

## **Family, Religion, and Multiculturalism: Challenging Implications on Women's Economic Behavior**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

This paper examines competing influences of family formation and religious affiliation on women's economic behavior in Australia's multicultural and multiethnic setting. The paper also examines the challenging influences of religion and family issues on women's economic behavior once other relevant factors such as human capital investments (i.e. education and English competency) as well as migration characteristics (consisting of born in Australia or overseas, duration of residence in the destination country, and region of origin) and age structure are controlled.

### **LITERATURE: A BRIEF REVIEW**

The increasing trend in women's employment rates has been observed as 'one of the fundamental facts of gender relations in this century' (Cotter, Hermsen, and Vanneman 2001: 430). Davis (1984: 397) also explained the substantial changes occurred in gender roles

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somewhat reflected in women's employment as the part of 'a more important social revolution, a revolution in sex roles'. According to him, 'in industrial societies, it used to be that a women would be asked what her husband does for a living. Now, increasingly, men are being asked what their wives do' (Davis 1984: 397).

Despite the fact that new technologies and facilities have substantially enabled women to combine family and work (United Nations 2001), their employment is still significantly affected by family characteristics such as fertility behaviour, in particular the presence of young children at home (Miller and Volker 1983a, 1983b, Brooks and Volker 1985, Young 1990, Bielby 1992, Massey *et al* 1993, VandenHeuvel and Wooden 1996, Rosenfeld 1996, Macunovich 1996, Rindfuss and Brewster 1996, and Lehrer 1999). The importance of family features on women's labour market behaviour is fairly reflected in the '*double peak pattern*' termed by United Nations (2000: 111), by which women are very likely to enter the labour market in their early twenties, and will come back to the labour market after spending a few years for childbearing duties.

Furthermore, there is a growing and extensive literature associating demographic and economic behaviour with religion (Lutz 1987, Lehrer 1995, 1996, 1999, 2004, Morgan *et al* 2002, Dharmalingam and Morgan 2004, and McQuillan 2004). The substantial effect of religion on women's economic activity is mainly connected with traditional gender roles, particularly caring for children as emphasised in religious teachings (Evans 1996, Lehrer 2004).

More specifically, prior studies have pointed out cultural barriers such as women's seclusion, so-called *purdah*, for their outside of home activities in many Islamic societies (Clark, Ramsbey, and Adler 1991, Bloom and Brender 1993, Anker 1997, Carr and Chen 2004). For instance, it was found that employment of Muslim and Hindu women in many of the higher castes in India is affected by seclusion system and 'traditional barriers still prevent women from going out of their home to work' (Carr and Chen 2004: 133). A significant association was explored between religiosity and employment of Muslim Arab-American women so that 'women with stronger connection to religion usually have lower employment ... than women

with weaker religious ties' (Read 2004: 58), while Muslim women in Norway were found to 'use Islam as a flexible resource for interpreting their own constraints and opportunities in paid labor and in the family' (Predelli 2004: 489).

## **THEORETICAL FOCUS**

Theoretically, women's economic behavior is explained here conventionally using values associated with the gender roles derived from religion (that is, Islamic ideology), family formation variables (as obstacles), and human capital variables (as facilitators). Focusing on both assimilation and human capital approaches, other determinants can intervene such as duration of residence (experience) in the country of destination, English competency, and ethnic origin, for immigrant groups.

There are also complicating factors that are difficult to measure such as the selectivity of migrants compared to those who do not migrate, the issue of religiosity, and the practice of discrimination on the part of employers in the country of destination. Therefore, it is recognised that, in this study, it is not possible to measure all of these factors accurately. However, as far as can be ascertained, it is theorised that Islamic affiliation has a significant impact on women's economic behavior.

## **DATA AND METHOD**

The present research focuses on women in the main economically active ages (i.e. 15-54 years old) in Australia. This research is based on special tabulations of the 2001 full census data provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), which are matrices of relevant variables cross-classified against each other. The matrix or cell data was converted to an individual record form. Statistically, this research contains almost 5.5 million women, of whom around 25 per cent are overseas-born. Approximately 82,000 of all of the women

under investigation are Muslim who are predominantly overseas-born (around 75 per cent)<sup>4</sup>. Using SPSS software, logistic regression is applied as a standardisation procedure (as distinct from a statistical procedure as the data were a full census) to examine the relative impacts of competing variables able to be measured from the census while simultaneously controlling for other variables.

