

# Women, services trade and economic recovery

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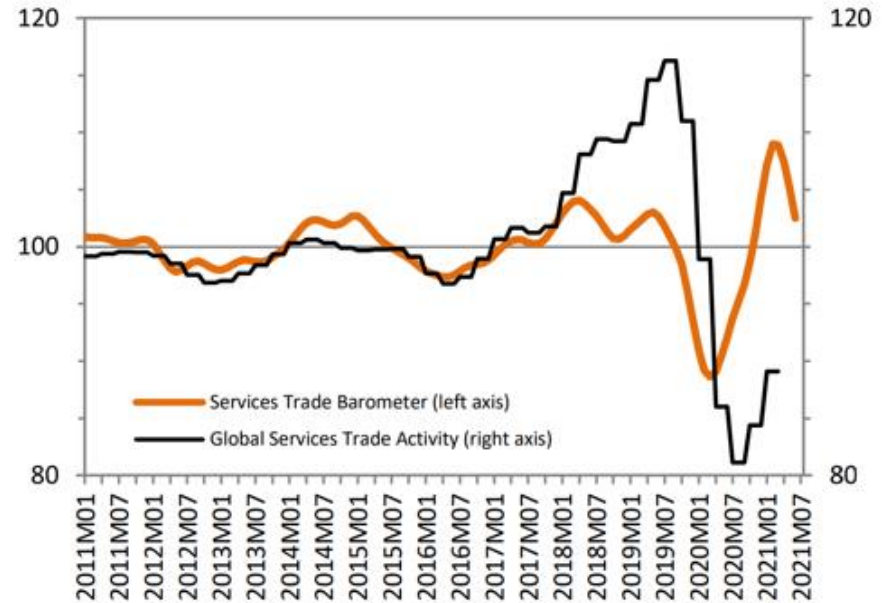
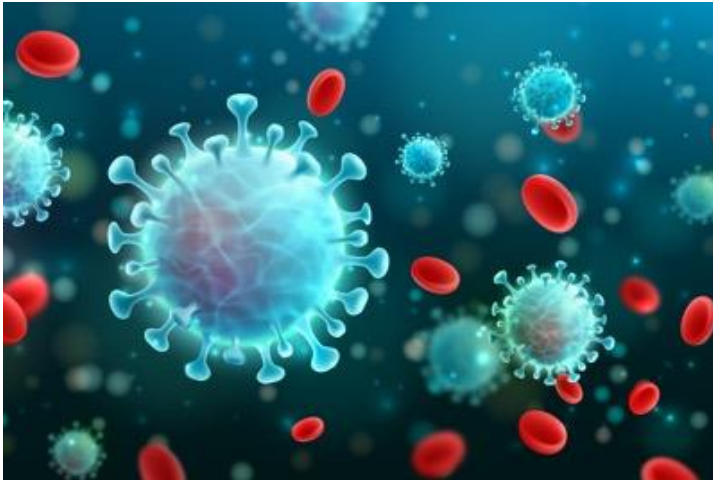
*APEC PPD – Driving Services for an Inclusive and Resilient  
Economic Recovery*

