

“What role can women play in addressing the growing requirements for workers in the Middle East?”

Now.....

...Next

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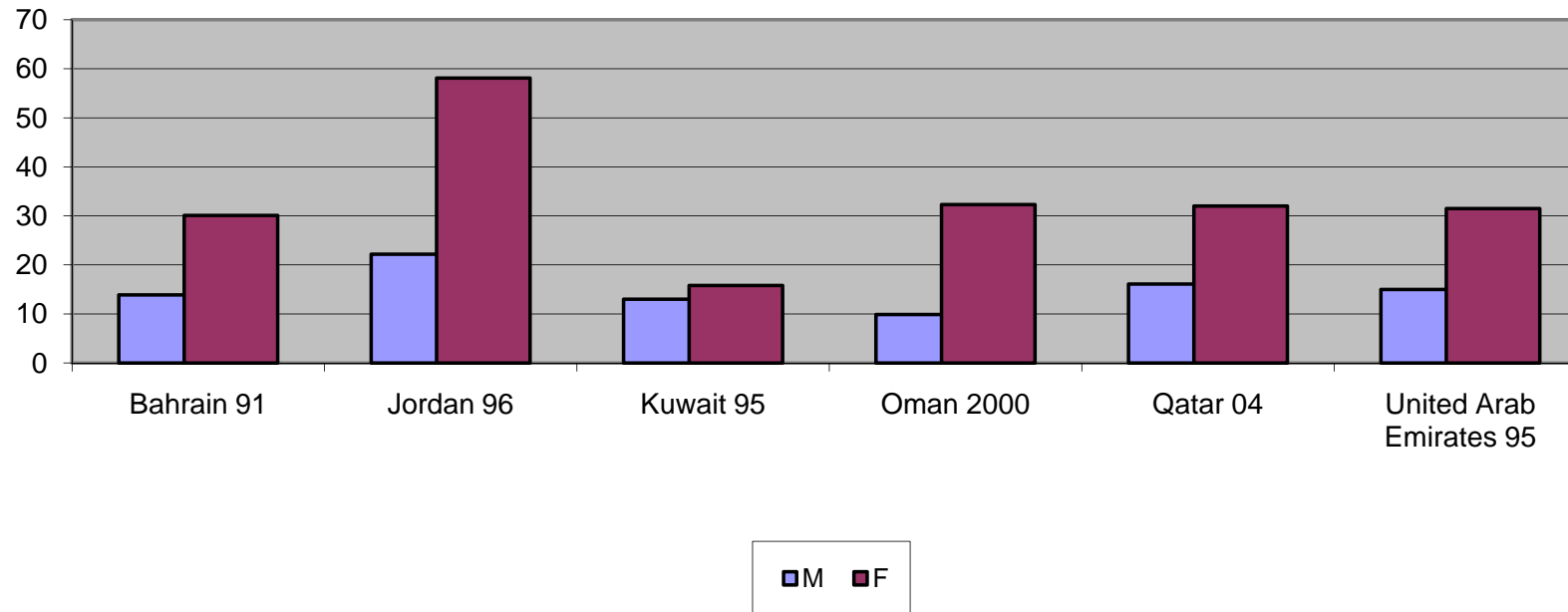
The overall picture

Middle East

Current labour market indicators	
<p><i>Labour market indicators</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labour force participation rate: 56.8%; youth: 42.3%; female: 33.3% • Employment-to-population ratio: 50.1%; youth: 32.2%; female: 28.1% • Unemployment rate: 11.8%; youth: 23.8%; female: 15.6% • Ratio of youth to adult unemployment rate: 3.0 • Sectoral employment shares: agriculture: 17.5%; industry: 25.5%; services: 57.0% • Vulnerable employment share: 32.2% • Labour productivity: annual growth between 1997 and 2007: -0.2% • Working poverty rate: US\$1 a day: 4.2%; US\$2 a day: 19.3% 	<p><i>Demographics</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share of youth in working-age pop: 32.7% • Annual population growth rate: 3.0% <p><i>Other</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average GDP growth rate 1997-07: 4.5%
Some issues for consideration	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barriers to labour market entry high for young people and women • Invisible underemployment based on skills mismatch, namely people taking jobs that do not make use of their skills • Stagnant income poverty and working poverty • Negative productivity growth • Graduate unemployment • Job quality – social protection, social dialogue, fundamental rights at work • Managing external and internal migration • Investment and job creation 	