Family formation characteristics in this research comprise couple status, the presence of a young child at home, the age of the youngest child at home, and partner's annual income. Meanwhile, women under this investigation in terms of religious affiliation are divided into Muslim and non-Muslim categories. Here, everyone whose religious affiliation was indicated as Islam is named Muslim and everyone else is called non-Muslim. Also, women's economic behavior in this research refers to their employment status in which they are either "Employed" or "Not employed" (including both unemployed and not in labor force).

## **I: BIVARIATE RESULTS**

The results of the present study will be presented in two sections based on bivariate and multivariate analyses. They highlight the influences of family formation characteristics and religious affiliation on women's employment. The bivariate findings are given for all women, by birthplace (i.e. either native-born or overseas-born), and religious affiliation (i.e. either Muslim or non-Muslim).

### **Employment status: A general pattern**

The results of this research show that, generally speaking, approximately two-third of all women under investigation are employed. Meanwhile, this general pattern varies by birthplace as overseas-born women are less likely than Australian-born women to be employed (Table 1).

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<sup>4</sup> The numbers, here, were obtained from a file that is partly affected by the issue of confidentiality caused by a large number of cross tabulations and small numbers in the cells of Super Table.

Moreover, employment status is substantially changeable by religious affiliation: non-Muslim women are significantly more likely to be employed than Muslim women so that the proportion of employed Muslim women is only half that of non-Muslim women. By birthplace, for both Muslim and non-Muslim women, overseas-born women are less likely to be employed than Australian-born women. Also, the gap produced by birthplace is bigger for Muslim women than that for non-Muslim women. In short, compared to non-Muslim women, Muslim women are less likely to be employed, either Australian or overseas-born (Table 1).

### **Couple status**

According to the results of this research, women's employment is influenced by couple status, although this influence varies by religious affiliation and birthplace. Generally speaking, women who live with partners are more likely to be employed than those who do not live with partners. This applies to both Australian and overseas-born women, suggesting that birthplace does not make significant difference on the general pattern highlighted before (Table 2).

Comparatively, the effect of couple status is different on the employment status of Muslim and non-Muslim women. Consistent with the general pattern mentioned above, non-Muslim women's employment is responsive to couple status, while this family formation characteristic does not make significant difference on the employment status of Muslim women. Again, consistent with the previously-mentioned general pattern, for non-Muslim women, this effect is nearly the same on the employment of Australian and overseas-born women. However, amongst Australian-born Muslim women, those living with partners are more likely to be employed than those who do not live with partners, whereas this variable does not produce significant change on the employment status of their overseas-born counterparts. In other words, only the employment of overseas-born Muslim women is almost unresponsive to couple status, while that of Australian-born Muslim women as well as non-Muslim women, either Australian or overseas-born, is affected by couple status as the general pattern highlighted before (Table 2).

### **The presence of young child at home and the age of the youngest child**

The bivariate analyses of this research show that women's employment status is significantly associated with the presence of a young child at home and the age of the youngest child. Consistent with prior research, women with no child at home are considerably more likely to be employed than those who have young children at home. Moreover, the employment status of women with a young child at home is significantly affected by the age of children: the younger the age of the child at home, the lesser the likelihood of being employed. However, when the effect of the presence of young child at home and the age of the youngest child on women's employment is considered by their birthplace, it is found that although the general pattern mentioned above is applicable to both Australian and overseas-born women, the employment status of Australian-born women is more responsive to this family formation characteristic compared to that of overseas-born women. These results also support and confirm prior research in relation to the smaller effect of family formation on migrant women's employment behaviour compared to native-born women (Table 3).

Generally speaking, the employment of both Muslim and non-Muslim women is substantially influenced by the presence of a young child at home and the age of the youngest child as the pattern discussed before. However, this family formation characteristic provides a relatively more significant influence on the employment status of non-Muslim women compared to that of Muslim women. The previously-mentioned pattern in relation to birthplace differences are also true for both Muslim and non-Muslim women. However, comparatively, the employment status of overseas-born Muslim women less than overseas-born non-Muslim women is affected by the presence of young child at home and the age of the youngest child. On the other hand, Australian-born Muslim women's employment is more responsive to the presence of a young child at home and the age of the youngest child at home compared to Australian-born non-Muslim women (Table 3).

