a simultaneous increase in the vulnerable employment rate in all economies equal to the largest increase since 1991; IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).

Note: Numbers may not add up due to rounding.

**Table S12. 2008-2009 Male vulnerable employment scenarios (numbers of people)**

Region	2007	2008		2009		
	Number (million)	Scenario 1 Number (million)	Scenario 3 Number (million)	Scenario 1 Number (million)	Scenario 2 Number (million)	Scenario 3 Number (million)
World	865	855	915	849	877	935
Developed Economies and European Union	29	29	31	28	30	33
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	16	15	19	13	15	21
East Asia	223	211	236	205	212	230
South-East Asia and the Pacific	94	94	99	94	96	102
South Asia	313	314	324	316	326	330
Latin America and the Caribbean	48	48	52	49	50	57
Middle East	13	13	15	13	14	17
North Africa	15	15	16	14	15	17
Sub-Saharan Africa	114	115	123	117	120	130
Region		Change between 2007-2008 (million)	Change between 2007-2008 (million)	Change between 2007-2009 (million)	Change between 2007-2009 (million)	Change between 2007-2009 (million)
World		-10	50	-16	12	70
Developed Economies and European Union		-1	2	-2	0	3
Central and South Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS		-1	3	-3	-1	5
East Asia		-11	13	-18	-10	7
South-East Asia and the Pacific		0	5	-1	2	7
South Asia		1	11	3	13	17
Latin America and the Caribbean		0	5	1	2	9
Middle East		0	2	0	0	3
North Africa		0	1	-1	0	2
Sub-Saharan Africa		2	9	4	7	17

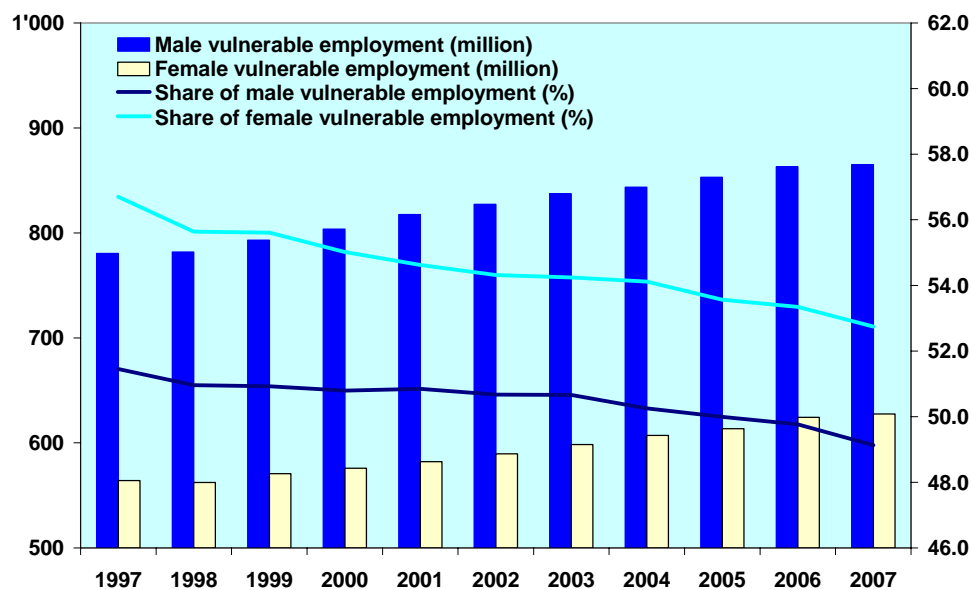
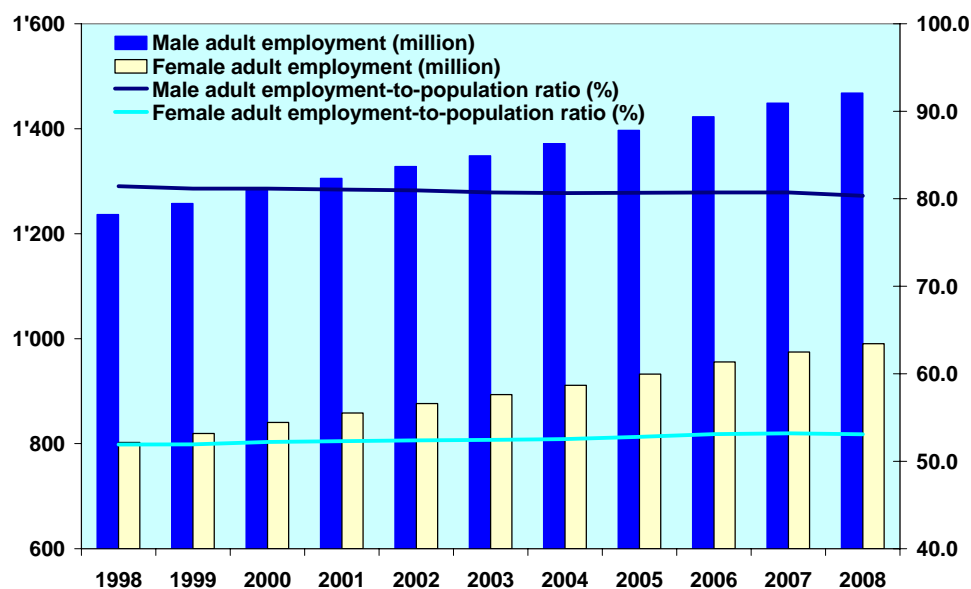
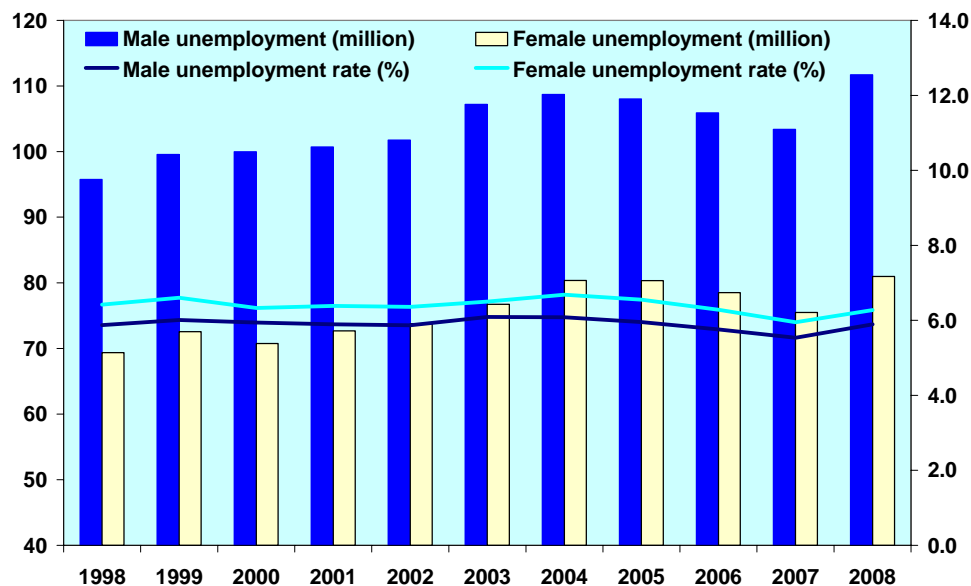
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 Figures for 2008 and 2009 are projections based on the following assumptions:  
*Scenario 1.* Projection on labour market data to date and IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).  
*Scenario 2.* 2009: Projection on the historical relationship between economic growth and vulnerable employment at times of crises in each economy; IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).  
*Scenario 3.* 2008: Projection on the basis of a simultaneous increase in the vulnerable employment rate in all economies equal to half of the largest increase since 1991; IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth.  
 2009: Projection on the basis of a simultaneous increase in the vulnerable employment rate in all economies equal to the largest increase since 1991; IMF January 2009 revised estimates for economic growth (for men and women separately).

Note: Numbers may not add up due to rounding.

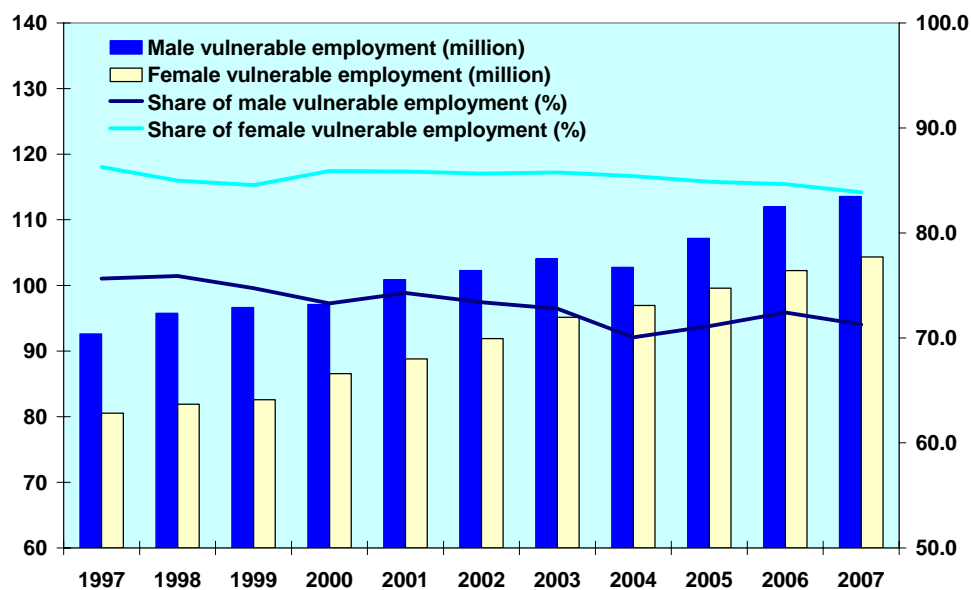
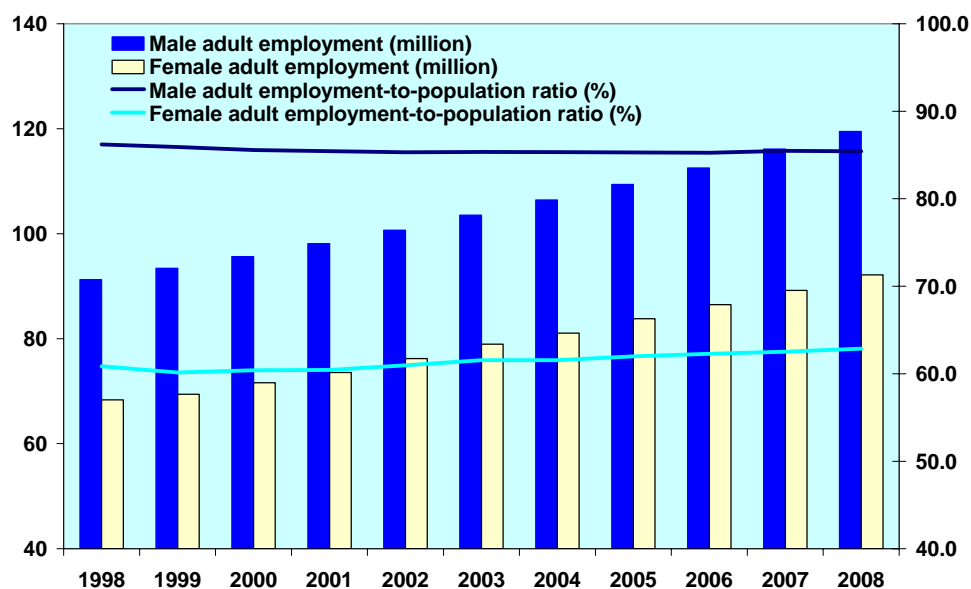
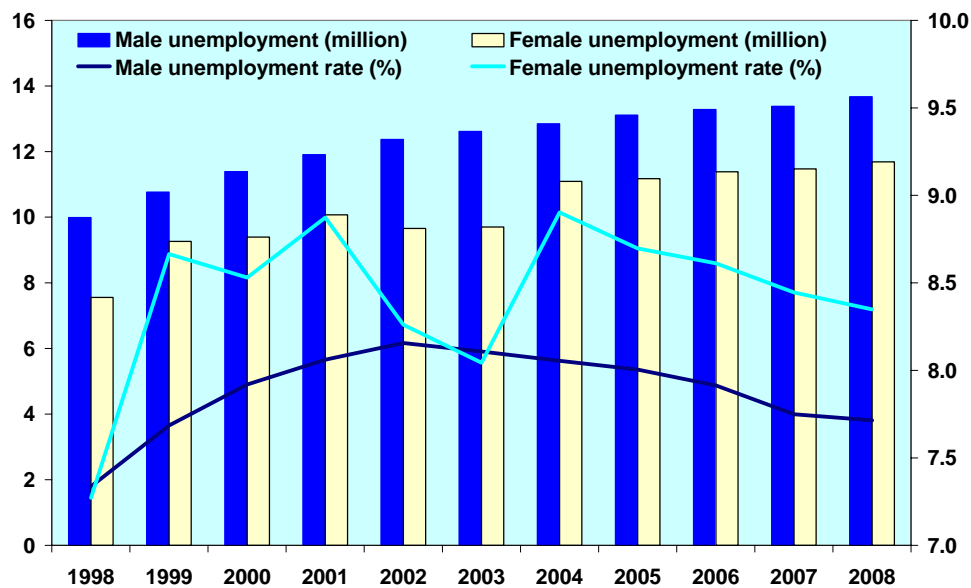
## Annex 3. Regional figures

The following charts present selected labour market indicators by region and by sex, followed by the regional groupings of economies used in this report.

# World

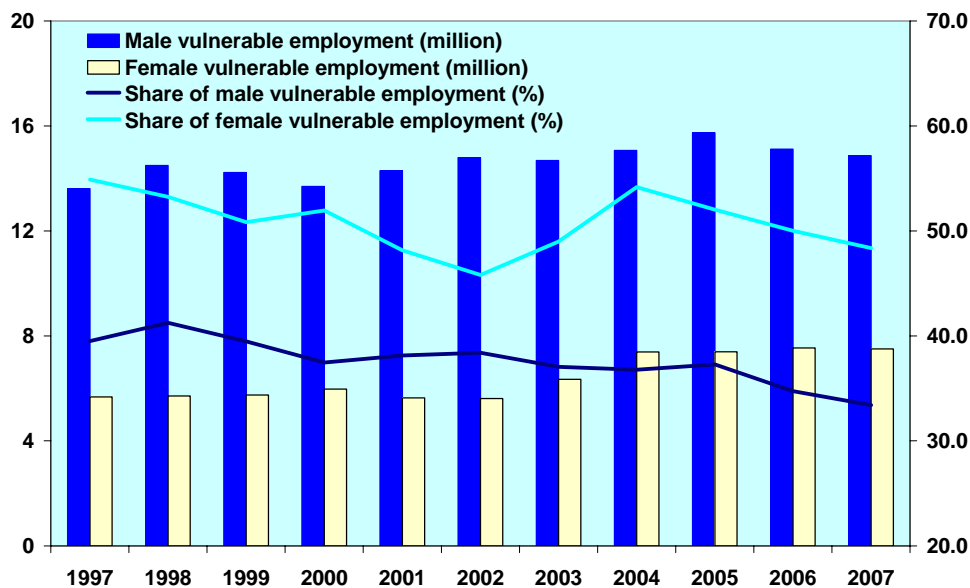
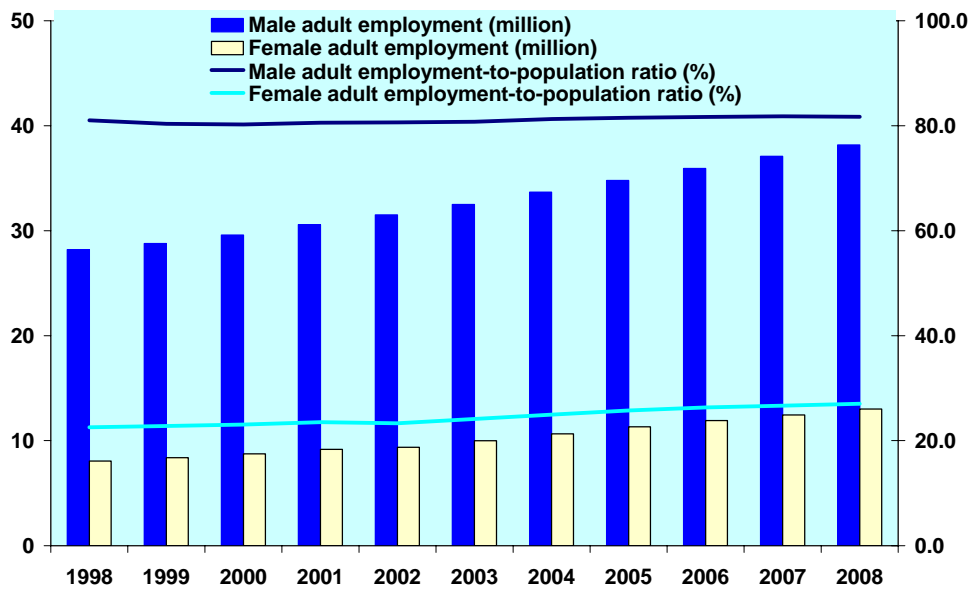
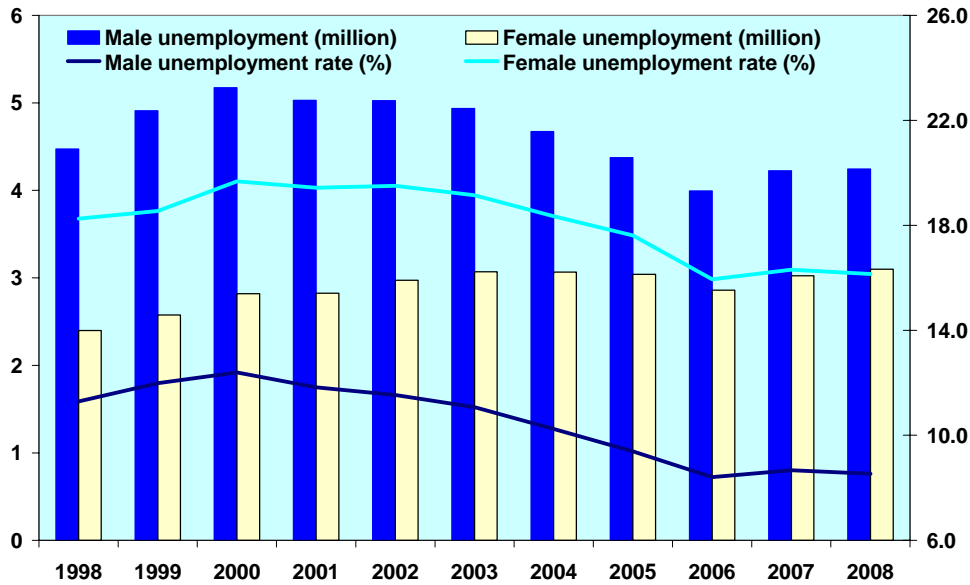


## Sub-Saharan Africa

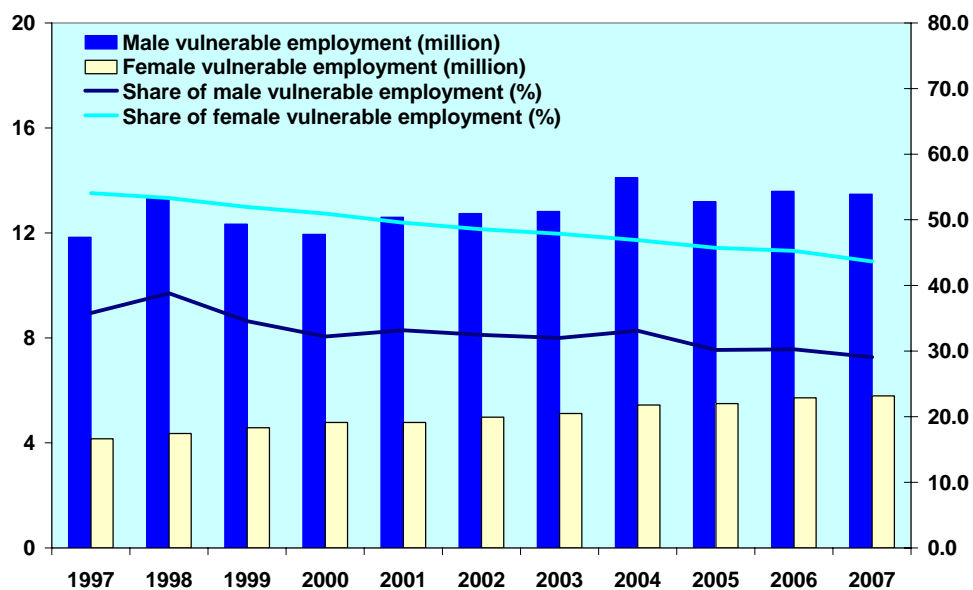
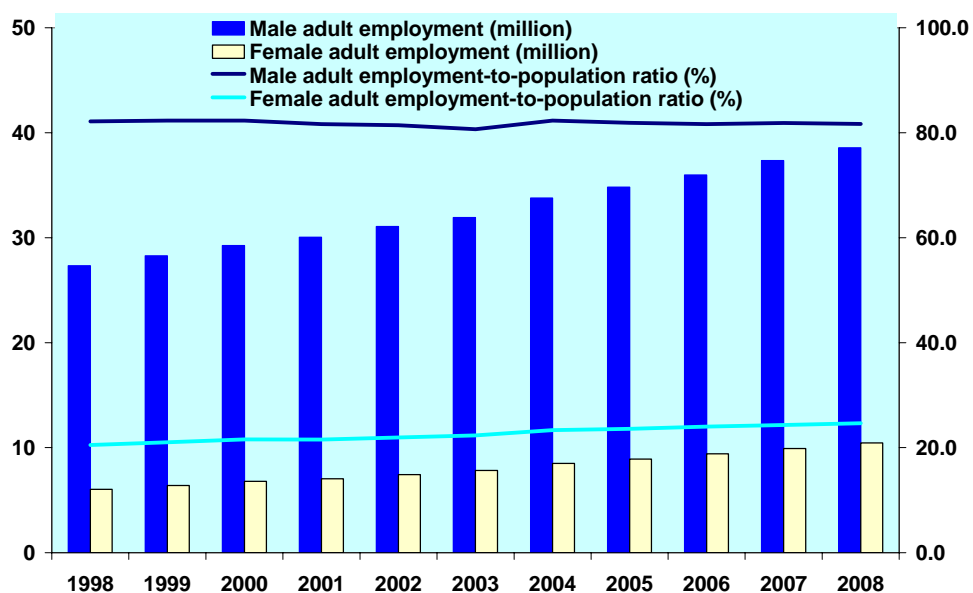
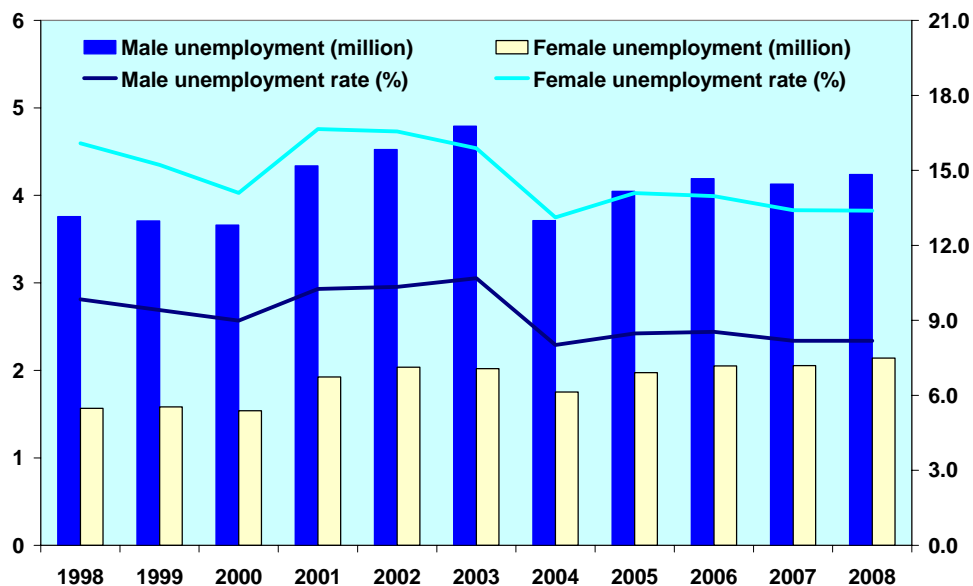




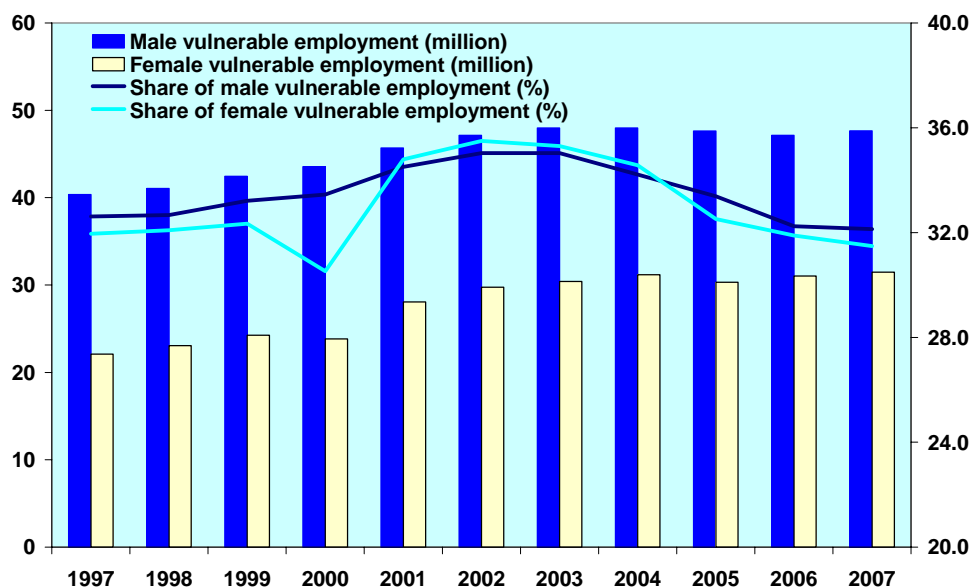
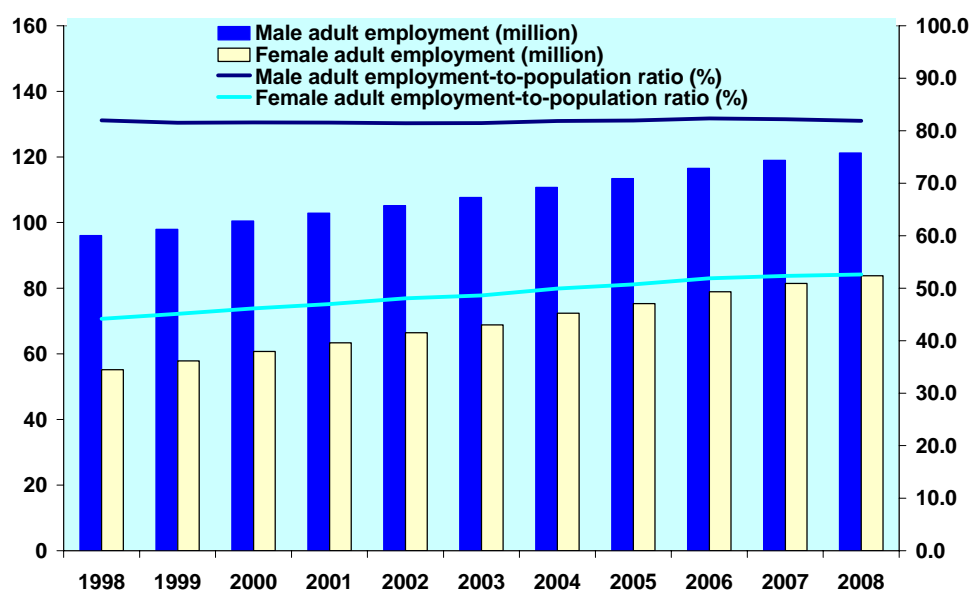
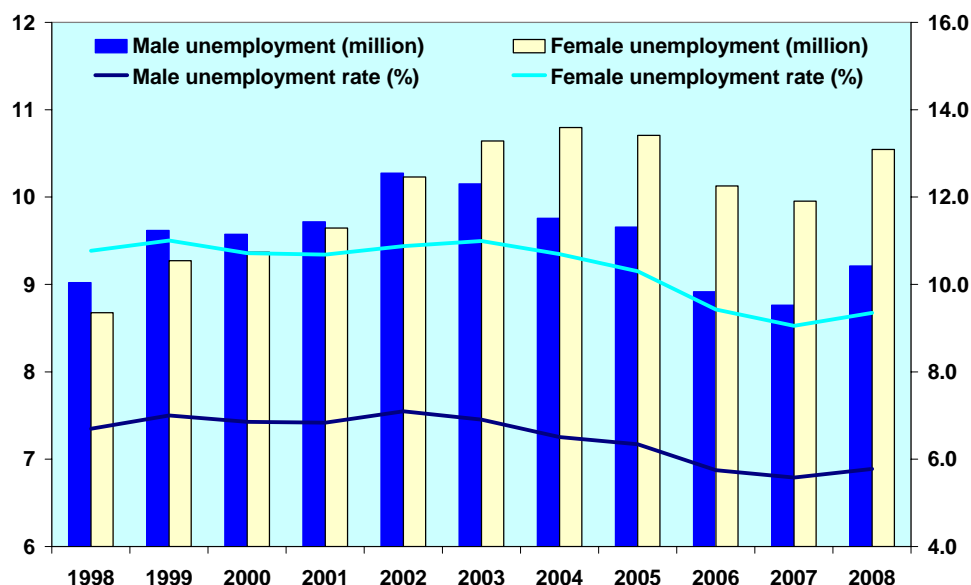
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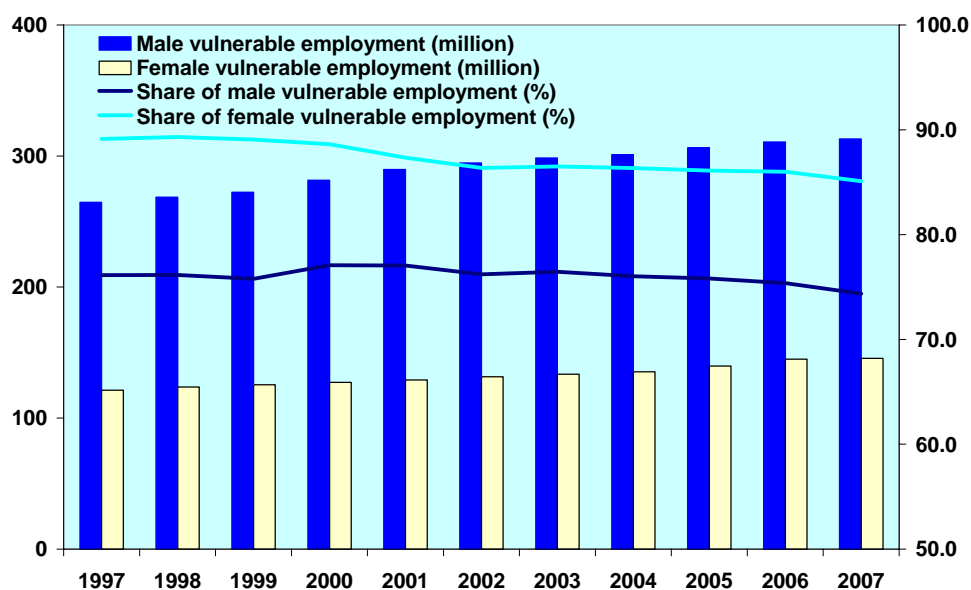
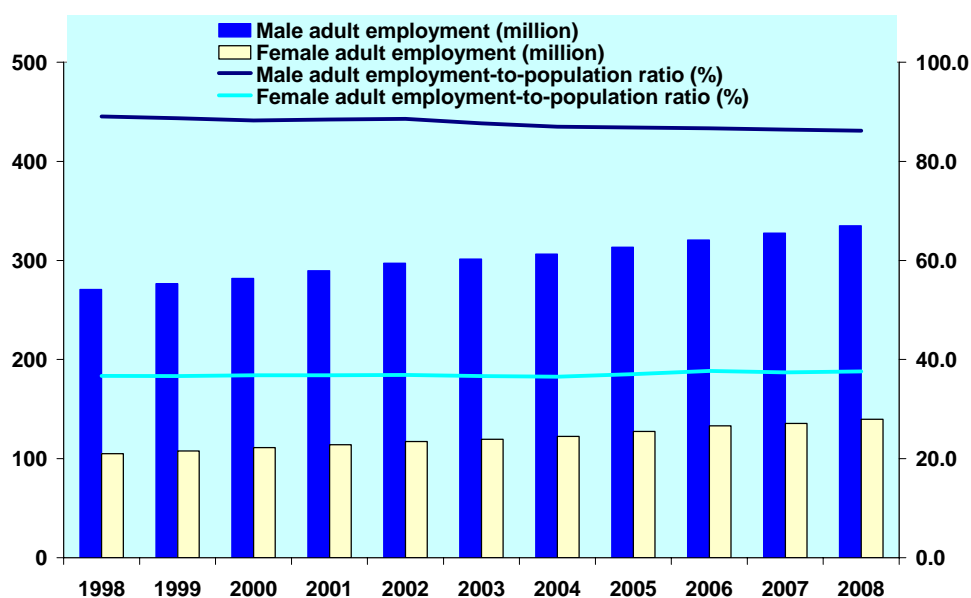
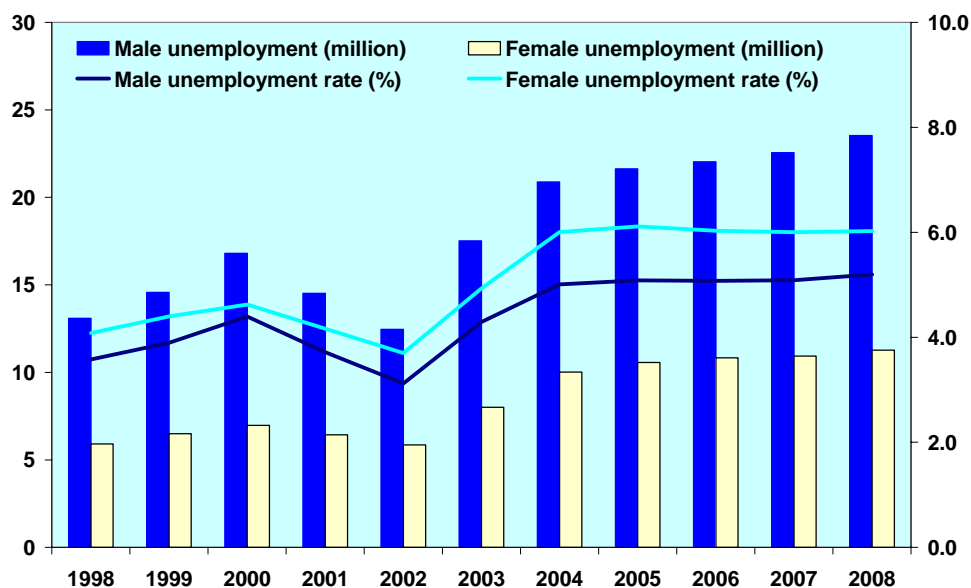
## Middle East



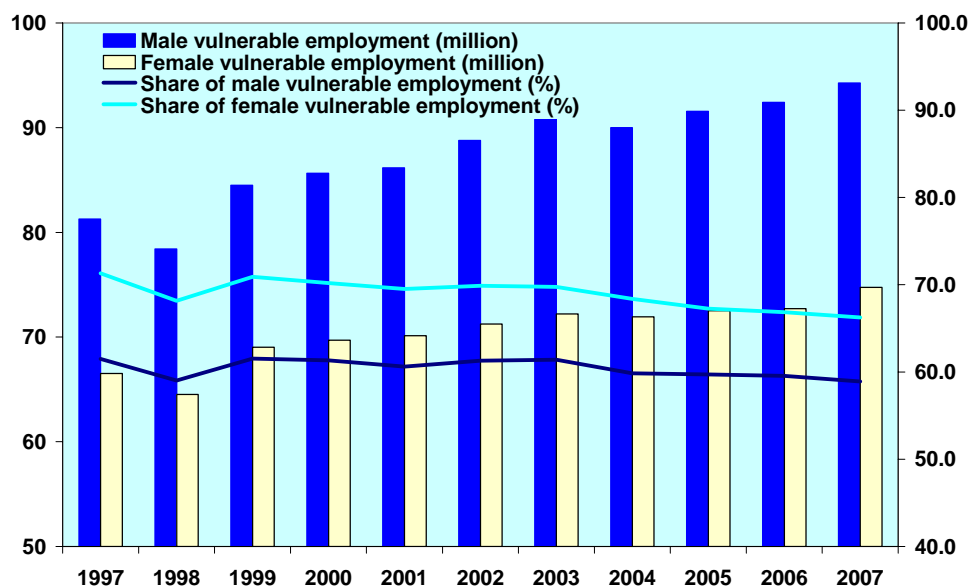
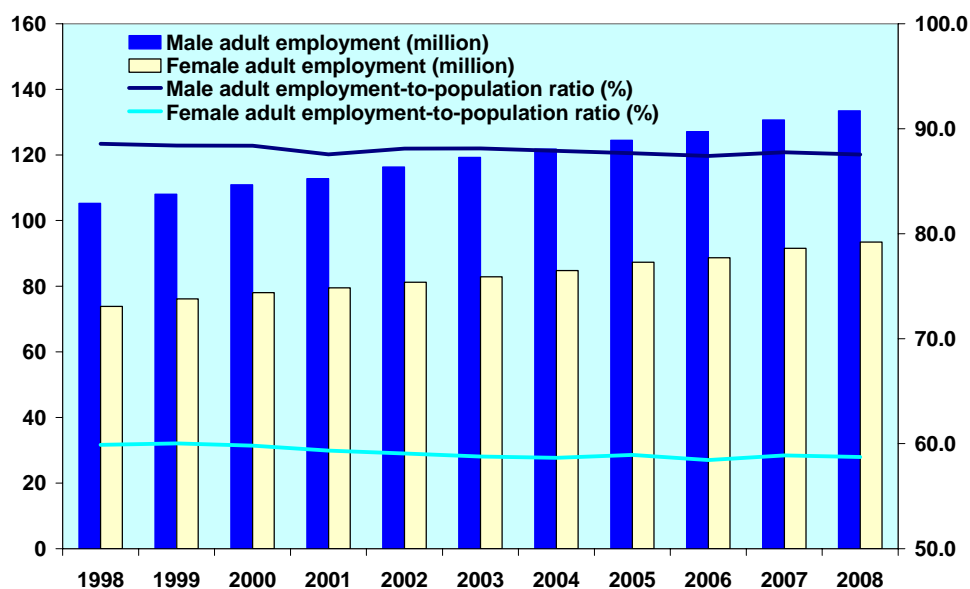
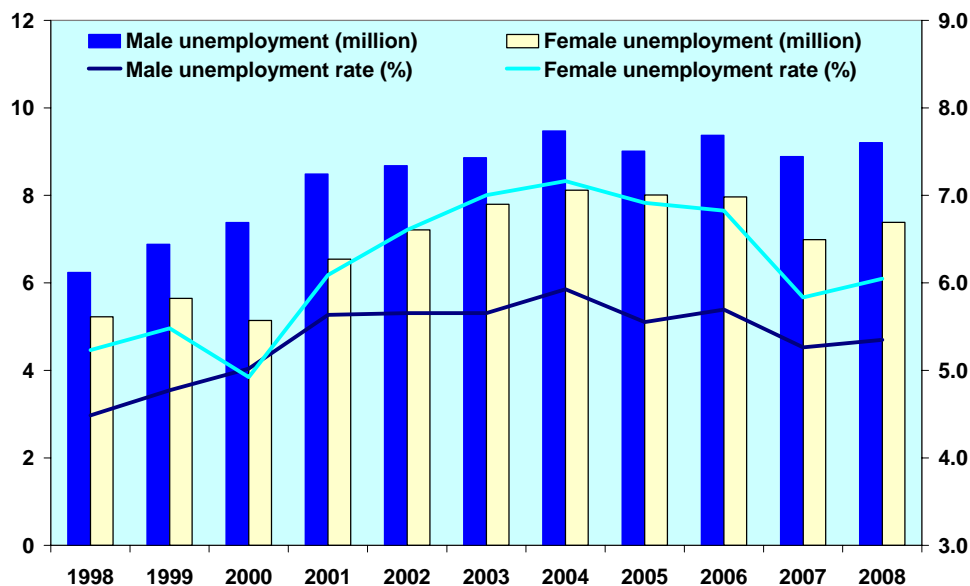
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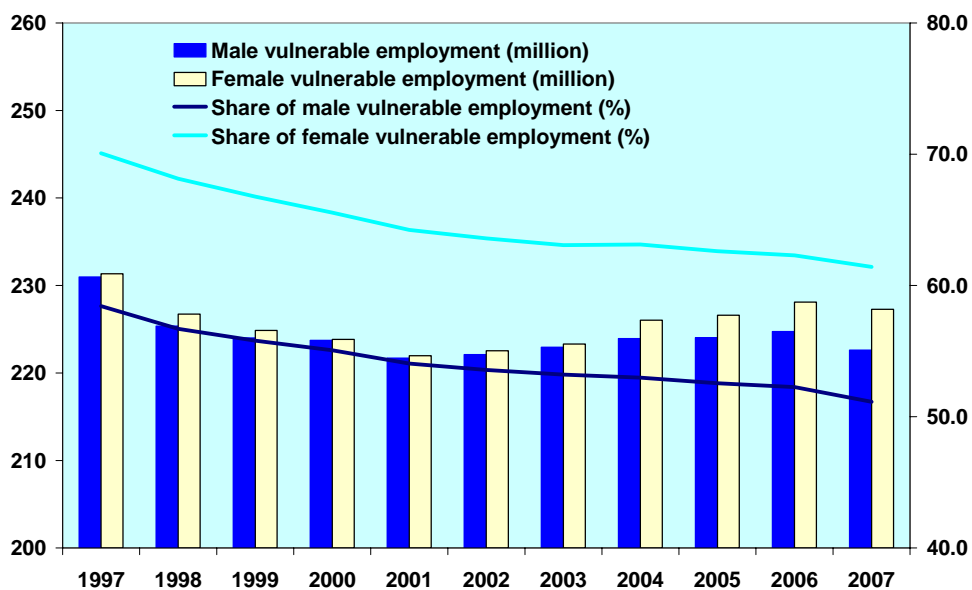
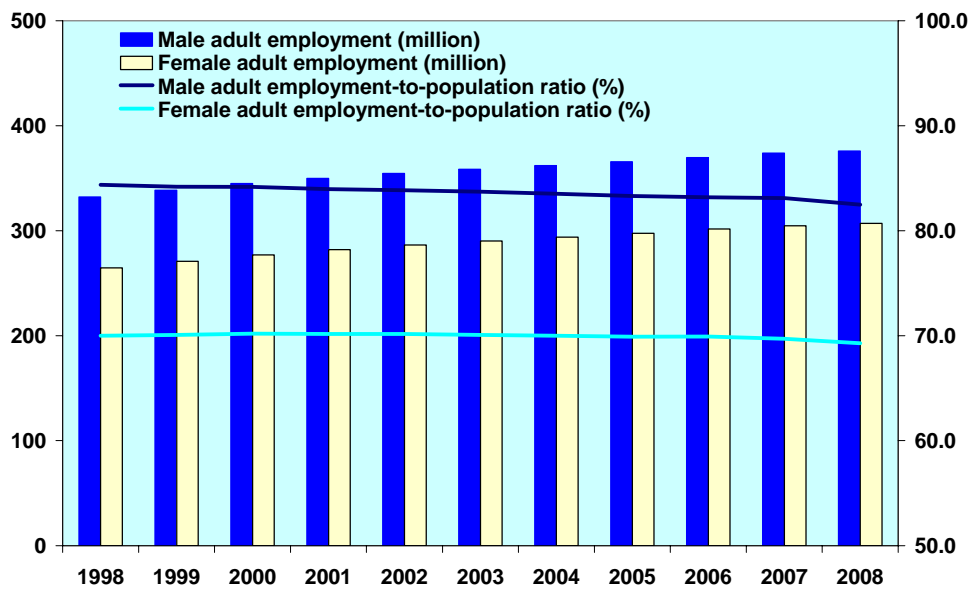
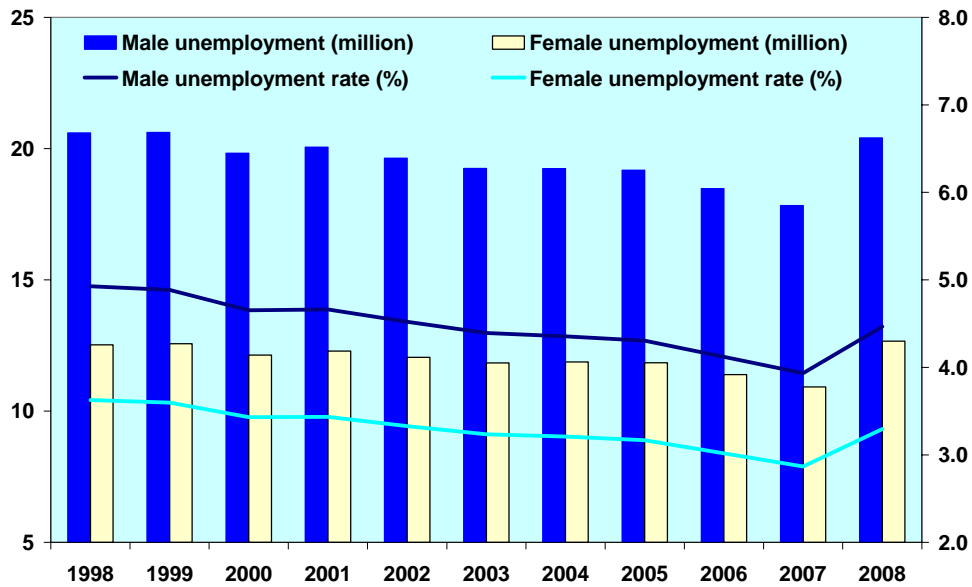
## South Asia



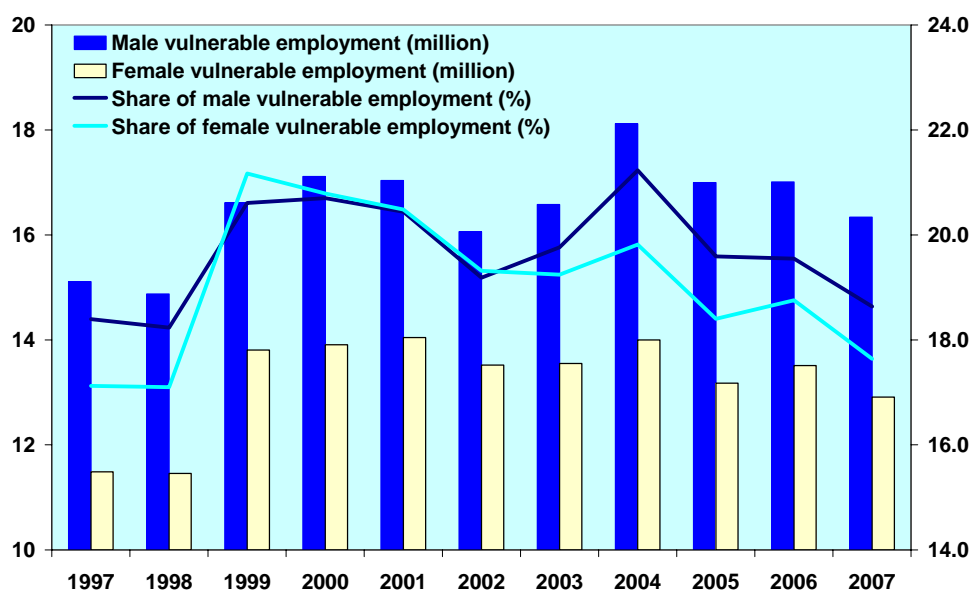
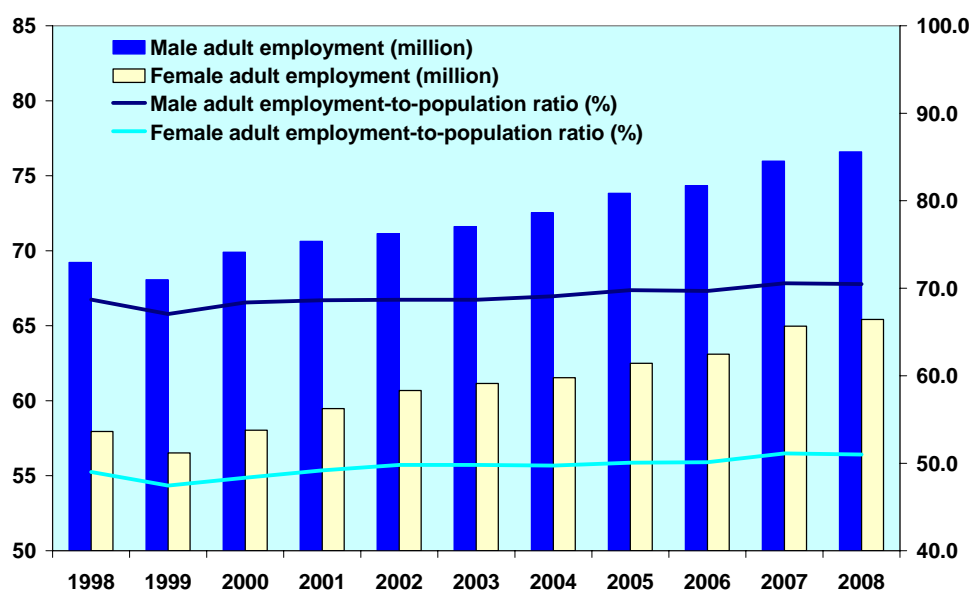
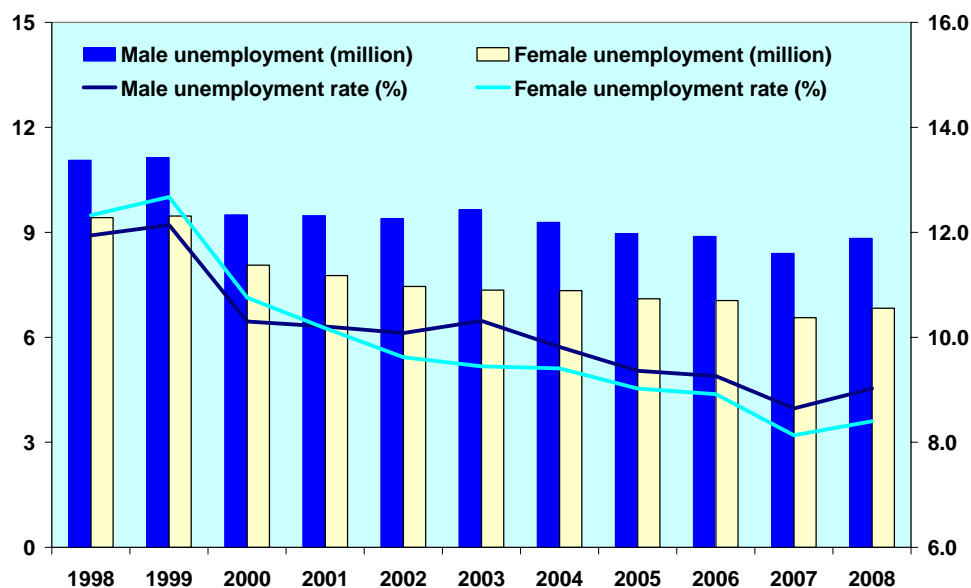
## South-East Asia and the Pacific



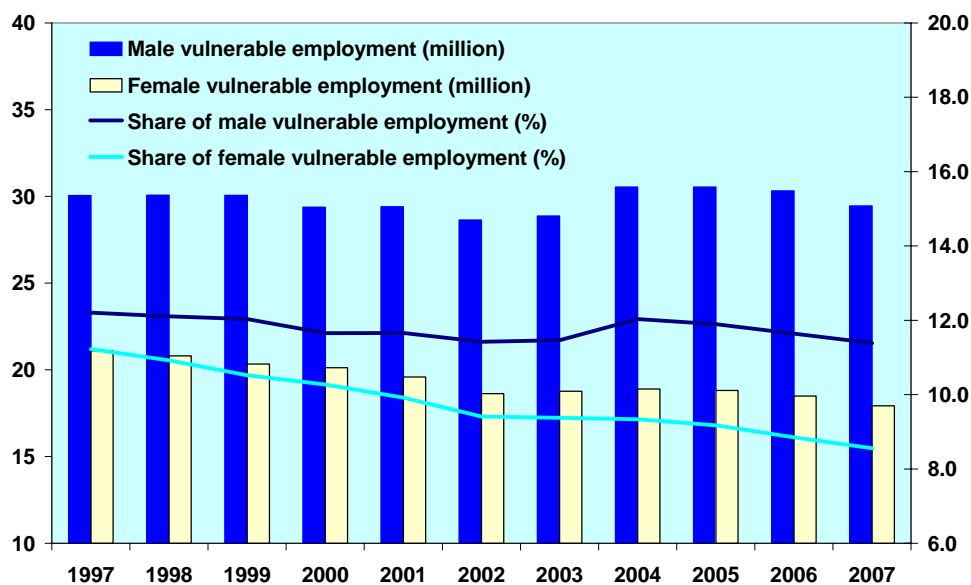
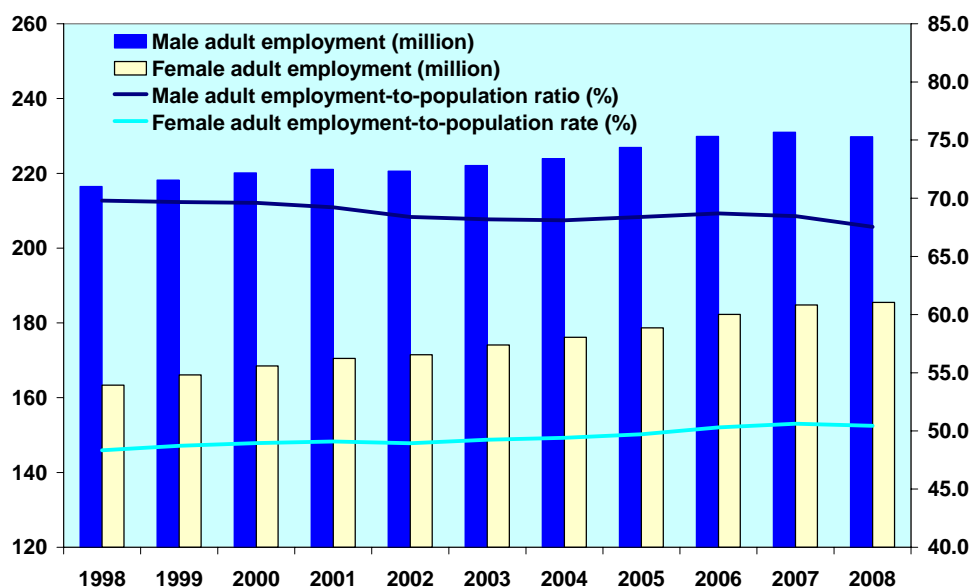
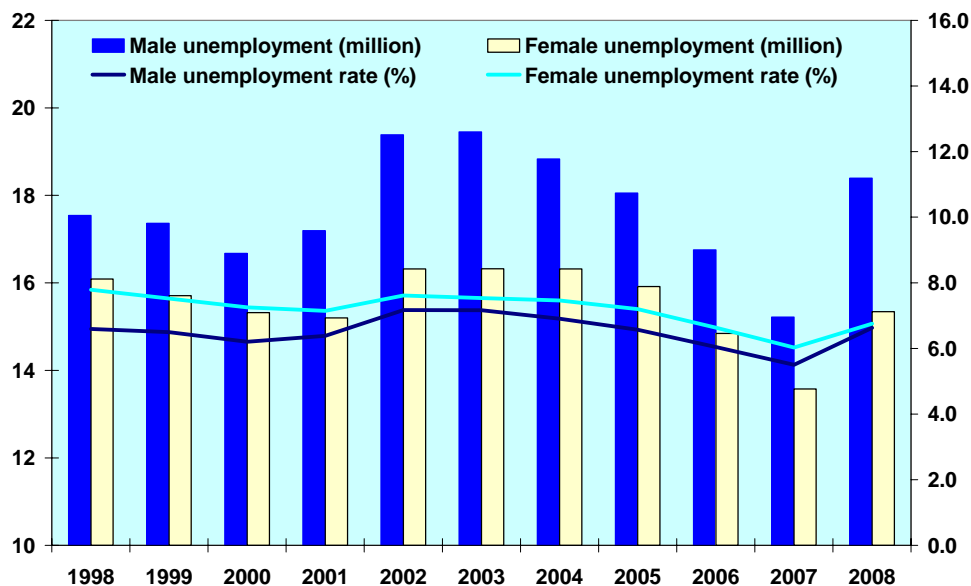
# East Asia



## Central and South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) and the CIS



## Developed Economies and European Union





## Global employment trends – regional groupings

<p><b>Developed Economies &amp; European Union</b> <i>European Union</i></p> <p>Austria Belgium Bulgaria Cyprus Czech Republic Denmark Estonia Finland France Germany Greece Hungary Ireland Italy Latvia Lithuania Luxembourg Malta Netherlands Poland Romania Portugal Slovakia Slovenia Spain Sweden United Kingdom</p> <p><b>North America</b></p> <p>Canada United States</p> <p><b>Other Developed Economies</b></p> <p>Australia Gibraltar Greenland</p>	<p>Isle of Man Israel Japan New Zealand San Marino St. Pierre and Miquelon</p> <p><b>Western Europe (non-EU)</b></p> <p>Andorra Iceland Liechtenstein Monaco Norway Switzerland</p> <p><b>Central &amp; South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) &amp; CIS</b> <i>Central &amp; South-Eastern Europe</i></p> <p>Albania Bosnia and Herzegovina Croatia The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Serbia and Montenegro Turkey</p> <p><b>Commonwealth of Independent States</b></p> <p>Armenia Azerbaijan Belarus Georgia Kazakhstan Kyrgyzstan Republic of Moldova</p>	<p>Russian Federation Tajikistan Turkmenistan Ukraine Uzbekistan</p> <p><b>South Asia</b></p> <p>Afghanistan Bangladesh Bhutan India Maldives Nepal Pakistan Sri Lanka</p> <p><b>South-East Asia &amp; the Pacific</b> <i>South-East Asia</i></p> <p>Brunei Darussalam Cambodia East Timor Indonesia Lao People's Democratic Republic Malaysia Myanmar Philippines Singapore Thailand Viet Nam</p> <p><b>Pacific Islands</b></p> <p>American Samoa Cook Islands Fiji French Polynesia Guam Kiribati Marshall Islands Nauru New Caledonia</p>	<p>Niue Northern Mariana Islands Papua New Guinea Samoa Solomon Islands Tokelau Tonga Tuvalu Vanuatu Wallis and Futuna Islands</p> <p><b>East Asia</b></p> <p>China Hong Kong, China Korea, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Republic of Macau, China Mongolia Taiwan, China</p> <p><b>Latin America &amp; the Caribbean</b> <i>Caribbean</i></p> <p>Anguilla Antigua and Barbuda Aruba Bahamas Barbados Bermuda British Virgin Islands Cayman Islands Cuba Dominica Dominican Republic Grenada Guadeloupe Guyana Haiti Jamaica</p>	<p>Martinique Montserrat Netherlands Antilles Puerto Rico Saint Kitts and Nevis Saint Lucia Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Suriname Trinidad and Tobago Turks and Caicos Islands United States Virgin Islands</p> <p><b>Central America</b></p> <p>Belize Costa Rica El Salvador Guatemala Honduras Mexico Nicaragua Panama</p> <p><b>South America</b></p> <p>Argentina Bolivia Brazil Chile Colombia Ecuador Falkland Islands (Malvinas) French Guiana Paraguay Peru Uruguay Venezuela</p> <p><b>Middle East</b></p> <p>Bahrain Iran, Islamic Republic of</p>	<p>Iraq Jordan Kuwait Lebanon Oman Qatar Saudi Arabia Syrian Arab Republic United Arab Emirates West Bank and Gaza Strip Yemen</p> <p><b>North Africa</b></p> <p>Algeria Egypt Libyan Arab Jamahiriya Morocco Sudan Tunisia</p> <p><b>Sub-Saharan Africa</b> <i>Eastern Africa</i></p> <p>Burundi Comoros Djibouti Eritrea Ethiopia Kenya Madagascar Malawi Mauritius Mozambique Réunion Rwanda Seychelles Somalia Tanzania, United Republic of Uganda</p>	<p>Zambia Zimbabwe</p> <p><b>Middle Africa</b></p> <p>Angola Cameroon Central African Republic Chad Congo Congo, Democratic Republic of Equatorial Guinea Gabon Sao Tome and Principe</p> <p><b>Southern Africa</b></p> <p>Botswana Lesotho Namibia South Africa Swaziland</p> <p><b>Western Africa</b></p> <p>Benin Burkina Faso Cape Verde Côte d'Ivoire Gambia Ghana Guinea Guinea-Bissau Liberia Mali Mauritania Niger Nigeria Senegal Sierra Leone St. Helena Togo</p>
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## Annex 4. Note on world and regional tables

The source of all tables in this *Global Employment Trends for Women* is ILO, Trends Econometric Models, January 2009. The ILO Employment Trends Unit has designed, and actively maintains, econometric models which are used to produce estimates of labour market indicators in the countries and years for which country-reported data are unavailable, and are thus unique in giving the ILO the ability to produce regional labour market information for all regions in the world.

