

Gender equality, employment and green transition: policies for inclusive development

El Salvador in the «Fair transition energy and green job creation» study

COUNTRY
EL SALVADOR



As a signatory country of the Paris Agreement at COP 21 in 2015, El Salvador has demonstrated its commitment to a fair energy transition and the integration of women into the labour market through the development of public policies and strategies to address socio-economic differences and climate change issues. Salvadoran women face high levels of informal employment and labour market access despite being 55 per cent of the working-age population, with a large female population of 34,7% devoted to home care and unpaid work, which makes the data on the wage gap show a 25% disparity between men's and women's wages. The transition of key sectors of the country towards an economically sustainable model based on the NDC set at COP 21, presents opportunities for the economic revival of Salvadoran women, it could also see its quality of life enhanced thanks to the Climate Change plans that seek to promote development and green employment in the country.

1. Public Policy Review

1.1. National policies for a just and energy transition

* [National Plan for Climate Change](#): presented in June 2015 and reformulated for the period 2022-2026, it also includes concrete environmental protection measures, specific components for the transformation of agricultural practices, for the promotion of renewable energy and energy security and urban development, and a national climate change training and conditioning programme.

* [National SLCP Methane Plan and Roadmap](#): project developed by the MARN in 2024 to strengthen institutional capacities when developing policies to mitigate emissions and reduce pollution, directly related to the just transition and fair energy transition.

* [Institutional Policy on Equality and Non-Discrimination](#): developed for the period 2024-2026 within international and national regulatory frameworks, proposes as one of its main lines of action the closing of the wage gap and the integration of women in the formal labour

market, seeking decent work with a gender and inclusion approach, Although it does not integrate its vision into a horizon of fair transition and green job creation.

* [Institutional Policy on Gender Equality and Equity](#): developed by the Salvadoran Institute for the Integral Development of Children and Adolescents in 2015 and updated in 2022; promotes the integration of a gender approach in the workplace to close gaps and meet the country's commitments to equal education, ratification of international treaties such as CEDAW or the Beijing Declaration.

* [National Energy Policy 2020-2050](#): developed by the National Council for Energy of the Government of El Salvador, provides a series of key actions for the time horizon that includes education in energy transition, Employment generation and universal access to greener, more efficient energy.

* [Coalition of Women and Climate Change](#): awareness campaign developed by UN Women El Salvador in 2023 to promote climate adaptation actions with a gender focus.



1.2. Planning tools and instruments

- * [Nationally Determined Contributions of El Salvador \(NDC\)](#): published regularly and with its last edition made in the year 2021, this document shows the political commitment of the country to the objectives assigned in the 2015 Paris Agreement. Provides relevant data on the country's geographical, environmental, economic and climatic conditions as well as concrete actions taken to mitigate impacts in sectors such as energy, agriculture, etc. in line with the SDGs, including gender equality.
- * [Women's Development Credit Line](#): a programme to finance Salvadoran women entrepreneurs in

strategic productive sectors, including those engaged in a process of fair transition and green job creation.

- * **Iniciativa MIPYMEs Verdes II**: impulse of the energy transition in the Salvadoran industrial sectors powered by the BCIE, the EU and the German cooperation agency (KfW), supporting the COREN Regional Energy Congress held in 2024.
- * **Statistical and monitoring system for equality**: a tool to monitor the progress made in terms of gender equality by the plans and projects carried out by the institutions, including the inclusion of women in the labour market and their economic autonomy.

- * **Monitoring the implementation of NDCs in El Salvador**: project launched in 2018 by the International and Ibero-American Foundation for Administration and Public Policies - FIIAPP within the framework of the EUROCLIMA+ project for the establishment of a virtual system of indicators that allows the MARN of El Salvador to monitor the actions of the NDC under the Paris Agreement.
- * **Gender units**: they operate under different names (Gender Equity Unit, Gender Unit, etc.) in various Salvadoran institutions such as the [Consumer Ombudsman's Office](#), the [Ministry of Education](#), the [National Academy of Public Security](#) or the [Directorate of Environmental Health](#). They are



responsible for managing policies to prevent and project workplace harassment and gender-based violence, as well as internal compliance with the Institutional Gender Policy.