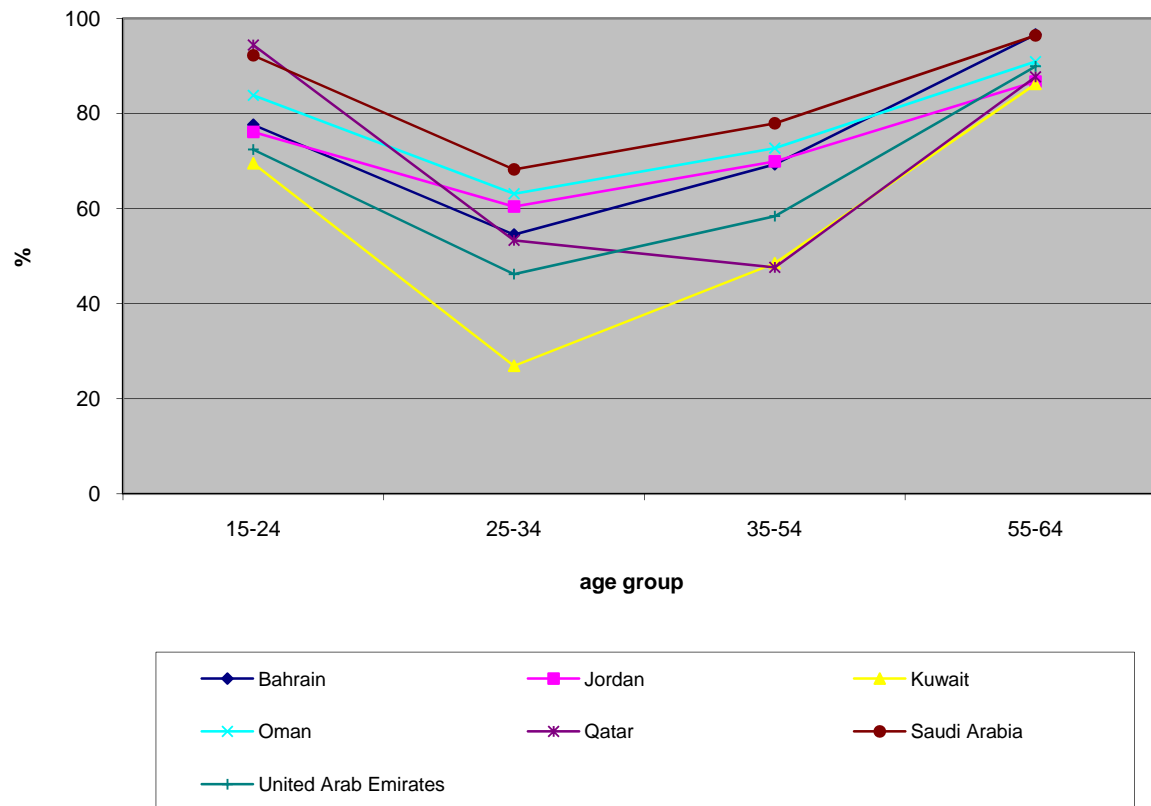
Women in the Middle East are well educated