The Global Employment Trends Model (GET Model) is used to produce estimates – disaggregated by age and sex as appropriate – of unemployment, employment, status in employment, and employment by sector. The output of the model is a complete matrix of data for 178 countries. The country-level data can then be aggregated to produce regional and global estimates of labour market indicators such as the unemployment rate, the employment-to-population rate, sectoral employment shares and status in employment shares.

Prior to running the GET Model, labour market information specialists in the Employment Trends Unit and the Bureau of Statistics, in cooperation with specialists in ILO Field Offices, evaluate existing country-reported unemployment rates, status in employment shares and sector employment shares and select only those observations deemed sufficiently comparable across countries – with criteria including 1) type of data source; 2) geographic coverage; and 3) age group coverage.

- With regard to the first criterion, in order for data to be included in the model, they must be derived from either a labour force survey or population census. National labour force surveys are typically similar across countries, and the data derived from these surveys are more comparable than data obtained from other sources. Consequently, a strict preference is given to labour force survey-based data in the selection process. Yet, many developing countries without adequate resources to carry out a labour force survey do report labour market information based on population censuses. Consequently, due the need to balance the competing goals of data comparability and data coverage, some population census-based data are included in the model.
- The second criterion is that only fully national (i.e. not geographically limited) labour market indicators are included. Observations corresponding to only urban or only rural areas are not included, as large differences typically exist between rural and urban labour markets, and using only rural or urban data would not be consistent with benchmark files such as GDP.
- The third criterion is that the age groups covered by the observed data must be sufficiently comparable across countries. Countries report labour market information for a variety of age groups and the age group selected can have an influence on the observed value of a given labour market indicator.

Apart from country-reported labour market information, the GET Model uses the following benchmark files:

- United Nations population estimates and projections
- ILO labour force estimates and projections
- IMF/World Bank data on GDP (PPP, per capita, growth)
- World Bank poverty estimates

The first phase of the model produces estimates of unemployment rates, which also allows for the calculation of total employment, unemployment, and employment-to-population ratios. After all comparable unemployment rates have been processed, multivariate regressions are run separately for each region in the world in which unemployment rates broken down by age and sex (youth male, youth female, adult male, adult female) are regressed on GDP growth rates. Weights are used in the regressions to correct for biases that may result from the fact that countries that report unemployment rates tend to be different (in statistically important respects) than countries that do not report unemployment rates.<sup>32</sup> The regressions,

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<sup>32</sup> If, for instance, simple averages of unemployment rates in reporting countries in a given region were used to estimate the unemployment rate in that region, and the countries that do not report unemployment rates tend to be different with respect to unemployment rates than reporting countries, without such a correction mechanism, the resulting estimated regional unemployment rate would be biased. The ‘weighted least squares’ approach taken up in the GET Model corrects for this potential problem.

together with considerations based on regional proximity, are used to fill in missing values in the countries and years for which country-reported data are unavailable.

During subsequent phases, employment by sector and status in employment are estimated. Additional econometric models are used to produce world and regional estimates of labour force participation, working poverty and employment elasticities. The models use similar techniques as the GET Model to impute missing values at the country level.

### **Improvements on previous global and regional estimates**

The January 2009 run of the Trends Econometric Models uses both new and revised data, which has resulted in improved global and regional estimates based on the latest available information. This includes revisions of the IMF and World Bank estimates of GDP and its components; new population estimates and projections (UN 2006 Revision); new estimates and projections of labour force participation; and other new country-level input. The country-level input comes from ILO, *Key indicators of the labour market*, 5th Edition (Geneva, 2007) and updates of the indicators. For more information on the methodology of producing world and regional estimates, see [www.ilo.org/trends](http://www.ilo.org/trends).

## Annex 5. Methodologies for constructing scenarios

### Unemployment scenarios

**Scenario 1:** For each economy and sex, the 2009 unemployment rate is projected by multiplying the country elasticity of the unemployment rate with respect to the GDP growth rate by the IMF projection (published in January 2009) of GDP growth for 2009 and adding the regression constant. The elasticity is calculated as the average over observed values during the 1991-2008 period, using the econometric model described in Annex 4.

**Scenario 2:** For each economy and sex, the 2009 unemployment rate is projected by multiplying the country elasticity of the unemployment rate with respect to the change in GDP growth rate by the projected change in the GDP growth rate from 2008 to 2009 on the basis of the January 2009 IMF projections. The elasticity is calculated on the basis of the largest year-on-year drop in GDP since 1991.

**Scenario 3:** For each developed (industrialized) economy and sex, the 2009 unemployment rate is projected by applying 0.9 of the largest percentage point increase in the unemployment rate observed in that country over the 1991-2008 period to the 2008 unemployment rate. For each developing economy and sex, the 2009 unemployment rate is projected by applying 0.45 of the largest percentage point increase in the unemployment rate observed in that country over the 1991-2008 period to the 2008 unemployment rate.

### Vulnerable employment scenarios

**Scenario 1:** For each economy and sex, the shares of wage employment (employees), employers, own-account workers and contributing (unpaid) family workers are projected separately on the basis of an econometric model in which these shares are the dependent variables, while per-capita GDP, annual GDP growth rates, the share of national value-added in agriculture and the share of national value-added in industry are the independent variables. Regressions are estimated separately for each region. Elasticities of each of the dependent variables with respect to the independent variables are multiplied by the projected values for the independent variables for 2009 (plus the regression constant) to obtain the 2009 projections. Elasticities are calculated as the average over observed values during the 1991-2008 period (using the econometric model described in Annex 4 and the January 2009 IMF projections). The projected shares of own-account workers and contributing (unpaid) family workers are then added to obtain the projected share of vulnerable employment.

**Scenario 2:** For each economy and sex, the 2009 vulnerable employment rate is projected by multiplying the country elasticity of the vulnerable employment rate with respect to the change in GDP growth rate by the projected change in the GDP growth rate from 2008 to 2009 on the basis of the January 2009 IMF projections. The elasticity is calculated on the basis of the largest year-on-year drop in GDP since 1991.

**Scenario 3:** For each economy and sex, the 2008 vulnerable employment rate is projected by applying half the largest percentage point increase in the vulnerable employment rate observed in that country over the 1991-2007 period to the 2007 vulnerable employment rate (calculated on the basis of the January 2009 IMF projections). The 2009 vulnerable employment rate is projected by applying the largest percentage point increase in the vulnerable employment rate observed in that country over the 1991-2007 period in full to the 2008 vulnerable employment rate.

# Trabalho e Família: Partilhar é a melhor forma de cuidar

A idade adulta pode, em muitos aspectos, ser considerada como a etapa mais agitada da vida, em que os desafios são múltiplos: procurar um trabalho digno e cuidar da família sem descuidar as obrigações profissionais, com a comunidade e com a sociedade. Em muitas sociedades, a participação das mulheres na força de trabalho tem vindo a aumentar devido ao maior número de oportunidades de educação e económicas, mas também à necessidade, por parte dos agregados familiares e das próprias mulheres, de aumentarem os seus rendimentos.

Embora hoje, mais do que nunca, as mulheres tenham um trabalho remunerado, as suas responsabilidades familiares não diminuiram. Além disso ainda persiste uma baixa participação dos homens nas responsabilidades familiares. Por outro lado, as alterações da estrutura familiar, com mais famílias monoparentais, especialmente agregados constituídos pela mãe e descendentes, e a diminuição dos agregados familiares alargados, para além das mudanças decorrentes da migração e outros factores socio-económicos, significam, em geral, uma diminuição do apoio à família. Nalguns casos, as responsabilidades familiares até aumentaram. A população de alguns países está a envelhecer rapidamente e as pessoas idosas necessitam dos cuidados dos membros mais jovens da família. A nível mundial, prevê-se que, em 2047, o número de pessoas idosas ultrapasse, pela primeira vez, o número de crianças.<sup>1</sup> As epidemias, como o VIH/Sida, também contribuíram para aumentar o número de pessoas com necessidade de cuidados, porém muitos países reduziram a sua despesa na saúde e nos serviços públicos, transferindo assim para as famílias maiores responsabilidades em termos de cuidados não remunerados.

Acresce ainda que, as actuais condições de trabalho agravaram significativamente as dificuldades de conciliação entre as responsabilidades profissionais e familiares, tanto para as mulheres como para os homens. Estas condições de trabalho incluem o trabalho precário, os baixos salários, o aumento das horas de trabalho e os horários de trabalho compactos – eliminando praticamente o tempo improdutivo durante as horas de trabalho – bem como as necessidades imprevisíveis de realização de horas extraordinárias.

Estas mudanças e realidades deixam, em particular, as mulheres numa situação vulnerável, na medida em que são elas que continuam a cuidar da família além de realizarem um trabalho remunerado. Por conseguinte, muitas mulheres acabam por ter jornadas de trabalho bastante mais longas e um acréscimo de trabalho, uma vez que o trabalho doméstico não remunerado e as responsabilidades familiares ainda não são equitativamente partilhados entre homens e mulheres. Os papéis e estereótipos tradicionais de género, e as expectativas e pressões sociais, também contribuem para dificultar a partilha das responsabilidades familiares por parte dos homens. Os estudos realizados indicam que, nos agregados familiares em que ambos os cônjuges exercem um trabalho remunerado, os homens têm muito a ganhar com a partilha das responsabilidades familiares, seja porque podem reforçar a relação com os filhos ou porque podem participar na vida familiar.<sup>2</sup>



©OIT, Deloche P.

<sup>1</sup> UN [Nações Unidas], 2007. *World Population Ageing* (DESA, Population Division, New York), p.xxvi.

<sup>2</sup> Marinova, J., 2003. *Gender Stereotypes and the Socialization Process*, DAW/ILO/UNAIDS/UNDP, Reunião do Grupo de Peritos, *The role of men and boys in achieving gender equality*, 21 a 24 de Outubro de 2003, p. 9.



Dados, provenientes de países desenvolvidos e em desenvolvimento, confirmam que a inexistência de políticas eficazes para gerir o conflito trabalho-família tem consequências graves para as sociedades, empresas, famílias, homens e mulheres. Por exemplo, a dificuldade em conciliar o trabalho e a vida familiar tem contribuído para o declínio das taxas de fertilidade em muitos países, porque as mulheres consideram que é difícil compatibilizar o emprego ou a carreira com a maternidade. Nos casos em que não existem estruturas de acolhimento de crianças, os pais e as mães vêem-se confrontados com opções difíceis, como entregar a guarda dos filhos mais novos aos filhos mais velhos ou levá-los consigo para o trabalho, situações que conduzem ao abandono escolar ou mesmo ao trabalho infantil. As mulheres podem ver-se obrigadas a abandonar o mercado de trabalho ou a procurar trabalho a tempo parcial, com consequências negativas para os seus rendimentos, desenvolvimento de competências e direitos de expressão e protecção social.

As políticas e as medidas delineadas pelos governos e parceiros sociais, com vista a promover a conciliação da vida profissional e familiar podem fazer a diferença. Em 1981, os Estados-Membros da OIT adoptaram a Convenção (n.º 156) relativa aos Trabalhadores com Responsabilidades Familiares, de 1981, e a Recomendação (n.º 165) que a acompanha.<sup>3</sup> Ambos os instrumentos integram a igualdade de oportunidades e de tratamento para trabalhadoras e trabalhadores com responsabilidades familiares no quadro mais vasto das medidas destinadas a promover a igualdade de género, a par da Convenção (n.º 111) sobre a Discriminação (Emprego e Profissão), de 1958, da Convenção (n.º 100) sobre a Igualdade de Remuneração, de 1951, e da Convenção (n.º 183) sobre a Protecção da Maternidade, de 2000. A Convenção das Nações Unidas sobre a Eliminação de todas as Formas de Discriminação contra as Mulheres, de 1979, também reconhece a importância de partilhar as responsabilidades familiares.



©OIT, Maillard J.

Estes instrumentos internacionais reconhecem que a igualdade de género está estreitamente ligada à divisão do trabalho produtivo e reprodutivo entre mulheres e homens (vide caixa 1) e que tanto as mulheres como os homens necessitam de apoio para desempenharem os seus papéis no mundo do trabalho e na família. Assim, à luz da Convenção (n.º 156), para alcançar a igualdade de género são necessárias políticas que permitam, tanto aos homens como às mulheres com responsabilidades familiares, prepararem-se para o mercado de trabalho e nele ingressarem, progredirem e permanecerem. Para o efeito, a eliminação das desigualdades entre homens e mulheres no mercado de trabalho e em casa deve tornar-se num objectivo fundamental das políticas nacionais.

### CAIXA 1. O QUE SIGNIFICA "RESPONSABILIDADES FAMILIARES NÃO REMUNERADAS"?

Na Convenção (n.º 156), a designação "responsabilidades familiares" refere-se especificamente às responsabilidades para com os "filhos a cargo" e "outros membros da família directa que tenham uma necessidade manifesta de cuidados ou de amparo" (art.º 1.º), como as crianças, as pessoas idosas, com deficiência ou doentes. O Sistema de Contabilidade Nacional (SCN 1993) das Nações Unidas inclui algumas actividades laborais não remuneradas no "trabalho económico ou de mercado", por exemplo: o trabalho não remunerado em empresas familiares ou para o mercado; a produção de subsistência ou a recolha de água e de materiais combustíveis. Contudo, as responsabilidades familiares não remuneradas ou a "prestação de cuidados não remunerada" estão excluídas do SCN e dos cálculos do PIB e abrangem as actividades não económicas que permitem garantir assistência e cuidados a todos membros da sociedade, assegurando a sua saúde e sobrevivência. Estes serviços não remunerados incluem: a prestação de cuidados a bebés e a crianças (activa e passiva), a pessoas com doença permanente ou temporária, a familiares idosos e a pessoas com deficiência; a manutenção do lar, limpeza, lavagem, preparação das refeições, compras; bem como todo o trabalho voluntário para os serviços comunitários.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Em Janeiro de 2009, 40 países tinham ratificado a Convenção (n.º 156). Vide lista de ratificações em: <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/newratframeE.htm>

<sup>4</sup> Antonopoulos, R., 2008. *The Unpaid Care Work-Paid Connection*, Working Paper n.º 541 (Levy Economics Institute of Bard college, New York).



## TRABALHADORES E TRABALHADORAS COM RESPONSABILIDADES FAMILIARES: DIFICULDADES ESPECÍFICAS

Todos os trabalhadores, homens e mulheres, deveriam poder ter um emprego sem ser objecto de discriminação em razão de um hipotético conflito entre o emprego e as suas responsabilidades familiares. Deveriam sentir-se livres de quaisquer constrangimentos resultantes das responsabilidades familiares quando se preparam para ingressar, participar ou progredir numa actividade económica. As dificuldades em conciliar o trabalho e as responsabilidades familiares afectam o princípio da igualdade de oportunidades e de tratamento no exercício da profissão, particularmente no caso das mulheres. Ainda que, em 2007, o número de trabalhadoras a nível mundial ascendesse aos 1200 milhões, quase 200 milhões, o que corresponde a mais 18,4% do que há dez anos,<sup>5</sup> os empregos que lhes são proporcionados são menos produtivos e dignos, com menos oportunidades de auferir um salário justo e adequado, com menor protecção social e menor possibilidade de exercer os seus direitos fundamentais, como a liberdade de expressão no trabalho. As mulheres continuam a assumir a maior parte das responsabilidades familiares e a pagar o preço inerente ao aumento do trabalho remunerado e não remunerado. Estudos sobre o uso do tempo, realizados a nível mundial, revelam que as mulheres dedicam muito mais tempo do que os homens ao trabalho familiar não remunerado. Por exemplo, na Bolívia, as mulheres dedicam 35 horas por semana ao trabalho não remunerado e os homens apenas 9. Por outro lado, os homens consagram tradicionalmente mais horas do que as mulheres às actividades económicas remuneradas — 42 horas semanais face às 26,6 das mulheres.<sup>6</sup> Contudo, se somarmos as horas de trabalho remunerado e não remunerado, verifica-se que as semanas de trabalho das mulheres tendem a ser mais longas do que as dos homens e conseqüentemente com menos tempo para a formação, actividades políticas, lazer ou para se ocuparem da sua saúde.

Esta situação afecta, igualmente, a disponibilidade das mulheres para as actividades económicas remuneradas. Por exemplo, na União Europeia (UE), a taxa de emprego das mulheres diminui em média 12 pontos percentuais quando têm filhos, e a diferença entre as taxas de emprego dos homens e das mulheres com filhos pode ascender a 26 pontos.<sup>7</sup> Na América Latina, mais de metade das mulheres desempregadas, com idades compreendidas entre os 20 e 24 anos, apontam o trabalho doméstico não remunerado como a principal razão que as impede de procurar um emprego remunerado.<sup>8</sup> Mesmo quando as mulheres participam no mercado de trabalho, as suas responsabilidades familiares determinam a quantidade e o tipo de trabalho remunerado que podem realizar<sup>9</sup>.

As responsabilidades familiares constituem, assim, uma das razões pelas quais as mulheres recorrem ao emprego precário e informal. Este último, em particular, proporciona-lhes a flexibilidade e a proximidade de que necessitam para poderem cumprir as suas responsabilidades domésticas e na criação dos filhos. As mulheres também podem escolher, ainda que involuntariamente, trabalhar a tempo parcial. Na maior parte dos países, a grande maioria dos trabalhadores a tempo parcial é constituída por mulheres, que se encontram muitas vezes nos empregos menos valorizados, com poucas oportunidades de progressão na carreira. No entanto, o trabalho a tempo parcial pode contribuir para conciliar as responsabilidades profissionais e familiares, especialmente quando a estes empregos podem aceder tanto os homens como as mulheres, e as condições de emprego são equivalentes às de que gozam os trabalhadores a tempo inteiro. Por outro lado, nos países em que as reformas legislativas recentemente levadas a cabo permitem aos trabalhadores e às trabalhadoras alterar em o seu horário de trabalho, o número de pedidos de alteração de horário é muito reduzido, talvez por temerem — especialmente os homens — que os referidos pedidos possam comprometer a sua progressão na carreira ou ficar mal vistos pelos colegas.

Ao mesmo tempo, condições de trabalho que exigem períodos longos de trabalho afectam a capacidade dos homens e das mulheres para prestar cuidados de qualidade. As estimativas da OIT indicam que em cada cinco trabalhadores, ou seja 614,2 milhões de trabalhadores em todo o mundo, trabalha mais de 48 horas por semana. A percentagem de homens e mulheres que têm horários de trabalho excessivamente longos é muito alta nalguns países, como a Etiópia, Honduras, Indonésia, República da Coreia e Paquistão; onde mais de 30% dos empregados trabalham mais de 48 horas por semana. Os homens têm tendência para terem horários de trabalho mais longos, uma situação que é simultaneamente causa e consequência dos estereótipos de género e que reforça a divisão do trabalho.<sup>10</sup> Os longos horários de trabalho, mas também os salários e os rendimentos baixos e desiguais, regra geral, limitam as opções das mulheres quanto à sua decisão de trabalhar, onde e em que tipos de emprego.



©OIT, Crozet M.

<sup>5</sup> ILO, 2008. *Global Trends for Women* (Geneva).

<sup>6</sup> UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), 2007. *Estadísticas para la Equidad de Género: Magnitudes y Tendencias en América Latina* (Santiago).

<sup>7</sup> EUROSTAT, 2008. *Report on equality between women and men – 2008* (European Commission, Brussels).

<sup>8</sup> ECLAC, 2007. *Social Panorama of Latin America 2006* (Santiago).

<sup>9</sup> Verceles, N.A. and S.N. Beltran, 2004. *Reconciling work and family. Philippine Country Study*, Documento de trabalho não publicado (Programa de Condições de Trabalho e Emprego, (ILO, Geneva). E Marcucci, P. N., 2001. *Jobs, gender and small enterprises in Africa and Asia: Lessons drawn from Bangladesh, the Philippines, Tunisia and Zimbabwe*, Series on Women's Entrepreneurship Development and Gender in Enterprises No. 58. (ILO, Programa focal de promoção do emprego através do desenvolvimento das pequenas empresas (SEED), Geneva).

<sup>10</sup> Lee, S., McCann, D. and J.C. Messenger, 2007. *Working time around the world: Trends in working hours, laws and policies in a global comparative perspective*, Routledge (ILO, Geneva), p. 240.

A tudo isto se junta a oferta insuficiente de serviços de apoio social de confiança e acessíveis, nomeadamente estruturas de acolhimento de crianças e de cuidados de saúde, para responder às necessidades crescentes nesta área. Estes serviços constituem, a par dos transportes e do fornecimento de água e electricidade, as principais preocupações dos trabalhadores e das trabalhadoras. Relativamente às estruturas de acolhimento de crianças, quase metade dos países do mundo não tem programas formais destinados às crianças com menos de 3 anos e, nos países onde esses programas existem, a respectiva cobertura é limitada.<sup>11</sup> Para as famílias que têm filhos em idade pré-escolar, existem programas de apoio e educação para a primeira infância, que têm vindo a aumentar nos países mais desenvolvidos. Não obstante, estes programas têm uma cobertura ainda desigual, particularmente nas comunidades pobres e rurais, e, em muitos casos, não vão ao encontro das necessidades dos pais e das mães que trabalham, em termos de duração, qualidade e custos.<sup>12</sup> Em muitos países, em que o horário de funcionamento das escolas é muito inferior aos horários de trabalho, ou inclui intervalos demasiado longos para o almoço, as famílias vêm-se confrontadas com a dificuldade de conciliar os horários escolares com os seus horários de trabalho remunerado.

Simultaneamente, o envelhecimento da população e o número crescente de pessoas idosas dependentes que necessitam de cuidados de longa duração agravam as dificuldades com que se deparam os trabalhadores e as trabalhadoras, tanto nos países desenvolvidos como naqueles em vias de desenvolvimento. A criação de serviços formais de cuidados de longa duração, como a prestação de cuidados institucionais, comunitários e domiciliários, tem sido particularmente lenta, continuando os membros da família a assegurar a prestação desses cuidados.<sup>13</sup>

A epidemia do VIH/Sida também afectou profundamente e agravou todas as dimensões da prestação de cuidados não remunerada, com sérias repercussões na igualdade entre homens e mulheres. A dificuldade de acesso aos cuidados de saúde institucionais significa muitas vezes que as famílias, particularmente as mulheres e as raparigas, têm de deixar o emprego remunerado ou a escola para cuidarem dos seus familiares doentes ou em fase terminal, precisamente numa altura em que necessitam de mais recursos económicos para fazer face às despesas médicas e compensar a perda de rendimento. Em geral, as famílias pobres, rurais, e as minorias raciais e étnicas são as mais duramente afectadas.<sup>14</sup>

A inexistência de medidas colectivas e de apoio para conciliar o trabalho remunerado e as responsabilidades familiares obriga muitas famílias a procurar "estratégias individuais de conciliação", que muitas vezes se repercutem negativamente nos objectivos do bem-estar da família e do trabalho digno. As famílias pobres e vulneráveis são as mais afectadas por esta situação, na medida em que têm menor capacidade económica para adquirir bens (alimentos pré-preparados, electrodomésticos que permitem poupar trabalho) ou serviços (privados de acolhimento de crianças, de cuidados de saúde para as pessoas doentes e apoio doméstico, vide caixa 2) para disporem de tempo para o trabalho remunerado. O conflito trabalho-família condiciona seriamente as opções destas famílias, obrigando-as muitas vezes a escolher entre o emprego ou a prestação de cuidados, ou a combinação de ambos; escolhas tomadas com o objectivo de escapar à pobreza, que implicam compromissos dolorosos em termos de qualidade do emprego e/ou qualidade dos cuidados e que trazem consequências a longo prazo.

### CAIXA 2. TRABALHO DOMÉSTICO: UMA SOLUÇÃO COMUM PARA FAZER FACE ÀS DIFICULDADES

Para as famílias com rendimentos médios e altos, a contratação de serviços domésticos é um recurso essencial que lhes permite colmatar a falta de apoio colectivo às responsabilidades familiares. O trabalho doméstico cria milhões de empregos no mundo, em todos os países independentemente do seu nível de desenvolvimento, e contribui em grande medida para os cuidados familiares. As pessoas que prestam serviço doméstico são sobretudo do sexo feminino, muitas vezes raparigas provenientes dos grupos mais desfavorecidos da sociedade — comunidades pobres, zonas rurais, minorias étnicas e raciais, e imigrantes. A OIT verificou que, na maioria dos países do mundo, as pessoas do serviço doméstico são objecto de um tratamento jurídico desigual relativamente aos outros trabalhadores por conta de outrem. Além disso, a aplicação da lei é frequentemente deficiente devido, entre outras razões, à natureza "oculta" deste tipo de trabalho. Como consequência, a maioria das pessoas do serviço doméstico tem empregos informais, com salários muito baixos, poucos direitos legais ou de protecção social e poucas possibilidades de se fazerem ouvir e representar. Contudo, alguns países empreenderam esforços legislativos para melhorar os seus direitos legais. Por exemplo, na África do Sul, desde 2002, têm direito ao salário mínimo, férias remuneradas, horas extraordinárias remuneradas e indemnização pela cessação do contrato de trabalho; e os empregadores estão obrigados à sua inscrição no Fundo de Seguro de Desemprego e ao pagamento das respectivas contribuições para que possam ter direito às prestações de desemprego e de maternidade.

Fonte: BIT, 2009. *Law and Practice Report on Decent Work for Domestic Workers* (Geneva).

<sup>11</sup> Education for All, 2007. *Strong foundations: Early childhood care and education*, Relatório Mundial de Acompanhamento (UNESCO, Paris).

<sup>12</sup> Hein C. and N. Cassirer, 2009. *Workplace partnerships for childcare solutions* (a publicar brevemente), (ILO, Geneva).

<sup>13</sup> Briodsky, J., Habib J. and M. Hirschfeld (eds), 2002. *Long-term care in developing countries: Ten case-studies* (WHO, Geneva).

<sup>14</sup> Addati, L. and N. Cassirer, 2008. *Equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including care-giving in the context of HIV/AIDS*, documento elaborado para a reunião do grupo de peritos no âmbito da Comissão da Condição da Mulher das Nações Unidas, *Equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including care-giving in the context of HIV/AIDS*, 6 a 8 de Outubro de 2008, Geneva, Suíça (ILO, Geneva).





Perante a falta de apoio para cuidar dos filhos, as famílias desfavorecidas não têm outra solução senão deixar os filhos sozinhos em casa, ou ao cuidado de uma irmã ou irmão mais velho – geralmente uma rapariga que abandonou a escola – ou levá-los consigo para o trabalho. Por exemplo, na Indonésia, 40% das trabalhadoras cuidam dos seus filhos enquanto trabalham; 37% contam com a ajuda de familiares do sexo feminino e 10% recorrem à ajuda das filhas mais velhas.<sup>15</sup> Em Nairobi, verificou-se que 54% das mães mais pobres levavam os seus bebés para o trabalho, enquanto que 85% das mães com mais recursos económicos tinham empregadas domésticas.<sup>16</sup> Deixar os filhos sozinhos ou ao cuidado dos irmãos ou irmãs mais velhos ou de outras pessoas não qualificadas para o efeito tem claras consequências na saúde e no desenvolvimento das crianças mais jovens, bem como implicações a longo prazo nas oportunidades de educação e de trabalho das crianças que são obrigadas a abandonar a escola para cuidar dos irmãos mais novos ou das tarefas domésticas. Por outro lado, levar os filhos para o trabalho não só reduz o tempo e o investimento que as mulheres podem dedicar ao trabalho remunerado, incluindo a formação e o desenvolvimento profissional, mas também leva a que as crianças fiquem expostas a ambientes perigosos e ao risco de trabalho infantil.

A falta de serviços colectivos de apoio a pessoas idosas, doentes e com deficiência afecta sobretudo as famílias pobres. A maioria dos países em vias de desenvolvimento enfrenta graves carências de serviços de cuidados de longa duração, adequados e acessíveis, e não tem regimes de segurança social que apoiem as famílias que têm dependentes com necessidades especiais a cargo. Por exemplo, em 2002, nas Filipinas, só existiam 13 centros públicos de assistência social para pessoas com deficiência, idosas e grupos especiais.<sup>17</sup> Os membros dessas famílias, em particular as mulheres, têm muita dificuldade em conciliar o trabalho e a família, uma situação que muitas vezes resulta na perda de emprego remunerado, provisória ou definitiva.

### CAIXA 3. OS HOMENS E OS CUIDADOS A PESSOAS IDOSAS

Nos Estados Unidos, os homens preocupam-se cada vez mais com o conflito entre cuidar dos pais e o seu papel de prover ao sustento da família. Estima-se que os homens representam quase 40% dos prestadores de cuidados familiares, o que traduz um aumento de 19% face a 1996. Cerca de 17 milhões de homens cuidam de uma pessoa adulta. Assim como a paternidade activa passou a ser melhor aceite pela geração do pós-guerra, a geração "baby-boom", o mesmo sucedeu com o papel de prestador de cuidados que é hoje em dia assumido por muitos filhos com pais idosos – uma evolução que resulta da diminuição da dimensão das famílias e do aumento do número de mulheres que trabalham a tempo inteiro. Os homens receiam que esta situação os venha a prejudicar no local de trabalho, porque existe a percepção que é preferível contratar homens porque se podem dedicar 100% ao seu trabalho.

Fonte: US Alzheimer's Association and the National Alliance for Caregiving. Leland, J., 28 de Novembro de 2008. *More Men Take the Lead Role in Caring for Elderly Parents*, New York Times (New York).

Na reformulação das políticas e no reajustamento das prioridades em matéria de cuidados e protecção social, deve ter-se em conta o seu impacto na sociedade, no trabalho e nas questões de género no quadro das responsabilidades familiares.

## COLOCAR NA AGENDA POLÍTICA AS MEDIDAS DE CONCILIAÇÃO TRABALHO-FAMÍLIA



As medidas de conciliação trabalho-família são soluções políticas destinadas a facilitar o acesso de todos os trabalhadores e trabalhadoras a um trabalho digno, abordando e apoiando explícita e sistematicamente as suas responsabilidades familiares não remuneradas. A Convenção (n.º 156) e a Recomendação (n.º 165) da OIT fornecem importantes orientações políticas, constituindo um instrumento flexível para apoiar a definição de políticas que permitam aos trabalhadores e trabalhadoras com responsabilidades familiares exercer o direito a um emprego e a uma carreira profissional, sem qualquer tipo de discriminação. As medidas de conciliação da vida profissional e familiar podem ser tomadas a nível nacional, local e da empresa, contribuindo para melhor compatibilizar as responsabilidades familiares com o trabalho remunerado e tornar as condições de trabalho mais compatíveis com as responsabilidades familiares não remuneradas. São necessárias políticas que promovam activamente a participação dos homens nas responsabilidades familiares, algo que dificilmente será alcançado se não se adoptarem medidas que fomentem uma mudança dos comportamentos, como as licenças por paternidade e licenças parentais remuneradas.

<sup>15</sup> Kamerman, S.B., 2000. *Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC): An overview of developments in OECD countries* (Institute for Child and Family Policy, Columbia University, New York). Disponível em [www.columbia.edu/cu/childpolicy/kamerman.pdf](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/childpolicy/kamerman.pdf) (consultado em 30 de Janeiro de 2009).

<sup>16</sup> A. Lakati et al., 2002. "Breastfeeding and the working mother in Nairobi", in *Public Health Nutrition*, Vol. 5, n.º 6, Dec., pp. 715-718.

<sup>17</sup> ILO, 2004 "Reconciling work and family in the Philippines", Estudo por país não publicado (ILO, TRAVAIL, Geneva).

## A IGUALDADE DE GÉNERO NO CORAÇÃO DO TRABALHO DIGNO

O governo deve assumir um papel de liderança na definição de orientações políticas e na criação de um ambiente social favorável ao diálogo e à mudança para melhorar a conciliação entre trabalho e vida familiar. Cabe-lhe, em particular, o papel crucial de elaborar cuidadosamente legislação para alcançar os objectivos de igualdade e, desta forma, combater a tradicional divisão do trabalho remunerado e não remunerado entre homens e mulheres. Como salientou o Comité de Peritos da OIT, *“as medidas destinadas a promover a harmonização das responsabilidades profissionais e familiares, como os serviços de acolhimento de crianças, não devem ser dirigidas especificamente às mulheres.”*<sup>18</sup> Na realidade, ao excluir-se os homens dessas medidas, perpetua-se a ideia de que a responsabilidade pelo cuidado dos filhos incumbe exclusivamente às mulheres, contribuindo ainda para aumentar os riscos de discriminação das mulheres no local de trabalho.



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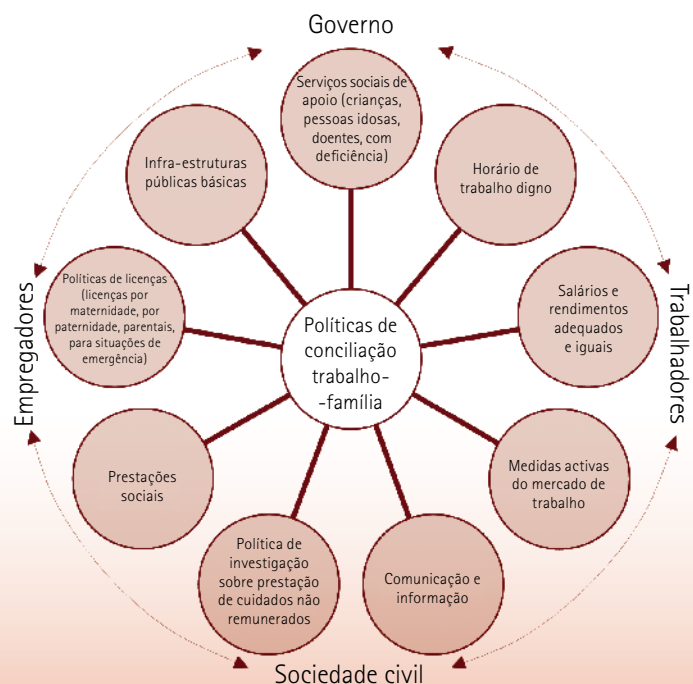
### CAIXA 4. PRINCÍPIOS – CHAVE PARA GARANTIR A IGUALDADE DE GÉNERO NAS MEDIDAS DE APOIO À FAMÍLIA

- Reconhecer o papel dos homens nos cuidados dos filhos: prever uma licença por paternidade e a concessão de uma licença parental não transferível a homens e a mulheres, após a licença por maternidade.
- Promover uma maior compatibilidade entre trabalho remunerado e vida familiar: regimes flexíveis em matéria de horário de trabalho, períodos de descanso e férias; licenças anuais, licenças de curta duração para situações de emergência; trabalho a tempo parcial (de qualidade), horários flexíveis; bancos de horas, teletrabalho, redução das horas de trabalho diário e das horas extraordinárias.
- Promover uma maior compatibilidade entre responsabilidades familiares e trabalho: garantir a disponibilidade de serviços de acolhimento de crianças, a custo acessível e de qualidade, bem com de outros serviços e estruturas de apoio à família que ajudem os trabalhadores e as trabalhadoras a fazerem face às responsabilidades profissionais e familiares.
- Promover uma partilha mais equitativa das responsabilidades familiares entre homens e mulheres através de medidas de informação e de sensibilização e de políticas de educação.
- Promover acções públicas e privadas para reduzir a carga de trabalho associada às responsabilidades familiares e domésticas, através de: equipamentos domésticos que permitem facilitar o trabalho; transportes públicos; abastecimento de água e electricidade.

Fonte: BIT, *Addressing gender equality through work family measures*, Information Sheets on Work and Family, No. 2, TRAVAIL, 2004, Geneva.

Como estabelece a Convenção (n.º 156), as organizações de trabalhadores e de empregadores têm um papel fundamental a desempenhar na definição e implementação de medidas de conciliação trabalho-família (art.º 11.º). Mais, estabelecendo o enquadramento para uma política nacional tripartida, incentivando a celebração de acordos de negociação colectiva que reforçam e potencialmente vão além da regulamentação, promovendo medidas favoráveis à família no local de trabalho, e melhorando as condições de trabalho, são abordagens comprovadas para assegurar políticas nacionais relevantes e que respondem às necessidades dos trabalhadores e empregadores.

O diagrama seguinte apresenta um resumo das diferentes medidas para promover a conciliação entre vida profissional e vida familiar previstas nas normas da OIT relativas aos trabalhadores e trabalhadoras com responsabilidades familiares, as quais dependem da acção directa dos governos, parceiros sociais e actores da sociedade civil.



Fonte: [www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/condtrav/family](http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/condtrav/family) [accedido em 30 de Janeiro de 2009].

<sup>18</sup> ILO, 1999. Direct request made by the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEARC) to Guatemala concerning Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156) (Geneva).



A formulação de políticas integradas de conciliação trabalho-família não é um assunto que diga apenas respeito ao bem-estar individual dos trabalhadores e das trabalhadoras e das suas famílias, tem também um impacto no desenvolvimento económico e social de toda a sociedade. Os governos, empregadores, sindicatos e o público em geral estão cada vez mais conscientes das dificuldades que as famílias enfrentam para alcançar o equilíbrio entre o trabalho e as exigências associadas à assistência a familiares dependentes. Verifica-se, em particular, que a capacidade de trabalho dos pais e das mães, nomeadamente a sua capacidade de trabalho produtivo, é limitada pela inexistência de medidas eficazes de conciliação trabalho-família



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e que muitas crianças, idosos, doentes e pessoas com deficiência sofrem as consequências da falta de estruturas de apoio à família de qualidade. Por isso, se reconhece cada vez mais que é do interesse público definir e implementar políticas integradas de conciliação da vida profissional e familiar, tendo em conta as importantes vantagens destas políticas para a sociedade em geral.

## CAIXA 5. EXEMPLOS DE POLÍTICAS DE CONCILIAÇÃO DA VIDA PROFISSIONAL E FAMILIAR NO CHILE, CROÁCIA, ÍNDIA E ÁFRICA DO SUL

Tendo reconhecido que a falta de estruturas de acolhimento de crianças constitui um obstáculo significativo à participação das mulheres no mundo do trabalho, o governo chileno, que ratificou a Convenção (n.º 156) em 1994, impulsionou uma série de medidas para ampliar a rede de serviços de acolhimento de crianças, a fim de criar empregos de melhor qualidade e promover a igualdade entre homens e mulheres e o desenvolvimento do país. Desde 2005, o número de lugares em creches públicas gratuitas para crianças dos 3 meses aos 2 anos, que vivem nas zonas mais carenciadas do país, aumentou de 14.400 para 64.000 em 2008. Por sua vez, prevê-se que o número de lugares em infantários para crianças dos 2 aos 4 anos, que era de 84.000 em 2005, aumente para cerca de 127.000 até 2009.<sup>19</sup>

Para dar cumprimento às obrigações assumidas ao abrigo da Convenção (n.º 156) e de outros instrumentos das NU sobre a igualdade de género, em 2006, a Croácia adoptou o Programa Nacional de Promoção da Igualdade entre Homens e Mulheres (2006–10), que prevê uma série de medidas específicas para promover a partilha das responsabilidades familiares entre homens e mulheres e aumentar a disponibilidade de estruturas de acolhimento de crianças, enquanto meio para alcançar uma efectiva igualdade de oportunidades e de tratamento entre trabalhadores e trabalhadoras.<sup>20</sup>

O National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme (NRAGA) [Programa Nacional de Garantia do Emprego Rural] lançado pelo Governo indiano em 2005, reconhece as dificuldades com que as mulheres se deparam para ingressarem no mercado de trabalho em virtude das responsabilidades familiares. O programa NRAGA prevê a criação de creches, bem como de outros serviços, no local de trabalho, como assistência médica, água potável e espaços à sombra, que os organismos locais responsáveis pela execução do programa devem criar para garantir a efectiva implementação do programa de criação de emprego.<sup>21</sup>

Na África do Sul, o governo lançou um programa de prestações não sujeitas a condições, o *Child Support Grant* [Subsídio de Apoio às Crianças], uma prestação de apoio à família paga ao principal responsável pelos cuidados e educação dos filhos, com o objectivo de contrariar o papel das mulheres enquanto principal responsável pelos cuidados familiares. Esta prestação não está sujeita a condições, não requer a frequência de acções de formação ou a realização de trabalho comunitário não remunerado, um requisito para a atribuição de prestações familiares que é controversa noutros países em desenvolvimento. Em Maio de 2006, quase 7 milhões de crianças beneficiaram deste programa.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Hein C. e N. Cassirer, 2009. op. cit

<sup>20</sup> BIT, 2008, Relatório do Comité para a Aplicação das Convenções e Recomendações (artigos 19.º, 22.º e 35.º da Constituição). Terceiro ponto da ordem do dia: informações e relatórios sobre a aplicação das Convenções e Recomendações, Conferência Internacional do Trabalho, 97ª sessão, 2008, Relatório III (Parte 1A) Relatório Geral e observações relativamente a determinados países, p. 360.

<sup>21</sup> Operational Guidelines of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme, 2006. Section 5.6, (New Delhi).

<sup>22</sup> Razavi, S., 2007. *The political and social economy of care in a development context: Conceptual issues, research questions and policy options*, Paper no. 3 (UNRISD Programme on Gender and Development, Geneva).

As políticas integradas de conciliação trabalho-família são um aspecto essencial para a qualidade da vida profissional e devem passar a ser uma componente-chave das estratégias sociais e de emprego nacionais para a igualdade de género e o trabalho digno. De entre todas as medidas de conciliação da vida profissional e familiar, a criação de serviços de acolhimento acessíveis, de confiança e de qualidade, para atenuar o conflito entre trabalho e cuidados aos filhos e familiares idosos e doentes, é geralmente reconhecida como uma das soluções mais eficientes em termos de custos e que integram a dimensão de género para dar resposta às necessidades dos trabalhadores e das trabalhadoras com responsabilidades familiares. Em particular, os estudos realizados pela OIT sobre os cuidados aos filhos quando os pais e as mães trabalham demonstraram que estas medidas trazem numerosas vantagens para a sociedade, empregadores, trabalhadores e respectivas famílias.

Por exemplo, os serviços de acolhimento de crianças:

- Promovem a igualdade de género, melhorando as oportunidades de emprego, desenvolvimento pessoal e capacitação das mulheres.
- Contribuem para prevenir a perpetuação das desigualdades sociais e a pobreza intergeracional, reforçam a segurança social e económica das famílias e reduzem a sua vulnerabilidade ao risco.
- Facilitam o funcionamento harmonioso e eficaz dos mercados de trabalho, graças ao pleno aproveitamento do crescente investimento realizado na educação das mulheres e de uma mão-de-obra diversificada.
- Oferecem melhores oportunidades de vida às crianças desfavorecidas, contribuindo para garantir o seu bem-estar físico e melhorar as suas competências cognitivas e linguísticas, bem como para promover o seu desenvolvimento social e emocional.
- Contribuem para a criação de postos de trabalho no sector dos serviços, em substituição do trabalho doméstico não remunerado.
- Permitem um acréscimo de receitas fiscais, uma vez que o aumento das taxas de participação e dos rendimentos dos pais contribui para o aumento da produção nacional.
- Reduzem a despesa pública na protecção social e, a longo prazo, em programas de recuperação escolar e com a criminalidade.<sup>23</sup>

As políticas integradas de conciliação trabalho-família também incluem disposições sobre licenças. O direito à licença para assistência a descendentes sofreu numerosas alterações ao longo das últimas décadas. A licença por maternidade, prevista na Convenção (n.º 183) sobre a Protecção da Maternidade, garante à mãe o direito de gozar um período de descanso aquando do nascimento de um filho ou filha, bem como o direito a assistência médica e a prestações pecuniárias, à segurança do emprego, à não discriminação, à protecção da saúde e à amamentação. Mais recentemente, tem-se registado uma tendência para incentivar os homens a gozarem uma licença para cuidarem dos filhos, nomeadamente através da introdução da licença por paternidade (licença de curta duração logo após o nascimento) ou da alteração da licença parental, que passou a poder ser gozada pelo pai ou pela mãe. Estas licenças podem ou não ser remuneradas, assumindo uma diversidade de formas em diferentes partes do mundo. Verifica-se, todavia, que uma grande percentagem de pais trabalhadores não tem acesso a estas licenças. As estatísticas revelam que, em todo o mundo, as mulheres continuam a gozar mais licenças do que os homens. As diferenças salariais entre mulheres e homens são um importante elemento que contribui para este estereótipo, uma vez que as mulheres continuam a auferir salários inferiores aos dos homens. A experiência demonstra que a licença parental só é uma solução aceitável, quando remunerada e quando os pais e as mães que gozam esta licença não receiam perder o emprego ou ser afectados a outro posto de trabalho com condições menos favoráveis, após a licença. A fim de não aumentar as desigualdades entre homens e mulheres e evitar a desactualização das qualificações das mulheres, deve ser definida uma política de apoio aos pais e às mães, em particular de apoio às mulheres, que regressam ao trabalho após uma licença para assistência à família.



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### RESPOSTAS DA OIT E PARCERIAS

A OIT reconhece que, a actual concepção da economia e da sociedade, raramente valoriza o trabalho não remunerado no seio da família e da comunidade, embora este trabalho seja essencial ao bem-estar não só das pessoas jovens, idosas e doentes, mas também daquelas que têm um trabalho remunerado. Para dar resposta a este problema, o Director-Geral exortou os mandantes da OIT a reforçar os esforços visando avaliar e analisar os contributos do trabalho não remunerado para o desenvolvimento económico e social de cada país.

<sup>23</sup> Hein C. e N. Cassirer, 2009. op. cit.



*"Este esforço é essencial se quisermos ajudar as mulheres e os homens a conciliar as pressões da vida profissional e as responsabilidades para com a família e a comunidade. Importa ainda estar ciente de que a chamada produtividade económica é na realidade indirectamente subsidiada pela produtividade social do trabalho não remunerado."*<sup>24</sup>

As organizações de empregadores também reconhecem que *"um dos principais obstáculos enfrentados pelas mulheres na concretização da igualdade, não obstante as medidas tomadas em muitos países, continua a ser a dificuldade de conciliar as responsabilidades familiares e profissionais."*<sup>25</sup> Um inquérito recente, realizado pela Organização Internacional de Empregadores (OIE),



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revela que *"as políticas de apoio à família são determinantes para facilitar a reinserção das mulheres no mercado de trabalho"*, salientando ainda que a flexibilidade do horário de trabalho e os serviços disponíveis de acolhimento de crianças são medidas importantes para aumentar a participação das mães na força de trabalho.<sup>26</sup> O *Bureau* para as Actividades dos Empregadores do BIT (ACT/EMP) elaborou recentemente um Manual de formação sobre trabalho e família que destaca o potencial das organizações de empregadores, enquanto importantes agentes dinamizadores das políticas de conciliação da vida profissional e familiar, em particular através da divulgação de orientações às empresas membros sobre as vantagens destas medidas e como as mesmas podem ser implementadas.<sup>27</sup>

Para promover o bem-estar dos trabalhadores e das trabalhadoras e melhorar a conciliação da vida profissional e familiar, a Confederação Sindical Internacional (CSI), a Internacional dos Serviços Públicos (ISP), a Internacional da Educação (IE), as Federações Sindicais Internacionais (FSI) e respectivos sindicatos membros têm promovido activamente melhorias na legislação e nas políticas nacionais, apoiando os processos de negociação colectiva e informando os trabalhadores e as trabalhadoras dos seus direitos. Para promover um ambiente de trabalho favorável à família, os sindicatos têm também desenvolvido esforços no sentido de aumentar o número de disposições relativas à conciliação trabalho-família nas convenções colectivas. O *Bureau* para as Actividades dos Trabalhadores do BIT (ACTRAV) publicou, por exemplo, um Manual de formação para ajudar as organizações de trabalhadores na negociação colectiva em matéria de igualdade de género, incluindo políticas de apoio à família.<sup>28</sup>

Outros departamentos e programas da OIT em Genebra e Escritórios da OIT em todo o mundo também estão envolvidos na investigação e assistência técnica aos mandantes da OIT sobre questões relativas aos trabalhadores e trabalhadoras com responsabilidades familiares. O Programa sobre Condições de Trabalho e Emprego (TRAVAIL) desenvolve actividades de investigação, sensibilização, formação e cooperação técnica, visando incentivar os mandantes da OIT a melhorarem as condições e trabalho e a produtividade no local de trabalho. Uma das vertentes do programa de TRAVAIL incide sobre as questões de conciliação da vida profissional e familiar e protecção da maternidade, enquanto importante dimensão de género que deve ser tida em conta para garantir uma vida profissional de qualidade. Mais recentemente, foram iniciados trabalhos sobre legislação e práticas no que diz respeito aos trabalhadores e trabalhadoras dos serviços domésticos, com vista ao debate sobre a adopção de uma nova norma de trabalho relativa a quem realiza trabalho doméstico. O *Bureau* para a Igualdade de Género (GENDER) e a rede de especialistas em igualdade de género nos escritórios regionais e sub-regionais da OIT também têm desenvolvido investigação e actividades sobre a conciliação trabalho-família e a maternidade nos respectivos contextos específicos, com o apoio das equipas da Igualdade e Segurança Social do Departamento de Normas Internacionais do Trabalho (NORMES).

Os Programas Nacionais para o Trabalho Digno (DWCP) são também motores de políticas e de acção adequados através dos quais é possível reflectir a nível nacional as prioridades dos parceiros sociais, incluindo as questões relacionadas com a conciliação da vida profissional e familiar.

<sup>24</sup> BIT, 2006. *Report of the Director-General: Changing patterns in the world of work*, Report I (C), International Labour Conference, 95<sup>th</sup> Session (Geneva), p. VI.

<sup>25</sup> BIT, 2005. *Employers' organizations taking the lead on gender equality: Case studies from 10 countries* (Bureau para as Actividades dos Empregadores (ACT/EMP), Geneva).

<sup>26</sup> Organização Internacional dos Empregadores (OIE), 2008. *Trends in the workplace survey 2008: Enterprises in a globalizing world* (Geneva).

<sup>27</sup> BIT, 2008. *Managing diversity in the workplace: Training package on work and family* (ACT/EMP e TRAVAIL, Geneva).

<sup>28</sup> Olney, S., Goodson, B., Maloba-Caines, K., e F. O'Neill, 2002. *Gender Equality: A Guide to Collective Bargaining* (BIT, Bureau para as Actividades dos Trabalhadores (ACTRAV) e Programa focal para o reforço do diálogo social, Geneva).

### O QUE PODEMOS FAZER?

Os dados disponíveis revelam que as políticas de conciliação da vida profissional e familiar são indispensáveis à criação de trabalho digno e produtivo, constituindo-se como um factor fundamental da concretização da igualdade de oportunidades e de tratamento entre homens e mulheres no trabalho. Neste sentido, tem vindo a adoptar-se um número crescente de medidas legislativas e práticas destinadas a alcançar o equilíbrio entre vida profissional e vida familiar. No entanto, como observaram os órgãos de supervisão da OIT, ainda poucos governos definiram quadros de políticas integradas, em conformidade com a Convenção (n.º 156), continuando as responsabilidades familiares não remuneradas a comprometer a realização dos objectivos do trabalho digno e da igualdade entre mulheres e homens.

Para garantir progressos neste sentido, os governos, organizações internacionais e regionais, empregadores e sindicatos, organizações não governamentais, actores bilaterais e multilaterais, instituições de Bretton Woods e outros actores relevantes são incentivados a:

- Promover a ratificação e aplicação da Convenção (n.º 156) relativa aos Trabalhadores com Responsabilidades Familiares, de 1981, bem como a aplicação da Recomendação (n.º 165) relativa à mesma matéria, que prevêem um quadro de políticas integradas para conciliar o trabalho remunerado com as responsabilidades familiares e a prestação de cuidados com o trabalho remunerado. Estes instrumentos visam uma partilha mais equitativa das responsabilidades familiares entre homens e mulheres e a igualdade de oportunidades e de tratamento entre homens e mulheres com responsabilidades familiares.
- Oferecer um enquadramento mais amplo da igualdade, através da ratificação e aplicação das Convenções (n.º 100), (n.º 111) e (n.º 183) da OIT.
- Analisar e alterar ou adoptar políticas sensíveis à dimensão de género com vista a melhorar o reconhecimento, estatuto e bem-estar de quem presta de cuidados, remunerados e não remunerados, em termos de direitos, protecção social, condições de trabalho e representação.
- Empreender acções coordenadas para fazer face à escassez mundial e migração de profissionais de saúde e melhorar as suas condições de trabalho, a fim de aumentar a capacidade dos serviços de saúde nacionais e reduzir a carga de trabalho que pesa sobre as mulheres e raparigas em termos de cuidados não remunerados no lar e na comunidade, em particular no contexto do VIH/Sida.
- Aumentar o investimento em infra-estruturas e serviços públicos para reduzir a carga de trabalho não remunerado nas famílias, assumida principalmente pelas mulheres e raparigas (incluindo transportes, abastecimento público de água e electricidade, serviços de saúde, serviços de acolhimento de crianças e outros serviços de apoio à família e à comunidade).
- Melhorar as condições de trabalho e a qualidade da vida profissional através de medidas visando: a redução progressiva das horas de trabalho e redução das horas extraordinárias; regimes mais flexíveis em matéria de horário de trabalho, períodos de descanso e férias, salários e rendimentos justos e adequados e medidas de protecção social.
- Oferecer apoio aos pais e às mães que reingressam no mercado de trabalho, após um período de licença para prestar assistência à família.
- Reforçar o diálogo social e a coordenação entre ministérios competentes, empregadores, sindicatos, organizações de mulheres e a sociedade civil para garantir políticas e medidas consistentes, destinadas a promover uma melhor compreensão, reconhecimento e partilha das responsabilidades familiares, entre o Estado, o sector privado e as famílias, e entre mulheres e homens.



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<sup>NT</sup> Versão portuguesa: Igualdade no Trabalho: Enfrentar os desafios. Relatório Global de Acompanhamento da Declaração da OIT relativa aos Direitos e Princípios Fundamentais no Trabalho (Relatório do Director-Geral), disponível em: [http://www.ilo.org/public/portugue/region/eurpro/lisbon/pdf/igualdade\\_07.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/public/portugue/region/eurpro/lisbon/pdf/igualdade_07.pdf)



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Esta brochura foi elaborada no âmbito da campanha de sensibilização da OIT "Igualdade de Género no Coração do Trabalho Digno". Para mais informação sobre outros temas da OIT abordados nesta campanha de promoção da igualdade de género, contacte-nos através do email: [gendercampaign@ilo.org](mailto:gendercampaign@ilo.org).



A tradução portuguesa desta brochura teve o apoio da Comissão para a Igualdade no Trabalho e no Emprego (Portugal).





**DECENT WORK**

**A better world starts here**

*90 years working for social justice*



International  
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*Work and family:  
The way to care is to share!*



**INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY** 8 MARCH 2009



**GENDER EQUALITY AT THE HEART OF DECENT WORK**

[www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org)  
[genderecampaign@ilo.org](mailto:genderecampaign@ilo.org)

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# Dia Internacional da Mulher, 2010

OIT Lisboa - Microsoft Internet Explorer

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ORGANIZAÇÃO INTERNACIONAL DO TRABALHO

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## 8 de Março de 2010 OIT celebra Dia Internacional da Mulher

De acordo com o Relatório da **Organização Internacional do Trabalho** (OIT), apesar de nos últimos 15 anos se terem verificado sinais de progresso nas questões de igualdade de género, ainda existe um fosso significativo entre homens e mulheres em termos de oportunidades de trabalho e qualidade do emprego.



O Escritório da OIT em Lisboa à semelhança de anos anteriores associa-se às celebrações do Dia Internacional da Mulher e traduziu para disponibilizar em língua portuguesa as doze brochuras que foram produzidas no âmbito da campanha mundial «A Igualdade de Género no Coração do Trabalho Digno» que convidamos a visitar no nosso [sítio](#).

»Mulheres no mercado de trabalho: medindo os progressos e identificando os desafios» é o título do Relatório que a OIT preparou para o 8 de Março.

[Versão integral do Relatório >](#)

[Para mais informações sobre o 8 de Março na OIT >](#)

[Página alusiva ao 8 de Março no Centro Internacional de Formação da OIT \(Turim\) >](#)

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Start | Internet | 14:05

Site :[http://www.ilo.org/public/portugue/region/eurpro/lisbon/html/portugal\\_8\\_marco\\_2010\\_pt.htm](http://www.ilo.org/public/portugue/region/eurpro/lisbon/html/portugal_8_marco_2010_pt.htm)

# ILO International Women's Day, 2010

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window displaying the ILO website. The address bar shows the URL: [http://www.ilo.org/gender/Events/lang--en/WCMS\\_122450/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/gender/Events/lang--en/WCMS_122450/index.htm). The website header includes the ILO logo and navigation links: "About the ILO", "Departments and Offices", "Regions", "Themes", and "What we do". Below the header is a search bar and the text "GENDER Bureau for Gender Equality".

On the left side, there is a navigation menu with the following items: "About us", "Events", "Information resources", "Technical cooperation projects", and "Links".

The main content area features the title "ILO celebrates International Women's Day" and a sub-header "Bureau for Gender Equality". Below this, there is a paragraph: "Each year, ILO celebrates International Women's Day with an event honouring women of courage and conviction, from different aspects of the world of work. In 2010, the theme for ILO's celebration is 'What's working for working women!'".

A table provides details about the event:

When	8 March 2010
Where	Geneva, Switzerland
Type	Campaign
Regions and countries covered	Global
Unit responsible	Bureau for Gender Equality
Contact(s)	ILO Bureau for gender equality ( <a href="mailto:gender@ilo.org">gender@ilo.org</a> )
Subjects	decent work, women workers, gender equality, womens rights, gender, womens empowerment, women
Other languages	<a href="#">Français</a> • <a href="#">Español</a>

Below the table, there is a section titled "What's working for working women!" with a paragraph: "Fifteen years have passed since the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing, decided on a global Platform for Action on gender equality and women's empowerment. ILO's message to the Beijing Conference was 'All Women are Working Women'. A panel at ILO on 8 March 2010 provided the opportunity to share experiences on successes since 1995, as well as remaining challenges towards achieving true gender equality in the world of work."

On the right side, there is a "KEY RESOURCES" section with two links: "More gender equality over past few years... but still a way to go (slideshow) - [icon]" and "Message by Juan Somavia Director-General of the ILO for International Women's Day".

The browser's taskbar at the bottom shows several open applications, including "ILO Applicatio...", "Document3 - ...", "Document6 - ...", "ILO celebrat...", and "C:\Monica\Igu...". The system clock shows 12:26.

Site : [http://www.ilo.org/gender/Events/lang--en/WCMS\\_122450/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/gender/Events/lang--en/WCMS_122450/index.htm)

## COMUNICADO DE IMPRENSA

**ORGANIZAÇÃO INTERNACIONAL DO TRABALHO** comemora Dia Internacional da Mulher - 8 de Março de 2010

Cada vez mais mulheres decidem trabalhar mas a igualdade de género permanece distante.

De acordo com um Relatório da Organização Internacional do Trabalho (OIT), apesar de nos últimos 15 anos se terem verificado sinais de progresso nas questões de igualdade de género, ainda existe um fosso significativo entre homens e mulheres em termos de oportunidades de trabalho e qualidade do emprego.

Segundo o Relatório há três áreas em que o desequilíbrio de género em desfavor das mulheres é evidente:

- Em primeiro lugar, cerca de metade (48.4%) das mulheres com idade superior a 15 anos são economicamente inactivas, comparativamente com os homens (22.3%), o que significa que a 4 mulheres economicamente activas correspondem 10 homens economicamente activos;
- Em segundo lugar, as mulheres quando querem trabalhar levam mais tempo do que os homens a encontrar um trabalho;
- E em terceiro, as mulheres recebem menos remuneração e outros benefícios do que os homens para trabalho de valor igual.

A OIT estima que o desemprego global das mulheres aumentou de 6% em 2007, para 7% em 2009, mais do que para os seus homólogos masculinos (5.5% para 6.3%). Em 2009, a taxa de desemprego feminina era mais alta do que a masculina em sete das nove regiões do mundo, sendo que no Médio Oriente e Norte de África a diferença foi de 7 pontos percentuais.