1.3. Inclusion of the gender dimension in public policies

Although El Salvador has its own policies for the promotion and defence of gender equality, which include labour-oriented components, the gender perspective has not yet become a cross-cutting element in the plans, Policies and programmes for a just transition and the creation of green jobs carried out, although it is understood that women are included in the impacts expected for the whole of Salvadoran society of the national plans, NDCs and road maps. Key strategies for integrating women into the

new green economic model include:

- ▶ Development of institutional policies to integrate gender equality and non-discrimination in all instances of public life in El Salvador.
- ▶ Financing instruments for women entrepreneurs.
- ▶ Establishment of operational gender units in various government ministries.

2. Analysis of opportunities and potential

2.1. Identification of policies that promote the employment of women in green jobs

In the case of El Salvador, there is no specific reference to the integration of women into green employment in any of the policies

currently implemented; however, there are support programmes for women which, Indirectly, they promote the integration of women into the green jobs labour market:

- ▶ **Women's Development Credit Line.**
- ▶ **Institutional policy on equality and non-discrimination.**
- ▶ **Institutional policy on gender equality and equity.**

2.2. Recommendations to improve the inclusion of gender in public policies

The review of policies, tools and indicators developed in El Salvador for the promotion of fair transition and green job creation, as well as gender equality and women's economic empowerment, show promising results demonstrating the country's involvement in meeting the Paris Agreement commitments on environment and fair energy transition, on the one hand, and equity and non-discrimination of women in domestic settings, employees, the public and management. It is recommended to design specific policies and programmes that integrate the gender approach in green job creation.

To advance gender mainstreaming and a just transition, it is recommended:

- ▶ Develop an integrated national policy that combines the



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creation of green jobs in line with the national NDC integrating a gender approach that includes financial, educational, social and training aspects in matters of fair transition and green employment for Salvadoran women.

- ▶ Continue to implement and improve gender equality monitoring mechanisms and NDC compliance, integrating the progress made in integrating women into green employment.

Practices to highlight

Women’s Development Credit Line as an economic stimulus mechanism for the creation or strengthening of women-led enterprises that can become creators of green female employment in sectors relevant to the just transition in the country.

Institutionalized gender units as guarantors of the implementation of institutional equality policies and the integration of gender equality into governmental practices and the internal functioning of ministries and subordinate institutions.





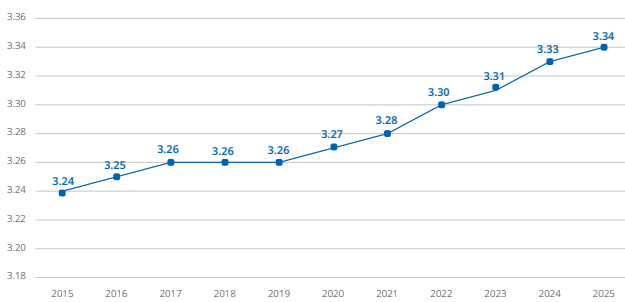
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3. Statistical data

