

Induced Abortion: Incidence and Trends Worldwide



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Content of Presentation

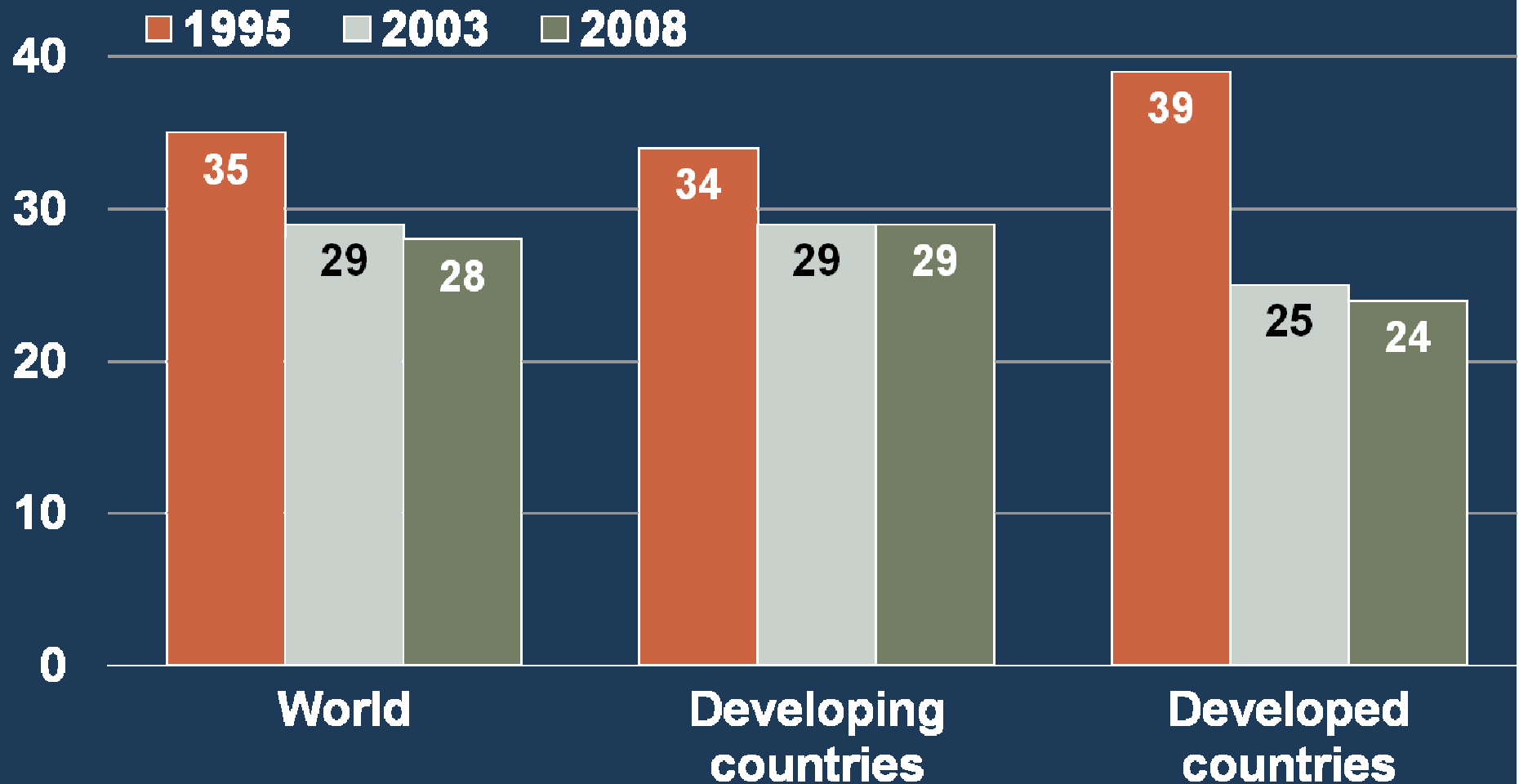
- Global, regional and subregional abortion incidence and trends since 1995
- The association between restrictive abortion laws and abortion rates
- Brief interpretation of findings in context of other research

Key messages

- The decline in abortion has stalled. This stall coincides with a plateau in contraceptive uptake.
- The lowest abortion rates are in Europe.
- Restrictive abortion laws are not linked to lower abortion rates.
- Greater investment in family planning is needed to reduce unintended pregnancy and abortions that result.

