



BACKGROUND NOTE

WORLD TRADE CONGRESS ON GENDER – SECOND EDITION

"Gender Equality and Innovation, the Keys to Sustainable Trade"

Organized jointly by the WTO, UN Women and the WTO Gender Research Hub

24-27 June 2025

Technology and science are driving forces shaping the global economy. Therefore, digital inclusion and innovation play important roles for women's economic empowerment, giving them new opportunities in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). However, worldwide, women represent only 35% of STEM students and merely 3% of students in information and communication technology, indicating gender gaps in technology literacy, access and use. Also, rural women continue to be excluded from the benefits of innovation and the digital economy.

Within this global context and under the theme "Gender Equality and Innovation, the Keys to Sustainable Trade", the 2025 World Trade Congress on Gender intends to pioneer research on how gender equality, innovation and trade interconnect.

In particular, the Congress will deepen the understanding of how women's empowerment can help countries promote innovation and how trade can contribute to this.

It will also provide an opportunity to deepen research on what is innovation's role in enhancing gender equality and how innovative trade policy solutions can help; if new technologies changed the way women access opportunities created by trade; how innovation can enhance women's trading capacities; if trade has helped women to innovate; how women can keep up with changing technology and trade patterns; how trade can accelerate innovation for the benefit of women's empowerment; how scientific innovation can benefit women; how innovation in care services can support women's economic empowerment and job growth; how humanity can make the leap from research to economic reality and if innovation can improve trade for the benefit of women.

The Congress will also focus on policy practices and solutions around innovation that could accelerate gender equality and women's empowerment, ranging from specialised programmes targeting marginalized female communities to partnerships with start-ups, innovative financing and aid for trade programming, as well as pioneer capacity-building initiatives. It will also create an opportunity to explore the relations between gender equality and frontier technologies and non-tech interventions that challenge convictions and beliefs.

Research presented at the Congress 2025 can focus on the following sub-themes below:

- Trade, gender and digitalisation
- Trade, gender and artificial intelligence
- Trade, gender and frontier technologies
- Trade, gender and green growth
- Trade, gender and health
- Trade, gender and policy innovation
- Trade, gender and innovative financing

Application process

The Congress will provide a platform to draw attention to the unpublished findings conducted by trade and gender experts and will aim to promote advanced research in this field. Submissions are open to experts working in research institutions and academia, international and regional organizations (including development banks), NGOs and governments.

Applicants are invited to submit a detailed abstract (between 600-700 words) following the requirements set in the application form ([World Trade Congress on Gender, 24-27 June 2025 Call For Papers - Formstack](#)). The abstracts must include enough details to provide a sufficient understanding of the work expected in the final paper. Only unpublished research work will be considered by the Congress Steering Committee for the selection of papers.

Please use this online application form [world Trade Congress on Gender, 24-27 June 2025 Call for Papers - Formstack](#) to submit your paper/abstract **by 16 August 2024**.

Selection process and timelines/deadlines

- Application and selection timeline*

Activity	Timeline and deadlines
Submissions of application form	16 August 2024
Review of applications	18 July-15 October 2024
Selection communication to all applicants	23 October 2024

- Selection Committee*

Submissions will be reviewed by the Congress Steering Committee which is composed of seven members of the WTO Gender Research Hub, representing research institutions and academia as well as international organizations, as well as one representative from UN Women.

Background on the World Trade Congress on Gender

The **World Trade Congress on Gender** is a joint initiative of the WTO and the WTO Gender Research Hub. It intends to promote innovative and pioneering research on trade and gender by bringing together the most prominent researchers and highlighting tangible results of research on women worldwide. The Congress provides an opportunity for trade and gender experts from around the world to share their perspectives on gender related trade issues. The event promotes gender mainstreaming in research and connects researchers with policy makers to foster inclusive and gender responsive trade policies.

The first edition was organized on 2022 at the WTO under the theme "[Gender Equality for Sustainable Trade and Recovery](#)". The 2022 edition was the first international research conference on trade and gender organized internationally.

In 2025, the WTO and the WTO Gender Research Hub are jointly working with [UN Women](#) in the organisation of the Congress' second edition.



WORLD TRADE
ORGANIZATION

Trade for Women

The Congress is a public event open to academics, students, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, and government representatives.

For more information

Please contact the WTO Trade and Gender Office: trade-gender@wto.org.