

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

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

COUNTRY
PARAGUAY



Paraguay has subscribed to the emission reduction targets of the Paris Agreement, derived from COP 21 in 2015, which was expressed through the formulation and update of the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), whose last version was presented in July 2021. On the other hand, the important commitment made by the country to promote gender equality in all aspects of public policy has been expressly recorded in its 2030 National Development Plan as an essential point of the strategy for equitable social development. It emphasizes that the economic, labor and wage integration of women must incorporate a gender perspective in all future programs and public policies. Green employment is a concept that has not yet been taken up by public authorities in the formulation of specific programmes or plans. Even so, the 2030 Development Plan, which embodies all the goals, targets and actions aimed at empowering the country's social and economic sectors, refers to the importance of a sustainable and environmentally friendly economy. Externally, Paraguay has been the subject of studies and technical notes developed by international organizations such as the ILO and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, which have evaluated the potential, creating green jobs and a just transition in the country by also making concrete proposals for interventions that may lead to specific public policies in the future.

development, employment and participatory development.

* [IV PlaNI National Plan for Equality](#): carried out by the National Government through the Ministry of Women and with the collaboration of UN Women for 2018-2024. The Plan is aligned with the 2030 National Development Plan and the SDGs, so it incorporates the guidelines of equality and gender approach in the creation of public policies and legislative instruments that concretize the measures to achieve the work areas defined in the plan, which include economic empowerment, employment, financing, education and inclusion.

* [National Poverty Reduction Plan Jajapo Paraguay](#): launched in 2020 by the National Government through the Ministry of Social Development, contains analysis of the situation of vulnerable populations and presents as an objective the reduction of poverty in line with the National Development Plan 2030 and the SDGs. It has a gender-specific approach and analysis of the situation of women in the labour market, informality, etc. with data disaggregated by

1. Public Policy Review

1.1. National policies for a just and energy transition

* [National Development Plan Paraguay 2030](#): framework plan approved by Decree 2794 in 2014, was launched by the National

Government to carry out a large-scale transformation of the Paraguayan economy towards a SBC (Behavioral Based Security) model and eradicate poverty and inequality. Its strategic focus is specifically on gender equality, which embeds the strategies of inclusive economic growth, equitable social

gender and specific targets for poverty reduction among women related to employment, education or income.

1.2. Planning tools and instruments

* [Nationally Determined Contribution \(NDC\)](#): a compilation of the actions and instruments that Paraguay is developing, or intends to implement, in order to comply with the emission reduction commitments of the Paris Agreement, among whose axes are energy, agricultural production, water and transport. The NDC has a cross-cutting gender perspective, so that all derived actions are carried out with a women's integration approach.

* [Gender Equality and Major Gaps in Paraguay](#): formulated in 2015 by the National Government of Paraguay and the Ministry of Women in collaboration with UN Women, is an in-depth study of the situation of women in Paraguay based on indicators. It is intended to serve as a basis for the formulation and design of public policies aimed at promoting gender equality and closing economic, social, labour-related problems and gaps.

* [Decent Work Programme, 2024-2028 and Plan of Action 2025](#): a programme carried out by the ILO in Paraguay that has among its goals the fair and



sustainable transition towards green employment and the integration and protection of women in terms of wages, training and work. Under the programme, the Labour Market Information System has been developed and Paraguay has joined the World Coalition for Social Justice and the Global Accelerator of Employment and Social Protection.

* [Green employment in Paraguay. Current situation, opportunities and challenges](#): Situation study prepared in 2020 by the European Union and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation with the aim of evaluating the overall picture of the country on economic and socio-political issues and proposing lines of intervention to promote the creation of green jobs in the country.

* [Just Transition: opportunities for an environmentally sustainable economic development in Paraguay](#): Technical note sponsored by the ILO in 2023 that analyses the situation of the country and justifies the need for

a policy of fair transition and green job creation based on the PND 2030 and the SDGs of the 2030 Agenda. Suggests courses of action and recommendations to achieve this goal, including inclusiveness and inclusion of the entire population in the process.