A. Demographic data

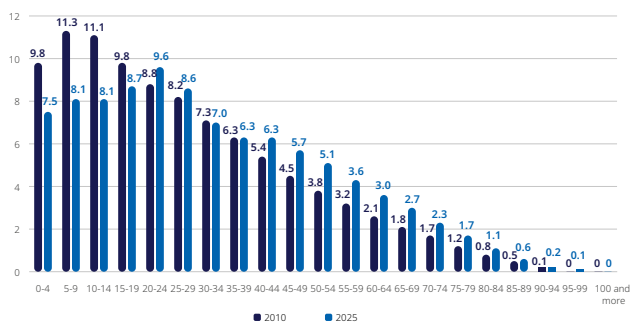
Population distribution statistics

Number of woman, millions

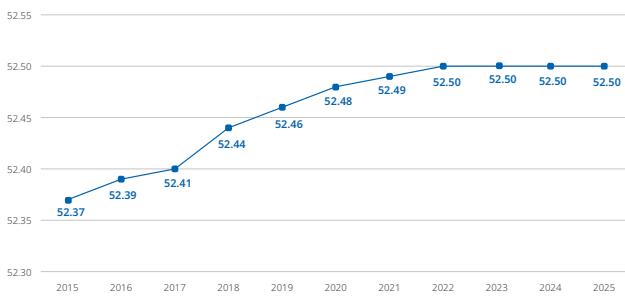


Age distribution statistics

Age distribution of the female population

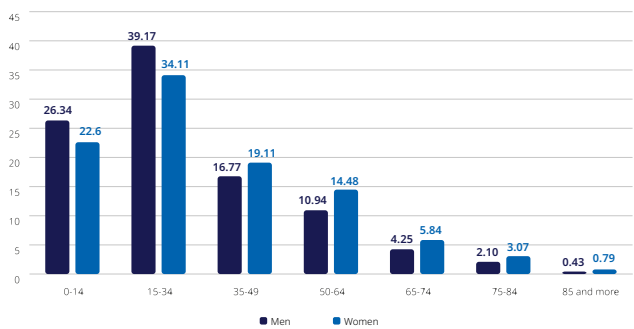
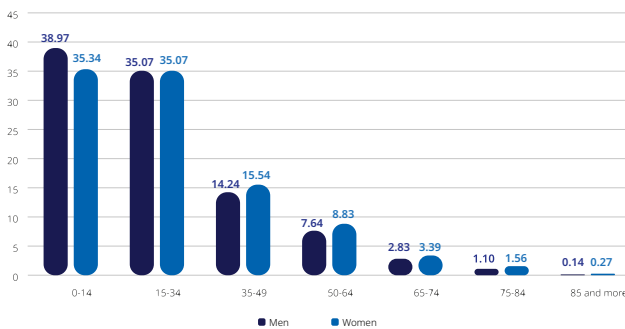


Percentage of woman



Population distribution statistics by age

Age distribution by sex, percentage





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Ages	Women			Men		
	2000	2025	Difference in percentage points	2000	2025	Difference in percentage points
0-14	35.34	22.61	-12.73	38.97	26.34	-12.63
15-34	35.07	34.11	-0.96	35.07	38.17	4.1
35-49	15.54	19.11	3.57	14.24	16.77	2.53
50-64	8.83	14.48	5.65	7.64	10.94	3.30
65-74	3.39	5.84	2.45	2.83	4.25	1.42
75-84	1.56	3.07	1.51	1.1	2.10	1.00
85 and more	0.27	0.79	0.52	0.14	0.43	0.29

Interpretation of demographic data

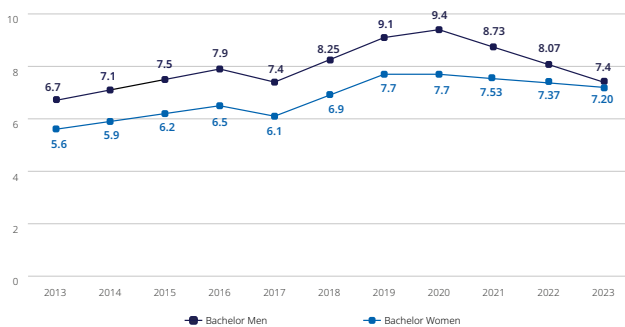
Distribution of the population by age and sex (2000 vs. 2025): El Salvador is undergoing a marked demographic transition. In 2000, 35.3% of women and 39.0% of men were in the 0-14 age group. By 2025, these figures will have fallen to 22.6% and 26.3% respectively, reflecting a fall of more than 12 percentage points. At the same time, the proportion of people in older age groups is increasing considerably. Women in the 50-64 age group will increase from 8.8% to 14.5%, and those in the 65-74 age group from 3.4% to 5.8%. This projects an increase in requirements for health services, pensions and long-term care.