### **Partner's annual income**

According to the bivariate findings of this study, women's employment is also closely connected to partner's annual income. Women are more likely to be employed when partner's annual income increases. This might be a result of the fact that women whose partners earn more are also more likely to have high human capital endowments influencing their labour force participation. This will be investigated in the multivariate analyses of this research. By taking birthplace into account, although the general pattern discussed above is true for both Australian and overseas-born women, the employment status of overseas-born women is more strongly affected by partner's annual income compared to that for Australian-born women. Irrespective of religious affiliation, the employment status of all women is significantly influenced by partner's annual income as the general pattern stated before. However, the influence of this variable on the employment status of Muslim women is stronger than that of non-Muslim women. Also, the previously-mentioned pattern in relation to the effect of partner's annual income on the employment status of Australian and overseas-born women still remains the same for both Muslim and non-Muslim women (Table 4).

## **II: MULTIVARITE RESULTS**

Using logistic regression analysis, the multivariate results of the present research highlighting the effects of family formation characteristics and religious affiliation on women's employment status are given in this section. Here, the dependent variable is employment status (i.e. either employed or not employed). The available independent variables included in the research models are family formation characteristics (couple status, the presence of a young child at home, the age of the youngest child at home, and partner's annual income), religion (Muslim, non-Muslim), human capital investments (education and English language competency), migration characteristics (native-born or overseas-born, duration of residence in Australia, and country/region of birth), and age.

### **Religious affiliation**

Based on the multivariate results of this study, when other relevant factors influencing female labour market activity included in the models are controlled, non-Muslim women are twice as likely to be employed as Muslim women. This pattern also remains applicable for both Australian and overseas-born women (Table 5 and Table 6). Although this different employment pattern of Muslim women, especially among those of them who are more visibly distinguishable due to the Islamic dress code, so-called the *hyjab*, can partly be related to the possibility of discrimination on the side of employers, there are more likely explanations.

It is a fact that the Australian Muslim women are substantially diverse with different socio-economic and cultural experiences and backgrounds, including in gender-related roles. This point can also, in part, be observed in women's significantly different employment patterns by their ethnic origin in the present study (Table 6). Moreover, despite a great variety of Muslim population in Australia in terms of country of origin, Turkish and Lebanese immigrants have constituted the highest proportion of Muslim populations in Australia since 1971 (Cleland 2001, and Bouma 1994). In particular, Lebanese Muslim women (like their non-Muslim counterparts) are the least likely to be employed. Therefore, it is more likely that Australian-born Muslim women, largely as children of Lebanese and Turkish parents, are more encouraged to maintain their parents' cultural norms and identity such as values associated with gender roles.

### **Presence of a young child at home and the age of the youngest child**

The multivariate results of this study also support the fact that the absence of young children at home has a positively strong effect on women's employment status so that women with no child at home are the most likely to be employed than women with children at home, irrespective of their age. Meanwhile, the employment status of women with children at home is closely connected to the age of child at home: the older the age of children at home, the



greater the likelihood of being employed. Moreover, like the bivariate findings discussed before, the results of the multivariate analyses of this study support and confirm prior research as overseas-born women's employment was found to be less responsive to this family formation characteristic compared to native-born women. Generally speaking, the two main patterns highlighted above are true for all women irrespective of religious affiliation. However, the employment status of non-Muslim women is somewhat more affected by this family formation characteristic compared to Muslim women (Table 5 and Table 6).

### **Couple status & partner's annual income**

According to the multivariate analyses of the present research, the employment status of women is significantly affected by partner's annual income. Women are more likely to be employed when their partners earn more. Meanwhile, the likelihood of employment for women with no partner is the same as those women whose partner's annual income is in the lowest income category. These general patterns remain the same for both Muslim and non-Muslim women as well as for Australian and overseas-born women because the values of odds ratios do not show significant differences between these groups.

