



# **GENDER EQUALITY, GROWTH AND COMPETITIVENESS**

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## **ECE gender activities**

- Focus on economic issues and transition countries under the Beijing process
- Promoting dialogue on gender-sensitive economic framework and policies
- Exchange of good practices in mainstreaming gender into sectoral work; SPECA WG on gender and economy
- Gender disaggregated statistics



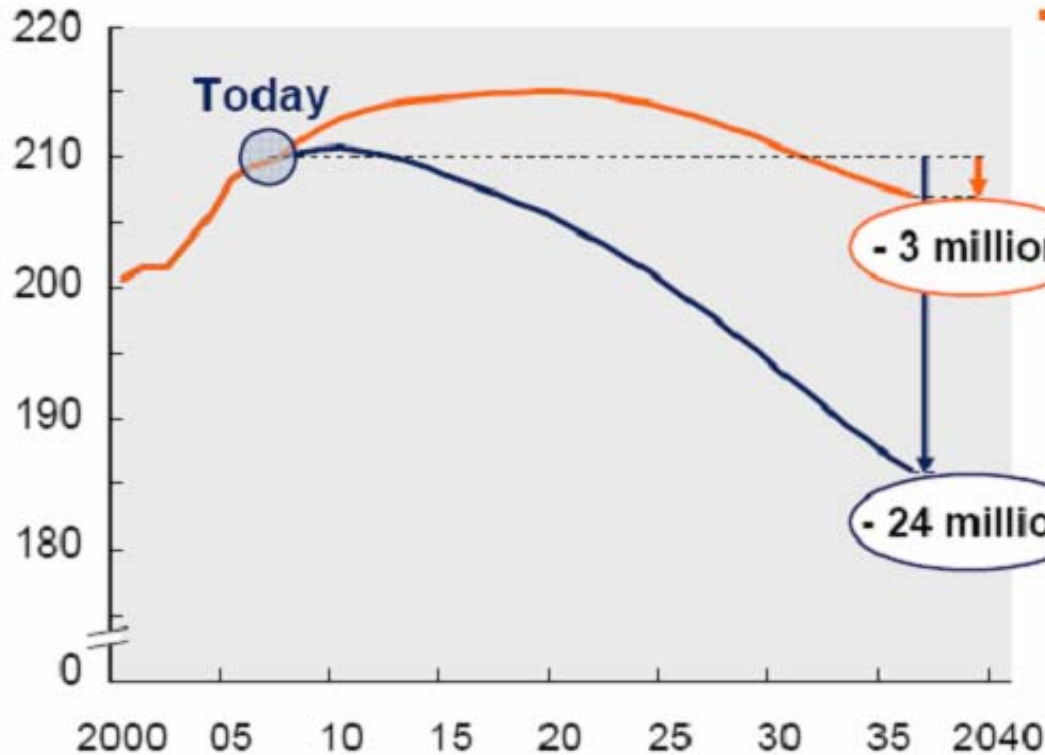
## Why gender matters for CECI work?

- Gender equality is a human right, but also a key factor of competitiveness and modern growth strategy (Lisbon Strategy, Nordic countries which top competitiveness lists)
- Female employment -a major source of new labour in ageing societies
- Quality aspects --well educated, bring new priorities and ideas in developing new products and services to compete on global markets



# Preventing the decline in workforce (EU-27)

## Active workforce\* Millions



### Quantitative challenge due to demographic change

If employment rates remain constant, active workforce will decrease dramatically while demand for workers remains high

Increasing the female employment rate to that for men could compensate for the shrinking workforce population

\* Total population aged 15 - 65 years multiplied by employment rate (for EU-27 countries excluding Slovenia, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic and including Iceland, Norway, Switzerland, and Albania)

\*\* Assuming 2005 employment level of women (58%)

\*\*\* Basis: male employment rate of 2005 (71%)



