STATISTICAL COMMISSION and   **WORKING PAPER No. 10**
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

ECE Work Session on Gender Statistics
(Geneva, Switzerland, 23-25 September 2002)

Topic (ii) Gender equality indicators

Gender indicators and policies: linking statistics with policy initiatives

Submitted by UNECE Secretariat[1]

Introduction

This paper will examine the challenges involved in linking gender statistics and policy initiatives based on the experience of the ECE regional gender statistics website for Europe and North America. First, we give an overview of the issues related to the different sets of indicators compiled as part of the follow-up to major international conferences and then analyse in more detail the common list of gender indicators developed by the UNECE Task Force. It is a work in progress and an inventory of what we can do with the current indicators to assess the gender situation at the regional level. Therefore, the conclusions should not be considered as final but as a next step towards building an efficient tool for monitoring gender policies.

The UNECE gender statistics website provides both data and profiles of social programmes carried out in countries to achieve gender equality. The paper looks more closely at how feasible it is to make a direct link between these two. It aims to:

1) establish a link between gender policies and indicators (data) by looking at
   - what are the different areas where gender inequality can be observed, what are the main concerns;
   - examples of policy programmes carried out to address these concerns;
   - is statistical data available to monitor the situation of women and men in these areas;
2) identify new emerging issues
   - gender concerns and policies where there are no indicators and not enough data;
   - areas where there are data but no policies (e.g. the data shows that policy intervention would be needed);
3) see if the data could be used to evaluate the efficiency of policies over time.

The provided policy initiatives are just examples from selected areas and do not attempt to give an exhaustive overview of all gender activities going on in the ECE member countries.

I. GLOBAL CONFERENCES AND STANDARD SETS OF INDICATORS

To follow-up on the major international conferences of the 1990s, initiatives to develop standard sets of indicators to measure progress in relevant areas were started worldwide. The world summits on social development addressing education (Jomtien, 1990), children (New York, 1990), the environment (Rio de Janeiro, 1992), human rights (Vienna, 1993), population and development (Cairo, 1994) and the status of women (Beijing, 1995), the World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995), the Millennium Summit, and others formulated important policy goals linked to quantitative targets. They set social development at the centre of the international policy agenda.

---

[1] Prepared by Sofia Drengsted-Nielsen and Tiina Luige

Since the issues raised at the various conferences were deeply interlinked, the commitments and targets underwritten at the conferences have tended to overlap. Therefore, the indicators to measure the achievement of these goals also overlap and in developing "standard" sets of indicators for gender we need to be aware of what is going on in other related areas.

There are several reasons why so many different lists were/are being developed to measure the attainment of the goals of the global summits:
- There were no clear guidelines from global conferences;
- The statistical complexity of measuring the attainment of targets was underestimated (no methodology, sometimes no agreed standards, not enough funding for data collection);
- Indicators are not appropriate for national level;
- Countries started their own efforts for monitoring the policy goals;
- Voluntary and non-binding nature of the targets;
- Voluntary following of international guidelines.

Initially it may seem to be desirable to develop one "standard" data set for gender statistics. However, this would not be possible because of all regional and national differences and different purposes of the organizations compiling the data sets. As not all areas of policy intervention are duly covered in the global list of targets, countries are encouraged to monitor their performance in these areas according to their own standards. Therefore, we can only strive to harmonise the different data sets and base them on the same principles with the differing level of detail. Because of the crosscutting nature of gender statistics, the development of indicators has to be coordinated with relevant work in other areas.

Efforts have been made to coordinate such initiatives and to develop "standard sets", for example the Minimum National Social Data Set (MNSDS) by the UN, Country Comparison Assessments (CCA) developed in response to the major international conferences of the 1990s.

The MNSDS serves as a good starting point. The Expert Group on Statistical Implications of Recent Major Untied Nations Conferences adopted very pragmatic criteria for the indicators: (1) direct relevance to policy themes, (2) accepted international definition or classification, (3) a feasible collection instrument, (4) disaggregation by sex. Following these requirements helps to ensure the feasibility of acquiring comparable data on the selected indicators.

A good inventory of gender indicators is given on the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) website at http://www.eclac.cl/mujer/proyectos/perfiles/inventory.htm. The site provides an overview of tools on statistics and indicators on gender issues offered by United Nations, main publications, databases, agencies disseminating gender statistics and other resources.

The UNECE/UNDP gender project

The UNECE Statistical Division's project on gender statistics is one of the activities to develop a common set of gender indicators relevant for a specific region (see http://www.unece.org/stats/gender/web). A similar project has been going on in the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). Other UN regional commissions are following the path.