1.3. Inclusion of the gender dimension in public policies

Paraguay has carried out an important deployment of public policies in order to reduce poverty and achieve the full economic and social development of the population, always having as integrative principle of its policies and plans the commitments of the Paris Agreement and the SDGs, which include gender equality as one of their main axes. The 2030 National Development Plan has set out the framework within which future policies that deepen the incipient development of green employment and the eradication of discrimination and poverty among vulnerable populations will be guided. Gender equality has been highlighted as part of this NDP

framework, which ensures that any plan and action derived from it will have an integrated gender approach. Among the policies favouring the integration of women into working life are:

- ▶ **National Development Plan Paraguay 2030.**
- ▶ **IV PlaNI National Equality Plan.**

2. Analysis of opportunities and potential

2.1. Identification of policies that favor the integration of women in green jobs

Paraguay is currently defining a future Green Employment Plan with the assistance of the EU through studies and projects of social, sectoral and economic analysis that seek to analyze the feasibility and scope of the implementation of green employment in the country. This plan should include a gender approach that favours the inclusion of women in the jobs to be created, which would be consistent with the approach of the 2030 National Development Plan, that emphasizes gender equality as a

cross-cutting axis of public policies and plans to be generated. The studies and programmes that are currently enabling Paraguay to develop its own green employment policy are:

- ▶ **Green employment in Paraguay. Current situation, opportunities and challenges.**
- ▶ **Decent Work Agenda, 2024-2028 and Action Plan 2025.**
- ▶ **Just Transition: opportunities for environmentally sustainable economic development in Paraguay.**

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

Paraguay has a transversal axis that links all its policies related to national development (employment,

economy, education, etc.) with gender equality. Similarly, the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, including SDG 5 on gender equality, have been defined as guiding principles for the creation of public policies based on the Nationally Determined Contribution and the National Development Plan 2030. Thus, the country has a solid regulatory base to generate public policies that incorporate the gender approach.

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

Develop a national monitoring and control system to ensure that the gender approach is applied in a practical manner and is consistent with the indicators set out in successive public policies.

Practices to highlight

Gender Equality and Major Gaps in Paraguay is a study carried out by the National Government that analyzes in detail, with support from UN Women, the gaps and obstacles faced by women in Paraguay so that problems can be more precisely addressed in the elaboration of plans and public policies, including employment and female labor insertion.

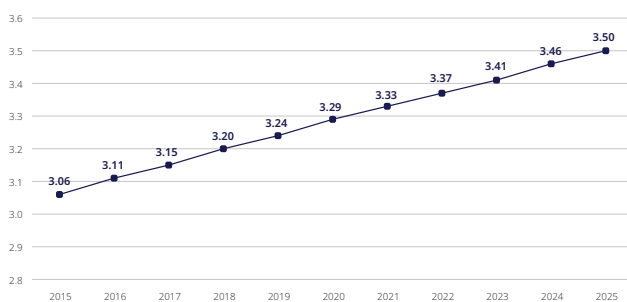
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3. Statistical data

