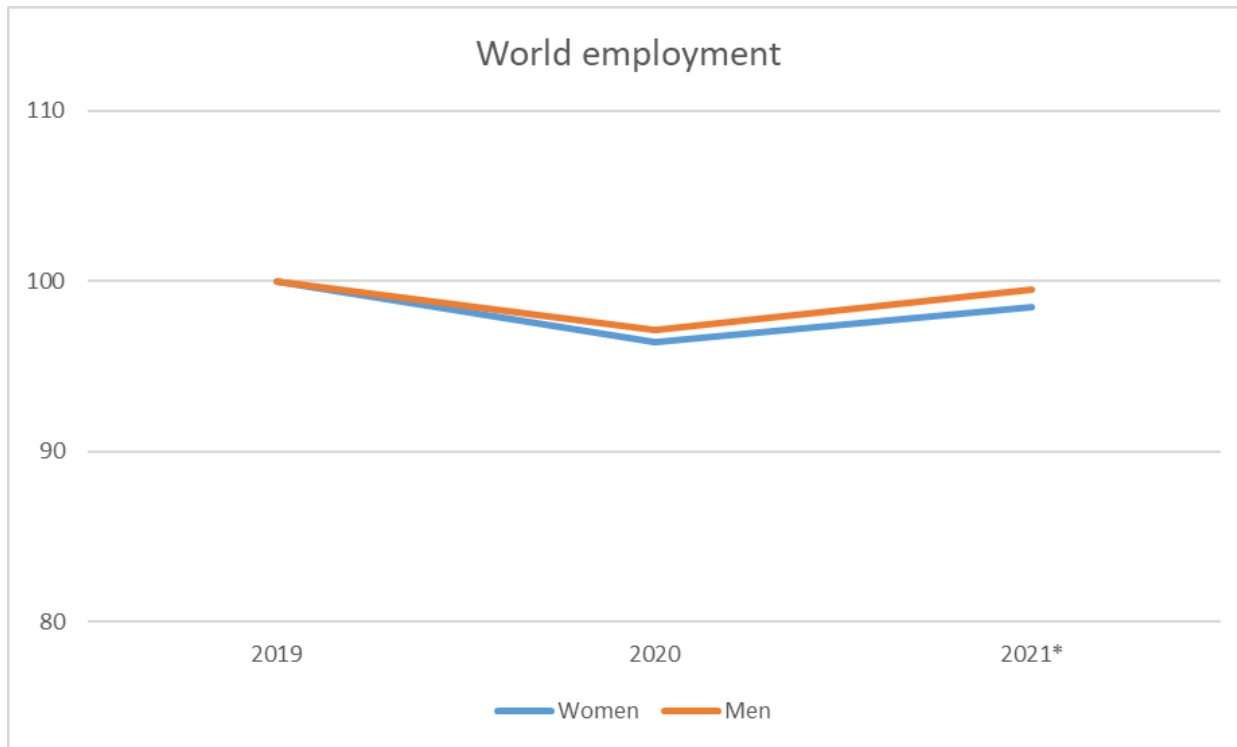


# ► Gender-responsive macroeconomic policies: Lessons learnt from the COVID-19 crisis and beyond

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## ► The COVID-19 Unprecedented job losses have hit women hardest, and they are lagging behind in the recovery



- Globally, women lost 46 million jobs whereas men lost 57 million in 2020. In percentage terms, jobs losses were larger for women, at 3.6 per cent compared to 2.9 per cent for men.
- Employment for both women and men recovered during 2021, but at a slower speed for women. The latest projection by the ILO indicates that neither women nor men have recovered their 2019 levels. Total jobs for women were approximately 19 million fewer in 2021 than in 2019, while this figure was 10.2 million for men.

**Labour markets are bearers of gender**

## Women's employment-to-population ratios declined proportionally more than men's for all income country groups except high-income countries

- Women have lost more jobs than men in proportional terms as measured by their employment-to-population ratios, with the exception of high income countries. Women's greater declines were observed in lower-middle-income countries in 2020 (-6.3pp).
- Employment-to-population ratios are not projected to recover to pre-pandemic levels for any income-level country grouping in 2022. Gender gaps in employment-to-population ratios will remain greater than their pre-pandemic levels in particular in upper-middle and low income countries.

► Changes in employment-to-population ratios across country income groups, 2019–22\*, by sex



Note: \* ILO estimations.

