



Integrating a Gender Lens in Free Trade Agreements : Reality of Impacts in Practice and its Relevance during COVID-19 Trade Disruptions

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The Business Case: Gender Equality Benefits Economy

GDP GROWTH BY 2025 WITH GENDER PARITY IN THE WORKFORCE
ALL REGIONS



Source: McKinsey Global Institute

International Instruments Acknowledge this Relation....



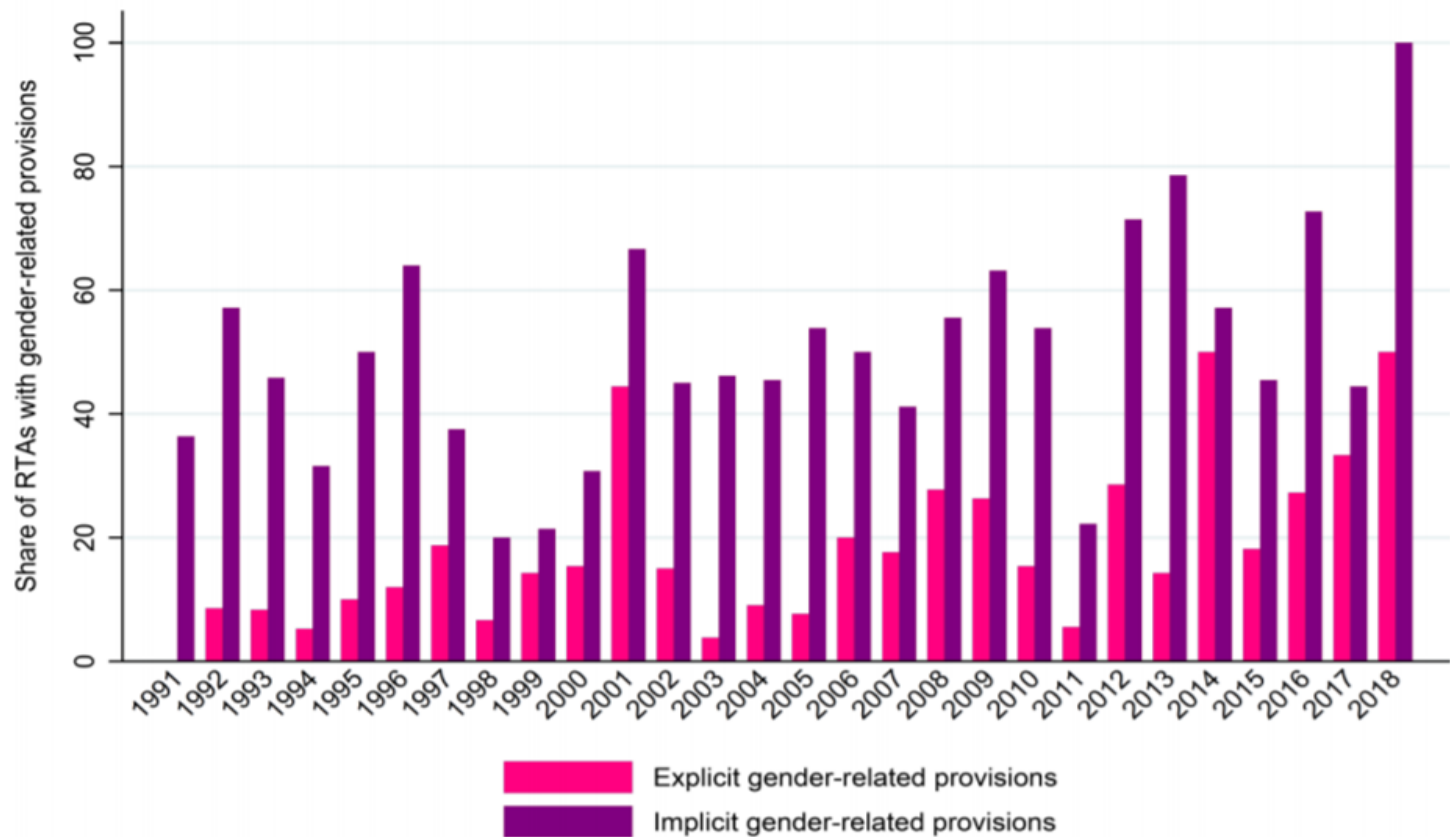
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Percentage of RTAs with explicit and implicit gender-related provisions