% of men and women with tertiary education



...but their potential is wasted

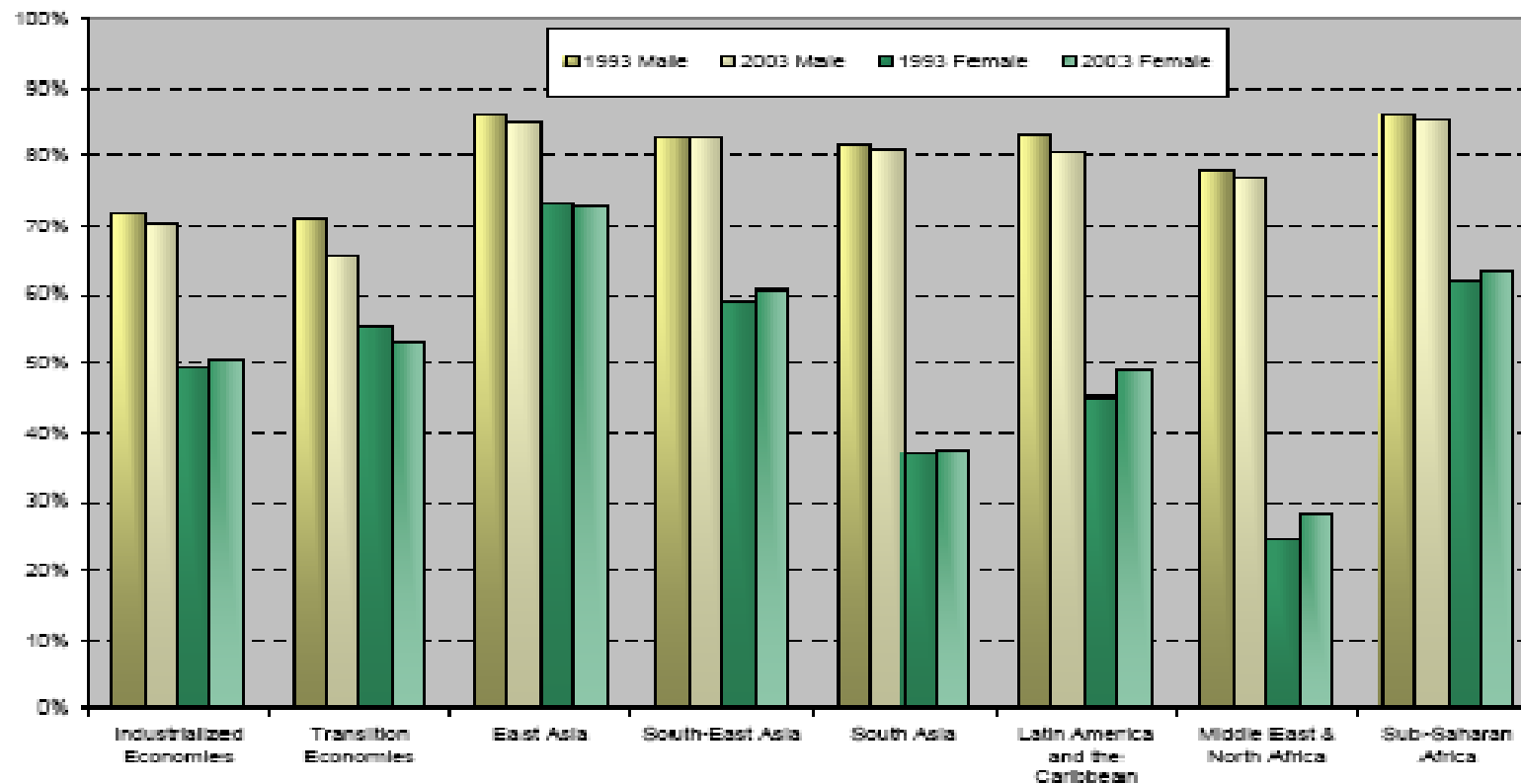
Women's inactivity rates by age group



- Around half of women with tertiary educated women are unemployed:
- UAE unemployment for men 15%, women 49%

