

### Survival and employment growth of women-owned enterprises

Policy makers can monitor the relative performance of women-owned enterprises by looking at their rate of survival and at their capacity to generate jobs during the first years of activity. Gender-disaggregated indicators on survival and employment growth allow to investigate questions such as the resilience and the growth performance of women-owned enterprises.

#### Definition

The *three-year survival rate of women (men)-owned enterprises* for a reference year  $t$  is calculated as the number of women (men) enterprises having survived up to  $t$  as a percentage of all women (men) enterprises that reported at least one employee for the first time in year  $t-3$ .

The *three-year employment growth rate of women (men)-owned enterprises* corresponds to the number of persons employed in surviving women (men)-owned enterprises in the reference year  $t$  divided by the number of persons employed in the year of birth  $t-3$  of those same women (men) enterprises that have survived to  $t$ .

Sole-proprietor enterprises are unincorporated enterprises with one single owner – female or male – who is a person with unlimited responsibilities over losses and debts of the enterprise. Statistics refer to sole-proprietorships with at least one employee.

#### Comparability

Different legal definitions of sole-proprietor enterprises and different economic incentives for incorporation can limit the comparability of the absolute number of sole-proprietor enterprises across countries.

Data from France, Poland and Switzerland are obtained from representative surveys of new enterprises. They are tabulated by gender of the enterprise (sole) founder instead of by gender of the sole-proprietor. The cohort of enterprise births from these surveys does not include those enterprises born by growth, i.e. enterprises that existed before

the year under consideration but were below the threshold of one employee. For Switzerland, the employer status of the enterprises is defined according to whether they have employees at the date of the survey. Statistics for Switzerland refer to two-year survival rate and employment growth rate in 2008. Statistics for Poland are limited to enterprise entities up to 49 employees. The data for France and Poland include enterprises born with and without employees.

#### Highlights

The evidence on gender differences in the survival rates is not clearcut. In most countries, women and men start-ups tend to have a similar survival performance three years after the birth. Performance in terms of employment creation during the first years of operation tends to vary greatly across countries, with women-owned new enterprises outperforming men-owned enterprises in France, Italy, New Zealand and Poland, while lagging behind in Finland, the Netherlands, Slovak Republic and Switzerland.

#### Source/online databases

Statistics produced for the OECD by national statistical offices.

Statistics for France: “Système d'information sur les nouvelles entreprises (SINE)”, [www.insee.fr/fr/themes/document.asp?ref\\_id=sine2009](http://www.insee.fr/fr/themes/document.asp?ref_id=sine2009)

#### For further reading

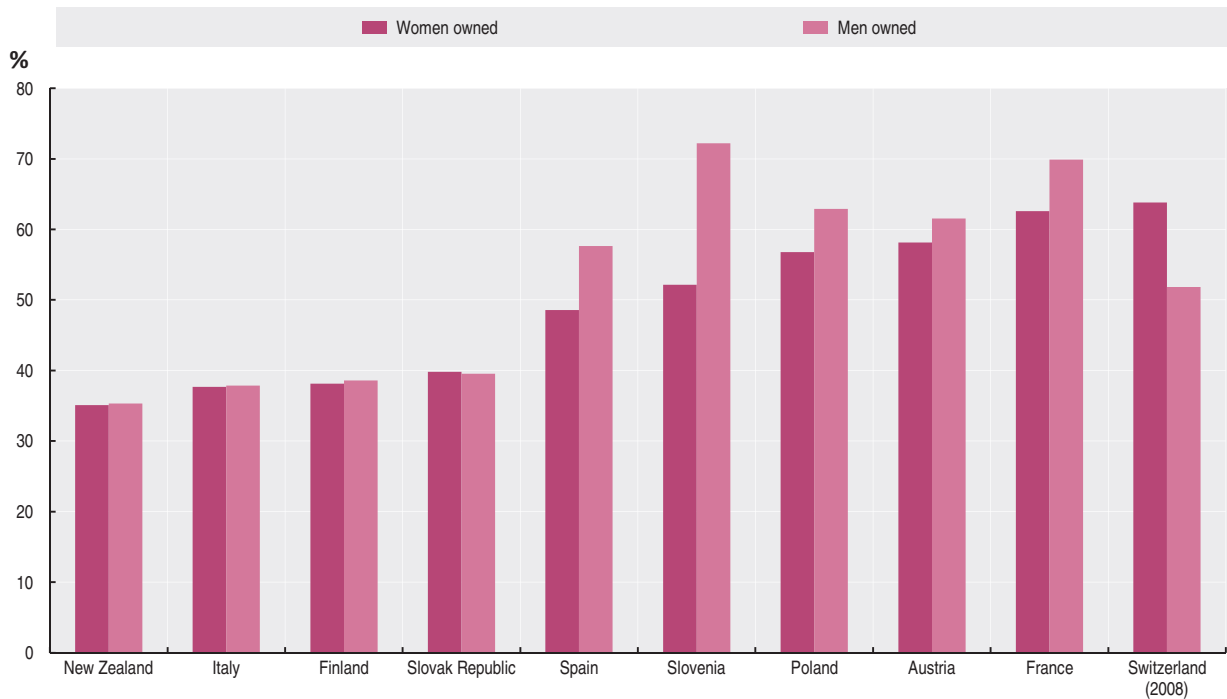
Letowski, A., (2001), “Comment améliorer la connaissance statistique des femmes chefs d'entreprise?”, in “Women Entrepreneurs in SMEs, Realising the Benefits of Globalisation and the Knowledge-based Economy”, OECD Publishing.