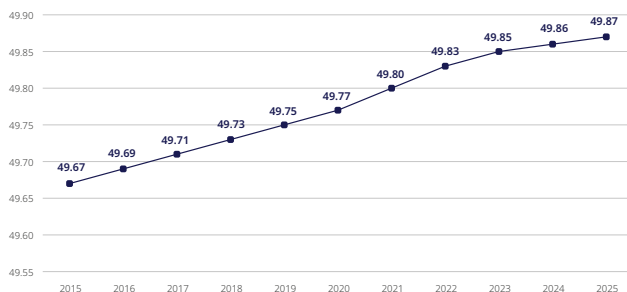
A. Demographic data

Population distribution statistics

Number of woman, millions

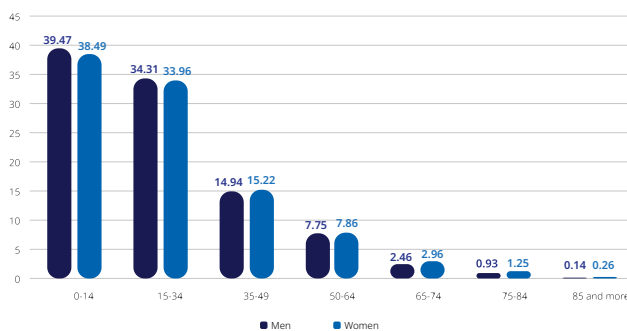


Percentage of woman



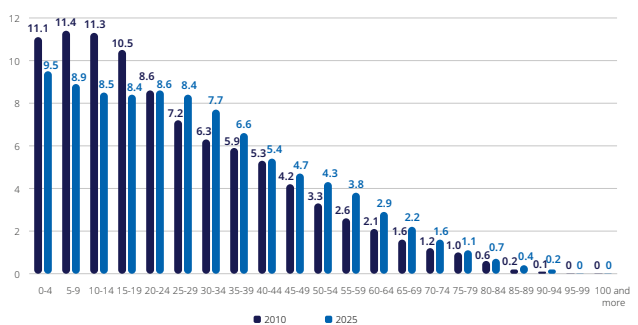
Population distribution statistics by age

Age distribution by sex, percentage



Age distribution statistics

Age distribution of the female population



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Ages	Women			Men		
	2000	2025	Difference in percentage points	2000	2025	Difference in percentage points
0-14	38.49	27.80	-10.69	39.47	28.94	-10.53
15-34	33.96	32.93	-1.03	34.31	33.84	-0.47
35-49	15.22	19.42	4.2	14.94	19.58	4.64
50-64	7.86	12.35	4.49	7.75	11.70	3.95
65-74	2.96	4.72	1.76	2.46	4.00	1.54
75-84	1.25	2.21	0.96	0.9	1.63	0.70
85 and more	0.26	0.58	0.32	0.14	0.30	0.16

Interpretation of demographic data

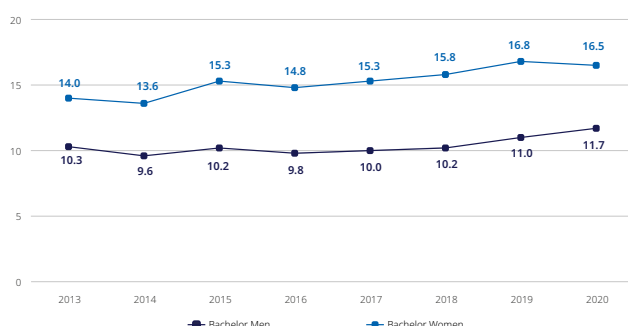
Distribution of the population by age and sex (2000 vs. 2025): Paraguay is experiencing a sustained process of population ageing. In 2000, 38.5% of women and 39.5% of men were aged 0-14; by 2025, this group will decrease to 27.8% and 28.9%, respectively. This is a reduction of more than 10 percentage points for both sexes. At the same time, there is an increase in middle and older age groups. Women between 50 and 64 years of age go from 7.9% to 12.4%, and those between 65 and 74 from 3.0% to 4.7%. This process entails greater demands on pension and health systems, particularly with a focus on the female population.

Evolution of the percentage of women in the total population (2015-2025): the female proportion in Paraguay remains stable between 49.67% and 49.87% over the period 2015-2025, with a slight upward trend. However, women continue to predominate in the older age groups, requiring differentiated responses from public policy.