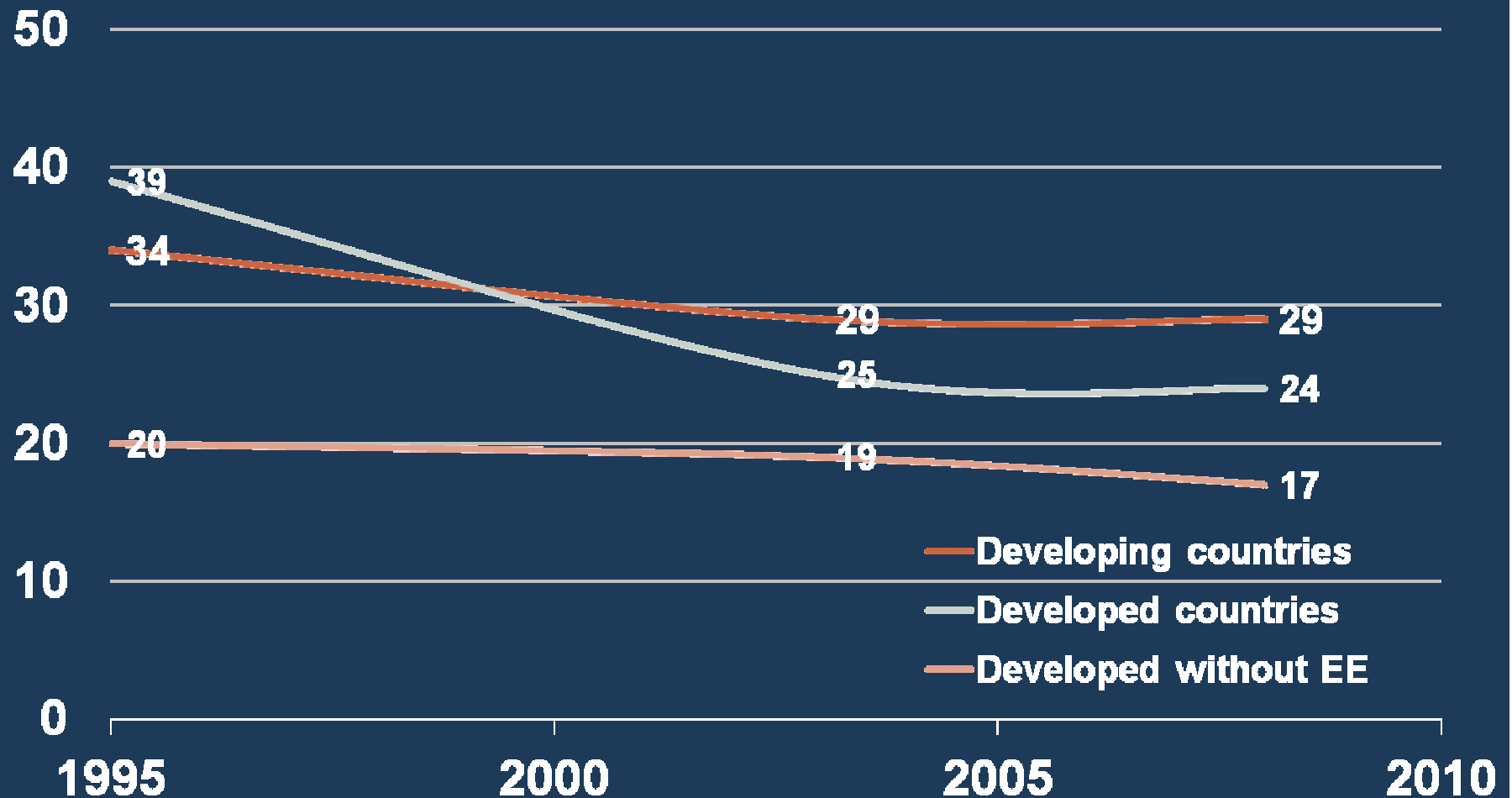
The global decline in the abortion rate has stalled