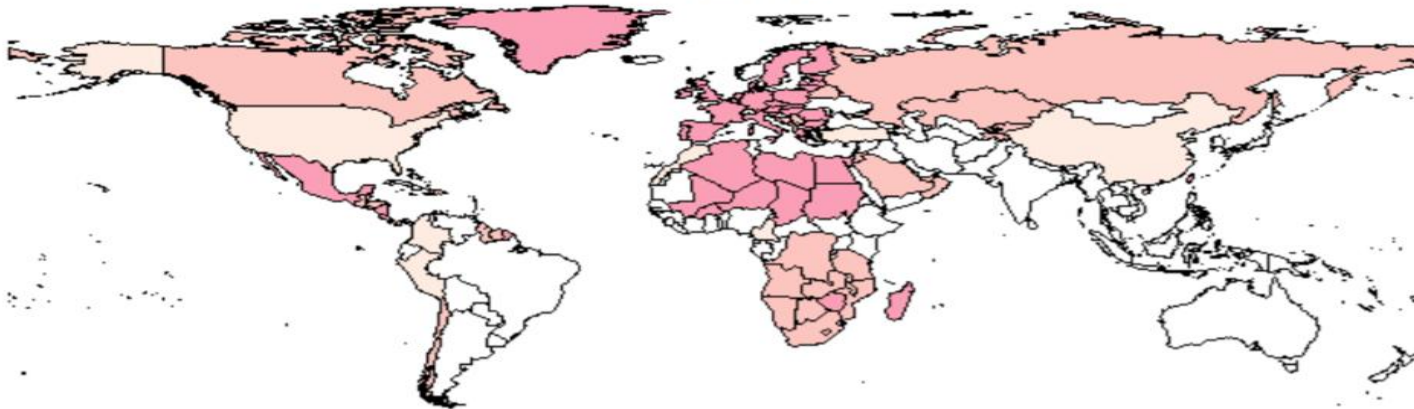
Source: Author's calculations.

Note: The total number of RTAs with gender-related provision per year is the sum of RTAs incorporating gender-related provisions that entered into force that year. Figures are not cumulative. Implicit gender-related provisions refer to provisions addressing human rights, vulnerable groups and the social dimension of sustainable development, including labour discrimination, fair trade and corporate social responsibility without any explicit reference to gender.

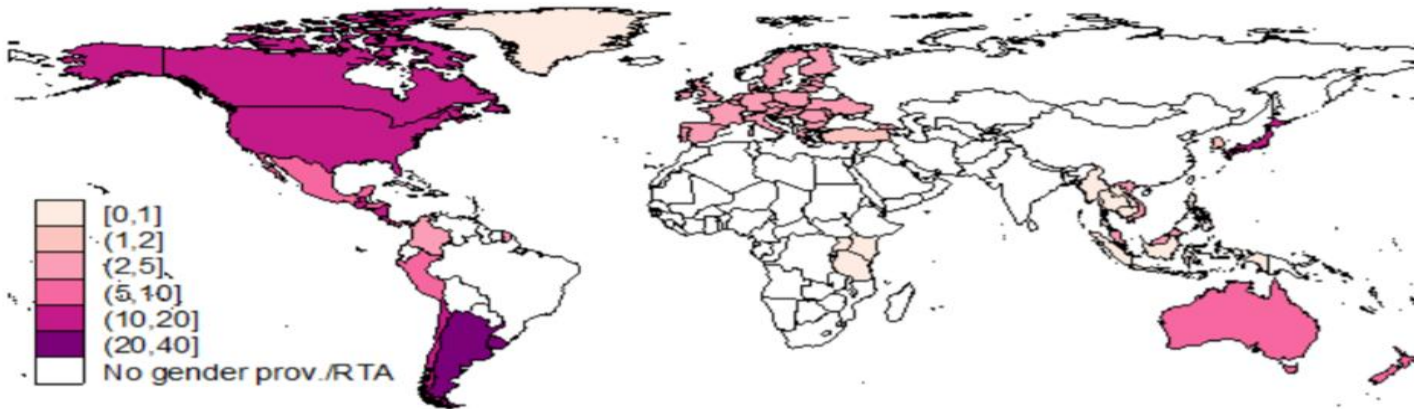
Source:
WTO Economic Research
and Stats Division 2018