Table 1: Percentage distribution of women aged 15-54 in Australia by employment status, birthplace, and religion, 2001

Birthplace & Employment status	All women	Muslim women	Non-Muslim
<b>Australian-born</b>			
Employed	66.8	38.9	66.9
Not employed	33.2	61.1	33.1
Total	100	100	100
Total number	3832011	18614	3813397
<b>Overseas-born</b>			
Employed	59.2	28.8	60.7
Not employed	40.8	71.2	39.3
Total	100	100	100
Total number	1290278	59922	1230356
<b>Total</b>			
Employed	64.8	31.1	65.3
Not employed	35.2	68.9	34.7
Total	100	100	100
Total number	5204793	80680	5124113

**Source:** Computed from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)

**Notes:** (1) "Employed" includes employee, employer, own account worker, and contributing family worker (versus "Not employed" embracing unemployed and not in labour force). (2) This Table excludes those women whose employment status is "Not stated". (3) The category of "Total" (beside 'Australian-born' and 'Overseas-born' categories) also includes those women whose birthplace is "Not stated". (4) This Table is also obtained from a file that is partly affected by the issue of confidentiality caused by a large number of cross tabulations and small numbers in the cells of the Super Table.

Table 2: Percentage distribution of women aged 15-54 in Australia by employment status, birthplace, religion, and couple status, 2001

Birthplace & Employment status	<b>All women</b>		<b>Muslim women</b>		<b>Non-Muslim women</b>	
	Partnered	Not partnered	Partnered	Not partnered	Partnered	Not partnered
<b>Australian-born</b>						
Employed	70.6	63.0	41.9	37.3	70.7	63.2
Not employed	29.4	37.0	58.1	62.7	29.3	36.8
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total number	2051932	1590366	6713	11254	2045219	1579112
<b>Overseas-born</b>						
Employed	62.2	54.5	29.6	28.0	63.9	55.7
Not employed	37.8	45.5	70.4	72.0	36.1	44.3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total number	825716	418622	40871	17667	784845	400955
<b>Total</b>						
Employed	68.1	61.0	31.3	31.5	68.7	61.5
Not employed	31.9	39.0	68.7	68.5	31.3	38.5
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total number	2910639	2054169	48727	29875	2861912	2024294

**Source:** Computed from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)

**Notes:** (1) Here, “Partnered” (or “Living with a partner”) includes husband, wife in a registered marriage, and partner in a de-facto marriage (opposite sex). (2) This Table excludes those women whose couple status is “Unclassifiable”. (3) Notes of Table 1 are also applicable to this Table.

Table 3: Percentage distribution of women aged 15-54 in Australia by employment status, birthplace, religion, and presence of a young child at home and the age of the youngest child at home, 2001

Birthplace & Employment status	All women				Muslim women				Non-Muslim women			
	0-2 years	3-7 years	8 years or +	No child	0-2 years	3-7 years	8 years or +	No child	0-2 years	3-7 years	8 years or +	No child
<b>Australian-born</b>												
Employed	43.6	57.9	65.8	76.3	20.9	30.1	36.5	61.2	43.8	58.1	66.0	76.3
Not employed	56.4	42.1	34.2	23.7	79.1	69.9	63.5	38.8	56.2	41.9	34.0	23.7
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total number	476645	497758	1112309	1745299	3743	3141	6707	5023	472902	494617	1105602	1740276
<b>Overseas-born</b>												
Employed	38.1	51.9	60.7	65.9	15.6	26.2	33.0	36.2	40.2	53.8	62.1	66.7
Not employed	61.9	48.1	39.3	34.1	84.4	73.8	67.0	63.8	59.8	46.2	37.9	33.3
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total number	141869	183501	400987	563921	12088	13084	19562	15188	129781	170417	381425	548733
<b>Total</b>												
Employed	42.3	56.2	64.2	73.6	16.7	26.9	33.8	42.3	42.9	56.9	64.8	73.9
Not employed	57.7	43.8	35.8	26.4	83.3	73.1	66.2	57.7	57.1	43.1	35.2	26.1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total number	623890	688814	1538468	2353621	16207	16647	27017	20809	607683	672167	1511451	2332812

**Source:** Computed from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)

\* Notes of Table 1 are also applicable to this Table.