Abortions per 1,000 women aged 15-44

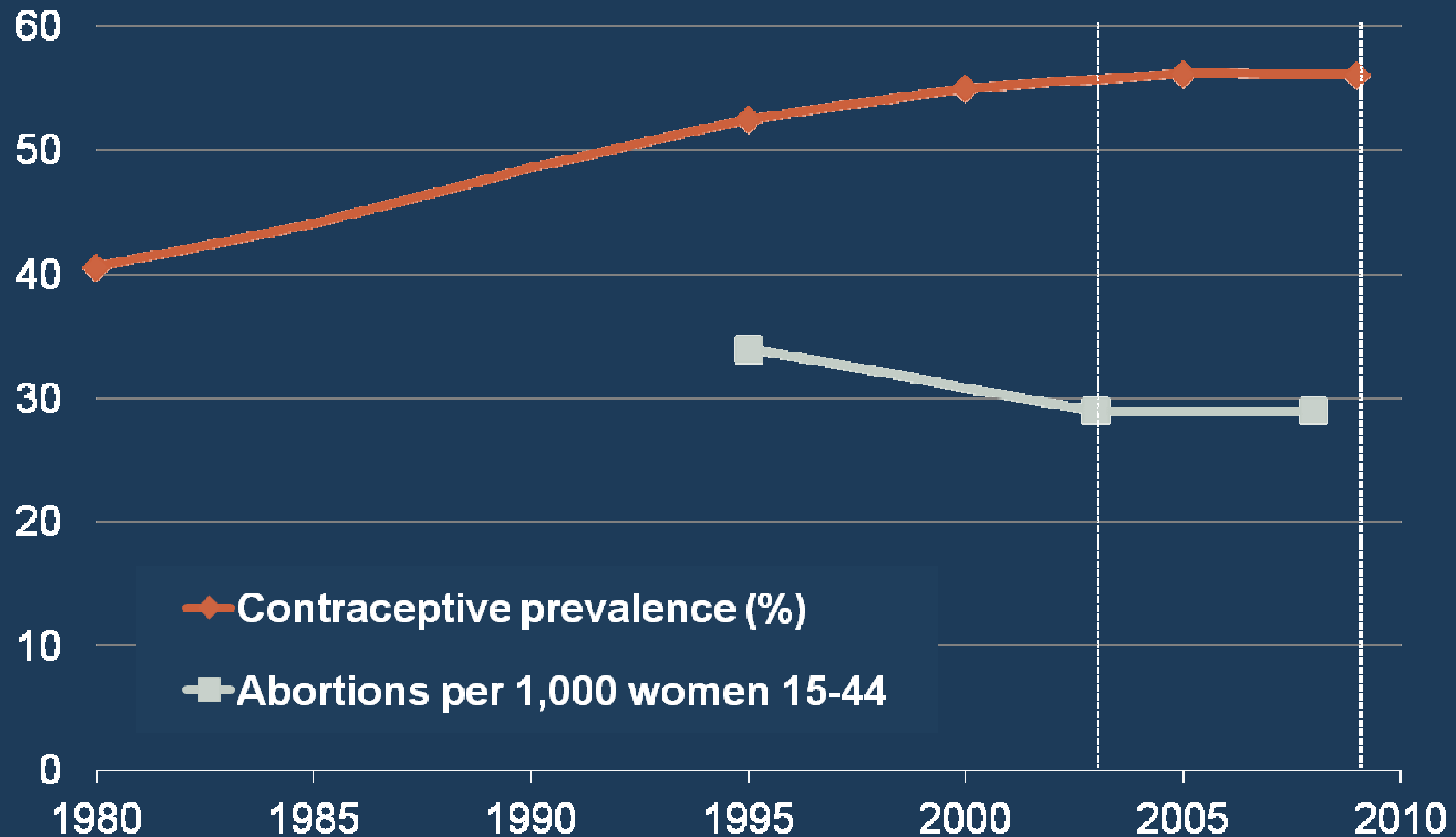


The abortion rate is lower in developed countries than in developing countries

Abortions per 1,000 women aged 15-44

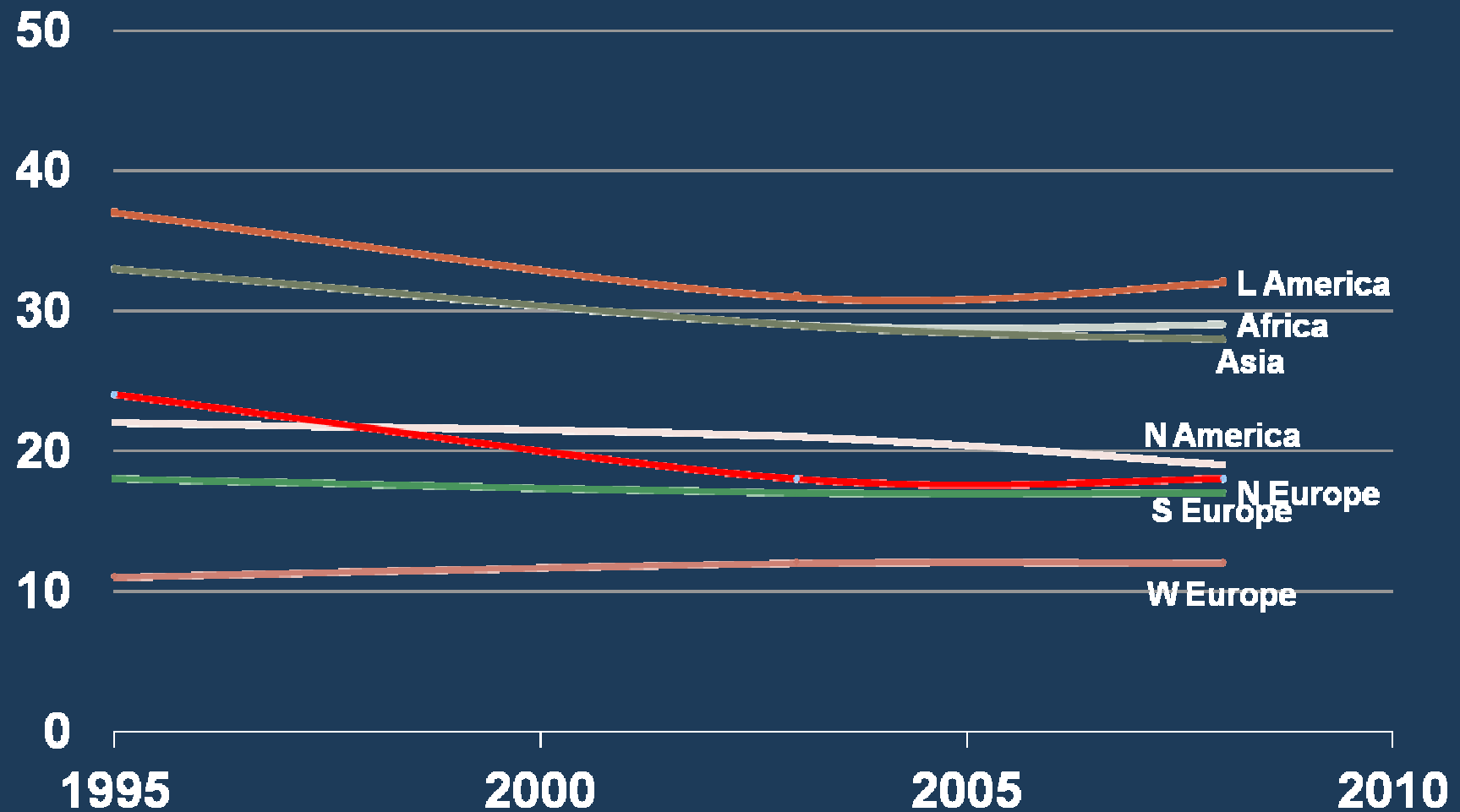


The stall in the global abortion decline coincides with a plateau in contraceptive use



