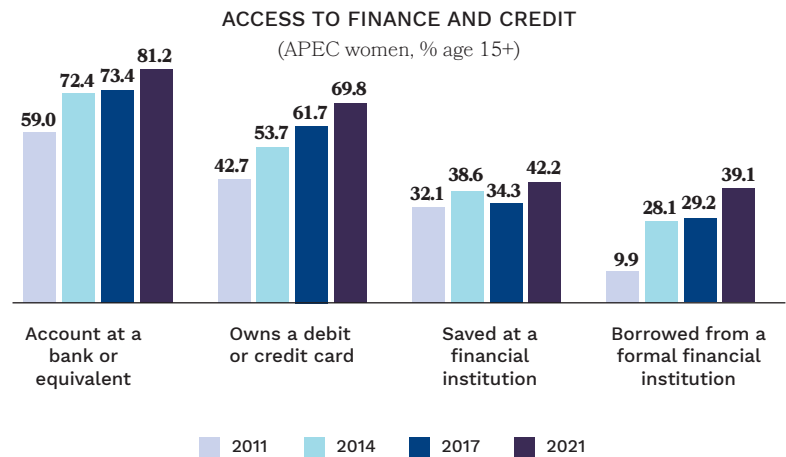


# Women in 2023: Access and Opportunities

The APEC Women and the Economy Dashboard measures areas that affect women's economic opportunities. The latest report reveals progress amid lingering barriers.

## CAPITAL AND ASSETS

- ▲ **Improved access to formal financial institutions amid the pandemic**, empowering women to participate in economic activities such as entrepreneurship.



SOURCE: World Bank Global Financial Inclusion Index Database (Global Findex)

- ▲ **Reduced gap between women and men in access to finance and credit**, reflecting a more inclusive financial system in the APEC region.



GAP BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN (%)

	2011	→	2021
Account at a bank, financial institution or mobile money account	5.0		1.6
Owns a debit or credit card	4.4		1.6
Saved at a financial institution	-0.5		0.3
Borrowed from a formal financial institution	1.3		0.3

- ▼ However, **only 9 out of 21** APEC economies have laws against credit discrimination based on sex.



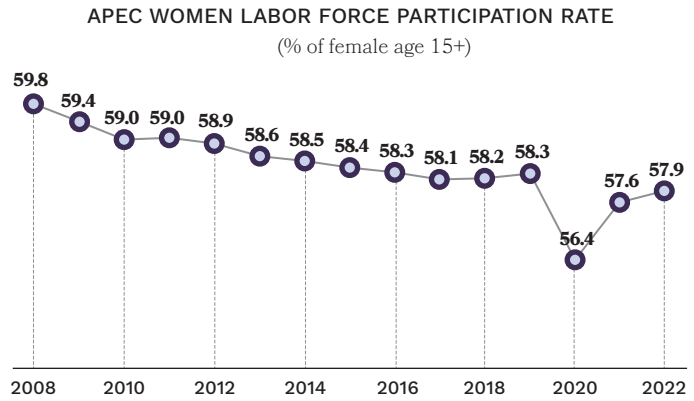
SOURCE: Women, Business and the Law (WBL)

**JOBS AND MARKETS**

**Women’s labor force participation declined during COVID-19, amid closures of:**

- frontline services, employing mostly women
- care facilities, increasing women's burden of unpaid work.

SOURCE: World Bank Gender Statistics and International Labour Organization (ILO)



While labor markets in APEC have progressively removed restrictions to encourage more women to participate...