In the course of the project, a common set of indicators was developed to monitor the equality of women and men. The set of indicators is divided into seven parts covering the following areas: (1) population, (2) families and households, (3) work and the economy, (4) education and communication, (5) public life and decision-making, (6) health, (7) crime and violence. Some other areas, like living conditions, social protection and environment were also considered but identification of relevant indicators was left for future discussions.

One of the aims of the project was to link statistics and policies. On the one hand, statisticians have to be aware of what is going on in the gender policy area to identify what data is needed. Relevance is one important aspect of data quality. On the other hand, policy makers need to be aware of what data are available in order to plan, implement and monitor the effectiveness of policy programmes.

Statistics should explicitly try to achieve two objectives of maximum public policy interest:
- to monitor the achievement of outcomes of social policies and programmes (e.g. changes in unemployment levels, income distributions, population health, etc.);
- to identify those factors that appear to be associated with specific (desirable or undesirable) outcome and which lend themselves to intervention through social policies and programmes.

A set of common indicators was compiled with the underlying assumption that monitoring the outcomes of these indicators would enable governments and international organizations to evaluate the effectiveness of the different policies and strategies adopted to foster gender equality. The starting point was identifying the main gender issues and concerns in the ECE region, then gathering information about policy initiatives in this area. The statistical indicators were developed to address the gender issues, not directly policies. This approach is one of the reasons why it is often quite difficult to use the data for monitoring specific policies.

Also, the different policy areas are very much interrelated, and policies that target one area can have an outcome in another area. Distinction needs to be made between the policies with short-term objectives aimed at solving concrete immediate problems or needs, and long-term strategic objectives targeted at the causes of the problems.

Evaluating the efficiency of policies is a demanding issue that requires quite detailed data. When compiling a data set for the whole region, it cannot be too detailed because of practical reasons. Such a tool on regional level can address broad issues to draw attention to problems and show their magnitude. By comparing countries we can see the general trends and where these are deviating from other countries of the region. Thus it can indicate areas where more research is needed. However, the detailed analysis should be left for countries themselves or researchers.

Concerning the indicators and monitoring framework:
- It is not always efficient to focus on targeted outcomes but to try to define a typology of areas of policy intervention which have high impact on outcomes;
- Focus not only on desired outcome but outcomes in relation to their inputs (linking inputs and outputs);
- Introduce series of immediate steps for each target allowing more timely evaluation of various policies.

The attempt to link indicators and policies makes us to review our current strategy with developing the website as a tool for policy monitoring. Therefore it represents not a final conclusion but a working hypotheses on how to continue our work on the gender website.

Benchmarking

An important notion in this connection is benchmarking, that is the establishment of a criterion or a standard against which an objective is set and progress is measured. The Workshop in Orvieto that laid the groundwork for the UNECE gender project was called a Workshop on gender statistics for *policy monitoring and benchmarking.*

How much would it make sense to establish benchmarks in gender statistics needs yet to be considered. First topic to discuss is: who should be compared to whom? Is it possible to have cross-country comparisons? And if it is so, is it reasonable to compare only peers (countries with the similar background and culture) or it is more appropriate to set a standard, a benchmark equal for all countries? True benchmarking involves far more that quantitative data comparison. Additional analysis based on detailed qualitative information helps 'understand behind numbers, what to change, and how to change it'. Comparing isolated gender equality indicators in different countries might be misleading without taking into account the context (national traditions, cultural background, social protection systems, etc.). Benchmarking could be more useful to measure the progress over time in one country or to compare regions of a country. But this goal needs to be kept in mind when developing the gender indicators. Concerning the benchmarks, a more detailed list of goals and targets is needed to reflect regional specifics (e.g., life expectancy, access to basic education, reduction of severe and moderate malnutrition, food security).

An example of benchmarking related to gender can be drawn from Sweden: There are ongoing activities by Statistics Sweden to develop gender equality database at the municipal and county levels. It is on Internet, so that both the general population and local authorities can compare the degree of gender equality in the individual municipality. Future extension of the project is envisaged so that comparisons could be possible not only at local level (inside one country) but also between different countries: for example between EU countries to start with.

II. POLICIES AND INDICATORS IN SELECTED AREAS

For each area, the paper lists the main concerns and problems as they were identified in the course of preparing the UNECE regional gender statistics website: which indicators were planned in our "standard" list to monitor progress in the selected area, the data availability as well as problems and limitations of the indicators. At the same time, such an inventory indicates areas where we would be able to do more research and analysis based on the data already collected for the gender statistics website. The country examples mentioned in the text refer to the examples available on the website.