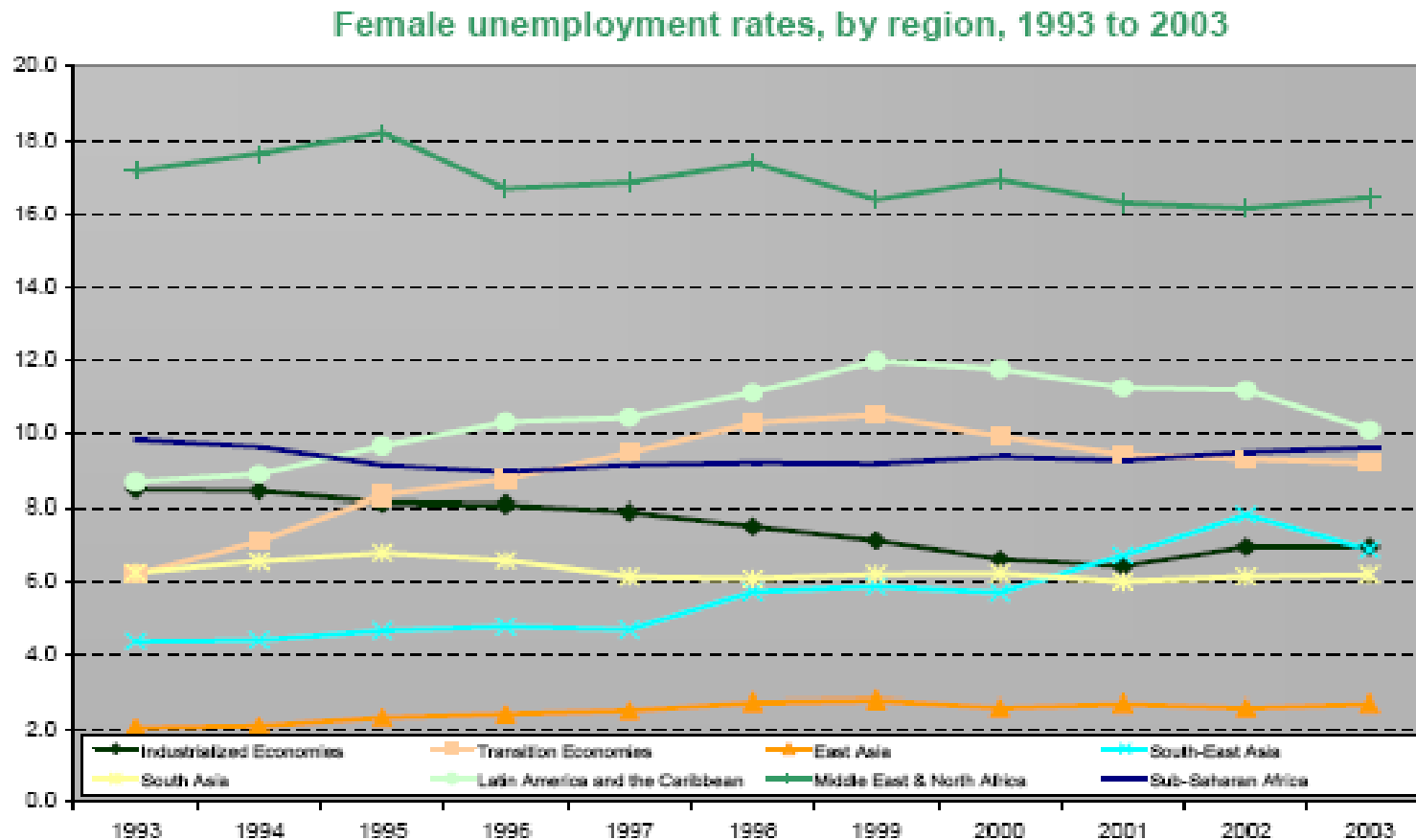
Their labour participation is the lowest in the world

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.

