

Transition in Food Security: Successes, Failures, and New Challenges in the ECA Region

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Kateryna G. Schroeder, William H. Meyers, David Sedik
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Regional Scope



European CIS countries:

Belarus, Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation and Ukraine

South-Eastern Europe:

Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, FYRM, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia

Central Asia and Caucasus:

Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan

Food security framework



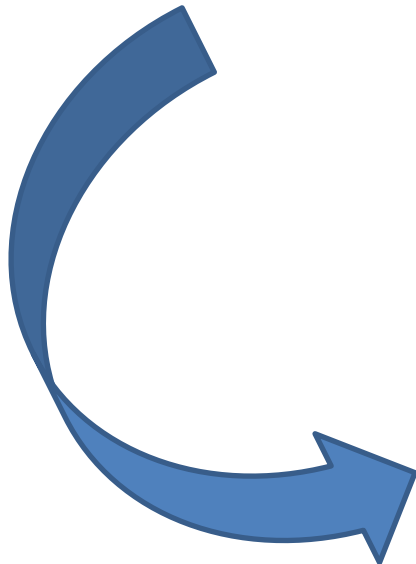
Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life (Committee on World Food Security, 2009).

From the MDGs to the SDGs



SDG Target 2.1: “by 2030 end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round”

SDG Target 2.2: “by 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under five years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons”.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Successes and failures

- Neither ***food availability*** nor ***food stability*** have posed any major problems for the countries in the region since 1990s (with some exceptions).
- ECA countries have made a tremendous progress in improving ***economic access to food*** since 1990s. Nevertheless, food access is still an issue of concern – for certain groups of people in all countries and at the national level in some CCA countries.
- Except for Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, all countries in the region reached Millennium Development Goal hunger target and World Food Summit target.
- ***Food utilization*** has remained a persistent problem in the region.

Successes and failures - Food availability

Average dietary energy supply adequacy (DES), %

Source: FAO, 2016

	1991-93	2000-02	2014-16
Armenia	91	95	120
Azerbaijan	99	106	127
Georgia	68	107	116
Kazakhstan	128	123	137
Kyrgyzstan	107	105	122
Tajikistan	98	90	97
Turkmenistan	117	115	129
Uzbekistan	125	102	122
Belarus	132	121	132
Republic of Moldova	104	104	116
Russian Federation	121	118	136
Ukraine	132	119	126
Albania	114	117	121
Bosnia and Herzegovina	99	116	127
Montenegro	118	106	147
Serbia	118	106	108
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	95	108	119