2.1 Population

Ageing - There are two aspects to ageing in relation to gender: the majority of older people are women, and the burden of caring for the elderly disproportionately falls on women. While there are data on the first subject, the caring activities should be included in the data on non-remunerated work.

Indicators and data availability:
Mid-year de facto population by age – data availability very good;
Population by age and by marital status – data availability good;
Population by age and by urban/rural, number – data availability good;
Population projection 2025 – data availability very good

Additional comments and some policy examples:
The available data provides a snapshot of the situation but is not sufficient for the effects of ageing. More detailed data are needed on the impacts of ageing on women and men, and the implications on society of the gender structure of the ageing population

When we look at concrete policies (like policies on care for the elderly), it is not easy to assess their effect. What should we look at – the number of elderly living in special institutions, or at home? The satisfaction of elderly with their quality of life? The cost of elderly generations on society? Gender budgets in relation to retirement benefits (women live longer and depend on the pension system longer).

Due to the differential impact of ageing on women and men and the 'feminisation of ageing' (a term used to describe a distinctive feature of predominance of women in the population ageing), the situation of older women is of major concern. The following problems have emerged:
- older women's health and needs;
- informal caregivers and pension policies.

Gaps in the policies: The public pension system is a key factor in reducing poverty among senior women. Pension policies with regard to care for the elderly are not developed enough in the region. The only gender sensitive policy found so far in this regard is the Canadian policy on care for elderly. It has at the same time another goal: recognition of the social importance of a certain form of unpaid work.

While most countries are more successful in expanding childcare facilities, there was little progress in developing care infrastructure for the elderly (see also the example from Canada given above on pension schemes for informal caregivers).

Population decline – a decrease in population growth is often linked with unfavourable conditions for women.
Indicators and data availability: Total fertility rate – data availability very good   Number of live births, total and to mothers aged under 20 – data availability on general live births very good, to mothers under 20 often not available   Mean age of women at birth of first child – data availability very good
Additional comments and some policy examples: Many policies are aimed at supporting families and increasing the number of children. The indicators are looking at population decline only from the aspect of decreasing fertility and live births, overlapping with the topic of families and households. It should be possible to assess the effect of family policies based on these indicators. However, a longer time period is required for analysis.

Migration – There are gender differences in the reasons for migration as well as in the conditions under which people migrate.
Indicators and data availability: No indicators
Additional comments and some policy examples: While it is easier to find both data and policies on legal immigrants, illegal immigration is a problematic area in terms of data collection.   One area of concern is illegal employment: Women with high income and education are able to hire other women with low wages, often from other countries, mostly from Eastern Europe and CIS and unregistered (on a tourist visa) to do a caring or chore work in the home. The question is how to improve rights of women doing this kind of job.

Refugees - Women refugees are particularly vulnerable as they have specific needs that include reproductive health services and protection from violence.
Indicators and data availability: Refugees by age – data availability about 50%
Additional comments and some policy examples: The policies are focused on rehabilitation programmes for women-refugees (including job training and integrating women into the labour market). No possibility to assess the effectiveness of policies based on the indicator. Also, the indicator is relevant to assess gender equality only in a limited number of countries.

Data would be needed on other kind of vulnerable groups, as ethnic minorities, immigrants, asylum seekers. Even if there are general data about the size of these groups, there are no data on their concerns and problems. Another vulnerable group are women in agriculture. Farmwomen in transition countries belong to the most disadvantaged groups of population. Still, there are initiatives in the ECE region as well (Ukraine).

2.2 Families and households

Diversification of lifestyles - diversification of lifestyles means cohabitation, childbearing outside wedlock, increased rates of divorce and separation, decreased rates of remarriage. Vulnerable groups are lone-parent households, especially women households. Lone mothers who tend to be poorer than lone fathers and poorer than mothers living with a partner. The number of one-person households has also increased, and the majority of these are headed by women. Due to a higher life expectancy among women, a large part of these households are elderly women who must often live off a low income.
Indicators and data availability: Population by age and by marital status - good   Total number of one-parent families – data available for about half of countries, for transition countries mostly missing   Children living in one-parent families by sex of parent – data availability poor   One person households by age - data available but only for few years   Private households by type - about 75%, sometimes just a few years

Mean age at first marriage - good

Additional comments and some policy examples: Policies are mostly dealing with social programmes for specific vulnerable groups, like low-income women and children, elderly women, immigrant women and women in isolated regions (e.g. providing access to affordable housing; information, counselling and referring services; access to social services and resources; provide job re-entry programmes/training /education). Data would be needed on care arrangements for children, who takes parental leave, responsibility sharing within families, the impact that small children have on men's and women's labour force participation, etc.

