

Gender and Services Trade in the APEC Region

Mia Mikic
Research Fellow, Waikato University, New Zealand

GOS Meeting SOM3
Seattle, Washington
August 2023

**Advancing Free Trade
for Asia-Pacific Prosperity**



GOS work on Gender and Trade in Services 2022 and 2023

- Dialogues held within SOM set of meetings*:
 1. Panel on Women and Services Trade, SOM 2, Bangkok, Thailand, May 2022
 2. Deep Dive: Cross-cutting priorities – The GOS and PPWE, SOM 1, Palm Springs, US, Feb 2023
 3. Deep Dive: How can we influence gender-responsive policy for trade in services?, SOM 1, Palm Springs, US, Feb 2023
 4. Inclusive Growth – Gender and Trade in Services, SOM 2, Detroit, US, May 2023
- These dialogues responded to:
 - the APEC Services Competitiveness Roadmap (ASCR),
 - the 2021 mid-term review of the ASCR, and
 - the 2019 La Serena Roadmap
- The goal is to put services trade at the forefront of building greater inclusive economic development and participation of women in the Asia-Pacific region.

* See Annex for more details

Policy brief: Gender and Services Trade in APEC Region, SOM 3, Aug 2023 (Seattle, US)

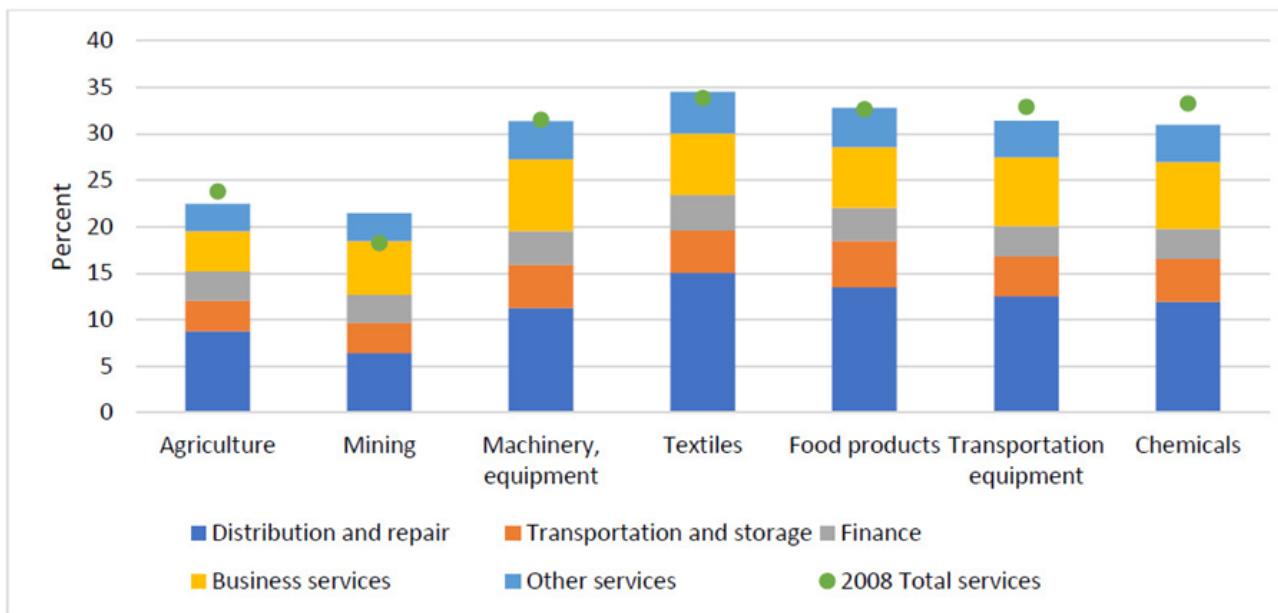
The policy brief is directly inspired by the panel held at SOM 2 earlier this year in Detroit. However, it also builds on the discussions in other sessions held under GOS in 2022 and earlier in 2023, including the breakout small group discussions with government officials and other stakeholders, especially from the business community