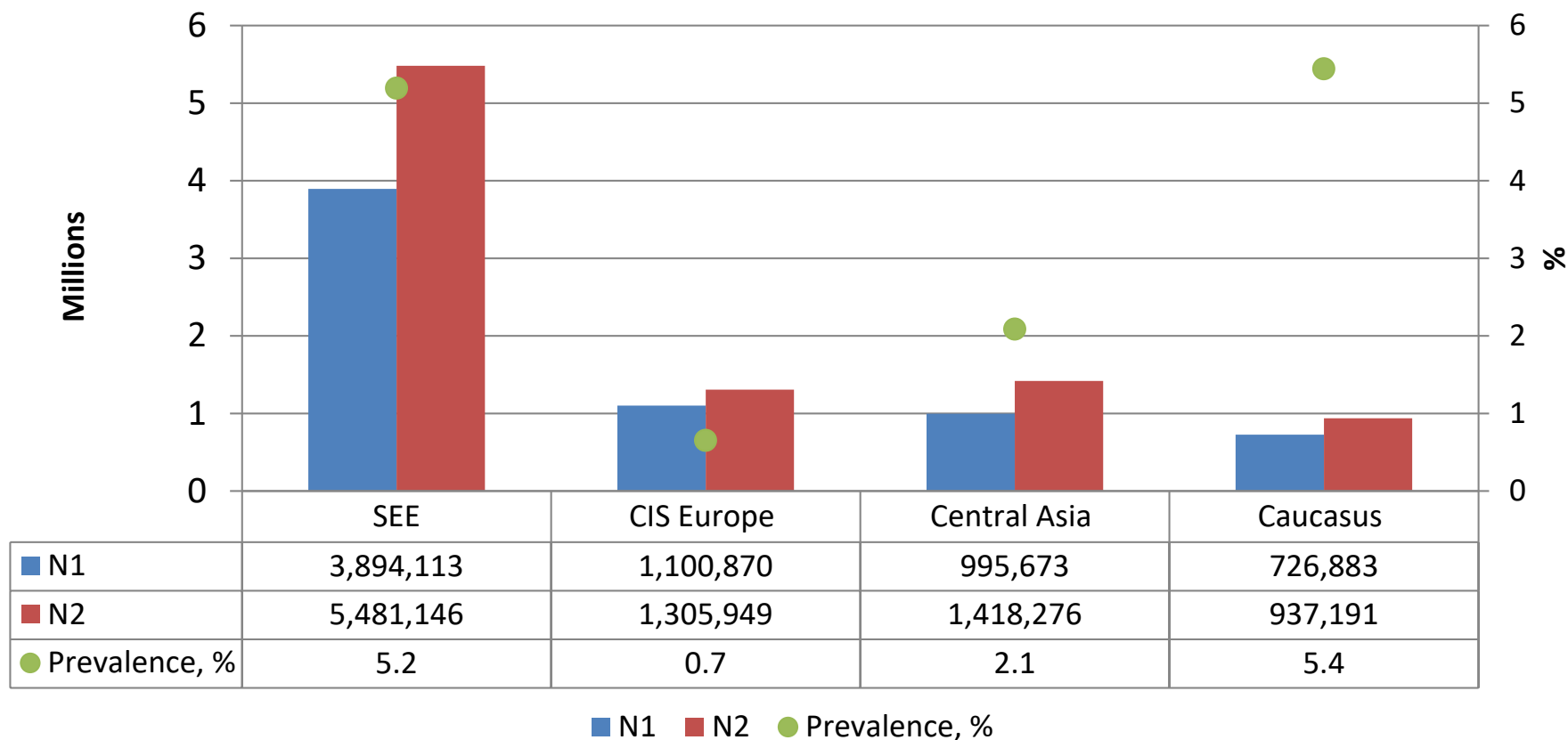
Successes and failures - Food access

Prevalence of undernourishment (PoU), %

Source: FAO, 2016

	1991-93	2000-02	2014-16	Per capita GDP, constant 2010\$
Armenia	27.3	23.0	4.4	3 797
Azerbaijan	23.6	17.1	<2.5	6 117
Georgia	80.8	16.3	7.0	3 969
Kazakhstan	<5.0	<5.0	<2.5	10 617
Kyrgyzstan	15.9	16.7	6.4	1 017
Tajikistan	28.1	39.5	30.1	933.0
Turkmenistan	8.6	8.4	5.5	6 933
Uzbekistan	<5.0	14.4	6.3	1 857

Prevalence of severe food insecurity in the adult population, computed using the FIES, 2014-2016



Note: **The prevalence of food insecurity**: measured as a percent of adult individuals (15 years or older) that are found to be food insecure;

N1: the estimated number of adult individuals (15 years or older) who are food insecure;

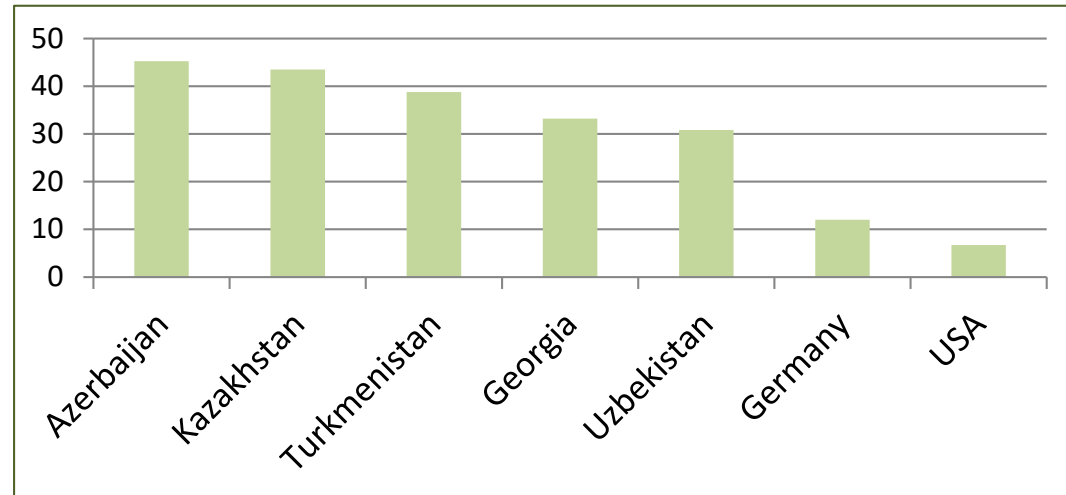
N2: the estimated number of individuals in the total population living in households where at least one adult is food insecure.