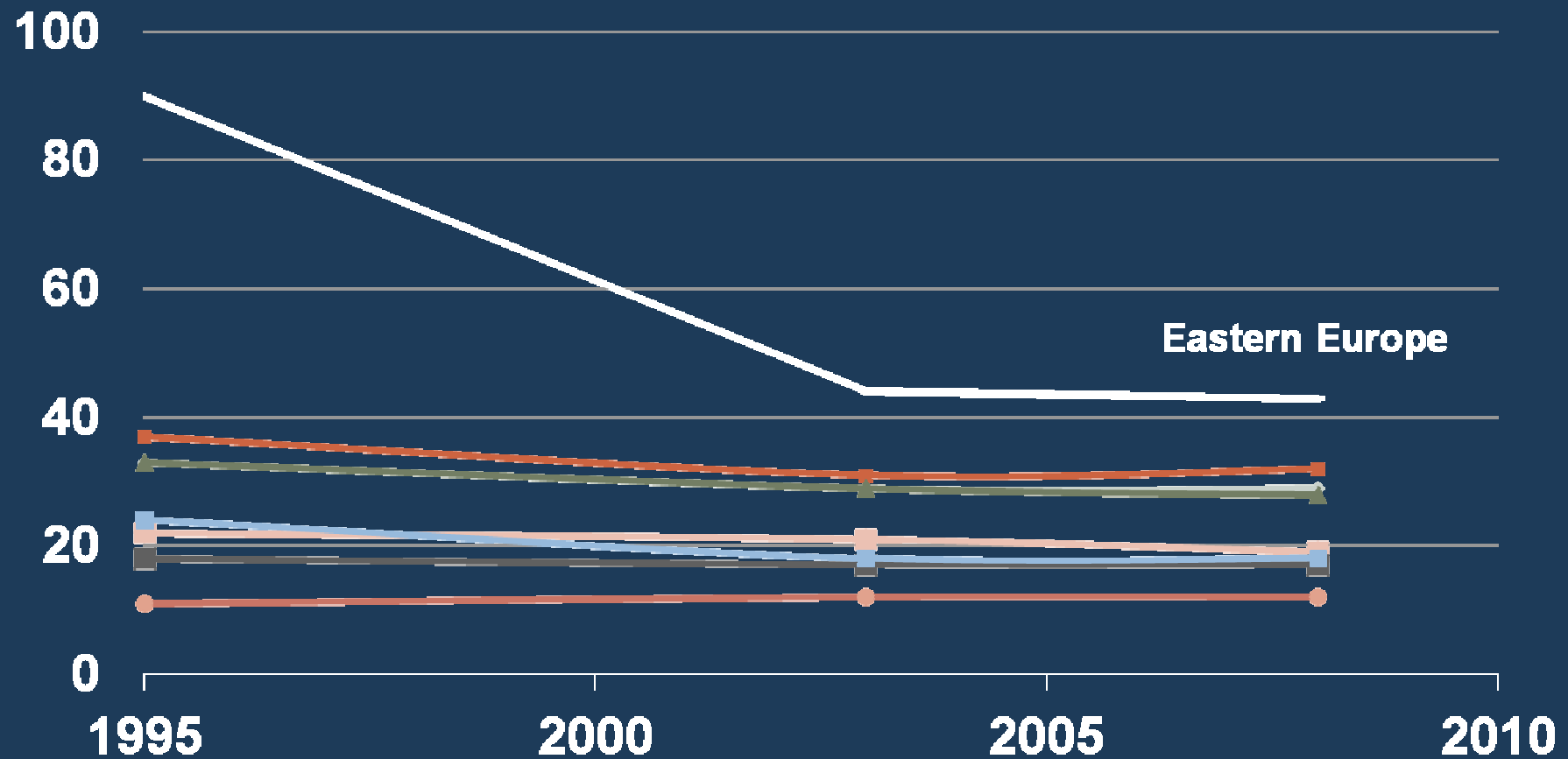
Regional abortion levels vary

Abortions per 1,000 women aged 15-44



