



**'Working together to advance Trade and Gender'**  
**CETA Joint Committee Recommendation on Trade and Gender**

**21 September 2020**

Canada and the European Union believe that all segments of society can share in the benefits created by CETA, including traditionally under-represented groups such as women. Therefore, Canada and the EU have adopted a Trade and Gender Recommendation that seeks to recognize the importance of making trade policies and trade agreements more gender-responsive.

The Recommendation on Trade and Gender was adopted by the CETA Joint Committee at its first meeting in Montreal, Canada on September 26, 2018, marking a milestone in our strong bilateral relationship. The Recommendation acknowledges the importance of incorporating a gender perspective into economic and trade issues to ensure that economic growth benefits everyone. It also provides a framework for Canada and the EU to undertake work together on issues related to trade and gender, and establishes Contact Points to oversee this work, provide advice, and report on progress.

A comprehensive work plan on trade and gender is currently being implemented, with activities aimed at better understanding the gender-related effects of trade and sharing of information on ways to reduce barriers to the participation of women in international trade.

**Joint Activities Implemented**

Considerable progress in implementing the Trade and Gender Recommendation has been made over the past 18 months with many activities implemented, including eight under the Trade and Gender Work Plan (see Annex 1 for more detail). There were three types of joint activities: (1) those benefiting policy makers and decision makers in Canada and the EU; (2) activities seeking to benefit stakeholders including women-owned businesses; and, (3) collaboration in multilateral fora.

**1. Exchanges on Policy**

Designed to increase women's participation in international trade and the Parties' collective understanding around the issue, the recommendation highlights exchanging knowledge, experiences and best practices as activities the Parties may carry out as an area of cooperation.

Three videoconferences between Canadian and EU officials took place in 2019 to discuss best practices on a series of gender related topics, including: (1) current domestic gender equality laws, programming and policies; (2) policies and programs that support women entrepreneurs from both a domestic and international point of view; and (3) experiences on conducting impact assessments of trade agreements on both an ex-ante and ex-post basis.

## **2. Stakeholder Engagement**

With a view to engaging stakeholders and women-owned businesses, Canada and the EU implemented five activities. These included a Trade and Gender Roundtable discussion in July 2019 in Montreal, Canada, co-hosted by EU Commissioner Cecilia Malmström and the Honourable Jim Carr, Minister of International Trade Diversification, on the margins of the Canada-EU Summit. It brought together women entrepreneurs to hear about the challenges and opportunities they face in accessing the benefits of trade under CETA.

A CETA Trade and Gender workshop held in April 2019 in Brussels, Belgium. It included the participation of over 80 from civil society to discuss issues such as impact assessments and the need to address structural and implicit biases to advance inclusivity and support women in trade.

A Trade and Gender discussion during the CETA Civil Society Forum (CSF) held in November 2019 in Ottawa, Canada. It included more than 100 representatives from business and civil society from across Canada and the EU joining in person or connecting via web streaming.

Furthermore, two Trade and Gender focused webinars (in December 2018 and December 2019) were hosted by UN Women in the context of the EU-funded WE EMPOWER project. Canadian and EU speakers and stakeholders participated and spoke about women's business success stories and measuring gender responsive trade agreements, respectively.

Canada also hosted its first National GBA+ Forum in November 2018 in Ottawa, Canada, to discuss how GBA+ can strengthen policy development and implementation. The participation of the EU's Ambassador to Canada along with a Canadian trade negotiator on a panel at the Forum provided both economies the opportunity to discuss how trade agreements can be made gender-responsive and how conducting GBA+ of trade agreements or policies can serve that goal.

The EU also hosted the Trade for Her Conference in September 2019 in Brussels, Belgium, to discuss how to achieve greater involvement of women in international trade, in the EU and beyond. The conference looked into the results of the EU commissioned study, conducted by the International Trade Centre, on barriers for women in the European Union, who are engaged in international trade. Canadian officials participated in the conference and Canada's Ambassador to Italy spoke on a panel on developing gender responsive trade agreements.

## **3. Collaboration in Multilateral Fora**

Given our shared commitment and leadership in advancing gender responsive trade agreements, Canada and the EU were invited by Iceland, Botswana, WTO, UNCTAD and the International Trade Centre to participate in a WTO workshop under the Buenos Aires Declaration on Trade and Women Economic Empowerment. On March 28, 2019, Canada and the EU participated in the WTO workshop in Geneva that explored how and why to craft gender responsive trade agreements. The workshop explored the role for trade agreements in promoting gender equality; it analyzed how gender has been integrated into FTAs, regional integration agreements and preferential trade schemes; and discussed achievements to date. The workshop also reflected on new ideas on how the inclusion of gender issues in trade agreements may be made more impactful for women.

## **Results**

It is too early to show concrete results in improving the access of women to opportunities created by CETA and resulting benefits. Canada and the EU acknowledge the importance of collecting and assessing quantitative and qualitative data and evidence to understand the benefits as well as the challenges that women businesses face in seeking to take advantage of the opportunities created by CETA.

In terms of policy development process, the videoconferences and workshops are useful fora in which to exchange information and learn from each other's experiences in order to create more effective trade and gender policies in the future. The videoconferences often involve the parties sharing a variety of documents afterwards, based on what was discussed, to deepen each other's knowledge on these topics.

In the last 18 months, over 20 documents have been shared between Canada and the EU. This includes information on pay equity and the gender gap, data and reports on women's entrepreneurship and women in trade, initiatives on work to increase the number of women in STEM, guideline materials on conducting impact assessments of trade agreements and more. These documents can inspire further action in the Canadian or European context respectively.