Average Number of Gender-related Provisions in RTAs by country

2000-2009






2010-2018



1. What is happening here?
2. Why is it happening?
3. What could be the hesitations?

1. Approach: Measuring Gender-Responsiveness of FTAs: ITC's Maturity Framework

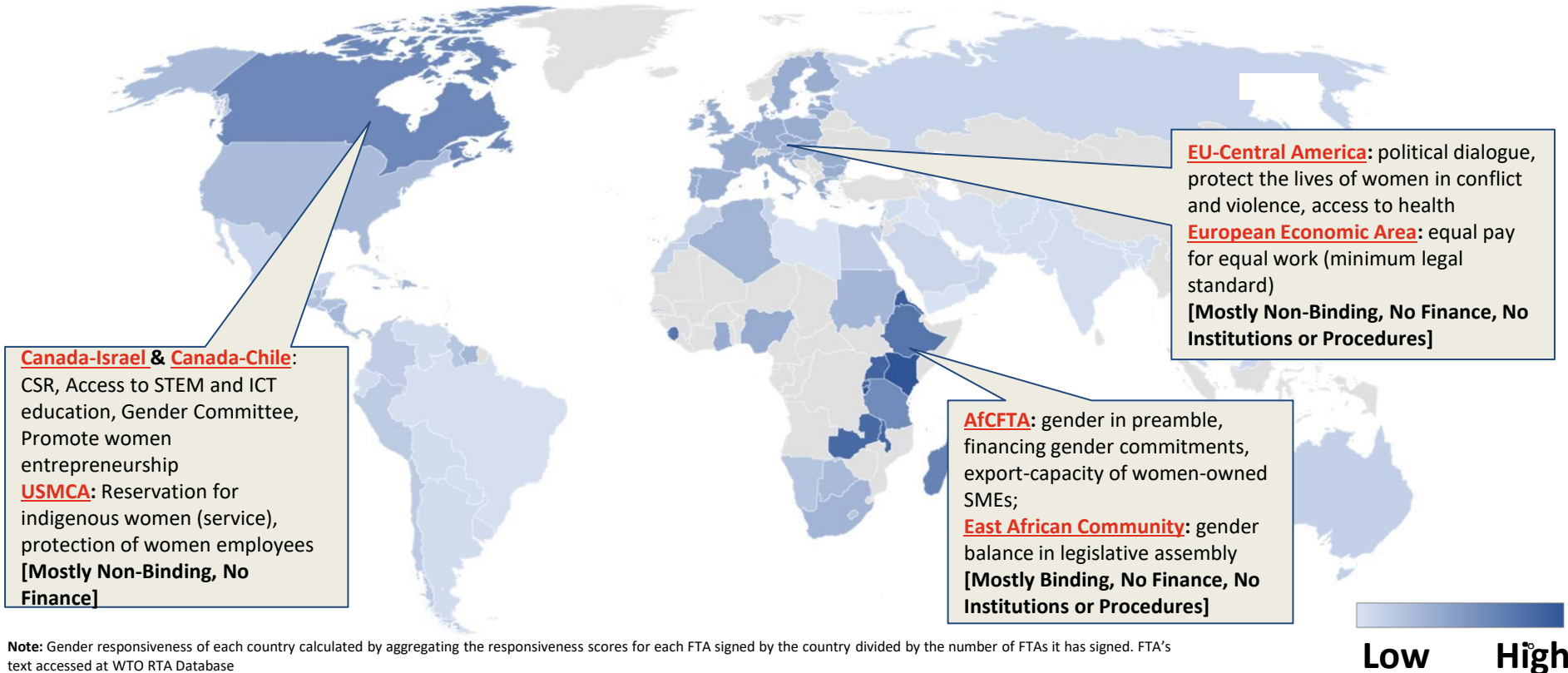
Category	Definition	Dimensions	
 <p><i>Awareness</i></p>	<p>This category reflects parties' awareness and the importance they assign to the incorporation of gender concerns in the given free trade agreement (FTA).</p>	<p>1. Frequency of Relevant Provisions</p>	<p>2. Location of Relevant Provisions</p>
 <p><i>Affirmative Action</i></p>	<p>This category reflects whether parties to the given FTA consider or commit to any affirmative action to incorporate gender concerns.</p>	<p>3. Affirmations and Reaffirmations</p>	
 <p><i>Enforcement</i></p>	<p>This category reflects whether parties to the given FTA consider or commit to the robust enforcement of gender-components included in the FTA.</p>	<p>4. Cooperation Activities</p>	<p>5. Institutional Arrangement</p>
		<p>6. Procedural Arrangements</p>	<p>7. Review and Funding</p>
		<p>8. Settlement of Disputes</p>	<p>9. Minimum Legal Standards</p>
		<p>10. Waivers, Reservations & Exceptions</p>	

Limited - FTA at this level is either completely or close to being gender-blind or gender-neutral in nature as it fails to mainstream gender concerns.