Table 4: Percentage distribution of women aged 15-54 in Australia by employment status, birthplace, religion, and partner's annual income, 2001

Birthplace & Employment status	All women			Muslim women			Non-Muslim women		
	\$20799 or less	\$20800-36399	\$36400 or +	\$20799 or less	\$20800-36399	\$36400 or +	\$20799 or less	\$20800-36399	\$36400 or +
<b>Australian-born</b>									
Employed	56.5	70.4	72.4	31.9	45.5	50.3	56.8	70.6	72.4
Not employed	43.5	29.6	27.6	68.1	54.5	49.7	43.2	29.4	27.6
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total number	477279	691579	1291569	6810	3458	2970	470469	688121	1288599
<b>Overseas-born</b>									
Employed	44.2	64.8	68.4	17.2	39.0	46.5	47.0	66.0	69.0
Not employed	55.8	35.2	31.6	82.8	61.0	53.5	53.0	34.0	31.0
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total number	228959	240401	410599	21746	10839	11155	207213	229562	399444
<b>Total</b>									
Employed	52.3	68.9	71.4	20.7	40.6	47.2	53.7	69.4	71.6
Not employed	47.7	31.1	28.6	79.3	59.4	52.8	46.3	30.6	28.4
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total number	720767	947177	1721944	29361	14642	14437	691406	932535	1707507

**Source:** Computed from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)

**Notes:** (1) This Table excludes women with "No male partner" and those women whose partner's annual income is "Not stated". (2) Notes of Table 1 are also applicable to this Table.

Table 5: Odds ratios from logistic regression analyses of factors affecting employment status of women aged 15-54 in Australia by religion and birthplace, 2001

Characteristics	Non-Muslim women			Muslim women			All women		
	Total	Australian-born	Overseas-born	Total	Australian-born	Overseas-born	Total	Australian-born	Overseas-born
<b>Age group</b>									
15-24	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
25-34	1.486	1.395	2.148	1.667	1.606	1.857	1.487	1.396	2.132
35-44	1.448	1.354	2.291	1.774	1.650	2.143	1.450	1.356	2.280
45-54	1.063	1.011	1.810	1.248	1.453	1.651	1.064	1.012	1.801
<b>Level of education</b>									
Low education	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Still at school	0.890	1.152	0.537	0.624	0.926	0.586	0.883	1.151	0.539
Middle education	2.793	3.660	1.672	1.913	2.713	1.688	2.769	3.656	1.677
High education	7.237	10.551	3.139	4.034	7.975	2.911	7.154	10.540	3.140
<b>English language proficiency</b>									
Not well	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Well	1.380	1.370	1.732	2.098	1.272	2.252	1.409	1.357	1.757
Very well	2.241	1.952	3.463	4.222	2.262	5.128	2.304	1.944	3.533
<b>Duration of residence in Australia</b>									
Born in Australia	*			*			*		
More than 10 years	0.953			0.838			0.954		
10 years or less	0.500			0.504			0.502		
<b>Presence of a young child at home and age of the youngest child</b>									
0-2 years	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
3-7 years	2.130	2.173	1.998	2.076	2.192	2.035	2.130	2.173	2.001
8 years or more	4.220	4.329	3.829	3.884	4.026	3.812	4.216	4.328	3.830
No dependent child at home	6.321	6.823	4.750	5.404	7.625	4.503	6.309	6.827	4.744
<b>Partner's (annual) income</b>									
\$ 20,799 or less	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
\$ 20800 - \$ 36339	2.008	1.945	2.157	2.400	1.760	2.711	2.016	1.944	2.185
\$ 36400 or more	1.934	1.922	1.903	2.507	1.897	2.742	1.942	1.922	1.931
No male partner	0.988	0.963	1.073	1.044	0.887	1.108	0.991	0.963	1.079
<b>Religion</b>									
Muslim							*	*	*
Non Muslim							2.104	2.006	2.269
<b>Number of valid cases</b>	<b>4,801,156</b>	<b>3,676,050</b>	<b>1,171,487</b>	<b>70,000</b>	<b>17,134</b>	<b>53,143</b>	<b>4,871,156</b>	<b>3,693,184</b>	<b>1,226,630</b>