Evolution of the percentage of women in the total population (2015-2025): the proportion of women has shown a slight upward trend, standing at around 52.5% in 2025. The greater presence of women in old age emphasizes the need to design differentiated public policies for ageing with a gender focus.

B. Education level data

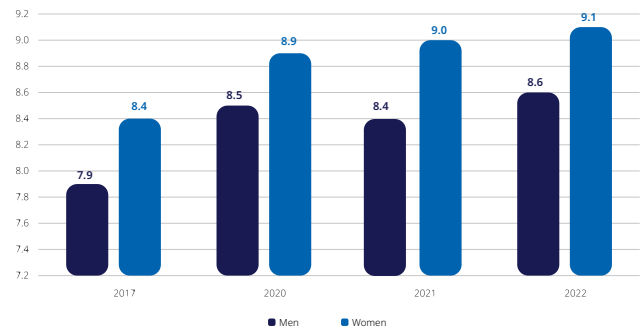
Educational attainment statistics

Percentage of bachelor, population 25+



Statistics on years of study

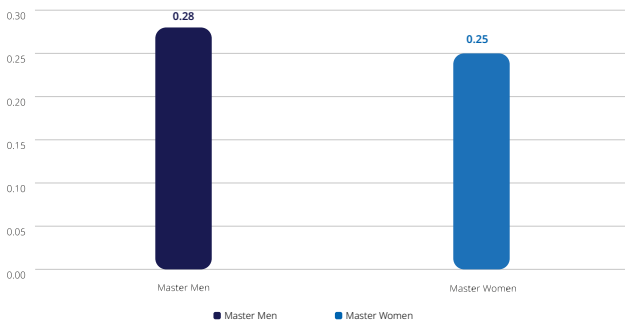
Years of education



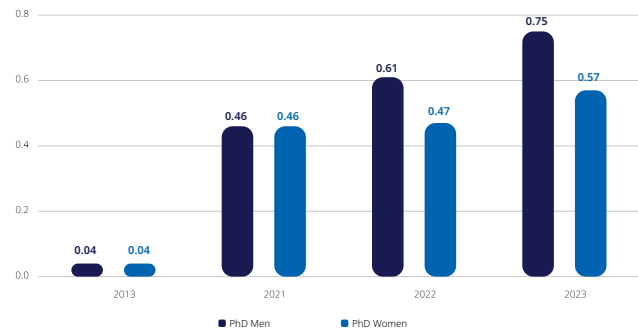


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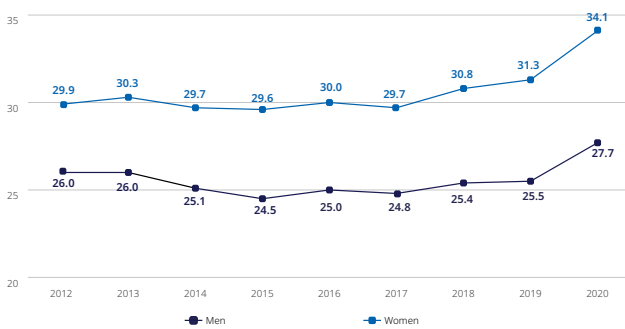
Percentage of master, population 25+



Percentage of PhD, population 25+



Gross tertiary enrolment rate, percentage



Interpretation of training data

Access to tertiary education: gross tertiary enrolment rates show sustained growth. In 2020, female enrolment exceeded 34%, while male enrolment was below 31%. This progress consolidates a relative advantage of women in access to higher education.

Level of education attained (bachelor's, master's, doctorate): since 2013, women have maintained a sustained advantage in obtaining bachelor's degrees. In masters, the gap also favours women since 2021, while at the doctoral (PhD) level, men continue to lead, albeit with very small gaps.