**only 14 out of the 21** APEC economies allow women to work in industrial jobs in the same way as men do.

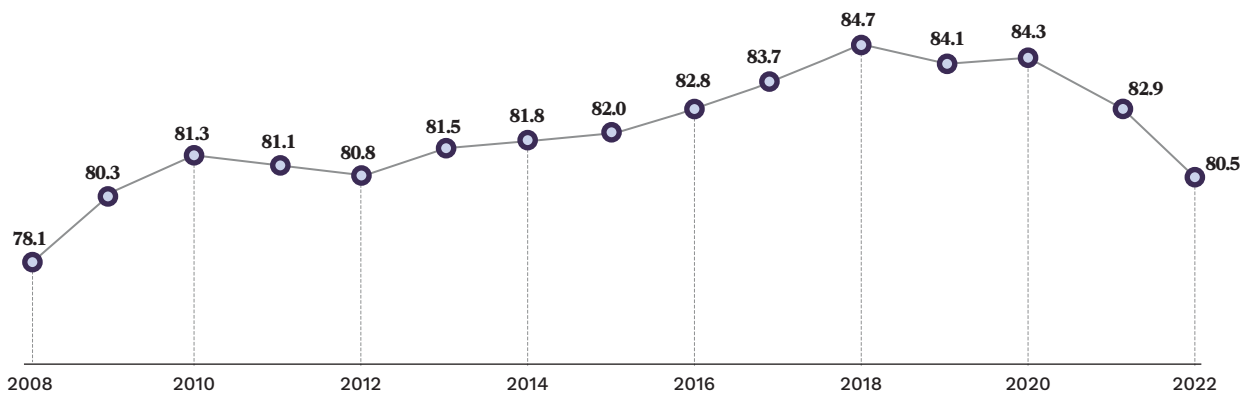
SOURCE: WBL



**only 16** APEC economies allow women to work in jobs deemed dangerous in the same way as men.

During the pandemic, firms faced international market access difficulties. Post-pandemic recovery is complicated by rising trade-restrictive measures, impacting MSMEs, many of which are women-owned/led.

ACCESS OF DOMESTIC COMPANIES TO INTERNATIONAL MARKETS (scale of 1-100, higher is better)



SOURCE: Heritage Foundation - Index of Economic Freedom

## HEALTH AND PROTECTION FROM VIOLENCE

▲ Considerable improvements in women’s health.

### Maternal mortality ratio declined



### Births attended by skilled attendants rose



SOURCE: United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF); World Health Organization (WHO); Gates Foundation; and Economy sources

▲ Safeguarding women from domestic violence and sexual harassment impact their well-being and productivity.



**20 APEC economies** have laws that provide protection to women who are victims of domestic abuse.



**19 economies** have specialized courts or procedures to process cases of domestic violence.



**17 economies** have laws against sexual harassment in the workplace.

SOURCE: WBL

## WAGES AND LEADERSHIP

▼ Wage inequality persists.

Women’s remuneration is **only 70%** of men’s.

**Only 11 out of 21** APEC economies have laws on equal remuneration for women and men for work of equal value.

▼ APEC still has a long way to go to achieve gender equality in leadership roles.

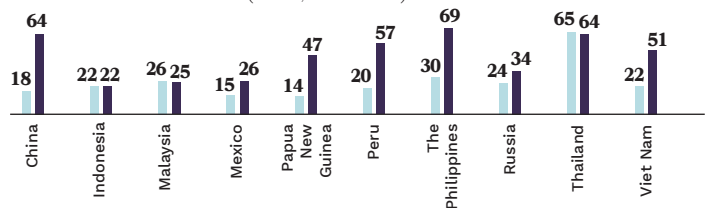


**Only 27%** of political leadership positions are held by women in 2022, the highest level achieved in 20 years.

SOURCE: Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and Global Gender Gap Report (GGGR)

More women owners than managers in APEC, reflecting in part women’s shift to entrepreneurship at the height of the pandemic.

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP ROLES IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR (2020, % of firms)



SOURCE: World Bank Gender Statistics and GGGR

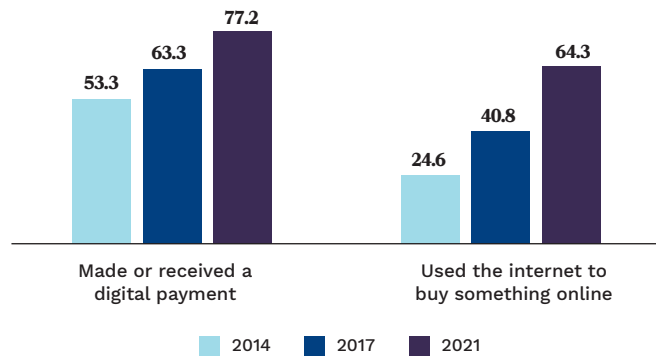
■ Percent of firms with a female top manager  
■ Percent of firms with female participation in ownership

## DIGITAL INCLUSION

▲ More women in the region are using digital payments or buying something online.

▼ Navigating rapid technological changes requires STEM-related skills. However, women's representation in STEM, R&D, and research and innovation has averaged **below 35%** in many APEC economies.

ACCESS TO DIGITAL FINANCIAL SERVICES  
(APEC women, % age 15+)



SOURCE: Global Findex

## ⚠️ TO ADDRESS

### POLICY AND DATA GAPS



**Improving women's representation in leadership roles** to advance gender equality in access and opportunities.



**Addressing policy gaps in access to credit and employment** widens opportunities for women to participate in the economy.

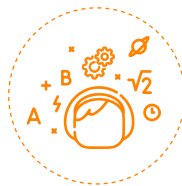


**Generating sex-disaggregated data** is key to better-informed and well-targeted policy interventions that promote women's empowerment.

### SEX-BASED BIASES



**Changing perceptions** of women's business and leadership skills as inferior to men's.



**Eliminating gender stereotypes**, such as girls being less interested in STEM subjects, women only pursuing traditional careers, and women being confined to homemaking roles.