De acordo com Sara Elder, responsável pelo Relatório, «Ainda encontramos muito mais mulheres do que homens em trabalhos precários e mal pagos, ou porque este é o único tipo de emprego acessível às mulheres ou porque precisam de encontrar um trabalho que possam conciliar o trabalho com as responsabilidades familiares. Os homens não enfrentam estes constrangimentos».

O Escritório da OIT em Lisboa, à semelhança de anos anteriores, associa-se às celebrações do Dia Internacional da Mulher e traduziu, para disponibilizar em língua portuguesa, as doze brochuras que foram produzidas no âmbito da campanha mundial «A Igualdade de Género no Coração do Trabalho Digno» que convidamos a visitar no nosso sítio em [www.ilo.org/lisbon](http://www.ilo.org/lisbon)

Em anexo enviamos o Comunicado de imprensa com mais algumas conclusões interessantes deste Relatório, que poderá consultar a partir do url:

[http://www.ilo.org/empelm/units/lang--en/WCMS\\_DOC\\_ELM\\_DPT\\_TRD\\_EN/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/empelm/units/lang--en/WCMS_DOC_ELM_DPT_TRD_EN/index.htm)

Para mais informações sobre o 8 de Março na OIT ver [http://www.ilo.org/gender/Events/lang--en/WCMS\\_122450/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/gender/Events/lang--en/WCMS_122450/index.htm)

Veja também o 8 de Março no Centro Internacional de Formação da OIT (Turim)

<http://gender.itcilo.org/cms/index.php?lang=pt>

Para qualquer esclarecimento, poderá contactar

Albertina Jordão, Gender Focal Point no Escritório da OIT em Lisboa.

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# INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Monday, 8 March 2010

The International Labour Office cordially invites you to a celebration of International Women's Day, which will be held on Monday, 8 March 2010 from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. in Room 2, ILO building, 4 route des Morillons, Geneva.

## Theme: What is working for working women!

The event will be chaired by Her Excellency **Maria Nazareth Farani Azevêdo**, Ambassador of the Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations at Geneva, Chairperson of the ILO Governing Body.

### *Invited guests:*

- ❖ **Ms Patricia Aragon Sto. Tomas**, Chairperson of the Development Bank of the Philippines, former Minister of Labor and Employment of the Philippines.
- ❖ **Ms Maria Machailo-Ellis**, Executive Director of the Botswana Confederation of Commerce, Industry and Manpower.
- ❖ **Ms Maria Fernanda Carvalho Francisco**, President of the National Women's Workers Union of Angola, Secretary for International Relations of the National Union of Angolan Workers (UNTA).
- ❖ **Ms Creuza de Oliveira**, President of the National Federation of Domestic Workers in Brazil.
- ❖ **Ms Mary Chinery-Hesse**, Vice-Chairperson of the National Development Planning Commission of Ghana, former Deputy Director-General of the International Labour Office.

Mark it in your calendar and come celebrate with us on 8 March!

Feel free to share this information with your friends and colleagues!

Free parking available. Simultaneous interpretation in English, French and Spanish. For security purposes, access to the building will only be possible upon presentation of a photo ID.

ILO Bureau for Gender Equality  
RSVP: [gender@ilo.org](mailto:gender@ilo.org)



**Message by Juan Somavia  
Director-General of the International Labour Office  
on the occasion of International Women's Day**

**Geneva  
8 March 2010**

On this International Women's Day, the ILO joins the rest of the UN system in its call for equal rights and equal opportunities for all.

Today we highlight what is working for working women.

Fifteen years ago, the ILO addressed the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing with the theme "All women are working women!" Since then, gender equality in the world of work has progressed through national policies and legislative frameworks.

Good practices were shared at the International Labour Conference last June in the discussion on *Gender Equality at the Heart of Decent Work*. Policies and laws now ban discrimination at work based on sex. Labour inspectorates and courts are better monitoring the application of gender equality. Awareness of workers' rights concerning equality of opportunity and treatment has increased across all regions. Information campaigns have empowered both women and men workers to demand their rights. Many governments have adopted active labour market policies that address gender inequalities within overall objectives of job-rich growth, sustainable enterprises and decent work.

Nevertheless, the global economic crisis is placing the recent advances at risk. Our report on *Women in labour markets: Measuring progress and identifying challenges*, shows that a new gender gap may be emerging. Although women's overall labour force participation is growing, women remain disproportionately represented in poorly-paid, insecure, part-time, home-based or informal work and continue to be undervalued when it comes to equal pay for work of equal value. Major causes of inequality are linked to structural imbalances that weigh against women and systems of collecting national data that are gender-blind.

The Global Jobs Pact was adopted by the International Labour Conference in June 2009 to help mitigate the social impact of the crisis. The Pact calls for recovery packages that integrate gender equality concerns in all measures. The economic crisis is as an opportunity to shape new gender equality policy responses. When governments design and implement fiscal stimulus packages, for example, it is important to recognize the labour market disadvantages that women may face. Women carry the heaviest burden when it comes to unpaid care work. This may expand as the crisis deepens and further limits women's access to labour markets if policies for sharing care responsibilities with men are not forthcoming.

The 2009 ILC resolution on *Gender Equality at the Heart of Decent Work* shows what works for working women and gender equality. It guides our efforts towards a labour market in which all women and men can participate freely and actively. It calls, for example, for measures to facilitate women's economic empowerment through entrepreneurship

development, to address unequal remuneration between women and men, to enhance social protection for all, to strengthen women's participation in social dialogue on an equal footing with men, and to prevent and eliminate violence against women at work.

In some regions, cooperatives and enterprise clusters are powerful vehicles of social inclusion and social and economic empowerment for women. Women are increasingly becoming better organized in sectors where they have traditionally been discriminated against; they have better access to finance and business services catering to women's specific needs. This does not only benefit women themselves, but their families, communities and societies at large.

On International Women's Day 2010, let us recommit to actively supporting what works for working women as an integral part of the Decent Work Agenda.

\* \* \*



*What's working  
for working women!*



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Office  
Geneva

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pour les femmes qui travaillent!*

*¡Lo que funciona  
para las mujeres que trabajan!*

8

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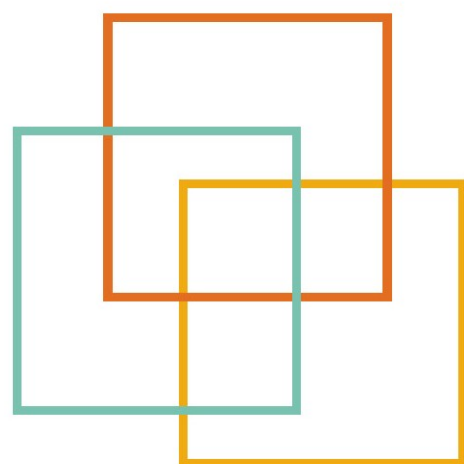




International  
Labour  
Office

Geneva

# Women in labour markets: Measuring progress and identifying challenges





# **Women in labour markets: Measuring progress and identifying challenges**

**March 2010**  
**International Labour Office, Geneva**

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## Executive summary

The global platform for action on gender equality and women's empowerment was fixed in Beijing 15 years ago ...

... and international organizations such as the ILO have advocated for gender equality in the world of work for even longer.

The time has come to measure progress and identify the remaining challenges that women face in attaining decent work.

Fifteen years have passed since the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing decided on a global platform for action on gender equality and women's empowerment.<sup>1</sup> Several of the strategic areas defined within the platform touch upon aspects of equality for women and men in the world of work, a core value of the International Labour Office (ILO)<sup>2</sup>. Specifically, under the header of "women and the economy", the following strategic objectives are listed:

- Promote women's economic rights and independence, including access to employment, appropriate working conditions and control over economic resources.
- Facilitate women's equal access to resources, employment, markets and trade.
- Provide business services, training and access to markets, information and technology, particularly to low-income women.
- Strengthen women's economic capacity and commercial networks.
- Eliminate occupational segregation and all forms of employment discrimination.
- Promote harmonization of work and family responsibilities for women and men.

Most of these sentiments were reiterated in the more recent, tripartite meeting of the International Labour Conference (ILC) on "Gender equality at the heart of decent work" in 2009.<sup>3</sup> The international community is now anxious to know if progress has been made on the Beijing platform for action and, specifically, on principles of gender equality in the world of work.

Measuring progress requires indicators, which is where this report fits in. It offers an analysis of 12 indicators from the ILO *Key Indicators of the Labour Market* database. The aim is to look for progress or lack of progress towards the goal of gender equality in the world of work and identify where and why blockages to labour market equity continue to exist. It focuses on the relationship of women to labour markets and compares employment outcomes for men and women to the best degree possible given the available labour market indicators.

<sup>1</sup> UN: Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, A/CONF.177/20/Rev.1, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995. For more information, see: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/index.html>.

<sup>2</sup> Conclusions, *Gender equality at the heart of decent work*, International Labour Conference, 98th Session, Geneva, June 2009; [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---gender/documents/meetingdocument/wcms\\_112288.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---gender/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_112288.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, p. 13.

More and more countries are realizing the productive potential of women ...

This report will show that there is a sort of inevitability about women's increasing engagement in labour markets. Between 1980 and 2008, the rate of female labour force participation increased from 50.2 to 51.7 per cent (see figure 7). In countries and regions where participation rates at the beginning of the period were below the world median, the increases were much more dramatic. On the other hand, in some countries where female labour force participation was much higher than the median in 1980, probably due to the prevalence of poverty in the country and the necessity of working for survival, the rates showed a decline over the period. What this means is that over time there has been both a general increase in female economic participation and a shrinking of the distance between countries with low levels and countries with high levels of participations (see figure 4).

... but other countries remain stalwartly closed to female economic participation, thus denying themselves a key resource of development.

In the meantime, male labour force participation rates have shown a tendency to decrease slightly. The result: gender differentials in labour force participation rates have decreased over time to "only" 26 percentage points (in 2008), versus nearly 32 percentage points in 1980. Still, many countries have a long way to go in approaching even this level of difference. In these countries, where women continue to lack the freedom to make basic choices such as how to contribute economically to the household, more needs to be done in the international community to advocate for change.

And while there is evidence of progress for some women in terms of employment status ...

And what about the quality of work that women engage in? Again, the report will show that there have been some modest signs of progress; the share of women working in the categories of vulnerable employment declined from 55.9 to 51.2 per cent between 1999 and 2009 (see table 2f and figure 12). The male share fell as well over the period but to a lesser degree than the female (from 51.6 to 48.2 per cent). The move away from vulnerable employment into wage and salaried work can be a major step toward economic freedom and self-determination for many women.

... gains are modest and inconsistent across countries.

But, unfortunately, such progress is irregular and far from consistent. There are countries where vulnerable employment for women continues to increase and countries where the shares of women in vulnerable employment remain above 75 per cent (nine countries with latest year data of at least 2000). Such findings remind us that progress measured at the global level should be treated with caution. The report attempts to balance the analyses of trends at the global and regional levels with more detailed country-level analyses in order that the final assessments of progress and remaining female employment challenges can be as well-rounded as possible.

And the general picture remains one of continuing gender disparity around the world in terms of both opportunities and quality of employment.

So what is the final assessment of the report when it comes to measuring progress toward gender equality in the world of work? The main findings highlight a continuing gender disparity in terms of both opportunities and quality of employment: female employment-to-population ratios have generally increased over

time but remain at levels well below those of men; nearly one-fourth of women remain in the category of unpaid contributing family workers, meaning they receive no direct pay for their efforts; and there is a clear segregation of women in sectors that are generally characterized by low pay, long hours and oftentimes informal working arrangements. To summarize, the circumstances of female employment – the sectors where women work, the types of work they do, the relationship of women to their jobs, the wages they receive – bring fewer gains (monetarily, socially and structurally) to women than are brought to the typical working male.

Is there a policy approach that will facilitate the breakthrough toward gender equality?

The question remains then, in the face of modest progress, how exactly does one go about “promoting full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and youth”<sup>4</sup> when current policy approaches do not seem to be working, at least not for women?

A first step regards empowering men and women alike in their labour market choices.

A first step requires granting men and women alike the possibility to make choices about their labour market entry. Some women will choose to work and others will choose to stay at home. The same for men. Some women will choose to work part-time or engage in temporary assignments while others will hold out for full-time permanent employment. The same for men. The important thing is that men and women alike are free to choose their respective labour market paths. Giving women a chance to contribute to the economic welfare of themselves and their families through labour force engagement has been proven to bring gains in nearly all areas of development, including poverty reduction, the spread of reproductive rights and associated declines in fertility and the redistribution of responsibilities and rights within the household. It is certainly a first step in building a society based on the concept of gender justice.

But even this is not enough.

But even this is not enough. Let us presume that all countries suddenly adhere to the concept of gender equality and remove all the obvious barriers that deny female labour force participation. Will it mean labour market equity? No. The aim should not be just to create a situation whereby female economic participation is the same as that of males. What matters is that both females and males who choose to engage in economic activity are able to find productive and decent work defined according to criteria that recognize their specific values and constraints.

<sup>4</sup> Recognizing that decent work for all is central to addressing poverty and hunger, the UN Millennium Development Goal 1 now includes a target to “achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people”. For a full history on the MDG target and information regarding the indicators selected for monitoring progress, see ILO: *Key Indicators of the Labour Market, 4th Edition* (Geneva, 2007), Chapter 1, section A, “Decent employment and the Millennium Development Goals: Description and analysis of the new target”.

A second step requires changing biases ...

“Specific values and constraints” – this is key and leads us to a vital second step in promoting greater progress toward gender equality in the world of work, which requires ridding society of gender stereotypes. “Gender justice”<sup>5</sup> cannot be achieved when biases remain embedded in economic and social institutions and development processes. For example, one should avoid the general premise that the aim is to recreate the male labour market for women. The premise is wrong.

... envisioning a labour market that incorporates the unique values and constraints of women ...

What a broader paradigm of gender equality in relation to employment aims to do is promote developments within labour markets that ensure that the same gains – economically, socially and politically – are brought to women as to men; that empower women to the same degree as men. The aim must not be to force women to fit into a labour market construct that is inherently male, but rather to adapt the labour market construct to incorporate the unique values and constraints of women.

... and then building the policy approach that ensures that labour markets empower women to the same degree as men.

In a way, what is advocated in this report is that countries increase their efforts in the promotion of gender justice in the world of work. Countries where female labour force participation is low, for whatever reasons, can do more to dissolve the barriers to entry. In countries where women and men are more equally free in their economic choices, they can push for the development of a more innovative policy approach, one that goes beyond standard labour market interventions (promoting equal employment opportunities and equal pay for equal work, for example). A “new” gender approach could, for example, introduce policies that: (1) encourage men to share family responsibilities through behaviour-changing measures (such as paternity leave); (2) quantify the value of unpaid care work; (3) develop educational systems that challenge stereotypical gender roles;<sup>6</sup> (4) challenge tendencies toward a discrimination- or exploitation-based definition of “women’s work” (for example, by broadening access for women to employment in an enlarged scope of industries and occupations while also encouraging male employment in sectors traditionally defined as “female” as a means of raising both the average pay and status of the occupation); and finally, (5) focus on raising the quality of work in all sectors, extending social protection, benefits and security to those in non-standard forms of work.

<sup>5</sup> Gender justice is defined as “the ending of, and if necessary the provision of redress for, inequalities between women and men that result in women’s subordination to men”. M. Mukhopadhyay and N. Singh (eds.): *Gender Justice, Citizenship, and Development* (International Development Research Centre, 2007); [http://www.idrc.ca/en/ev-108814-201-1-DO\\_TOPIC.html](http://www.idrc.ca/en/ev-108814-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html). According to the authors of the book, “The term ‘gender justice’ is increasingly used by activists and academics because of the growing concern and realization that terms like ‘gender equality’ or ‘gender mainstreaming’ have failed to communicate, or provide redress for, the ongoing gender-based injustices from which women suffer.”

<sup>6</sup> ILO: *Gender equality at the heart of decent work*, Report VI, International Labour Conference, 98th Session, Geneva, June 2009.

And finally, a “new” gender policy approach calls for a broader framework for labour market information and analysis ...

... incorporating alternative sources to broaden the information base and make sure that labour market information is geared toward understanding exactly how female and male labour markets operate.

This report emphasizes the importance of labour market information and analysis for informed policy-making. It introduces and utilizes numerous labour market indicators that together paint a fairly accurate portrait of how women and men engage in labour markets. It acknowledges the strengths and weaknesses of the available labour statistics and points to some important developments in the statistical community that will improve measures to some degree, allowing us to better capture the concept of labour underutilization and the composition therein (see section 3.2). But in essence, all that the analysis of new measures will do is fine-tune the ability to demonstrate that women are generally disadvantaged, without being able to fully capture what this means for the welfare of half of the human population. Female disadvantages are proven in this report and elsewhere. Adding another indicator to strengthen the case of gender inequality in the world of work is interesting from a research and advocacy point of view,<sup>7</sup> but it still will not address a fundamental shortcoming of analyses built on numbers alone.

When looking at the issue of gender equality, one must broaden the information base. The labour market indicators can showcase the advantages and disadvantages of the two sexes, but will never be able to officially measure, for example:

- The decision-making process that a male or female parent faces regarding employment.
- The full extent of the working day of a parent, incorporating all aspects of child and home care.
- The internal struggle of a man or woman determined to have both career and family.
- The extent of “soft” (or indirect) discrimination and valuation of gender-biased skills as factors in the career advancement of men or women.
- The number of marriage dissolutions driven by disagreement regarding the sharing of household responsibilities.
- The household dynamics of a family when the principal earner loses a job.
- The child welfare consequences of a working, single-parent household.

<sup>7</sup> In fact, the ILO has been tasked in the Conclusions of the ILC gender equality discussion in 2009 to “build the capacity of labour statisticians and improve labour market information systems so as to provide better sex-disaggregated data in areas such as labour market participation rates, childcare and dependant care provisions, by levels of remuneration ...”. Conclusions, op. cit., para. 52, p. 13.

Then once a “new” gender approach based on a broad array of labour market information is built, it must be protected from default during times of economic crisis.

The ILO and its member States have committed to the principle of reducing gender inequality as part of an overall jobs recovery strategy.

All of these are factors in determining gender justice or the consequence of continuing injustices. They qualify as qualitative information made available through alternative sources such as case studies and other social science research tools. It is simply a matter of adding the information into the national framework of labour market analysis and policy-making.

Finally, we need to ensure that the goal of gender justice does not get lost in the face of the current (or any future) economic crisis. This report investigates the gender impact of the crisis in a series of three boxes spread throughout the report. Box 9 summarizes a report based around the very important reminder that gender equality should not be a fair weather policy priority. The report reminds us that: “Although gender equality is widely regarded as a worthwhile goal, it is also seen as having potential costs or even acting as a constraint on economic growth, and while this view may not be evident in official policy it remains implicit in policy decisions. For example, where there is pressure to increase the quantity of work or promote growth, progress towards gender equality may be regarded as something that can be postponed. However, it is possible to make an economic case for gender equality, as an investment, such that it can be regarded as a means to promote growth and employment rather than act as a cost or constraint. As such, equality policies need to be seen in a wider perspective with a potentially greater impact on individuals, firms, regions and nations.”

Within the Global Jobs Pact, a commitment and strategy for “putting quality jobs at the heart of the recovery” unanimously adopted by ILO member States at the International Labour Conference in 2009, one of the “principles for promoting recovery and development” is “promoting core labour standards and other international labour standards that support the economic and jobs recovery and reduce gender inequality”.<sup>8</sup> The commitment is there. Now is the time to refocus attention on redressing some lingering inequalities and to develop innovative gender approaches to employment policy.

---

<sup>8</sup> *Recovering from the crisis: A Global Jobs Pact*, adopted by the International Labour Conference at its 98th Session, Geneva, 19 June 2009.



## Abbreviations

CEE	Central and South-Eastern Europe (non-EU)
EPR	Employment-to-population ratio
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GET	Global Employment Trends
ICLS	International Conference of Labour Statisticians
ILC	International Labour Conference
ISCO	International Standard Classification of Occupations
ISIC	International Standard Industrial Classification (of All Economic Activities)
KILM	Key Indicators of the Labour Market
LFPR	Labour force participation rate
LMI	Labour market information
LMIA	Labour market information and analysis
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
SNA	System of National Accounts



# 1 Introduction

## **The ILO Key Indicators of the Labour Market as a primary tool for gender analysis**

The ILO *Key Indicators of the Labour Market* (KILM) database is a comprehensive collection of labour market information that “can serve as a tool in monitoring and assessing many of the pertinent issues related to the functioning of labour markets”.<sup>9</sup> One such issue is equity in the labour market. The producers of the KILM acknowledge in the “Guide to understanding the KILM” that women face specific challenges in attaining decent work. What we wish to uncover in this report is how well one can paint a realistic portrait of the female labour market today and identify trends over time using the available KILM indicators. Does the KILM offer a wide enough umbrella for measuring the utilization of labour, particularly female labour, and for showcasing the characteristics of labour markets, especially as they differ between men and women? The short answer is yes.

Twelve KILM indicators serve as the barometer from which the analysis of employment trends for women has been built in this report. There are certainly other indicators mentioned throughout the report that could strengthen the analysis, indicators that are “new” and not yet available for a significant number of countries (informal employment, for example; see section 3.3.4) or indicators that are widely available at the country level but are not yet harvested into an ILO database (employment by occupation, for example; see box 8). But such indicators would only add to the strength of the findings highlighted throughout the report and summarized in the following section. Using the available, sex-disaggregated KILM indicators, we are already able to demonstrate how women engage in labour markets and how their unique values and constraints result in an overall portrait of gender inequality in the world of work (as summarized in the executive summary).

This report utilizes the KILM as the main data source but also builds on the numerous analyses of female trends or gender comparisons that currently exist in the six editions of the KILM. Each KILM report, released every two years since 1999, contains a “Trends” section for each of the 20 indicators. It is here that the analyses of the particular indicator are showcased, with figures and text to demonstrate the latest trends and guide KILM users on the interpretation of the data. Annex 1 contains an inventory of all gender-specific figures and accompanying analyses found in the current six editions of the KILM. Readers of this report can use the inventory as a guide to specific types of existing gender analyses – including time trends, correlations between variables, country or regional comparisons, life span (using age disaggregation) and others – and find ideas for areas where they might wish to focus attention for future research.

### **A note on the data**

The KILM is a collection of country-level data. Detailed information concerning its organization and coverage as a collection of labour market indicators for approximately 200 countries, areas and territories can be found in the “Guide to understanding the KILM”, a chapter in each edition since the 4th. One significant challenge of any repository of labour market information is how to flag issues of data comparability. There are systematic differences in the type of data source related to the methodology of collection, definitions, scope of coverage and reference period that impact the interpretation of an indicator from one country to another. Such meta-information is linked to the KILM data as a means of addressing such limitations to comparability. An effort has been made in the examination of country-level data in this report to remove

<sup>9</sup> ILO: *Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM)*, 6th Edition (Geneva, 2009); [www.ilo.org/kilm](http://www.ilo.org/kilm).

non-comparable data, but users are reminded to carefully examine the notes associated with the KILM tables when undertaking their own research.

This report makes use of both country-level data from the KILM but also reports on world and regional estimates that are generated from the ILO Trends Econometric Models. Results of the world and regional estimation process are displayed with brief analyses in the KILM – see boxes 1a, 2b, 3a, 4b, 8b, 9a, 19b and 20a in the 6th Edition – and also serve as the basis for the analyses undertaken in the ILO *Global Employment Trends* (GET) series. The ILO issued *Global Employment Trends for Women* reports in 2004, 2007, 2008 and 2009.<sup>10</sup> This report serves as a hybrid between the two products, combining both the country-level analysis made available in the KILM and the global and regional analysis made available in the *GET for Women*. For detailed information specific to the methodology behind the production of world and regional estimates, readers are invited to review box 3 in the “Guide to understanding the KILM” and the methodological papers made available on the production unit’s website.<sup>11</sup>

A final note concerns the level of technicality used throughout the report. Definitions of the concepts and definitions of the core labour market concepts such as employment, unemployment, etc., are provided throughout the report but technical details are avoided since the emphasis here is more on the interpretation of the indicators than on measurement. Readers who are interested in gaining a better technical understanding of the concepts, definitions and measurement guidelines can consult the “Sources and definitions” section of the corresponding KILM indicator or the ILO Department of Statistics internet page on “Standards and guidelines” for labour statistics.<sup>12</sup> Detailed methodological information about the national sources of these statistics are available from the “Sources and methods” link on the ILO Department of Statistics LABORSTA database.<sup>13</sup>

### Objectives of the report

The majority of KILM indicators are disaggregated by sex so there is scope for examining female engagement in the labour market and comparing male and female outcomes. This report does focus attention on gender comparisons, looking for progress (or the lack thereof) towards the goal of gender equality in the world of work and identifying where and why blockages to equality continue to exist. But the report also aims to familiarize readers with labour market information as a tool for undertaking gender analysis and to identify where information gaps exist that weaken the measurement and characterization of women at work. The main objectives of the report are to:

1. present an up-to-date portrait of women in the world of work, using KILM indicators;
2. present the strengths and weaknesses of available labour market indicators as measures of women’s economic activities;
3. familiarize readers with labour market information as a tool for gender analysis and policy-making; and
4. highlight continuing labour market imbalances as impetus for increased action to promote gender equality in the world of work.

<sup>10</sup> GET reports are available on website: [http://www.ilo.org/empelm/what/lang--en/WCMS\\_114243/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/empelm/what/lang--en/WCMS_114243/index.htm).

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.ilo.org/empelm/what/projects/lang--en/WCMS\\_114246/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/empelm/what/projects/lang--en/WCMS_114246/index.htm). See specifically, ILO: “Trends Econometric Models: A Review of the Methodology”, web-document, Geneva, January 2010; [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/---emp\\_clm/---trends/documents/publication/wcms\\_120382.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_clm/---trends/documents/publication/wcms_120382.pdf).

<sup>12</sup> [http://www.ilo.org/global/What\\_we\\_do/Statistics/standards/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/What_we_do/Statistics/standards/lang--en/index.htm).

<sup>13</sup> ILO Department of Statistics, LABORSTA database on labour statistics is available at: <http://laborsta.ilo.org>.

## Structure of the report

The report is constructed in a linear way, introducing one indicator at a time, in the hopes of demonstrating how each subsequent indicator helps to flesh out the portrait of women in the labour market. But before indicators can be introduced, they should first be placed within the context in which they were developed. We first need to set the scene about what labour market information is and how (and why) it is analysed to address specific topics such as gender. The next section of the report (section 2) does exactly this. It defines labour market information and analysis (LMIA) and the labour force framework from which the indicators are defined.

Section 3 is where the actual analysis of employment trends for women takes place. It is organized around three analytical themes: labour utilization, labour underutilization and female employment: where and how women work. To help readers navigate through the text and pinpoint where specific issues will be addressed, bullets are used to mark the relevant question relating to women in labour markets and the text that responds to it. This framework should demonstrate to readers how it is only through analyses of multiple indicators that one can attain a view broad enough to clearly define a specific labour market topic.

Finally, section 4 presents ten country profiles as a demonstration of how a full picture of the composition and characteristics of the female labour force in one country can emerge in the presentation of the most relevant gender-sensitive KILM indicators. Included as a country profile are: Argentina, Costa Rica, Finland, Ireland, the Netherlands, Spain, Sri Lanka, Thailand, United Arab Emirates and United Republic of Tanzania. Each country offers an interesting case study of female labour market trends.

## Main findings

This section combines the qualitative and quantitative findings of the report and brings in some additional summations of trends in the global and regional data as presented in Annex 2.

### Labour utilization

- The overall picture of the global capacity to tap the productive potential of its people is one in which nearly half (48.4 per cent) of the productive potential of the female population remains unutilized (compared to 22.3 per cent for men). (See table 2a.)
- Between 1980 and 2008, the rate of female labour force participation rate (LFPR) increased from 50.2 to 51.7 per cent while the male rate decreased slightly from 82.0 to 77.7 per cent. As a result, the gender gap in labour force participation rates has narrowed slightly from 32 to 26 percentage points.
- Of all people employed in the world, 40 per cent are women. This share has not changed over the last ten years.
- The share of women above the working age (15 years and over in most countries) who are employed (the employment-to-population ratio) was 48.0 per cent in 2009 compared to a male employment-to-population ratio (EPR) of 72.8 per cent. (See table 2d.) Both male and female ratios decreased slightly over the decade but more so for men. In seven out of nine regions, however, female EPRs increased over the last ten years. The two exceptions were East Asia and South-East Asia & the Pacific. Male ratios, in contrast, saw decreases in seven of the nine regions. Among the youth cohort (aged 15 to 24 years), however, declining EPRs are evident for both sexes in nearly all regions. This is explained by the increased tendency of youth to engage in education.
- In absolute numbers, worldwide there were equal numbers of women and men above the age of 15 years in 2009 (2.5 billion of each), but among these only 1.2 billion women were employed as opposed to 1.8 billion men. (See table 2a.)

- In developed countries a portion of the employment gap can be attributed to the fact that some women freely choose to stay at home because they can afford to not enter the labour market or prefer to tend to the household. Yet in some lesser-developed regions of the world, remaining outside of the labour force is not a choice for the majority of women but an obligation; it is likely that women would opt to work in these regions if it became socially acceptable to do so. This of course does not mean that these women remain at home doing nothing; most are heavily engaged in household activities. Regardless, because most female household work continues to be classified as non-economic activity, the women who are thus occupied are classified as outside of the labour force. More than six in ten women remain economically inactive in three regions: South Asia, the Middle East and North Africa. (See table 2b.)
- Attracting more women into the labour force requires as a first step equal access to education and equal opportunity in gaining the skills necessary to compete in the labour market. More women are gaining access to education, but equality in education is still far from the reality in some regions.
- In addition, broadening access for women to employment in an enlarged scope of industries and occupations will be important to enhancing opportunities for them in the labour market. Society's ability to accept new economic roles for women and the economy's ability to create the jobs to accommodate them are the key prerequisites to improving labour market outcomes for women, as well as for economic development on the whole.

#### Labour underutilization

- Overall, there is not a significant difference between the sexes when it comes to global unemployment rates but the female rate is consistently slightly higher than the male. The female unemployment rate in 2009 was 7.0 per cent compared to the male rate of 6.3 per cent. (See table 2c.) Also at the country level, the majority of countries have higher unemployment rates for females than males (113 countries out of 152) and 30 countries showed female rates that exceeded male rates by more than 5 percentage points.
- Women bear a significantly larger burden of the only currently available measure of underemployment, time-related underemployment, with an overrepresentation in almost all countries with data (55 countries in total).

#### Female employment: Where and how women work

- The move away from vulnerable employment into wage and salaried work can be a major step toward economic freedom and self-determination for many women. Economic independence or at least co-determination in resource distribution within the family is highest when women are in wage and salaried work or are employers, lower when they are own-account workers and lowest when they are contributing family workers. The share of women in wage and salaried work grew during the last ten years from 42.8 per cent in 1999 to 47.3 per cent in 2009 whereas the share of vulnerable employment decreased from 55.9 to 51.2 per cent. (See table 2f.)
- Looking at the gender differences in status in employment, one finds that differences are not large when it comes to shares in wage and salaried work. There are large gender differences in shares of employees by sex but the importance of this status to overall employment is small. The most significant gaps are found in the statuses of own-account workers (favouring men) and contributing family workers (favouring women). Both statuses are sub-categories of "vulnerable employment", as persons less likely to have formal work arrangements, access to benefits or social protection programmes. Thus, they are more at "at risk" to economic cycles and poverty.
- In low-income countries where job creation in the formal sector is a rare phenomenon, there is a strong tendency for both women and men to engage in self-employment activities. Thus, the shares

of persons working in vulnerable employment are high for both sexes, especially in the world's poorest regions, but still higher for women than for men (51.2 per cent for women and 48.2 per cent for men in 2009). (See table 2f.) And even within the category of vulnerable employment, there are welfare consequences associated with the sub-category that dominates – own-account work or unpaid family work. At least own-account workers have the possibility of earning income from their efforts. For women, the larger share (in the vulnerable employment total) in all but three regions was unpaid contributing family work.

- Whereas ten years ago agriculture was the main employer for women, the services sector now provides the majority of female jobs: out of the total number of employed women in 2008, 37.1 per cent worked in agriculture and 46.9 per cent in services. Male sectoral shares in comparison were 33.1 per cent in agriculture and 40.4 per cent in services. (See table 2e.)
- There is a clear segregation of women in sectors that are generally characterized by low pay, long hours and oftentimes informal working arrangements. And even within the sectors where women dominate, it is rarely women who would hold the upper managerial jobs.
- Part-time work continues to be a predominantly female domain (although male part-time employment rates are also increasing in some countries with available information). The high incidences of time-related underemployment for some women tend to lend support to the premise that many women take up part-time work as the only solution to balancing work with family responsibilities. The question remains then, what are the costs to the large number of females working part-time in terms of lower pay, lack of benefits (social security, etc.), representation and voice, and career paths? The Netherlands serve as an interesting case in which the State has intervened to extend elements of social protection and entitlements to part-time workers with the result that women take up part-time employment voluntarily without feeling marginalized as a result of their choice. (See box 10.)
- In many countries the female labour force is generally better educated than the male labour force. At the same time, the data show a much greater tendency for the educated woman, at both the tertiary and secondary levels, to face unemployment than men with the same education level. Yes, women are making great progress in gaining access to education and yes, the trend is for more women to become economically active, but in terms of numbers alone, the balance is still strongly in favour of men.
- Gender wage differentials are firmly present in all occupations and across all skills bases. The occupations showing the lowest differentials are first-level education teaching and general office work, both occupations that are likely to be dominated by females. Even among persons with the highest skills level (university degree), the gender wage differential is still evident. As examples, among countries with available data, male accountants earned up to 33 per cent more than female accountants. Within the mid-skills level (secondary-school level) occupations, the gender wage differential for salespersons in the majority of countries was in the range of 10-30 per cent. Even hotel receptionists and professional nurses – traditionally female occupations – had large wage gaps although there were also more incidences where wages favoured women in these occupations than the others.

### The current economic crisis

- The global female unemployment rate increased from 6.0 per cent in 2007 to 7.0 per cent in 2009, slightly more than the male rate which rose from 5.5 to 6.3 per cent. However, in four of nine regions – Developed Economies & European Union, Central & South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS, East Asia and South-East Asia & the Pacific – the male unemployment rates increased slightly more than the female rates over the same period. In general, neither men nor women were impacted to a greater extent than the other in the current economic crisis, at least in terms of job losses. What seems to have happened is that the initial impact of the crisis hit

the financial, manufacturing and construction sectors hard, the domain of predominantly male workers in developed economies. It was men in these sectors that experienced the first job cuts. But the impact of the crisis has since expanded to other sectors around the world, including service sectors where women are mainly employed and job losses in these sectors are now occurring as well (see box 6 for more information).

- The largest increase in unemployment for women and men – both the rates and nominal values – were in the regions of the Developed Economies & European Union, Central & South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS and Latin America & the Caribbean. Only in one region, the Middle East, did the nominal number of unemployed women increase more than the corresponding increase in male unemployment. As a result, the female unemployment rate increased from 14.4 to 15.0 per cent between 2007 and 2009 while the male rate remained constant at 7.7 per cent.
- The impact of the economic crisis on men and women is strongly influenced by the circumstances of gender job segregation within the country. In some developing countries, for example, many women work in the export-driven manufacturing sector. If downsized, they face stiff competition in finding new work when the supply of female unskilled labour is higher than the demand. They would have little option open to them but to get in a job queue and hope for a quick recovery or take up less desirable, informal employment. The recently unemployed male, on the other hand, would seem to have a wider variety of sectors open to him and might, therefore, stand a better chance of finding work (see box 7 for more information).
- Between 2008 and 2009, female LFPRs showed slight decreases, most likely as a result of the economic crisis in Developed Economies & European Union, Central & South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS, East Asia, South Asia and North Africa. Male rates between the two years declined only in Developed Economies & European Union, Central & South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS and Latin America & the Caribbean.
- Even though the crisis impact on the unemployment of men and women seems to be relatively even, how men and women behave in the face of the crisis is likely to result in gender differentials as economic recovery begins to set in. Analyses of past crises have shown that female job-losers were slower to return to work as economic recovery settled in. One also cannot ignore the risks of an increased marginalization of female labour as they take up part-time and flexible jobs, which dominate the available work opportunities during a recession. Men are less likely to “settle” for such work, but will rather hold out as unemployed until a full-time “real job” becomes available. Many of these part-time female workers will be working shorter hours involuntarily and will therefore qualify as time-related underemployed. The suspicion is that it will be with labour underutilization (as defined in section 3.2) that the real gender impact of the economic crisis will show up (see box 9 for more information).



## 2 Labour market information for gender analysis

### 2.1 A brief introduction to labour market information and analysis (LMIA)

Labour market information (LMI) is exactly what the term implies – any information about the intangible arena where the supply and demand of labour interact. This includes information about how people work or search for work, on the system of education and training, on the school-to-work transition, how enterprises engage workers, return to labour ... the list is infinite. Inevitably there are blockages that prevent a perfect union of labour supply and demand; discrimination, for example, prevents a perfect match, as does imperfect infrastructure that prevents a person from getting to where the jobs are or imperfect information such that the person does not know where to look for work. Identifying and quantifying inefficiencies (and good practices) in the labour market – such as gender equality in the world of work – is the first step in designing employment policies aimed at enhancing the well-being of workers while also promoting economic growth. This broad view of the world of work calls for a comprehensive collection and organization of LMI and, perhaps more importantly, an analytical capacity to understand it.

Labour market information and analysis (LMIA) should be viewed as the cornerstone for developing integrated strategies to promote standards and fundamental principles and rights at work, productive employment, social protection and dialogue, as well as to address the cross-cutting themes of gender and development.

### 2.2 A brief introduction to the labour force framework

There are many sources of labour market information. Common ones include labour force surveys, population censuses, establishment surveys, administrative records and household income and expenditure surveys. Each source comes with its own strengths and limitations. This report is not the proper arena for discussing the details concerning data sources. What does concern this report, however, is the labour market statistics that are tabulated from such sources, specifically the concepts and definitions that drive tabulations; where do they come from and are they realistic when investigating the gender dimensions of the world of work?

The two main concepts that drive any discussion of the world of work are employment and unemployment. Both are defined within the international standard framework for measurement of the labour force (also known as the currently economically active population). The labour force is the sum of the two sub-categories – persons who are working, i.e. the employed, and persons who are not working and want to work, i.e. the unemployed. On the other side of the spectrum are persons outside of the labour force (also known as the economically inactive population). The statistical definitions for measurement of each of these concepts – employment, unemployment and inactivity – are comprehensive and comprehensible, having been set nearly three decades ago within the institution of the International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS).<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Resolution concerning statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment, adopted by the 13th International Conference of Labour Statisticians, Geneva, October 1982; [http://www.ilo.org/global/What\\_we\\_do/Statistics/standards/resolutions/lang--en/docName--WCMS\\_087481/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/What_we_do/Statistics/standards/resolutions/lang--en/docName--WCMS_087481/index.htm).

### Box 1. Measurement and valuation of women's work

The standardized UN System of National Accounts (SNA) is a mechanism developed by economists in 1947 to define what constitutes as market production and certain types of non-market production. In other words, the SNA sets the boundary between economic and non-economic activity and it is upon these boundaries that the measurement of the economically active population is based. The SNA is described as:

*... a coherent, consistent and integrated set of macroeconomic accounts, balance sheets and tables based on a set of internationally agreed concepts, definitions, classifications and accounting rules. It provides a comprehensive accounting framework within which economic data can be compiled and presented in a format that is designed for purposes of economic analysis, decision-making and policy-making.*

There are many critics of the system, however. The SNA excludes unpaid activities such as unpaid domestic activities volunteer community services, which many feel ensures that “certain factors of economic life appear far more important than others. It is a way of counting money, but not human and environmental cost, not unpaid work, not time, and certainly not health and happiness. In particular, it allows women's work to be made invisible and subsequently ignored and deemed unimportant in measures of economic progress”. See box 10 for additional discussion relating to the measurement of unpaid household work.

Source: UN Platform for Action Committee (UNPAC); <http://www.unpac.ca/economy/econmeas.html>.

There are priority rules associated with the labour force framework for sorting the sampled working-age population into the proper sub-category (employed, unemployed, inactive). For the most part, national statistical programmes, where they exist around the world, apply the rules to generate standardized labour market statistics from their surveys.<sup>15</sup> The statistics are then put together to generate labour market indicators and it is the indicators that are analysed and used to inform the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of employment policies and programmes. A country that engages in an employment or development strategy specific to women will certainly benefit from the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated labour market information in order to develop and monitor the strategy and its specific policies and programmes.

The majority of the labour market indicators discussed in this report is a derivation of total employment or unemployment as set out in the labour force framework. The international standards for measurement are not without their critics, however. The strengths and weaknesses of the concepts will be discussed in the relevant sections throughout the report. Specifically, the report will summarize a long-standing debate on whether or not the international standards for measurement of labour market statistics are particularly narrow when it comes to measuring the labour utilization of women.

<sup>15</sup> Exceptions in the application of the international standard definitions are common and represent a big challenge to producers of compilations of statistics such as the KILM; see the “International comparability” in the “Guide to understanding the KILM” and in each KILM indicator manuscript for more information.

## 3 Analysing the female labour market

### 3.1 Labour utilization

#### 3.1.1 Introduction

There are certain indicators that aim to measure the capacity of an economy to utilize the productive potential of its available human resources. In looking at the gender dimensions of labour force utilization, the values and movements of the indicators will be analysed to address the following questions in this section:

- What is the capacity of the economy to utilize female labour in comparison to male labour?
- What is the historical picture of female labour force participation and where do we see the biggest changes over time?
- What are the main factors that drive change in female LFPR?
- What is the correlation between female LFPR and the level of development in the country?
- What are the patterns of LFPRs over the life-span of a woman and what is the influence of childbearing?
- What is the overall effect when youth and adult employment trends move in opposite directions?
- Which regions show the biggest increases in female EPRs?

#### 3.1.2 Measuring labour utilization: The indicators

The labour market concepts used to construct the indicators in this section are those set out within the labour force framework mentioned in section 2.2. The framework sets the current international standard for measurement of the labour force and its sub-components. As stated in the introduction, the details of the technical definitions can be found elsewhere<sup>16</sup> and are not repeated here except where needed to clarify the discussion of the interpretation of the indicators and their limitations.

A person in the **labour force** is somehow engaged in economic activity – either working or looking for work (the labour force is the sum of employment and unemployment). As a concept, the labour force has come to represent the productive potential of the people in an economy, with the segment that is **employed** representing utilized labour and the segment that is **unemployed** representing the underutilized labour. The inverse is a person who is **inactive** (or outside of the labour force), a person who neither works nor looks for work. The **labour force participation rate** (labour force as a percentage of the working-age population) then represents the share of productive potential in the working-age population (i.e. the share of the population that could be tapped for economic engagement). Table 1 summarizes the indicators and their components in relation to the topic of labour utilization.

<sup>16</sup> Interested readers are directed to benefit from the “Definitions and sources” sections of the indicator manuscripts within the KILM or, if even greater technical details are desired, to make use of an invaluable resource for labour statisticians and technical specialists interested in survey design: R. Hussmanns, F. Mehran and V. Verma: *Surveys of economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment: An ILO manual on concepts and methods* (ILO, Geneva, 1990).

TABLE 1.

**Components of labour utilization: “Classic” labour force framework**

Indicator/component	Definition	General interpretation (“what does it indicate?”)	But ...
Labour force	Sum of persons who are employed or unemployed	The current productive potential of an economy	See Employed and Unemployed
Inactive	Sum of persons who are neither employed nor unemployed	The population that does not engage in economic activity (non-utilized)	... also includes some underutilized labour (discouraged workers and others), i.e. some elements of “productive potential”
Employed	Persons who worked (for self or for pay) for at least one hour during the reference period	Utilized labour	... also includes some underutilized labour, if considering employment characteristics such as short hours, low earnings or skills mismatch (underemployment and persons in inadequate employment situations) and the category of “with a job but not at work”
Unemployed	Persons who did not work, are available to work and actively sought work during the reference period	Underutilized labour	... narrow definition excludes some underutilized labour (discouraged workers and others counted among the inactive)
Labour force participation rate	Labour force / working-age population * 100	The relative size of an economy’s current productive potential	... but slightly deflated by exclusion of some underutilized labour (discouraged workers and others counted among the inactive)
Inactivity rate	Inactive / working-age population * 100	The relative size of an economy’s non-productive potential	... but slightly inflated by inclusion of some underutilized labour (discouraged workers and others)
Employment-to-population ratio	Employed / working-age population * 100	The share of utilized labour in an economy	... but slightly inflated by inclusion of some underutilized labour (e.g. the underemployed)
Unemployment rate	Unemployed / labour force * 100	The relative size of underutilized labour in the productive potential of an economy	... but can be too narrow since other elements of underutilization also exist among the employed and inactive

### 3.1.3 Utilization of female labour: The trends

#### **INDICATOR 1:**

*DISTRIBUTION OF THE WORKING-AGE POPULATION BY MAIN ACTIVITY STATUS<sup>17</sup>*

Figures 1 and 2 show the distribution of the female and male working-age populations (above the age of 15 years) by main economic status (inactive, employed or unemployed) using global and regional estimates.<sup>18</sup> The gender differences are immediately evident in the pie charts that represent the global working-age populations. The overall picture of the global capacity to tap the productive potential of its people is one in which nearly half (48.4 per cent) of the productive potential of the female population remains untapped (compared to 22.3 per cent for men). One cannot help but wonder how much could be added to global economic growth if the share of the active female population was seen to increase by even 5 percentage points over the next five years. Certainly some regions are doing better than others when it comes to female economic utilization. In the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia more than six in ten women of working age remain outside of the labour force. Giving women a chance to contribute to the economic welfare of themselves and their families through labour force engagement has been proven to bring gains in nearly all areas of development, as stated in the executive summary. It is certainly a first step in building a society based on the concept of gender justice.

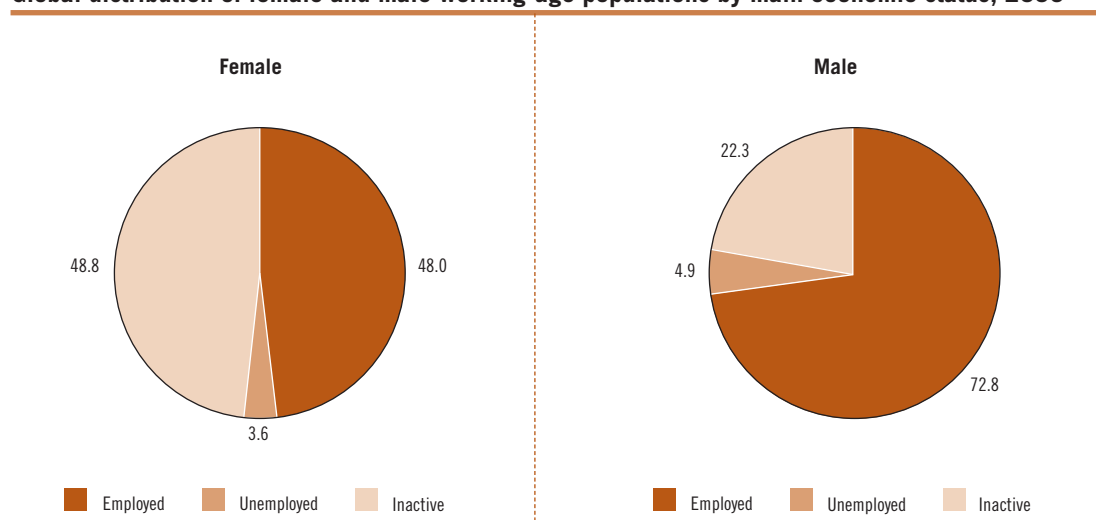
#### **INDICATOR 2:**

*LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE (LFPR) (KILM 1)*

As stated in the section introduction, the labour force participation rate is a measure of the proportion of a country's working-age population that engages actively in the labour market, either by working or looking for work. Its value as an indicator is to provide an overall indication of the available supply of labour or, as stated in table 1, the relative size of a country's productive

FIGURE 1.

#### **Global distribution of female and male working-age populations by main economic status, 2009**



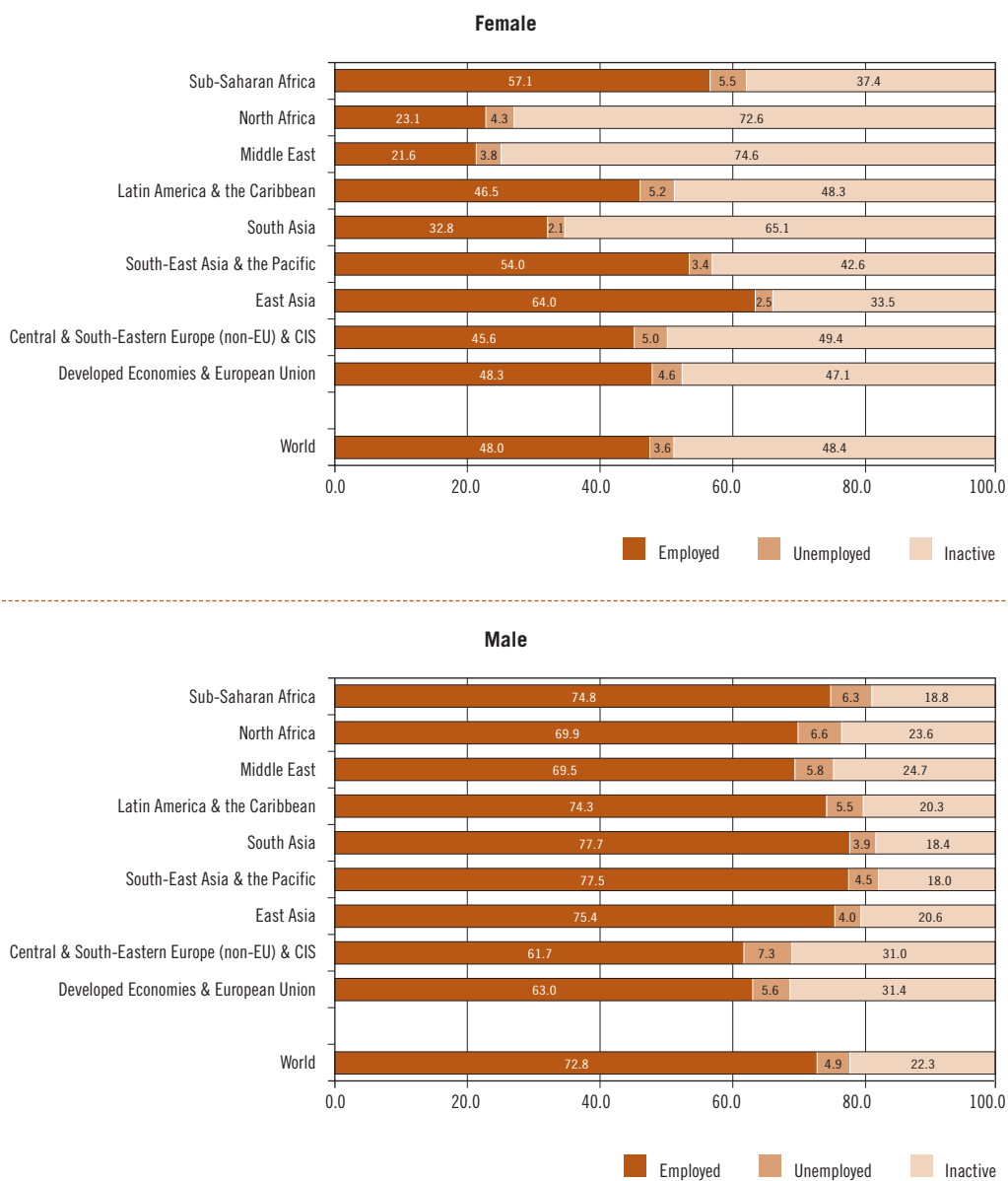
Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, November 2009.

<sup>17</sup> While not a measure within the KILM, this indicator is built on components that are available in the KILM – specifically, the raw numbers of persons employed, unemployed and inactive – and is included here because it serves as a useful means for visualizing the gender differences in the labour markets.

<sup>18</sup> See “A note on the data” in the introduction for information on the source of global and regional estimates used throughout this report.

FIGURE 2.

**Regional distribution of female and male working-age populations by main economic status, 2009**



Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, November 2009.

potential. From a gender perspective, the measure is interesting for: (1) assessing the access to labour markets for females in comparison to males; (2) determining historical trends and its drivers; and (3) analysing the life-span pattern of female participation. Each item will be dealt with in turn in the following subsections.

The regional bar charts in figure 2 show in which areas of the world the productive capacity of females is most likely to be tapped. The labour force participation rate is represented in the distribution charts above as the sum of the shares in employment and unemployment. In descending order of highest shares of economically active women (and lowest shares of inactive women) in 2009, the list of regions is: East Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, South-East Asia & the Pacific, Developed

Economies & European Union, Latin America & the Caribbean, Central & South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS, South Asia, North Africa and the Middle East. One should remember, however, that even the regional averages will mask some important country variations within the same region, hence, the importance of looking at the country-level data before making any final assessments. Looking at the country data, one would find that in South Asia, for example, the range of female labour force participation rate (LFPR) extends between 63.2 and 21.2 per cent in Nepal and Pakistan, respectively, while the regional figure was 35.1 per cent (see also figure 3 below).

It is also important to remember that labour force participation is the sum of unemployed persons and employed persons and that the latter can be found at any point on the spectrum between non-decent and non-productive and decent and productive work. The interpretive value of an increased supply of female labour is significantly weakened when additional indicators show the increase to be driven by gains in unemployment and low-paid, non-standard and precarious work. As we progress through this report we will find that, in many cases, the general increase in female participation in countries has gone hand in hand with increases in the proportion of females in part-time work, other non-traditional forms of work, underemployment and unemployment. The dynamics at work within the labour force are masked if looking at labour force participation rates alone. It is an important indicator for framing the size of the female labour potential, in particular in comparison to that of men, but it does not provide a comprehensive picture of whether there have been gains in female well-being.

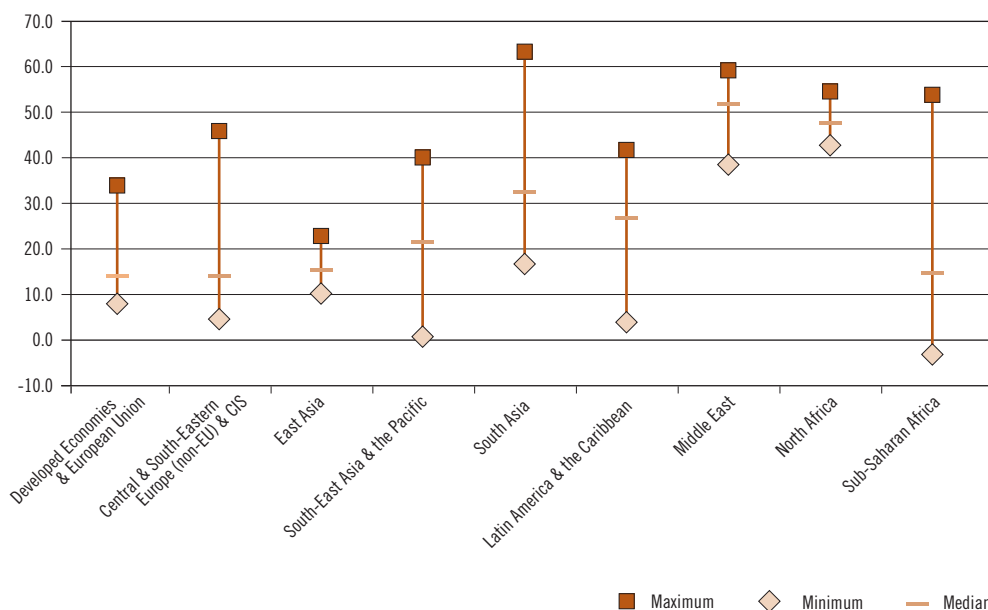
### Gender gaps

- What is the capacity of the economy to utilize female labour in comparison to male labour?

Figure 3 illustrates the wide gender disparity in labour force participation rates, with patterns differing significantly around the world and from country to country. The regions where the

FIGURE 3.

### Male-female gaps (percentage points) in labour force participation rates, regional minimum, maximum and median, 2008



Source: KILM 6th Edition, table 1a.

median gender differences were highest were already identified with the previous indicator (the median gaps in the Middle East and North Africa are far above those of other regions) but here one can also see the distribution of results within the regions. We see that not only do the regions of the Middle East and North Africa have the highest male-to-female participation differentials at the median level, but also that there were no big country outliers within the regions. The gaps were sizable (above 38 percentage points) in all countries in the regions. In Sub-Saharan Africa, on the other hand, the median differential was much lower at 14.7 percentage points but there was a significant number of countries with gaps higher than that. The highest gap in the region (53.8 percentage points at Equatorial Guinea) was even on par with countries in the Middle East and North Africa. On the other hand, there was at least one country where the female LFPR exceeded that of the corresponding male rate, hence the minimum of the distribution of the gaps in the region is below zero.<sup>19</sup>

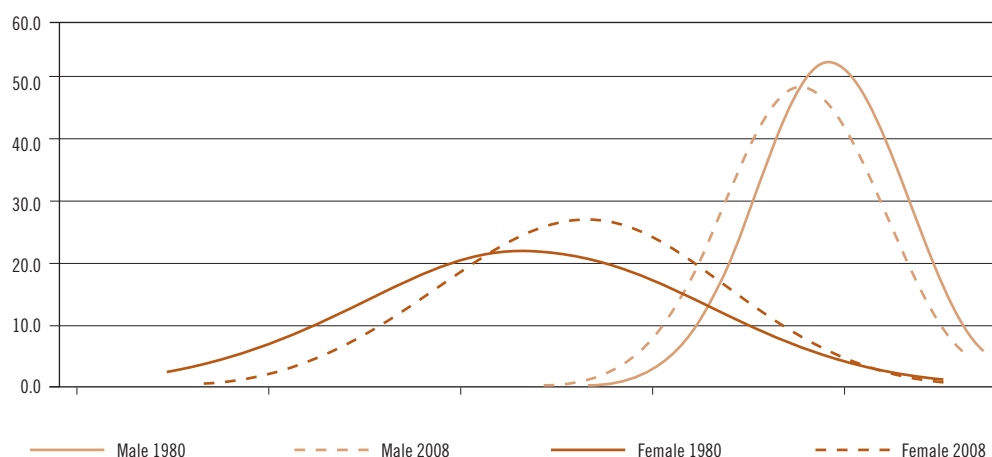
### Historical view

- What is the historical picture of female labour force participation and where do we see the biggest changes over time?

The KILM data start in 1980 so we are able to look at the longer-term patterns in female LFPRs in the period 1980-2008. The global female LFPR grew in the 1980s from a starting point of 50.2 per cent, reached 52.2 per cent in 1990, but then declined between 1990 and 2008 to settle at 51.7 per cent.<sup>20</sup> In general, there has been a convergence toward a median of female LFPR for all countries with available data, meaning a narrowing of the curve with fewer countries represented at the extremes. Figure 4 shows that in 2008 there was less variation among the

FIGURE 4.

### Normal distribution of female and male labour force participation rates across 189 countries, 1980 and 2008



Source: KILM 6th Edition, table 1a.

<sup>19</sup> For a full regional-level trend analysis, readers are referred to the March 2008 edition of the ILO: *Global Employment Trends for Women* (ILO, Geneva).

<sup>20</sup> Because global estimates from the ILO Trends Econometric Models are available only from 1991, the estimation process used here was a simple average of the summed labour force estimates of the 189 countries with data in KILM table 1a divided by the summed working-age population (15+) from the same table.



countries of the world (a steeper curve) as females in countries where participation had been blocked for whatever reason began to engage in economic activity and females in countries where economic participation was high in 1980, whether driven by poverty and a lack of access to education or the command economy, were provided with alternatives that lowered their labour force participation.

Over the same long term period (1980-2008), the global male LFPRs decreased from 82.0 per cent in 1980 to 77.7 per cent in 2008, mainly as a result of decreasing participation of male youth (15-24 years) who are staying longer in education. Figure 4 shows graphically the tendency of male LFPRs to decrease. The result: gender differentials in labour force participation rates have decreased over time to “only” 26 percentage points (in 2008), versus nearly 32 percentage points in 1980. Still, as was noted in the previous sub-section on gender gaps, many countries have a long way to go in approaching even this level of difference. In these countries, where women continue to lack the freedom to make basic choices such as how to contribute economically to the household, more needs to be done in the international community to advocate for change.