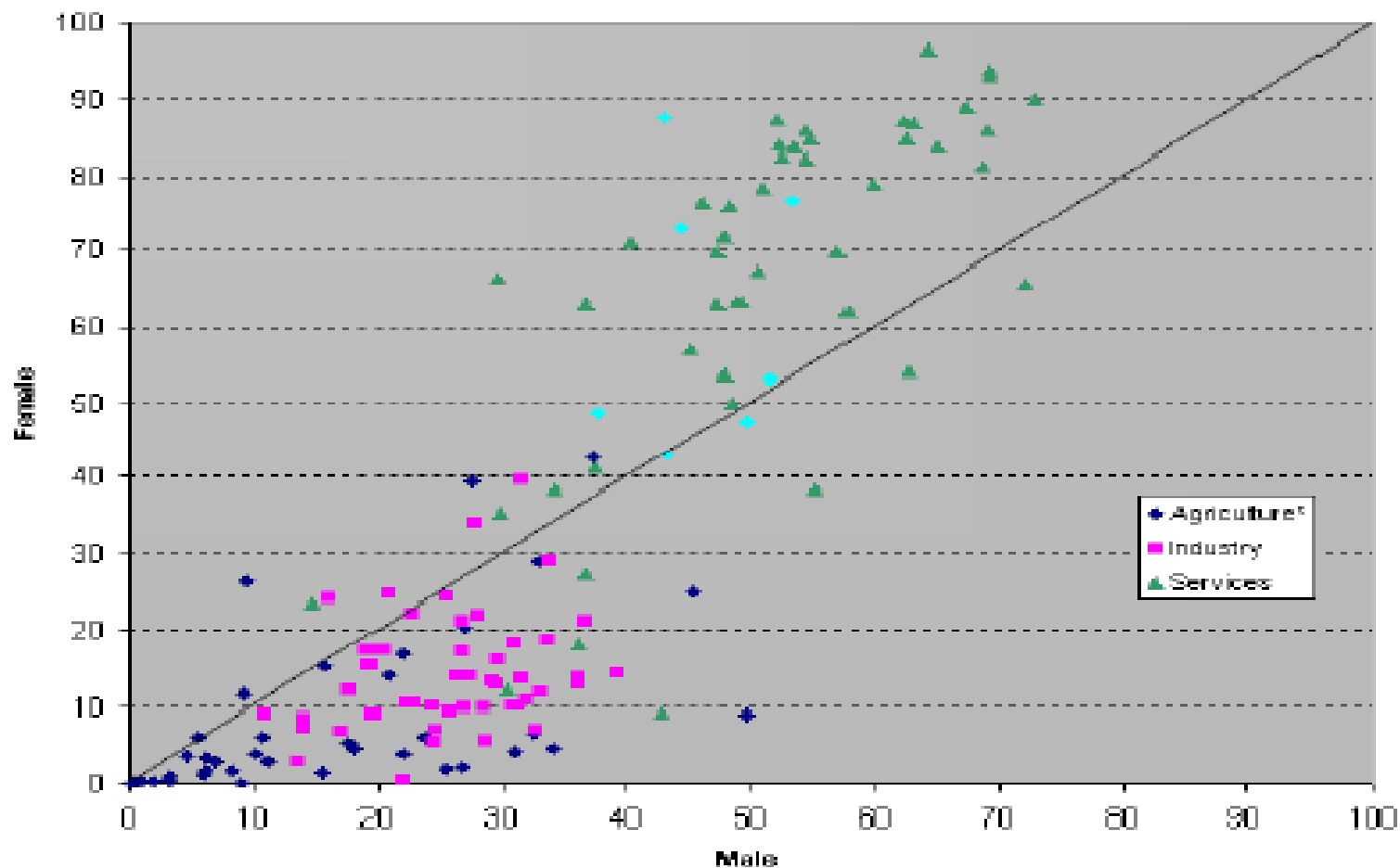
...and their unemployment highest



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