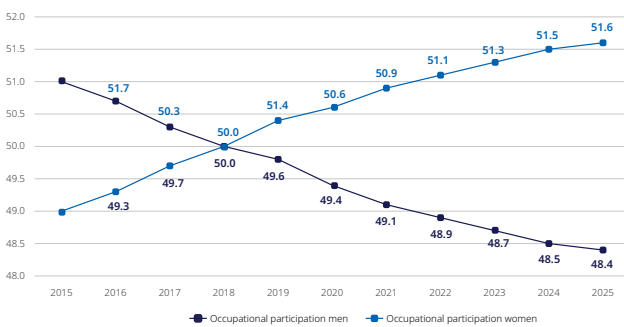
Average years of formal education: the average years of schooling have improved for both sexes. In 2023, women reached 8.73 years, surpassing men at 8.07 years.



C. Employment data

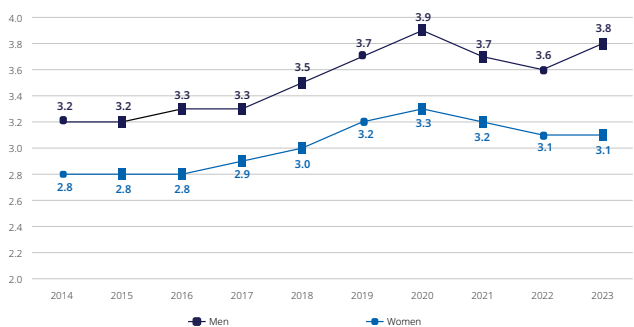
Employment statistics

Economic participation rate, percentage

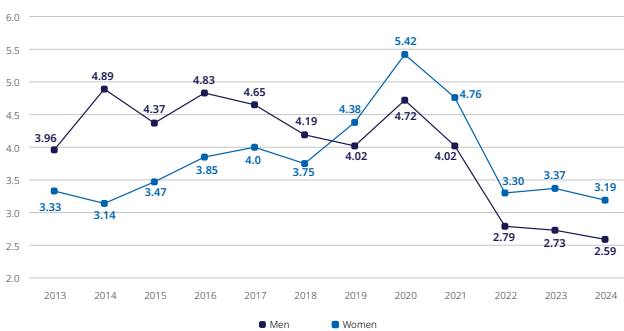


Income Statistics

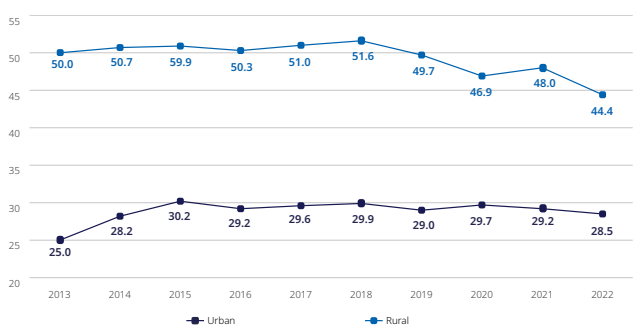
Average income, in multiples of the poverty line



Unemployment rate, percentage



Percentage of adult women dedicated exclusively to unpaid work



Interpretation of employment data

Economic participation rate: women have a lower labour participation rate. By 2025, 48.4 per cent of women are projected to participate in the labour market compared with 51.6 per cent of men.

Unpaid work: in 2022, 30.2% of rural women and 28.5% of urban women reported full-time unpaid work. These figures reflect the unequal burden of care, in contrast to the low incidence of the phenomenon among men.

Unemployment rate: the female unemployment rate has been consistently higher than the male unemployment rate. In 2023, unemployment was 4.72% for women and 3.19% for men.