The country results of the historical trends in female LFPR are summarized as follows:

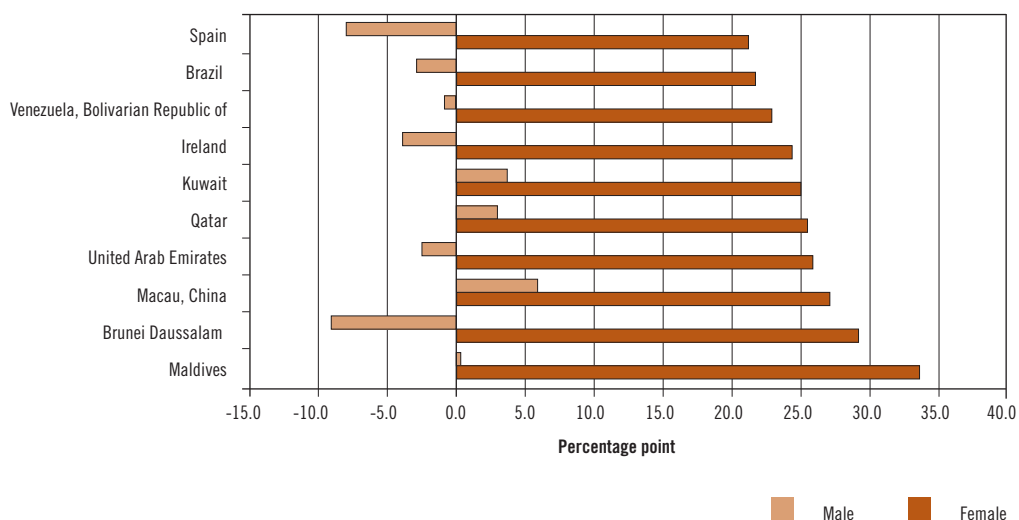
- 10 countries showed an increase in female LFPR of over 20 percentage points (medians: 1980, 28.0 per cent; 2008, 52.3 per cent);
- 48 countries showed an increase in female LFPR of 10-20 percentage points (medians: 1980, 34.4 per cent; 2008, 50.5 per cent);
- 78 countries showed a 0-10 percentage point increase in female LFPR (medians: 1980, 50.1 per cent; 2008, 56.0 per cent);
- 47 countries showed a decrease in female LFPR of 0-10 percentage points (medians: 1980, 59.7 per cent; 2008, 55.5 per cent); and
- 6 countries showed a decrease in female LFPR of over 10 percentage points (medians: 1980, 61.9 per cent; 2008, 50.4 per cent).

By rating countries according to the largest increase over time rather than according to the size of the gender gap or level of participation, we get a slightly different insight into the different factors at play, and can take a different approach to identifying the forces that contribute to increases in economic activity for women. Clearly these countries have very different starting points but, nevertheless, it is revealing to identify where the biggest changes are taking place in order to assess what dynamics are operating.

Figure 5 shows the ten countries with a change in female labour force participation of over 20 percentage points and the corresponding changes for men. The countries that achieved the largest increases in the labour force participation of women tended to start from very low levels (between 15.9 (United Arab Emirates) and 38.3 per cent (Macau, China) at a time when the world median was 47.0 per cent), showing a clear bottom-up trend. The median of the ten countries shifted from 28.0 to 52.3 per cent over the period, putting it very close to the median of all countries with data in 2008 (53.6 per cent). By 2008, it was only the Middle Eastern countries of Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates where the participation rates of women remained more than 5 percentage points below the median. Five of the countries ended with female LFPRs that were above the world median (Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Ireland, Macau (China) and Maldives). Ireland, Spain and the United Arab Emirates are all featured as “country profiles” in section 4.

The countries that have shown the biggest changes in female LFPR are fairly well represented across the different regions, suggesting some very different dynamics at work. One can list the generic factors that drive female labour force participation (see the list that follows) but, in order to determine the correct mix and strengths of determinant at the country level, a

FIGURE 5.

**Change in labour force participation rates, by sex, 1980 to 2008 (percentage points)**


Source: KILM 6th Edition, table 1a.

detailed investigation of country data, both qualitative and quantitative, is called for. The country profiles offered in section 4 can serve as a good starting point for the more detailed country-level analysis.

■ What are the main factors that drive change in female LFPRs?

The following is a list of some key determinants of female labour force participation (many of which will be examined in other areas of the report):

- Religious, cultural and social norms;
- Access to education;
- Income level;
- Fertility;
- Institutions (legal framework, enterprises, labour unions, etc.);
- Sectoral base of the economy (agricultural, industrial or service-based);
- Political regimes;
- Wars and conflicts.

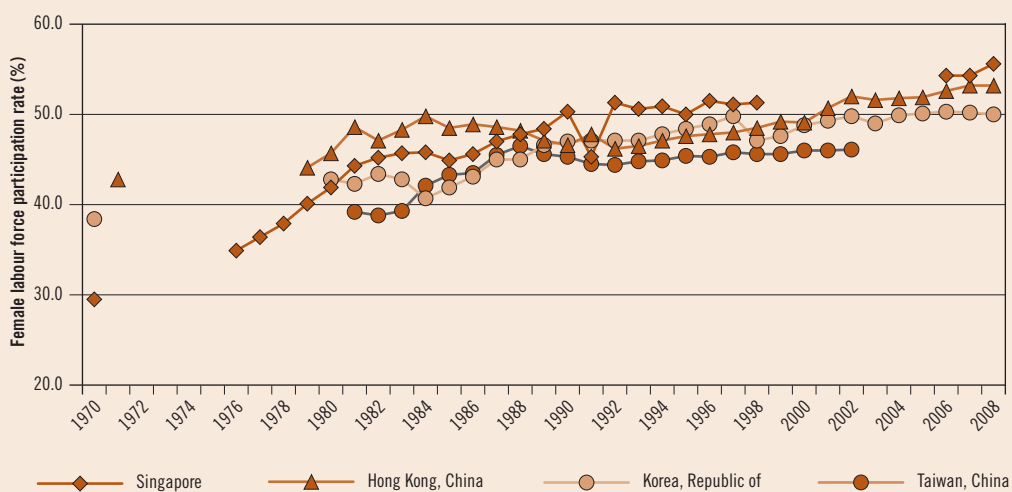
There does seem to be an especially high proportion of Latin American & the Caribbean countries among the 30 countries with the largest increases (ten of the 30: Belize, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Panama, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela), so a study of the factors driving change in this region particularly would be a worthy undertaking. One of these countries – Argentina – is examined in detail in a country profile. The overall pattern and structure of the emerging female labour force in Argentina showed an increase in part-time work, a strong gender division by sector and a better-educated female workforce. From a developmental point of view, these countries seem to be following a similar pattern as some of the developed economies ten to 20 years earlier, suggesting that the female labour force – its size, composition and characteristics – might follow some sort of continuum in parallel to that which defines economic development.

### Box 2. Female labour utilization and rapid economic growth: The Asian Tiger story

The newly industrializing countries – Hong Kong (China), Republic of Korea, Singapore and Taiwan (China) – have been heavily studied by economists and exemplified as remarkable cases of rapid and prolonged industrialization between the early 1960s and 1990s. Explaining the Asian “miracles” is a complex business, with numerous factors contributing to the boom in manufacturing output and exports. What is of interest for this report is the rapid growth in female LFPR that took place in all four countries. The figure below reflects the notable increases in female participation in all the countries, increases that were well above the general trends. Over the period 1970-2008, the rate in Singapore increased by 26 percentage points. In the other three countries, the increases were not as high but were also impressive at approximately 10 percentage points.

Growth in these countries can largely be explained by mobilization of resources, meaning growth in inputs such as labour and capital, rather than by gains in efficiency.<sup>1</sup> The educational standards as well as the investments in physical capital were dramatically improved. These economies had high levels of female educational attainment compared to other developing economies, which contributed to their eventual dominance in the export of electronic products.<sup>2</sup> Women were the preferred workers for the light, labour-intensive manufacturing production. Certainly one of the strongest elements of growth in the economies was the reliance on low-wage female labour. Some researchers claim that gender inequality was a fundamental component of export-oriented economic growth for the Asian Tigers.<sup>3</sup> In short, the Asian Tigers story was one in which significant progress was made in tapping female labour and this fed strong economic growth, but it would be hard to say that women were really better off given the inequality of wages and working conditions.

#### Female LFPRs in Hong Kong (China), Republic of Korea, Singapore and Taiwan (China), 1970 to 2008



Source: KILM 6th Edition, table 1a (1980+) and ILO LABORSTA database; <http://laborsta.ilo.org> (1970-79).

<sup>1</sup> P. Krugman: “The Myth of Asia’s Miracle”, in *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 73, No. 6, 1994.

<sup>2</sup> S. Joekes: *Trade-Related Employment for Women in Industry and Services in Developing Countries*, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (Geneva, 1995).

<sup>3</sup> B.H. Mitra-Kahn and T. Mitra-Kahn: “Gender wage gaps and growth: What goes up must come down”; <http://www.feministeconomics.org/idg/Mitrahahn.pdf>.

**Box 3. Religious, cultural and social norms**

It is interesting here to note that there is a widely-held belief that women's labour force participation is greatly influenced by religious and cultural norms. A nice overview is presented in *The Global Employment Challenge* (p. 16), which argues that evidence in fact suggests that the level of economic development and social rather than religious norms are equally relevant as determinants of female LFPR. There is no doubt that religion plays an important role, but it is important to remember that there are also other powerful forces at work.

Source: A.K. Ghose, N. Majid and C. Ernst: *The Global Employment Challenge* (Geneva, ILO, 2008).

There are also countries which have seen decreased female labour force participation. Those which had decreased participation of more than 10 percentage points were central and eastern European countries (the Sub-Saharan African country of Malawi was the only exception). Here the political-economic reasons are clear; with the dismantling of the guaranteed job and child-care systems under the command economy, the labour market became a much more competitive place and many women had no choice but to forgo a job search in order to take care of the household. Some other countries with decreases over the period started from very high rates of participation – high enough to indicate a situation in which all able bodies were engaged in economic activity as a fight against poverty. One can assume that some countries such as Thailand and Viet Nam experienced sufficient economic growth and poverty reduction over the period to allow some women the option to withdraw from economic activity. At the same time, there has been significant improvement in access to education in both countries so that many young women began to postpone work to stay in education. The country profile for Thailand in section 4 supports the proposal that the decrease was clearly driven by youth.

***The income connection***

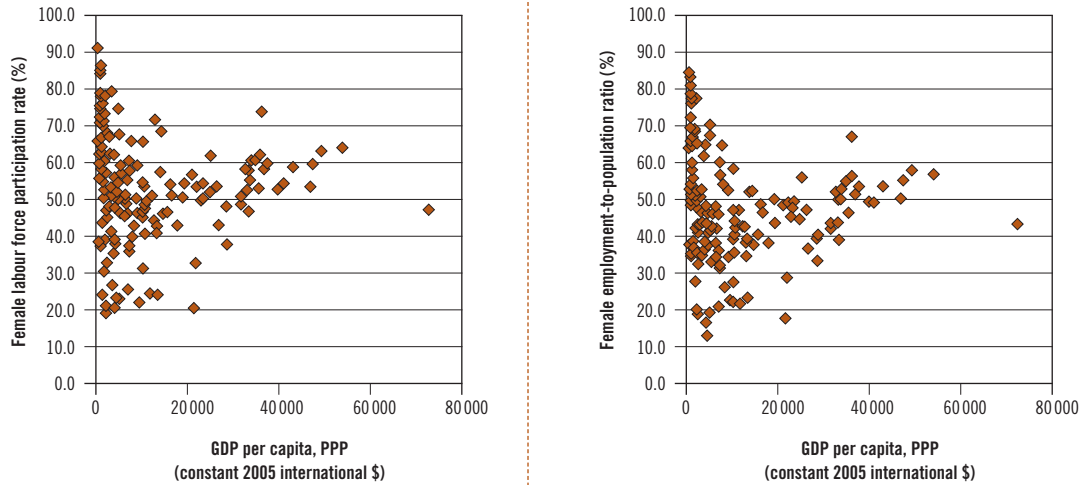
- What is the correlation between female LFPR and the level of development in the country?

From a gender perspective, caution should be exercised in the interpretation of increasing LFPR, as there is a tendency to overestimate the positive nature of the trends. High or increasing labour force participation rates among women can be a reflection of growing levels of poverty in a country. As explained in the KILM, “Labour force participation rates tend to be highest in the poorest countries, where only a small proportion of the working-age population, including women and youth, can afford to remain outside of the labour force.”<sup>21</sup> And following the same logic, in low-income countries and regions, nearly all persons in the labour force are working rather than unemployed. Large shares of the population work but remain poor, a phenomenon known as working poverty and a topic for discussion in box 5.

The correlation between income level, labour force participation and employment are confirmed in figure 6. A trend line on the two charts would show a slightly u-shaped pattern, revealing how LFPR is generally higher at the early stages of development (although there is a great deal of variety in rates among the poorer countries), possibly reflecting the existence of large, labour-intensive agriculture sectors and the existence of large shares of working poor in these countries. As gross domestic product (GDP) per capita increases, the LFPR of both

<sup>21</sup> KILM 6th Edition, op. cit., KILM 1 manuscript, “Trends” section, p. 79.

FIGURE 6.

**The relationship between income (GDP per capita) and female LFPR and EPR, 2007**

Source: KILM 6th Edition, table 1a and appendix table A1.

men and women seems to initially decline, then levels off at the mid-level of development. The probable reason for the initial decline is the fact that, with economic growth, more children and youth attend school on a regular basis so that fewer of them are available for economic activity during periods of education. At the higher end of economic development, there is then a slight tapering off of economic participation.

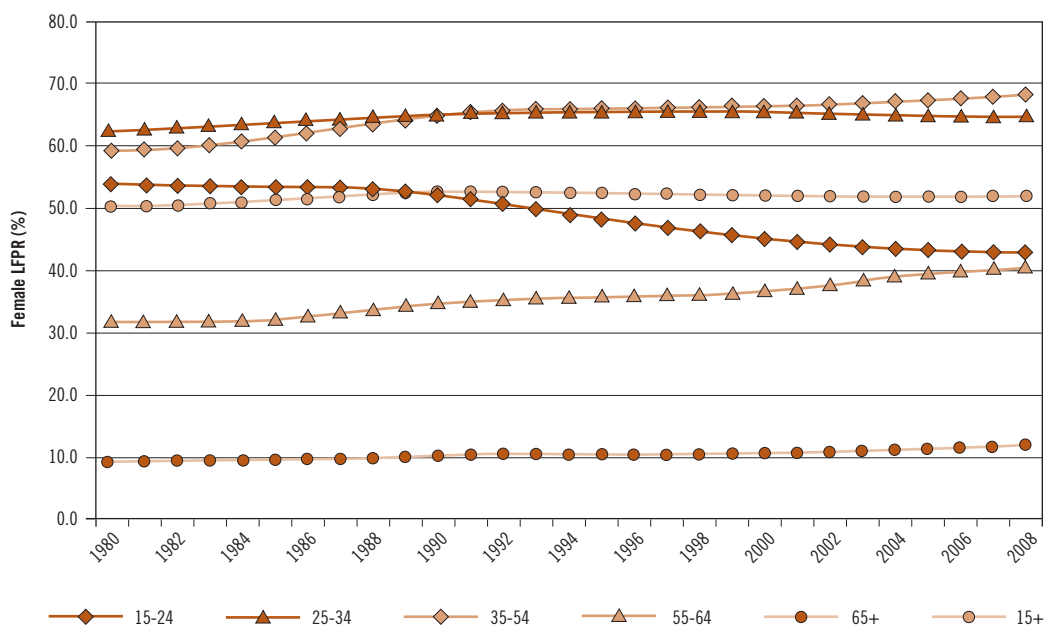
**LFPR by life-span**

- What are the patterns of LFPRs over the life-span of a woman and what is the influence of childbearing?

As stated above (“the historical view”), the global female LFPR grew in the 1980s from a starting point of 50.2 per cent, reached 52.2 per cent in 1990, but then declined between 1990 and 2008 to settle at 51.7 per cent in that period. Looking at the data disaggregated by age, it can be seen that the decline in the total female LFPR is entirely driven by the decline in the participation of youth, aged 15 to 24 years. The strong decrease in economic engagement among youth is largely a positive trend since it suggests that many more youth now have the choice to stay in education rather than enter the labour market. The ILO’s *Global Employment Trends for Youth, October 2008* focused specifically on the relationship between declining youth participation rates and increased school enrolment, and found the two to be strongly negatively correlated in all regions of the world. It is instructive to also look at the labour force by educational attainment indicator (KILM 14). In general, there have been great gains in the area of female education, to the point that in some countries there are now higher shares of female labour force participants holding higher education degrees than male. Whether the education gains are leading to greater equity at the workplace and a better situation for women in general is a matter for discussion within section 3.3.6.

At the global level at least (remember the importance of also focusing analysis at the country level in order to determine national trends), female LFPRs have been increasing for all age groups except youth (aged 15-24 years). Since 2000, there seems to be an increasing tendency among older women to engage in labour market activities. In general, we expect labour force

FIGURE 7.

**Global female labour force participation rate by age band, 1980 to 2008**


Note: Global figures are the sum of available country-level labour force data weighted by the summed working-age populations of the same countries.

Source: Authors' calculation based on KILM 6th Edition, table 1a.

participation to be highest for both men and women during the “prime age” band of 25 to 54 years, and this is supported in figure 7. Women in the age bands of 25 to 34 years and 35 to 54 years were approximately 1.5 times more likely to participate in the labour force than women between 55 and 64 years in 2008.

It is interesting to see the pattern of female participation during the core child-bearing years (25-34 years) and in the years that follow (35-54 years). In the 1980s, there was slightly higher participation among the younger age band than the older but the pattern reversed around 1991 when women in the older age group became more likely to be economically active than the younger. The trend implies that a woman who might have fallen out of the labour force after having children in order to tend to the household – and the tendency seems to be stronger among women in the 35-54 age band than the 25-34 when families might not yet be established – re-entered the labour force after a certain point in time, perhaps when the children reached school age. For a full discussion of the influence of children on female labour force participation, readers are encouraged to review the KILM 3rd Edition.<sup>22</sup>

**INDICATOR 3:**
**EMPLOYMENT-TO-POPULATION RATIO (EPR) (KILM 2)**

If the labour force represents the share of the working-age population that could be tapped for economic activity, the employment-to-population ratio represents the share of the same that actually *is* tapped, i.e. the share of utilized labour. The indicator in itself says nothing to the

<sup>22</sup> ILO: *Key Indicators of the Labour Market, 3rd Edition* (Geneva, 2003), Chapter 1, section B, “Female labour force participation rate and fertility”.

type, quality or volume of the work involved, which weakens attempts to make valuations of trends over time, but this weakness can be overcome by adding depth to a labour market analysis with additional employment indicators (such as employment by sector (KILM 4), status in employment (KILM 3) and others discussed in section 3.3).

The main ways in which we can view gender disparity in employment are (1) in terms of opportunities to take up work and (2) in terms of quality of employment.<sup>23</sup> With employment increases among women, at least among adult women, there is a tendency to overestimate the “gains” (as with female LFPR, see discussion above) in terms of opportunities, ignoring what this means in terms of the quality of employment and the equity element. More women are given (or take up) an opportunity to work but oftentimes it is in non-standard forms of work (see box 4). To overstate the gains in female employment is to ignore the difference in the composition of male and female employment. As we continue through this report, adding bit by bit the full range of employment indicators, it will become clear that the portraits of female and male employment are vastly different when it comes to elements of quality of employment, and it is generally the women who fare worse.

■ What is the overall effect when youth and adult employment trends move in opposite directions?

The story regarding female EPRs is similar to that of the LFPR. Ratios have generally increased over time but remain at levels well below those of men. The share of women above the working age (15+) who are employed was 48.0 per cent in 2009 compared to a male EPR of 72.8 per cent. (See table 2d.) Both female and male ratios decreased slightly between 1999 and 2009 but more so for men. The patterns differ significantly by regions and across age groups, with the EPRs of young people decreasing significantly for both sexes as more youth engage in education as an alternative to working<sup>24</sup> (see figure 8). In many countries, EPRs among female youth are decreasing while those of adults are increasing. There are exceptions (decreases among both youth and adults in East Asia, slight decrease among adults in South-East Asia & the Pacific, slight increase among youth in the Middle East and Sub-Saharan Africa) but for the most part, the two age cohorts behave in opposing manners, thus reminding us of the need to disaggregate indicators by age and to look carefully for diverging trends when conducting a labour market analysis.

■ Which regions show the biggest increases in female EPRs?

The regional patterns of female EPR and the male-female gaps in employment will look familiar since they follow closely those of the LFPR. This makes sense given that it is employment that makes up the largest share of the labour force (see figure 1). Figure 9 shows the time trend 1991 to 2008 and the same kind of convergence to a median level that was discussed above in regards to the female LFPR. The biggest increases in female EPRs were seen in Latin American & the Caribbean, the Middle East and Africa. East Asia and South-East Asia & the Pacific showed decreases and the remaining regions showed little significant change. The factors that influence female EPRs are the same as those listed above in relation to the female LFPR. The influence of religious, cultural and social traditions is certainly one of the strongest factors behind female EPR trends (see box 3). Some of the other determinants, including reproductive choices, poverty and access to education were discussed in some detail above in connection to the LFPR, but it is worth repeating here that there are competing factors at play that can obscure the overall trends of female EPRs.

<sup>23</sup> A.K. Ghose, N. Majid and C. Ernst: *The Global Employment Challenge* (Geneva, ILO, 2008).

<sup>24</sup> See ILO: *Global Employment Trends for Youth, October 2008* (Geneva, 2008); [http://www.ilo.org/empelm/what/pubs/lang--en/docName--WCMS\\_112573/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/empelm/what/pubs/lang--en/docName--WCMS_112573/index.htm); and KILM 6th Edition, op. cit., KILM 2 manuscript, “Trends” section, pp. 118-120.

#### **Box 4. Non-standard forms of work**

Recent decades have seen a growing trend towards non-standard forms of work, with more part-time and temporary employment in developed economies and more informal employment in developing countries. Even formal work is becoming increasingly precarious with many enterprises relying on a labour force dominated by workers in atypical relationships (flexible, temporary, contract or home-based). There is a clear link between these less standard forms of work and income inequality, but to what extent is the growing prevalence of non-standard forms of work a reflection of choice or constraint? Since many of these jobs are held by females, one might assume that the “new” working arrangements provide a means of reconciling work and family responsibilities, at least in developed economies where the economic need is less desperate and females are more willing or able to accept the cost.

The following summarizes some of the trends over time with regards to non-standard forms of work:

##### **Part-time employment**

There has been a big increase in part-time employment in developed economies over the last 20 years, with shares much higher for women than men (see section 3.3.5 for more information).

##### **The informal economy**

Informal and formal work should not be understood as dichotomous, but as intimately linked and frequently overlapping. The ILC 2009 report on *Gender equality at the heart of decent work* noted that informal and formal work exists along a continuum, with informal work lying outside the regulatory framework. The informal economy includes both own-account workers and wage workers and cuts across all sectors. The informal sector has generally higher shares of females, although the lack of regular statistics on the topic makes it difficult to judge definitively (see section 3.3.4 for more information).

##### **Home work**

Home-based work can be a voluntary choice in developed countries. However, it is often a survival strategy in developing countries. Women engage in home work out of economic need and are forced to cope with the accompanying long hours, poor pay, limited access to social protection and associated safety and health problems. With globalization, home work is increasing, especially among women.

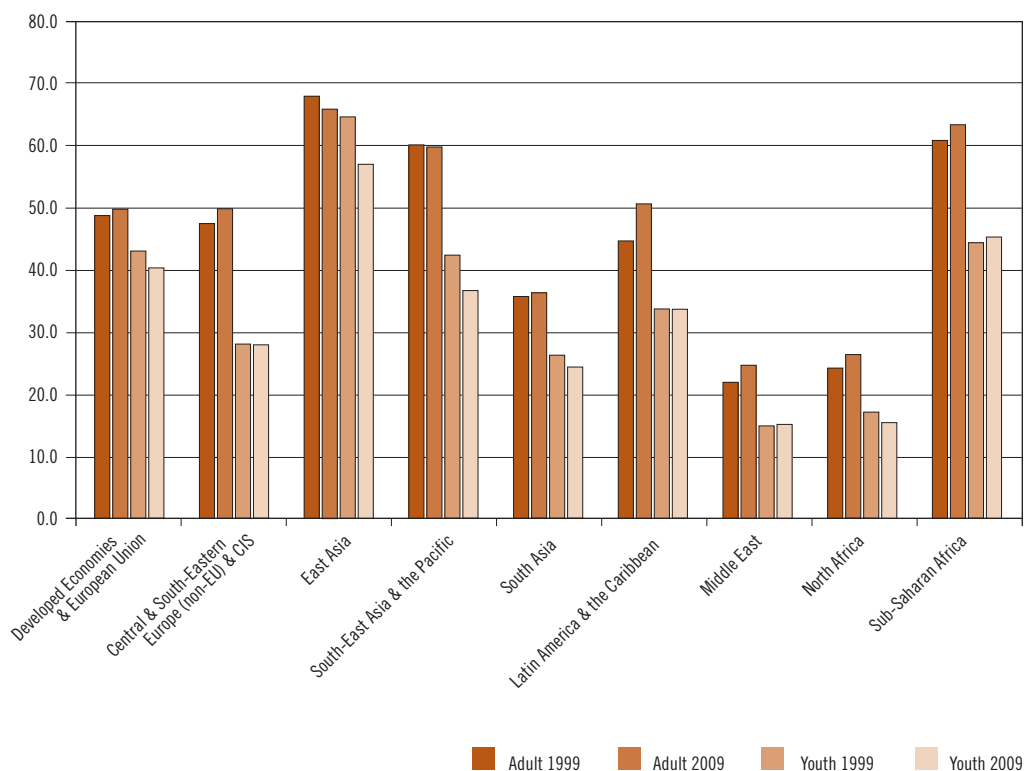
Source: ILO: *Gender equality at the heart of decent work*, Report VI, International Labour Conference, 98th Session, Geneva, June 2009, pp. 111-117.

#### **Country outliers**

When looking at the regional numbers, the biggest male-female EPR gaps are seen in the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia (see table 2d in Annex 2). There are, however, some interesting cases found in the country-level data where the trends regarding female EPRs do not conform to the regional patterns. In East Asia, for example, the trend of decreasing female EPR is clearly driven by China, whereas all other economies in the region showed an increase over time (for example, Hong Kong, China, from 46.3 to 50.0 per cent over the period 1991 to 2008). Two countries whose female EPRs moved contrary to the regional trends are Sri Lanka in South Asia and the United Republic of Tanzania in Sub-Saharan Africa. These two countries were selected for profiling in section 4 in order to investigate the national circumstances there.



FIGURE 8.

**Youth and adult female EPR, by region, 1999 and 2009**

Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, November 2009.

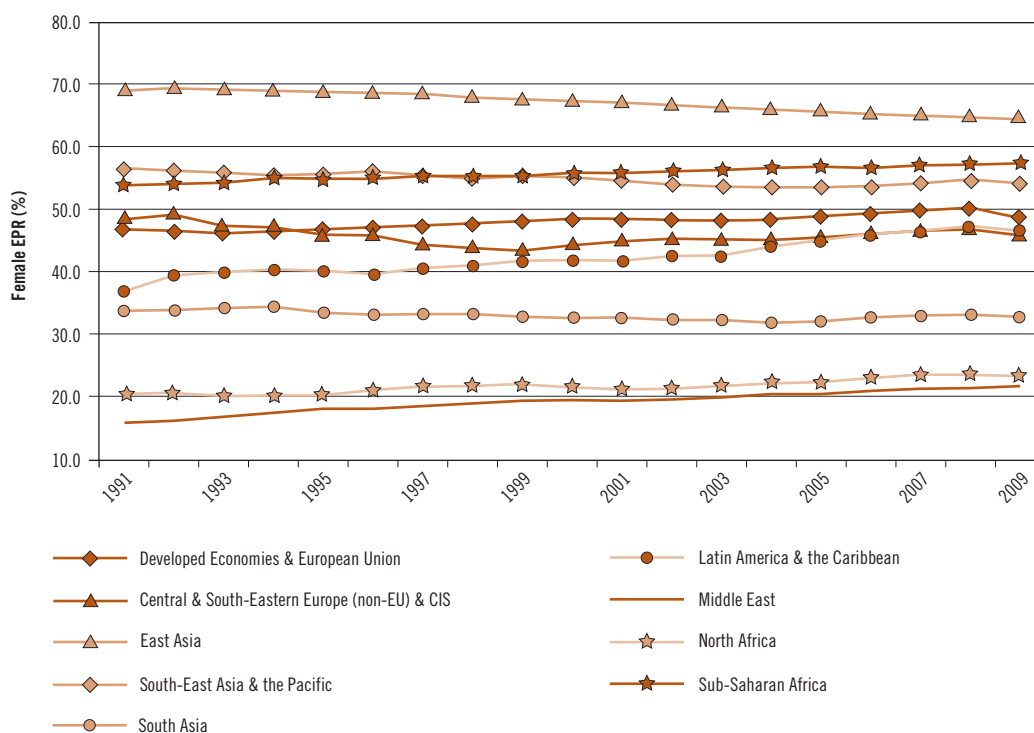
**INDICATOR 4:****INACTIVITY RATE (KILM 13)**

The inactivity rate represents the inverse of the LFPR and its trends. Where the female LFPR increases, the female inactivity rate decreases by the same amount, and vice versa. It is a measure of the share of the working-age population that is not working or seeking work. There are of course many reasons why some people do not participate in the labour force and not all of them necessarily reflect an unwillingness to work. Such persons can be sick, disabled, retired or studying; they may be caring for a family; or they may believe there are no jobs available. The latter category would qualify as “discouraged workers”, assuming that they are also available for work.<sup>25</sup>

The share of women outside of the labour force remains the largest share in the distribution by main activity status in all regions but East Asia (see figure 2). Hence, its value as a gender-sensitive indicator is quite important and it merits careful scrutiny, both conceptually and numerically. Care should also be taken to be aware of an intuitive gender bias that can permeate the discussion of this indicator. Readers are cautioned to remember that “a high inactivity rate for certain populations should not necessarily be viewed as ‘bad’: for instance, a relatively high inactivity rate for women aged 25 to 34 years may be due to their leaving the labour force to attend to family responsibilities such as childbearing and childcare.” In many countries, women

<sup>25</sup> The “available to work” criteria is not consistently applied in national definitions of discouraged workers.

FIGURE 9.

**Regional female employment-to-population ratios, 1991 to 2009**


Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, November 2009.

can freely choose to stay at home because they can afford to not enter the labour market or prefer to tend to the household. Yet in some lesser-developed regions of the world, remaining outside of the labour force is not a choice for the majority of women but an obligation; it is likely that women would opt to work in these regions if it became socially acceptable to do so. This of course does not mean that these women remain at home doing nothing; most are heavily engaged in household activities. Regardless, since these responsibilities are not shared equally by men (although patterns are changing, particularly among developed economies), and currently no measurable economic value exists for such activities in the current system of national accounting (as discussed in boxes 1 and 11), an inadvertent negative attitude toward female inactivity persists.

Trends in female inactivity rates are not examined in greater detail here because they can be presumed to be the opposite of those of female LFPRs. Perhaps the most important finding related to the indicator is that more than six in ten women remain economically inactive in three regions: South Asia, the Middle East and North Africa. (See table 2b.)

### 3.2 Labour underutilization

#### 3.2.1 The search for additional indicators

The labour force framework was not designed to make fine distinctions regarding the level of utilization, which poses challenges when it comes to the interpretative value of the indicators. The “buts” listed in table 1 identify the limitations of the indicators. Some are considered too broad and others too narrow. Employment, for example, is intended to measure the entire employed

population from anyone working for over one hour per week. It includes certain categories of unpaid workers and covers both the formal and informal sectors; hence, it is a broad measure, and sometimes criticized as overly inclusive. Unemployment, on the other hand, measures only a total lack of work (everyone who does not work, is available to work and is actively seeking work) and is often criticized for being too narrow. In fact, numerous developing countries have already taken the decision to forgo the actively seeking criterion and thus report on what is known as “relaxed” unemployment.

The study of labour economics has become more refined today thanks in part to the “decent work” advocacy campaign of the ILO; policy-makers and researchers start to be interested in the ability of a country to provide not just employment for its working-age population, but sufficient (in volume) and decent (in conditionality) employment. Adding such an adjective (or adjectives) to the employment goal calls for renewed attention to defining the “grey area” of labour utilization – the area of underutilization.

Labour statisticians are taking up the challenge in a “working group on labour underutilization” following the recommendations of the ICLS. The objectives of the group are to come to agreement on the measurement of various forms of labour underutilization relating to sub-categories of employment (time-related underemployed, employed with low earnings, employed with underutilized skills) and inactivity (discouraged workers, other inactive persons available for work). Table 2 summarizes the additional components that may be covered in a broader concept of labour underutilization. These components and the indicators derived from them are a work in progress and not yet approved at the international level.

In a submission to the ICLS, the ILO Department of Statistics undertook an initial exercise in producing a broader indicator of labour utilization based on the components (a-e) listed in table 2, for a sample of countries and examining its added value. The paper shows that unemployment is, in fact, a relatively small part of labour underutilization, in some cases reaching less than 10 per cent, and that countries with low unemployment are more affected by other forms of underutilization. Conversely, countries with high unemployment rates are less affected by other forms.

As an indicator, the labour underutilization rate should make a very useful addition to the repertoire of labour market information for gender analysis. The assumption is that the new measure of labour underutilization of women would prove to be significantly higher than that of men, and the data produced in the pilot exercise strongly supports the assumption. In most of the countries analysed, one finds a larger difference between the results of the traditional unemployment rate and the new labour underutilization rate for women than men. So, while women already appeared to be the disadvantaged sex when looking at underutilization measured by unemployment alone, adding in the other elements of labour underutilization to the new measure makes the inequality even more clear (see table 3).

Currently, the only elements of labour underutilization that exist within the framework of the KILM are the unemployment rate and the time-related underemployment rate. The trends for both are presented in section 3.2.2.

The concept of the “working poor”, presented in KILM 20, is quite different from what is intended as the labour underutilization component “employed with low earnings” in its measurement approach and objectives (namely, the foreseen measure of inadequate income calls for income received directly from a job whereas working poverty takes household income as its base). The KILM indicator is also not currently disaggregated by sex, hence, disqualifying it as a gender indicator; however, an ongoing work item within the KILM programme relates to making use of alternative sources of information for working poverty that allow for disaggregation along a number of elements, including sex. An initial examination of some gender differences in the numbers are summarized in box 5.

TABLE 2.

**Components of labour underutilization: “Refined” labour force framework**

Component	Definition	General interpretation (“what does it indicate?”)
Time-related underemployed (a)	Employed persons working less than a specified number of hours, who are willing and available to work more hours	Underutilization of the productive capacity of the employed population in terms of hours of work
Employed with low earnings (b)	(1) Full time workers whose total monthly earnings were below a specified threshold; (2) Persons working less than full-time with low hourly earnings; and (3) Persons working more than the typical number of hours for full-time work with low earnings	Inadequate earnings
Employed with underutilized skills (c)	Employed persons in jobs with skill requirements that are below the persons’ educational level	Underutilization of the productive capacity of the employed population in terms of use of skills (the return on investment in their education and training is somewhat wasted)
Discouraged workers (d)	Persons not economically active who were available for work, had sought work over the past six-month period but did not actively seek work during the last four weeks because of their discouragement from past failure in finding work	Underutilization of the productive potential of an economy due to discouragement in the job search
Other inactives available for work (e)	Persons not economically active who were available for work but did not actively seek work during the last four weeks for reasons other than discouragement	Underutilization of the productive potential of an economy due to other reasons than discouragement (not knowing where or how to look for work, for example)
Labour underutilization	The sum of components (a) through (e) above + Unemployed (see table 1)	The degree of inadequate exchange between the supply and demand of labour

## 3.2.2 Trends in the underutilization of female labour

**INDICATOR 5:***UNEMPLOYMENT RATE (KILM 8)*

The unemployment rate is a widely used measure of the underutilized labour supply and provides a general reflection of the performance of the labour market and economy as a whole. It should not necessarily be used to infer economic hardship for the unemployed person but simply as the failure to find work. Critics recognize that focusing on unemployment alone (unfortunately, there seems to be a myopic focus on such in the media and in the political arena despite

TABLE 3.

**Labour underutilization rate versus unemployment rate, seven available countries**

Country	Date	Sex	Unemployment rate (%)	Labour underutilization rate (%)	Percentage point difference
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2006	Male	29.8	51.5	21.7
		Female	35.8	62.7	26.9
Mexico	2007Q2	Male	3.2	28.4	25.2
		Female	3.7	33.1	29.4
Moldova, Republic of	2007	Male	6.3	48.5	42.2
		Female	3.9	44.2	40.3
Panama	Aug. 2007	Male	4.4	42.2	37.8
		Female	7.8	50.0	42.2
Philippines	2003Q4	Male	5.6	36.1	30.5
		Female	6.0	48.2	42.2
Tanzania, United Republic of	2005/2006	Male	2.2	48.2	46.0
		Female	4.5	56.2	51.7
Turkey	2007	Male	9.8	27.4	17.6
		Female	10.2	36.3	26.1

Source: ILO: *Beyond Unemployment: Measurement of Other Forms of Labour Underutilization*, Room document 13, 18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians, Geneva, 24 November-5 December 2008.

**Box 5. Working poverty by sex**

The ILO, in cooperation with the World Bank, has recently expanded its efforts to analyse the linkages between employment and poverty with an aim of producing an international repository of national working poverty estimates based on household surveys instead of estimates derived from macroeconomic models. This effort and its rationale are analysed in Chapter 1, section B, in the KILM 6th edition ("Analysing poverty-employment linkages with household surveys: Towards an international working poverty database"). The main disadvantages of the "macro"-based working poverty estimates, on which the current estimates in KILM table 20 are based, are the over-simplified assumptions applied regarding the linkages between poverty and economic activity, the lack of disaggregation and the difficulties in applying country-level monitoring. The new "micro" methodology offers more reliable estimates disaggregated by various population groups and can be reproduced by countries in the production of their own national estimates for self-monitoring and analysis.

The KILM summarizes an initial analysis of some pilot data, finding that in seven of the eight countries analysed, the female working poverty rate was higher than the corresponding male rate, but only slightly. For example, in Burundi (1998), which had the highest working poverty rate (85.4 per cent), the female working poverty rate was 86.3 per cent compared to 84.3 per cent for men. The largest gender differences between the working poverty rates were found in Congo, Mali and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (with the full range of difference between 1.1 percentage points in Benin to 6.9 percentage points in Congo). Only in Niger (2005) was the male working poverty rate higher than the corresponding female rate, by 1.6 percentage points.

The "new" working poverty data set will appear as a new table in the KILM by mid-2010.

the fact that the share of the unemployed in the working-age population is “only” 3.6 per cent globally for women, and at most 5.5 per cent regionally; see figures 1 and 2) can result in a situation in which other areas of labour slack are ignored. This then results in the undercounting of the underutilized human resources of a country. Recognizing that there is not yet sufficient country-level information to analyse in depth the broader measure of labour underutilization, this section proceeds with an analysis of the only readily-available measure of persons who are without work, available to work and actively seeking work, i.e. the unemployed as defined in the standard labour force framework.<sup>26</sup> A word of caution before proceeding: as an indicator, the unemployment rate (the number of persons unemployed as a percentage of the labour force) is more relevant to economies above a certain level of development, as poor people often cannot afford not to work (see “income connection” above in section 3.1.3).

■ Are women more likely to be unemployed than men?

In the majority of countries with available data, unemployment rates (URs) were higher for females than males (113 countries out of 152). A review of the latest available country data in KILM table 8a (latest years after 2000), reveals the following:

- 9 countries where female URs exceeded males by more than 10 percentage points;
- 21 countries where female URs exceeded male URs by between 4.9 and 10 percentage points;
- 56 countries where female URs exceeded male URs by between 0.9 and 5 percentage points;
- 27 countries where female URs exceeded male URs by between 0.1 and 1 percentage point;
- 39 countries where male URs exceeded female URs by between 0 and 4.7 percentage points.

Six regions are represented in the list of economies with the highest unemployment gaps: Latin America & the Caribbean (Dominican Republic), Central & South-Eastern Europe (Kosovo), the Middle East (Jordan and Syrian Arab Republic), North Africa (Egypt), South Asia (Maldives) and Sub-Saharan Africa (Ethiopia, Mauritania and Sao Tome and Principe). On the other side, there is also a wide regional distribution seen in the countries where male rates exceeded female rates.

■ What are the barriers that lead to female unemployment; is gender-based discrimination among them?

The explanations generally suggested for the higher unemployment rates for women are numerous. The KILM manuscript for the indicator suggests that “women are more likely than men to exit and re-enter the workforce for family reasons; there is a general ‘crowding’ of females into fewer occupations than men”; and of course the gender inequalities operating outside the labour market and embedded in societal attitudes. However, further studies also show that the gender-based differences in unemployment rates tend to be among the more educated workers in the majority of countries, and gender differences are lower among the less educated.<sup>27</sup> The unemployment by level of educational attainment indicator (KILM 14) is discussed in section 3.3.6.

The *GET for Women, 2008*, also offers an interesting explanation, at least for the higher female unemployment rates in the North Africa region (looking at the female-male unemployment rate

<sup>26</sup> It is important to note that many national definitions of unemployment include persons who want to work but do not actively seek work.

<sup>27</sup> KILM 6th Edition, op. cit., KILM 8 manuscript.

gap by region, available as table 2c in Annex 2, we find that the gap is consistently the highest in this region and the Middle East, followed by Latin America & the Caribbean):

The cause of high female unemployment rates in the region is twofold. On the one hand, some employers openly give preference to male jobseekers and, on the other hand, the women that have gained access to education often do not wish to take up the types of job that are available to them. Some employers do actually prefer female workers, but the jobs offered are low-skilled and low-paid. The overall result is that some women will remain unemployed while waiting for the “right” job (with some holding out for public sector work) and other women – the majority – have little choice but to fall outside of the labour force.<sup>28</sup>

Long-term unemployment (seeking work for over one year) (KILM 10) is related to the personal characteristics of the unemployed, and high rates of long-term unemployment indicate serious problems for certain groups of the population, for example, older or unskilled workers. Are women among them? The majority of countries with available data showed higher incidences of long-term unemployment for males than females, probably because women would give up on the job search earlier than men and would thus fall into another indicator<sup>29</sup> (see figure 10a in the KILM 6th Edition). If data were systematically available on persons who are not working, available to work but not actively seeking work (the category of persons reintroduced to produce a “relaxed” unemployment rate; see section 3.2.1 for more information), one might find greater support for the assumption that it is women who give up the job search sooner than men.

#### **INDICATOR 6:**

##### *TIME-RELATED UNDEREMPLOYMENT (KILM 12)*

- Are women more likely to be (time-related) underemployed than men?
- Is time-related underemployment a significant issue in many countries?

Women bear a significantly larger burden of the only currently available measure of underemployment, time-related underemployment, with an overrepresentation in almost all countries with data (55 countries in total) (see figure 10).

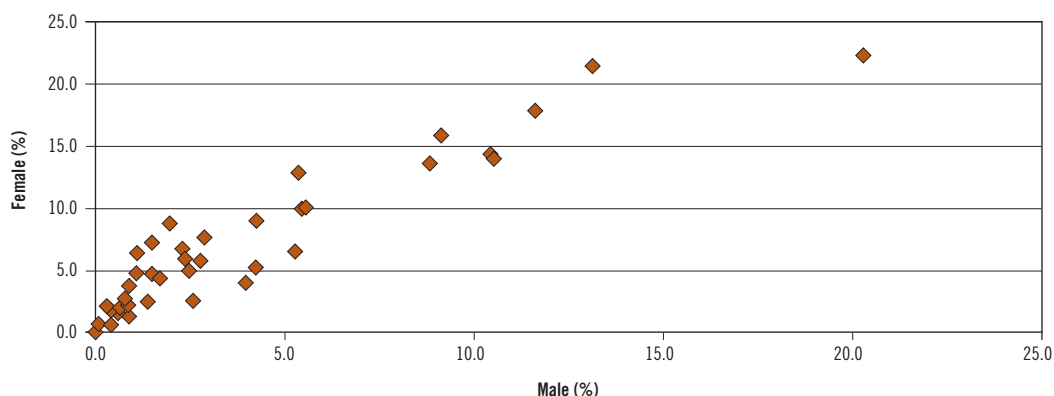
As stated in the KILM 6th Edition, “Overlooking the underemployment component could also be misleading. While not technically unemployed, the underemployed are often competing for available hours of work and jobs. Because of the way in which unemployment figures are defined and measured (namely, the “main” activity of the respondent determines the resulting classification into employed, unemployed and inactive), these workers will not be included even though they may regard themselves as unemployed and may be actively seeking other work while currently employed. Consequently, a clearer picture of the underutilization of the productive potential of the country’s labour force can be gained by adding the number of underemployed to the number of unemployed as a share of the overall labour force.” Note that the new developments around the measure of labour underutilization, discussed in the previous section, would do exactly this.

Ignoring underemployment can lead to an underestimation of labour underutilization but also an overestimation in the valuation of employment gains. If an increase in employment is driven by an increase in the underemployed then the claims made for gains in female employment must take this into account. Since females bear the larger burden, the implications are significant.

<sup>28</sup> ILO: *Global Employment Trends for Women, March 2008* (Geneva, 2008), p. 8.

<sup>29</sup> Data for this indicator in the KILM are almost exclusively for countries in the Developed Economies & European Union grouping, with limited coverage in CEE, Central America and the Caribbean.

FIGURE 10.

**Incidence of time-related underemployment by sex, latest years (after 1999)**

Source: KILM 6th Edition, table 12.

In interpreting the data, one cannot help but consider the causal direction of growing incidences of labour underutilization of women. Is the relationship driven by the desire of women for less rigid work that offers greater possibility for family balance despite less hours and lower pay, or are they responding to the constraints of a discriminatory labour market where access to standard forms of work are limited? Either way the result is the same, women are valued (at least in the economic sense) less than men. This discussion will continue in relation to part-time work and the gender wage differentials in sections 3.3.5 and 3.3.7 below.

### 3.3 Female employment: Where and how women work

#### 3.3.1 Introduction

This section looks at the structure of female (and occasionally male) employment in order to identify the different dynamics emerging. The focus will be on identifying what the increase in female labour force participation over time has really meant in terms of the well-being of women in the world of work. There have certainly been gains for women in their growing economic empowerment but there have also been costs. The portrait of the modern working woman will feed the final section 3.4 that summarizes a “new” gender gap. There has certainly been progress in narrowing the gender gap when it comes to engagement in economic activity but what does the male-female gap look like when it comes to accessing decent work? We should have a better idea after the following analysis of six additional employment-related measures. As stated in the KILM:

The importance of employment indicators should come as no surprise to analysts of labour markets, since employment and the lack of it (where employment is the goal) are largely what labour market policies are all about. It is not sufficient, however, to discuss the quantity of employment alone, especially given the ILO’s framework of the decent work agenda ... which brings quality aspects of employment into the picture. To better assess working conditions, one needs to understand that the underlying concept of work is broad and encompasses all forms of economic activity, including self-employment, economic unpaid family work and wage employment in both the informal and formal sectors.

The indicators in this section will be examined to answer the following questions relating to where and how women work:

- Where are the main areas of difference between male and female employment statuses?
- Is there a higher likelihood for women than men to fall into vulnerable employment?



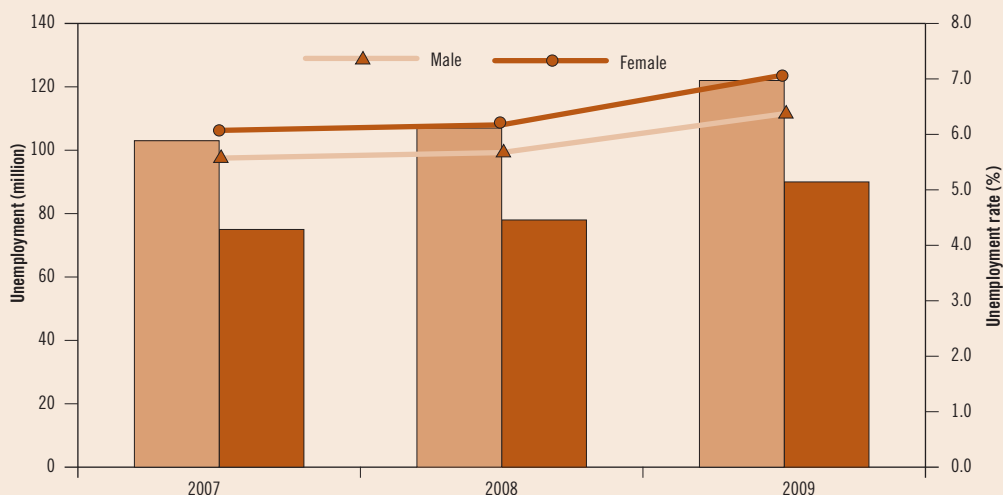
### Box 6. The current economic crisis and the gender impact (1): A gender balance in job loss?

The GET 2010 report focuses heavily on the current economic crisis with a section specific to the gender impact. It concludes that the economic crisis on the global level has impacted women and men more or less equally, resulting in very little difference in the gap in unemployment rates by sex between the 2007 and 2009 period. The global female unemployment rate increased from 6.0 per cent in 2007 to 7.0 per cent (1.0 percentage points) in 2009, slightly more than the male rate which rose from 5.5 to 6.3 per cent (0.8 percentage points).<sup>1</sup> The following figure shows the global and regional patterns over the three-year period for both men and women. The male and female trend lines for the unemployment rates seem to move almost in perfect parallel.

There were negligible increases in the male-female unemployment rate gaps in all regions but Central & South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS, where there was a positive gap (meaning the male rate exceeded the female rate already in 2008) that widened slightly in 2009, and East Asia and South-East Asia & the Pacific where there was no change. The largest increases in unemployment for both women and men – both the rates and nominal values – were in the regions of the Developed Economies & European Union, Central & South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS and Latin America & the Caribbean. Only in one region, the Middle East, did the nominal number of unemployed women increase more than the corresponding increase in male unemployment. As a result, the female unemployment rate increased from 14.4 to 15.0 per cent between 2007 and 2009 while the male rate remained constant at 7.7 per cent.

Do we see any more obvious gender impacts at the country level? The following figures show the female-male gaps in unemployment rates over monthly intervals between pre-crisis January 2008

#### Global unemployment, numbers and rates, by sex, 2007-09



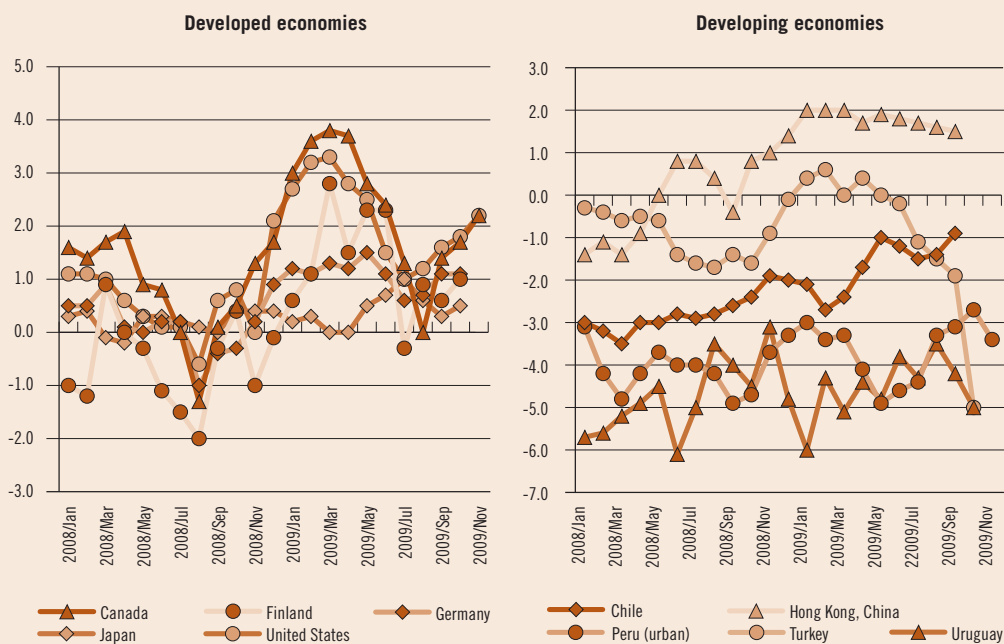
Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, November 2009.

<sup>1</sup> 2009 unemployment rates are preliminary estimates based on a point estimate methodology utilizing available monthly and quarterly 2009 rates. A detailed description of the estimation methodology is available in *GET 2010*, Annex 4.

(cont.)

Box 6 (cont.)

**Gap in monthly unemployment rate by sex (male-female), selected developed and developing economies, January 2008 to November 2009**



Source: ILO LABORSTA database, "Main statistics (monthly): unemployment general level"; <http://laborsta.ilo.org>.

and crisis period November 2009, with separate charts for selected countries in developed and developing economies. Among countries in the latter group, while there were certainly month-to-month variations, the unemployment gaps by sex have so far been more or less immune to the crisis. An exception is Hong Kong, China, being the only country shown to shift from a negative gap to a positive one, meaning that the male unemployment rate surpassed that of females, over the period. There also seems to be a slight narrowing of the gap occurring in Chile. But in general, neither men nor women in developing countries are being impacted to a greater extent than the other, at least in terms of job losses. In the developed economies, where the crisis impact has been relatively larger, there did seem to be a short period between approximately August 2008 and April 2009 when it looked like the job crisis was mainly a male one (see particularly Canada, Finland and the United States). But this trend and the related increases in the gap in unemployment rates by sex have been reversed in more recent months.

What seems to have happened is that the initial impact of the crisis hit the manufacturing, financial and construction sectors hard, the domain of predominantly male workers in developed countries. It was men in manufacturing that were among the first to experience job cuts. But the impact of the crisis and associated job losses have since expanded to other sectors, including service sectors where women are mainly employed (see section 3.3.3). Which brings us to an important point – the crisis impact on jobs is highly dependent on the sectoral distribution of employment. If the sectors that were hardest hit by the crisis were male-dominated sectors, then the unemployment numbers of males should rise faster than women, and vice-versa for female-dominated sectors. Box 7 looks more specifically at the influence of gender sectoral segregation on crisis outcomes.

- What are the main sectors for female employment and what does this mean in terms of female welfare and gender equality?
- Do data support claims of a feminization of the informal sector?
- What are the trends regarding part-time employment and why is it so strongly a female domain in developed economies?
- Is part-time employment an opportunity or a cost for women?
- What is the educational distribution of the female labour force and how does it differ from that of men?
- In which occupations is there closer pay equity? Does the skills level of the occupation play a role?
- Are there obvious wage differences between male-dominated and female-dominated occupations?

### 3.3.2

#### **INDICATOR 7:**

#### *STATUS IN EMPLOYMENT (KILM 3)*

The basic criterion for defining categories of status in employment is the assessment of economic risk/level of financial security of the worker that results as an explicit or implicit consequence of the type of employment contract and the strength of the institutional attachment between the person and the job.<sup>30</sup> The International Classification for Status in Employment (ICSE) defines the following three broad categories of status:<sup>31</sup>

- (1) wage and salaried workers (employees);
- (2) self-employed workers; and
- (3) contributing family workers (unpaid).

There are three subgroups of the self-employed: (a) employers (i.e. self-employed with employees); (b) own-account workers (self-employed without employees); and (c) members of producers' cooperatives. Employment structures in terms of status are a strong indication of a country's level of development, and the traditional view is that a structural labour market transformation will accompany economic growth with shrinking numbers of low-income, largely rural and informal workers and growing numbers of higher-income wage and salaried workers. A high proportion of wage and salaried workers tends to indicate advanced economic development while large shares of contributing family workers and own-account workers tend to indicate low economic development and high levels of poverty.<sup>32</sup> The latter two statuses (own-account workers and contributing family workers) are added together as a measure of "vulnerable employment". The definition of vulnerable employment was an ILO response to the need to select indicators that measure a new employment-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) target, "to achieve full and decent employment for all, including women and young people".<sup>33</sup>

<sup>30</sup> KILM 6th Edition, op. cit., KILM 3 manuscript, p. 145.

<sup>31</sup> <http://laborsta.ilo.org/applv8/data/icsee.html>.

<sup>32</sup> See discussion around figures 3a and 3b in the KILM 3 manuscript, KILM 6th Edition, op. cit.

<sup>33</sup> Recognizing that decent work for all is central to addressing poverty and hunger, the UN Millennium Development Goal 1 now includes a target to "achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people". For a full history on the MDG target and information regarding the indicators selected for monitoring progress, see ILO: *Key Indicators of the Labour Market, 4th Edition* (Geneva, 2007), Chapter 1, section A, "Decent employment and the Millennium Development Goals: Description and analysis of the new target".

Figure 11 shows the distribution of male and female employment by status in employment in 2009. The gender differences are vast (as are the implications), as summarized here:

**Wage and salaried workers:** The global proportion of wage and salaried workers looks reasonably equal between males and females. The global shares were 47.3 per cent for women and 48.6 per cent for men in 2009,<sup>34</sup> compared to 42.8 and 44.9 per cent for women and men in 1999, respectively (see table 2f in Annex 2 for the additional 1999 data). The regional figures show the clear correlation with level of economic development. Shares of total employment in wage and salaried work remained low in developing regions such as East Asia (46.4 per cent), South-East Asia & the Pacific (37.5 per cent), South Asia (22.3 per cent) and Sub-Saharan Africa (23.2 per cent). Regionally, in the Developed Economies & European Union, Central & South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS, and Latin America & the Caribbean, the proportions of women in wage and salaried employment were slightly higher than the corresponding male shares. All other regions have higher male shares.

**Employers:** Men have a greater tendency than women to be the owner of a business with employees. North Africa and the Middle East showed the biggest gaps in male and female shares (10.5 and 5.0 percentage points, respectively), but Latin America & the Caribbean and the Developed Economies & European Union also showed significant gaps (3.0 and 2.9 percentage points). The smallest gaps were in East Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa.

**Own-account workers:** The regional patterns are diverse, but all regions except North Africa and the Middle East showed greater proportions of males in own-account work. More than one-fourth of both working women and men were eking out a living through self-employment in East Asia, Latin America & the Caribbean, the Middle East, South-East Asia & the Pacific, South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. In Sub-Saharan Africa, the shares were as high as 46.6 and 44.7 per cent for men and women, respectively.

**Contributing family workers:** Figure 11 illustrates both the large regional differences as well as the enormous differences between male and female workers in terms of the share of contributing (unpaid) family workers. As an indicator, it is less relevant to the more developed economies, particularly those in the Developed Economies & European Union region. The picture for all regions of Asia is particularly striking with a much higher proportion of females in unpaid family work than males. After Asia, Africa and the Middle East showed the biggest differences.

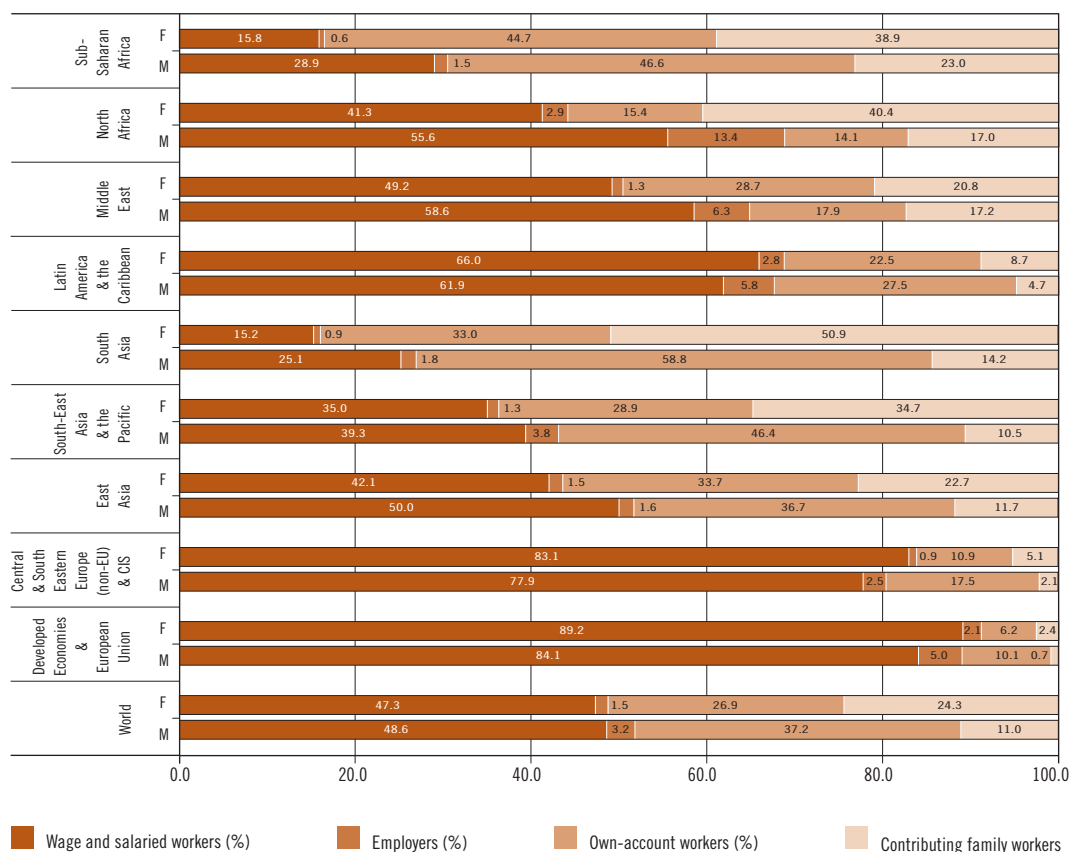
■ Where are the main areas of difference between male and female employment statuses?