The content of the brief is as follows:

- Introduction
- Servicification
- Gender and Trade Agreements
- Digitalization of Services Trade and Opportunities for Women's Inclusive Growth
- Empowering women through trade: Small businesses and digitalization
- What additional research is required to support women's participation in services trade?
- Annex – Summary of Breakout Group Discussions

Servicification on a rise

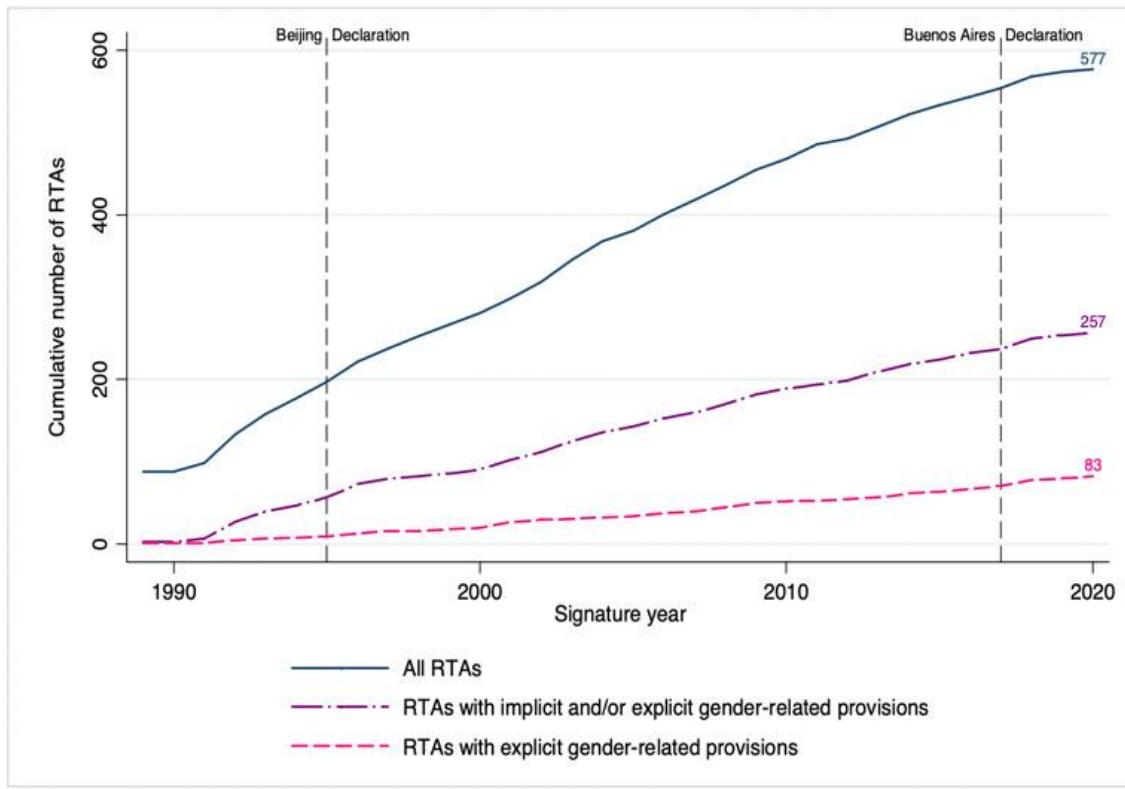
Services share of Value-Added in Merchandise Exports, 2018
(APEC average)



Source: OECD Trade in Value-added TiVA 2021. <https://www.oecd.org/sti/ind/measuring-trade-in-value-added.htm> Note: This data set includes 20 APEC economies (Papua New Guinea is not included).