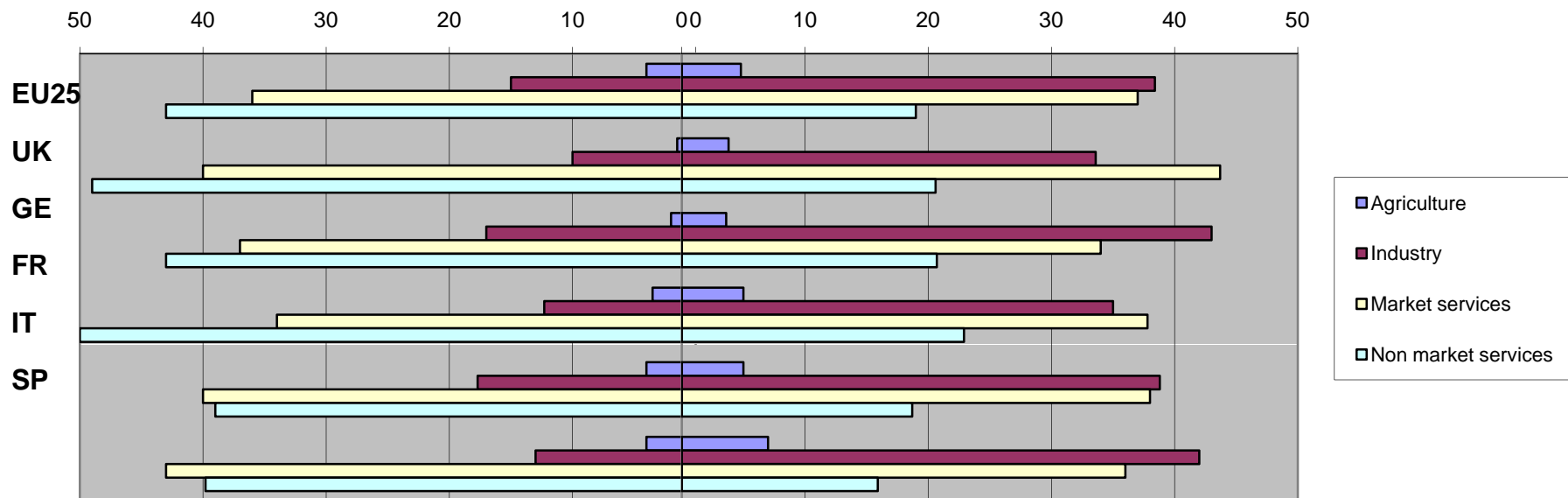
Employment opportunities for women are in the service sector