Gender differences are not so significant when it comes to shares in wage and salaried work. There are large gender differences in shares of employers by sex but the overall importance of this status to overall employment is small (no more than 13.4 and 2.9 per cent for males and females, respectively, in North Africa). The most significant gaps are found in the statuses of own-account workers (higher for men) and contributing family workers (higher for women). Both statuses are sub-categories of “vulnerable employment”, as stated above. What makes these workers more vulnerable? In general, own-account workers and contributing family workers are less likely to have formal work arrangements, access to benefits or social protection programmes. Thus, they are more “at risk” to economic cycles and poverty.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>34</sup> 2009 status in employment shares are preliminary estimates based on a methodology that applies different projection methods (scenarios) to existing data. The 2009 estimates shown in this report are based on a middle scenario, generated on the basis of the relationship between economic growth and vulnerable employment during the worst observed economic downturn in each country. Full details on the estimation methodology are provided in *GET 2010*, Annex 4.

<sup>35</sup> ILO: *Global Employment Trends for Women, October 2008* (Geneva, 2008), p. 3. The report also reminds us that “The indicator is not without its limitations; some wage and salaried workers might also carry high economic risk [see discussion related to informal employment in section 3.3.4] and some own-account workers might be quite well-off and not vulnerable at all.”

FIGURE 11.

Global and regional distribution of total employment by status, by sex, 2009<sup>36</sup>

Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, November 2009.

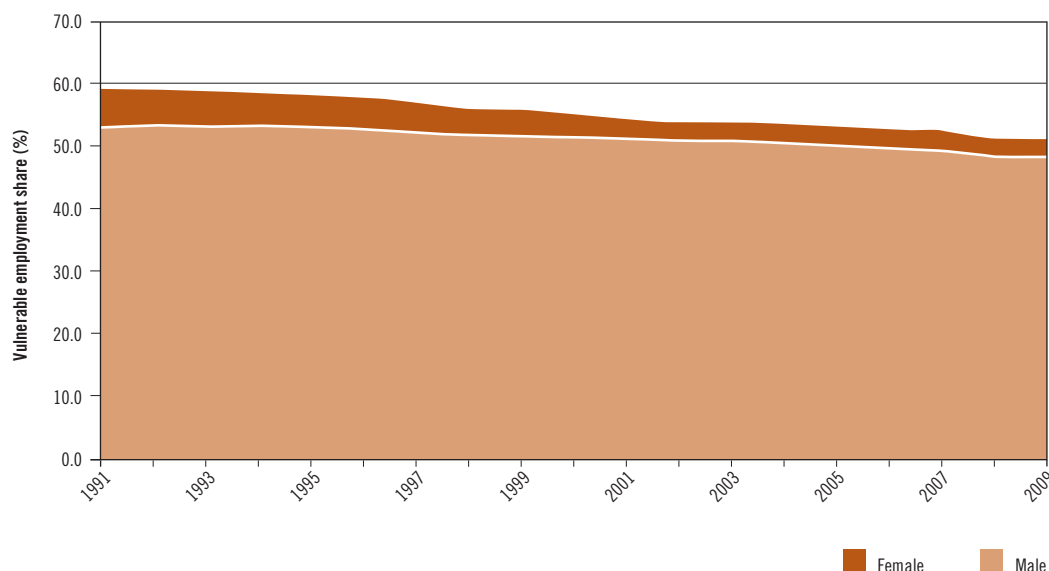
■ Is there a higher likelihood for women than men to fall into vulnerable employment?

With own-account work as more of a male domain and contributing family work as a female domain, it is interesting to see where the overall balance rests when it comes to the share of employed persons in vulnerable employment (also called the vulnerable employment share). The time trends of male and female shares are shown in figure 12. The data show that, at the global level, women are slightly more likely than men to be in vulnerable employment but, over time, the gap between the sexes has been shrinking. Vulnerable employment shares are decreasing over time for both men and women, but at a faster pace for women. Between 1999 and 2009, the female share in vulnerable employment declined from 55.9 to 51.2 per cent while the male share declined from 51.6 to 48.2 per cent. To generalize, in low-income countries where job creation in the formal sector is a rare phenomenon, there is a strong tendency for both women and men to engage in self-employment activities; but at least the majority of self-employed men have the possibility of earning income for their efforts while 47.4 per cent of women

<sup>36</sup> 2009 estimates are preliminary. See footnote 34 for details.

FIGURE 12.

**Global shares of vulnerable employment in total employment, by sex, 1991 to 2009<sup>38</sup>**



Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, November 2009.

(compared to 22.7 per cent of men) in the vulnerable employment category still received no direct pay as contributing family workers in 2009.<sup>37</sup>

Now, let us contrast the trends in vulnerable employment in two diverse regions. Figure 13 shows the male and female shares in vulnerable employment in the two regions, Sub-Saharan Africa and Central & South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS. What is interesting here is first, the difference in the size of the shares, with shares of workers in vulnerable employment approximately four times higher in Sub-Saharan Africa compared to Central & South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS. Second, the gender patterns are reversed, with a stronger female tendency toward vulnerable employment in Sub-Saharan Africa and a slightly stronger male tendency in Central & South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS.

### 3.3.3

#### **INDICATOR 8:**

##### *EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR (KILM 4)*

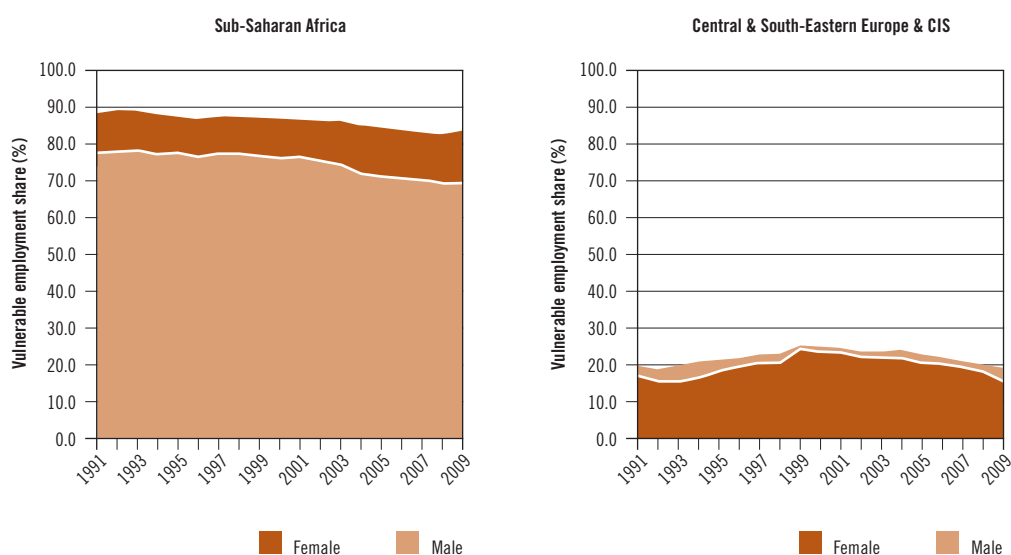
Information on the distribution of employment according to three broad sectoral groupings – agriculture, industry and services – is given in KILM table 4a and the more-detailed 1-digit

<sup>37</sup> Indeed, in many instances where women are engaged in unpaid work on their small landholdings, they are denied even the right to own the land that they work. UNIFEM report that “even in countries where women constitute the majority of small farmers and do more than 75 percent of the agricultural work, they are routinely denied the right to own the land they cultivate and on which they are dependent to raise their families”. UNIFEM: “Women’s Land & Property Rights”; [http://www.unifem.org/gender\\_issues/women\\_poverty\\_economics/land\\_property\\_rights.php](http://www.unifem.org/gender_issues/women_poverty_economics/land_property_rights.php).

<sup>38</sup> 2009 estimates are preliminary. See footnote 34 for details.

FIGURE 13.

### Shares of vulnerable employment in total employment in Sub-Saharan Africa and Central & South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS, by sex, 1991 to 2009<sup>40</sup>



Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, November 2009.

sectoral breakdowns are available in tables 4b and 4c.<sup>39</sup> The information on employment by sector can be used in the design of economic and social policies, for example, by ranking employment growth by sector when considering the development of targeted sectoral policies. It is also an important indicator of economic development and shows significant disparity in sectoral growth patterns between developed and developing countries. The relationship between sectoral employment and economic development (measured using GDP) generally indicates a shift from agriculture to industry to services, although some countries have moved directly from dominant shares in agricultural employment to services and have not undergone the intermediate shift to industry.

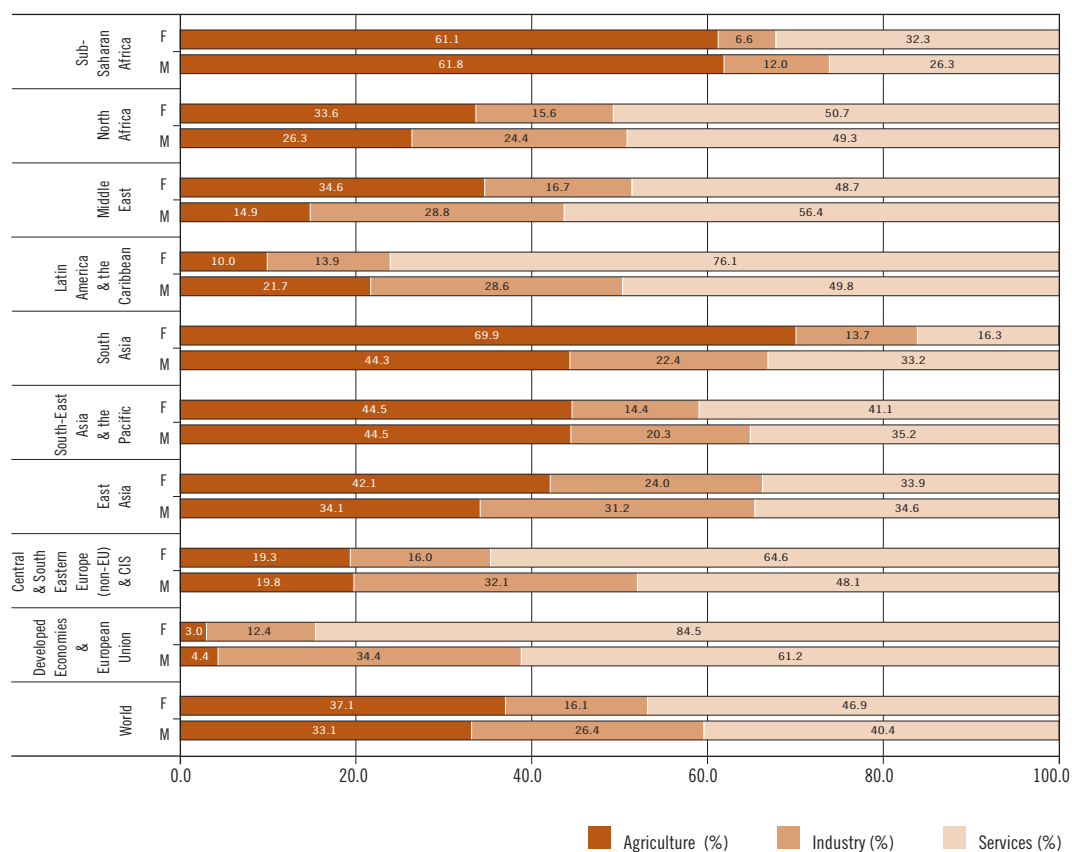
- What are the main sectors for female employment and what does this mean in terms of female welfare and gender equality?

As a gender-relevant indicator, looking at the distribution of employment by sector provides a clear picture of the very different composition of female and male employment. There is a clear segregation of women in sectors that are generally known to be lower-paid (this finding will be further supported in the discussion relating to occupational wages below in section 3.3.7). Figure 14 shows the global and regional distribution of employment by sector for men and women. At the global level, whereas ten years ago, agriculture was still the main employer for women, the services sector now provides the majority of female jobs. Already, here there are interesting

<sup>39</sup> Since 1980, two different ISIC systems have been used. A slight majority of countries continue to use Rev. 2 instead of Rev. 3. These can have large effects at the detailed levels of classification, thus data remain separated in the two tables according to the classification revision applied. The different classifications and the migration from one to the other should not significantly impact the calculations of the aggregated sectors shown in table 4a.

<sup>40</sup> 2009 estimates are preliminary. See footnote 39 for details.

FIGURE 14.

**Global and regional distribution of employment by aggregate sector, by sex, 2008**


Source: ILO, Trends Econometric Models, November 2009.

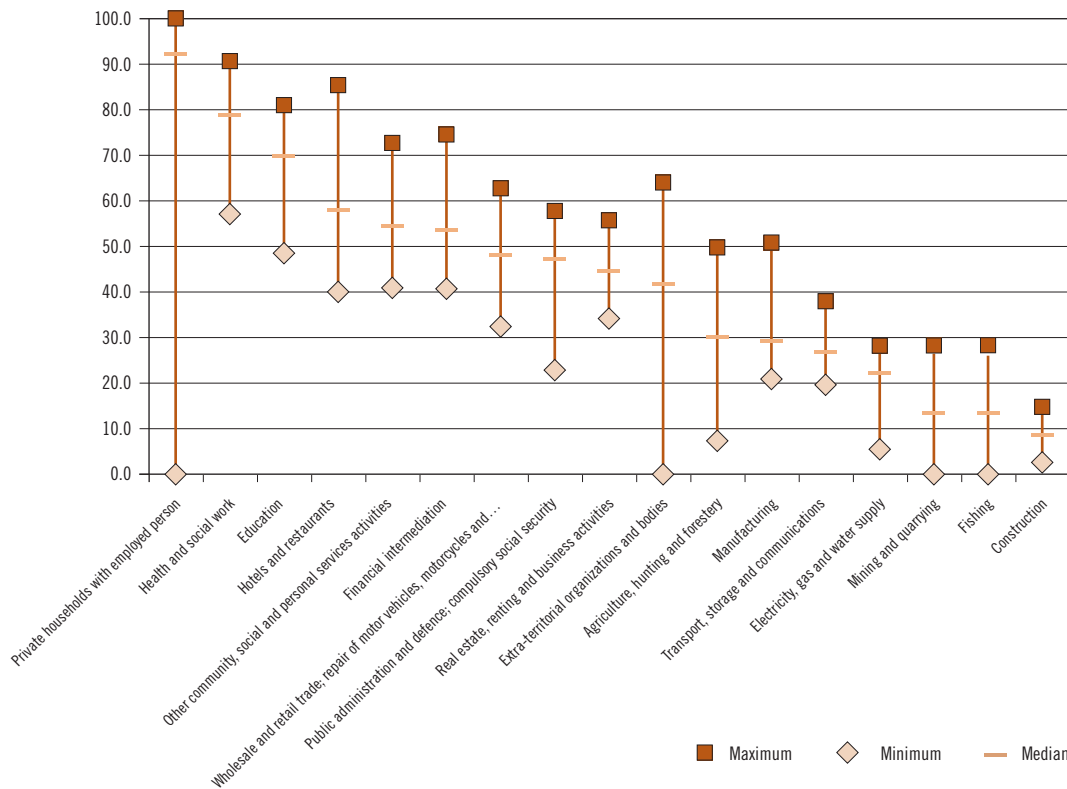
implications regarding the welfare of women workers – for example, women in most regions are more likely than men to work in agriculture, mainly in subsistence-level agriculture under harsh conditions with little or no economic security.

The dominant share of employment for both women and men in 2009 was in agriculture in East Asia, South Asia, South-East Asia & the Pacific and Sub-Saharan Africa. The female shares in agriculture exceeded those of males in the former two regions but in the latter two regions shares were more or less the same. In the services sector, shares at or above 50 per cent for females were seen in the Developed Economies & European Union, Central & South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS, Latin America & the Caribbean and North Africa, with the share in the Middle East just slightly below. The male dominance in industrial employment is made clear in all regions, but especially in Developed Economies & European Union, Central & South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS, Latin America & the Caribbean and the Middle East. In the remaining regions (East Asia, North Africa, South-East Asia & the Pacific, South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa) male employment shares in industry were higher than female shares but the difference was to a degree of less than 10 percentage points.

Looking at employment by the more detailed sectoral categories, the gender-based differences become much more obvious. Figure 15 shows the female share of sectoral employment by category for 37 developed economies and figure 16 shows the same for 21 developing Asian economies.



FIGURE 15.

**Female share of employment by 1-digit sector in 37 developed economies, minimum, maximum and medians (latest years)**


Note: In some cases the lowest number is 0; the empty columns do not indicate a lack of data.  
Source: Constructed from KILM 6th Edition, table 4b (ISIC Rev. 3).

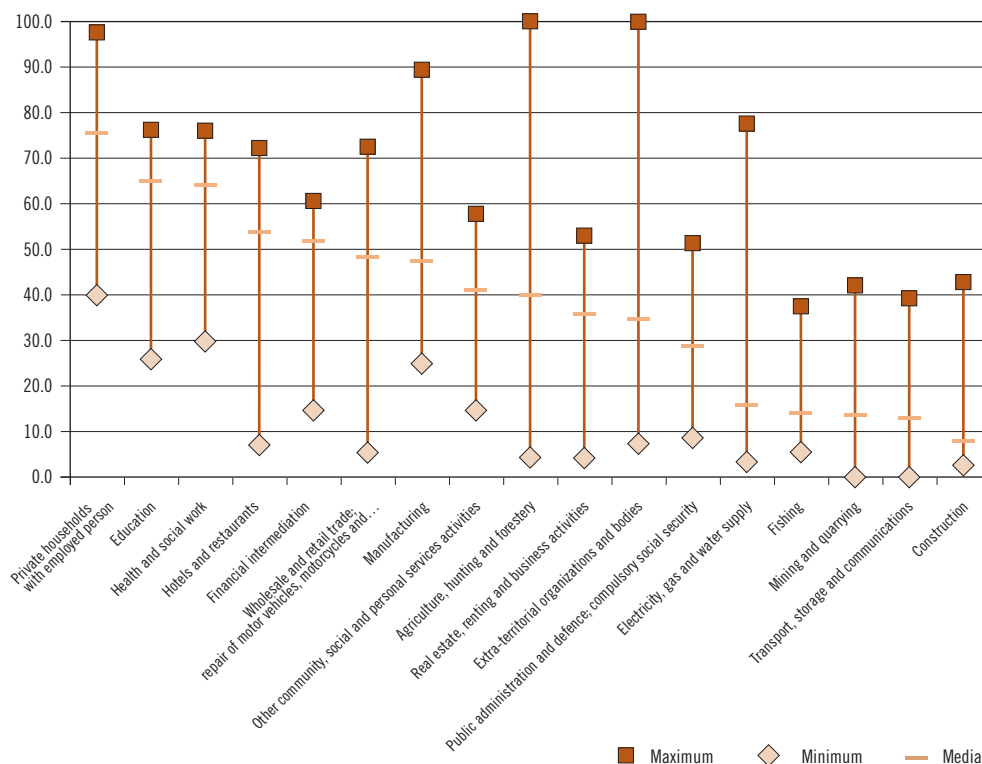
The six sectors dominated by women (over 50 per cent) in the developed economies are: (1) private households with employed persons, (2) health and social work, (3) education, (4) hotels and restaurants, (5) other community, social and personal services, and (6) finance intermediation. The developing Asian economies have five sectors where the female share exceeds 50 per cent and the list is almost identical to that of the developed economies: (1) private households with employed persons, (2) education, (3) health and social work, (4) hotels and restaurants, and (5) financial intermediation. What is different between the two regions is the strong presence of women in manufacturing in Asian economies (median female share was 47 per cent). Although agriculture remains a main employer in many Asian economies, it was only in six of the 21 economies that the share of female agricultural workers outnumbered the corresponding male share.

There is clear evidence in these charts that female workers are concentrated in services sectors that are characterized by low pay, long hours and oftentimes informal working arrangements. And even within these sectors where women dominate, it would rarely be women who would hold the upper level, managerial jobs. With regard to the health-care sector, a main employer of women (predominantly in nursing), the ILC report states that “women are poorly represented in the higher echelons”.<sup>41</sup> The category of “private households with employed

<sup>41</sup> ILO: *Gender equality at the heart of decent work*, Report VI, op. cit., p. 123.

FIGURE 16.

**Female share of employment by 1-digit sector in 21 Asian economies, minimum, maximum and medians (latest years)**



See note and source for figure 15.

persons” is particularly interesting. Among such household-based workers are maids, cooks, waiters, valets, butlers, laundresses, gardeners, gatekeepers, stable lads, chauffeurs, caretakers, governesses, babysitters, tutors, secretaries, etc.<sup>42</sup> There are numerous gender issues that arise out of the dominance of females in domestic work, all carefully outlined in the ILC report. The report states that “since domestic work is often regarded as an extension of women’s traditional unpaid household and family responsibilities, it is still mostly invisible, undervalued and unprotected”.<sup>43</sup> Conditions of such work can be poor mainly because domestic workers remain beyond the reach of national social protection schemes.

Stalwart gender sectoral and occupational segregation remains a real impediment to progress towards the principles of gender justice. Policy objectives to promote gender equality should aim to fight against the tendency toward a discrimination- or exploitation-based definition of “women’s work”. At the same time, it is important to broaden access for women to employment in an enlarged scope of industries and occupations while also encouraging male employment in sectors traditional defined as “female”. Policy objectives should focus on raising the quality of work in all sectors, extending social protection, benefits and security to those in non-standard forms of work.

<sup>42</sup> UNSD website, ISIC Rev. 3.1 code 9500, detailed structure and explanatory notes; <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/cr/registry/regcs.asp?Cl=17&Lg=1&Co=9500>.

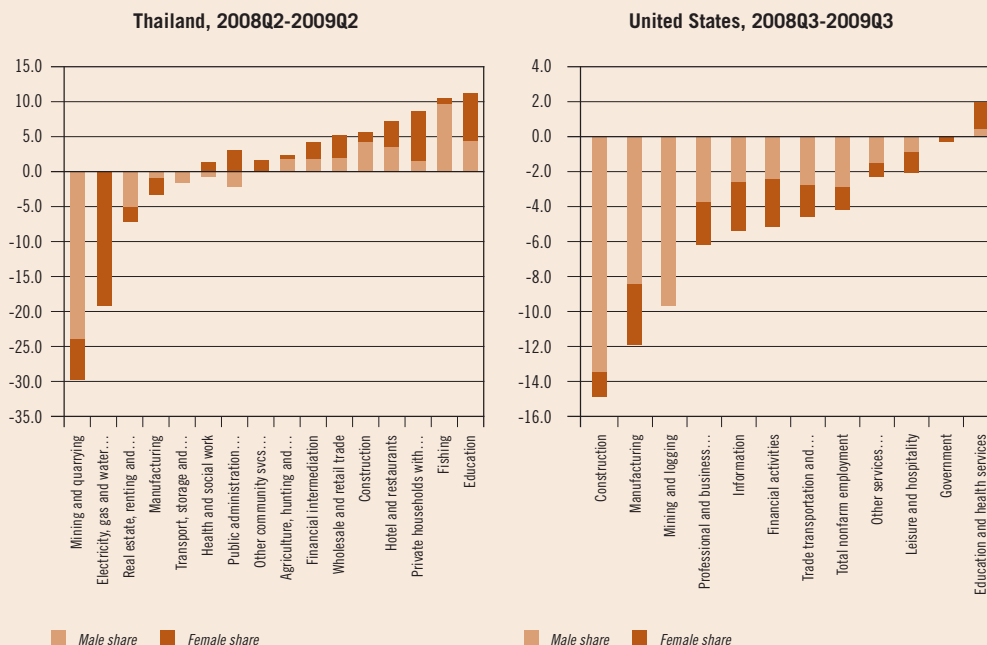
<sup>43</sup> ILO: *Gender equality at the heart of decent work*, Report VI, op. cit., p. 36.

### Box 7. The current economic crisis and the gender impact (2): Gender job segregation as determinant of gender differentials

This box explores the relationship between the sectoral distribution of employment, the gender distribution within sectors and the economic contraction brought with the current economic crisis. The theory is that there should be some evident shift in gender differences in labour market indicators when one of the key sectors hit – manufacturing – was either male- or female-dominated in terms of workers. The two countries compared are the United States, where in 2008Q3 (at the onset of the crisis), manufacturing employment was 71 per cent male, 29 per cent female, and Thailand where in 2008Q2, the corresponding split was 46/54. The analysis for each country is based on the quarter where the employment loss in manufacturing was the greatest – second quarter 2009 in Thailand and third quarter 2009 in the United States – and comparing the situation one year earlier.

The following figures show the distribution of employment change in the respective periods by sector, indicating the relative male-female shares of the loss (or gain) within each sector. For example, in the worst hit sectors in the United States – construction, manufacturing and mining – nearly all job losses were among men. In contrast, in Thailand, the sectoral “losers” were (in order of biggest decrease) mining, electricity, gas and water, real estate and business services, manufacturing and transport, storage and communication. In three of the five sectors, the losses were mainly (or entirely, in the case of transport, storage and communication) male. It was only in manufacturing and electricity, gas and water that more women lost their jobs than men (the distribution of employment decline in manufacturing was 72 per cent female, 29 per cent male).

#### Employment change by sector in Thailand (2008Q2-2009Q2) and the United States (2008Q3-2009Q3)



Note: Non-seasonally adjusted data. Data for the United States refer to non-farm employees only.

Sources: National Statistical Office of Thailand, Report of the Labour Force Survey, Ministry of Information and Communication Technology, Bangkok; [http://service.nso.go.th/nso/nso\\_center/23project-en.htm](http://service.nso.go.th/nso/nso_center/23project-en.htm); and Bureau of Labor Statistics, US Department of Labor, Current Employment Statistics, Table B-1. Employees on nonfarm payrolls by industry sector and selected industry detail; <http://www.bls.gov/webapps/legacy/cesbtbl1.htm>.

(cont.)

Box 7 (cont.)

What one really needs to know, though, is the dynamics within the overall changes in employment. The following table shows the overall employment losses by sex, and the same for manufacturing, and then the unemployment gains for the same periods in the two countries. In Thailand, we see that although employment grew overall, there were losses in certain sectors (already identified) and that the male employment loss was cumulatively greater than the female loss. The female loss was highly concentrated in manufacturing, whereas the male employment losses were spread across numerous sectors.

So, if in both of the countries, the decreases in employment numbers were worse for men than women, why is it that the female unemployment numbers in Thailand increased so much more than the corresponding figures for males? The seeming contradiction may be explained by the fact that the crisis hit the manufacturing sector hard, a sector that engaged 18 per cent of the female work force before the crisis struck. Female manufacturing workers are likely to be low-skilled and relatively interchangeable. If down-sized, they would face stiff competition in finding new work when the supply of female unskilled labour is higher than the demand. They would have little option open to them but to get in a job queue and hope for a quick recovery or take up less desirable, informal employment. The recently unemployed male would seem to have a wider variety of sectors open to him and might, therefore, stand a better chance at finding work. In the United States, the results are more straightforward. With huge overall employment decreases, spread throughout all sectors but sharper in the male-dominated sectors, it makes sense that male unemployment and the unemployment rate increased more than the female.

	Thailand (2008Q2-2009Q2)			United States (2008Q3-2009Q3)		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Overall employment change	840	471	369	-5,742	-3,943	-1,798
- employment losses (number of sectors)	-306 (5)	-184 (7)	-164 (4)	-6,118 (10)	-4,037 (9)	-2,098 (10)
- employment gains (number of sectors)	1,145 (12)	654 (10)	533 (13)	376 (1)	93 (2)	299 (1)
Manufacturing employment loss (thousands)	-180	-51	-129	-1,602	-1,135	-467
Proportion of manufacturing employment in total employ- ment (%), early quarter	15.1	12.8	17.9	9.8	13.7	5.7
Unemployment change (thousands)	148	46	102	5,571	3,589	1,982
Unemployment rate change (percentage points)	0.4	0.2	0.5	3.7	4.4	2.7
Labour force change (thousands)	-87	129	-216	-330	-451	120

See notes and sources above.

(cont.)

*Box 7 (cont.)*

There is another element at play here though and this is the labour force, the denominator of the unemployment rate. In Thailand, the labour force decreased for women but not for men. This trend reflects a common occurrence in more traditional, patriarchal societies; during times of economic recession, females who are mostly presumed to be secondary breadwinners are more likely to fall outside of the labour force than to undertake a prolonged job search. The decrease in the labour force is one factor in the higher female unemployment rate. But in the United States, the contrary is true. It was the male labour force that decreased while the female labour force increased. In this case, what could be happening is that as some male breadwinners are losing their jobs and facing difficulties in finding new ones, their wives are forced to take up work where they can get it to keep the household afloat. The one sector where female employment increased over the period was education and health care, one of the sectors most resilient to the business cycle.

### 3.3.4

#### **INDICATOR 9:**

##### *INFORMAL EMPLOYMENT*

#### ■ Do data support claims of a feminization of the informal sector?

Informal and formal work should not be understood as dichotomous but as intimately linked and frequently overlapping. The ILC gender equality report notes that informal and formal work exists along a continuum, with informal work lying outside the regulatory framework. Given that formal wage labour is not widely present for many parts of the world, classification into “formal” and “non-formal” is not always relevant or useful. Yet, there is no avoiding the widespread hunger for information about the informal sector and informal employment and a need to place the issue on the table as one of the main areas of contention between the developed and developing worlds. We read, for example, that the current economic crisis has led to major increases in informal economy jobs, with the proliferation of outsourcing, subcontracting and casual work.<sup>44</sup> We also hear again and again about the dominance of women in the informal economy. Can either claim be backed up with hard data? Unfortunately, the answer to this is “not yet”; sufficient country-level data on informal employment is not yet available.

As explained in the KILM manuscript for the “employment in the informal sector” indicator (KILM 7), informal employment is a relatively recent concept (see the KILM 6th Edition, box 7b). It exists as a reaction to criticisms that the only currently available measure of informality, employment in the informal sector, excluded aspects of informality that can exist outside of informal sector enterprises as currently defined. Casual, short-term and seasonal workers, for example, could be, for all intents and purposes, informally employed – lacking social protection, health benefits, legal status, rights and freedom of association – but because they are employed in the formal sector are not considered within the measure of employment in the informal sector. The ILO Department of Statistics and the 17th ICLS took up the challenge for the development of a statistical definition and measurement framework of informal employment to complement the existing standard of employment in the informal sector. The 17th ICLS defined informal employment as the total number of informal jobs, whether carried out in formal sector enterprises, informal sector enterprises, or households, during a given reference period. Included are:

1. own-account workers (self-employed with no employees) in their own informal sector enterprises;

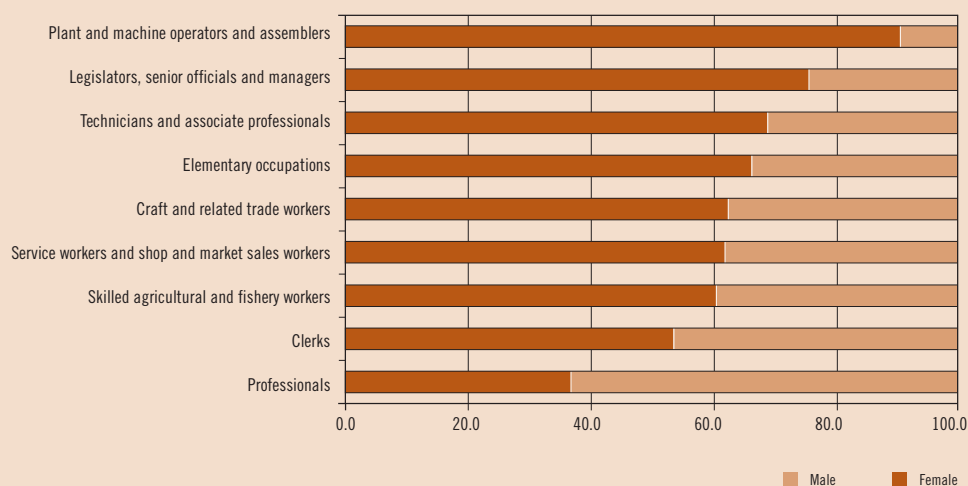
<sup>44</sup> ILO: *Gender equality at the heart of decent work*, Report VI, op. cit., p. 114.

2. employers (self-employed with employees) in their own informal sector enterprises;
3. contributing family workers, irrespective of type of enterprise;
4. members of informal producers' cooperatives (not established as legal entities);
5. employees holding informal jobs as defined according to the employment relationship (in law or in practice), jobs not subject to national labour legislation, income taxation, social protection or entitlement to certain employment benefits (paid annual or sick leave, etc.); and
6. own-account workers engaged in production of goods exclusively for own final use by their household.

### Box 8. Employment by occupation

The classification of employment by occupation is not currently a KILM indicator, although it will be added to the next edition. The indicator offers greater depth to an analysis of female labour market trends. Specifically, it is with this indicator that the so-called “glass ceiling”, which prevents women (and other disadvantaged groups) from reaching the top levels of management, becomes evident. Data on employment by occupation are currently available for a significant number of countries in the ILO Department of Statistics database, LABORSTA (<http://laborsta.ilo.org>). We reproduce here a brief analysis of employment by occupation data for Sri Lanka as a demonstration of the clear-cut inequality of male-female representation across occupations.

#### Employment by occupation (based on ISCO-88) in Sri Lanka, by sex, 2008



Source: ILO Department of Statistics, LABORSTA database, table 2c: Total employment by occupation; <http://laborsta.ilo.org>.

The 2008 data for Sri Lanka showed that women were concentrated mostly in the professional and clerical categories. The former may be due to the increasing concentration of women in the legal, teaching and nursing professions, but also to the fact that it is the public sector that dominates female employment in the country. Top-level occupations – categories: senior officials and managers and technicians and associate professionals – are clearly dominated by males.

The development of a measure for informal employment has big implications for both gender analysis and policy-making (hence, the more technical discussion allotted to the topic in this report). First, as more and more countries incorporate measurement of the concept into their statistical frameworks, we should have more data from which to support or defend the claim to a dominance of women in the informal economy. According to a forthcoming report, “It is often assumed that more women are found earning a living in the informal economy than men, but accurate statistics show wide variation across countries when applying the measure of employment in the informal sector. Among the 12 countries surveyed, it was only in three (Ecuador, Mali and South Africa) that women were more likely to be engaged in the informal sector than men.<sup>45</sup> When looking at the broader measure of informal employment, however, most countries did show greater shares of women than men.”<sup>46</sup>

Looking at the six categories to be included in the measure of informal employment, even without hard data, one can guess at the gender dimensions within each. Categories 1 and 2, own-account workers and employers, are likely to be more male than female (see section 3.3.2). Categories 3 and 6, contributing family workers and own-account workers engaged in production of goods exclusively for own final use by their household, will be more female than male. Category 4, members of producers’ cooperatives could be mixed but this is likely to be a nominal number anyway. The big unknown remains category 5, employees holding informal jobs.

Category 5 is an extremely interesting and very important addition. In essence, “employees holding informal jobs” is where we add in all jobs characterized by an employment relationship that is not subject to national labour legislation, income taxation, social protection or entitlement to certain employment benefits (for example, paid annual or sick leave). Casual workers would be captured within the group, as would many temporary and part-time workers – all of whom work in situations that tend to attract females seeking to earn some income while maintaining the household and childcare responsibilities. If measured within the “status in employment” indicator only, the workers in such situations are classified as wage and salaried workers – a statistic that is given a positive value in the interpretation. If, however, “employees in informal jobs” becomes a measurable sub-category of the status group, following the guidelines designed by the 17th ICLS,<sup>47</sup> and data are increasingly collected and disseminated by national statistical offices, labour market researchers will gain immensely in the ability to locate and analyse the additional area of worker vulnerability.

When it comes to the importance of the new measure to policy-making, we know that national policies are better informed when the magnitude of informal work, as well as the conditions found therein, is known. Since the informal economy is generally recognized as entailing a missing legal identity, poor work conditions, lack of membership in social protection systems, incidence of work-related accidents and ailments, and limited freedom of association, generating statistics that count the number of persons within the group will certainly broaden the knowledge base concerning the extent and content of policy responses required. And if women prove to be more vulnerable to informal employment, as the initial review of data hints, then gender-specific policies would be called for as well.

<sup>45</sup> The difficulty in backing up the assumption is further supported in the recent analysis of KILM 7 data; see figure 7b in the “Trends” section, KILM 6th Edition, op. cit.

<sup>46</sup> ILO: *Decent work and the informal economy: A consolidated reader*, Chapter 3, Measuring the informal economy: Statistical challenges (tentative title), forthcoming 2010.

<sup>47</sup> *Guidelines concerning a statistical definition of informal employment*, adopted by the 17th International Conference of Labour Statisticians, Geneva, 2003; [http://www.ilo.org/global/What\\_we\\_do/Statistics/standards/guidelines/lang--en/docName--WCMS\\_087622/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/What_we_do/Statistics/standards/guidelines/lang--en/docName--WCMS_087622/index.htm).

### **Box 9. The current economic crisis and the gender impact (3): Beyond unemployment**

Already, the current economic crisis has been diligently dissected in the research community. Some studies focus on the causal factors, others on the impact and still others look for commonalities between this economic crisis and previous ones. The gender impact of the crisis also remains a topic of interest. One such study specific to the Asian region is a very thorough, recent ILO report, “Asia in the Global Economic Crisis: Impacts and Responses from a Gender Perspective”.<sup>1</sup> One of its main findings is that “the casual and contract labourers, temporary workers, rural migrant and seasonal workers, and employees in subcontracted and small-scale enterprises have suffered the heaviest blows during the first wave of job cuts.”<sup>2</sup> Such workers are especially vulnerable in the face of job losses since they are typically not subject to any forms of social protection. In terms of identifying why the crisis will impact men and women differently, the report points to gender-based job segregation (see the discussion in box 7), the fact that women make up a greater share than men of the “buffer workforce” listed above, a stronger tendency for women than men to fall outside of the labour force rather than continue with the job search (the so-called “male breadwinner bias”), the shift to informal employment for both sexes but probably more so for women than men, and an “added worker” effect if women take up work to help the family to withstand the crisis and the possible negative consequences when it comes to children’s welfare.

Another interesting gender analysis of the crisis, this time specific to the European Union, is a European Commission report, “Analysis note: Gender equality and recession”.<sup>3</sup> This paper posits that when looking at the traditional statistics such as employment and unemployment, this crisis, like many in the past, will show little overall change to the status quo of gender differentials. But the author warns that, “as with other areas of labour market performance the statistics often disguise feminised patterns of behaviour shaped by national rules and norms around labour market activity as well as the constrained labour supply decisions women face ...”.<sup>4</sup> One example of “feminised patterns of behaviour” is a situation in which both a male and female spouse lose their jobs. The tendency in such a case would be for the female to stay home and concentrate on household duties, allowing the husband to concentrate on the job search. And women have been found to be slower to return to work as economic recovery settles in. One also cannot ignore the risks of an increased marginalization of female labour as women take up part-time and flexible jobs, which dominate the available work opportunities during a recession. Men are less likely to “settle” for such work, but will rather hold out as unemployed until a full-time “real job” becomes available. Many of these part-time female workers will be working shorter hours involuntarily and will therefore qualify as time-related underemployed, an area of labour slack to be included in the wider measure of labour underutilization mentioned in section 3.2. If the measure of labour underutilization becomes more widely available at the country level, it would be an interesting exercise to review the data over the course of the recession. The suspicion is that this is where the real gender impact of the economic crisis will show up.

<sup>1</sup> ILO: *Asia in the global economic crisis: Impacts and responses from a gender perspective*, Technical note, Responding to the Economic Crisis – Coherent Policies for Growth, Employment and Decent Work in Asia and Pacific, Manila, Philippines, 18-20 February 2009; [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/documents/meetingdocument/wcms\\_101737.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_101737.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> M. Smith: *Gender equality and recession*, Analysis note, May 2009; <http://grenoble-em.academia.edu/marksmith/Papers>.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, p. 9.

(cont.)



*Box 9 (cont.)*

The main theme of the author is a very important one: “gender equality should not be a fair weather policy priority”. He reminds us that many of the gains made toward gender equality in the EU, particularly under the framework of the European Employment Strategy, have been driven by policy interventions such as reconciliation policies that help women to balance work with family responsibilities. In the face of budget cuts, such programmes might be seen as expendable. And employers too might be tempted to limit policies and initiatives that aid women.<sup>5</sup> Both possibilities must be fought against by raising awareness of the overall gains that come with gender equality. The economic crisis offers a possibility, the author says, to refocus attention on redressing some lingering inequalities. He finishes with an outline of “guidelines for a gender mainstreamed response to the recession”. Let us hope that they are brought to the attention of policy-makers as they begin to outline their recovery strategies.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*, p. 17.

### 3.3.5

#### **INDICATOR 10:**

##### *PART-TIME WORKERS (KILM 5)*

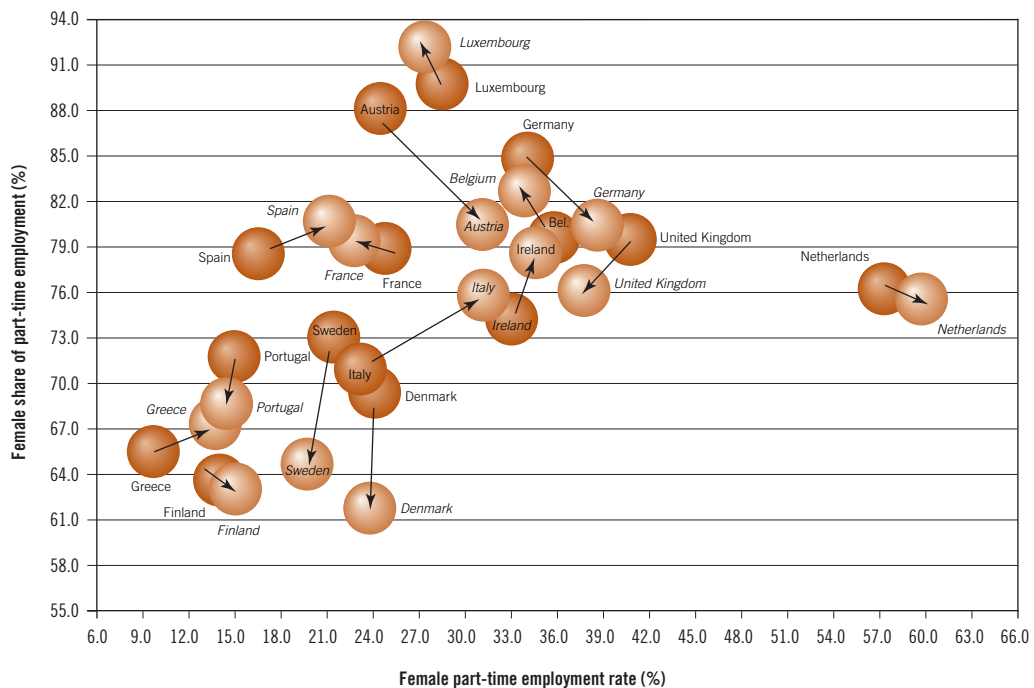
From a gender perspective, part-time work is one of the most important indicators to describe the characteristics of the female labour force, along with status and sector. Unfortunately, though, it is an indicator that has little relevance in many developing economies, where the institutional structures for formal (time-bound) working arrangements are less common and where hours of work might be driven by a need to maximize income in the face of poverty. In general, one can assume that where the share of wage and salaried workers in total employment is small (in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, for example; see section 3.3.2 above), the issue of part-time work is not overly important. For countries in the Developed Economies & European Union, Central & South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS and Latin America & the Caribbean, on the other hand, the indicator remains highly relevant, especially for women. In fact, access to part-time work has been an important driver of the increase in the economic engagement of women in these regions over the last 20 years.

- What are the trends regarding part-time employment and why is it so strongly a female domain in developed economies?

Figure 17, an update of figure 5b in the KILM 6th Edition, looks at the trends in female part-time work in 15 EU countries. The figure shows the relationship between female part-time employment rates (share of part-time workers in total employment) and the female share in total part-time employment, and also builds in a time element to show how the two variables and their relationship has changed over the period 2000 to 2008. One can pull out many interesting findings from here: first, part-time employment rates were particularly high in Belgium, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. In these countries, at least one out of three working women was engaged in part-time work in 2008. In all the countries, part-time work is clearly a female domain (with the female share ranging from 62 per cent in Denmark to 92 per cent in Luxembourg). In Denmark, Portugal, Sweden and the United Kingdom, the female share of part-time employment decreased over the period while female part-time employment rates decreased as well, indicating that fewer women in these countries are selecting

FIGURE 17.

**Female part-time employment rates and female shares of total part-time employment between 2000 and 2008, 15 EU countries**



Note: The arrows denote the movement in the related two variables between the 2000 to 2008 period.  
Source: KILM 6th Edition, table 5.

part-time over full-time work and also that the increase in male part-time workers exceeded that of female part-time workers over the period.

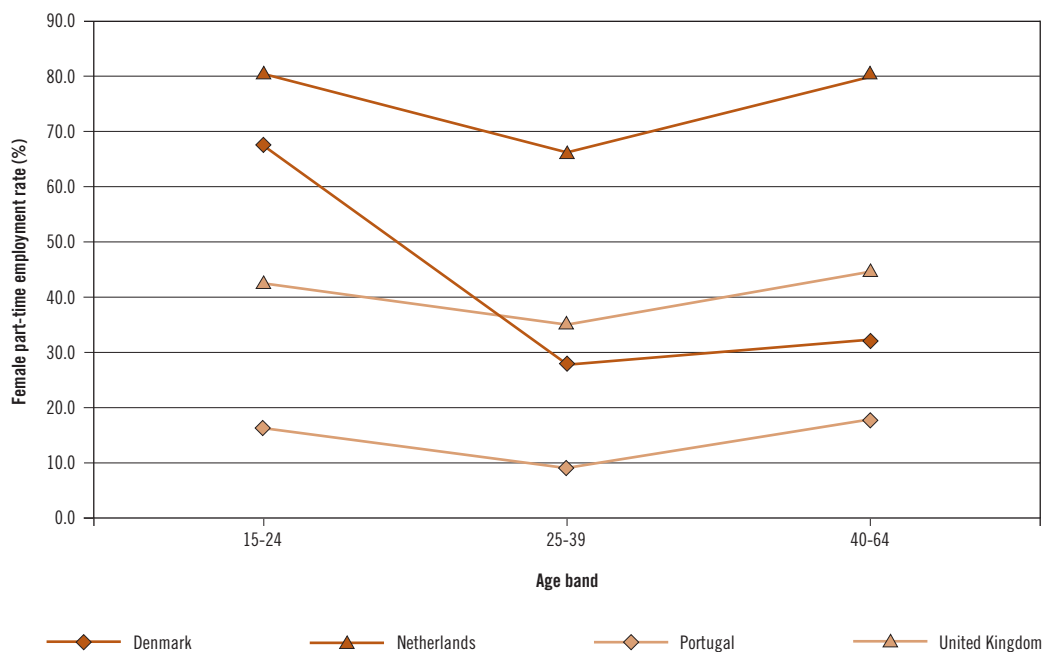
In Greece, Ireland, Italy and Spain, the situation differs. In these countries, both the female share of part-time employment and female part-time employment rates increased over time. These trends cement the fact that in the majority of countries found in the area of southern Europe, part-time work continues to be strongly a female domain. In the remaining countries (less France, Luxembourg and Belgium), the numbers showed an increase in female part-time employment rates accompanied by slight declines in the female share indicating that men in these countries (Austria, Finland, Germany and the Netherlands) have also started to take up part-time employment.

■ Is part-time employment an opportunity or a cost for women?

An important question of relevance to this section is whether or not women take up part-time work entirely voluntarily or because there are no viable alternatives (either in placement opportunities or for balancing family responsibilities)? The high incidences of time-related underemployment for some women, discussed above in section 3.2, tend to lend support to the second premise over the first. So, presuming many women take up part-time work as an only alternative, what are the costs to them in terms of lower pay, lack of benefits (social security, etc.), representation and voice, and their ultimate career paths? From a gender perspective, does the increase in part-time work perpetuate the marginalization of females? As highlighted in the ILC report on gender equality, the issue of part-time work raises an interesting quandary: given that some women currently working part-time might not have entered the labour force

FIGURE 18.

### Female part-time employment rates by age groups in Denmark, the Netherlands, Portugal and the United Kingdom, 2008



Source: EUROSTAT, European Labour Force Survey, online database, “Full-time and part-time employment – LFS series (lfsa\_emptpt)”.

at all had the option not been available, and would have thus remained economically inactive, it is difficult to deem the phenomenon of part-time work as a “bad” thing, despite the costs involved. As stated in the report, “the issue raises questions as to how to achieve gender equality without reinforcing gender inequality”.<sup>48</sup> Part-time work is one of the variables that make female engagement in labour markets unique. Family remains a top priority for many women and working short hours allows them to care for children and also earn some income. It is important to remember that when freely chosen and well protected, part-time work is certainly not a negative phenomenon.

Figure 18 reveals some interesting dynamics in national female labour markets that are played out during the childbearing years. Here we have selected four European countries to examine the female part-time employment rates over the life span and find some important differences. First, as already shown above, female part-time work in the Netherlands is a common occurrence, certainly more so than in the other countries. Box 10 investigates the possible reasons why. Second, there is a significant range of differences in rates across the four countries. It would be an interesting exercise to identify if some of the same institutional factors found to be associated with high incidences of part-time employment among women in the Netherlands are lacking in the other countries, especially Portugal where very few women engage in part-time work, or if there are other explanatory factors at play there.

<sup>48</sup> ILO: *Gender equality at the heart of decent work*, Report VI, op. cit.

### Box 10. Why are there so many female part-time workers in the Netherlands?

During the last decades, the Dutch labour market has been characterized by high rates of female part-time employment. In 2008, the maximum female part-time employment rate among the European Union was that of the Netherlands at 59.9 per cent. Why are so many Dutch women attracted by the option of part-time work? There is evidence of both push and pull factors. It appears that initially women were driven to take up part-time work because of the limited access to childcare facilities in the country. With the shift from a manufacturing- to a service-based economy, demand for female labour increased after the 1950s, but the lack of a family support system for working mothers drove women to take up part-time opportunities only. Portegijs and Keuzenkamp draw attention to the 1950s when part-time jobs were offered to married women because of inadequate numbers of young female staff.<sup>1</sup>

In subsequent years, the Dutch Government, recognizing a need to maintain traditional values without undermining the female desire (or financial push) to participate in economic activities, has intervened through laws and policies that protect the legal position of part-time workers. A series of laws and collective agreements instituted in the early 1990s have created a situation in which part-time workers are subject to a statutory minimum wage and minimum holiday allowance, equal treatment in wages, overtime payments, bonuses and training.<sup>2</sup> Thus, part-time employment has become not just an “only” option for Dutch women but a “desirable” option that allows them to balance work and family life without sacrificing the benefits that were traditionally a full-timer privilege only. Other European countries have experimented with similar initiatives to regularize part-time employment in keeping with the ILO Part-time Work Convention (C175) and European Community directive (EC directive 97/81/EC of 15th December 1997) but still part-time employment has not taken off to the same extent as in the Netherlands. The real difference may lie in the fact that part-time employment has become culturally and socially accepted in the Netherlands, while it is still associated with marginalization in some other countries.

Booth and van Ours raise the question of whether the current situation of high female part-time employment rates is a stepping stone to a higher proportion of women in full-time jobs. According to their results, part-time employment in the Netherlands is here to stay, at least in the near future, since overall job satisfaction of partnered women relates positively with their engagement in part-time work.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> W. Portegijs and S. Keuzenkamp: *Nederland deeltijdland* [Netherlands part-time country], Sociaal and Cultureel Planbureau, Den Haag, 2008.

<sup>2</sup> N. Bosch, A. Deelen and R. Euwals: *Is Part-time Employment Here To Stay? Evidence from the Dutch Labour Force Survey 1992-2005*, Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA) Working Paper 3367 (IZA, Bonn, 2008).

<sup>3</sup> A.L. Booth and J.C. van Ours: *Part-Time Jobs: What Women Want?*, Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA) Discussion Paper 4686 (IZA, Bonn, 2010).

Looking across the age groups, women (and men) are most likely to engage in part-time work at both the younger and older age extremes. This makes sense given that the youth cohort (15-24 years) contains many persons still in education. Working a limited number of hours allows youth to combine work with their studies. As women age, perhaps having finished with their studies, they will be more likely to take up full-time as opposed to part-time work, hence the dip associated with the age cohort 25 to 39 years. There is then another slight upturn in the part-time employment rates associated with the older age band, 40 to 64 years. This cohort could contain women who are returning to work after dropping out to care for their now-grown children. Many older women returning to the labour market after years of absence find it easier to adjust to

part-time work, especially given that they are likely to still maintain the bulk of household and childcare responsibilities. What is interesting to note is the significant drop across the age bands 15-24 and 25-39 years in Denmark, a decrease that is much more severe than in the other countries. This seems to signify that part-time work among women in Denmark is “naturally” around the 30 per cent line and that the high rates among youth are really just a blip caused by the practical need to combine work and studies.

### 3.3.6

#### **INDICATOR 11:**

##### *EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF THE LABOUR FORCE (KILM 14)*

Although the educational attainment indicator here relates to the labour force rather than to employment specifically, we include it in this section as an important indication of the skills base of both men and women in the labour force (of which the employed take up the majority share; see figure 1). The indicator also serves as a necessary bridge to the topic that will follow, that of the gender differentials in occupational wages.

- What is the educational distribution of the female labour force and how does it differ from that of men?

There are some interesting findings when it comes to the educational attainment of the labour force for men and women. In many countries, the female labour force is generally better educated than the male labour force. This statement was supported in the analysis surrounding figure 14b in the KILM 6th Edition. The figure plots the male and female labour force shares across three education levels – primary or less, secondary and tertiary – for all the countries with available data in 2007. The figure confirms that, for both sexes, the highest shares of the labour force by educational attainment were those with either primary- or secondary-level education, which indicates that the bulk of labour supply is still working with low- or medium-level skills. The figure also shows that in most countries (44 of the 53 with comparable data) a higher proportion of the female labour force had attained tertiary education while a larger share of men than women in the labour force were educated at the primary level or below.

Does the fact that an economically active woman is more likely to hold a tertiary degree than a man mean that we are making good progress in the fight for equality in the world of work? No. It simply means that there is a stronger tendency for a more educated woman to remain economically active than a less educated woman. After the lengthy and costly investment in years of education, the opportunity cost in becoming inactive is much greater for the highly educated. The educated person will put up a greater fight to utilize their productive potential. And the fact that it is a fight, much more so for women than men, becomes apparent when we look at another indicator, the unemployment rate by educational attainment (KILM table 11b). Many of these highly educated women who are trying to utilize their skills, trying to get into the labour market, are unable to. The data show a much greater tendency for the educated woman, at both the tertiary and secondary levels, to face unemployment than a man with the same education level (confirmed in figures 11d and 11e in the KILM 6th Edition).

Both supply and demand elements are explanatory variables behind the growing wage gap between low-skilled and high-skilled occupations (see section 3.3.7 below); the demand for workers with tertiary-level education and higher skills, which are in relatively short supply, pushes up their wages, and vice versa for workers with lower-level education. With this theory, is there not then another contradiction in the persistence of gender wage differentials (also discussed below) given that we now find that the female labour force is generally better educated than the male? Again, no, and the reason has to do with the volume of the female educated labour supply

in comparison to that of the corresponding educated male labour force. In terms of numbers, the male labour force outnumbers the female labour force by a factor of between 1.2 and 3 depending on the region, and the same should be more or less true when it comes to the respective educated labour forces. Yes, women are making great progress in gaining access to education and, yes, the trend is for more women to become economically active, but in terms of numbers alone, the balance is still strongly in favour of men. And the volumes will certainly have a big impact on the gender wage differentials. Perhaps the women with higher education are working and receiving decent salaries, but there are simply not enough of them yet to counterbalance the volume of educated, highly-paid men.

### 3.3.7

#### **INDICATOR 12:**

##### *OCCUPATIONAL WAGE AND EARNING INDICES (KILM 16) AND GENDER DIFFERENTIALS*

Pay differentials remain one of the most persistent forms of inequality between males and females in the world of work. Many factors contribute to the gap and it is difficult to distinguish between differences resulting from labour market characteristics (skills, education, participation rates, etc.) and direct or indirect discrimination. Efforts to address the problem need to deal with labour market inequalities and also the more fundamental attitudes to the role of men and women in society, the value of female or male skills and the demands of balancing work and family/household responsibilities.

The KILM 16 indicator offers a rare collection of occupational wage and earning nominal and real indices across 19 occupations, available by sex for many countries. The data set, therefore, offers researchers a rare opportunity to compare wages and earnings at the nominal levels between the sexes. Data are based on the ILO October Inquiry, a worldwide examination of wage rates, earnings and hours of work for a possible set of 159 occupations differentiated in 49 industry groups (together with information on retail prices of 93 food items) and conducted with reference to the month of October of each year.<sup>49</sup> Undertaking the analysis is not an easy task; there are numerous limitations in the data that hamper comparability across sexes, occupations and countries.<sup>50</sup> But a careful weeding out of the comparable data elements can still yield interesting and valuable information on gender wage differentials and the different pay scales of low-skill versus high-skill occupations.

The selected occupations for KILM tables 16a (wages) and 16b (earnings) are:

- (1) labourer in construction;
- (2) welder in metal, manufacturing;
- (3) professional nurse;
- (4) first-level education teacher;
- (5) computer programmer in the insurance sector;
- (6) accountant in the banking sector;

<sup>49</sup> For further information, see ILO: *Statistics on occupational wages and hours of work and on food prices: October Inquiry Results* (Geneva, various years); the latest results are also available in CD-ROM format and on the LABORSTA online database at: <http://laborsta.ilo.org>.

<sup>50</sup> See ILO: *Key Indicators of the Labour Market, 4th Edition* (Geneva, 2005), Chapter 1, section B, "Global trends in wages by sector and occupation", box B1, for details on some of the problems with the data set.

- (7) field crop farm worker;
- (8) garment cutter in apparel manufacturing;
- (9) sewing-machine operator in apparel manufacturing;
- (10) stenographer/typist in printing and publishing;
- (11) office clerk in printing and publishing;
- (12) power distribution and transmission engineer in electric and power;
- (13) salesperson in grocery wholesale trade;
- (14) salesperson in grocery retail trade;
- (15) hotel receptionist;
- (16) room attendant or chambermaid;
- (17) motor bus driver;
- (18) urban motor truck driver; and
- (19) refuse collector.

### Box 11. Unpaid care work

Estimates show that the value of unpaid care work (also called unpaid household work) can be equivalent to at least half of a country's GDP.<sup>1</sup> As noted in the ILC report on gender equality in 2009, governments depend on unpaid care work to reduce the financial burden on the State. It is females that perform most of this work and this reality poses one of the biggest barriers to equality for women. The care economy is a complex concept – broadly defined as “looking after the physical, psychological, emotional and developmental needs of one or more other people”. It spans public and private spheres and cuts across the formal and informal sectors. Although much care is provided through the health services sector, itself a large employer of females, unpaid care work is underestimated and almost totally excluded from gross national product (GNP).

As stated in the executive summary, a broader policy approach to gender equality in the world of work would incorporate the challenging task of valuing unpaid care work. No one would challenge that there is value in caring for the children who will be the drivers of future progress and no one would challenge that there is inherent fulfilment in having the value of one's work recognized. Amartya Sen refers to this as “the recognition aspect”.<sup>2</sup> What many people continue to challenge, however, is the incorporation of household production activities into the SNAs and the labour force framework for measuring employment.<sup>3</sup> The compromise approach seems to be in the development of a system of measuring the value of unpaid household work that parallels the standard SNA-determination of economic activity.