Gender provisions in trade agreements

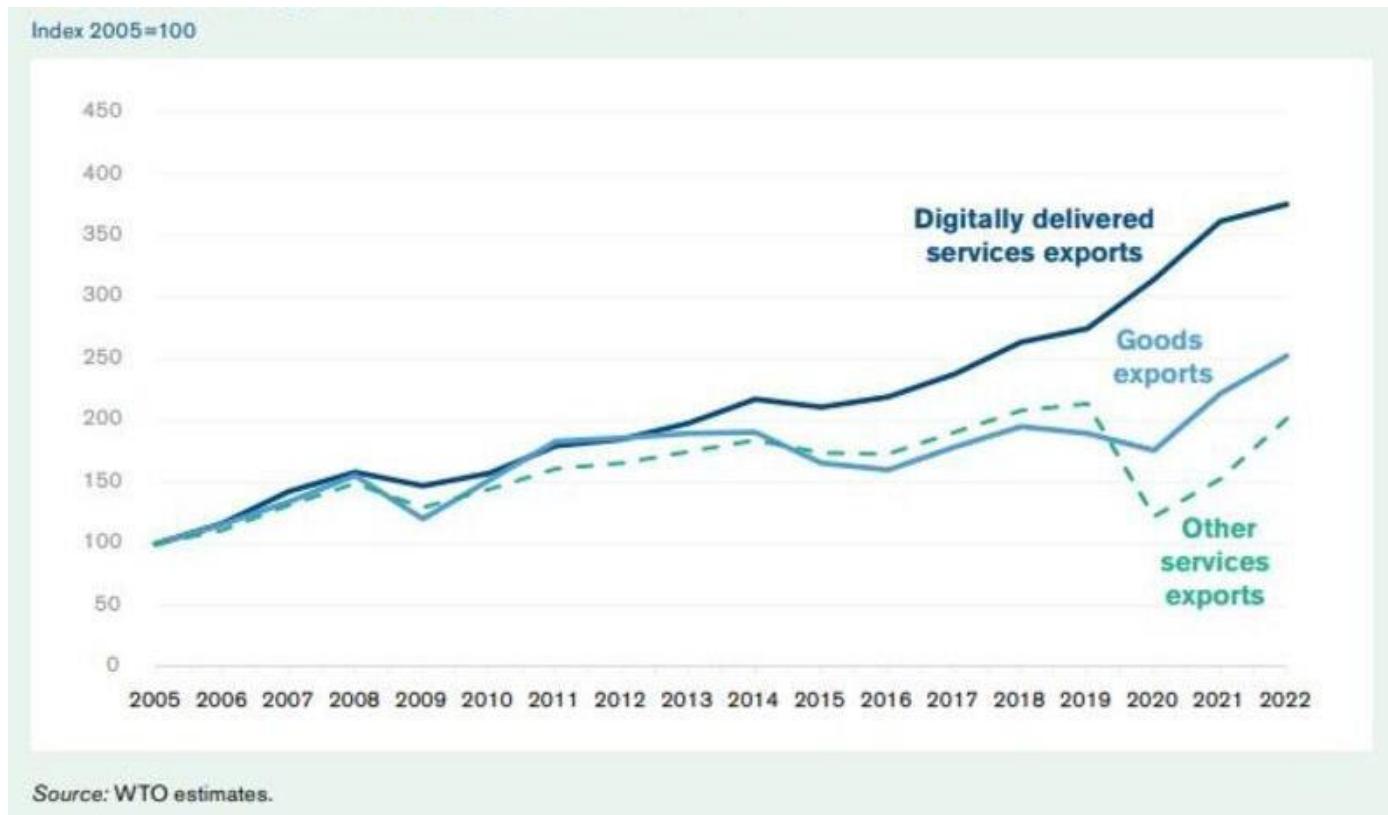
Gender Provisions in RTAs



Source: José-Antonio Monteiro, The Evolution of Gender-Related Provisions in Regional Trade Agreement, WTO, 2021