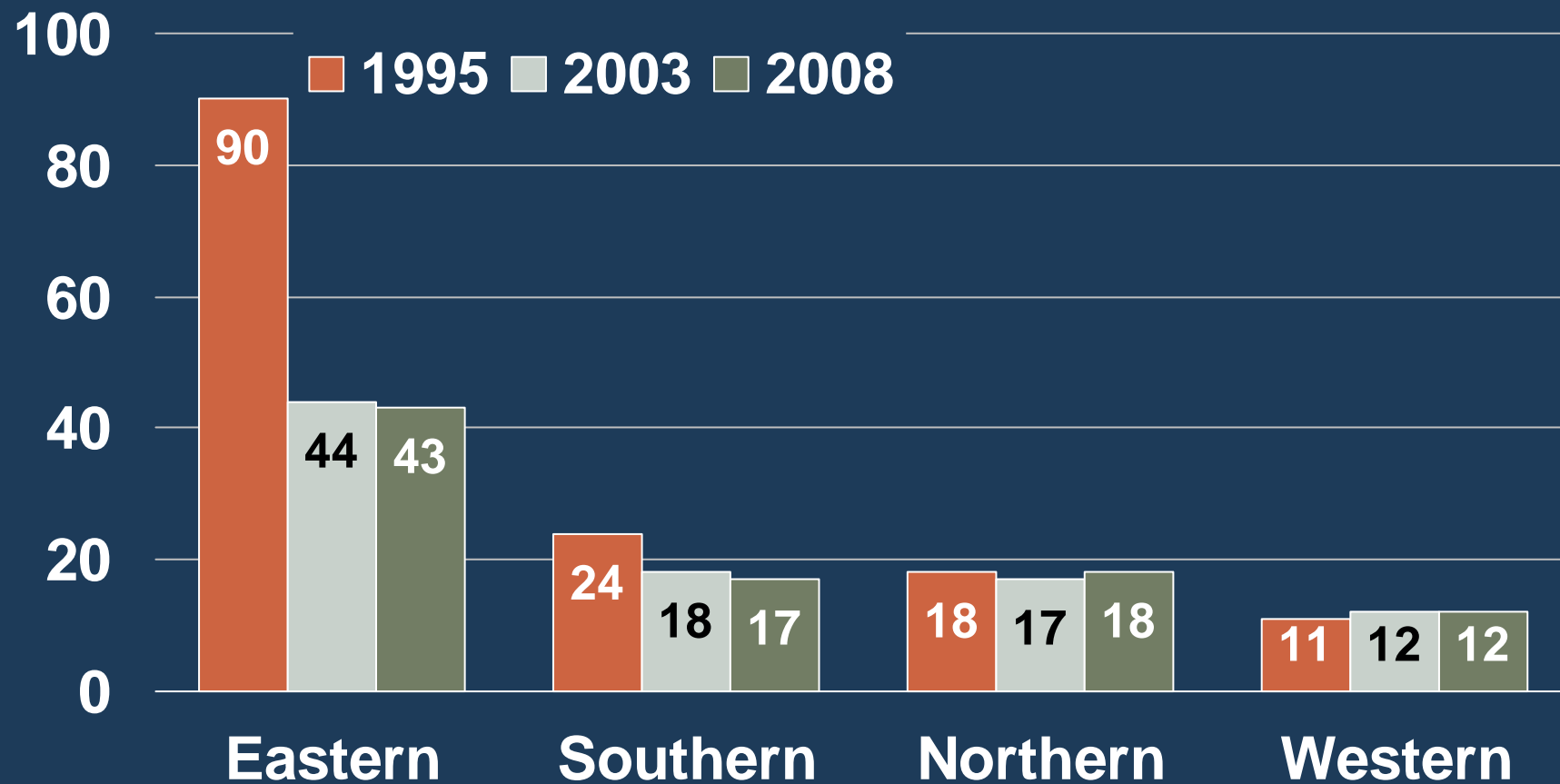
The highest regional abortion rate is in Eastern Europe