B. Education level data

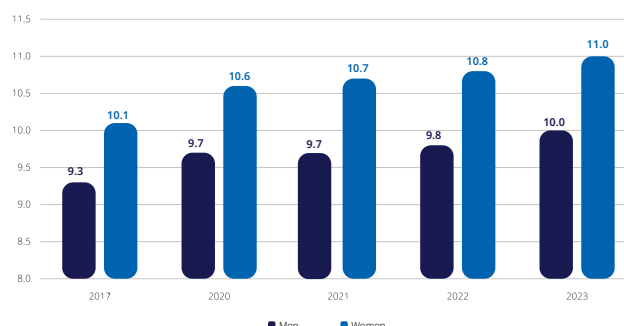
Educational attainment statistics

Percentage of bachelor, population 25+



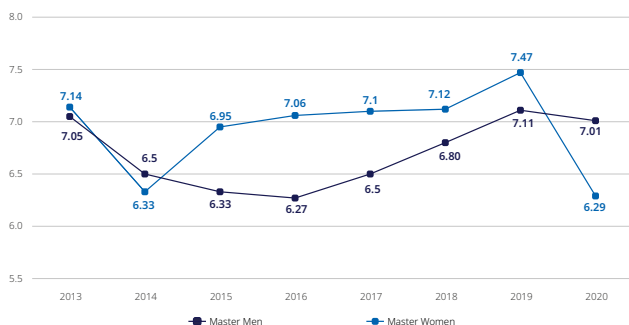
Statistics on years of study

Years of education

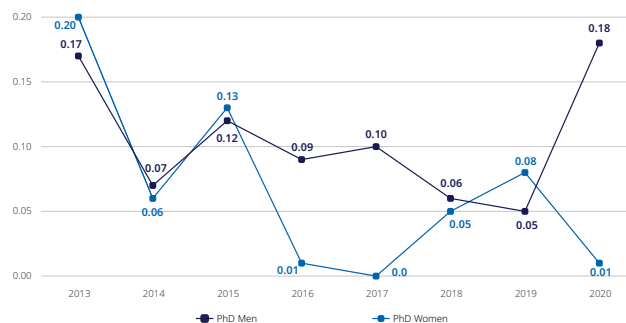


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Percentage of master, population 25+



Percentage of PhD, population 25+



Interpretation of training data

Access to tertiary education: The gross enrolment rate in tertiary education has been historically higher for women. In 2020, this rate reached 16.8% for women compared to 11.7% for men.

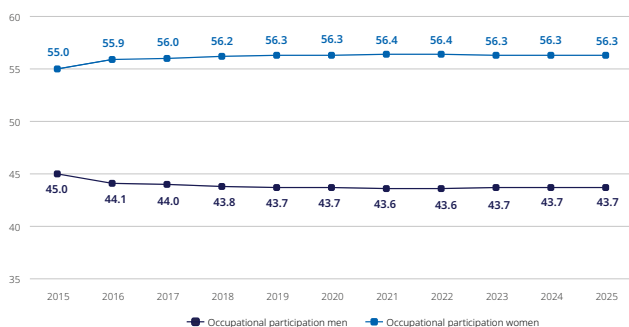
Level of education achieved (bachelor's, master's, doctorate): since 2013, the percentage of women with a bachelor's degree has exceeded that of men. In 2020, 7.47% of women aged 25 and over had a bachelor's degree compared to 6.29% of men. This trend is also observed, albeit to a lesser extent, in the master's programmes. In doctorates (PhD), rates are similar and very low for both sexes.

Average years of formal education: in 2023, women reached an average of 11.0 years of schooling compared to 10.8 years for men. This parity reflects advances in female educational access in quantitative terms.