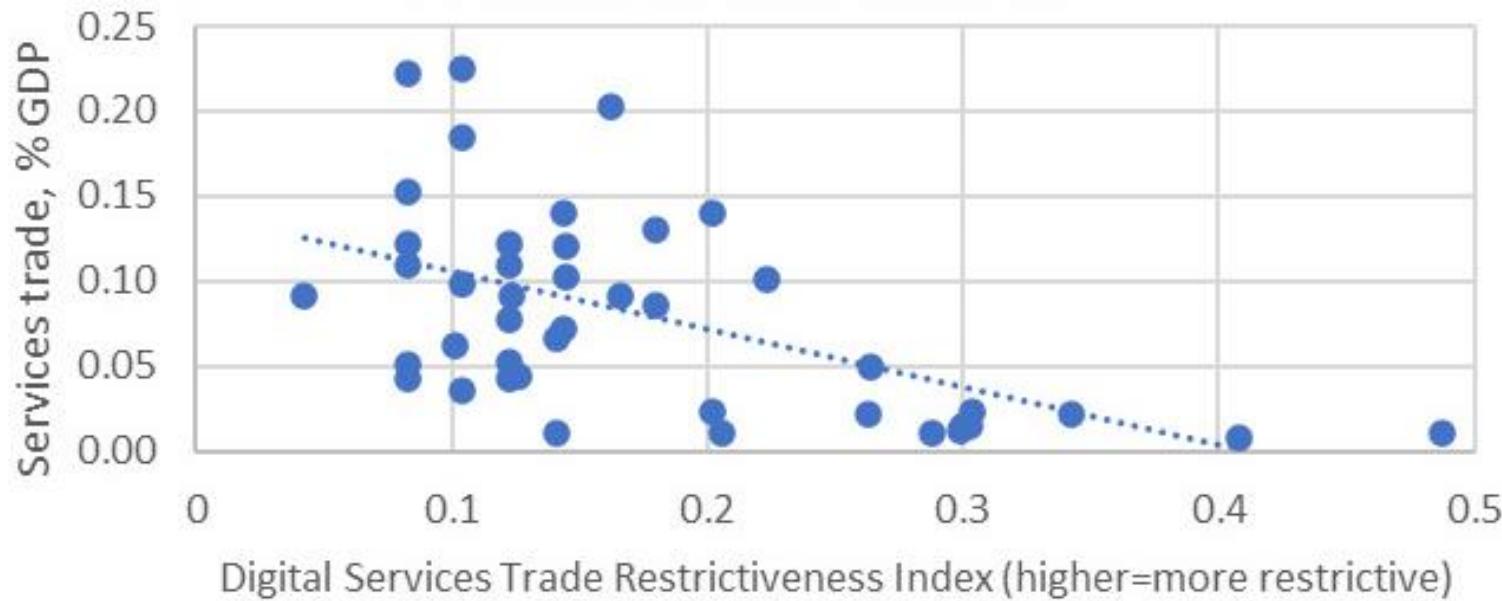
Digitalization of services trade and opportunities for women

Growth in global exports of digitally delivered services 2005-2022



Digital trade restrictions and services exports

The Impact of Digital Trade Restrictions on Services Exports (as % of GDP)



Source: Author's calculations based on UNCTAD and OECD data



Asia-Pacific
Economic Cooperation

Some selected recommendations for actions in APEC

The Brief provides detailed recommendations; the following is a small selection based on the urgency/priority of needed action :

- Address the remaining obstacles to services and digital services trade to access APEC markets
- Contribute to the collection of gender-differentiated statistics relevant to trade in services (including employment, skills, wages, firms' revenue, by sector and possibly mode of service supply)
- Adopt education and training policies to further enable women to develop their human capital and also increase capacity building in the area of gender-aware policy making
- Based on available data on gender provisions in RTAs, extract the relevant information for RTAs signed by APEC economies and offer a functional up-to-date and searchable database to inform current and future negotiations and enhance use of binding provisions
- Consider putting in place a gender-focused impact analysis of proposed trade agreements before they are signed
- Consider joining Global Trade and Gender Arrangement (GTAGA)
- Improve access to finance and digital technology which is dedicated to vulnerable gender groups.