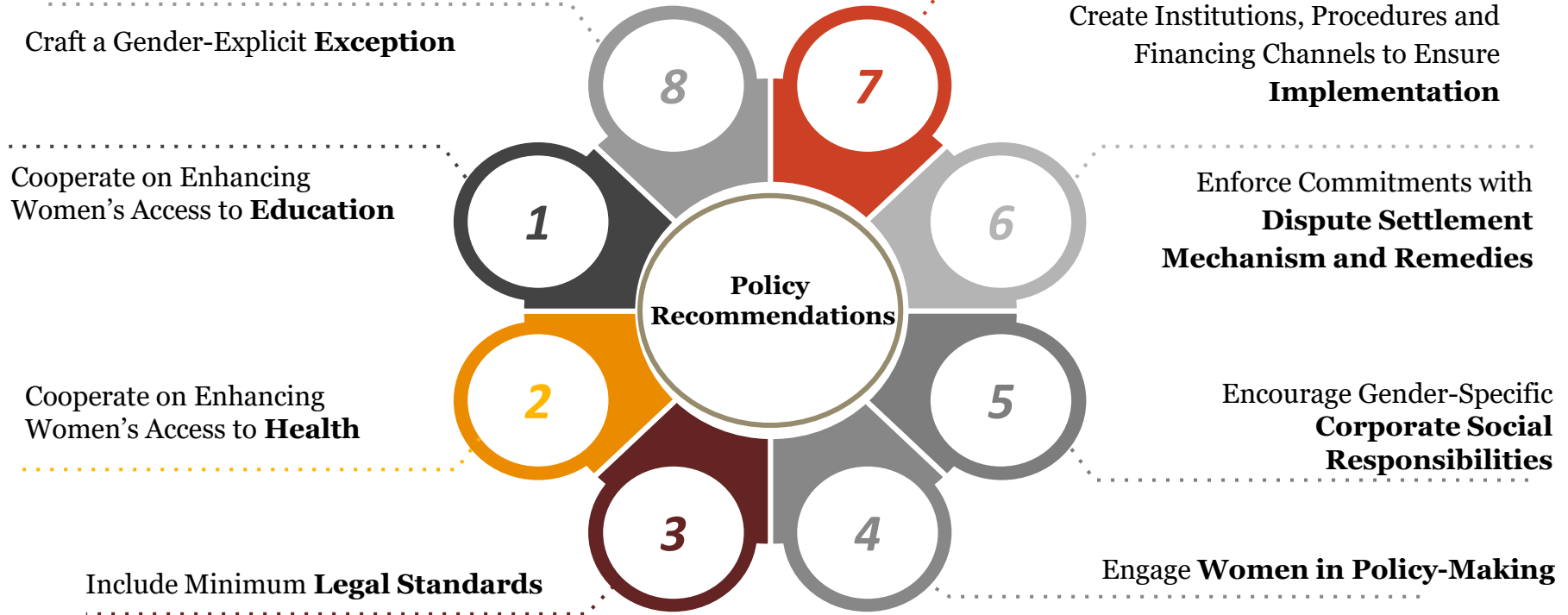
Evolving - FTA at this level employs some best practices for mainstreaming gender concerns, but it has a significant scope for further improvement.

Advanced - FTA at this level achieves the highest level of maturity in the way it mainstreams gender concerns with the use of best practices for incorporating gender concerns, and there is no or only a negligible scope for further improvement.

2. Results: Canada and East Africa are Pioneers, EU Follows...



3. What Next? Preparing FTAs to Reboot Inclusive Economy post-COVID-19



Three big questions:

- 1 | Many new FTAs (such as USMCA) contain highly enforceable labor commitments. If this can be negotiated, why are countries still reluctant to include enforceable gender-related commitments such as equal pay for equal work?
- 2 | If we can have exceptions to protect public morals, or animal health or life, or even plant health or life in almost 100% of existing FTAs, why can't we negotiate an exception to reduce gender inequality?
- 3 | Even if gender provisions are not made enforceable, wouldn't they remain a distant reality if parties do not craft procedures and institutions or mobilize funds to put these commitments to action?

iThanks!

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