Abortions per 1,000 women aged 15-44



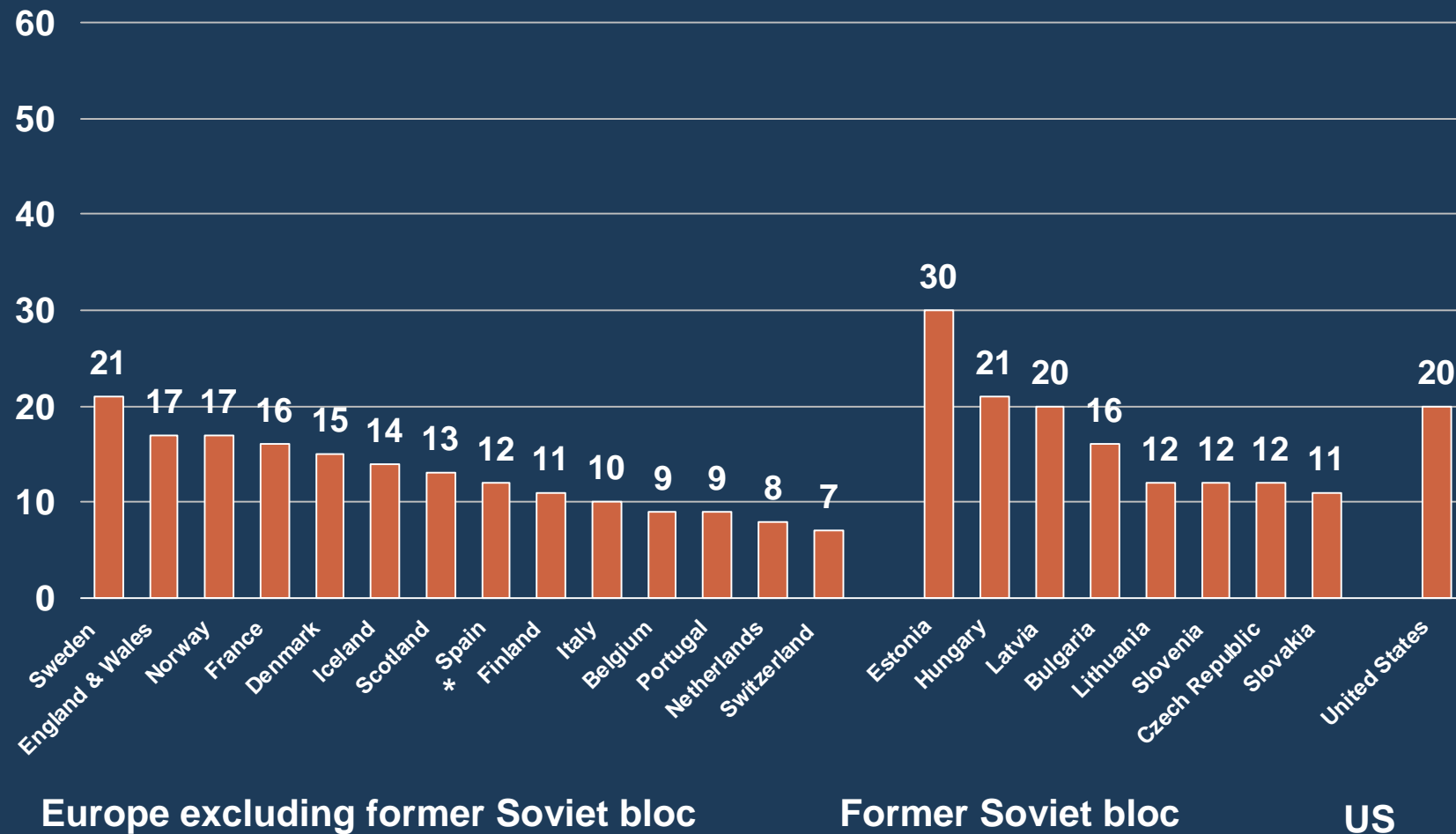
European Subregions

Abortions per 1,000 women aged 15-44