Source: [World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2022](#)

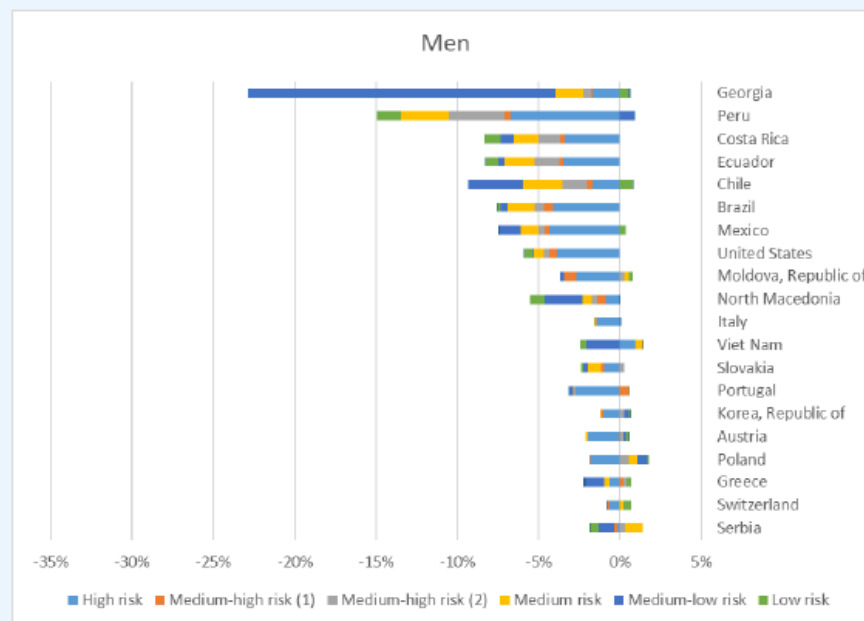
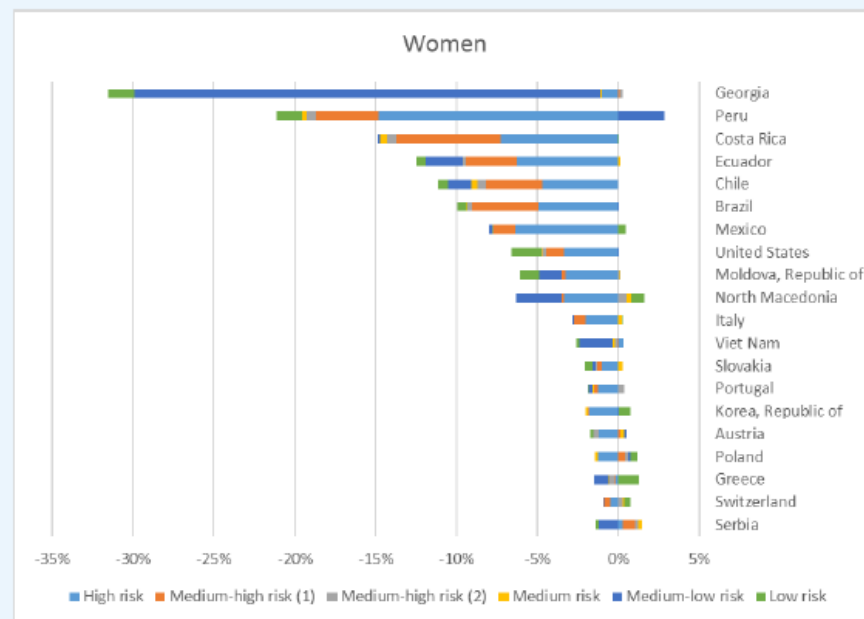
# Women's over-representation in sectors severely impacted by the crisis explains their greater employment losses