Source: FAO, 2016

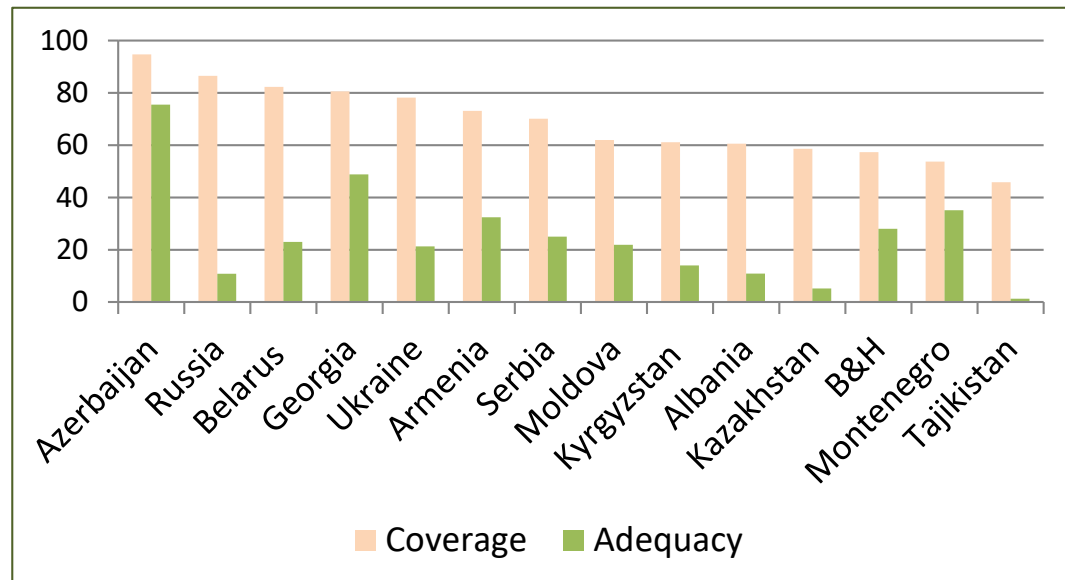
Food Access

- Poverty is the principal obstacle for people's access to food
- Uneven progress across the region
- Seasonal nature of poverty
- Rural vs. urban poverty
- Vulnerable groups
- Role of remittances