Decreasing family size - A general decline in fertility resulted from women's increased participation in economic activities. Further reductions in fertility seem to be the result of two different sets of factors: unfavourable social and economic conditions and higher levels of education with better career opportunities for women. Decisions concerning the number and spacing of children are also influenced by accessibility of child-care services and the existence of adequate family and social policies. Childbearing and motherhood continue to have a stronger impact on a woman's lifecycle than on a man's. A particularly vulnerable group is composed of working mothers with young children.

Indicators and data availability: Population by age and by marital status – data availability good Total fertility rate – availability good Abortion rate – availability good Mean age of women at birth of first child – availability good Total number of one-parent families - data availability about 50%, mostly transition countries missing Children living in one-parent families – same as previous One-person households - about 75%, often for few years

Additional comments and some policy examples: The topic is mostly analysed from the viewpoint of decreasing fertility rates; analysis of the causes should concentrate on accessibility of child-care services, the existence of adequate family and social policies, reconciliation of work and family life, etc. The indicators are looking at the outcomes and not at the causes of the decreasing family size.

Contraceptive information – limited access to family planning means and reproductive health services are limits to women's choices in organising their lives. Abortions can have negative consequences on women's health. Where women experience unwanted pregnancies at young ages, becoming pregnant also means undermining their personal growth and often exposing them to poverty.

Indicators and data availability: Number of persons using contraception – data availability very poor Number of legal abortions – data availability good Number of live births to mothers aged under 20 – data often missing

Additional comments and some policy examples: Policies aimed at reproductive health. Even when data are available, their quality is questionable. The definition of the use of contraception should be improved. Are the data relevant to our region? Often a more relevant indicator would be access to contraceptive information as the use of contraception is difficult to measure.

Gender roles and responsibility sharing - despite the fact that an increasing number of women have entered the labour force the societal response to the changing needs of families where both partners work outside the home has been slow. Women still bear most of the burden for work within the household and for managing and organizing the life of their children.

Indicators and data availability: Time spent in paid work, unpaid and other – data availability poor.

Additional comments and some policy examples: Except for time use, there are no indicators in this very important area which can be considered the cause of decreasing family size, population decline, women's participation in public life and decision making etc.

National policies that enable people to combine their work and family life imply the equal sharing of parental responsibilities between women and men. This issue on balancing family and working life is linked to resolving the problem of unequal sharing of unpaid care work (performed mostly by women). There is a certain progress in measuring the time spent in unpaid care work in some countries; this experience can be disseminated to other countries.

Gaps in the policies: Availability of childcare services for workers with low means - governments should ensure that the services are open to all children and that they should not be excluded for reasons related to the financial situation of their parents.
In Nordic countries, the family policies aim also to enhance role of the fathers (Iceland, Sweden, Finland).

Some of the laws in Eastern Europe traditionally protect women with children (longer maternity leaves, reduced working hours, etc., while father's rights are sometimes neglected. This often concerns divorce cases, where mothers have custody for children, and father's role and responsibilities are reduced. (Kyrgyzstan).

For the accession countries (countries accessing EU) new laws on equal rights for fathers are envisaged.

2.3 Work and the economy

Labour force participation and type of work - Women and men participate in the labour force in different proportions and have a different distribution across various types of employment. Women are more often unpaid family workers, in low paid jobs, or in the informal sector without job security. Men traditionally have had better opportunities for self-employment.

Indicators and data availability:
- Economic activity rate (15 years to retirement) – availability of data in general good, prior to retirement not always available
- Labour force (15 years to retirement) – availability of data in general good, prior to retirement not always available
- National retirement age – data availability good. This is a very interesting indicator of gender equality which can give basis for many kind of analysis. In a way it shows whether there is de-facto gender equality in countries. In East European and CIS countries women's retirement age is about 5 years less than men's. The justification for that has been that women have carried a double load working outside home and caring for family and children. At the same time, men's life expectancy is much lower and from this viewpoint it could be justified to have their retirement age lower than women's.
- Part-time employed – availability about 75%
- Persons in employment by status of employment (employees, employers, own-account workers, etc.) – in general good, sometimes only for limited years
- Employment in public and private sector – availability about 75%
- Unemployment rate – data almost always available, problem are different definitions and sources (LFS or registered unemployment), therefore not always comparable across countries. Use of this indicator to evaluate an impact of policies is complicated as unemployment is influenced by many different factors
- Long-term unemployment – data availability quite good (although less than for unemployment, and what is considered long-term differs across countries)
- Time spent per week in paid and unpaid work – data availability poor (depends on carrying out time-use surveys in countries); very important indicator to assess the responsibility sharing within family.
- Average annual earnings for women and men (full time, full year) by level of education completed – data availability very poor, also a lot of criticism concerning data quality. Very important indicator to assess the real gender equality in society. In most countries it is illegal to pay unequal wages for equal work, the difference in earnings reflects differences in education, women's different choices of career, different occupational fields (where often the kind of work that women do is lower appraised by society).