<sup>1</sup> ILO: *Gender equality at the heart of decent work*, Report VI, International Labour Conference, 98th Session, Geneva, June 2009, p. 123.

<sup>2</sup> A. Sen: “Inequality, Unemployment and Contemporary Europe”, in *International Labour Review* (Geneva, ILO, 1997), Vol. 136, No. 2; as quoted in A.S. Young: “Employment statistics as social statistics: Some challenges”, EUROSTAT Conference on Modern Statistics for Modern Societies, Luxembourg, 6-7 December 2007.

<sup>3</sup> See A.S. Young, *ibid.*, for more details on the continuing debate.

### **Previous analysis**

The KILM 4th Edition contained a “key issues in the labour market” section specific to the topic of occupational wage differences between men and women between 1996 and 2003 in selected developed and developing countries using KILM indicator 16.<sup>51</sup> The main findings of the report showed a negative relationship between female labour force participation and the gender wage differentials, as well as an association between high unemployment and high pay differentials, though not for all regions. It showed that globalization had in general narrowed the pay differentials, particularly in low-skilled occupations, but that in the EU there was a large and widening gap.

In the investigation of pay difference by general skill levels, the section included a global ranking of occupations according to average monthly wage and found, not surprisingly, a prevailing wage premium for more technically-skilled workers. The average wages in the top five occupations were more than double the average in the remaining 14 occupations.<sup>52</sup> The study also concluded that the inequality in wages and earnings since the 1980s has been rising – the wages of high-skilled workers have increased while those of low-skilled workers have grown more slowly, remained stagnant or decreased.

### **Current analysis**

- In which occupations is there closer pay equity? Does the skills level of the occupation play a role?

In the review of the KILM’s occupational wage data undertaken for this report, the findings were not always what we would expect. For example, where one would expect to find greater wage equality in the high-skill occupations (since the education and training is presumably comparable), this is not reflected in the data (see figure 18). Gender wage differentials are calculated as the difference between the male and the female nominal wage (with wage measured in the same time frame and average hours worked differing by less than two) as a percentage of the male nominal wage.

It is often claimed that this type of wage gap can be attributable more to labour market characteristics than discrimination; for example, females may earn less due to shorter tenure or shorter hours. However, if we look at some of the reasons for shorter tenure, such as taking a career break to raise a family or working part-time to balance family responsibilities in the absence of structured childcare support, the gender dimension still remains a central issue. Regardless, this critique does not apply to the analysis undertaken here since our analysis compared only nominal wages measured according to the same time element for men and women and applying the same actual hours worked (or less than 2 hours of difference).

The following series of figures (figures 19-21) demonstrates clearly that male-female pay differentials are firmly present in all the occupations and across all skills bases.<sup>53</sup> The occupations showing the lowest differentials were first-level education teacher, professional nurse and office clerk – all occupations that are likely to be dominated by females. The gender wage differential for the occupations at the highest skills level (university degree) reached as high as 32 per cent for computer programmers (in Bahrain) and 33 per cent for accountants (in the

<sup>51</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> The top five occupations at that time were: power distribution engineer, accountant, computer programmer, first-level education teacher and professional nurse.

<sup>53</sup> Occupations are tentatively categorized according to the educational levels and professional qualifications which are expected of the person performing the tasks and duties of each occupation, as described in the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO). See KILM 6th Edition, *op. cit.*, KILM 16 manuscript, for more information.

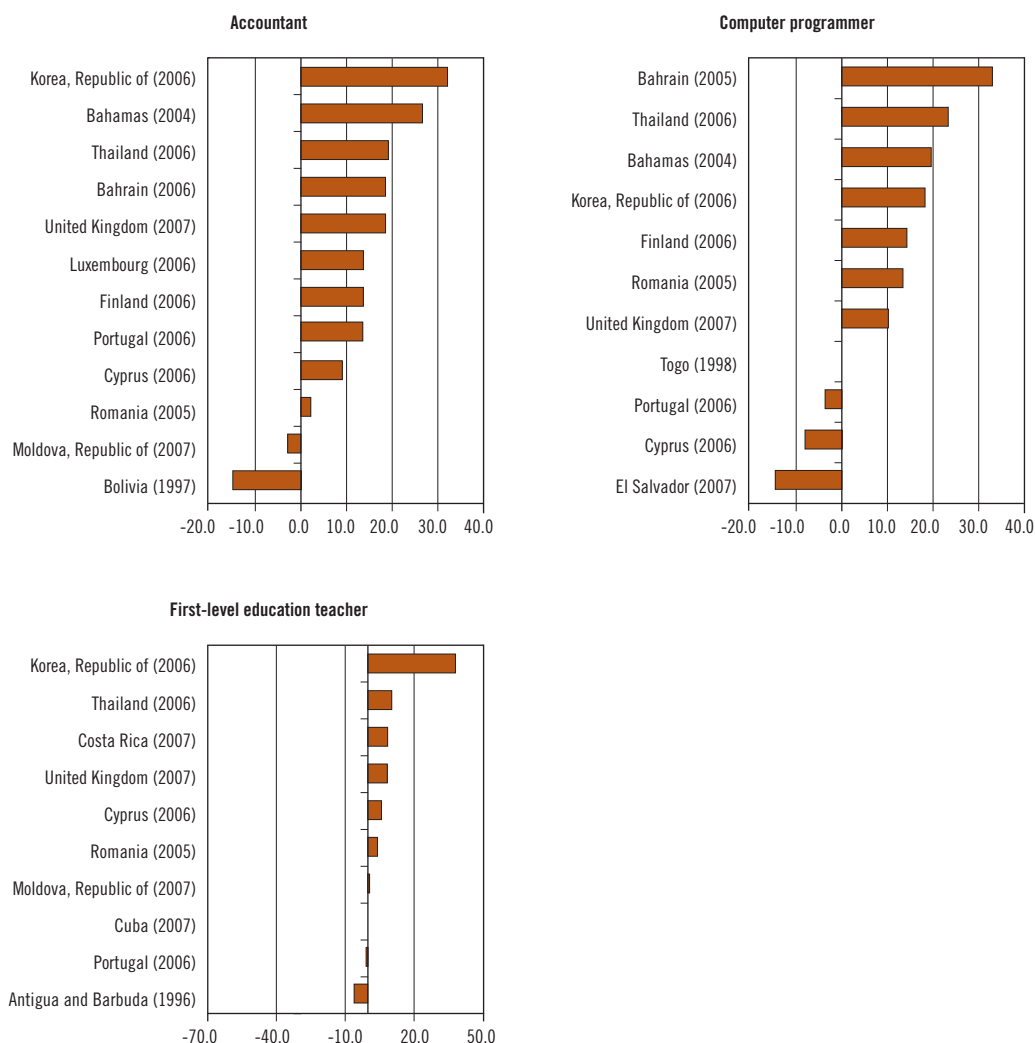


Republic of Korea). For the mid-skills level (secondary-school level) occupations, the gender wage differential for salespersons reached over 40 per cent in Bolivia, with the majority of countries in the range of 10-30 per cent. Even hotel receptionists and professional nurses – traditional female occupations – had large gaps, although there were also more incidences where wages in these occupations were higher for women than men. The countries that consistently showed high wage gaps between the sexes were Kazakhstan, Lithuania, the Republic of Korea and Thailand.

- Are there obvious wage differences between male-dominated and female-dominated occupations? Another means of demonstrating how occupational segregation influences wage differentials is to group the occupations according to male-dominated or female-dominated status and then look at the difference in average pay (in this case, the KILM 6th Edition earnings table 16b was used) across the two categories. The six occupations deemed to be sufficiently male-dominated

FIGURE 19.

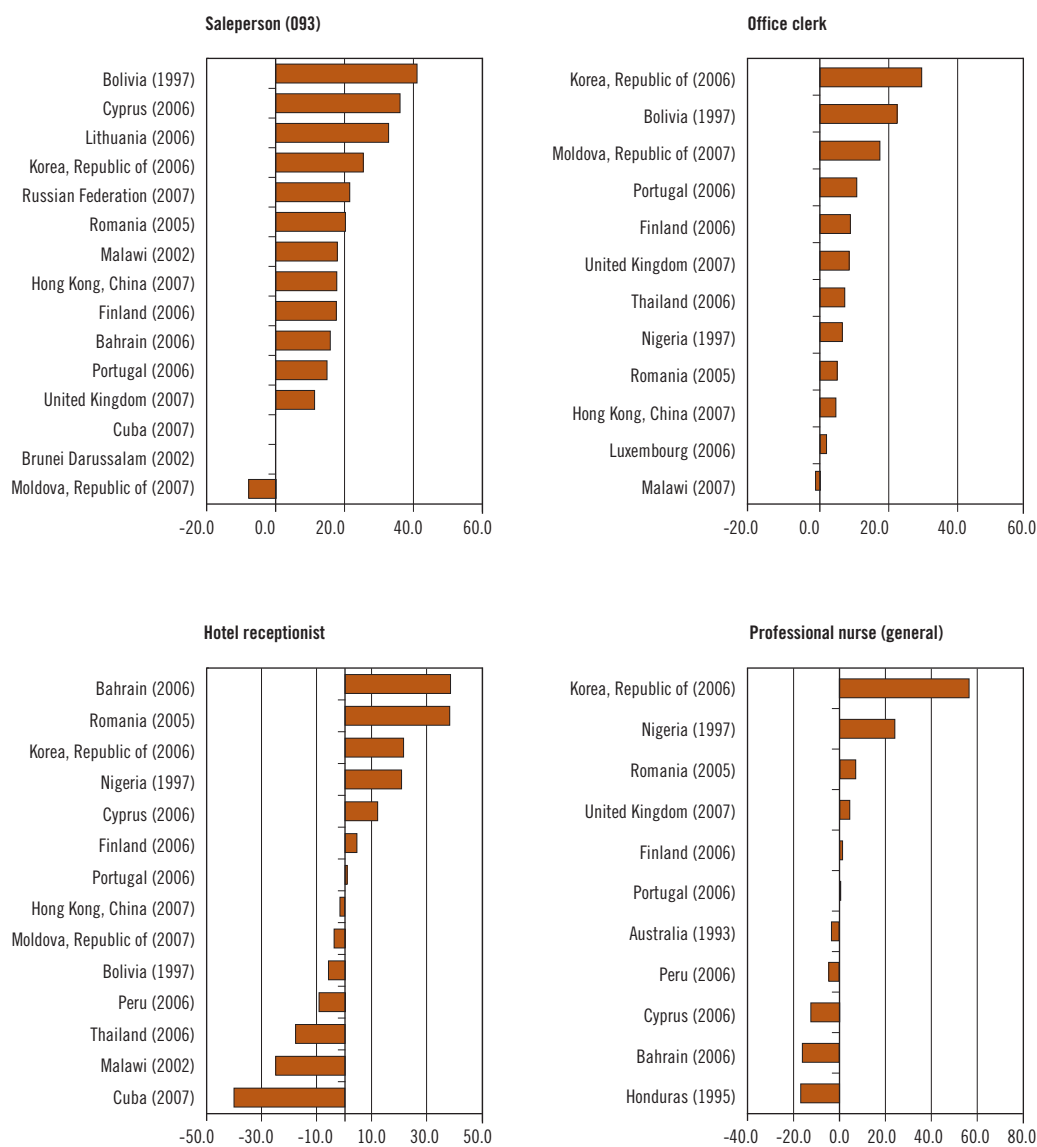
**Gender wage differentials of professional-level occupations (ISCO skill level 4, university degree)**



Source: KILM 6th Edition, table 16a.

FIGURE 20.

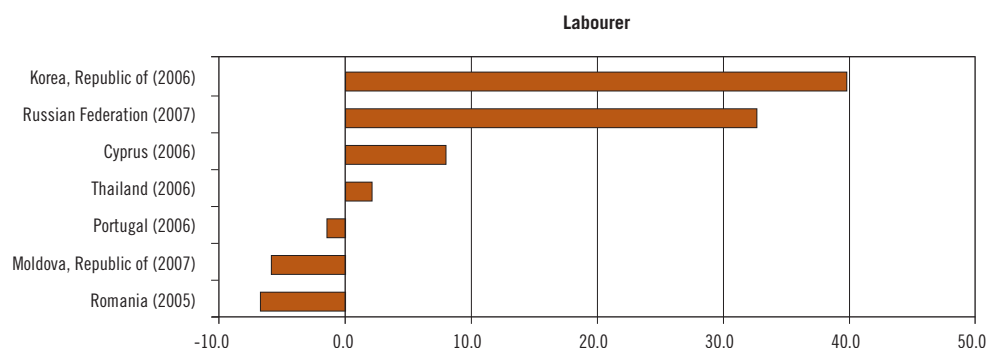
**Gender wage differentials of sales/clerk occupations (ISCO skill level 2, secondary education)**



Source: KILM 6th Edition, table 16a.

are: labourer, welder, power distribution and transmission engineer, motor bus driver, urban motor truck driver and refuse collection. The four female-dominated occupations selected are: professional nurse, sewing-machine operator, stenographer/typist and room attendant or chambermaid. The analysis was based on 14 countries with available recent data. Table 4 shows the results. In the majority of countries there is evidence of a strong wage bias toward male-dominant occupations. The gender wage differential between the two categories of occupations was greater than 20 per cent in eight of the 14 countries.

FIGURE 21.

**Gender wage differentials of unskilled occupations (ISCO skill level 1, primary education)**

Source: KILM 6th Edition, table 16a.

TABLE 4.

**Comparing average earnings and earning differentials across male- and female-dominated occupations, selected countries, latest years**

	Male-dominated occupations	Female-dominated occupations	Gender wage differential (%)
	Earnings (in national currency)	Earnings (in national currency)	
Cuba (3 female occupations, 2007)	2.0	2.0	0.0
Thailand (2006)	11'870.8	11'275.5	5.0
Poland (2006)	2'307.5	2'183.8	5.4
Finland (2006)	2'566.2	2'162.5	15.7
Latvia (2005)	253.5	212.3	16.3
Jordan (2006)	248.0	200.3	19.2
Romania (2005)	869.7	670.8	22.9
United Kingdom (2007)	438.6	327.4	25.4
Australia (2006)	1'140.0	849.3	25.5
Korea, Republic of (2006)	2'216'099.0	1'596'338.0	28.0
Portugal (2006)	1'061.5	745.1	29.8
Slovakia (3 female occupations, 2006)	18'598.8	11'971.0	35.6
Peru (5 male occupations, 2006)	1'642.4	1'040.9	36.6
Moldova, Republic of (2007)	2'844.4	1'617.8	43.1

Source: Author's calculations based on the KILM 6th Edition, table 16b.

### 3.4 Summarizing the trends

The findings in this report suggest that a “new” gender gap is growing. It is less one based on numbers alone – the gap between the number of economically active men and women has been slowly decreasing – and one based more on inequity in the quality of employment. The women who choose to enter the labour market are generally highly educated but still face a difficult time in finding work. For those who do attain work, they are generally segregated in poorly-paid, insecure, home-based or informal employment, partly as a result of lingering discrimination among employers and partly in response to the female need to combine family responsibilities with paid employment. As a result, the earning potential of women continues to be well below that of men.

In general, the trends analysed throughout the report confirm a situation vis-à-vis female employment whereby the sectors where women work, the types of work they do, the relationship of women to the job and the wages they receive are all indicative of a lingering gender disparity. The unfortunate fact remains that engaging in the labour market brings women less gains than the typical working male (monetarily, socially and politically).

The major causes of female inequality are found in the socio-cultural traditions of countries, but also remain deeply embedded in employment structures and the system of economic measurement. What is needed is a broader paradigm of gender equality in relation to employment, one that promotes developments that can ensure that the same gains are brought to women as to men; that empowers women to the same degree as men. The report advocates that countries increase their efforts in the promotion of gender justice in the world of work, exploring innovative policy approaches to challenging labour market biases. Countries where female labour force participation is low, for whatever reasons, can do more to dissolve the barriers to entry. In other countries where the problem is less one of equal opportunity in gaining employment and more in equity in the quality of employment, they can push for the development of a more innovative policy approach, one that goes beyond standard labour market interventions and deals directly with the unique constraints of working women.

## 4 Country profiles

Ten country profiles are presented in this section. The aim here is to demonstrate how even a brief analysis of a limited number of labour market indicators can tell a lot about the gender dimensions of the world of work in a country. Each country offers an interesting case of female labour market trends. The process for selecting the countries to highlight was one of looking at the general trends within indicators and finding “outliers”, i.e. countries that somehow differed from the general regional trends. Some countries showed trends that magnified the regional trend; for example, Ireland, where the growth in the female LFPR during recent decades was higher than the average in the region. Other countries moved contrary to the regional trends; Sri Lanka and the United Republic of Tanzania fit this category (see the discussion on female employment-to-population ratios (EPR) in section 3.1.3). Some countries were added to give a better regional balance. Finally, Finland was selected because of its high ranking in certain gender-specific ratings. Perhaps the trends shown for Finland are demonstrative of certain “good practices” in establishing an institutional framework for promoting gender justice.

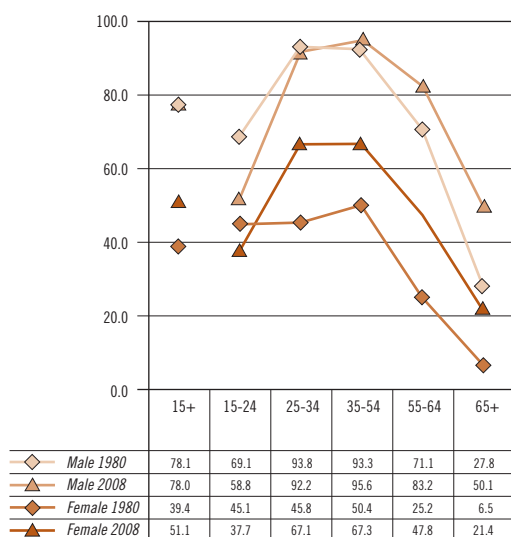
The profile of each country utilizes charts to display the results of up to seven labour market indicators: labour force participation rate (KILM 1), educational attainment of the labour force (KILM 14), total and youth unemployment rate (KILMs 8 and 9), status in employment (KILM 3), employment by sector (KILM 4), part-time employment (KILM 5) and the gender wage differential based on occupational wage data in KILM 16. The KILM 6th Edition served as the basis for all information (latest available year and a year as close as possible to ten years prior, subject to data availability). Not all countries have data for all seven indicators in which case only the available subset is shown.

The country profiles and their page numbers are as follows:

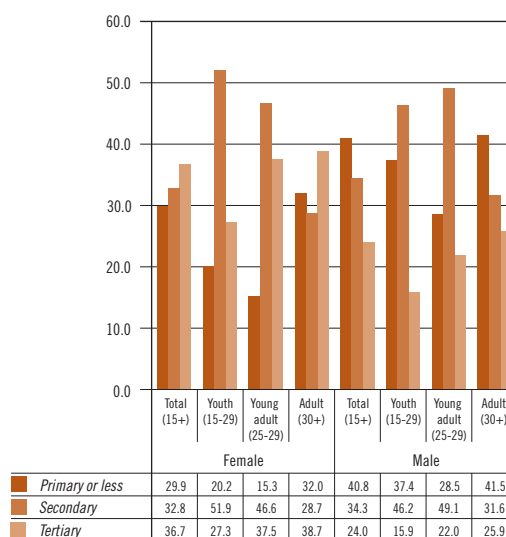
■ Argentina . . . . .	60
■ Costa Rica . . . . .	62
■ Finland . . . . .	64
■ Ireland . . . . .	67
■ Netherlands . . . . .	70
■ Spain . . . . .	72
■ Sri Lanka . . . . .	74
■ Thailand . . . . .	76
■ United Arab Emirates . . . . .	78
■ United Republic of Tanzania . . . . .	80

## ARGENTINA

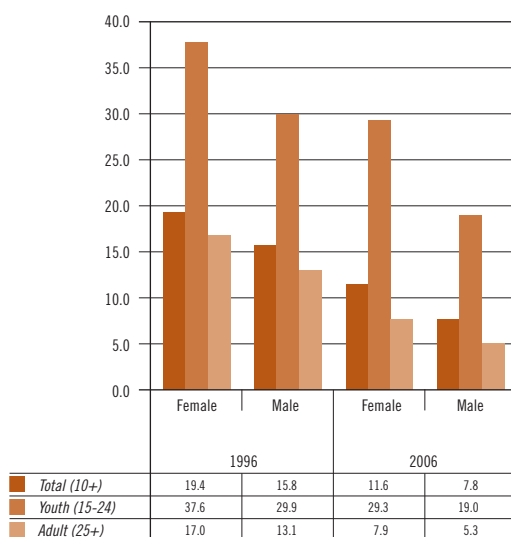
Labour force participation rate (%) by age group, 1980 and 2008



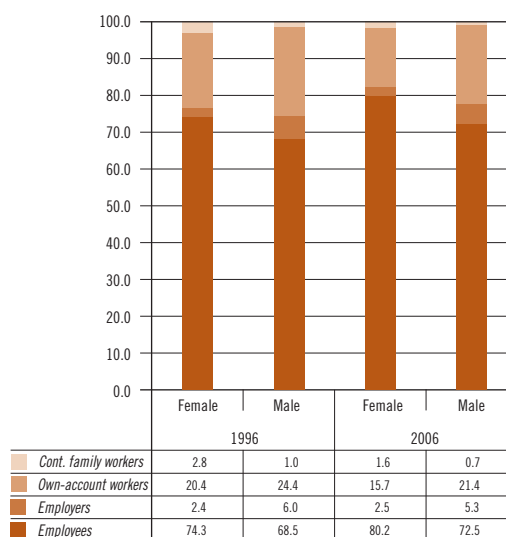
Distribution of labour force by level of educational attainment (%), 2006



Unemployment rate (%), total, youth and adult, 1996 and 2006



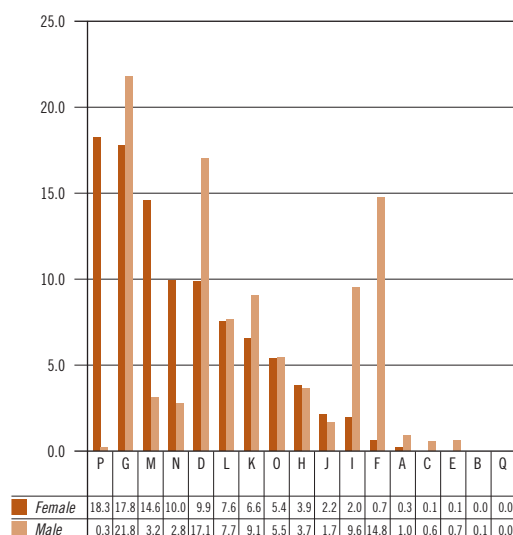
Distribution of total employment by status in employment (%), 1996 and 2006



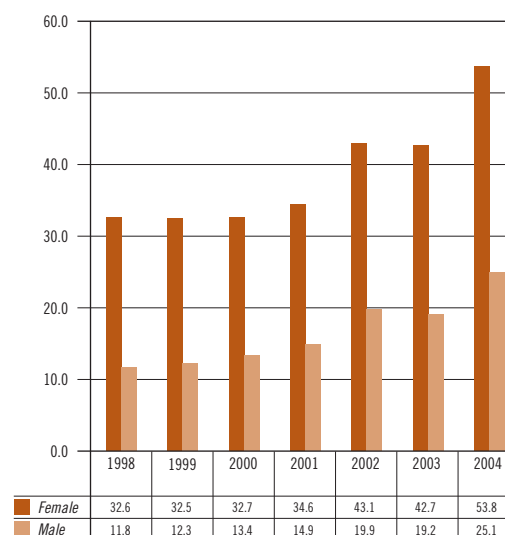
### MAIN FINDINGS

- Total female LFPs (15+) in 2008 was 51.1 per cent, compared to 78.0 per cent for men. Female LFPs have shown a huge increase between 1980 and 2008 for all age groups but particularly among prime-age women (25-54 years). The gap between male and female economic activity has narrowed significantly over the period, but male LFPs in 2008 still remained approximately 20 percentage points above females across all age bands.

**Distribution of employment by 1-digit sector level (ISIC-Rev. 3, 1990) (%), 2006**



**Part-time employment rate (%), 1998-2004**



#### Key for 1-digit sector of employment (ISIC revision 3)

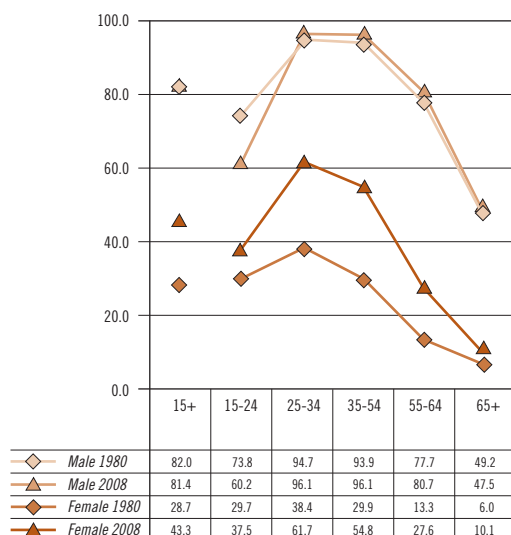
**A**-Agriculture, hunting and forestry, **B**-Fishing, **C**-Mining and quarrying, **D**-Manufacturing, **E**-Electricity, gas and water supply, **F**-Construction, **G**-Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles, motorcycles and personal and household goods, **H**-Hotels and restaurants, **I**-Transport, storage and communications, **J**-Financial intermediation, **K**-Real estate, renting and business activities, **L**-Public administration and defence; compulsory social security, **M**-Education, **N**-Health and social work, **O**-Other community, social and personal services activities, **P**-Private households with employed persons, **Q**-Extra-territorial organizations and bodies.

- Women with a low level of education (primary level) are less likely to be economically active than men of the same education level. There is greater likelihood of finding a female in the labour force holding a tertiary degree than a male. Women with at least a secondary-level education are more likely to take the decision to engage in economic activity.
- Total unemployment rates (10+) are higher for women than for men, with an increasing female-male gap between 1996 and 2006. Both men and women saw significant drops in rates over the period. Youth unemployment is higher than the total for both sexes, but the ratio of youth-to-adult unemployment rates were higher for women.
- The majority of workers in Argentina are engaged as wage and salaried workers in formal enterprises. The main differences are in the proportion of men and women in the employment statuses of employers and own-account workers, both of which showed higher shares for men.
- The segregation of women in the typical female sectors is evident. The largest share of female employment are in trade, education and health services but there are also a substantial number of females in the manufacturing sector, one typically considered to be a male domain.
- Female engagement in part-time work is on the rise. The male tendency to take up part-time work is also increasing but the share of male part-time workers remains much lower than the female.

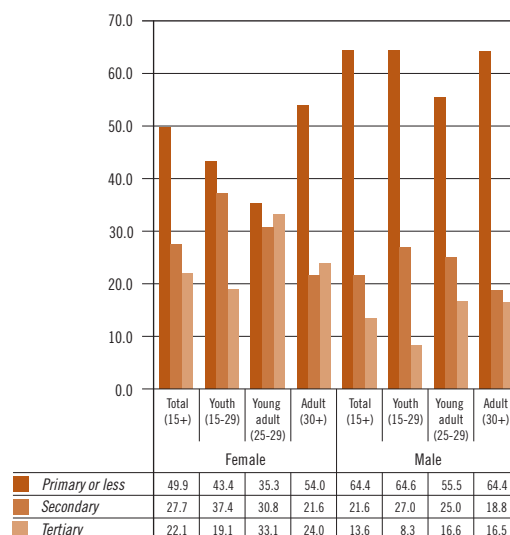
Source: KILM tables 1a, 3, 4b, 5, 8a, 9 and 14a. Data for Argentina are based on an annual labour force survey, covering 28 urban agglomerations.

## COSTA RICA

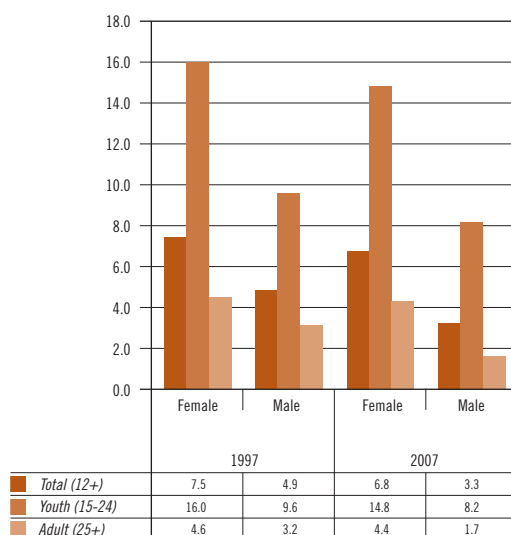
Labour force participation rate (%) by age group, 1980 and 2008



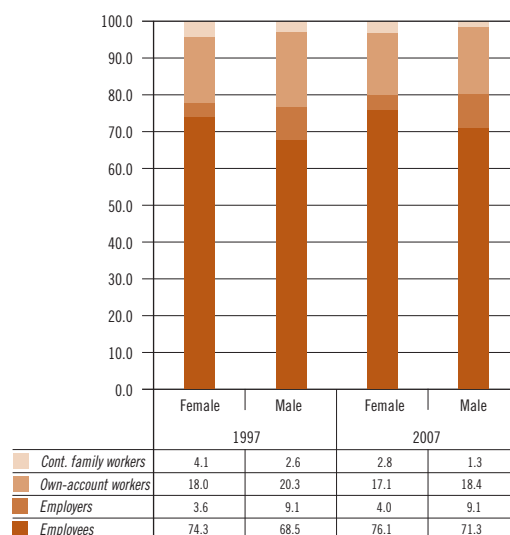
Distribution of labour force by level of educational attainment (%), 2007



Unemployment rate (%), total, youth and adult, 1997 and 2007



Distribution of total employment by status in employment (%), 1997 and 2007

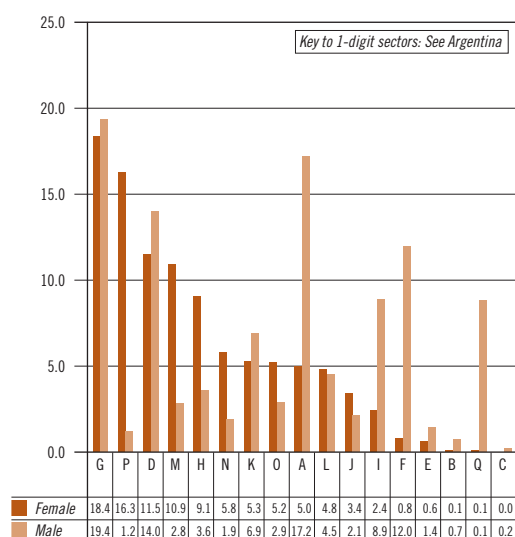


### MAIN FINDINGS

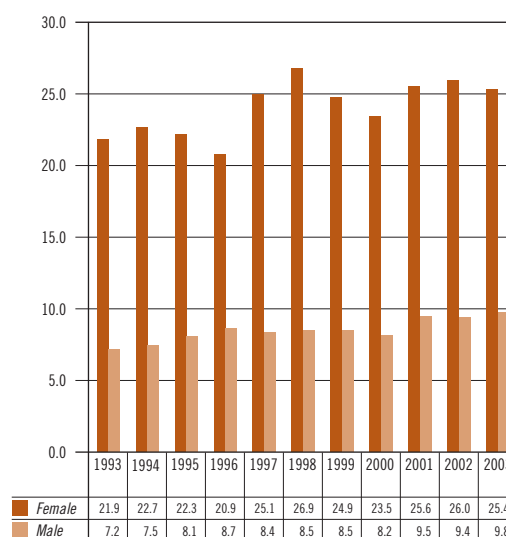
- Total female LFPR (15+) in 2008 was 16.6 percentage points higher than the rate in 1980. Increases occurred over the period for all age groups but were especially high for prime-age women (25-54 years old). The difference between male and female LFPRs decreased over this period but in 2008 it still remained large at around 37 percentage points across all age groups.



**Distribution of employment by 1-digit sector level (ISIC-Rev. 3, 1990) (%), 2006**



**Part-time employment rate (%), 1993-2004**

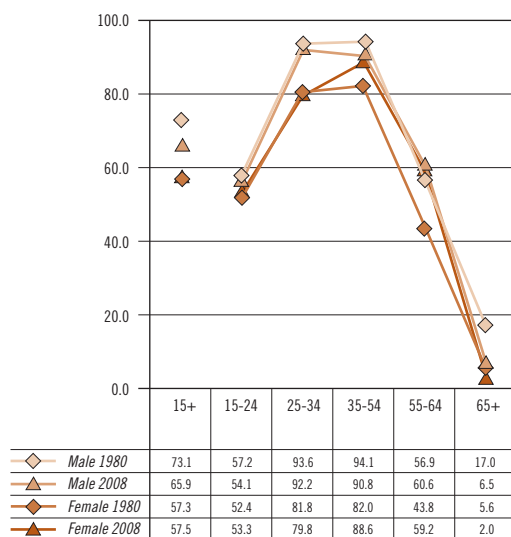


- The majority of both the female and male labour force in Costa Rica holds a primary degree. Women of all age groups with a degree higher than primary are significantly more likely to be economically active than men of the corresponding age group. For example, a woman aged 25 to 29 years, holding a tertiary degree is two times more likely to be engaged in the labour market than a man of the same characteristics.
- Total unemployment rates (12+) are higher for women than men and the gap between the two has decreased between 1997 and 2007. Still the female rate at 6.8 per cent in 2007 was slightly more than double the male rate of 3.3 per cent.
- The majority of the female and male employed population in Costa Rica is wage and salaried workers (employees). The shares of contributing family workers and own-account workers, the two sub-categories of vulnerable employment, decreased between 1997 and 2007 for both women and men.
- Wholesale and retail trade was the main sector employing women in Costa Rica in 2007, followed by private households with employed persons (i.e. female domestic workers) and manufacturing. Men were highly concentrated in agriculture and construction.
- The share of part-time employment among women is almost three times higher than the share among men, which remained below 10.0 per cent between 1993 and 2003. Still, the male part-time employment rate increased by 2.6 percentage points over the period. Female rates, in contrast, increased by 4.5 percentage points.

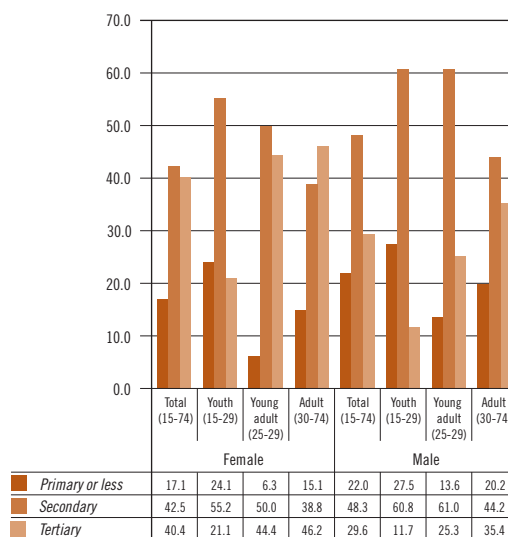
Source: KILM tables 1a, 3, 4b, 5, 8a, 9 and 14a. Data for Costa Rica are based on an annual household survey.

## FINLAND

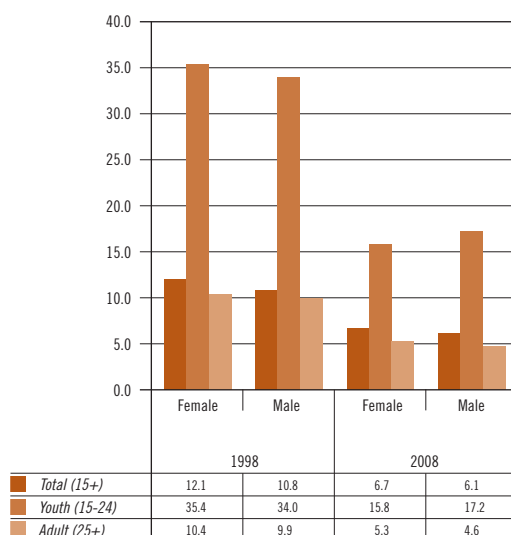
Labour force participation rate (%) by age group, 1980 and 2008



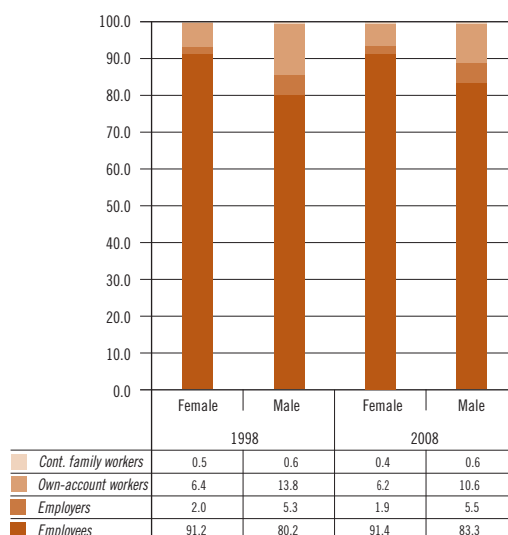
Distribution of labour force by level of educational attainment (%), 2007



Unemployment rate (%), total, youth and adult, 1998 and 2008



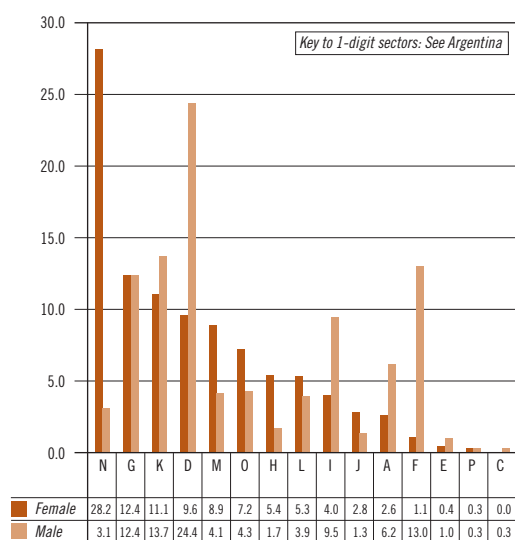
Distribution of total employment by status in employment (%), 1998 and 2008



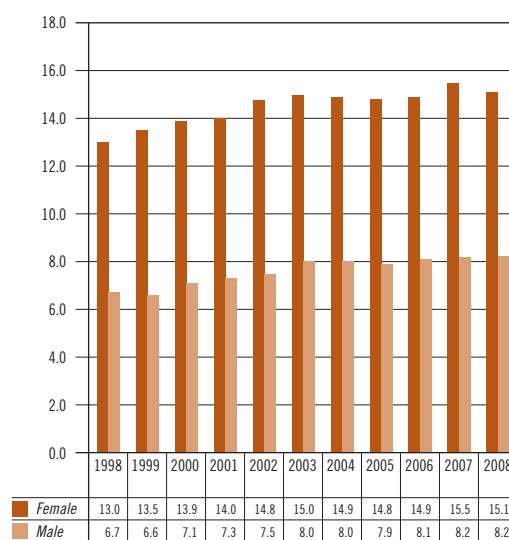
### MAIN FINDINGS

- Total female LFPR (15+), already comparatively high at 57.3 per cent in 1980, barely moved over the period, finishing at 57.5 per cent in 2008. The male LFPR, in contrast, showed a decrease of 7.2 percentage points over the period. Like in other Scandinavian countries, there is near equality in the share of economically active women and men. The gap increased slightly as women entered the child rearing years (25-34 years) but, as women reach the 35-54 age cohort, they re-enter the labour force and reach again near parity with the economically active men.

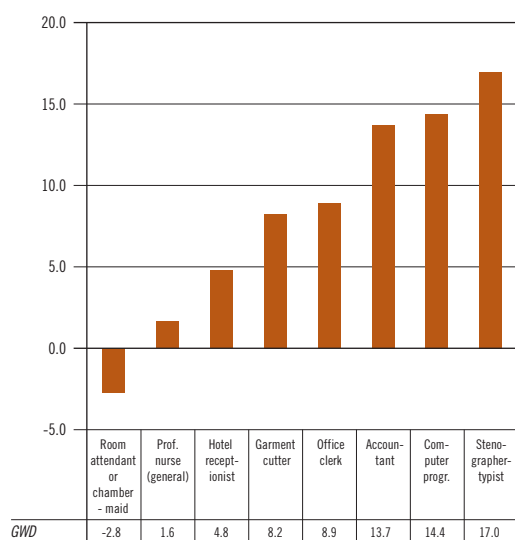
Distribution of employment by 1-digit sector level (ISIC-Rev. 3, 1990) (%), 2008



Part-time employment rate (%), 1998-2008



Gender wage differential in selected occupations (%), 2006

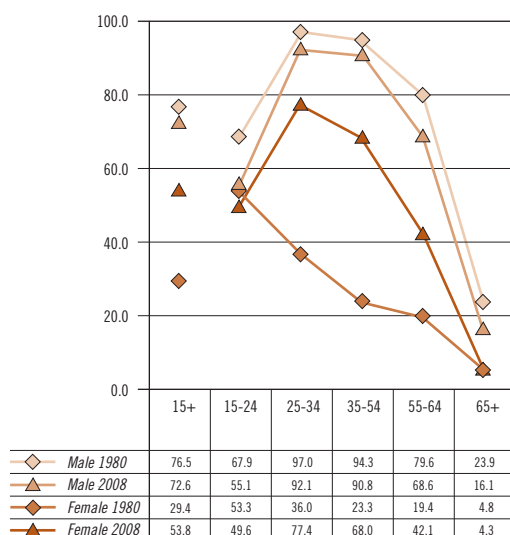


- The majority of the Finnish labour force, both male and female, is educated to at least the secondary level. The share of adult women in the labour force with tertiary degrees is slightly higher than the corresponding share for males (46.2 and 35.4 per cent, respectively).
- Unemployment rates decreased substantially for all age groups and sexes between 1998 and 2008. The total female unemployment rate (15+) at 6.7 per cent exceeded that of the male at 6.1 per cent in 2008, but the opposite was true for the youth rates (15.8 per cent for young women and 17.2 per cent for young males).

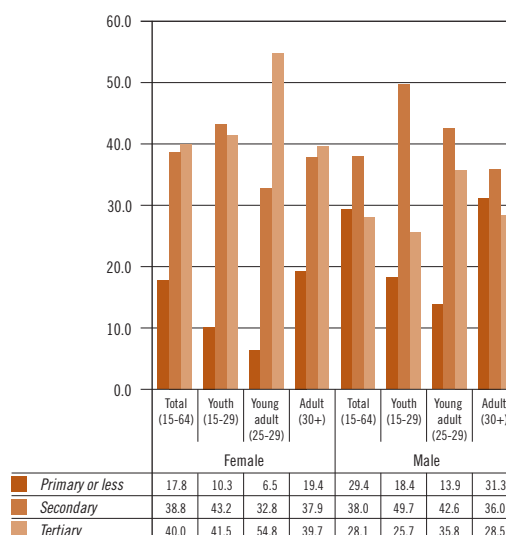
- In 2008, nine out of ten employed women were wage and salaried workers (employees) compared to eight out of ten males. The distribution of total employment by status in employment showed little change between 1998 and 2008.
- Slightly more than one in four working women in Finland were engaged in the health and social work sector. For men, in contrast, the largest sector was manufacturing.
- The share of women in part-time employment was nearly double that of males, but still relatively low at 15.1 per cent in 2008. Part-time employment rates for both sexes have increased slightly between 1998 and 2008.
- Women tend to be paid less than men in the occupations with comparable data for men and women. Only for room attendants were wages more favourable for women.

## IRELAND

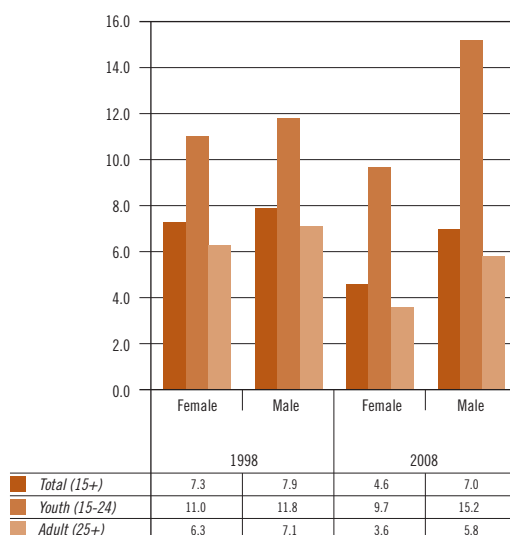
Labour force participation rate (%) by age group, 1980 and 2008



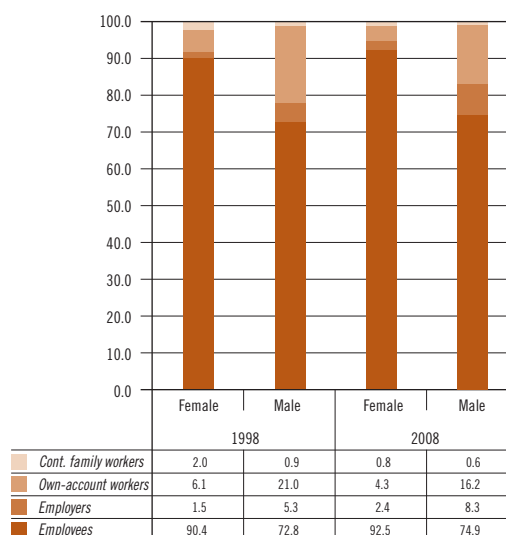
Distribution of labour force by level of educational attainment (%), 2007



Unemployment rate (%), total, youth and adult, 1998 and 2008



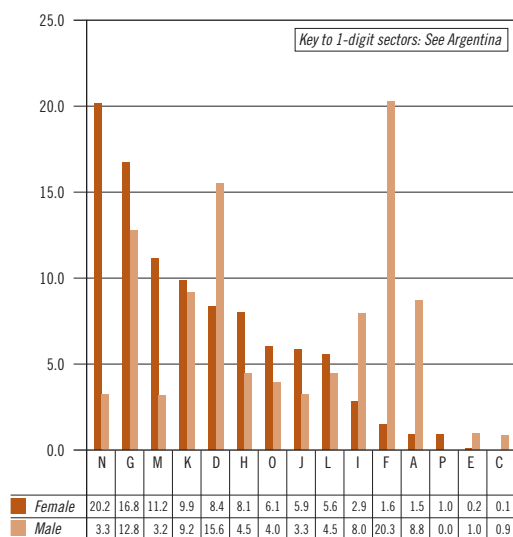
Distribution of total employment by status in employment (%), 1998 and 2008



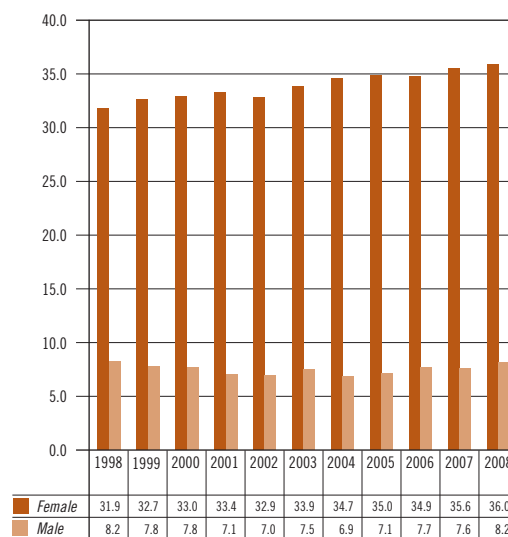
## MAIN FINDINGS

- Total female and male LFPRs (15+) moved in opposite directions between 1980 and 2008; the female rates increased for all demographic groups but youth (15-24 years) and elderly (65+) while male rates showed decreases for all age bands. Thus, the gap between male and female LFPRs narrowed (53.8 per cent for women and 72.6 per cent for men in 2008).

**Distribution of employment by 1-digit sector level (ISIC-Rev. 3, 1990) (%), 2008**



**Part-time employment rate (%), 1998-2008**

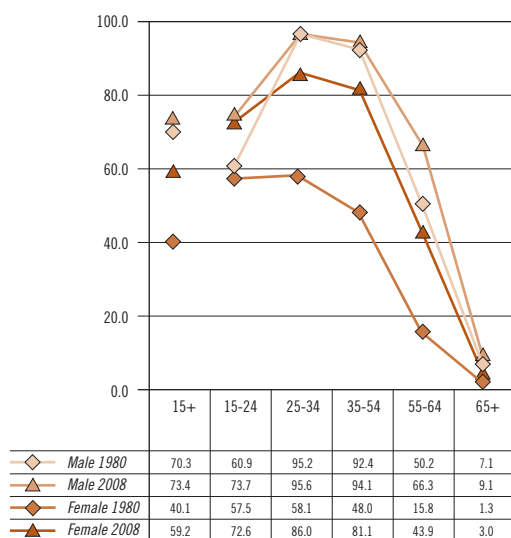


- There has been a dramatic change in the behaviour of Irish women in the child rearing years (aged 25-34) over the 28-year period. In 1980, it appeared that Irish women left the labour force, never to return, as soon as they had children. By 2008, this was no longer the case. The peak of female labour force participation was among 25-34 year-olds in 2008. The rate declined slightly in the 35-54 age cohort but still women in this age group were three times more likely to be economically active in 2008 than a woman in 1980.
- The more educated the adult woman, the more likely she is to be in the labour market. For adult men, labour force participants in 2007 were more likely to be educated to the secondary level or below.
- Unlike in most other countries, the unemployment rates of men across all age groups were higher than those of women. The total female unemployment rate in 2008 was 4.6 per cent compared to 7.0 per cent for men. The biggest gap was among the youth cohort where the male unemployment rate was 5.5 percentage points higher.
- Total unemployment rates (15+) decreased between 1998 and 2008 but more so for women than men and more so for adults than youth. As a result, the youth-to-adult ratio of unemployment rates increased by 1 percentage point for both sexes.
- The tendencies of employment statuses are quite different between men and women. A strong majority of women are wage and salaried workers (employees), with little change in the shares between 1998 and 2008 (90.4 and 92.5 per cent, respectively). Although men are also most likely to be employed as wage and salaried workers, there are also sizable shares of own-account workers (16.2 per cent) and employers (8.3 per cent).
- One in four working women in Ireland was engaged in the health and social work sector in 2008. Other services sectors are also strongly represented among female workers, in particular wholesale and retail trade, education and real estate, renting and business services. The main three sectors employing male workers, in contrast, are construction, manufacturing and wholesale and retail trade.

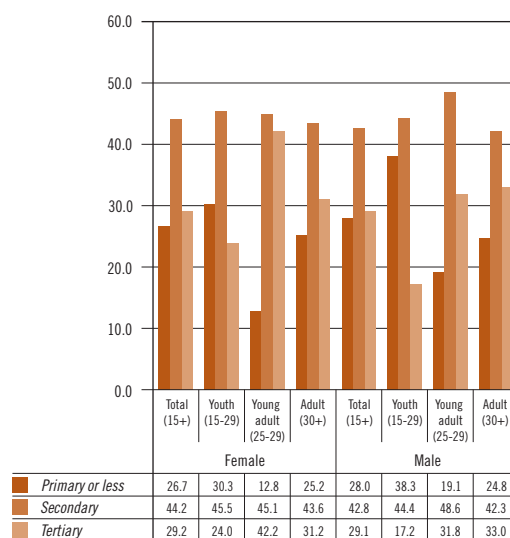
- As much as 36 per cent of working women in Ireland work part time. The female part-time employment rate in 2008 was higher than the EU average (20.1 per cent) and it has increased slightly since 1998. The male part-time employment rate has been relatively stable at around a much lower 8 per cent over the period.

## NETHERLANDS

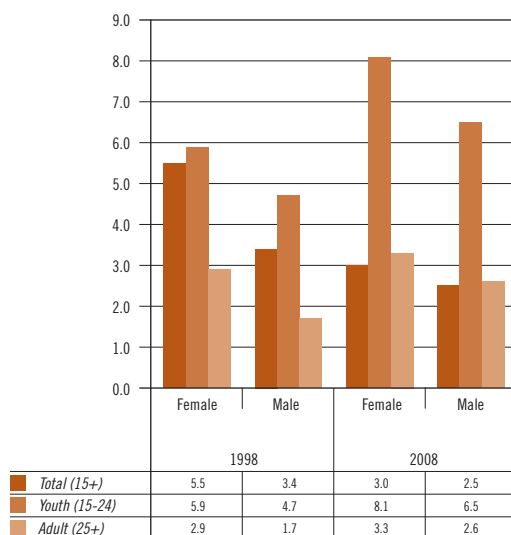
Labour force participation rate (%) by age group, 1980 and 2008



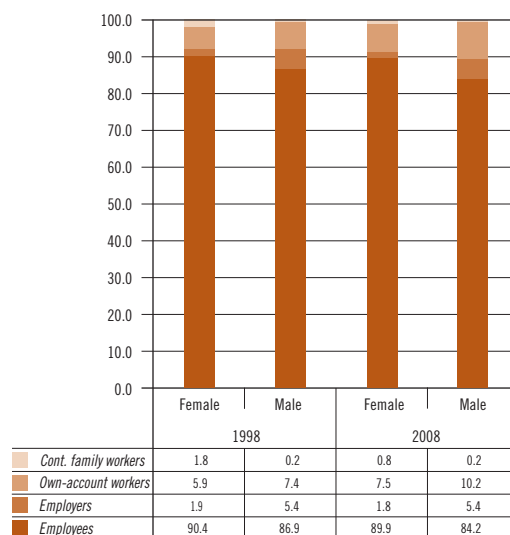
Distribution of labour force by level of educational attainment (%), 2005



Unemployment rate (%), total, youth and adult, 1998 and 2008



Distribution of total employment by status in employment (%), 1998 and 2008

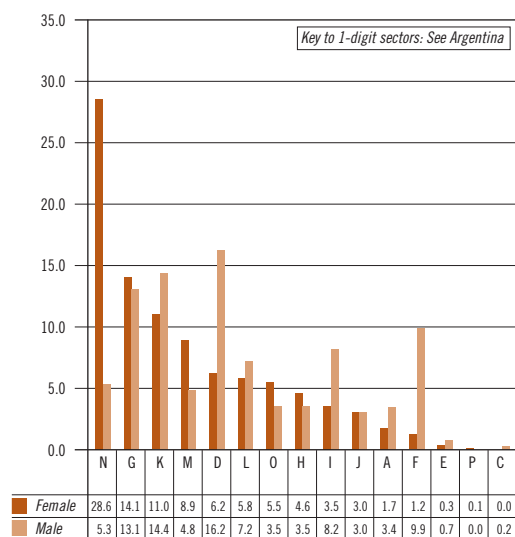


### MAIN FINDINGS

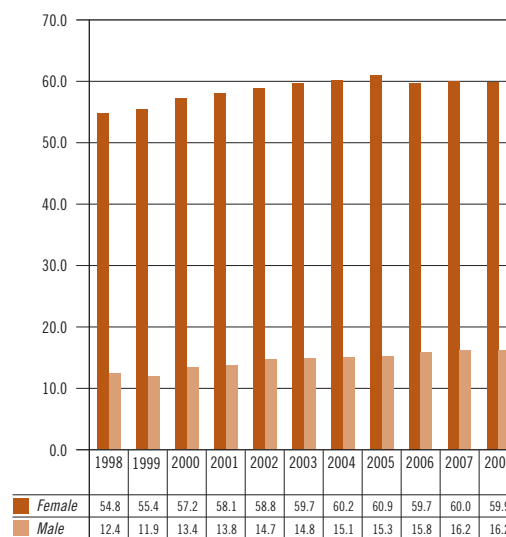
- Between 1980 and 2008, the labour force participation rates of both men and women increased but the increase was much sharper for women (19.1 percentage points). Like in Ireland and many other countries where female LFPRs were quite low in 1980 and increased quickly thereafter, it is among the prime-age women (aged 25-54 years) that the patterns of economic activity have changed dramatically over the 28-year period. Dutch women are no longer stopping economic engagement as a rule when they become mothers. The strong presence of part-time employment in the country creates an environment in which women can find a balance between work and family life. (See box 10.)



**Distribution of employment by 1-digit sector level (ISIC-Rev. 3, 1990) (%), 2008**



**Part-time employment rate (%), 1998-2008**

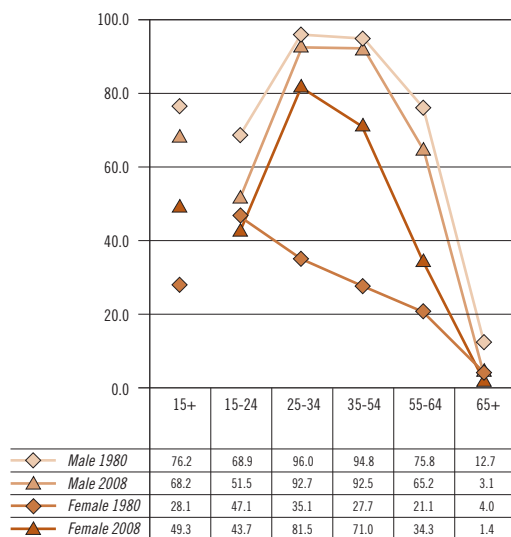


- The male and female labour force are remarkably similar when it comes to the levels of education. Women and men with a tertiary degree were equally likely to be engaged into the labour market. Both men and women with a secondary degree were the most likely to be economically active in 2005.
- Total unemployment rates (15+) decreased between 1998 and 2008 but the female rate (3.0 per cent) remained higher than the male (2.5 per cent). The youth-to-adult ratio of unemployment rates did not change significantly and remained around 2.5 for both sexes.
- Nine out of ten employed women and eight out of ten employed men were wage and salaried workers (employees) in 2008. Men were more likely than women to be employers and own-account workers. Between 1998 and 2008, the share of female wage and salaried workers declined slightly with the difference explained by a gain in the share of female own-account workers (7.5 per cent in 2008).
- The vast majority of female employment is concentrated in the health and social work sector. The wholesale and retail trade sector and real estate, renting and business activities are the second and third main employers of both women and men in the country.
- Part-time employment is clearly a female domain in the Netherlands, although male part-time employment rates did increase slightly between 1998 and 2008. Female part-time employment rates (59.9 per cent in 2008) are consistently the highest in the European Union.

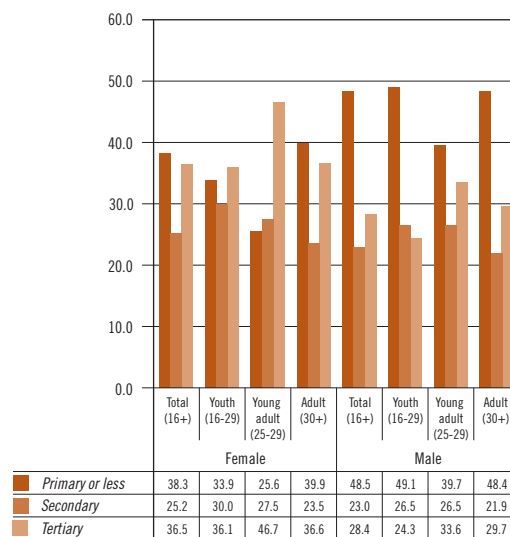
Source: KILM tables 1a, 3, 4b, 5, 8a, 9 and 14a. Data for the Netherlands are based on the European Labour Force Survey.