*12 October 2021*

*Session 2: Broadening the Reach of Recovery*

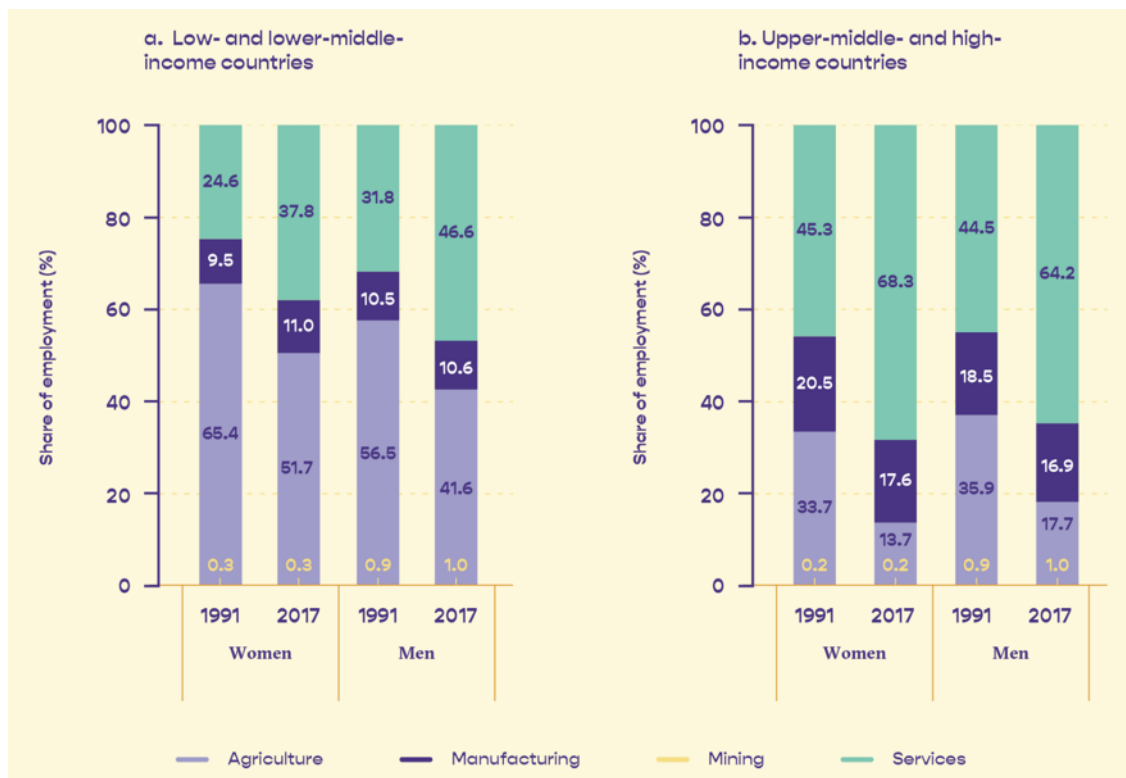


# Pandemic challenges



Source: WTO Services Trade Barometer

# Services sectors offer real potential for women



Source: WTO & World Bank, *Women and Trade: The Role of Trade in Promoting Gender Equality*

# Digital services: a key enabler

## ABAC Research: E-commerce

### Digital Drivers to Enable Women

#### E-commerce Platforms

Women in our study reported that using e-commerce enabled them to grow their businesses and bypass many challenges due to gender. Conducting business online also enabled women in our study to create a more flexible work schedule.

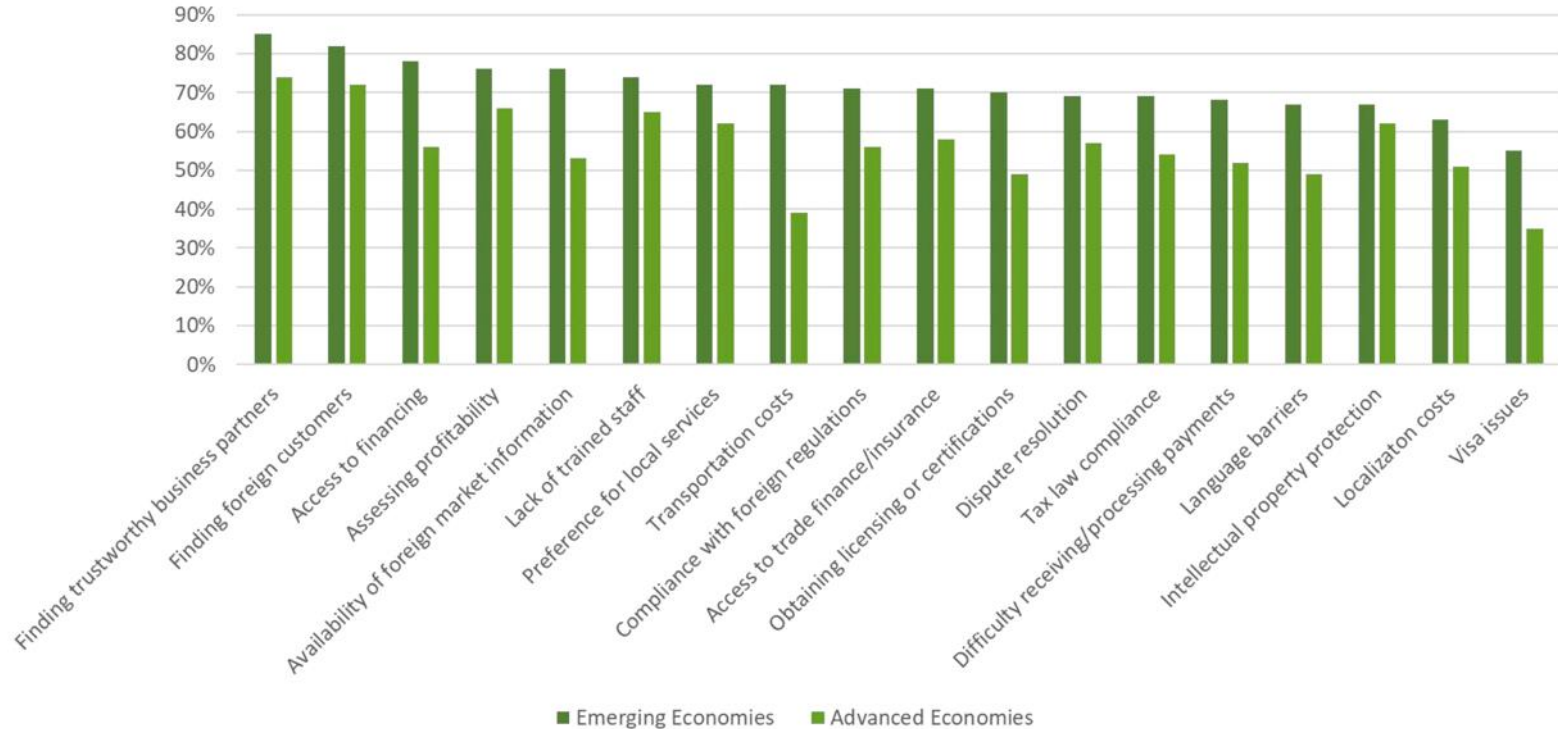
The idea of 'minimum investment, maximum profit' in e-commerce businesses is helping women start and grow businesses from their homes. With e-commerce, women do not need collateral or have high overhead costs due to physical locations. E-commerce expands women's ability to grow exponentially and through international markets. Going online also removes gender biases as the online medium can place a layer of invisibility on the seller's identity.