Additional comments and some policy examples:
There are a lot of indicators in this area and the data availability in general is very good. This is especially true for the EU and accession countries where Labour Force Surveys are carried out. In other countries where LFS is not conducted, much less data are available and their comparability is a problem.

However, there are big problems with the availability of time-use and earnings data.

Data according to the life-cycle approach might enable better analysis of the gender situation.

Some indicators, like part-time work cannot be understood without a context (examples from Sweden, Finland and UK).

First of all, the policies are concerned with the equal pay for women and men for equal work or work of equal value. There is a wide range of activities: campaigns, networks, etc., mostly in the West (examples on the Website).
-   Balancing family and working life;
-   Unequal sharing of unpaid care work.

Related to labour force participation is the question of poverty. Poverty is a crosscutting issue for the CIS countries. However, poverty alleviation programmes are not connected to the gender in spite of obvious gender differences in human poverty.

Labour market segregation - Women and men are concentrated in different sectors and occupations, often due to sex-based stereotypes.

Indicators and data availability:
Total employment by occupation – data availability quite good (about 80%)
Persons in employment by status of employment – availability in general good, sometimes only for limited years
Employment in public and private sector – availability about 75%, does not directly show gender inequalities, the public sector generally offers lower wages but better social security
Top executives in most important businesses – almost no data available

Additional comments and some policy examples:
The data are not sufficiently detailed to enable to analyse specific policy initiatives. However, to collect more detailed data would require significant resources.

Anti-discriminatory policies against employers biases exist in different countries of the region, still these policies are effective only in case when the enforcement mechanisms are in place, like an equal opportunity ombudsperson or Labour Court.

Unemployment - women are often the first to be affected when job opportunities are lacking. Women raising children are disadvantaged in a labour market as it becomes more competitive. However, the research on the former socialist countries showed that rapid social change has hit men particularly hard, and unemployment among men has in some countries risen more quickly than unemployment among women due to cuts in industry/sector occupied mainly by men.

Indicators and data availability:
Unemployment and unemployment rates by age – data availability very good (about 95%)
Long-term unemployment and long term unemployment rates by age – data availability good

Additional comments and some policy examples:
More detailed data would be needed to identify the critical issues for becoming unemployed (education, children, etc.)

Entrepreneurship - in recent years, more self-employed women are becoming involved in the micro and small enterprise sector, even though the number of women-entrepreneurs is still much lower compared to men in the countries of the region. Women face more constraints than men in developing their business (less access to credit and larger markets, mobility constraints, lack of networks needed to facilitate business development).

Indicators and data availability: Persons in employment by status of employment – data availability in general good   Top executives in most important businesses – data almost non-existent
Additional comments and some policy examples: There are policy programmes in several countries to support women- entrepreneurs, to improve their managerial skills, etc. but very little data to monitor the effectiveness of these policies. More data would also be needed on specific constraints for women in starting their businesses.

2.4 Education and communication

Equal access to higher education - Historically, women have been less likely than men to reach higher levels of education. However, this is no longer the case in most ECE countries. In very few countries in the region are girls less likely than boys to access higher education. However, less adult women than men have achieved higher education and are therefore less likely to have access to higher-paid jobs.
Indicators and data availability: Tertiary students by level and fields of study – data availability very good   Upper secondary pupils – data availability very good   Net enrolment rate at secondary level – data availability good but accordance with the definition of the net enrolment ratio is sometimes questionable   Graduates - data availability very good   Adult population by educational attainment and age – data availability about 60%, not so good for transition countries, sometimes for a limited number of years
Additional comments and some policy examples: In most countries of the region, equal access to education is not a problem, but the dropout can be, both in Eastern and Western Europe.   A study has showed that young men, who drop out of school before the school leaving age, face a higher risk of serious or persistent offending. For those aged 18 to 30, leaving school without any educational qualifications was the second most important predictor for involvement in crime, after drug use (Campbell, S and Harrington, V. (2000) `Youth crime: Finding from the 1998/99 Youth Lifestyles Survey`. Home Office Research Findings No.126.).   For young women who drop out of school, there is a higher risk of teenage pregnancy (Women and men in Britain: Pensions and social security). The lower the level of a woman's qualifications, the younger she is likely to be when she first has children.   There are no studies in the transition countries on association between drop-out and youth delinquency or teenage pregnancies, even though these are serious problems in CIS. (See HFA/WHO/EURO Health for all database).