C. Employment data

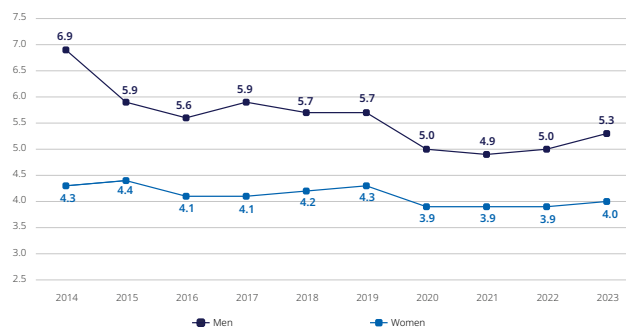
Employment statistics

Economic participation rate, percentage



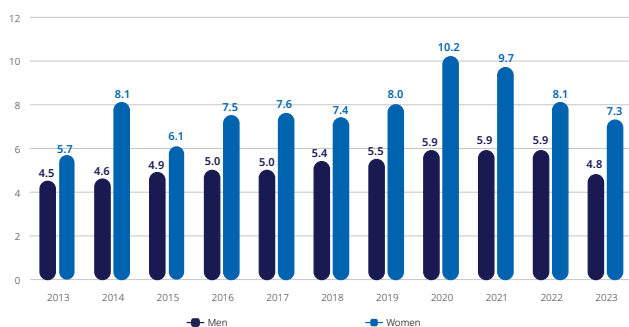
Income Statistics

Average income, in multiples of the poverty line

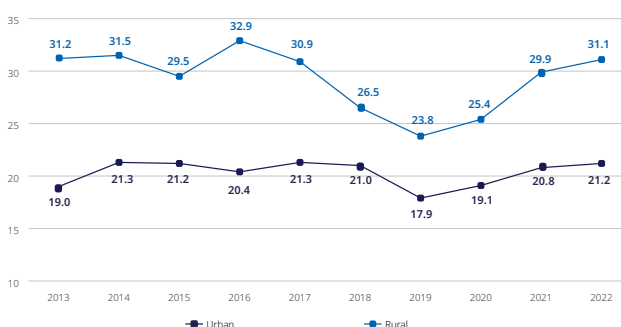


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Unemployment rate, percentage



Percentage of adult women dedicated exclusively to unpaid work



Interpretation of employment data

Economic participation rate: in 2025, the projected economic participation rate will be 43.7% for women and 56.3% for men, indicating a persistent gap of over 12 percentage points.

Unpaid work: in 2022, 21.0% of urban women and 31.1% of rural women were engaged exclusively in unpaid work. This phenomenon is minimal in men and evidences the female overload in care and domestic work.

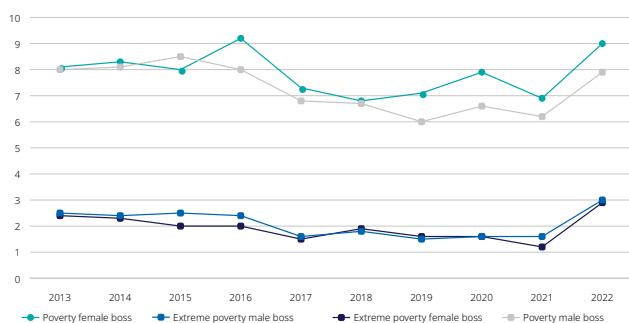
Unemployment rate: women consistently have higher unemployment rates than men. In 2023, the rate was 5.9% for women compared to 4.3% for men.

Income: In 2023, women earned 3.9 times the poverty line while men earned 5.0 times. This gap reflects structural inequalities in the labour market.

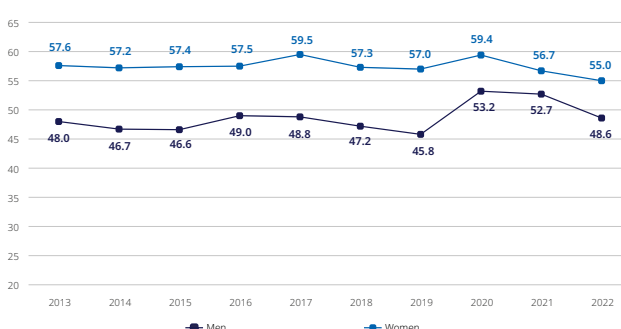
D. Poverty data

Statistics on poverty and extreme poverty

Poverty gap coefficient, percentage

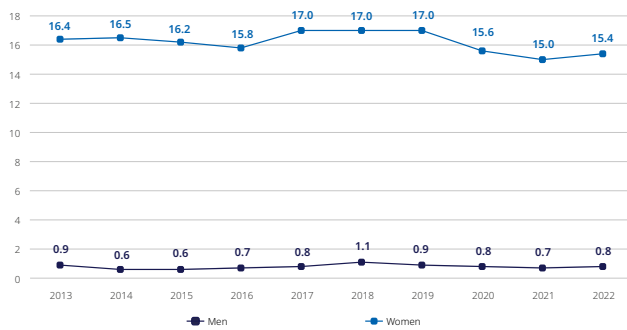


Percentage of employed people in low-productivity jobs



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Employment in domestic work, percentage



Interpretation of poverty and vulnerability data

Low-productivity jobs: in 2022, 55.0% of employed women worked in low-productivity jobs, compared to 48.6% of men. This difference highlights the segmentation of the labour market to the detriment of women.