OECD, WTO and World Bank research shows that digital technologies create new opportunities by:

- bringing women producers and traders closer to markets and customers (e.g. through e-commerce platforms)
- reducing mobility constraints, cultural barriers and physical risks by reducing face-to-face interactions in trade
- making it easier for women to access capital and financing
- creating better opportunities for education and training for women

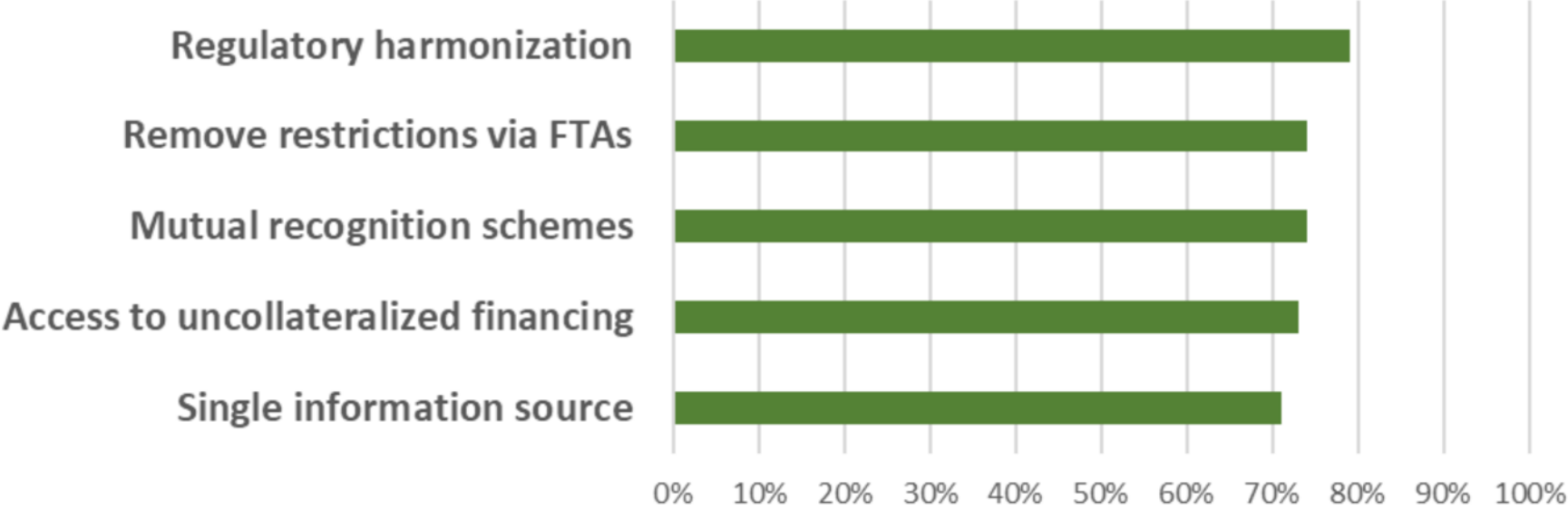
# Business perspectives on services barriers (pre-COVID)