Equal access to the same fields of study - The sex-stereotyped choice of study is later reflected in gender segregation of occupations. Gender-based stereotypes still influence girls' and boys' choices in education, as well as parental views of what they should expect from their children. These stereotypes discourage women's enrolment in fields traditionally regarded as "men's fields". Gender-based stereotypes in school curricula, textbooks, and teachers' attitudes affect a student's future choice in determining his/her field of study and occupation. This discrepancy is prominent in the field of science and technology
Indicators and data availability: Upper secondary pupils – data availability very good   Net enrolment rate at secondary level – data availability good but accordance with the definition of the net enrolment ratio is sometimes questionable   Tertiary students by level and fields of study – data availability very good   Graduates – data availability very good
Additional comments and some policy examples: The data would allow assessing the situation quite well but there are not many policies in countries targeted at education from the gender perspective.

Gender roles and stereotypes concern school curricula and teachers training. The curricula do not always take into account the gender specific needs for education, e.g. health education and as part of it sex education exist in Western countries, and are being implemented slowly in the Eastern Europe (Romania) and CIS. More attention should be paid on:

- The human rights education, anti-discrimination on the basis of sex; (Life skills project of the UNICEF)
- Teachers training on gender issues, so teachers can challenge gender stereotypes instead of confirming them.

Some policies exist already in the countries: teacher-training programs contain gender equality issues, like in Portugal or Sweden.

Indicators are needed on eliminating gender stereotypes from teaching materials and curricula content.

Most teachers are women - Although the majority of teachers are women, they are concentrated at the primary and lower secondary levels which enforces the gender stereotype that the more complex and intellectually challenging tasks should be left for men.

Indicators and availability:
Teachers by ISCED levels (number) – data availability very good
Teachers by ISCED levels (full time equivalent) – data available but not for enough detail or not for all years

Additional comments and some policy examples:
In general, the availability of data on education is very good and gives basis for further analysis. It would be interesting to see how the gender segregation in education has in later years influenced the labour market segregation. There seem to be not many gender policy initiatives in countries in the area of education; we have found only some examples.

2.5 Public life and decision-making

Key positions in political decision making – women's representation in political parties, parliament, government positions, public administration

Indicators and data availability:
Members of national parliament – data availability good
Government ministers – data availability about 60%
Senior level civil servants – data availability about 50%
Members of municipal councils or other local area governing bodies – availability about 50%
Voters voting – data availability poor, only very few countries have it with a sex breakdown

Additional comments and some policy examples:
As a general comment it can be said that few data are available in countries to assess gender equality in public life and decision-making. Quite a number of replies to our questionnaire had left this section totally blank. Low availability of data is sometimes surprising because the data should be quite easy to find. Lack of data is caused probably by tradition because this topic has not been considered relevant for statistical offices and no data collection has been done.

An issue of political debate in several countries is whether to establish quota for women in parliament and other political bodies. As data show, women's representation in the political decision-making is rather low everywhere, and in the transition economies it is sometimes lower than it was before (example from Kyrgyzstan).
The Soviet quota system reserved 33% of places in power structures for women (UN's minimum target is 40%). It was disbanded in CIS, which resulted in a sharp decrease in representation of women in elected bodies. For example, in the new Kyrgyz law on election there is no article discriminating women, but there are no norms to maintain gender balance.

Key positions in economic decision-making - Economic decision-making has traditionally been a male prerogative; men therefore outnumber women among top executives in private business, among employers as well as membership on boards of Central Banks. The dearth of women in these key positions is a clear indication that women do not participate equally in economic decision-making.

Indicators and data availability:
Central bank board members – data availability about 50%
Top executives in most important businesses – almost no data (available for just a few countries)

Additional comments and some policy examples:
Due to lack of precise and comparable data, this topic is difficult to analyse. According to a study financed by European Commission, women own only 23% of businesses in the European Union. Further regular and updated statistics on this is needed to begin with.   There are already some steps made: Sweden published statistics on women and power. (Women and men in Sweden: facts and figures 2000); Finland has produced figures on women in management positions in companies. (Women and men in Finland, 1999).   According to a Finnish survey (2000), 11% of the directors of big companies are women, while the percentage of women in the state enterprises is higher.   There is an ongoing open public debate in Norway on introducing gender quotas for executive bodies in private enterprises (by the year of 2000, the percentage of women was only 6,4 per cent). To improve this low representation of women in the economic decision-making the government passed the resolution demanding at least 40% of the representation of either sex in the executive boards of all public joint stock companies, with the one-year deadline to fulfil this goal (by March 2003).   In April 2002, the amendment to the Gender Equality Act was passed by the Storting (Norwegian parliament). It requires of the public authorities to promote gender equality in all sectors of the society including the private sector.