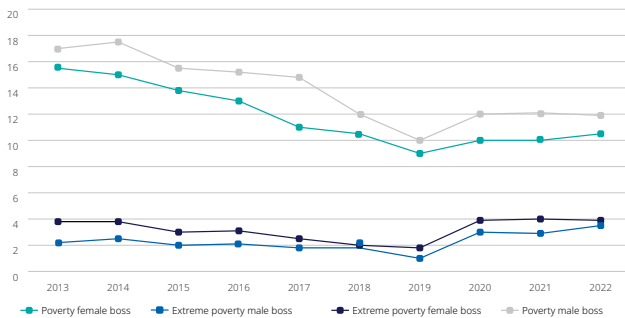
Income: in terms of average income, women are below men, with a gap that has persisted over the last decade. This inequality persists even among people with similar educational levels.



D. Poverty data

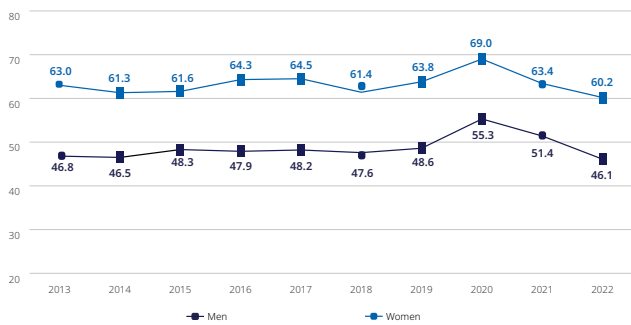
Statistics on poverty and extreme poverty

Poverty gap coefficient, percentage

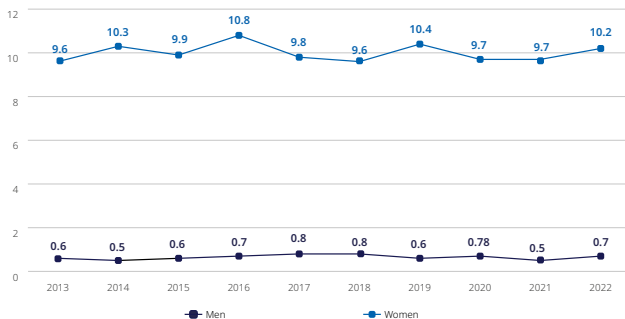


Employment and vulnerability statistics

Total employed in low-productivity jobs, percentage of urban employed population



Employment in domestic work, percentage



Interpretation of poverty and vulnerability data

Low productivity jobs: 69.0% of employed women in 2022 were in low productivity jobs, compared to 51.4% of men. This difference of almost 18 percentage points shows a greater precariousness in women’s employment.

Poverty gaps by type of household head: female-headed households have higher levels of poverty and extreme poverty than male-headed households. In 2022, the poverty rate was 55.3% for women compared to 46.1% for men.

Employment in paid domestic work: in 2022, 10.2% of women were employed in paid domestic work, compared to 0.7% of men. This data reflects a strong occupational gender segregation and conditions of high informality.

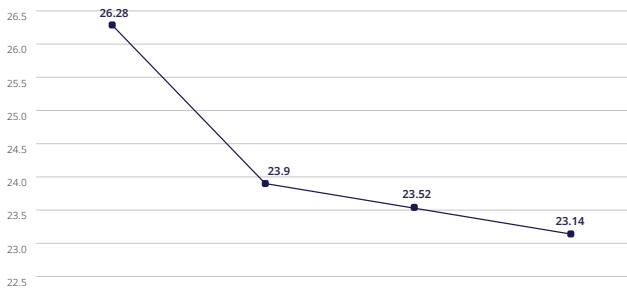


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E. STEM education and employment data in the energy and transportation sectors