## *Identification of Services-Sector MSME Challenges as "Major" or "Severe"*

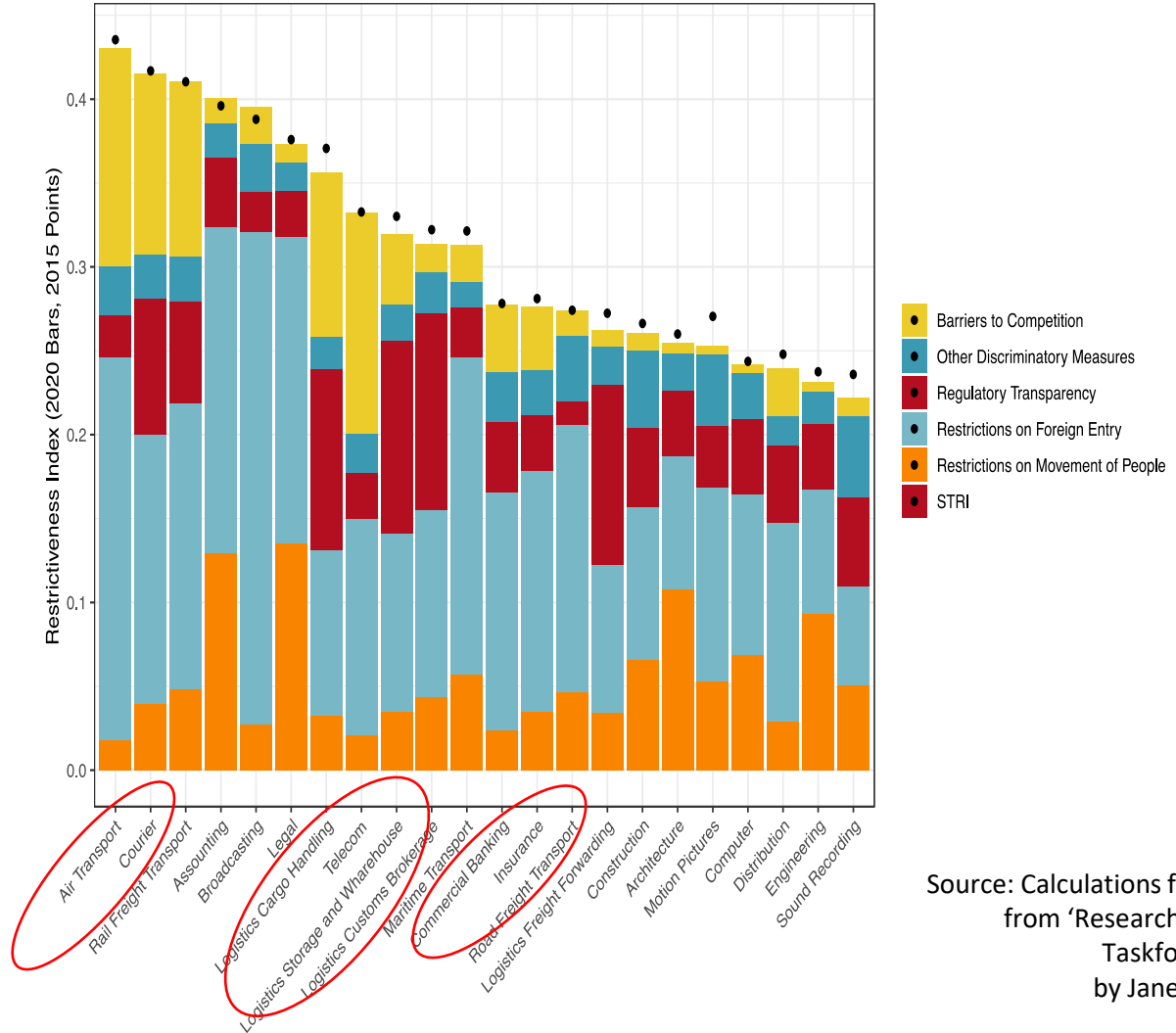


Source: University of Southern California Marshall School of Business, 'Realising the Untapped Potential of MSMEs in APEC', 2018

# Business perspectives on services trade solutions (pre-COVID)



Source: University of Southern California Marshall School of Business, 'Realising the Untapped Potential of MSMEs in APEC', 2018



Source: Calculations from OECD STRI dataset, from 'Research Report for the Services Taskforce', prepared for ABAC by Jane Drake-Brockman, 2021

# What's needed now



An enabling digital environment for digital services – reduced barriers, increased interoperability



Liberalisation of the services sectors where women predominate, and that would support trade (e.g. finance, logistics, transport)



Targeted skills and capacity-building, networking, information – and structural reforms for gender equality