## SPAIN

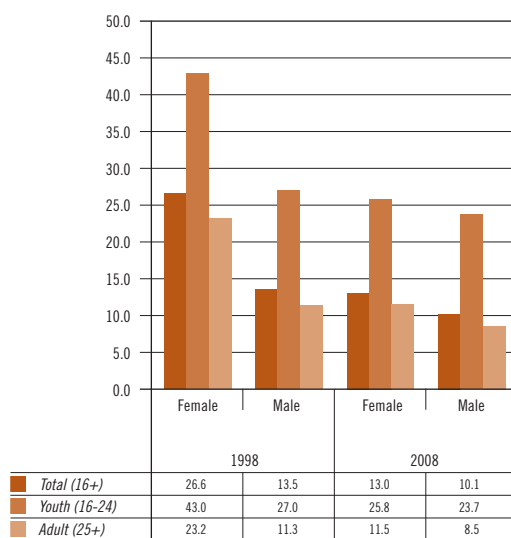
Labour force participation rate (%) by age group, 1980 and 2008



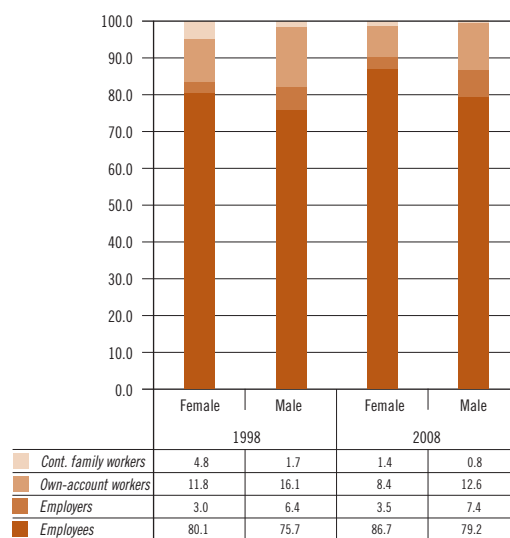
Distribution of labour force by level of educational attainment (%), 2007



Unemployment rate (%), total, youth and adult, 1998 and 2008



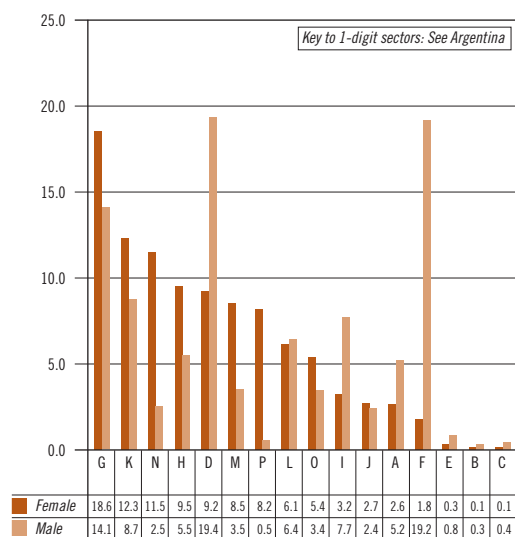
Distribution of total employment by status in employment (%), 1998 and 2008



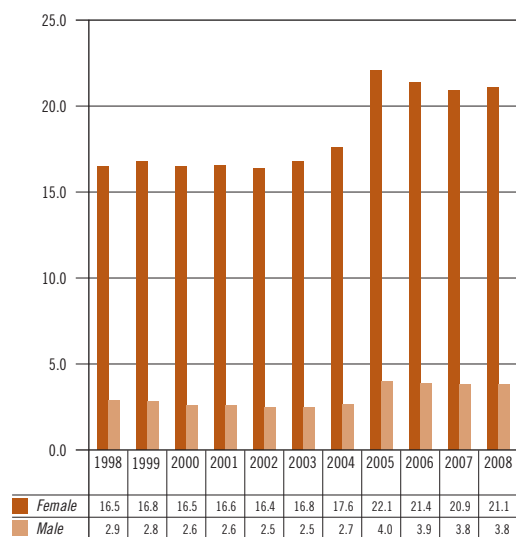
### MAIN FINDINGS

- The year 1980 marked a starting point for the transition of females from inactivity to increasing engagement in economic activity. Total female LFPR (15+) was well below the regional average in 1980 at 58.1 per cent. By 2008, it had increased to 49.3 per cent, a rate more or less on par with the regional average (53.2 per cent). The LFPR of women in the 25-34 and 35-54 age groups more than doubled over the period 1980-2008. At the same time, male LFPRs among all age cohorts decreased, resulting in a smaller male-female gap.

**Distribution of employment by 1-digit sector level (ISIC-Rev. 3, 1990) (%), 2008**



**Part-time employment rate (%), 1998-2008**

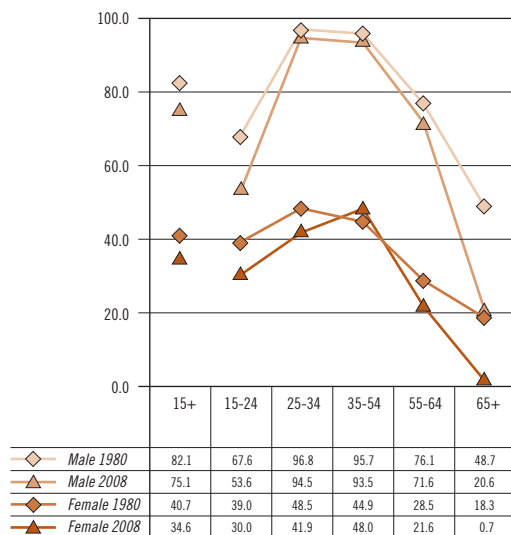


- The education levels of both men and women in the Spanish labour force are mixed but, for both sexes, the share of persons with primary-level education was slightly higher. The female labour force had a slightly higher share of tertiary degree holders than the male labour force (36.5 and 28.4 per cent, respectively).
- Comparing the years 1998 and 2008, the Spanish unemployment rates (16+) decreased significantly for both sexes but more so for women. The unemployment rate for women decreased by half from 26.6 to 13.0 per cent but remained higher than the male rate throughout.
- Wage and salaried employment is the strongest status option in Spain for both men and women. Men were more likely than women to be self-employed, with or without employees.
- Female workers are engaged primarily in services; the four largest sectors in 2008 were: wholesale and retail trade; real estate, renting and business activities; health and social work; and hotels and restaurants. Men were primarily engaged in manufacturing and construction.
- Few men engage in part-time work in Spain while for females the part-time option attracts approximately one female worker in five. Between 2004 and 2005 the female part-time employment rate increased by 4.5 percentage points and it remained around 21 per cent in the years after.

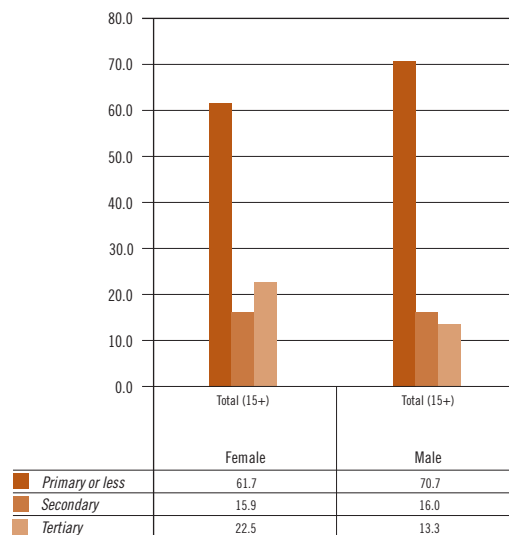
Source: KILM tables 1a, 3, 4b, 5, 8a, 9 and 14a. Data for Spain are based on the European Labour Force Survey.

## SRI LANKA

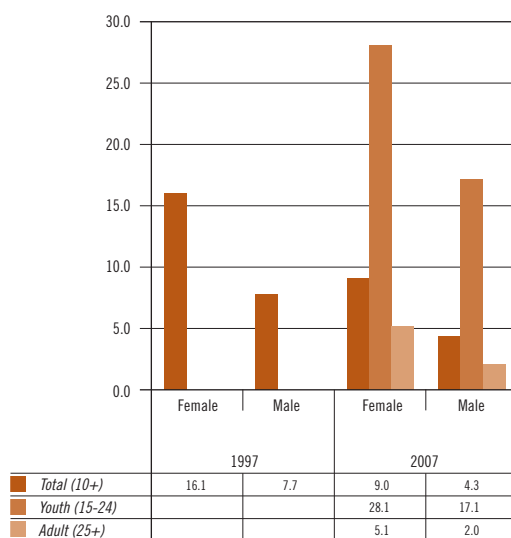
Labour force participation rate (%) by age group, 1980 and 2008



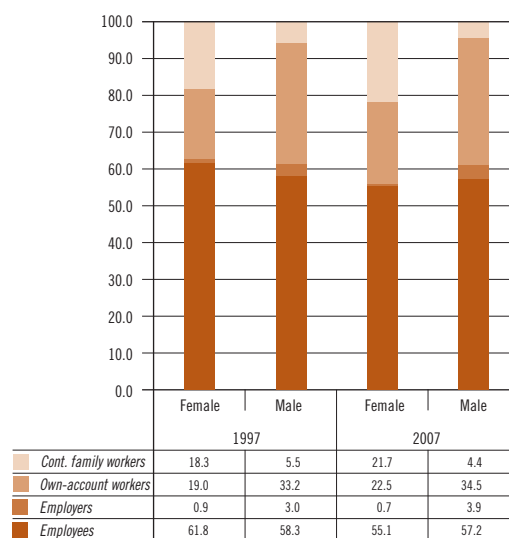
Distribution of labour force by level of educational attainment (%), 2007



Unemployment rate (%), total, youth and adult, 1997 and 2007



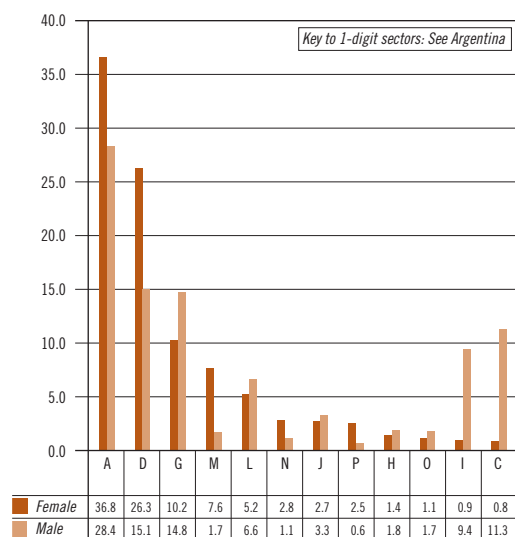
Distribution of total employment by status in employment (%), 1997 and 2007



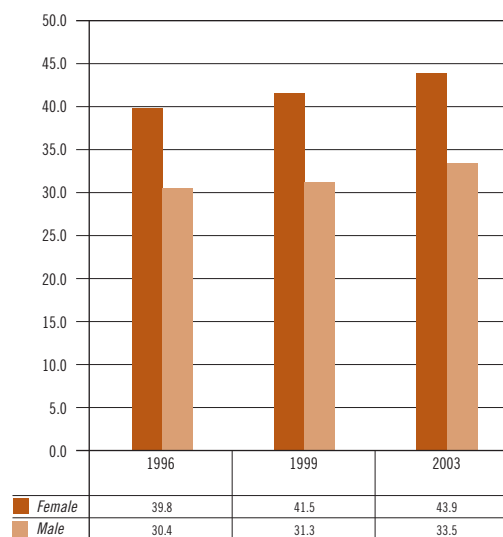
### MAIN FINDINGS

- Total female LFPR (15+) remained slightly less than half of the male LFPR throughout the period 1980-2008. The female rate in 2008 was 34.6 per cent, a decrease from the rate of 40.7 per cent in 1980. Only among females aged 35-54 years did the LFPR increase. Male LFPRs also decreased over the period regardless of age cohort. The most drastic drops occurred for elderly men and women (65+), 28.1 and 17.6 percentage points, respectively.

**Distribution of employment by 1-digit sector level (ISIC-Rev. 3, 1990) (%), 2007**



**Part-time employment rate (%), 1996, 1999 and 2003**

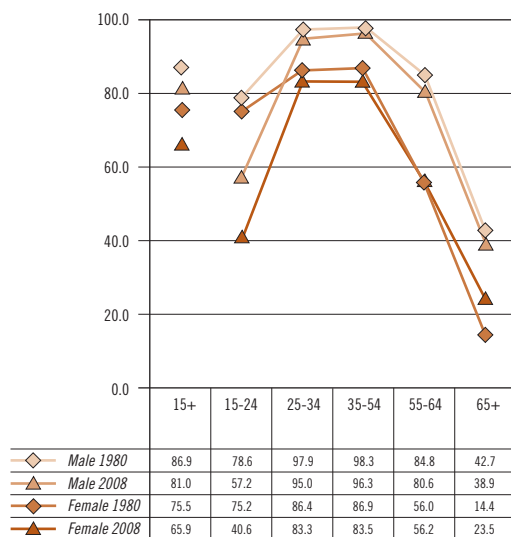


- There is not significant gender difference in the distribution of labour force by educational attainment. An economically active person in Sri Lanka in 2007 was more likely to hold a primary degree. The female labour force contained a slightly higher share of higher educated persons than the male labour force.
- Total unemployment rates (10+) for both sexes decreased between 1997 and 2007. The female-male gap narrowed from 8.4 percentage points in 1997 to 4.7 points in 2007. In 2007, the ratio of youth-to-adult unemployment rates was 5.5 points for women and 8.6 points for men.
- Slightly more than half of men and women were engaged in wage and salaried work in 2007 (55.1 per cent for women and 57.2 per cent for men). While men showed a slightly greater tendency to take up own-account work than women (34.5 and 22.5 per cent, respectively), women were much more likely than men to engage in unpaid contributing household work. As much as 21.7 per cent of female employment was contributing family work in 2007, an increase of 3.4 percentage points from 1997.
- Similar to other Asian economies (and strongly contrasting the services-driven female employment in developed economies), agriculture and manufacturing remained the main employers of women in Sri Lanka. The two sectors also took up the two largest shares of male employment although men were also heavily represented in other industrial sectors.
- In the years with available data, female workers showed a slightly higher tendency to work part time than men, but the difference was not substantial (43.9 per cent for women in 2003 compared to 33.5 per cent for men).

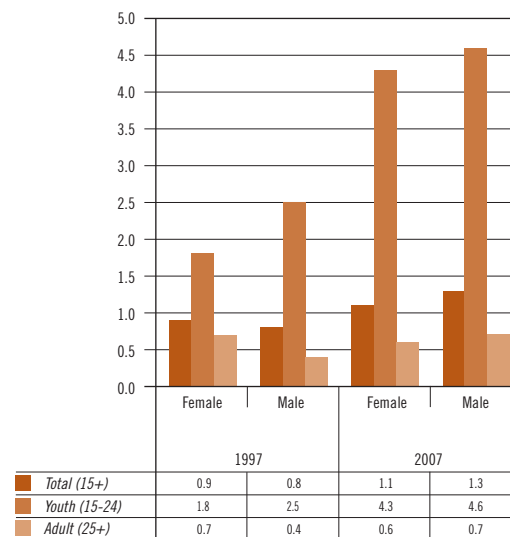
Source: KILM tables 1a, 3, 4b, 5, 8a, 9 and 14a. Data for Sri Lanka are based on a quarterly labour force survey, excluding the Northern and Eastern provinces.

## THAILAND

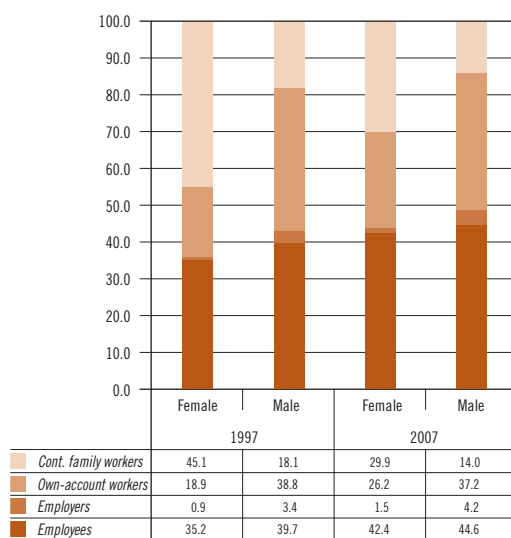
Labour force participation rate (%) by age group, 1980 and 2008



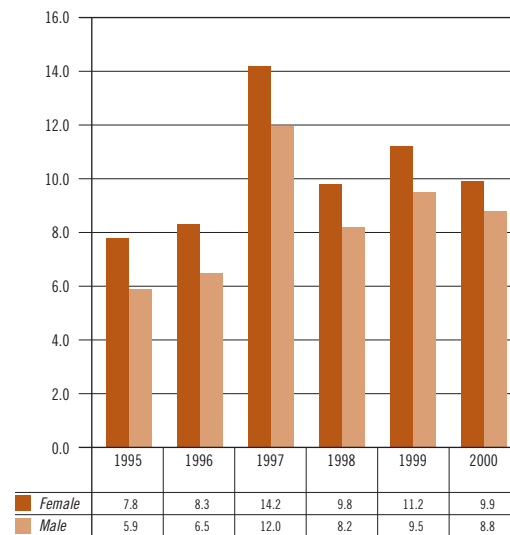
Unemployment rate (%), total, youth and adult, 1997 and 2007



Distribution of total employment by status in employment (%), 1997 and 2007



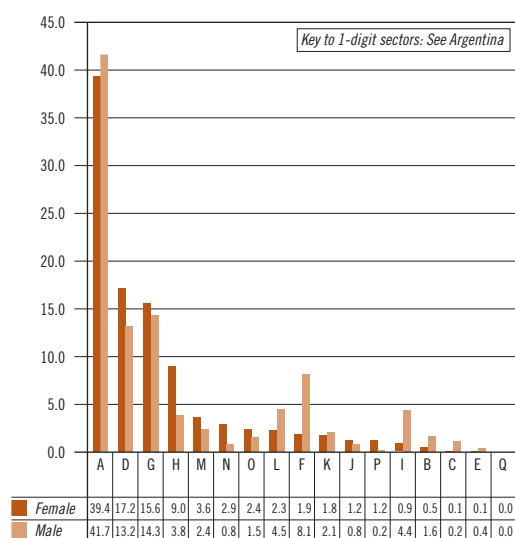
Part-time employment rate (%), 1995-2000



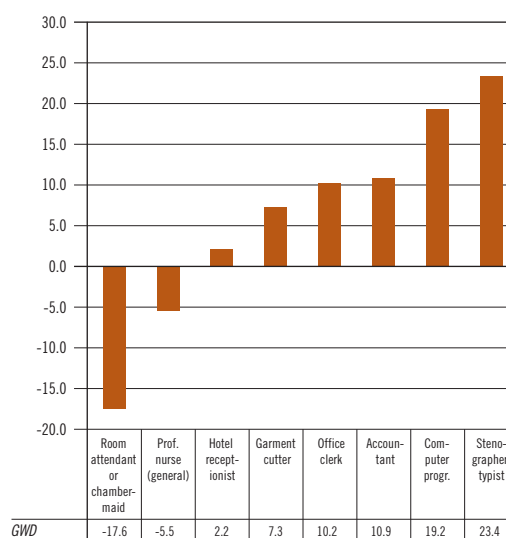
### MAIN FINDINGS

- LFPRs in Thailand are relatively high for both sexes but showed a declining trend between 1980 and 2008. The female rate in 2008 was 65.9 per cent compared to 81.0 per cent for men. The overall decreases seem to be mainly driven by the youth cohort (15-24 years) and are likely to reflect a situation in which youth are increasingly staying in education. The patterns of LFPRs across the life span of men and women are similar, with male rates approximately 15 percentage points higher than female rates.

**Distribution of employment by 1-digit sector level (ISIC-Rev. 3, 1990) (%), 2007**



**Gender wage differential in selected occupations (%), 2006**

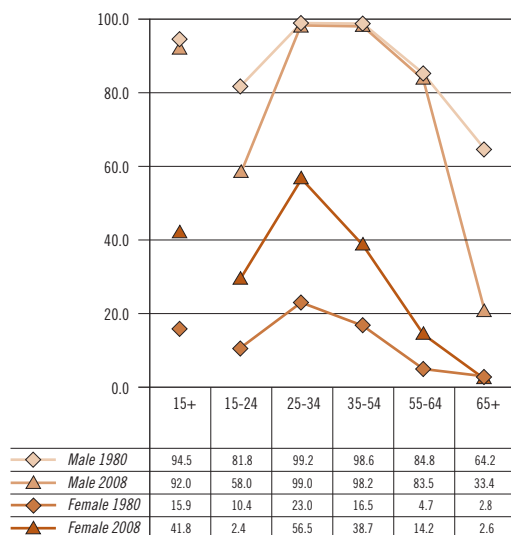


- Unemployment rates in Thailand increased between 1997 and 2007 for both sexes but remained low at 1.1 and 1.3 per cent for women and men, respectively. The ratio of youth-to-adult unemployment rates increased by 4.6 points for women over the period while for men it remained more or less constant.
- Between 1997 and 2007 there was a fairly sharp decline in the share of women engaged as contributing family workers, with more women shifting into own-account and wage and salaried work. Still, the share of women in unpaid family work remained high at 29.9 per cent in 2007.
- Part-time employment rates are not high in Thailand, which is not surprising given the comparatively low shares of wage and salaried employment. Part-time employment rates were slightly higher for women than men throughout the period 1995-2000.
- Gender sectoral segregation is not as present in Thailand compared to other countries. Women and men alike are most likely employed in agriculture, manufacturing or wholesale and retail trade.
- The average male worker received higher wages than the female for six of the occupations with available (and comparable) data. The gender wage differentials were highest among the most highly skilled of the occupations, accountants and computer programmers. Only for hotel receptionists and stenographers were wages higher for women than men.

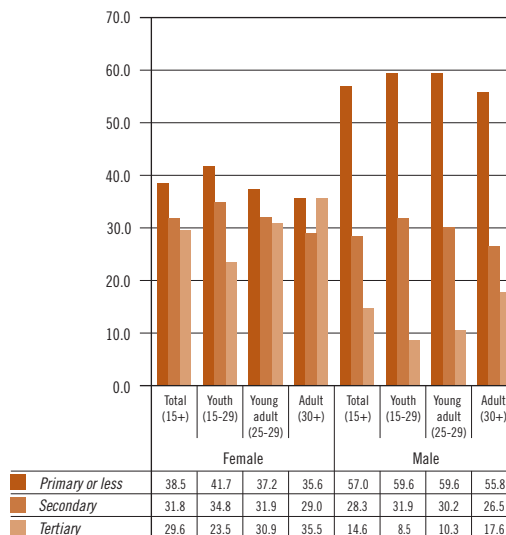
Source: KILM tables 1a, 3, 4b, 5, 8a, 9 and 16a. Data for Thailand are based on a quarterly labour force survey.

## UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

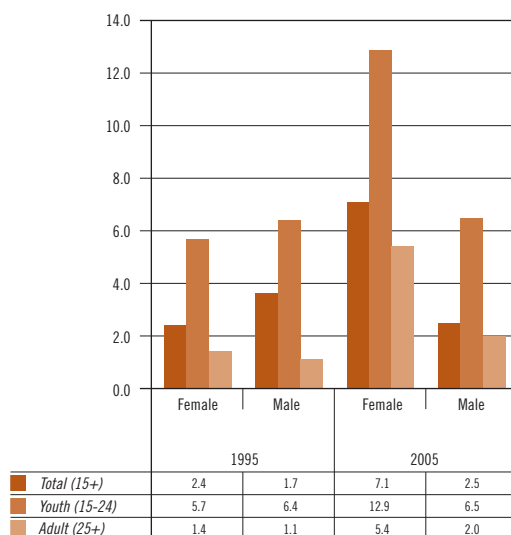
Labour force participation rate (%) by age group, 1980 and 2008



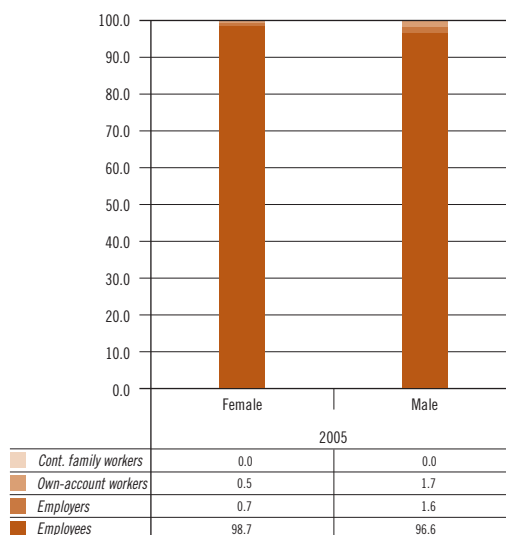
Distribution of labour force by level of educational attainment (%), 2005



Unemployment rate (%), total, youth and adult, 1995 and 2005



Distribution of total employment by status in employment (%), 2005

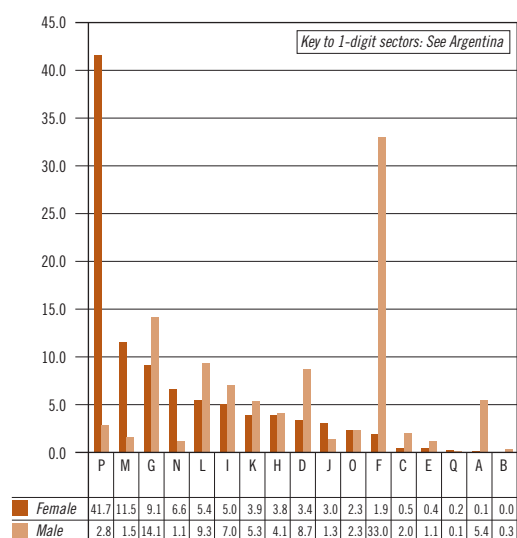


### MAIN FINDINGS

- The enormous difference between the female and male LFPRs (15+) in 1980 (78.6 percentage points) had declined considerably by 2008 as the female LFPR increased more than three-fold from 15.9 to 41.8 per cent in the latter year. Still, the male-female gap remained substantial at 50.2 percentage points. The largest increase in female LFPR was among women aged 25 to 34 years, many of which are likely to be non-nationals.



**Distribution of employment by 1-digit sector level  
(ISIC-Rev. 3, 1990) (%), 2005**

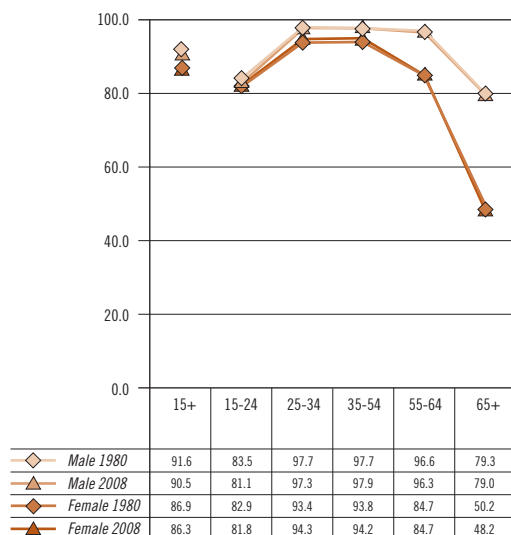


- There is less skills/education variation among women in the labour force compared to men. For men in the labour force, 57 per cent were educated at the primary level or less while only 14.6 per cent were educated at the tertiary level in 2005. There were more women with primary education than tertiary education in the female labour force but the difference in the shares was much less than the corresponding difference for men.
- Unemployment rates (15+) were significantly higher for women than men in 2005 (7.1 per cent for women and 2.5 per cent for men) and the increase in the rates since 1995 was larger for women.
- The structure of employment in UAE is dominated by formal enterprises engaging wage and salaried workers. The shares of female and male workers engaged in wage and salaried employment were 98.7 and 96.6 per cent, respectively, in 2005. Self-employment is virtually non-existent as an employment option for women in the country and only nominally more so for men.
- The majority of female workers – 41.7 per cent – were engaged as domestic workers in private households in 2005. As already stated, most of these are likely to be non-nationals. The largest employer of men in UAE was the construction sector, another sector that attracts a significant number of foreign labourers.

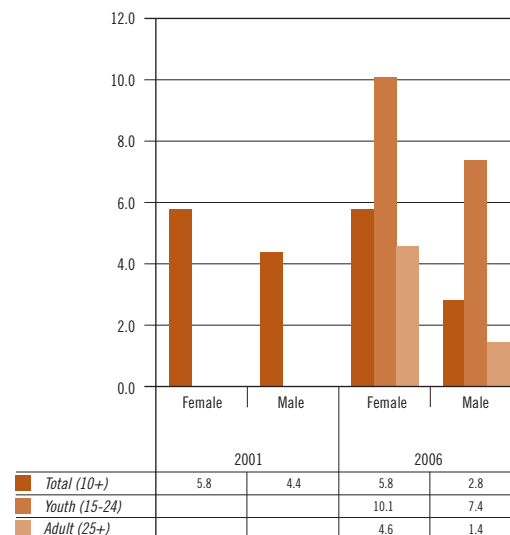
Source: KILM tables 1a, 3, 4b, 8a, 9 and 14a. Data for the United Arab Emirates are based on periodic population censuses.

## UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

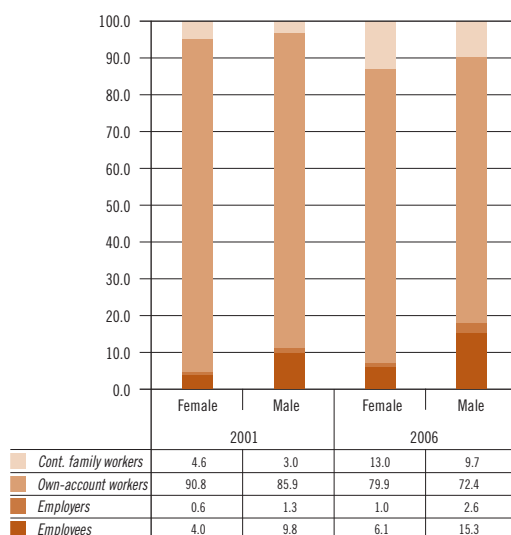
Labour force participation rate (%) by age group, 1980 and 2008



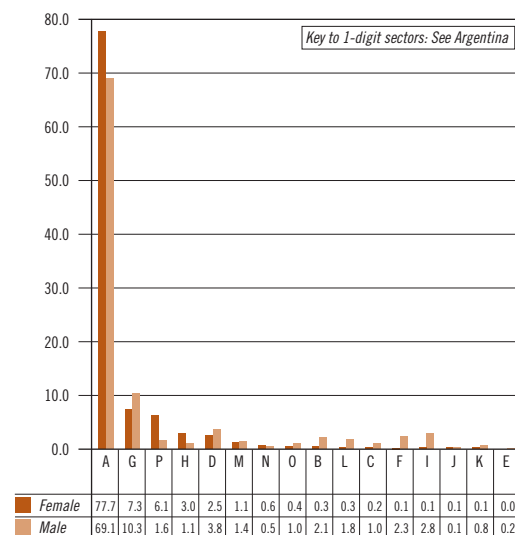
Unemployment rate (%), total, youth and adult, 2001 and 2006



Distribution of total employment by status in employment (%), 2001 and 2006



Distribution of employment by 1-digit sector level (ISIC-Rev. 3, 1990) (%), 2006



### MAIN FINDINGS

- There is little difference in the total female and male LFPs (15+) in the United Republic of Tanzania and rates for both sexes declined slightly between 1980 and 2008. Rates remained high for both men and women at 90.5 and 86.3 per cent, respectively, in 2008. The main difference between the sexes with regards to labour force participation is the tendency for women to withdraw from the labour force at an earlier age than men. Still, even among the elderly (65+), the male and female LFPs were 79.0 and 48.2 per cent, respectively.

- The unemployment rate (10+) of women remained the same at 5.8 per cent between 2001 and 2006 while the male rate declined from 4.4 to 2.8 per cent. The ratio of youth-to-adult unemployment rates were 2.2 and 5.3 per cent for women and men, respectively.
- In Tanzania, the majority of employed persons were own-account workers both in 2001 and 2006, although the shares declined for both sexes over the period. The largest increases for both men and women were in the share of contributing family workers. Women were more likely than men to engage in contributing family and own-account work, while men had a stronger tendency to gain wage and salaried employment.
- Agriculture, most likely at the near subsistence level, is clearly the dominant sector in Tanzania, engaging as much as 77.7 and 69.1 per cent of female and male workers, respectively, in 2006.



# Annex 1

## *INVENTORY OF ANALYSES OF LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION RELATING SPECIFICALLY TO WOMEN IN THE EXISTING KILM EDITIONS*

Name of figures specific to gender	Description	KILM edition (page)
<b>LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE (KILM 1)</b>		
Figure 1c. Labour force participation rates of females aged 15 years and over, latest years	Demonstrates the variation in female labour force participation rates among all countries.	1st (21)/2nd (19)
Figure 1e/a-b. Labour force participation rates of females aged 15 years, and over/25-54 years, and GDP per capita at purchasing power parity (PPP), 1990/1980-2003	Demonstrates the relationship between female/prime-aged female labour force participation rates and the GDP per capita at PPP level.	1st (22)/4th (83)
Figure 1g. Typical regional labour force participation across age groups, females	Demonstrates the age patterns of labour force participation (one country example per region).	1st (23)
Figure 1b. Percentage point gap between labour force participation rates of men and women aged 15 years and over, latest years	Demonstrates the variation in percentage point gaps in male and female labour force participation rates among all countries.	3rd (57)
Figure 1c/b. Female labour force participation rates by age group, selected economies, 2003/2006	Demonstrates the female labour force participation rates over the life cycle for selected economies.	3rd (57)/4th (84)/5th (73)
Figure 1b. Labour force participation rates, by sex and KILM region, 2008	Demonstrates the distance the countries in the KILM regions have from the gender parity line, in terms of labour force participation rates.	6th (91)
<b>EMPLOYMENT-TO-POPULATION RATIO (KILM 2)</b>		
Figure 2d. Employment-to-population ratios, females, 1990-97/1990-2000	Presents the trends in female employment-to-population ratio for selected economies.	1st (56)/2nd (52)
Figure 2b. Employment-to-population ratio of males and females by regional groupings, latest years	Demonstrates the distance of the employment-to-population ratio of males and females from the 1:1 diagonal line, in the KILM regions.	3rd (90)
Figure 2b. Female employment-to-population ratios, selected countries, 1990-2003	Shows the time series for the few countries in the regions of low female employment-to-population ratios, where comparable time data are available.	4th (144)
Figure 2b. Economies with female employment-to-population ratios below 30 per cent or above 70 per cent, 2006	Shows the economies with very low and with high female employment-to-population ratios.	5th (107)

Name of figures specific to gender	Description	KILM edition (page)
Figure 2b. Male-female differences in employment-to-population ratios, selected countries, latest years	Demonstrates the gender percentage point differences that accompany employment ratios for selected economies.	6th (119)
<b>STATUS IN EMPLOYMENT (KILM 3)</b>		
Figure 3c. Distribution of total employment by status, excluding wage and salaried workers, by sex, selected countries of the European Union, 2008	Focuses attention on the non-wage and salaried categories, and shows who is more likely to be an employer and to perform unpaid work within a family establishment (contributing family workers).	6th (149)
<b>EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR (KILM 4)</b>		
Figures 4d-f. Proportion of male and female workers in industry – services sector – agriculture, latest year	Presents the proportions of men and women in the three broad sectors, 25 selected economies.	1st (99/100/101)
Figure 4c. Employment distribution by sector, for males and females, latest years	Presents the distribution of employment by sector for both sexes.	3rd (143)
Figure 4b. Shifts employment by sector in Mexico, 1991-2003	Demonstrates how a review of the more detailed sectoral employment data can reveal which sectors are showing signs of growth or decline.	4th (194)
Figure 4c. Sectoral growth rates in selected developed economies, 1995-2005	Shows average growth rates from 1995 to 2005 for a group of developed economies for all sectors (ISIC Rev. 3), for both sexes and separately.	5th (161)
<b>PART-TIME WORKERS (KILM 5)</b>		
Figure 5b. Female share of part-time employment, 1996	Demonstrates the proportion of females in total part-time employment for 43 countries with data available.	1st (132)
Figure 5c. Male and female incidence of part-time employment in 43 countries, 1996	Demonstrates the proportions of males and females in part-time employment for 43 countries with data available.	1st (133)
Figure 5d-e/c. Female part-time employment to total employment ratios and labour force participation rates in selected developed (industrialized) – transition economies, Asian, and Latin American and Caribbean countries, latest year/Share of part-time work and labour force participation rates of females, 1999	Demonstrates the relationship between female part-time employment to total employment ratios and labour force participation rates, in various regions of the world.	1st (134/135)/2nd (191)
Figure 5c/b. Female share of part-time employment, regional averages, 1995 and 1999-2001/1991, 1995, 1999 and 2003/1990, 1995, 2000 and 2005	Presents the evolution of the female share in part-time employment at the regional level.	3rd (225)/4th (283)/5th (252)

Name of figures specific to gender	Description	KILM edition (page)
Figure 5b. Female part-time employment rates and employment-to-population ratios in countries in the Developed Economies & European Union and Latin America & the Caribbean, latest years	Presents the relationship between female part-time employment and employment-to-population ratios in two major regions of the world.	4th (282)
Figure 5c. Female part-time employment rates, employment-to-population ratios and time-related underemployment rates, latest years	Shows the relationship between female part-time employment rates, employment-to-population ratios and time-related underemployment rates.	5th (253)
Figure 5a. Female part-time employment rates and female shares of part-time employment, OECD countries, 2007	Demonstrates the relationship between part-time employment rates and the female share of part-time employment.	6th (277)
Figure 5b. Female part-time employment rates and female shares of part-time employment between 2000 and 2007, selected countries	Demonstrates the relationship between female part-time employment rates and the female share in part-time employment in countries in northern and southern Europe, including time.	6th (278)
<b>HOURS OF WORK (KILM 6)</b>		
Figure 6a/b. Percentage of males and females usually working less than 10/more than 40 hours per week, 1996	Compares the percentages of males and females usually working less than 10/more than 40 hours per week across 33 countries.	1st (147/148)
Figure 6a. Percentage of males and females working more than 40 hours per week by regional grouping, latest years	Compares the percentages of men and women working more than 40 hours.	3rd (239)
Figure 6a. Percentages of persons working "excessive hours" (more than 50 hours per week), selected countries in Central America and the Caribbean, by sex, latest years	Compares the percentages of persons working "excessive hours" in nine countries.	4th (300)
Figure 6a. Percentage of males and females working more than 40 hours per week, latest years	Demonstrates the relationship between the percentage of males and females working more than 40 hours per week.	5th (270)
<b>EMPLOYMENT IN THE INFORMAL SECTOR (KILM 7)</b>		
Figure 7b. Female share of employment in the informal sector, selected countries, latest years ( $\geq 1999$ )	Demonstrates the female share of informal sector employment for a selection of countries.	6th (342)
<b>UNEMPLOYMENT (KILM 8)</b>		
Figure 8d. Unemployment rates, females, latest year	Demonstrates the variation in female unemployment rates among all countries of the world.	1st (197)
Figure 8b. Net change in female unemployment rates, earliest (after 1989) to latest years	Demonstrates the variation in the net changes in female unemployment rates all over the world.	2nd (258)

Name of figures specific to gender	Description	KILM edition (page)
Figure 8c. ILO-comparable unemployment rates for males and females, 1990 and 2001/2003/2005	Compares the unemployment rates of males and females, using the ILO-comparable unemployment rate.	3rd (290)/4th (376)/5th (346)
<b>YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT (KILM 9)</b>		
Figure 9c. Youth unemployment rates, females, latest year	Demonstrates the variation in young female unemployment rates among all countries of the world.	1st (235)
Figure 9b. Female to male percentage point gaps in youth unemployment rates, latest years	Demonstrates the variation in the female to male percentage point gap in youth unemployment rates all over the world.	2nd (311)
Figure 9c. Youth unemployment rates by gender for selected countries, latest years	Presents countries where youth unemployment rates differ the most between males and females.	5th (399)
Figure 9b. Countries with ratios of youth-to-adult unemployment rates greater or equal to 3.5, by sex, latest years ( $\geq 2004$ )	Presents the countries where the ratio of youth-to-adult unemployment rates of either males or females was 3.5 or higher, indicating a significant structural imbalance in the youth labour market.	6th (415)
<b>LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYMENT (KILM 10)</b>		
Figure 10b. Long-term unemployment rates by sex, countries in Central and Eastern Europe (non-EU), Central America and the Caribbean/selected countries in Latin America & the Caribbean, latest years	Compares the long-term unemployment rates of males and females for countries in major regions of the world.	4th (454)/5th (428)
Figure 10a. Incidence of long-term unemployment, selected countries in Developed Economies & European Union, by sex, 2007	Presents the differences in incidences of long-term unemployment for males and females.	6th (442)
<b>UNEMPLOYMENT BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (KILM 11)</b>		
Figure 11d. Male-to-female ratio of unemployment by educational attainment (adjusted by labour force share of educational attainment), latest years	Demonstrates the unequal distribution of unemployment between men and women by educational attainment.	2nd (355)
Figure 11b. Share of total unemployment by educational attainment, males and females, 2001	Compares male and female unemployment by level of educational attainment, for economies of similar economic development.	3rd (376)
Figure 11c-e. Female versus male unemployment rates of workers with primary (or less) level education/secondary level education/tertiary level education, latest years	Provides a gender-based analysis of unemployment rates by level of education.	6th (458/459)



Name of figures specific to gender	Description	KILM edition (page)
<b>TIME-RELATED UNDEREMPLOYMENT (KILM 12)</b>		
Figure 12b. Time-related underemployment rate and unemployment rate, females, latest year	Presents the rates of time-related underemployment and unemployment for 36 economies.	1st (287)
Figure 12b. Percentage point change in time-related underemployment rates, males and females, earliest (after 1989) to latest years	Illustrates the percentage point change in time-related underemployment rates.	2nd (376)
Figure 12c. Percentage point change in underemployment and unemployment rates, males and females, earliest (after 1989) to latest years	Depicts the percentage point change in underemployment and unemployment rates, showing that the two measures can move in different directions.	2nd (377)
Figure 12a. Percentage point change in incidence of time-related underemployment, males and females, earliest to latest years (after 1989, with a span covering at least 4 years)	Shows that the two measures of unemployment and time-related underemployment do not always move in the same direction.	3rd (400)
Figure 12a. Time-related underemployment for males and females, latest years	Shows how likely women in part-time employment are to be seeking more hours than their male counterparts (indicated by the points to the right of the diagonal line).	5th (466)
Figure 12b. Female share of time-related underemployment in Germany and Italy, 1997-2007	Shows how women in Italy and Germany bear the larger burden of the underemployment.	6th (496)
<b>INACTIVITY (KILM 13)</b>		
Figure 13d. Inactivity rates, females, latest year	Demonstrates the variation in female inactivity rates among all countries of the world.	1st (305)
Figure 13d/a. Inactivity rates for the female population aged 25 to 54 years, latest years/2006/2008	Demonstrates the variation in prime-aged female inactivity rates among all countries of the world.	2nd (396)/5th (481)/6th (511)
Figure 13c/b. Percentage change in inactivity rates of the female population aged 25 to 54 years, earliest (after 1989) to latest years/1996-2006/1998-2008	Presents the variation in percentage point changes in female inactivity rates among all countries of the world (which have driven the overall change in inactivity rates) over the latest decade.	3rd (414)/5th (482)/6th (512)
<b>EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT AND ILLITERACY (KILM 14)</b>		
Figure 14a. Distribution of male and female labour force by level of educational attainment, 2001/2002	Presents the distribution of male and female labour force by level of educational attainment.	3rd (442)/4th (545)
Figure 14c. Economies with illiteracy rates of 50 per cent or over, 2001	Demonstrates the problem of illiteracy in 20 economies, by sex.	3rd (444)

Name of figures specific to gender	Description	KILM edition (page)
Figure 14c/b. Countries with youth or adult illiteracy rates in excess of 30 per cent, by sex	Shows countries (with similar definitions of illiteracy) which reported an illiteracy rate for either youth or adults, or both, in excess of 30 per cent.	4th (547)/5th (516)
Figure 14a/b. Distribution of male and female labour force by level of educational attainment, 2005/2007	Plots the male and female labour force shares across three education levels – primary or less, secondary and tertiary.	5th (515)/6th (547)
<b>MANUFACTURING WAGE INDICES (KILM 15)</b>		
Figure 15e. Real manufacturing wage trends (ILO series) in Ireland, the Republic of Korea and Singapore, 1980 and 1990-97	Demonstrates wage differences through time of real manufacturing wages for men and women.	1st (375)
Figure 15a. Percentage change in real/nominal wages, selected economies, 1990-2001/2000-2005	Shows the trends and compares the variation in male and female real wages/nominal (manufacturing, sorted according to the difference between female and male wage growth) wages.	3rd (499)/5th (562)
Figure 15a. Percentage change in nominal manufacturing wages, by sex, selected economies, 2000-07	Demonstrates the percentage change in male and female nominal manufacturing wages.	6th (587)
<b>OCCUPATIONAL WAGE AND EARNINGS INDICES (KILM 16)</b>		
Figure 16e. Female wages as a percentage of male wages, selected economies, latest years	Shows the female wages as a percentage of male wages for the same occupation for the latest year available in 11 economies.	2nd (524)
Figure 16c. Female occupational earnings as percentage of male earnings, United States, 1990-2000	Demonstrates the lag in female earnings in all occupations in comparison to males, and shows the evolution of the gap over time.	3rd (535)
Figure 16b. Female occupational wages as a percentage of male wages, Finland, 2004	Shows the female wages in Finland which lagged behind those of males in all occupations in 2004 except for urban motor truck drivers and sewing-machine operators.	5th (591)
Figure 16c. Real wage indices for 17 occupations in United Kingdom, male and female, 2007	Presents the relatively equitable distribution of real wages in the United Kingdom for the 17 occupations.	6th (616)
<b>EMPLOYMENT ELASTICITIES (KILM 19)</b>		
Figure 19b. Female versus male employment elasticities, by region, 2004-08	Shows the variation across countries between female and male employment elasticities over the 2004-08 period.	6th (864)

## Annex 2

### GLOBAL AND REGIONAL TABLES

The source of all tables is the ILO Trends Econometric Models, November 2009, as described in section 1, "A note on the data". 2009 data are preliminary estimates. For a full description of the methodology for the production of global and regional estimates, see GET 2010, Annex 4.

TABLE 2A.

**Global labour market indicators, 1999, 2008 and 2009**

	Female			Male			Total		
	1999	2008	2009	1999	2008	2009	1999	2008	2009
Labour force (millions)	1'084.4	1'268.0	1'284.8	1'652.7	1'898.7	1'928.1	2'737.1	3'166.7	3'212.9
Employment (millions)	1'011.2	1'190.2	1'195.3	1'550.8	1'791.6	1'806.1	2'561.9	2'981.8	3'001.4
Unemployment (millions)	73.2	77.8	89.5	102.0	107.1	122.0	175.2	184.9	211.5
Inactive population (millions)	1'010.0	1'182.8	1'203.3	432.8	544.0	552.5	1'442.7	1'726.8	1'755.7
Working-age population (millions)	2'094.4	2'450.8	2'488.1	2'085.5	2'442.7	2'480.6	4'179.9	4'893.5	4'968.7
Labour force participation rate (%)	51.8	51.7	51.6	79.2	77.7	77.7	65.5	64.7	64.7
Employment-to-population ratio (%)	48.3	48.6	48.0	74.4	73.3	72.8	61.3	60.9	60.4
Unemployment rate (%)	6.8	6.1	7.0	6.2	5.6	6.3	6.4	5.8	6.6
Inactivity rate (%)	48.2	48.3	48.4	20.8	22.3	22.3	34.5	35.3	35.3

TABLE 2B.

**Male and female labour force participation rates, 1991, 1999, 2008 and 2009, and the gender gap in economically active females per 100 males, 2009**

	Female LFPR (%)				Male LFPR (%)				Number of economically active females per 100 economically active males
	1991	1999	2008	2009	1991	1999	2008	2009	2009
World	52.3	51.8	51.7	51.6	80.6	79.2	77.7	77.7	66.6
Developed Economies & European Union	50.6	51.8	53.2	52.9	72.5	70.4	69.2	68.6	81.5
Central & South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	54.4	49.8	50.7	50.6	74.1	69.1	69.3	69.0	83.2
East Asia	71.5	69.9	66.6	66.5	84.5	83.5	79.3	79.4	80.3
South-East Asia & the Pacific	58.8	58.0	57.4	57.4	83.1	83.1	81.7	82.0	72.0
South Asia	35.4	34.3	35.1	34.9	84.4	82.9	81.5	81.6	40.6
Latin America & the Caribbean	41.8	46.6	51.6	51.7	82.0	80.7	80.1	79.7	68.1
Middle East	18.6	22.6	24.9	25.4	78.6	75.8	74.4	75.3	30.6
North Africa	25.0	26.6	27.5	27.4	76.5	76.4	75.5	76.4	36.1
Sub-Saharan Africa	58.8	60.4	62.1	62.6	81.9	81.4	81.2	81.2	79.2

TABLE 2C.

**Male and female unemployment rates, total and youth, 1999, 2008 and 2009**

	Unemployment rate (%)											
	Female total			Male total			Female youth			Male youth		
	1999	2008	2009	1999	2008	2009	1999	2008	2009	1999	2008	2009
World	6.8	6.1	7.0	6.2	5.6	6.3	12.9	12.4	13.6	12.5	11.9	13.2
Developed Economies & European Union	7.6	6.1	8.6	6.6	6.0	8.2	13.8	12.2	15.6	14.1	13.8	19.5
Central & South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	12.8	8.1	9.8	12.1	8.3	10.6	24.1	17.8	21.2	21.7	16.5	21.7
East Asia	3.9	3.6	3.7	5.3	4.9	5.0	7.7	7.3	7.5	10.6	10.1	10.4
South-East Asia & the Pacific	5.1	5.5	5.9	5.1	5.2	5.5	13.4	15.2	16.1	12.9	13.9	14.7
South Asia	4.6	5.6	5.9	4.2	4.5	4.8	10.2	10.7	11.4	9.7	9.5	10.4
Latin America & the Caribbean	10.8	8.8	10.1	7.1	5.8	6.9	19.8	18.3	21.0	13.0	11.7	13.5
Middle East	14.4	14.7	15.0	7.9	7.5	7.7	26.7	29.3	30.1	18.3	18.6	19.2
North Africa	18.2	14.8	15.6	11.3	8.2	8.6	32.7	30.9	33.1	24.8	20.3	21.1
Sub-Saharan Africa	8.9	8.5	8.8	7.6	7.6	7.8	13.4	12.8	13.1	11.9	11.8	12.1

TABLE 2D.

**Male and female employment-to-population ratios, total and youth, 1999, 2008 and 2009**

	Employment-to-population ratio (%)											
	Female total			Male total			Female youth			Male youth		
	1999	2008	2009	1999	2008	2009	1999	2008	2009	1999	2008	2009
World	48.3	48.6	48.0	74.4	73.3	72.8	39.5	37.2	36.7	55.2	51.8	51.3
Developed Economies & European Union	47.8	49.9	48.3	65.8	65.0	63.0	43.0	42.4	40.3	47.8	45.7	42.4
Central & South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	43.4	46.6	45.6	60.8	63.5	61.7	28.0	28.9	27.9	39.3	39.7	37.3
East Asia	67.2	64.2	64.0	79.1	75.5	75.4	64.6	56.7	57.0	60.1	50.6	51.2
South-East Asia & the Pacific	55.0	54.2	54.0	78.9	77.5	77.5	42.3	36.8	36.6	56.5	50.9	50.7
South Asia	32.7	33.1	32.8	79.4	77.8	77.7	26.2	24.7	24.3	59.9	58.0	57.7
Latin America & the Caribbean	41.6	47.0	46.5	75.0	75.4	74.3	33.6	34.8	33.7	58.6	55.5	53.5
Middle East	19.3	21.3	21.6	69.8	68.8	69.5	14.8	15.2	15.1	43.0	40.4	40.9
North Africa	21.8	23.4	23.1	67.8	69.3	69.9	17.0	15.8	15.4	40.2	40.6	41.5
Sub-Saharan Africa	55.1	56.8	57.1	75.2	75.0	74.8	44.4	45.1	45.2	56.4	55.5	55.3

TABLE 2E.

**Male and female employment by sector (as share of total employment), 1999 and 2008\***

Female	Employment in agriculture (%)		Employment in industry (%)		Employment in services (%)	
	1999	2008	1999	2008	1999	2008
World	43.4	37.1	15.5	16.1	41.2	46.9
Developed Economies & European Union	4.8	3.0	15.8	12.4	79.4	84.5
Central & South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	30.6	19.3	19.3	16.0	50.2	64.6
East Asia	53.9	42.1	20.3	24.0	25.8	33.9
South-East Asia & the Pacific	50.9	44.5	13.5	14.4	35.6	41.1
South Asia	74.9	69.9	11.2	13.7	13.9	16.3
Latin America & the Caribbean	14.1	10.0	13.5	13.9	72.4	76.1
Middle East	32.6	34.6	18.6	16.7	48.7	48.7
North Africa	27.5	33.6	16.1	15.6	56.5	50.7
Sub-Saharan Africa	66.4	61.1	5.4	6.6	28.1	32.3
Male	1999	2008	1999	2008	1999	2008
World	38.8	33.1	24.1	26.4	37.2	40.4
Developed Economies & European Union	6.1	4.4	36.6	34.4	57.3	61.2
Central & South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	28.1	19.8	30.9	32.1	41.1	48.1
East Asia	42.8	34.1	26.8	31.2	30.4	34.6
South-East Asia & the Pacific	49.0	44.5	18.1	20.3	32.9	35.2
South Asia	53.3	44.3	17.1	22.4	29.6	33.2
Latin America & the Caribbean	27.3	21.7	25.6	28.6	47.1	49.8
Middle East	17.7	14.9	27.5	28.8	54.9	56.4
North Africa	30.0	26.3	21.7	24.4	48.2	49.3
Sub-Saharan Africa	65.2	61.8	10.8	12.0	24.0	26.3

\* 2009 estimates are not yet available for this indicator.

TABLE 2F.

**Male and female status in employment (as share of total employment), 1999, 2008 and 2009**

	Wage and salaried workers (%)			Employers (%)			Own-account workers (%)			Contributing family workers (%)			Vulnerable employment (%)		
	1999	2008	2009	1999	2008	2009	1999	2008	2009	1999	2008	2009	1999	2008	2009
<b>Female</b>															
World	42.8	47.2	47.3	1.3	1.5	1.5	24.3	26.9	26.9	31.6	24.4	24.3	55.9	51.3	51.2
Developed Economies & European Union	87.4	89.4	89.2	2.4	2.2	2.1	6.5	6.2	6.2	3.7	2.2	2.4	10.1	8.4	8.7
Central & South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	75.0	80.7	83.1	0.6	1.0	0.9	15.6	13.5	10.9	8.8	4.8	5.1	24.4	18.3	16.1
East Asia	32.7	40.8	42.1	1.1	1.4	1.5	27.7	33.6	33.7	38.5	24.2	22.7	66.1	57.8	56.4
South-East Asia & the Pacific	28.1	33.7	35.0	0.9	1.2	1.3	25.7	30.2	28.9	45.3	34.9	34.7	71.0	65.1	63.7
South Asia	10.4	14.5	15.2	0.5	0.8	0.9	25.7	33.3	33.0	63.4	51.4	50.9	89.1	84.7	84.0
Latin America & the Caribbean	62.8	67.2	66.0	2.2	2.6	2.8	25.1	22.4	22.5	9.8	7.7	8.7	35.0	30.2	31.1
Middle East	38.4	49.5	49.2	1.2	1.3	1.3	36.7	28.2	28.7	23.6	21.0	20.8	60.3	49.2	49.5
North Africa	44.6	41.2	41.3	3.2	3.0	2.9	13.8	15.3	15.4	38.4	40.6	40.4	52.2	55.8	55.8
Sub-Saharan Africa	12.3	16.2	15.8	0.5	0.7	0.6	50.1	44.2	44.7	37.1	38.9	38.9	87.2	83.1	83.5
<b>Male</b>															
World	44.9	48.6	48.6	3.5	3.1	3.2	38.4	37.1	37.2	13.2	11.2	11.0	51.6	48.3	48.2
Developed Economies & European Union	82.7	84.1	84.1	5.7	5.2	5.0	10.5	10.1	10.1	1.1	0.7	0.7	11.6	10.7	10.8
Central & South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) & CIS	72.0	76.5	77.9	2.4	2.9	2.5	21.7	18.7	17.5	3.8	1.8	2.1	25.5	20.6	19.5
East Asia	42.1	48.9	50.0	2.5	1.6	1.6	39.6	37.1	36.7	15.8	12.3	11.7	55.4	49.5	48.4
South-East Asia & the Pacific	34.1	39.0	39.3	3.9	3.3	3.8	48.2	46.3	46.4	13.7	11.3	10.5	62.0	57.6	56.9
South Asia	21.7	24.5	25.1	2.2	1.7	1.8	59.1	58.8	58.8	17.0	15.0	14.2	76.1	73.8	73.1
Latin America & the Caribbean	59.7	62.9	61.9	5.3	5.5	5.8	29.0	27.2	27.5	6.0	4.4	4.7	35.0	31.6	32.2
Middle East	51.3	59.0	58.6	5.6	6.0	6.3	24.1	17.9	17.9	19.1	17.1	17.2	43.1	35.0	35.1
North Africa	48.6	55.5	55.6	12.5	12.7	13.4	18.0	14.5	14.1	20.9	17.3	17.0	38.9	31.8	31.1
Sub-Saharan Africa	21.8	29.0	28.9	1.2	1.4	1.5	50.7	46.5	46.6	26.3	23.1	23.0	77.0	69.6	69.6

# Dia Internacional da Mulher, 2011

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the OIT-LISBOA website. The browser's address bar shows the URL: [www.ilo.org/public/portugue/region/eurpro/lisbon/html/portugal\\_8\\_marco\\_2011\\_pt.htm](http://www.ilo.org/public/portugue/region/eurpro/lisbon/html/portugal_8_marco_2011_pt.htm). The website header features the ILO logo and the text "OIT-LISBOA Trabalho Digno Para Todos". The main content area is titled "Novidades" and features a news item for "8 de Março de 2011" with the headline "OIT assinala o Centenário do Dia Internacional da Mulher". Below the headline is a small image of a woman and a child. The text of the article discusses the ILO's commitment to gender equality and the challenges faced by women in the labor market, particularly in the context of the global financial crisis. The website also includes a sidebar with navigation links such as "Perfil do Escritório", "Informação e Publicações em Língua Portuguesa", and "Programas e Projectos". The footer of the browser window shows the Windows taskbar with various application icons and the system clock displaying 16:22.

Site: [http://www.ilo.org/public/portugue/region/eurpro/lisbon/html/portugal\\_8\\_marco\\_2011\\_pt.htm](http://www.ilo.org/public/portugue/region/eurpro/lisbon/html/portugal_8_marco_2011_pt.htm)

# ILO International Women's Day, 2011

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the ILO website. The browser's address bar shows the URL: [www.ilo.org/gender/Events/WCMS\\_151275/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/gender/Events/WCMS_151275/lang--en/index.htm). The page header includes the ILO logo and the tagline "Promoting jobs, protecting people". A navigation menu lists various sections: About the ILO, Topics, Regions, Meetings and events, Publications, Research, Labour standards, and Statistics and databases. The main content area is titled "ILO celebrates International Women's Day" and features a sub-header "8 March 2010". The text below the header states: "The year 2011 marks the centenary of International Women's Day, and the theme of the ILO's celebrations is: 'Making the crisis recovery work for women!' as we will endeavour to show the importance of including women in recovery policies after the financial crisis." A sidebar on the left contains a "GENDER" menu with options like "About us", "Events", "International Women's Day", "Information resources", "Technical cooperation projects", and "Links". Below the main text, there is a section titled "Making the crisis recovery work for women!" which discusses recovery measures and the date of the event. A "Key resources" section lists documents such as "Background paper: Making the crisis recovery work for women" and "Poster". The browser's taskbar at the bottom shows several open applications, including "ILO Application...", "8 March 2010...", "Publicações OI...", "Novell GroupWi...", "skype™ - aber...", "2: ILO Internat...", "Mail From: Albr...", "1: Dia Internaci...", and "1: Dia Internaci...".

Site: [http://www.ilo.org/gender/Events/WCMS\\_151275/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/gender/Events/WCMS_151275/lang--en/index.htm)



Viernes, 4 de marzo 2011  
Para difusión inmediata  
OIT/11/07

**La OIT celebrará el 100° Día Internacional de la Mujer bajo el tema  
“¡La recuperación de la crisis también ha de beneficiar a la mujer!”**

GINEBRA (Noticias de la OIT) – La Organización Internacional del Trabajo (OIT) celebrará el centenario del Día Internacional de la Mujer el lunes 7 de marzo con una mesa redonda que pondrá de manifiesto el papel de la igualdad de género a la hora de alcanzar una recuperación de la crisis que sea sostenible y equitativa.

Partiendo del tema “¡La recuperación de la crisis también ha de beneficiar a la mujer!”, el panel de expertos discutirá sobre cómo las medidas políticas en el periodo posterior a la peor crisis económica desde la Gran Depresión pueden garantizar la igualdad de oportunidades y trato para mujeres y hombres en lo relativo al empleo y las condiciones de trabajo. Los participantes harán hincapié en el desarrollo de calificaciones y las políticas de formación, y de esta manera vincularán la discusión al tema de Naciones Unidas para este Día Internacional: “La igualdad de acceso a la educación, la capacitación y la ciencia y la tecnología: el camino hacia el trabajo decente para la mujer”.