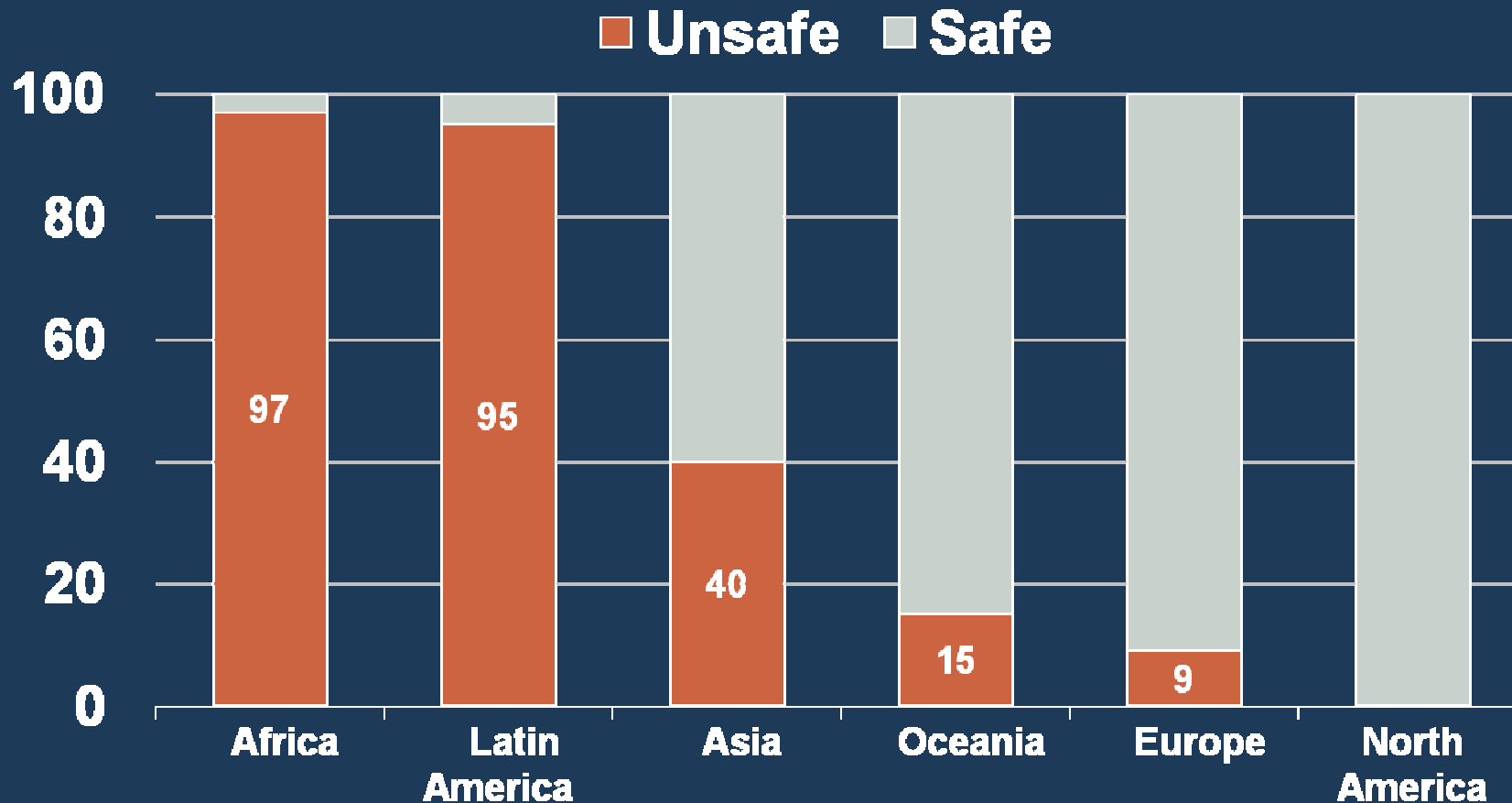
Abortion incidence is low in Spain and it is relatively high in the US