ANNEX

- Panel on Women and Services Trade, SOM 2, May 2022 (Bangkok, Thailand)
- Deep Dive: Cross-cutting priorities – The GOS and PPWE, SOM 1, Feb 2023 (Palm Springs, US)
- Deep Dive: How can we influence gender-responsive policy for trade in services?, SOM 1, Feb 2023 (Palm Springs, US)
- Inclusive Growth – Gender and Trade in Services, SOM 2, May 2023 (Detroit, US)

Panel on Women and Services Trade

SOM 2, May 2022 (Bangkok, Thailand)

Trade policy circles have transformed how they consider gender and trade issues. We are witnessing a transformation from “trade is gender neutral” to gender-responsive trade and trade policy. Those responsible for trade policy increasingly recognize the differential impacts of trade and trade policy on women and men and the need to measure and address them. We have come a long way in accumulating statistical and qualitative evidence related to women’s participation in trade (and the remaining obstacles). Unfortunately, much less is still understood about gender-differentiated impacts of services trade, particularly in some of the modes of supply. This session will attempt to draw attention to general and specific considerations as they relate to women and trade in services and, in particular, those supplied through mode 1.

Moderator: Bonnie Rivendell, Program Director, the Australian APEC Study Centre

Keynote Speaker:

Grace Gown, Head of Global Government Advisory at Access Partnership, Sydney

Roundtable Discussion:

- Deborah Elms, Founder and Executive Director of the Asian Trade Centre, Singapore
- Maria Esperanza Alconcel, National Project Coordinator for ARISE Plus/ITC in the Philippines
- Stephanie Honey, Director of Honey Consulting, New Zealand

Deep Dive: Cross-cutting priorities – The GOS and PPWE, SOM 1, Feb 2023 (Palm Springs, US)

Moderator: Bonnie Rivendell, Program Director, the Australian APEC Study Centre
Panelists:

- Thomas Fine, GOS Chair: Welcome Remarks and GOS/ASCR priorities
- Andrea Boron, Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR): US priorities and the intersection between Gender and Services
- Chantelle Stratford, PPWE Chair: 2023 PPWE priorities

Deep Dive: How can we influence gender-responsive policy for trade in services?, SOM 1, Feb 2023 (Palm Springs, US)

This deep dive asked the discussants to focus on providing concrete examples or realistic proposals towards influencing gender-responsive policy in trade in services. Three key aspects were considered:

- 1) Influencing – what would that entail (e.g., could it be done if not linked to laws or binding international agreements – APEC has made progress in many areas without having such “sticks”)?;
- 2) Identifying what a gender responsive policy is. Is there an agreement (or could there be) about the main elements of such policy? Could it be subsumed in human rights or labour policies, why or why not?; and
- 3) Why is cross-economy and cross-fora collaboration (and cooperation?) desirable/necessary?

Moderator: Mia Mikic, Research Fellow, The University of Waikato, New Zealand

Discussants:

- Anoush der Boghossian, Head of the Trade and Gender Unit, World Trade Organization
- Tanya Spisbah, Director, Australian Office for Women
- Sherry Stephenson, International Trade Policy Expert, US PECC