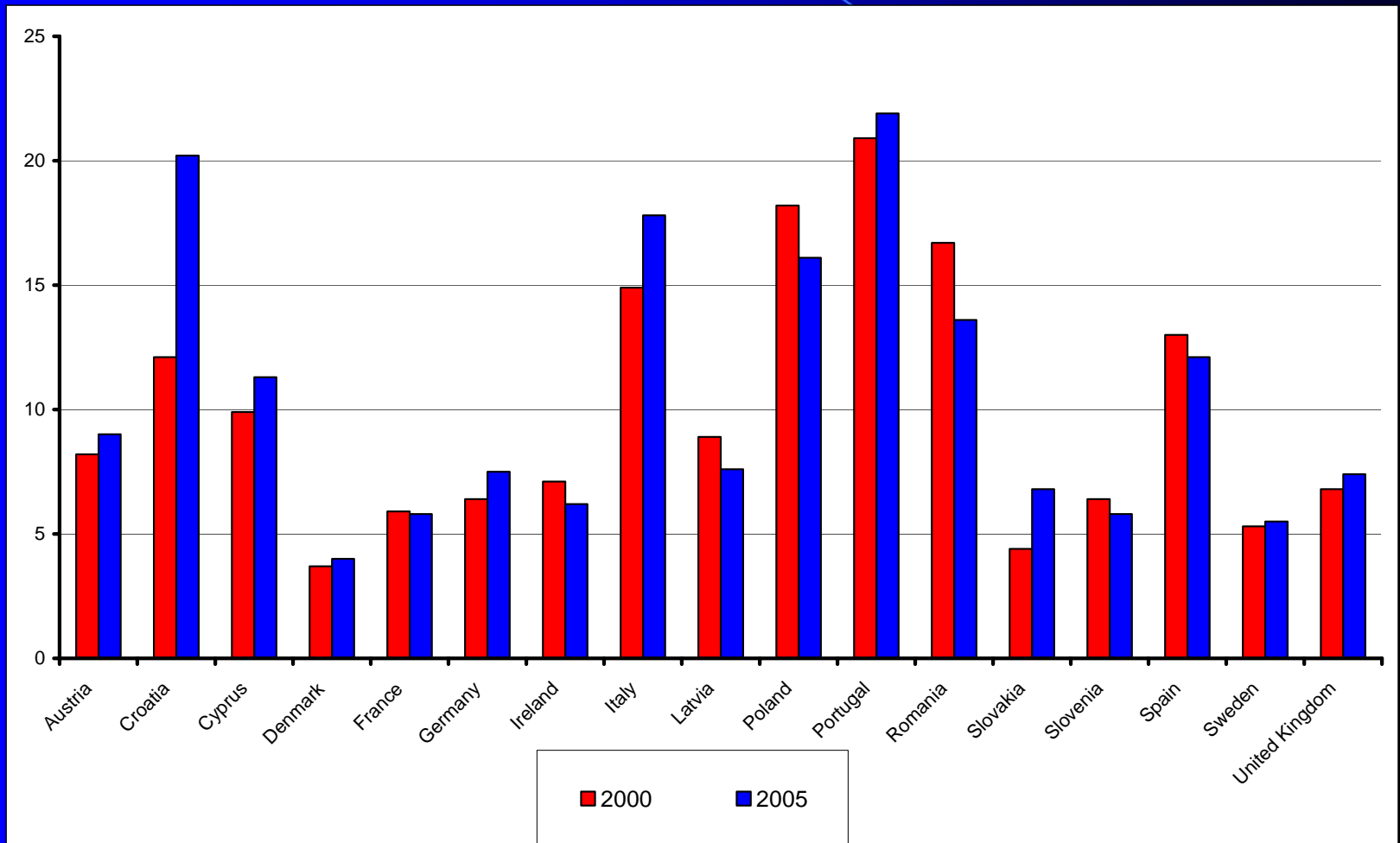
## Improving innovation and competitiveness

- Over 50% share in total tertiary education in most ECE countries and up to 62 % (Albania, Latvia); also high-share of employment in service sector
- *Ford Women's Network (since 1999)*: inclusion of women into design teams for new cars pushed up sales and is now standard human resource policy
- *The Global Banking Alliance For Women* (among members: Bank of Scotland, Bank of America, RBC Royal Bank): increased market share as a result of better understanding of needs of female customers



## Women's entrepreneurial potential

*Employers and own-account workers, % employed selected countries*



- More and more women are starting up business.



## **Access barriers: working mothers**

- Financing: lack of wealth or property ownership, smaller size of businesses
- Information: less time and fewer resources to gathering and processing information; also learning ICT skills
- Markets: women entrepreneurs lack access to traditional business networks (“old boys”)
- Training: less opportunities for training in business and management skills



## Lessons from good practices

- Gender-sensitive legislative and institutional framework for SMEs matters;
- US -- Equal Credit Opportunity Act (1974), office for women's business at SME Administration, Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act (1994), support centers and targeted programmes
- In 1997-2004 number of women run business grew by 42% (23% all firms); now about 40% of privately held businesses
- Role of WBA but positive changes only in partnership with Government and private sector





# CECI programme: Entrepreneurship

- Recommendations of CECI International Conference on legal and institutional framework include a gender perspective (ECE/CECI/2007/5)
- Proposals for their implementation: (1) including good practice in addressing gender barriers into reviews of policies approaches
- And (2) building synergies with SPECA WG on gender and economy (current project: assessment of business environment for women entrepreneurs in Central Asia)



# CECI programme :other relevant areas

## Public-private partnerships (PPP)

- *Shell* and *Deloitte* support to women in business in Central Asia and Caucasus (Astana, November 2007)
- Proposal: Explore the possibility to include gender aspects under social corporate responsibility

## Innovative development and knowledge-based competitiveness

- Proposal: Include gender into policy oriented research and good practices, especially in the context of absorptive capacity, generation of knowledge and governance



# Thank you

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<http://www.unece.org/oes/gender/Welcome.htm>