Key positions in other areas: judiciary, education, and the media - Women are also under-represented in professions that relate to the law and security and professions that influence public opinion.

Indicators and availability:
Heads of universities – data availability less than 50%   Judges – data availability about 50%   Chief editors of national newspapers – very little data (less than 25%)   Journalists – data availability about 30%

Additional comments and some policy examples:
We have found no policies targeted on improving the representation of women in these areas. Also data availability is very low. These are areas which have not been considered important for data collection until now while it should be quite easy to get these data.

Gender & media - Media plays an important role in shaping and reflecting gender roles and stereotypes

Indicators and availability:
Chief editors of national newspapers– very little data (less than 25%)   Journalists – data availability about 30%

Additional comments and some policy examples:
Analysis of gender stereotypes in media has not been considered relevant for statistics. Maybe more (statistical) research on gender stereotypes and attitudes could be undertaken? And the experience of public opinion polls used?   One of the points of the Beijing Declaration concerning media was that women are not able to influence media policies. This can be achieved by the critical mass of women in decision-making position, including those in media.   There is a lack of effective media policies. Governments in general take little responsibility for regulation of media industries with regard to gender stereotyping. There have been some efforts to establish or maintain self-regulatory mechanisms on media content. For example, in the United Kingdom, there are a number of regulatory mechanisms in place, set up independently from Government.

2.6 Health

Women and men differ biologically - this leads to different longevity and disease patterns.
Indicators and data availability: Standard mortality rates – data availability good (data from WHO)
Additional comments and some policy examples: Two problems have emerged in this regard: - *Health research*: researchers exclude female subjects from clinical studies and focus on male complaints. - Women are often excluded from health policy-making and planning. Indicators and data are not sufficient to analyse policies in this area.

Gender differences in life style - women and men are differently exposed to risk factors. Since the concept of good health includes all aspects of well-being (for instance lifestyle and nutrition), measures of physical exercise, alcohol and tobacco consumption, people's over- and under-weight are all important indicators in this respect. While tobacco consumption is generally declining among men in many countries of the ECE region, the habit is spreading among women and in some cases the prevalence of female smokers equals that of men.
Indicators and data availability: Life expectancy at birth – data availability very good Disability adjusted life expectancy (DALE) – data availability very good (WHO data) Probability of dying between 15 and 59 – data availability about 60% Smokers by age (%) – general availability about 60% but with big gaps and not according to age groups HIV positive persons – data mostly for new cases, number of persons living with HIV/AIDS often not available Persons' overweight/underweight by age group – some data but mostly in per cent and not with age breakdown Standard mortality rates – data availability good (data from WHO)
Additional comments and some policy examples: No data on alcohol consumption and drug use. Data are not detailed enough to make policy analysis. More detail in data would be needed on deaths from external causes (accidents, suicides, homicide, etc.). WHO is working actively in the area of measuring the health status of population and carrying out a special survey on health risk assessment in about 70 countries during the coming 6 months. More data could be derived from this source later. Some interesting indicators were proposed as future indicators by the Gender Statistics Task Force, like number of machines for mammography per female population, persons living with STIs, self-perceived health status, alcohol consumption, exercise daily/regularly. *Men's health*: the high mortality rate in the transition countries is due to risk-taking behaviour like alcohol and drug abuse, accidents, occupational hazards; and violence, including street violence. Mental problems among men like depression and suicide are often attributed to chronic unemployment due to changes in gender roles (male as a breadwinner) and overall stress caused by the economic transition period. *Tobacco.* A discrepancy between statistics (exists) and gender sensitive policies (almost none). Policies on tobacco exist practically in all Western countries (examples) but more often than not they are not gender-specific. At the same time, it is well known that women and girls are traditionally an important target for tobacco advertising. The situation in some Eastern countries is alarming as there are no anti-tobacco policies to confront the aggressive advertising by tobacco companies. Data and analysis of trends over time allows to pinpoint areas where further research is needed to indicate critical areas for policy intervention, e.g. to identify factors that cause the decrease in male life expectancy

Some health problems are particular to women - Many such conditions are due to their reproductive system (*Maternal diseases and mortality, infant mortality rate, sexually transmitted infections*)
Indicators and availability: Standard mortality rates due to different causes – data availability good
Additional comments and some policy examples: Little data about health is available with gender breakdown, except for causes of death. The health problems specific to women are due to their reproductive system. Contrary to the Western countries, in most transition countries there is a lack of screening services and prevention programmes for cervical and breast cancers (reflected in the higher death rates due to these causes) which calls for the attention of policy-makers. Another thing is that women's health is not only a reproductive health, in this way the health problems of women out of reproductive age (older women), or non-reproductive states, like mental problems for example are missing.