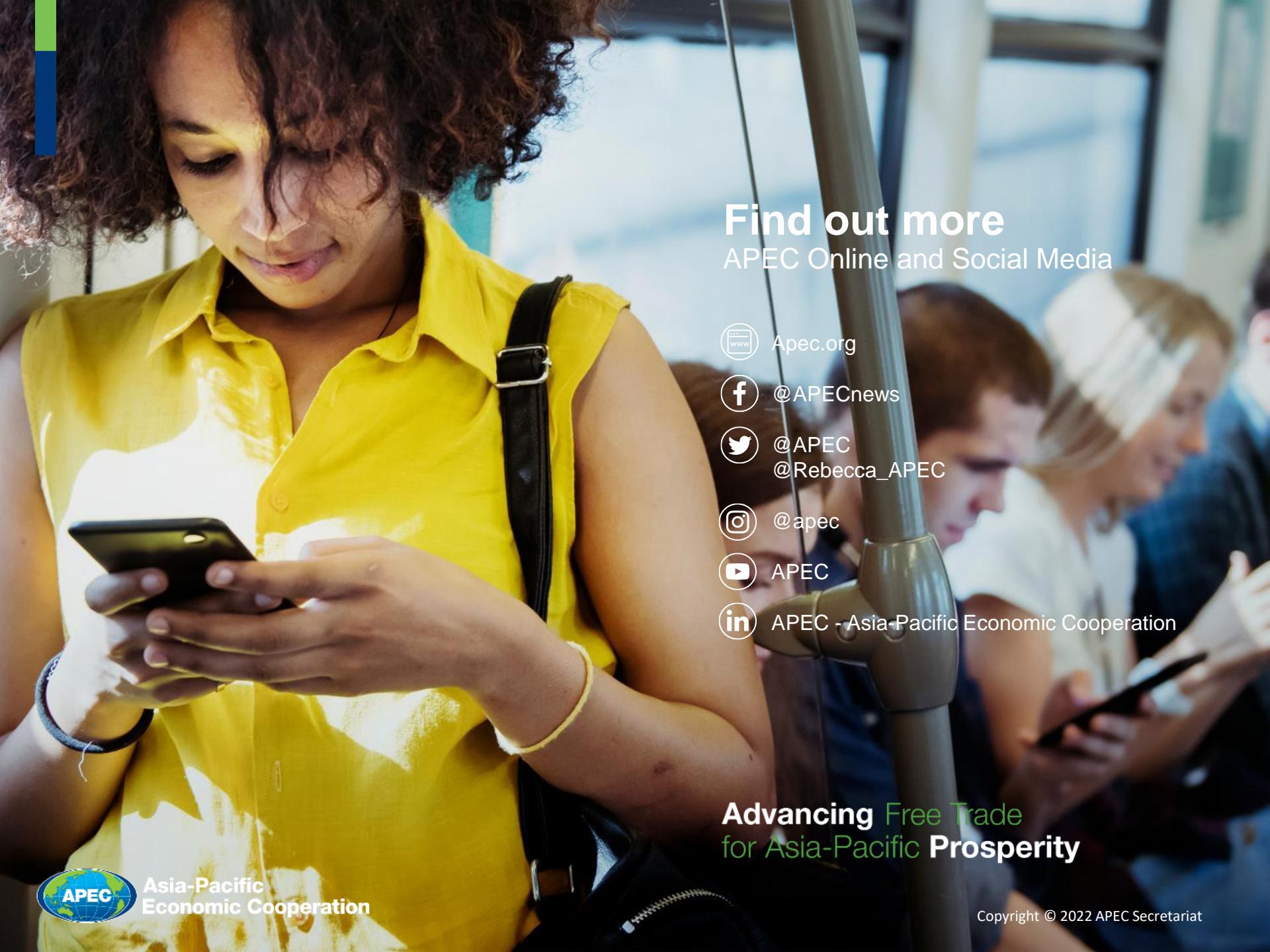
Inclusive Growth – Gender and Trade in Services, SOM 2, May 2023 (Detroit, US)

Although services trade in APEC economies has experienced substantial growth, gender disparities persist within the sector. Trade policies and RTAs must be complemented with gender-responsive measures to effectively tackle these inequalities. The digitization of services offers both opportunities and challenges for women, requiring efforts to ensure equitable access and benefits. Additionally, the servicification trend highlights the need to value and recognize the predominantly female workforce in care-related services. By adopting a comprehensive approach that addresses existing gender gaps and promotes equal opportunities, APEC economies can unlock the full potential of services trade and contribute to inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

Moderator: Andrea Boron, Office of the U.S. Trade Representative

Panellists:

- Katrin Kuhlmann, Centre on Inclusive Trade and Development, Georgetown University, US
- Sherry Stephenson, US PECC
- Mia Mikic, The University of Waikato, New Zealand
- Carolina de la Paz, Lenovo, Mexico
- Barbara Kotschwar, Visa Economic Empowerment Institute, VISA, US



Find out more

APEC Online and Social Media



Apec.org



@APECnews



@APEC
@Rebecca_APEC



@apec



APEC



APEC - Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation

Advancing Free Trade
for Asia-Pacific **Prosperity**



Asia-Pacific
Economic Cooperation

Copyright © 2022 APEC Secretariat