Abortions per 1,000 women aged 15-44, 2008



Virtually all abortions in Africa and the Latin America region are unsafe

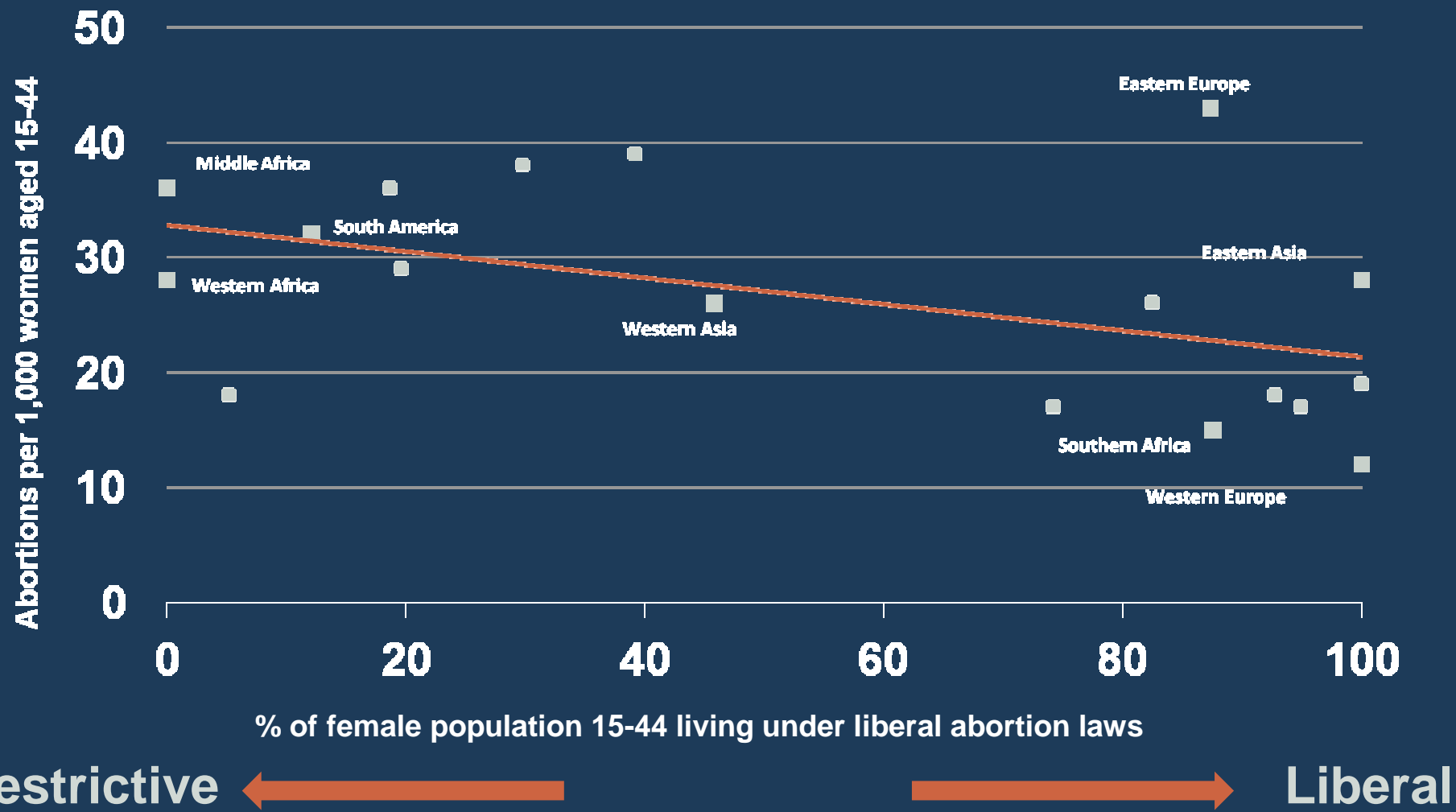
% of abortions



Consequences of Unsafe Abortion

- 13% of all maternal deaths are the result of unsafe abortion.
- 8.5 million women experience complications that require medical attention each year; 3 million do not receive care.
- Complications include excessive blood loss, infection, septic shock and perforation of internal organs.

Abortion rates are lower in subregions with liberal abortion laws



Law reforms in developing countries have been followed by declines in morbidity and mortality

- **South Africa (1997)**: annual number of abortion-related deaths decreased by 91% after the law was liberalized.
- **Nepal (2002/2004)**: In eight districts: abortion complications as a proportion of all of maternal illnesses in facilities decreased by 48%.
- **Ethiopia (2005)**: In one large hospital: abortion complications per 100,000 live births decreased by about 70%.

Summary

- Abortion declines and increases in contraceptive use have stalled in nearly all world regions.
- Abortion rates are very low in many parts of Europe, where most abortions are legal.
- Restrictive abortion laws are not associated with low abortion rates.
- Without increased investment in family planning, the plateau in abortion incidence is likely to persist.

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**For questions or additional
information:**



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