Boegh Nielsen, P., (2001), “Statistics on Start-ups and Survival of Women Entrepreneurs: the Danish Experience” in *Women Entrepreneurs in SMEs, Realising the Benefits of Globalisation and the Knowledge-based Economy*, OECD Publishing.

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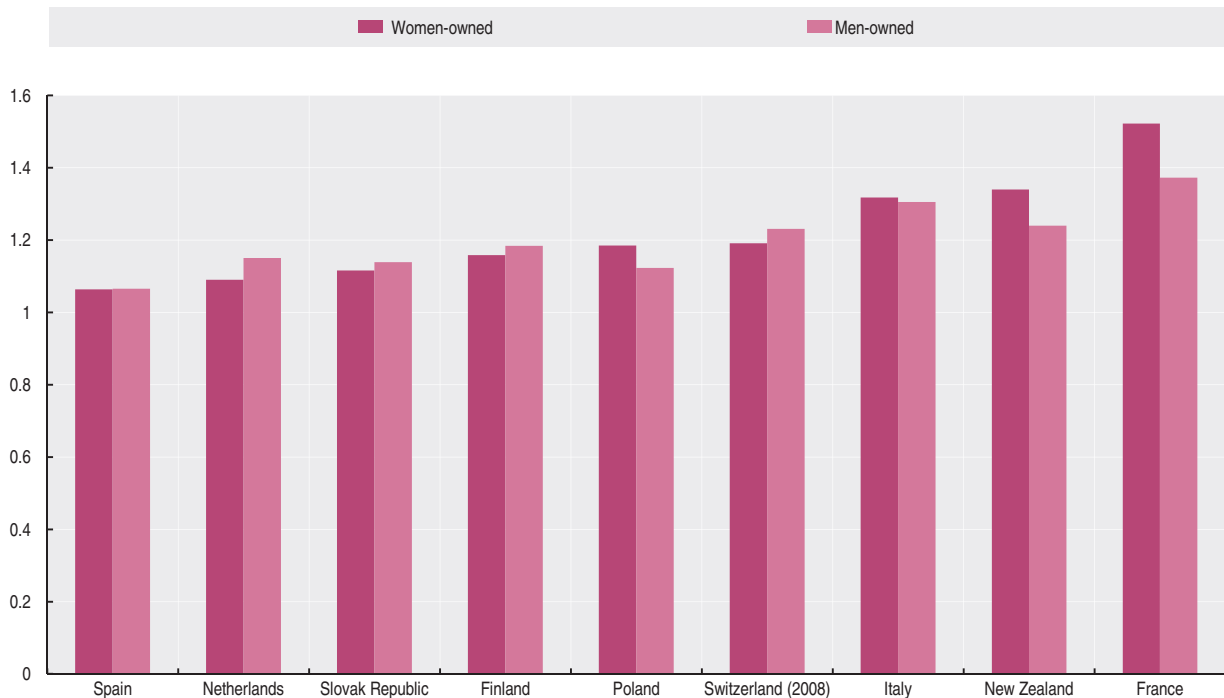
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Figure 7.10 **Three-year survival rate of women and men-owned enterprises, 2009 or latest available year**  
Percentage



StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932597847>

Figure 7.11 **Three-year employment growth rate of women and men-owned enterprises, 2009 or latest available year**



StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932597866>



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