UNECE Gender Statistics Database

from a user's point of view

Presentation by Eva Fodor

Description of the project

- "The Story Behind the Numbers: Women and Employment in Central and Eastern Europe and the CIS" (UNIFEM)

- Goal: to evaluate conflicting claims in the academic and policy literature on women's position in the labor markets post 1989.

- Method: assessing women's employment chances in 17 countries using UNECE database.

Major findings

Two questions are conflated:

- Are women doing worse than before 1990?

  Yes, most women

- Are women doing worse relative to men?

  Not necessarily, but the numbers don't tell the whole story

UNECE dataset- pros

- Includes countries from outside the EU

- A wide variety of indicators going back to 1990

- Efforts to include gender specific variables, such as time use, access to top level positions, etc.

- Available free, online, access very easy and straightforward

Overall: wonderful for research, teaching, or policy making!!

Problems, suggestions

Comparison with state socialist period impossible, practically no data for 1990. What is there may be misleading.

Activity rates (15-64 year age group, UNECE database)

	1990		1995	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
PL*	75.3	62.3	70.6	59.3
BL**	68.9	60.8	67.1	59.6
EE	83.7	72.4	79.3	66.3
HU***	83.8	75.9	67.9	50.3

*Data for Poland 1990 refers to 1992
** Data for Bulgaria refers to 1993
*** Data for Hungary is from Hungarian Statistical Yearbook, selected yrs

Problems, suggestions

Focus specifically on countries from which data are usually difficult to obtain.

(For example, Serbia, Macedonia, Albania, many CIS countries.)

Problems, suggestions

Areas I found sorely missing:

- informal work, unpaid work, immigrant work
- More on division of labor, time use
- Poverty
- ethnic breakdowns
- information about "inactives"
- political positions and women

Problems, suggestions

There are discrepancies – some larger, some smaller- in different databases. It is unclear what explains these but this is disconcerting for user.

Activity Rates (15-64 year old age group) in 2000, by three agencies

	UNECE		EF		WB 1		WB 2	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
EE	76.0	65.3	75.2	65.4	86	72	76.1	67.9
PL	69.2	58.5	63.4	48.8	81	73	n.d.	59.2
HU	66.8	52.2	67.8	52.4	79	67	68.8	49.6

UNECE database
WB 1:   Activity rates from World Bank report: Gender in Transition 2003.
"Labor Market data from GenderStats", 1999 data.
WB 2: Labor Force participation rates from World Bank report: Gender in Transition 2003
"Labor Market data from labor force surveys", 1999 data.
EF: Final Report 2003, data collected by each country from own labor stats for the
European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Condition

Smaller points- what else would be useful?

- Regional (weighted?) averages would be useful- EU, CIS, East European EU, same level of GDP?
- Sectoral dis-aggregation is necessary
- Employment rates in general! (Can't calculate it for 15-64 age group, b/c unemployment rates are for 15+ only)
- Employment rates for different age groups? (For example, for working age defined for each country?)

Nevertheless, it is a…

wonderful resource!

- easy to use
- free
- with loads of info