Economic structure shapes how macroeconomic shocks impact women and men

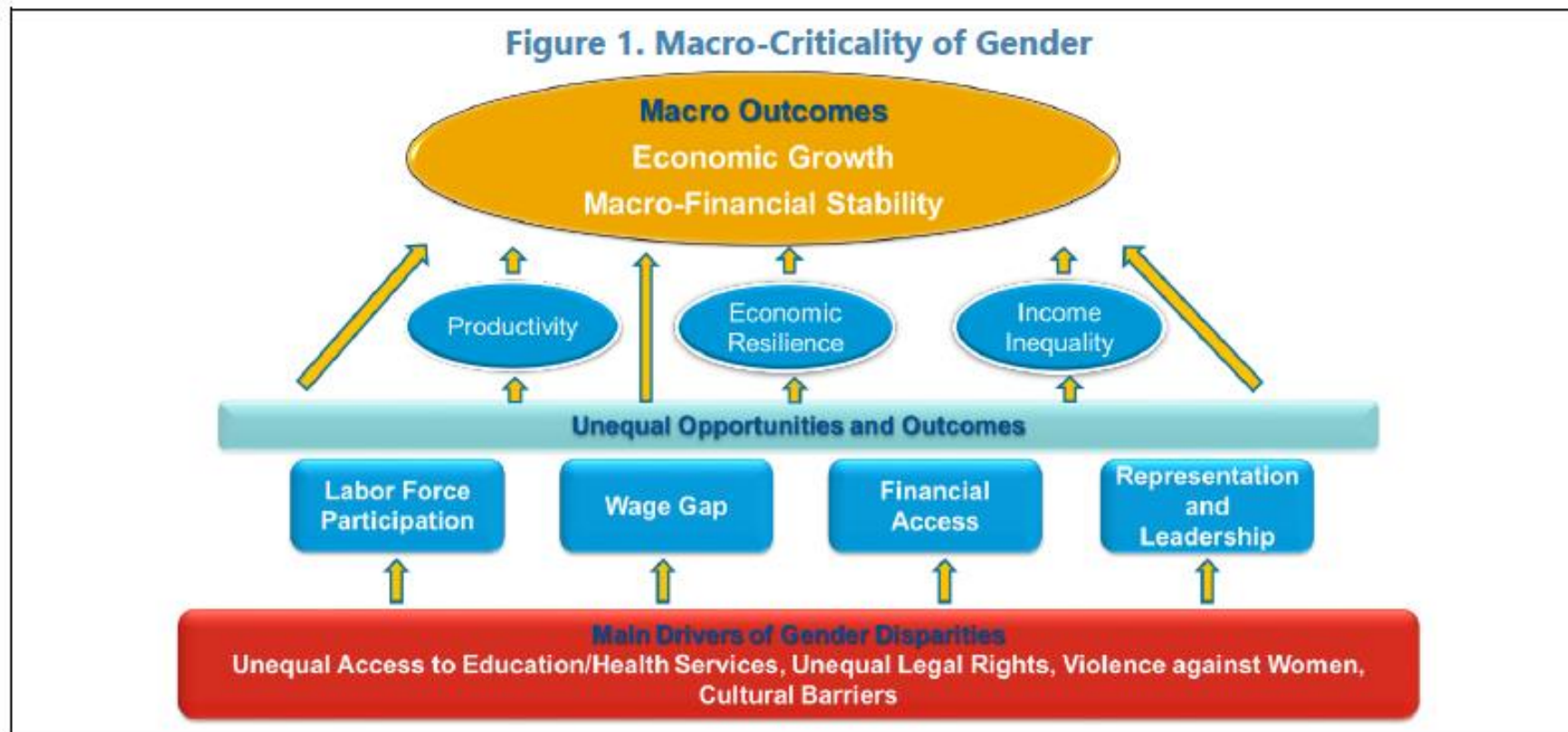
Employment policies matter

Note: High risk sectors are: manufacturing (C); wholesale and retail trade; motor vehicle and motorcycle repair (G); accommodation and food services (I); real estate activities (L); professional, scientific and technical activities (M); and administrative and support services (N). Medium-high risk (1) sectors are: the arts, entertainment and recreation (R); other service activities (S); domestic activities for household employers; undifferentiated goods and services activities undertaken by households for own use (T). Medium-high risk (2) sectors are: transportation and storage (H) and information and communication (J). Medium risk sectors are: construction (F); financial and insurance activities (K); and mining and quarrying (B). Medium-low risk sectors are: agriculture; and forestry and fishing (A). Low risk sectors are: electricity; and gas, steam and air-conditioning supply (D); water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities (E); public administration and defence; compulsory social security (O); education (P); and human health and social work activities (Q).

► Figure 2.1. Share of employment losses and gains by sector grouped according to risk of being impacted by the crisis, end of 2020, women and men



## ► The new IMF strategy for mainstreaming gender

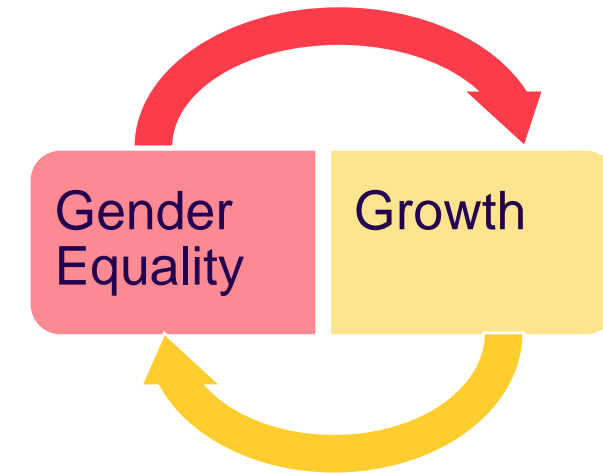


## ► An integrated gender-responsive macroeconomic policy framework

### From feminist (heterodox) macroeconomics

- Double causality in growth theory: from gender equality to growth (typically, productivity-enhancing measures, like education, that result in greater expected output in the long term) and from growth to gender equality (patterns of growth matter)
- Synergies in macroeconomic policies: macroeconomic policies provide an enabling environment for a job-rich, gender-responsive recovery. Recovery in turn generates revenue that allows for social protection policies, in particular care policies.
- A word of caution: there are also trade-offs.