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



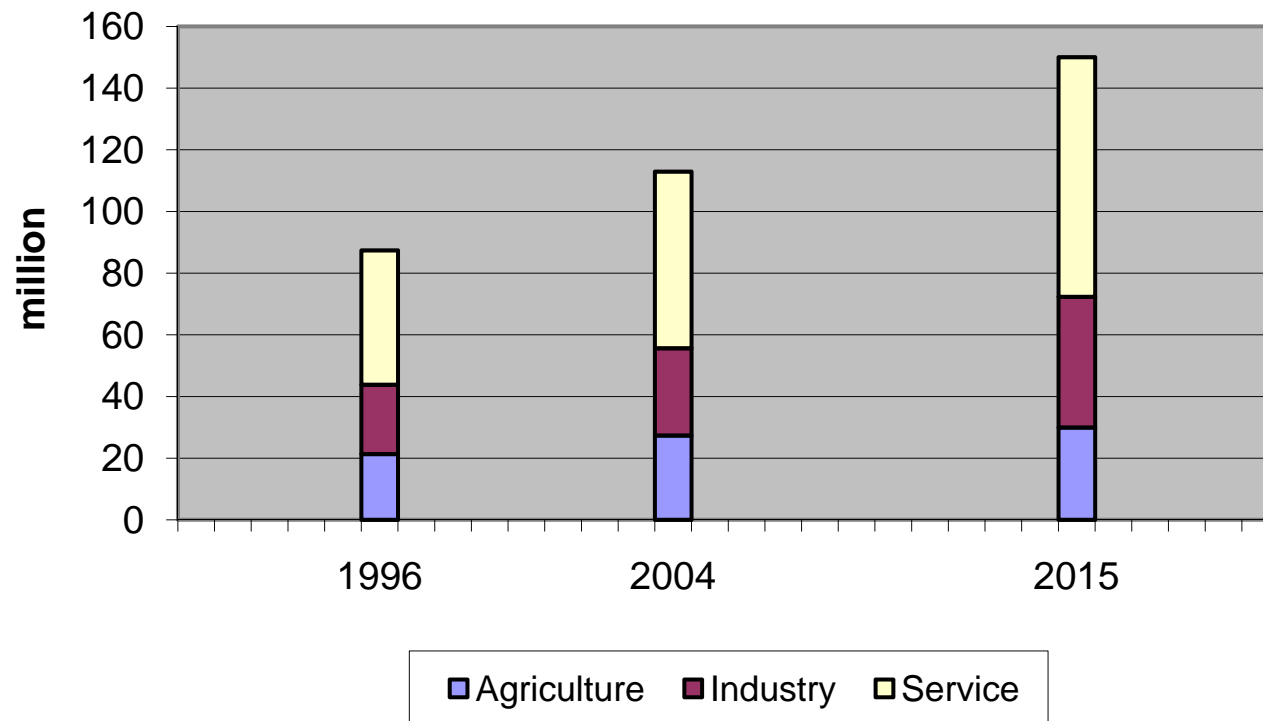
...particularly in non-market services

- **Women dominate non-market service sector** (health, education, social)
- **Gender balance in market service sector**
- **Men dominate the declining industry sector**

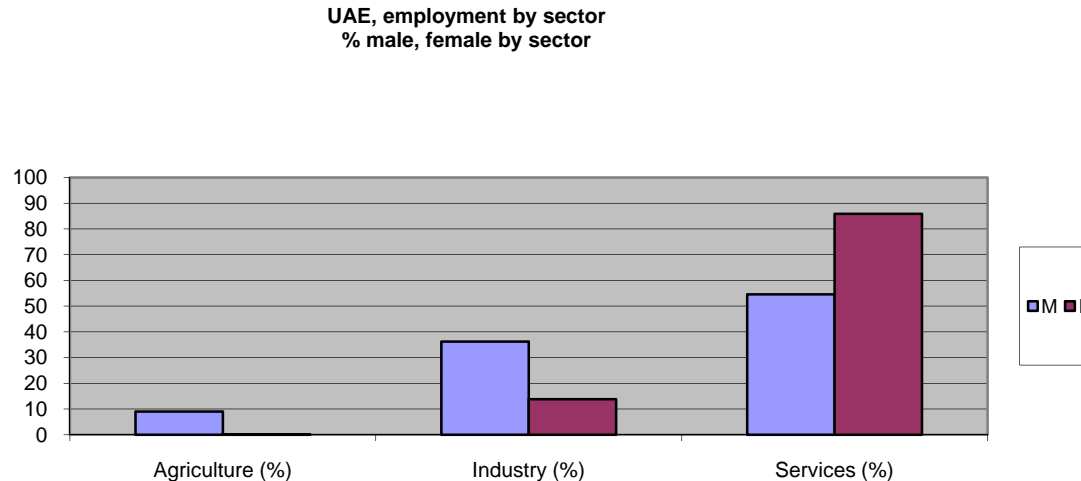


...and it is growing – also in the Middle East

Middle East, Employment



Services and entrepreneurship offer opportunities for women..



...some trends:

- Businesses owned by Arab women are on the rise
- Expanding opportunities beyond traditional female occupations (education, health, banking) to telecommunications and postal services
- Commerce and industry jobs where religious codes are not breached
- ICT is gender neutral

...but challenges remain:

- Constraining employment choices comes with a price:
 - less optimal matches and lower productivity
- Broadening consistency with social, cultural and religious traditions
 - Broadening employment opportunities in interacting with other women
 - Innovative solutions in technology and science

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