Share of income spent on food, % of total income, 2014

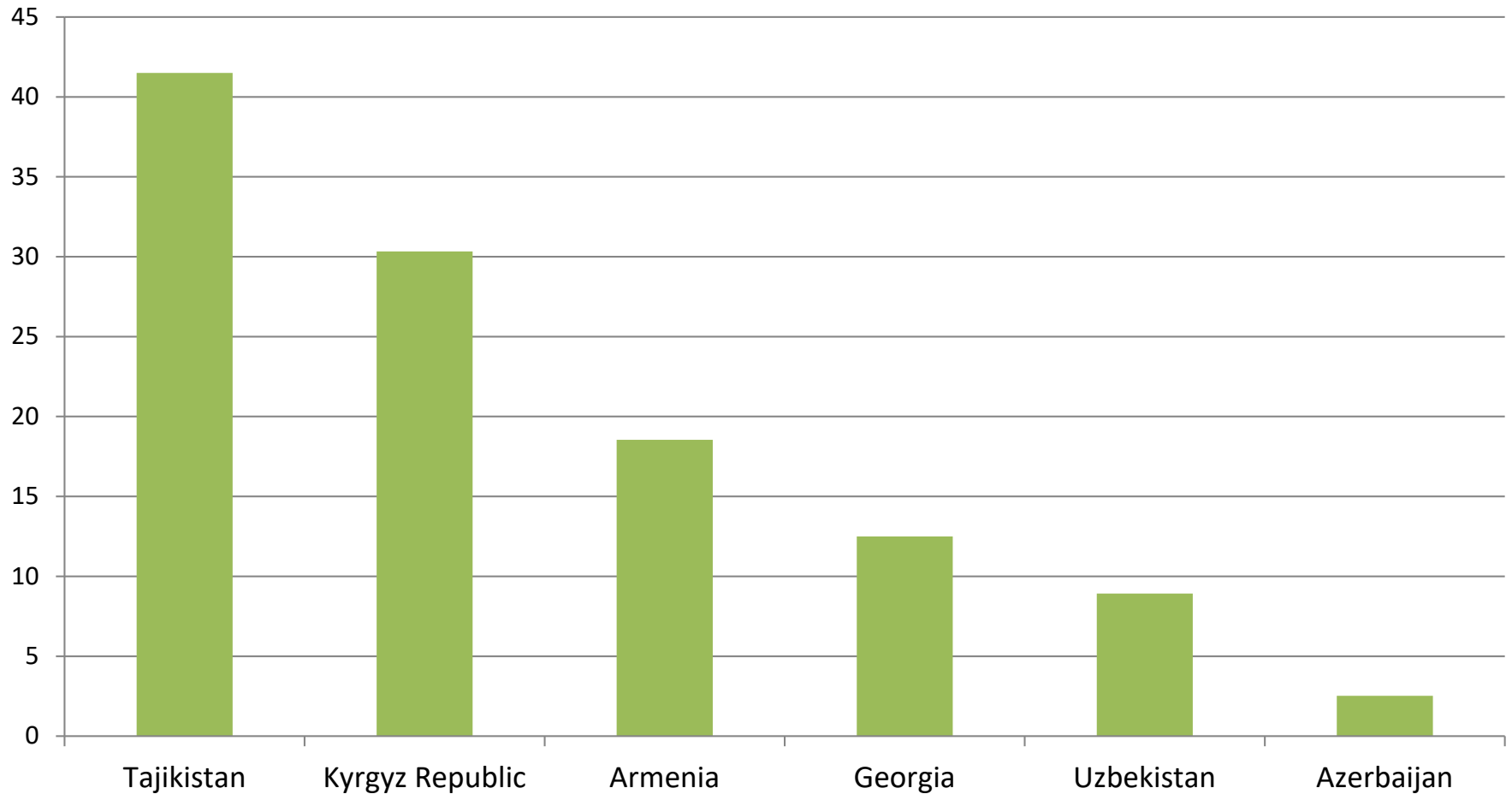


Coverage and adequacy of social protection and labor programs for the poorest



Role of remittances

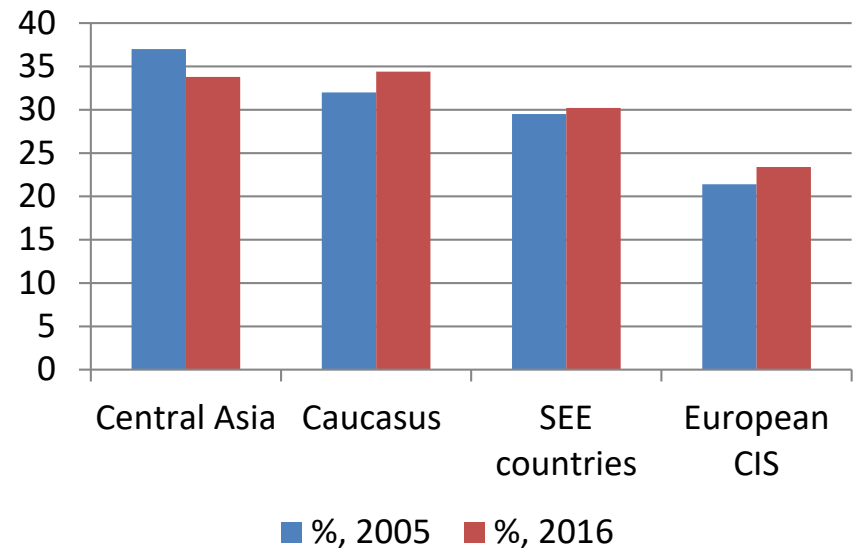
Remittances inflows as % of GDP, 2014



Source: World Bank (2015)

Successes and failures - Food utilization

- Inadequacy of vitamin A, vitamin D, folic acid, iodine, and calcium for all ages
- For adults, micronutrient deficiencies are primarily caused by inadequate zinc, iron, selenium, copper, vitamin B12, and vitamin C
- Anaemia in children
 - Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Azerbaijan, and Armenia (>30%)
 - and women of reproductive age