### *Orthodox emphasis*



### *Heterodox emphasis*

# UN Women and ILO Joint Programme Promoting Decent Employment for Women through Inclusive Growth Policies and Investments in the Care Economy

## Policy Tool: *How to assess fiscal stimulus packages from a gender equality perspective*

- ▶ Identifies the transmission channels by which gender is salient in contributing to inequality and material deprivation, based on COVID-19 specific gendered effects.
- ▶ Discusses the adequacy of the size of fiscal packages relative to the size of the problem they are meant to solve.
- ▶ Fiscal stabilization and stimulus packages are assessed from a gender equality perspective, with guidance on indicators that can be used in policy assessments.
- ▶ Monetary policy is similarly assessed from a gender equality perspective.
- ▶ The tool considers the role of gender budgeting in the development and evaluation of fiscal and monetary stimulus packages.



## COVID-19 gender-responsive emergency and recovery policies

- ▶ Out of the almost 5000 measures taken by governments around the world to tackle the pandemic, as listed by the UN Women-UNDP “Gender tracker”, only 1,600 are gender sensitive. Half of them tackle violence against women.
- ▶ Social protection measures were the most extended (2223), and 448 (20 per cent) were gender responsive
- ▶ Out of the 1016 “economic, financial and fiscal support” measures listed only 146 (14 per cent) were classified as gender-responsive; and out of the 876 “labour market measures” only 158 (18 per cent) were

**Measures were classified as gender-responsive if they addressed female-dominated sectors or firms**

**Social protection measures were also fiscal expansions**

Number of measures by region

| Region       | All Measures | Gender Sensitive | Unpaid care | Violence against women | Women's economic security |
|--------------|--------------|------------------|-------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Africa       | 842          | 270              | 14          | 112                    | 144                       |
| Americas     | 1,265        | 455              | 50          | 227                    | 178                       |
| Asia         | 1,220        | 360              | 35          | 197                    | 128                       |
| Europe       | 1,360        | 419              | 113         | 247                    | 59                        |
| Oceania      | 281          | 101              | 14          | 70                     | 17                        |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>4,968</b> | <b>1,605</b>     | <b>226</b>  | <b>853</b>             | <b>526</b>                |

Last updated on 02-21-2021

Source: UNDP-UNW COVID-19 Global Gender Response Tracker Policy Measures Dataset. Living database, version 2 (March 22, 2021). Accessible at <https://data.undp.org/gendertracker/>



## ► Gender biases in mainstream macroeconomic policies

### Gender Biases of Mainstream Fiscal Policy

- Preference for austerity policies as way to solve problems (extreme case: “expansionary austerity”)
- Lack of investment in social services, particularly care, typically associated to low pay for care workers
- Subsidies and tax rebates privileging formal workers and firms
- Regressive taxation
- Absence of explicit gender-responsive targets
- In general, absence of financing for employment and for social protection

### Gender Biases in Mainstream Monetary Policy

- Focus on inflation targeting and on debt sustainability
- High interests rates and little access to credit

### Gender Biases of Mainstream Growth Policy

- Focus on GDP growth and not on growth patterns
- Instability and vulnerability to negative external shocks
- Trade liberalization can disproportionately affect women

## ► Moving towards a gender-responsive recovery

**Promote gender-responsive employment policies that address effectively the gender-specific effects of the COVID-19 crisis and support the creation of full and productive employment for women**

- Macroeconomic policies are gender-responsive when gender equality concerns are imbedded within fiscal and monetary policies
- Sectoral employment policies are gender-responsive when they promote a just transition to a gender-equitable, job-rich and environmentally sustainable economy
- Active labour market policies are gender-responsive when they support women's attachment to the labour market and guarantee their access to productive employment

**Promote appropriate public and private investments in the care sectors (health and education)**

- Investments in the care economy have the potential to create quality jobs, particularly for women, boosting labour demand; increase resilience and support women's attachment to the labour market
- The case for investments in care can be made on distributive, efficient and resilience grounds

**Avoid recessionary pressures, protect workers from the distributional impacts of inflation**

- Recessions and fiscal adjustments hit women harder
- Women are more exposed to the impacts of inflation ► [ilo.org](https://ilo.org)