El primer Día Internacional de la Mujer fue celebrado de manera oficial en 1911 tras una decisión de la Conferencia Internacional de la Mujeres Trabajadoras, que se había realizado el año anterior en Copenhague. En ese entonces, la demanda principal en países como Austria y Alemania era el derecho al voto, mientras que en Estados Unidos las mujeres se manifestaban en contra de las condiciones de trabajo precarias, que eventualmente terminaron provocando un incendio en una fábrica de vestidos. El saldo fue 146 trabajadores muertos, la mayoría de ellos mujeres inmigrantes.

Cien años después, a pesar de que se han producido algunos avances, aún queda mucho por hacer para alcanzar la igualdad de género en el mundo del trabajo. “La crisis ha servido para subrayar y agravar las desigualdades existentes. Lograr la igualdad de género sigue siendo un importante desafío. Si queremos alcanzar una recuperación de la crisis que sea sostenible y equitativa, así como una globalización justa, precisamos soluciones que tomen en cuenta la dimensión de género”, dijo el Director General de la OIT, Juan Somavia.

De acuerdo con los [datos más recientes de la OIT](#), tanto las mujeres como los hombres continúan sintiendo el impacto de la crisis económica. En 2010, la tasa mundial de desempleo para hombres fue de 6 por ciento; para las mujeres, fue de 6,5 por ciento.

Jane Hodges, Directora de la Oficina para la Igualdad de Género de la OIT, dijo que sigue existiendo una clara segregación de la mujer en sectores que se caracterizan por tener bajos salarios, largas horas de trabajo y acuerdos de trabajo informales. Este fenómeno se ve reflejado en el hecho de que hay un mayor porcentaje de mujeres atrapado en empleo vulnerable a nivel mundial (51,8 por ciento) que de hombres (48,9 por ciento). Las mujeres también se ven rezagadas en relación a los hombres cuando se trata de acceso a la formación y la educación, en especial en el mundo en desarrollo.

Desde su fundación en 1919, la OIT ha apoyado los principios de igualdad de remuneración para un trabajo de igual valor y la no discriminación. En 2009, la Conferencia Internacional del Trabajo (CIT) aprobó una resolución sobre *Igualdad de género en el corazón del trabajo decente* para guiar los esfuerzos hacia un mercado laboral en el cual todas las mujeres y hombres puedan participar de manera libre y activa. Ese mismo año, la CIT adoptó el [Pacto Mundial para el Empleo](#) con el fin de ayudar a mitigar el impacto social de la crisis.

Entre otras medidas, el Pacto exhorta a que los planes de recuperación tomen en cuenta los temas sobre igualdad de género.

Para más información sobre la iniciativa de la OIT para el Día Internacional de la Mujer, por favor vea: [http://www.ilo.org/gender/Events/lang--en/WCMS\\_151275/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/gender/Events/lang--en/WCMS_151275/index.htm)

Para cualquier otra información, por favor póngase en contacto con el Departamento de Comunicación e Información al Público al +4122/799-7912, o [communication@ilo.org](mailto:communication@ilo.org)

# Programme for International Women's Day

International Labour Office

**Monday 7 March 2011**  
**Governing Body Room (R3 South)**  
**12:30 - 14:30**

## **Making the crisis recovery work for women !**

Recovery measures should seek innovative ways to create decent work to ensure that women – alongside men – have equal access to better education, re-skilling and training leading to jobs. Women should have equal chances for careers in science and technology as men, as new jobs emerge and old jobs recover.

- 12:30 Welcome and introduction of panellists by Ms Jane Hodges  
Director, Bureau for Gender Equality,  
International Labour Office
- 12:40 Opening remarks by Mr Juan Somavia  
Director-General, International Labour Office
- 12:55 Ms Carmen Bravo Sueskun  
Women's Confederate Secretary,  
Trade Union Confederation of Workers' Commissions, CCOO, Spain
- 13:10 Mr Olusegun Oshinowo  
Director-General of Nigeria Employers' Consultative Association
- 13:25 Ms Anja Wyden Guelpa  
Geneva State Chancellor, Switzerland
- 13:40 Questions and answers
- 14:25 Closing words

# Programa para el Día Internacional de la Mujer

## Oficina Internacional del Trabajo

**Lunes 7 de marzo de 2011**

**Sala del Consejo de Administración de la OIT (3R Sur)**

**12:30 - 14:30**

### **¡La recuperación de la crisis también ha de beneficiar a la mujer !**

Las medidas de recuperación deberían prever métodos innovadores para crear trabajo decente, a fin de que las mujeres, y los hombres, tuvieran el mismo acceso a instruirse, reciclarse y formarse mejor para el trabajo. Las mujeres deberían tener las mismas posibilidades que los hombres de hacer una carrera profesional en el mundo de las ciencias y la tecnología, a medidas que aparecen nuevos puestos de trabajo y otros se recuperan.

- 12:30 Bienvenida e introducción de los oradores por parte de la Sra. Jane Hodges  
Directora de la Oficina para la Igualdad de Género,  
Oficina Internacional del Trabajo
- 12:40 Observaciones iniciales a cargo del Sr. Juan Somavia  
Director General, Oficina Internacional del Trabajo
- 12:55 Sra. Carmen Bravo Sueskun  
Secretaria Confederal de la Mujer,  
Confederación Sindical de Comisiones Obreras, CCOO, España
- 13:10 Sr. Olusegun Oshinowo  
Director General de la Asociación Consultiva de Empleadores de Nigeria
- 13:25 Sra. Anja Wyden Guelpa  
Canciller del Estado de Ginebra, Suiza
- 13:40 Sesión de preguntas y respuestas
- 14:25 Observaciones finales

# Programme pour la Journée internationale de la Femme

## Bureau international du Travail

**Lundi 7 mars 2011**

**Salle du Conseil d'administration (R3 sud)**

**12:30 - 14:30**

### Après la crise, les femmes au cœur de la reprise!

Les mesures de reprise doivent s'orienter vers des solutions novatrices pour créer des emplois décents afin de garantir aux femmes, comme aux hommes, un accès égal à une meilleure éducation et à une formation leur garantissant un travail. L'émergence de nouvelles professions et la reprise des emplois classiques devraient donner aux femmes les mêmes possibilités d'accéder à des carrières dans les sciences et la technologie qu'aux hommes.

- 12:30 Discours de bienvenue et présentation du panel par Mme Jane Hodges  
Directrice, Bureau pour l'égalité entre hommes et femmes,  
Bureau international du Travail
- 12:40 Ouverture par M. Juan Somavia  
Directeur général du Bureau international du Travail
- 12:55 Mme Carmen Bravo Sueskun  
Secrétaire confédérale de la femme,  
Confédération syndicale des commissions ouvrières, CCOO, Espagne
- 13:10 M. Olusegun Oshinowo  
Directeur général de l'Association consultative des employeurs du Nigéria
- 13:25 Mme Anja Wyden Guelpa  
Chancelière d'Etat du canton de Genève, Suisse
- 13:40 Session de questions-réponses
- 14:25 Clôture

## “Making recovery work for women”: Statement by ILO Director-General Juan Somavia for International Women’s Day

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Type: Discours

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Quand: 7 mars 2011

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Où: Geneva

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One hundred years ago women took to the streets of Europe for the right to vote;

One hundred years ago women – mainly migrant women – took to the streets in the United States to demand safe working conditions.

From those events, one hundred years ago International Women’s Day was born.

And we know that the struggle for gender equality continues, taking different forms in different societies and contexts. Some struggles more visible than others, but absolutely indispensable in all societies. The struggle goes on.

Today, we applaud the courage of the women who took to the streets in North Africa and the Middle East to demand freedom and a better life. It was a moment that illustrated that people could make a difference, that there is a moment when they are prepared to fight indignity.

Today, we join in solidarity with women the world over who are striving not to be held back simply by virtue of gender.

The big calls of history have been for freedom, dignity and justice as well as for opportunities to work in these conditions: to work in conditions of freedom, dignity and justice.

This is the demand of men and of women at all levels of development who know what it takes ultimately to move towards a life of dignity. It is the demand for decent work. At the heart of it is the struggle for gender equality, non-discrimination and downright fairness for women.

### **The situation**

We know the data but it bears repeating.

Half the productive potential of the world’s female population remains untapped. Female participation rates are around 53 per cent compared to 78 per cent for men. In other words some 510 million women worldwide are of working age, but are not economically active. This translates into a waste of talent; ideas untapped; productive capacity lost.

Among the employed, 40 per cent are women: this share has not changed over the last decade.

Unemployment rates are still higher for women compared to men.

Women remain disproportionately represented in poorly-paid, insecure, part-time, home-based or informal work. For the same job, women much too often still receive less pay than men.

Social security coverage globally is lower among women and poverty levels are higher.

In the economic crisis, women and men have been adversely affected, yet there is a differential impact, for example:

Food price increases hit women hardest, especially in the least developed countries.

For people living in poverty, when things get worse, girls' education suffers first – if they were in school to begin with.

Care burdens – still disproportionately carried by women - increase.

Experience shows that women who lose their jobs in a crisis have greater difficulty obtaining work in the recovery.

And when fiscal consolidation becomes the foremost concern, women tend to be disproportionately affected by austerity measures. This is the situation which many countries are going through today. I will just mention one example - a Gender Audit of the June 2010 Budget in the UK done by the House of Commons Library shows that women will bear 72 per cent of the burden of their government's cuts. The experience is replicated in countries that have shifted abruptly to intense fiscal consolidation.

The simple truth is that there is still too much lip service to gender equality.

We cannot be for gender equality while real economic conditions flagrantly undermine it.

We cannot expect sustainable development when half the working population participates on varying terms of inequality.

We cannot want girls to have a brighter future if parents have no opportunities for work, no basic social protection including support for children to go to school.

We cannot advocate empowerment without supporting respect for the rights and organizations that empower and the institutions that allow these to develop.

In 2009 the *Global Jobs Pact* adopted by the International Labour Conference as a decent work response to the crisis, saw the crisis as an opportunity to shape effective policy responses that are gender aware.

The Pact called for recovery packages to take into account the impact on women and men and integrate gender concerns in all measures. And in discussions on recovery packages, both regarding their design and assessing their success, women should have an equal voice with men.

This was a very strong call from the real economy, governments, employers and workers, to place gender equality as an axis of the recovery policies.

It is timely to remember that call.

### **The UN theme**

For this year's observance, the UN Family has chosen the theme "*equal access to education, training and science and technology: Pathway to decent work for women.*"

Let me note that this is the first international women's day we are celebrating under the leadership of the new UN agency – the UN Women, led by Michelle Bachelet. The ILO welcomes the establishment of the new entity and put its capacities on gender in the world of work at the disposal of efforts to empower women and promote gender equality.

Our monitoring shows that many governments are indeed seeing upgrading the skills of women as a winning element.

What does it require?

Enhancing access of adolescent and young girls to quality formal and non-formal education programmes, including vocational technical training;

Girls and women must have equal opportunities as boys and men for vocational education, training and skills development connected to the world of work and the evolving reality of labour markets, enterprises and workplaces where new technologies will be key;

Tackling societal perceptions that tend to stream girls into non-scientific courses that ultimately restrict their choice of jobs and employability, and in tandem address the occupational segregation of traditionally accepted "male" and "female" jobs by opening them up to both sexes;

Facilitating the transition of young women and men from school to work, taking into account that young women (who are increasingly doing better in school than young men) face greater barriers entering the labour force;

Instituting systems for recognition and certification of formally or informally acquired skills and competencies, because the portability of skills makes it easier for both male and female workers to move into new jobs that may emerge; and



Targeting particularly disadvantaged groups of women through specially designed skills training programmes, for example, through catch-up technical courses, community-based and mobile training programmes to reach women in the informal economy;

Yet the focus on education and training for girls and women must be paralleled by attention to the broader environment: jobs for the future as well as support measures that enable them to progress.

Gender-sensitive social protection policies and programmes targeting mothers have proved to be effective elements of an enabling environment

### **Gender equality in the context of recovery**

As we consider the issue of gender equality in the context of recovery, it means focusing on the bigger picture.

Looking around we see a marked tendency to go back to business as usual as we come out of the crisis – perhaps especially so in Europe.

I believe we have to ask a fundamental question: What is the kind of growth that we need? We need investment, innovation, technology to create jobs. At the same time we also have to focus on the quality of work. Will the business as usual model of growth yield gender equality in the world of work? Will it yield the stable societies that we need? I think not.

And if there is a place where can have a reasoned discussion on these issues it is the ILO. To move forward on the gender agenda we need to think differently. We need to consider the issue in the framework of the broader demand of people for a fair change at a decent job. Gender equality is part of that process.

Sufficient thought is not given to the notion that the quality of work defines the quality of a society. Work is seen as a cost of production; the worker as a consumer. This is legitimate yet work is more than this. A narrow perspective fails to capture the role of work as a source of human dignity, family stability and social stability, a source of empowerment. The linkage between the stability of families and jobs is not being made. Gender equality is at the heart of issues pertaining to the organization of work and of family life.

In 2004 the ILO produced a Report on the Social Dimension of Globalization. In 2008 it adopted the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization which pointed to the imbalances of the prevailing model of globalization.

A lot has been done; a lot still needs to be done. As a tripartite organization the ILO has to play a very important role.

As we reflect on progress and the distance still to go.

As we renew commitment to gender equality.

We can say that the forces of the status quo are too powerful to resist or we can discharge the responsibility of our Organization which derives from its Constitution to work for change.

It is time to work for a new era of social justice; time to make a radical re-assessment of gender equality policies and strategies as part of the construction of this new era of social justice.

Unité responsable: [Communication et information au public](#)



International  
Labour  
Office

**Making the crisis recovery  
work for women!**

**Après la crise, les femmes  
au cœur de la reprise!**

**¡ La recuperación de la crisis  
también ha de beneficiar  
a la mujer!**



**1911  
2011**

**The Centenary  
of the  
International  
Women's Day**

**Le centenaire  
de la journée  
internationale  
de la femme**

**El Centenario  
del Día  
Internacional  
de la Mujer**

Bureau  
for Gender  
Equality



# Dia Internacional da Mulher, 2012

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the OIT-LISBOA website. The browser's address bar shows the URL: [www.ilo.org/public/portugue/region/eurpro/lisbon/html/portugal\\_8\\_marco\\_2012\\_pt.htm](http://www.ilo.org/public/portugue/region/eurpro/lisbon/html/portugal_8_marco_2012_pt.htm). The website header features the OIT logo and the text "OIT-LISBOA Trabalho Digno Para Todos". The main content area is titled "8 de março de 2012 OIT celebra Dia Internacional da Mulher" and includes a photograph of a woman in a field. The text below the photo reads: "Anualmente, a Organização Internacional do Trabalho assinala o Dia Internacional da Mulher homenageando mulheres que demonstraram coragem e convicção em diferentes domínios do mundo do trabalho. Em 2012, para assinalar o importante contributo das mulheres do mundo rural e da agricultura, a OIT escolheu o tema: Empoderamento das mulheres do mundo rural - eliminar a pobreza e a fome. Na sede da OIT, um debate reunirá especialistas e responsáveis na área e será seguido de um debate. Para mais informações >". The website also features a sidebar with navigation links and a footer with contact information for OIT-Lisboa.

7. Global Employment ...pdf  
4.2.Programa Francês.pdf  
4.1.Programa Espanhol.pdf  
4. Programa Inglês.pdf  
6.Poster.pdf

Mostrar todas as transferências...

Start  
ILO Applications for jo...  
C:\Documents and Set...  
Google - Google Chrome  
OIT - Google Chrome  
Novell GroupWise - 10 ...  
Mail From: Ana Santos  
1. Dia Internacional d...  
11:36

Site: [http://www.ilo.org/public/portugue/region/eurpro/lisbon/html/portugal\\_8\\_marco\\_2012\\_pt.htm](http://www.ilo.org/public/portugue/region/eurpro/lisbon/html/portugal_8_marco_2012_pt.htm)

# ILO International Women's Day, 2012

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the ILO website. The browser's address bar shows the URL: [www.ilo.org/gender/Events/WCMS\\_204182/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/gender/Events/WCMS_204182/lang--en/index.htm). The page features the ILO logo and navigation menu at the top. The main content area is titled "8 March 2012 ILO celebrates International Women's Day". Below the title, there is a sub-header "ILO celebrates International Women's Day" and a paragraph describing the theme: "The theme for international Women's Day 2012 – Empower Rural Women, end poverty and hunger – highlights the need to tackle gender inequalities in the rural sector." A table provides details about the event, including the type (Campaign), dates (7-11 March 2012), location (Geneva, Switzerland), and contact information (ILO Bureau for gender equality, gender@ilo.org). The page also includes a section for "Key resources" with links to a background paper and a poster. The browser's taskbar at the bottom shows several open applications, including Google Chrome and various ILO documents.

International Labour Organization  
Promoting jobs, protecting people

**8 March 2012**  
**ILO celebrates International Women's Day**

The theme for international Women's Day 2012 – Empower Rural Women, end poverty and hunger – highlights the need to tackle gender inequalities in the rural sector.

Type:	Campaign
When:	7 - 11 March 2012
Where:	Geneva, Switzerland
Contact(s):	ILO Bureau for gender equality (gender@ilo.org)

Some 70 per cent of the world's poor live in rural communities. Within these communities, the poorest of the poor are often women, who are often perceived and treated as second-class citizens. Despite the low level of recognition given to their work, their socio-economic contribution to the welfare of their households and communities is immense.

Marking International Women's Day 2012, the ILO calls to unleash the full potential of rural women to help build a fair and equitable global economy. A high-level panel debate will take place on 8 March from 12:30 to 14:30 at the ILO headquarters in Geneva.

Prior to ILO Director-General Mr Juan Somavia's opening remarks, Ms Jane Hodges, Director, Bureau for Gender Equality, will introduce distinguished panelists:

- Ms Sue Longley, Coordinator for Agriculture, International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Association (IUF);
- Ms Zodwa F. Mabuza, Chief Executive Officer of Federation of Swaziland Employers and Chamber of Commerce; and
- Dr. Esther Byer Suckoo, Minister of Labour and Social Security, Barbados

After the panelists debate, a question-and-answer session will take place.

This content is available in [Español](#) [Français](#)

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**Key resources**

- ▶ Background paper: Empower Rural Women- End Poverty and Hunger - [pdf 748KB]
- ▶ Poster - International Women's Day 2012 - [pdf 435KB]

Site: [http://www.ilo.org/gender/Events/WCMS\\_204182/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/gender/Events/WCMS_204182/lang--en/index.htm)

# Message by Juan Somavia Director-General of the ILO on the occasion of International Women's Day

International Women's Day is celebrated on 8th March of each year. This year's event focuses on recognizing the important contribution of rural women across the world to the well-being of their families and communities and in sustaining societies and economies.

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*Type:* Statement

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*When:* 06 March 2012

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*Where:* Geneva, Switzerland

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Today we celebrate International Women's Day by recognizing the important contribution of rural women across the world to the well-being of their families and communities and in sustaining societies and economies. We call for action to ensure that all rural women can live and work in dignity.

Women comprise around 43 per cent of the agricultural labour force in developing countries, and more than 70 per cent of the labour force in some agriculture-intensive economies. Working as farmers, wage labourers, and entrepreneurs, rural women also take on a disproportionate share of the responsibility of caring for children and the elderly. Through these multiple roles rural women have a fundamental part to play in achieving rural development.

Rural women are paid less than men and often lag behind in access to education, training, technologies and mobility. They also work longer days than men, taking both paid and unpaid work into consideration. Much of their work remains unrecognized because it is not remunerated and confined to the domestic sphere. With a continuing economic crisis it is expected that in most countries women's unpaid work is likely to increase, diminishing their ability to engage in productive activities.

Rural women everywhere face gender-related constraints that limit their access to decent work as well as their productivity. Enhancement of women's productive capacity depends on better access to decent jobs and control over productive resources. If they are given the opportunity to realize their full potential all stand to benefit.

It is time for change and it is timely to recall that there is a decent work route out of poverty.

With gender equality a guiding principle, the ILO promotes decent work for all. Promoting respect for fundamental principles and rights at work and social dialogue, promoting employment creation and enterprise development, and improving access to social protection, the ILO supports rural women's fight to live in dignity, through access to more and better jobs.

This agenda empowers, it is a pathway to sustainable development. With integrated action, it enables women and men to break the vicious cycle of poverty.

Applied to the rural economy what does it take?

- Respecting freedom from discrimination as a fundamental right supported by all policies affecting the rural sector;
- With freedom of association, organization gives strength and voice to rural women;
- Ensuring that equity and equality begin early with action to keep girls as well as boys in school up to the minimum age for entry into employment – respecting the right to freedom from child labour;
- Enhancing women's capacity to engage in productive work – through education and training, opening up their access to productive resources and expanding employment opportunities including through support for rural enterprises, infrastructural development and in promoting rural green jobs;
- Building social protection floors gives a basic level of security – it also empowers and helps to sustain local economies;
- Organization in cooperatives, associations and unions also provides channels for productive activity and the delivery of services; and
- Pursuing integrated local development strategies that are gender sensitive and supportive of decent work.

A decent work approach can go a long way towards closing the gender gap in agriculture and enabling rural women to work out of poverty. The impact would be great. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimates for example that reducing the poverty gap would reduce the number of undernourished people worldwide by as much as 100 to 150 million.

There is much good experience to draw upon and scale up, backed by international support in policy and practice.

On this day, I applaud rural women and ask everyone to recognize their contributions. It is time to unleash the full potential of rural women so that they can take their proper place in efforts to achieve a fair and equitable global economy.

Tags: decent work, rural employment, women workers

Unit responsible: [Communication and Public Information](#)

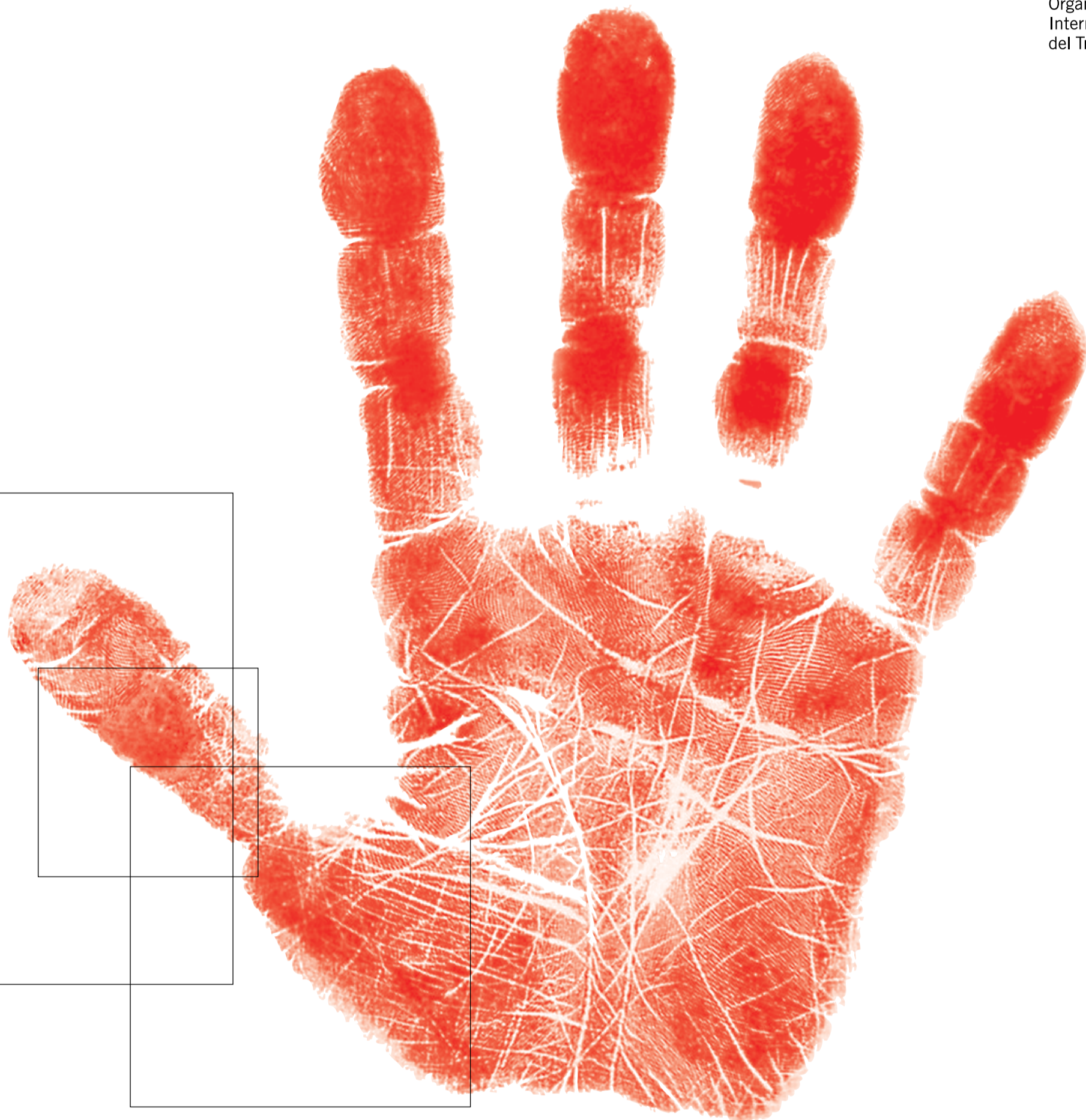
# STOP VIOLENCE AT WORK VIOLENCE AU TRAVAIL VIOLENCIA EN EL TRABAJO



International  
Labour  
Organization

Organisation  
internationale  
du Travail

Organización  
Internacional  
del Trabajo



**8** March  
mars  
de marzo | **2013** | **11:30** | ILO – Governing Body Room  
**13:00** | OIT – Salle du Conseil d'administration  
OIT – Sala del Consejo de Administración

Join us to observe International Women's Day  
Venez nombreux à l'occasion de la Journée internationale de la femme  
Únase a nosotros con motivo del Día Internacional de la Mujer

Bureau  
for Gender  
Equality







INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2012

EMPOWER RURAL WOMEN  
END POVERTY AND HUNGER

Unleashing the potential of rural women

Rural women are resourceful economic agents who contribute to the income of families and the growth of communities in a multitude of ways. They work as entrepreneurs, as farm and non-farm labourers, in family businesses, for others and as self-employed; while they take on a disproportionate share of unpaid work at home. However, their contribution is limited by unequal access to resources as well as persistent discrimination and gender norms which need to be addressed to allow the realisation of their full potential.

**Did you know?**

In 2008, two thirds of employed women and men in sub-Saharan Africa worked in Agriculture, mainly as contributing (unpaid) family workers or own account workers. In South Asia 44% of men and 70% of women workers, were engaged in agriculture.

Most rural women workers are unpaid family workers or self-employed, and exposed to precarious jobs and low pay.

Rural women are paid on average 25% less than men.

Overall, rural women work longer hours than men. In Benin and Tanzania, women work, respectively 17.4 and 14 hours more than men per week.

Gender norms dictate the role of women and men and also their opportunities regarding type of work, both in urban and rural areas. In some societies these norms restricts women's mobility and engagement in productive work outside their homes. For example women's entrepreneurship is not broadly accepted in many societies and women face attitudinal obstacles in starting, consolidating and developing a sustainable business. In addition, rural women are often thwarted by discriminatory property, family and inheritance laws and practices.



Rural women in developing countries are heavily burdened by their double role as paid or unpaid workers and family care providers. The latter restricts their time and mobility to engage in productive work and limits their time for schooling, training and economic activities.

The limited access to productive resources, lower educational levels, and social norms about appropriate work for women tend to confine them to lower paid, lower status work where opportunities for skills training and advancement are reduced, thus perpetuating their lower status. Further, vocational education, training and entrepreneur programmes for rural women are often limited to a narrow range of female-dominated fields that reinforce their traditional roles and responsibilities. While improving their opportunities to generate income, such training limits the chances to benefit from newer, non-traditional areas that can offer women higher earning and more skilled technical or managerial jobs.

**Did you know?**

Over two-thirds of the world's illiterate people are women, many of whom live in rural areas. In Cambodia, 48% of rural women and 14 % of rural men are unable to read or write. In Burkina Faso, the illiteracy rate for women is 78% compared to 63% for men. The global secondary school attendance ratio of rural girls is 39% as opposed to 45% for rural boys (compared to 59% and 60% of urban girls and boys respectively).

When women receive the same levels of education, experience and farm inputs as men, there are no significant difference in male and female farmer's productivity.

Micro and small enterprises offer a number of particular advantages for rural women: flexible hours, location on or near women's houses, ease of entry, and links with local markets. However, rural female entrepreneurs also face particular challenges entering new and lucrative markets and expanding their business.



Rural women's presence in workers' and employers' organisations remains low (11-35% of total membership), leading to lack of voice and representation in policy-making and programme development.

Child labour is also widespread in rural areas and girl child workers form a significant part of the agricultural workforce. Child labour is detrimental to long-term health, education and higher-level skills acquisition, and decreases the chances of decent employment in youth and adulthood.

**Did you know?**

Cooperatives are a prominent form of sustainable enterprise for women in rural areas. When they adopt gender-sensitive practices, they can increase women's empowerment, voice and representation in decision-making, provide a business network, enhance access to markets and services, and (consequently) facilitate economies of scale.

Low rates of female land ownership can hinder access to financial assets that are necessary to set up a business. Available information suggests that less than 20% of agricultural land holdings in developing countries are operated by women (10% in Western and Central Africa and in the Near East and North Africa).

## Policy options/recommendations

The factors that limit women's productivity in the rural sector are manifold and diverse and the programmes and services aimed at assisting rural women need to address all four aspects of the Decent Work Agenda.

### Employment creation

- Increase productivity, particularly in women-intensive rural sectors, among others by providing up-to-date training to women, and facilitating their access to improved technologies.
- Encourage or initiate rural public works programmes. Include women both as workers (including in high-levels tasks) and as decision-makers in the planning and implementation phases so that products and services delivered reflect women's needs and thus contribute to enhancing gender equality in rural employment.
- Promote equitable access to, and productive use of land by women farmers through gender sensitive agrarian reform, promoting land rental markets and services to small farmers, joint titling of land/assets, and revising discriminatory land laws.
- Increase the breath, depth and "women-friendliness" of financial services in rural areas, as a key strategy for providing capital for women-led rural businesses and farms, through gender sensitization and support for rural financial institutions.
- Expand rural women's access to science, technical education, mobile phones, computers, and other information and communication technologies.



### Strengthen social dialogue

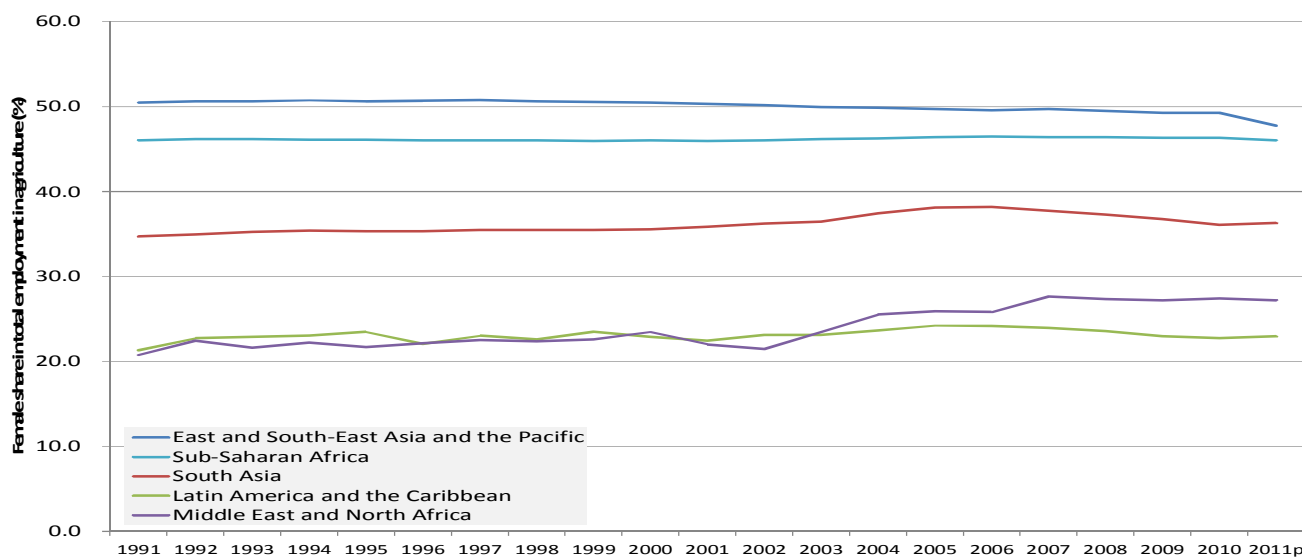
- Ensure explicit inclusion of rural and gender issues in the key national policy frameworks to be addressed in social dialogue, including employment policies.
- Promote tripartite social dialogue and consultation at national and local levels, enhancing especially rural women's representation and voice.

### Social protection

- Improve gender equality in access to basic services (schools, health care, child care) in rural areas, by investing in their supply (infrastructure, staff, etc.) so as to reduce women's vulnerability and increase their capacity to access more remunerative jobs and opportunities.
- Develop social security schemes for men and women informal entrepreneurs, including cash benefits for maternity leave or child cash benefits and childcare arrangements to increase women's ability to mitigate risk and engage in business.

- Promote the social protection floor, which is an integrated set of social policies designed to guarantee income security and access to essential social services for all. Such social transfers can be particularly important to women by giving them greater control over how household income is spent.

**Figure 1. Female share in total employment in agriculture by selected regions, 1991-2011 (%)**



Note: 2011 are preliminary estimates.

Source: ILO - Trends Econometric Models, October 2011.

### Promote rights at work

- Encourage ratification and support implementation of key equal rights in International Labour Standards: especially Convention no. 100 on Equal remuneration (1951), and no. 111 on Discrimination in employment and occupation (1958).
- Ensure that rural small producers and workers, particularly agricultural workers, are covered under national labour and other relevant laws and regulations, and are protected in practice.

### Sources

Gender dimensions of agriculture and rural employment: Differentiated pathways out of poverty, 2010, FAO, IFAD and ILO. Available at <http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i1638e/i1638e.pdf>

Gender and Rural Employment Policy Brief 1, Gender-equitable rural work to reduce poverty and boost economic growth. Available at <http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i2008e/i2008e01.pdf>

Gender and Rural Employment Policy Brief 2, Investing in skills for socio-economic empowerment of rural women. Available at <http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i2008e/i2008e02.pdf>

Gender and Rural Employment Policy Brief 3, Rural women's entrepreneurship is "good business"! Available at <http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i2008e/i2008e03.pdf>

The State of Food and Agriculture 2010-11. Women in Agriculture: closing the gender gap for development. Available at <http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i2050e/i2050e.pdf>

# Dia Internacional da Mulher, 2013

The screenshot shows the OIT-LISBOA website interface. At the top, the header includes the OIT logo and the text "OIT-LISBOA Trabalho Digno Para Todos". The date "Lisboa, 07 de março 2013" is displayed in the top right. The main content area is titled "Novidades" and features a section for "Dia Internacional da Mulher". This section includes a graphic with the word "STOP" and a handprint, and a text block in Portuguese and English. The Portuguese text states that the ILO commemorates International Women's Day with the theme of violence against women in the workplace, noting that sexual harassment is a subtle but disruptive form of violence. It also mentions that the Director General, Guy Ryder, has issued a declaration on this day. The English text reads: "Workplace violence assumes many forms and women are often particularly vulnerable, especially in the informal economy. Such violence is wrong and is a violation of the most basic human rights. Workplace violence including sexual harassment also represents a significant barrier to women's access and equitable treatment and opportunities in the labour markets." Below this, it says "Violência no Trabalho" and "Declaração de 8 de Março do Diretor Geral da OIT". The website also has a sidebar with navigation links and a "DECENT WORK" logo.

Site: [http://www.ilo.org/public/portugue/region/eurpro/lisbon/html/portugal\\_8marco\\_2013.htm](http://www.ilo.org/public/portugue/region/eurpro/lisbon/html/portugal_8marco_2013.htm)

# ILO International Women's Day, 2013

International Labour Organization  
Promoting jobs, protecting people

International Women's Day  
**STOP Violence at work**  
8 March 2013

Promoting decent work for women and men that is free from violence  
At a time when ending violence against women has taken centre stage in the international media, is high on the political agenda in many countries, and is the topic of this year's United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, International Women's Day 2013 presents an important opportunity for the ILO to host a world-of-work discussion on how to stop violence at work.

8 March 2013, 11:30 to 13:00, ILO – Governing Body Room

ILO's Director General, Mr Guy Ryder, and other distinguished speakers representing workers' and employers' organizations will participate in the panel debate. Dr. Charlotte Harland will grace the event, and share her perspectives based on her wide experience in development work. Each speaker will share good practices and experiences, followed by an active question and answer session from the floor.

Download the Programme  
Download the Biographies of panelists

Key resources  
Statement  
ILO Director-General's statement on the occasion of International Women's Day  
A promise is a promise. Time for action to end violence against women

Background paper  
STOP Violence at work  
Promoting decent work for women and men that is free from violence

Event coverage  
Video highlights  
ILO panel for International Women's Day

Download the poster

Site: <http://www.ilo.org/gender/Events/international-women-day/lang--en/index.htm>

ILO Director-General's statement on the occasion of International Women's Day 2013

A promise is a promise: Time for action to end violence against women. Stop violence against women at work.

Type: Statement

When: 08 March 2013

Where: Geneva

Workplace violence assumes many forms and women are often particularly vulnerable, especially in the informal economy. Such violence is wrong and is a violation of the most basic human rights. Workplace violence including sexual harassment also represents a significant barrier to women's access and equitable treatment and opportunities in the labour market.

The ILO's decent work mandate compels it to act against violence at work and to foster workplace environments founded on gender equality and respect. Gender-based violence is clearly at odds with the meaning of decent work: full and productive employment for women and men in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity.

Available data point to the extent of the problem at work. For example, between 40 and 50 per cent of women in European Union countries experience unwanted sexual advances, physical contact or other forms of sexual harassment at their workplace. In Asia and the Pacific, studies indicate that 30 to 40 per cent of women workers report some form of verbal, physical or sexual harassment. Violence against women comes with a high cost to individuals, families, societies and economies. A study in Australia showed an estimated economic cost of some AUS\$13.6 billion in 2008-09 while another study published in 2008 estimated that in England and Wales the cost of domestic violence alone was £20 billion per year, of which lost economic output amounted to £2.3 billion.

The world of work is an excellent context for both prevention and remedial measures. The ILO has had a long engagement in practical action against gender-based violence in work places, both at policy and programme levels. It has developed tools and guides with a strong sectoral approach targeting areas where the labour force is highly feminized, such as the health and services sectors. Moreover, action in support of women's empowerment whether through business development, management skills, and provision of savings and credit services, as well as through their organization, also renders them less vulnerable to violence.

Tripartite delegates at the ILO's 2009 International Labour Conference instructed member States to develop policies, programmes, legislation and other measures aimed at combatting gender-based violence. Several international labour standards – including the 2011 Convention

on Domestic Workers which covers these highly-vulnerable and predominantly female workers – require ratifying States along with trade unions and employers’ organizations to take action against any form of violence, abuse and harassment at work.

Of the various ways in which sex discrimination manifests itself across the globe, gender based violence is exceptionally dehumanizing, pervasive and oppressive. It can and must be prevented. Wherever invidious discriminatory behaviour such as sexual harassment and bullying at work is tolerated, trivialized or brushed out of sight, it is time to take a stand, join forces and act with determination.

A decent world with social justice upholds equality between women and men, boys and girls and assures all women and girls that gender-based violence will not be tolerated wherever it occurs – from homes to schools and workplaces.

On this International Women’s Day the ILO recommits to doing its part to make this a reality.



## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2013

*Promoting decent work for women & men that is free from violence*

The primary goal of the ILO is to achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. Self-evidently, violence in the workplace is at odds with this mandate. For decades the ILO has advised on policy and executed programmes to eliminate sex discrimination at work. Given the 2009 ILC Conclusions instructions<sup>1</sup> to develop policies, programmes, legislation and other measures aimed at combatting gender-based violence, ILO uses the 2013 IWD theme to raise awareness on how the world of work is both an excellent channel for prevention and for remedies and enforcement of policy proscriptions.

Since the mid-1990s increasing international attention has been paid to the issue of violence against women; the data that are now being collected show that it is widespread.

### FACT BOX

#### Sexual harassment

- *Between 40 and 50 per cent of women in European Union countries experience unwanted sexual advancements, physical contact or other forms of sexual harassment at their workplace.*
- *In the United States, 83 per cent of girls aged 12 to 16 experience some form of sexual harassment in public schools.*
- *Small surveys in Asia-Pacific countries indicate that 30 to 40 per cent of women workers report some form of harassment - verbal, physical or sexual.*
- *One in five (21%) people in Australia has been sexually harassed since the age of 15; one third of women (33%) have been harassed, compared to less than one in ten (9%) men.*
- *A majority (68%) of those people were harassed in the workplace. A quarter of women (25%) and one in six men (16%) have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace in Australia.*

*Violence against Women Factsheet  
United Nations, Secretary General's Campaign, UNiTE, 2012  
and 2011 Australian Human Rights Commission Telephone Survey*

Sexual harassment and other forms of harassment and abuse (physical, verbal or psychological), bullying, mobbing, work-related stress and violence affect all professions and sectors, and both women and men. However, there is still no explicit international human rights treaty prohibition on violence against women, and the issue remains poorly defined and understood under international human rights law.

<sup>1</sup> ILC: *Provisional Record* No. 13, Conclusions on Gender Equality at the Heart of Decent Work paras 5, 45, 52 and 54.

Often in the world of work, violence is based on unequal power relations. ILO's standards on gender equality and those covering workers in situations where violence may go un-noticed – domestic workers, indigenous peoples, child labourers, rural workers, migrant workers, to name but a few – help define international rights on the matter. The ILO's tripartite structure adds weight to workplace responses by drawing workers' and employers' organisations and ministries responsible for labour into the debate. Existing programmes have already supported constituents' work to end violence where it has proven a factor in HIV infection among women and girls. So all the other measures available from the ILO should be used to end this scourge. This year's International Women's Day discussion builds on the totality of ILO's expertise.

### *Making the Human Rights and the Business Case*

Violence in the world of work is a human rights issue, as well as a health, education, legal and socio-economic problem. There is also a strong business case for eliminating violence against women and men. The costs to enterprises include absenteeism, increased turnover, lower job performance and productivity, negative public image, legal/litigation fees, fines or high settlement costs, and rising insurance premiums. For workers, it can lead to heightened stress, loss of motivation, increased accidents and disability, and even death. The potential strain on health, welfare and social security systems can be avoided through the promotion of integrated, gender-responsive occupational safety and health policies and a preventive culture in the world of work.

### *Current ILO research, guides and tools*

Office-wide tools and guides have been developed over the last decade, and now comprise a formidable package of approaches to end violence against women at work. Sectoral dimensions have been addressed e.g. the ILO, WHO, ICN, PSI Joint Programme on Workplace Violence in the Health Sector was launched in 2000 and has since carried out a series of research activities and published *Framework Guidelines* for addressing workplace violence in the health sector. 2010 ILO research highlighted the challenges faced by women in hotel, catering and tourism, who make up 60 to 70 per cent of that labour force; unskilled or semi-skilled women tend to work in the most vulnerable jobs where they are more likely to experience poor working conditions, inequality of opportunity and treatment, violence, exploitation, stress and sexual harassment.

ILO also works on better tracking of incidence of violence at work. Safework's 2012 database *The Global Database on National OSH Legislation* includes occupational violence as an indicator. Better Work, present in many factories that are women-dominated, has been measuring its own impact on reducing gender-based violence by collecting enterprise-level data through worker surveys, which cover a range of issues including sexual harassment at the workplace. Baseline data in 2011 show that such harassment is a concern for 85 per cent of workers in Indonesia, 26 per cent in Jordan and seven per cent in Vietnam. Better Work undertook training for managers, supervisors and workers themselves aimed to prevent and address sexual harassment. Gender-based violence should be addressed through social dialogue, including collective bargaining, at the enterprise, sectoral or national levels and ILO training courses are addressing this. In addition, work needs to be accelerated to build the capacity of labour statisticians, improve labour market information systems in areas such as violence against women in the world of work.

### *Technical cooperation addressing violence at work*

There are currently two ILO projects where the explicit purpose is to combat gender-based violence in the workplace: "*Promoting Gender Equality and Preventing Violence against Women at the Workplace in Bangladesh*", and "*Joint UN Programme on Prevention of and Response to Gender-based Violence in Sri Lanka*".

Several other projects include efforts to combat gender-based violence and sexual harassment as part of a larger workplace programme or of a UN Joint Programme. The project *Promoting Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in the World of Work in Brazil, Angola, South Africa, India, China (BASIC)* has worked on this e.g. it supported Angola's advocacy campaign which led to an Act of Parliament specifically outlawing domestic violence; in China the project supported constituents to draft and use a guide on preventing sexual harassment at the workplace. Projects promoting the rights of domestic workers in Lebanon and the Middle East include building support structures for domestic workers who are violently abused in their places of work. In Pakistan a study on how workplaces operate to minimize sexual harassment has been conducted by the ILO, while in Nepal the ILO runs a project that is explicitly linked to supporting the National Plan of Action against Gender-based Violence. The project *Empowering Women for Peace & Recovery in East Sudan* addresses masculinities and non-violent approaches in its delivery. And lastly, training under a women's leadership programme in Indonesia, builds capacity in enterprises on how to eliminate sexual harassment in the workplace.

### *Time to speak out*

Of the varied ways in which sex discrimination manifests itself across the globe, gender-based violence is particularly dehumanizing and oppressive. No other form of sex discrimination violates so many fundamental human rights, as articulated in the 1948 United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Workplace violence and harassment present a significant barrier to women accessing and progressing through the labour market. It is worth repeating that workplace violence is a hidden problem, but with very tangible consequences. It erodes decent working conditions and reinforces gendered and other power relations to the detriment of both women and men in the world of work. It is time to speak out against the unspeakable: violence, sexual harassment and abuses at work.

At a time when ending violence against women has taken centre stage in the international media, is high on the political agenda in many countries, and is the topic of this year's United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, International Women's Day 2013 presents an important opportunity for the ILO to host a world-of-work discussion on how to stop violence at work. This tripartite discussion will allow for concrete good practice to be shared and for the ILO to take further concrete steps in supporting government, workers and employers in our joint imperative to *stop violence at work*.

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[www.ilo.org/gender](http://www.ilo.org/gender)

# Dia Internacional da Mulher, 2014

Site: [http://www.ilo.org/public/portugue/region/eurpro/lisbon/html/portugal\\_dia\\_mulher\\_pt\\_2014.htm](http://www.ilo.org/public/portugue/region/eurpro/lisbon/html/portugal_dia_mulher_pt_2014.htm)

Início | Mapa do Sítio | Contactos | Sala de Imprensa | Visita Guiada



**OIT-LISBOA** Trabalho Digno Para Todos

ORGANIZAÇÃO INTERNACIONAL DO TRABALHO

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**OIT LISBOA** [Início >](#)

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**Programas/Projectos e Parcerias**

**Relações OIT / Portugal**

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**Ligações das Instituições Parceiras**

**Relações Portugal-OIT: promoção do estatuto das mulheres**  
8 de Março - 2014



Relações Portugal-OIT: promoção do estatuto das mulheres é uma das iniciativas do projeto Portugal-OIT - dinâmicas de uma relação, que assinala a relação quase centenária entre Portugal e a Organização Internacional do Trabalho. Este ano, a OIT-Lisboa assinala o Dia Internacional da Mulher (8 de março), disponibilizando elementos significativos dessa relação.

A seleção de documentos que aqui destacamos ilustram a dinâmica de um país que, após a revolução, vê aprovar um conjunto de medidas legislativas com um impacto acentuado no estatuto das mulheres portuguesas. E nesse movimento, a então Comissão da Condição Feminina (CCF) teve um papel de relevo que podemos testemunhar através dos vários documentos e publicações da OIT.

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Cooperação Técnica

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# ILO International Women Day, 2014

Site:

<http://www.ilo.org/gender/Events/international-women-day/lang--en/index.htm>

The screenshot shows the ILO website for International Women's Day 2014. The header includes the ILO logo and the tagline 'Promoting Jobs, Protecting People'. The main navigation bar contains links for Home, About the ILO, Newsroom, Meetings and events, Publications, Research, Labour standards, Statistics and databases, and Contact Us. The main content area features a large heading 'International Women's Day' and a sub-heading 'The ILO Women at Work Centenary Initiative: Where we are and where we want to be'. Below this, there is a multimedia feature titled 'Women at work' and a photo-timeline titled 'The fight for women's rights in the workplace'. A poster download link is also visible.

ILO Director general statement, 2014

[http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/who-we-are/ilo-director-general/statements-and-speeches/WCMS\\_237248/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/who-we-are/ilo-director-general/statements-and-speeches/WCMS_237248/lang--en/index.htm)



International  
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del Trabajo

The ILO Women  
at Work  
Centenary Initiative:

Initiative du Centenaire  
de l'OIT sur les  
femmes au travail:

Iniciativa del Centenario  
de la OIT sobre las  
mujeres en el trabajo:

Where we are and  
where we want to be

Où en sommes-nous,  
quels sont nos buts

Dónde estamos, cuáles  
son nuestras metas



Friday  
Vendredi  
Viernes

7

March  
mars  
de marzo

11:00  
12:30

Room II - R3  
Salle II - R3  
Sala II - R3

Join us on the eve of International Women's Day – International Labour Office

Rejoignez-nous à la veille de la Journée internationale de la femme – Bureau international du Travail

Únase a nosotros en la víspera del Día Internacional de la Mujer – Oficina internacional del Trabajo

## ***The ILO Women at Work Centenary Initiative: Where we are, and where we want to be***

Panel event to mark International Women's Day

ILO Headquarters, Geneva, 7 March 2014

The ILO Centenary Initiative on *Women at Work* is one of seven being launched ahead of the ILO's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in order to help "equip the Organization to take up successfully the challenges of its mandate in the future".<sup>1</sup> The ILO is planning a major assessment of women in the world of work in the years leading up to its Centenary in 2019. This year's observance of International Women's Day launches a process of reflection on this Initiative.

On Friday 7 March 2014 eminent gender equality scholars and activists from workers' and employers' organisations will take part in a high-level panel at the ILO Headquarters in Geneva. This panel will be one of a series of activities aimed at giving wider voice to the ILO's tripartite constituents and experts on the theme of women at work inspiring and informing the Centenary Initiative as it develops. This event takes place within the broad framework of the United Nations' chosen topic for International Women's Day covering achievements and challenges for the MDGs.

### **Building on achievements...**

The ILO enjoys a long-established record of advocacy and contributions toward improving women's status and recognition of their rights in the world of work. Since its founding in 1919, the Organization has taken the lead in developing international labour standards, policies and approaches in promoting women workers' rights and equality with men in the world of work. The ILO fundamental Conventions on equality at work<sup>2</sup> and the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) - have been almost universally ratified. In 2009 the International Labour Conference adopted Conclusions concerning gender equality<sup>3</sup> which contain a wealth of strategies, suggested policies and approaches for promoting equality. The 2008 Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization mandates the ILO to make gender equality and non-discrimination cross-cutting issues throughout its strategic objectives.<sup>4</sup>

In most countries the principles of equality and non-discrimination have been incorporated into national legislation, many governments have adopted active labour market policies to tackle sex discrimination, and a growing number of employers' and workers' organizations have implemented measures to help ensure equality of opportunity and treatment. Targeted measures/positive action have been identified as an instrument to overcome persistent

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<sup>1</sup> [Report of the Director-General: Towards the centenary: realities, renewal and tripartite commitment, Report I\(A\), International Labour Conference](#), 102<sup>nd</sup> Session, 2013. See also [GB.319/INS/3/1](#), at para. 30-33.

<sup>2</sup> These are the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100) and the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111).

<sup>3</sup> See [Resolution concerning gender equality at the heart of decent work](#), International Labour Conference, 98<sup>th</sup> Session, Geneva, 2009, Provisional Record No. 13, 13/64.

<sup>4</sup> The ILO Office mainstreams gender equality within its structures, staffing and substantive programmatic frameworks, see ILO, [ILO Action Plan for Gender Equality 2010–15 - Phase II: Aligned with the Programme and Budget for 2012–13](#) (2012).

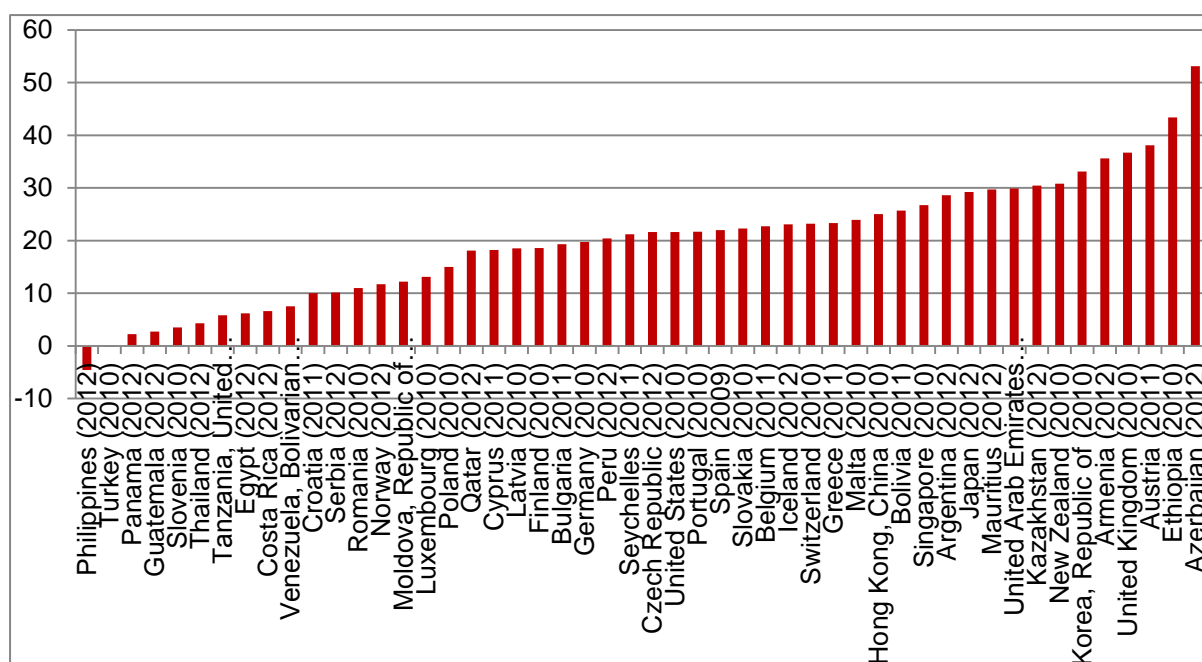
employment discrimination (e.g. temporary goals or quotas), along with ensuring equitable representation of women in tripartite bodies.

**...assessing the gaps...**

However, progress in achieving women’s empowerment and gender equality has been mixed. Though women’s labour market participation has often significantly increased, progress has been uneven across countries and regions. Horizontal and vertical occupational sex segregation and gender pay gaps persist. Women are overrepresented in the informal economy, precarious work, and in low-paid jobs (e.g. in agriculture, homework, care work, and domestic work). In the formal economy, women’s share among CEO and top managers remains unacceptably low, despite the existing pool of talented and competent women leaders. Indirect discrimination and its effects remain poorly understood and addressed, as is the case with discrimination on multiple grounds.

Women and girls still perform the large majority of unpaid care work, which limits their equal employment opportunities and treatment in labour markets. Measures assisting women and men in the balancing of work and family responsibilities, particularly quality State-funded child care, are unavailable or inaccessible for many.

**Gender pay gaps (monthly earnings, unadjusted)<sup>5</sup>**



Source: ILO STAT

<sup>5</sup> The gender wage gap (%) is the difference between men’s and women’s average earnings from employment, shown as a percentage of men’s average earnings. The monthly gender pay gap reflects differences in time worked and type of work performed. For the following countries the gaps above are calculated comparing women and men in full time work: Bolivia, Egypt, Finland, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Island, Japan, Latvia, Luxembourg, Norway, Panama, Portugal, Slovenia, Switzerland, and United States.



Despite maternity protection having been a concern for the ILO from its very beginning, lack of such protection remains one of the major challenges faced by working women today. A statutory right to paid maternity leave is virtually universal;<sup>6</sup> however the large majority of women – especially self-employed, agricultural, domestic or non-standard workers – lack access to quality maternal and infant health care, income security, adequate rest, and protection from discrimination based on pregnancy or maternity around childbirth. When employers are statutorily mandated to shoulder fully the direct cost of maternity protection benefits, for example by financing wage replacement during leave, this creates disincentives to hiring, retaining and promoting workers with potential or real family responsibility. The ILO calls for maternity benefits to be funded by social insurance or public funds, the protection of women’s employment during maternity, and non-discrimination in relation to maternity and family status.

Financial and demographic considerations have become drivers for policy interventions on work and family reconciliation, sometimes relegating equality at work and social cohesion to the side lines. Or these may be seen as desirable “side effects” rather than distinct policy objectives that are a matter of rights as well as a factor for sustainable development. Only recently has more attention been paid to the negative effects and costs of gender-based violence on and in the world of work, and the impact of HIV and AIDS which disproportionately affect women and girls.

Taking into account on the one hand progress made and on the other hand remaining challenges, it is urgent to survey the situation of women in the world of work in greater detail and assess outcomes of existing gender equality and non-discrimination policies. This is especially important in the context of the economic crisis and rapidly-changing realities in labour markets. Learning from experiences within and across regions as well as the voices of workers and employers, expanding knowledge, and promoting policy innovation are essential to help ensure increased equality of opportunity for and treatment of working women.

### **...and bridging them through renewed action and benchmarks**

The findings of the *Women at Work* initiative are expected to provide a basis for future action by all who are striving to advance the goal of gender equality, as well as for developing a renewed ILO strategy for gender equality in its second century of existence. By engaging with the tripartite constituents and forging strategic alliances with others whose experience and expertise can help to advance the objectives of the Initiative, the focus will be on influencing change in the lives of women and men on the ground through concrete action to realize gender equality, and identifying and promoting labour market interventions that work more rapidly in different contexts.

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<sup>6</sup> ILO, *Maternity and paternity at work. A review of national legislation and practice*, Geneva, (2014 forthcoming).

## **Women's situation in the labour market: findings from the Global Employment Trends 2014**

Overall labour force participation rates are not improving and remain more than 1 percentage point below their pre-crisis level. The drop in participation rates has been particularly pronounced in East and South Asia, where many women have left the labour market. Women continue to face a higher risk of informal employment than men, as they often have less legal and social protection.

In developed economies, women are expected to benefit less from the timid recovery that is expected over the medium term; indeed, their unemployment rates will only gradually decline to 8.2 per cent in 2018, whereas men are projected to benefit from a stronger reduction to 7.6 per cent.

In the Eastern and South Eastern Europe (non-EU), and the CIS, the gender gap in employment continues to be large, with a general tendency towards a further widening. Women are more present in the informal economy, often involved in subsistence agriculture. Given the economic crisis, women are frequently forced to accept jobs below their qualification levels in order to be able to continue supporting their households.

Consistent with weak labour force growth, employment in East Asia expanded by only 5.6 million jobs, or 0.7 per cent, in 2013. Rising employment levels benefitted men more than women, however, as women occupied less than two in five newly created jobs. As a result, the male–female gap in the employment-to-population ratio edged up slightly, to 13.0 percentage points.

In South East Asia and Pacific, vulnerable employment continues to affect women more than men (63.1 per cent for women compared to 56 per cent for men in 2013), but the incidence of women's vulnerable employment is projected to decline slightly more than men's by 2017.

In East Asia, the share of wage workers in total employment increased significantly by 18.5 percentage points to 50.1 per cent from 1991 to 2013 (figure 25). Women have clearly benefitted from this process. While male workers are still more likely to earn a salary or wage compared with female workers, the gap is gradually shrinking. By 2013, the gender gap in wage employment rates had fallen to 5.2 percentage points in East Asia.

In South Asia, the quality of employment and opportunities for better jobs continue to be unequally distributed between men and women in the region. When women work they tend to earn less (the gender wage gap), to work in less productive jobs (often a case of occupation segregation) and are over-represented in unpaid family work.

Women face particular challenges in the labour market in the MENA region, in particular in GCC countries (see, also, ILO, 2013c). Female unemployment rates are high and the gender employment gap is large. Female labour market participation rates are lower than in any other region, reaching barely 25 per cent in North Africa and not even 20 per cent in the Middle East. Nevertheless, an increasing share of the female population has now attained tertiary level education, but so far they remain underutilized

*(Adapted from ILO, Global Employment Trends, 2014, [http://www.ilo.org/global/research/global-reports/global-employment-trends/2014/WCMS\\_233953/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/research/global-reports/global-employment-trends/2014/WCMS_233953/lang--en/index.htm) )*