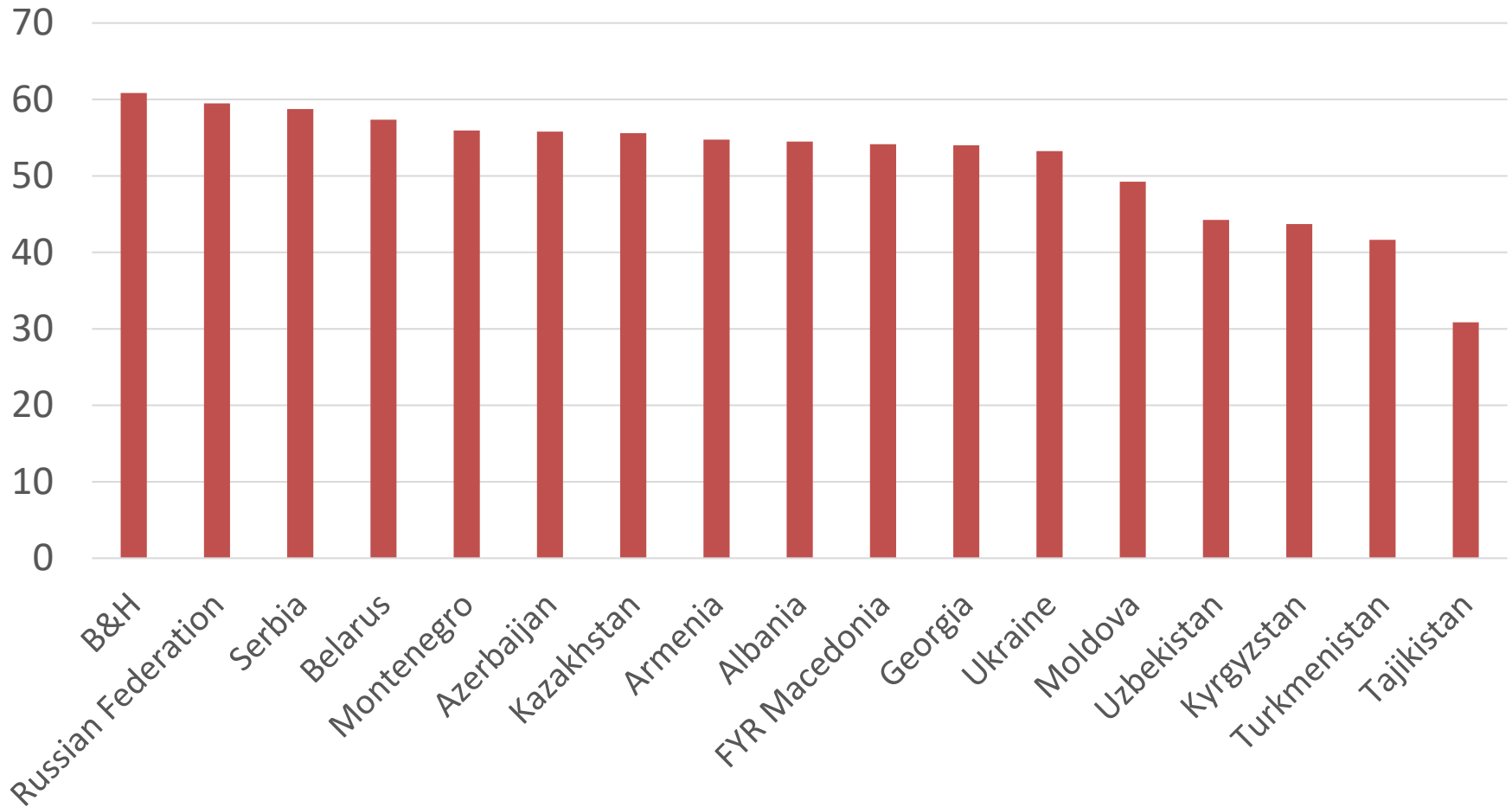


Source: WHO(2017)

