



Trading-in Gender Equality? The EU and Free Trade Agreements

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Trade and Gender

Widespread assumption that trade is a rising tide that lifts all boats

- Silence about the inequalities and deleterious social impacts, and often adverse, differential impacts on women relative to men.
- European Union (EU) is a powerful trade actor with the greatest market share of world trade in goods and services.

Trade and gender

1) Trade exacerbates existing structural gender inequalities

E.g. OECD trade-related employment losses in globally-competitive sectors also female labour-intensive sectors

2) Structural gender inequalities are barriers to building trade capacity within any country to take advantage of global market liberalisation

Gender Equality an enabler of trade integration?

- High-level EU commitments to mainstreaming gender equality in development and trade relationships (Amsterdam, Lisbon, Beijing PFA, CEDAW).
- Preamble to Cotonou Agreement between EU and ACP countries pledges that:
“Systematic account shall be taken of the situation of women and gender issues in all areas – political, economic and social”

Questions...

- What impact does EU global trade policy have on gender equality — especially beyond the Union?
- To what extent have EU institutions addressed the structural gendered power of trade in policy dialogues, instruments, and agreements?

Existing EU Initiatives

**Ex Ante Impact of
FTAs using EU
Sustainability Impact
Assessments (SIAs)**

Structural Power of Trade

**Ex Ante Impact of
FTAs using EU
Sustainability Impact
Assessments (SIA)**

**Labour, human rights,
sustainable
development clauses**

Structural Power of EU Trade

**Ex Ante Impact of
FTAs using EU
Sustainability Impact
Assessments (SIA)**

**Labour, human rights,
sustainable
development clauses**

**Empowering non-
state actors and civil
society dialogue in
trade policy**

SIA Gender Impacts

SIA Gender Impacts

Gender Analysis

SIA Gender Impacts

Gender Analysis

**Impact of
Agricultural
Liberalisation**

**Employment and
Production**

Summary of SIAs

Gender Analysis

**Impact of
Agricultural
Liberalisation**

**Employment and
Production**

**Services
Liberalisation**

SIA Gender Impacts

Gender Analysis

**Impact of
Agricultural
Liberalisation**

Issues

- *Methodological challenges of assessing ex ante impact*
- *Need for Flanking Measures*
 - *No specific policies outlined*
- *Not used to Inform Trade Negotiations*

Future Gender-Equal Trade Policy

- What approaches could enable the EU to redress negative gender impacts and promote gender equality and human rights as part of its commitment to advancing the social dimension of globalization?

New instruments

- Development benchmarks during and after trade agreements
- Product or sector exemptions under WTO special and differential treatment
- Targeted adjustment support and capacity building for gender-specific sectors/products
- Policies supporting marginalised women exporters, access to finance, market info, etc
- IPR for indigenous women and small trades
- Monitoring policy coherence between human rights commitments and trade agreements

Conclusion

- Is trade is too blunt a tool to address the social dimension of globalisation (Mandelson)?
- No -- trade agreements could be used as tools for addressing negative gendered impacts and for promoting gender equality at the same time as moving toward more integrated global trade