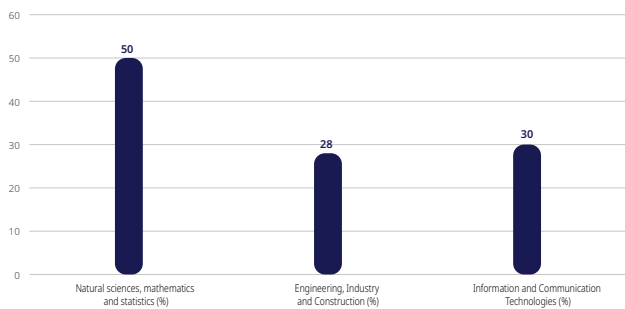
Graduate Statistics

Percentage of STEM graduates

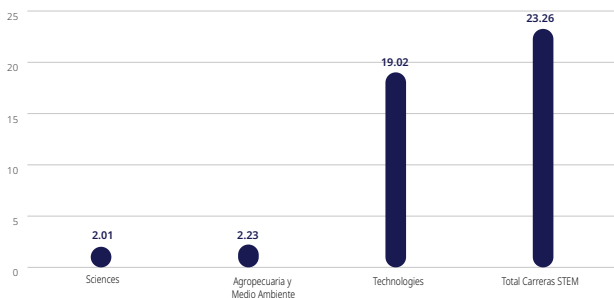


Student statistics by STEM major

Percentage of female graduates from selected STEM majors (2022)

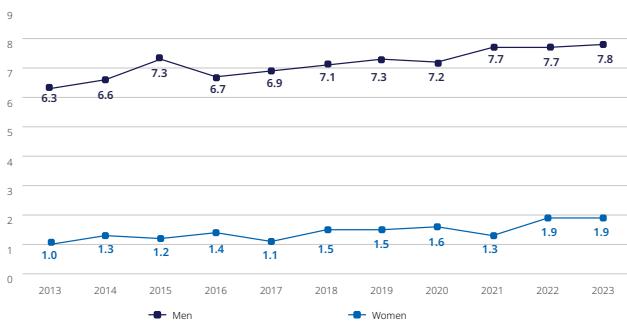


Participation of women in STEM careers (2017)



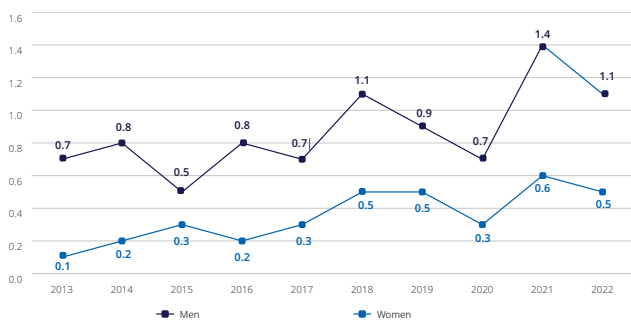
Transportation employment statistics

Population employed in transport, percentage



Energy employment statistics

Population employed in energy, gas and water, percentage





Interpretation of training and employment data in STEM and strategic sectors

Female participation in STEM careers: in 2022, women accounted for only 23.3% of the total in STEM careers. Participation was particularly low in Information Technologies (2.2%) and Engineering (19.0%), while it was slightly higher in Natural Sciences (26.3%).

Graduates in STEM disciplines: between 2015 and 2018, the proportion of female graduates in STEM remained between 22.5% and 26.3%, with little variation. This indicates a stabilization in still low levels of participation.

Employment in strategic sectors (energy and transport): the presence of women in sectors such as energy and transport is marginal. In 2022, women accounted for only 1.1% of employment in energy and barely 1.9% in transport.

General conclusions

Persistent inequality in the labor market: despite educational progress, Salvadoran women face significant barriers to translating their academic achievements into employment and wage improvements.

Precariousness and segmentation of employment: women are over-represented in low productivity jobs and in highly feminized sectors, such as domestic work.

Disproportionate burden of care: Unpaid work falls more heavily on women, especially in rural areas, limiting their opportunities for professional development.

Exclusion in strategic sectors: the low female participation in STEM careers and jobs, energy and transport evidence a systematic exclusion of key areas for economic and technological development of the country.