Food security: New challenges

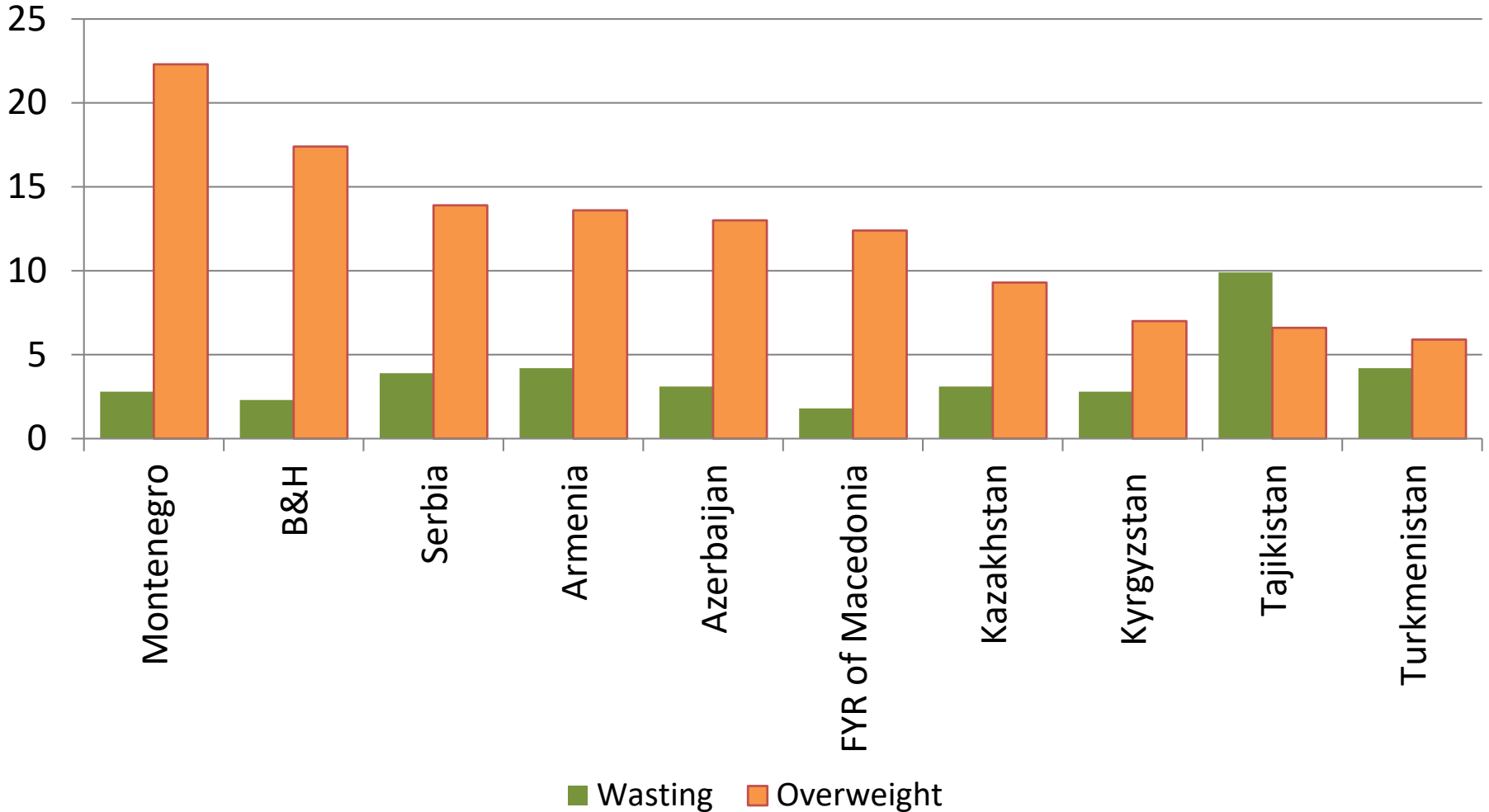
- Changing nature of food insecurity
- Evolving natural resources' constraints
- Climate change threats
- Geopolitical tensions
- Macroeconomic vulnerabilities
- Policy challenges