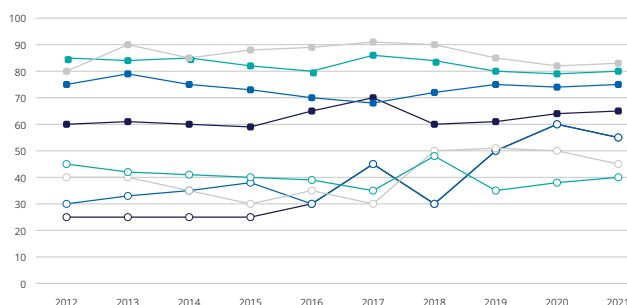
Poverty gaps by type of head of household: female-headed households have higher levels of poverty and extreme poverty. In 2022, the poverty ratio was 48.6% for female heads of household compared to 45.8% for male heads of household. The gap widens in extreme poverty: 59.4% versus 57.0%.

Employment in paid domestic work: Paid domestic work is highly feminized. In 2022, 15.4% of women worked in this sector compared to 0.8% of men.

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

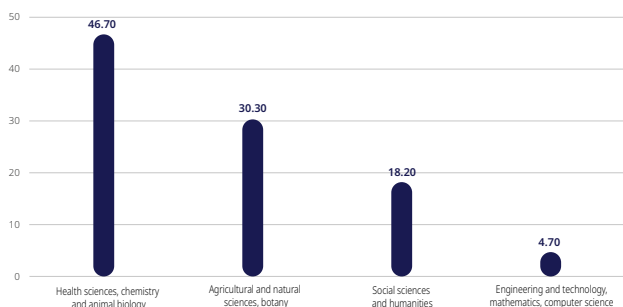
Graduate Statistics

Percentage of STEM graduates



Student statistics by STEM major

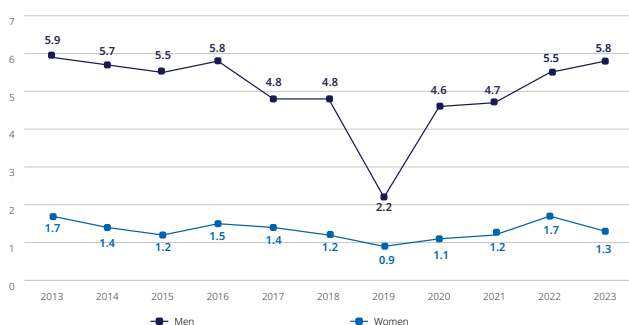
Percentage of female graduates from selected STEM majors (2020)



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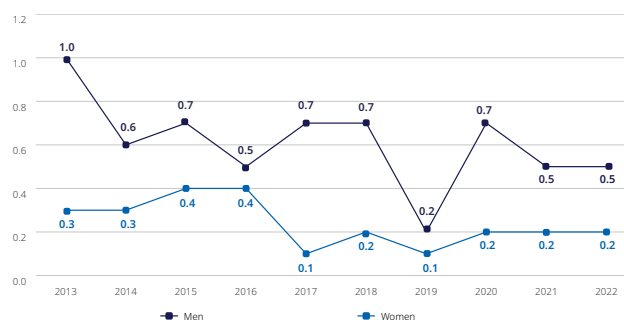
Transportation employment statistics

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: women represent 46.7% of those studying medical sciences, but only 18.2% in agricultural sciences and only 4.7% in engineering, technology and computer science, showing a marked segmentation in technical and scientific training.

Graduates in STEM disciplines: In 2020, female researchers in engineering, technology and exact sciences accounted for only 4.7% of the total number of women researchers, compared to 46.7% in medical and health sciences.

Employment in strategic sectors (energy and transport): In 2022, only 0.2% of employment in energy and 1.3% in transport was occupied by women, compared to 0.7% and 5.8% of men respectively.

General conclusions

Persistent structural gaps: Women have advanced in formal education but continue to face barriers in the labour market and income.

Precariousness and job segmentation: Women are over-represented in low productivity jobs and paid domestic work, which limits their opportunities for advancement.

Unequal care burden: High rates of full-time unpaid work restrict the time available for paid employment.

Exclusion in strategic sectors and STEM: Low female participation in science, technology, energy and transport reflects persistent barriers in key areas for economic development.