## **Next Steps:**

To continue to build momentum on our shared commitment to advance women's economic empowerment and participation in trade, Canada and the EU will continue to work to identify opportunities for greater collaboration, including the continued implementation of their evergreen Trade and Gender Work Plan. In addition, Canada and the EU will work together to ensure that stakeholders continue to be engaged and that their views are factored into the activities under the work plan. Going forward, Canada and the EU will consider new activities for the work plan.

The full and equal participation of women in the economy and trade is essential to our economies' competitiveness and prosperity. We recognize that we cannot reach our full potential if we are leaving people behind. Canada and the EU will continue to work together to ensure that the benefits of trade are better shared among our people, including the traditionally under-represented such as women.

**Annex: Joint activities**

**Annex 1—Joint activities under the Recommendation on Trade and Gender**

**[Webinar - G7 Women in Business Success Stories under CETA](#)**

December 2018

The UN Women hosted a webinar supported by EU funding to the WE EMPOWER project to highlight success stories and best practices for women in business and women-owned business under CETA. Canadian and EU speakers and stakeholders participated in the webinar.

**[Videoconference on current domestic gender equality laws, programming and policies](#)**

February 2019

The first meeting of the CETA Joint Committee on Trade and Gender took place via videoconference in Ottawa and Brussels on February 20th, 2019. The EU delivered their presentation titled “Gender Equality in the European Union”, followed by the Canadian presentation titled “Gender Equality and Women’s Economic Empowerment”.

This provided an overall context on the EU and Canada’s policies related to gender equality to begin the implementation of the CETA Trade and Gender Recommendation. Parties agreed to share a series of decks, briefs, placemats and other relevant documentation on policies and programs.

**[Policy and business CETA workshop jointly sponsored by Canada and the EU](#)**

April 2019

Canada and the EU co-hosted a Policy and Business CETA Workshop in Brussels. The workshop gathered Trade and Gender experts, including government officials, women organizations, and businesswomen. The business workshop covered topics such as the barriers to entry faced by women, what can be done to increase participation of women, and provide an opportunity to share experiences and successes. The policy workshop discussed what types of support women entrepreneurs need to take advantage of CETA, what kind of events and activities could the EU or Canada support, and how can some of these challenges be addressed in CETA governance.

**[Videoconference on policies and programs that support women entrepreneurs](#)**

June 2019

The second meeting of the CETA Joint Committee on Trade and Gender took place via videoconference in Ottawa and Brussels on June 14, 2019. The exchange of information served to implement action item #3 of the Canada-EU work plan on policies and programs that support women entrepreneurs from both a domestic and international point of view. The objectives of the exchange were to: 1) increase the understanding and awareness of the ecosystem of support for business women in the EU and Canada, 2) understand the characteristics of businesswomen in both parties, 3) provide information that could be shared with women-owned/led businesses, and 4) support the growth of women entrepreneurs to take advantage of CETA’s opportunities.

## **Trade and Gender Roundtable**

July 2019

A roundtable on trade and gender in the context of CETA was held on the margins of the Canada-EU Summit in Montreal, Canada with the participation of EU Commissioner for Trade Cecilia Malmstrom and Canada's Minister for International Trade Diversification, Jim Carr. The event brought together a number of public sector representatives and women entrepreneurs from the private sector.

## **[Videoconference on conducting impact assessments of trade agreements](#)**

October 2019

Canada and the EU held a videoconference to share their respective experiences on conducting impact assessments of trade agreements. The Canadian presentation discussed the process for conducting GBA+<sup>1</sup> on trade agreements in Canada, and presented some preliminary findings and best practices from the ex-ante GBA+ of Canada-Mercosur FTA negotiations. The EU presentation explained the Commission's framework for conducting impact assessments of FTAs on an ex ante and ex post basis, including how they integrate gender considerations into this work.

## **[Civil Society Forum](#)**

November 2019

The annual CETA Civil Society Forum (CSF) is an important dialogue mechanism for European and Canadian stakeholders to exchange views on the implementation of three CETA chapters: Chapter 22 (Trade and Sustainable Development), Chapter 23 (Trade and Labour) and Chapter 24 (Trade and Environment), as well as the joint recommendations on Trade and Gender, SMEs and Climate Action.

The second CSF took place in Ottawa and included the participation of more than 100 leaders from business and civil society, including Indigenous leaders and youth ambassadors, from across Canada and Europe joining in person, or connecting via web streaming. An additional 60 participants from federal, provincial, territorial, and European bodies joined in-person and online. A special presentation was delivered on trade and gender in order to bring civil society up to date on the activities under the recommendation, as well as informing them of challenges and opportunities for future work.

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<sup>1</sup> GBA+ is an analytical tool used by the Government of Canada to assess how diverse groups of women, men and non-binary people may be affected by domestic and international policies, programs, initiatives, organizations and activities. GBA+ also considers many other identity factors, like race, ethnicity, religion, age, and mental or physical disability, and can be used as a tool to better understand the impact of trade on women's participation in the economy and gender equality.

## [Webinar - Assessing the Impact of Trade Agreements on Women's Economic Empowerment](#)

December 2019

The WE EMPOWER G7 Team hosted a webinar on "Assessing the Impact of Trade Agreements on Women's Economic Empowerment". This webinar explored ways to measure the success of trade agreements on women's economic empowerment by looking at the opportunities for women exporters and women in the labour market economy. The session focused on the recent Canada-EU CETA and analyzed the model for measuring and capturing inclusive gender-sensitive data to assess the impact of trade agreements and better inform inclusive trade agreements. Canadian and EU officials presented during the webinar to an international audience which included numerous Canadian and EU stakeholders.