Overweight and obesity rates in adults, %, 2014



Source: WHO, 2014

Prevalence of wasting and overweight in children, %, 2014

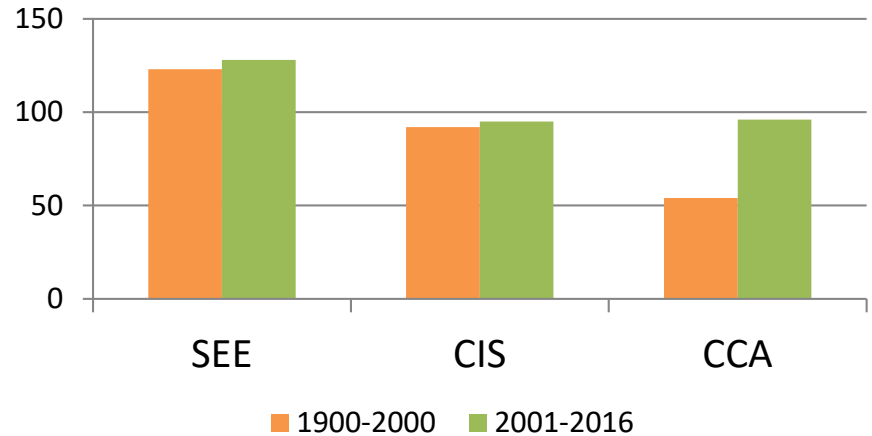


Source: WHO, 2014

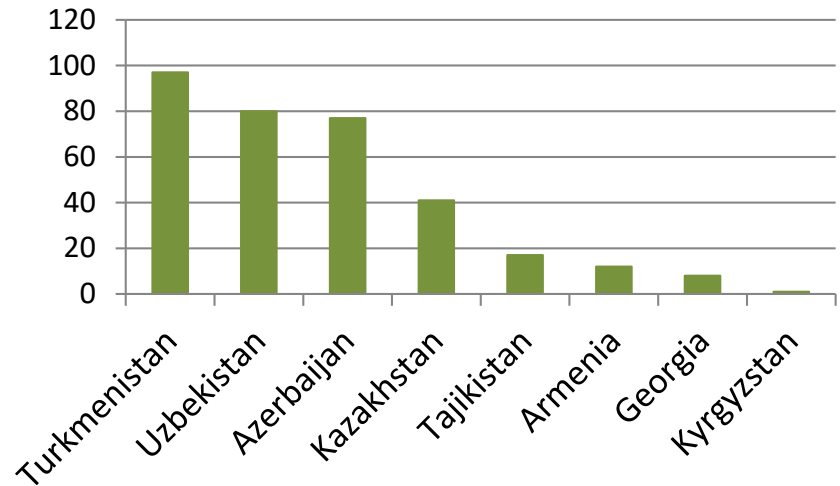
Food stability challenges

- Dependency on food imports and oil exports
- Unsustainable production practices
- Climate change processes
- Political instability & armed conflicts

Frequency of natural disasters in ECA countries, number (EM-DAT, 2015)



Water dependency ratio, %, 2015 (FAO, 2015)



SDG Target 17.14: “ by 2030 enhance policy coherence for sustainable development”

- Examples of the countries that are addressing food security in their policy frameworks in a coherent cross-sectoral approach are very limited
- In Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, the concept of food security is still primarily viewed as ‘food independence’ or ‘food self-sufficiency’
- Encouraging examples of Albania and Kyrgyzstan

Selected national food security policy documents

Albania	National Action Plan for Food and Nutrition for 2013-2020 (2012)
Armenia	Law “On Ensuring Food Security” (2002); Food Security Concept of Republic of Armenia (2011)
Azerbaijan	Law of the Azerbaijan Republic On Food Stuffs (2013)
Belarus	The Concept of National Food Security (2004)
Kyrgyzstan	Food Security Law (2008); Food Security and Nutrition Program (2015)
Russian Federation	Russian Federation Food Security Doctrine (2010)
Tajikistan	Law “On Food Security” (2010)
Turkmenistan	Law “On Food Security” (2016)

Policy challenges



Current policy environment

- Policy disconnect across four pillars of food security
- Focus on food self-sufficiency
- Trade interventions
- Protection of domestic consumers through income transfers and/or food price controls
- Limited focus on the utilization pillar
- Limited focus on the stability pillar

Re-direction of policy priorities

- Food security policy coherence
- Trade liberalization/adherence to WTO principles
- Stronger rural development focus
- Social protection policies/Safety net programs
- School feeding programs
- Much stronger focus on the utilization pillar
- Policy response to climate change and natural resources overuse

Conclusions

- Since the 1990s the ECA countries have achieved a tremendous reduction in food insecurity
- Reduction of armed conflicts and general economic growth have been two key factors for improving food security in the region
- Nevertheless, the concept of food security and nutrition remains a pertinent issue
- Food insecurity is often characterized by the triple burden of malnutrition - undernutrition, overnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies
- Implementation of the food security policies and programmes has been characterized by varying degrees of success and with different levels of cross-sectoral coordination

Thank you!