**Source:** Computed from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) \*: Reference (indicator) group.

**Notes:** (1) This Table excludes those women whose level of education, English language proficiency, Partner's (annual) income, duration of residence in Australia, and employment status is "Not stated". (2) In the classification of English proficiency, "Very well" includes both "Only speak English" and "Speak English very well". (3) The classification for level of education includes *Low*: Did not go to school, Year 8 or below, *Middle*: Year 9-12 or equivalent, Certificate level, *High*: Postgraduate degree, Graduate Diploma and Graduate Certificate, Bachelor Degree, Advanced Diploma and Diploma level. (4) In each model of this Table, dependent variable is "employment status" in which "Employed" is coded as 1 (one), and "Not employed" is coded as 0 (zero). (5) Notes of Table 1 are also applicable to this Table.

Table 6: Odds ratios from logistic regression analyses of factors affecting employment status of women aged 15-54 in Australia by religion, 2001

Characteristics	Muslim women (1)	Non-Muslim women (2)	All women (3)
<b>Age group</b>			
15-24 .....	*	*	*
25-34	1.693	1.490	1.493
35-44	1.957	1.488	1.492
45-54	1.492	1.131	1.134
<b>Level of education</b>			
Low education .....	*	*	*
Still at school	0.578	0.854	0.846
Middle education	1.839	2.693	2.667
High education	3.647	6.795	6.701
<b>English language proficiency</b>			
Not well .....	*	*	*
Well	2.303	1.454	1.484
Very well	4.992	2.492	2.569
<b>Presence of young child at home and age of the youngest child</b>			
0-2 years .....	*	*	*
3-7 years	2.071	2.133	2.133
8 years or more	3.742	4.242	4.237
No dependent child at	4.946	6.198	6.179
<b>Partner (annual) income</b>			
\$ 20799 or less.....	*	*	*
\$ 20800 - \$ 36399	2.286	1.999	2.005
\$ 36400 or more	2.413	1.918	1.924
No male partner	1.039	0.981	0.983
<b>Country &amp; Region of birth</b>			
Australia .....	*	*	*
Lebanon	0.364	0.438	0.426
North Africa and Middle East	0.406	0.561	0.529
South Asia	0.550	0.661	0.652
SE Asia	0.579	0.732	0.731
Central and North East Asia	0.630	0.614	0.618
Developed countries	0.893	0.848	0.849
Turkey, Cyprus, Greece	0.984	0.920	0.955
Sub-Saharan Africa, Caribbean, Pac Is	1.024	0.800	0.816
Eastern Europe	1.091	0.827	0.845
<b>Religion</b>			
Muslim .....			*
Non -Muslim			2.003
<b>Number of valid cases</b>	71,912	4,842,802	4,914,714

**Source:** Computed from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) \*: Reference (indicator) group.

**Notes:** (1) This Table excludes those whose country/region of birth is "Not stated" or "Inadequately described".  
(2) A list of countries included in the regions of birth has been presented in Appendix 1. (3) Notes of Table 1 and Table 5 are also applicable to this Table.

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Appendix 1: Countries of birth for overseas-born women aged 15-54 in Australia by major region of birth, 2001

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Central and North East Asia: Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Central Asia (nfd), Chinese Asia (includes Mongolia), Iran, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Uzbekistan.

Developed countries: Central America, Japan and the Koreas, Ireland, New Zealand, Northern America, Northern Europe, South America, Southern Europe, United Kingdom, Western Europe.

Eastern Europe: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Eastern Europe, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Romania, Slovenia, South Eastern Europe (nfd), Yugoslavia Federal Republic

North Africa and Middle East: Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gaza Strip and West Bank, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Middle East (nfd), Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen

South Asia: Bangladesh, Burma (Myanmar), Comoros, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Seychelles, Southern Asia (nfd), Sri Lanka.

South East Asia: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, East Timor, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Maritime South East Asia (nfd), Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam

Sub-Saharan African, Caribbean and Pacific Islands: Angola, Botswana, Caribbean, Central and West Africa (nfd), Djibouti, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Melanesia, Mauritius, Micronesia, Mozambique, Nigeria, Polynesia (excluding Hawaii), Rwanda, Senegal,

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