2.7 Crime and violence

Perpetrators, and types of crime - The number of convicted criminals, sex and age distribution, and the type of crime are indicators that are necessary for gender analysis.
Indicators and availability: Persons convicted – data availability about 75% Juveniles convicted – data availability less than 75% Death rates for homicides – data availability good (WHO data) Men convicted for rape and attempted rape (of all convicted men) – about 75% Prisoners, total – about 75% Prisoners by their recidivist status – breakdown by recidivist status and gender often not available Foreign prisoners – often data not available or available for a few years and without gender breakdown Convictions, and for specific crimes – availability about 50% Clear up rates for rape and attempted rape (of all reported) – less than 50%
Additional comments and some policy examples: There is a gap of data and no unified legal definition of crime. Still there are studies, at national, regional and international levels.

Violence against women - This section includes: domestic violence (against women and children), violence against women in situation of armed conflicts, and trafficking in women.
Indicators and availability: Victims with breakdown according to type of crime – very few data available
Additional comments and some policy examples: The victims of trafficking in humans are mostly women and girls. Both domestic violence and human trafficking are high on the political agenda both in the East and West. These are also priority areas for EU and UN/UNIFEM

CONCLUSIONS

Based on collecting gender statistics and information on gender policies, the following conclusions can be made:

Concerning the policy initiatives

- The policy areas are interrelated, which provides a more holistic picture of the policy situation. For example, gender segregation in occupation is a continuation of gender segregation of fields of study, or gender-based stereotypes that influence the boys' and girls' choice in education. Therefore, policies that target educational system contribute to elimination of labour-market segregation. Another example:

child-caring and other services in favour of families will help to reduce vertical segregation of labour, and at the same time they are relevant to other topics: responsibility sharing in the home, encouraging families to have more children, etc.

- Another observation concerns two types of policies, or rather policies' objectives:
  o practical, short-term objectives aimed at solving concrete immediate problems or needs. (for example, concrete measures to increase women's presentation in public life and decision-making are legislation and quota system).
  o long-term strategies/strategic objectives targeted at the causes/roots of the problems (at the same case of women in decision making: high levels of female labour force, extent to which women's labour force activity is part-time and the nature of welfare benefits available, measures to facilitate reconciliation of political work and family life, etc.).

Data availability

- In some areas the data are routinely collected and can be considered sufficient for gender equality analysis. A good example is education. However, to get a complete picture of the impact of education on men's and women's lives, it would be needed to link these data to employment, unemployment, earnings, health, economic status, etc.
- In some areas, like public life and decision-making, the data availability is poor and does not allow analysing or monitoring gender policies. It seems to be a matter of more attention to the area: traditionally these data have not been collected by the statistical offices. However, the data could be fairly easily collected and they reflect very well the tendencies in gender equality in countries.
- In some areas, like health and population, the available data can be used to pinpoint critical areas where policy intervention would be needed, e.g. life expectancy and its change over time, national retirement age, wages.

Linking indicators and policies

- It is very difficult to establish a one to one relationship between policies and statistical indicators, some policies have an effect on several areas, and positive results in some area might be influenced by different policies. In many areas data should be combined in order to get a meaningful analysis, e.g. families and households with labour force data, population and health data, etc. Linking population register and survey data might also help.
- Very often the indicator does not only reflect policies but the general economic situation (employment-unemployment), therefore it is complicated to use it for monitoring policy efficiency;
- Very detailed analysis is needed for monitoring an impact of a specific policy initiative (e.g., increase in unemployment); it is needed to look specifically how this has affected women/men, different age groups, regions, etc. If unproportionally high impact can be seen on a specific group and there is a need for policy interference, by the time these policies are implemented, the conditions might have changed.
- The indicators can be better used to identify problem areas. Their use for policy monitoring is more problematic.
- Very often the data in sets that are to be used for a large number of countries are not detailed enough to allow analysis of national conditions. However, the data can pinpoint to areas where more detailed research would be needed at the national level.
- Statistics shows the situation as it is (e.g. ageing), and should look more at the causes and implications.

Other comments

- An important role of attitudes should be taken into account. Attitudes impact the way people act and at the same time policies can influence attitudes (sometimes this can be a specific goal of a policy; gender equality is an area which is very strongly influenced by attitudes, a lot of inequality in practice takes place within the family, workplace, etc. (responsibility sharing, domestic violence, etc.). Statistics usually do not go into analysis of that. Maybe public opinion research could help?
- The closer we go to individual units (person, family, workplace) the less available are data.