Session 8 · 30 July 2026

Gender in Trade Assessment in Georgia

Georgia's Experience: Linking Trade, Business and Gender Data

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International Workshop on Gender Statistics · Wuhan, China · July 2026

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Why Gender in Trade Matters for Georgia

A small, open economy where trade shapes livelihoods — but who benefits?

100%+

Trade-to-GDP ratio

Exports and imports together exceed Georgia's entire GDP — trade policy is economic policy

International Mandate

2017 Buenos Aires Declaration on Trade and Women's Economic Empowerment — Georgia among signatories committed to gender-responsive trade policy

SDG Alignment

Directly supports SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 8 (Decent Work & Economic Growth) — trade as a vehicle for women's economic empowerment

A Data Gap, Until 2021

Until the UNECE partnership, Georgia had no systematic gender analysis of its trading sector — who owns, who's employed, who's paid what

Methodology: Two Complementary Approaches

A 2021 partnership with UNECE, under the Development Account project on gender-responsive trade policy

APPROACH 1 · Sectoral Analysis

Mapped 5 key export products (HS codes) to NACE economic activity sectors: motor vehicles, grape wines, mineral waters, hazelnuts, wearing apparel

Data sources: Annual Business Statistics (2015–2019), Structure of Earnings Survey (2017)

Limitation:

Imprecise mapping between export product codes (HS) and economic activity codes (NACE) limited precision — confirmed the need for a more granular approach

APPROACH 2 · Microdata Linking

Enterprise-level linkage of customs data, business register, employment, and ownership records using a common business register ID

Coverage: ~10,000 trading companies; linked traders represent 90%+ of total trade value

Why preferred:

Enterprise-level precision; enables analysis of ownership, employment, and wages together — by sector, trade direction, and over time

How Microdata Linking Works

Four data sources, linked at the enterprise level via a common business register ID

Customs Data

Revenue Service,
Ministry of Finance

Business Register

Statistical Business
Register

Employment Data

Structure of Earnings
Survey

Ownership Records

National Agency of
Public Registry (NAPR)

Enterprise-Level Microdata Linking

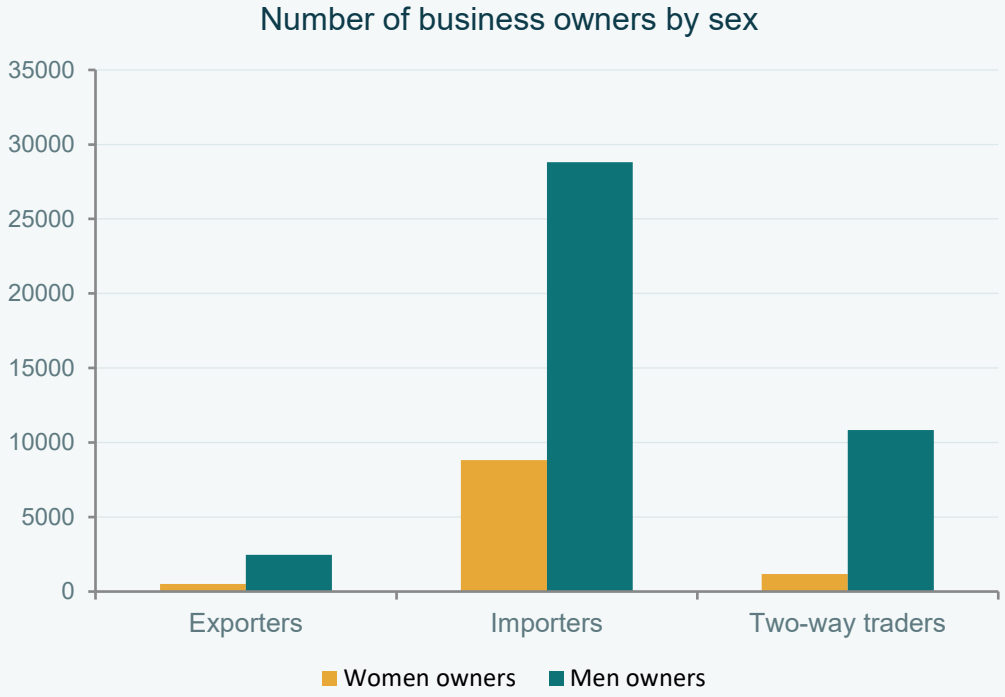
~10,000 trading companies tracked

What this enabled:

Gender-disaggregated analysis of who owns trading companies, who's employed in them, and what they're paid — by sector, by trade direction, and over time

Finding 1: The Ownership Gap

Who owns Georgia's trading companies?



Key Ratios

9×	Men outnumber women as owners of two-way traders
5×	Men outnumber women as owners of importers
14%	Women's trade-weighted ownership share — importers
4%	Women's trade-weighted ownership share — two-way traders

Source: Geostat — External Trade Data, Structural Business Statistics & Statistical Business Register (2021 assessment)

Finding 2: The Employment Gap is Narrowing

Women-to-men employment ratio in trading companies, 2016–2020

0.53 → 0.64

Improvement over 5 years, driven by higher employment growth rates for women in trading firms

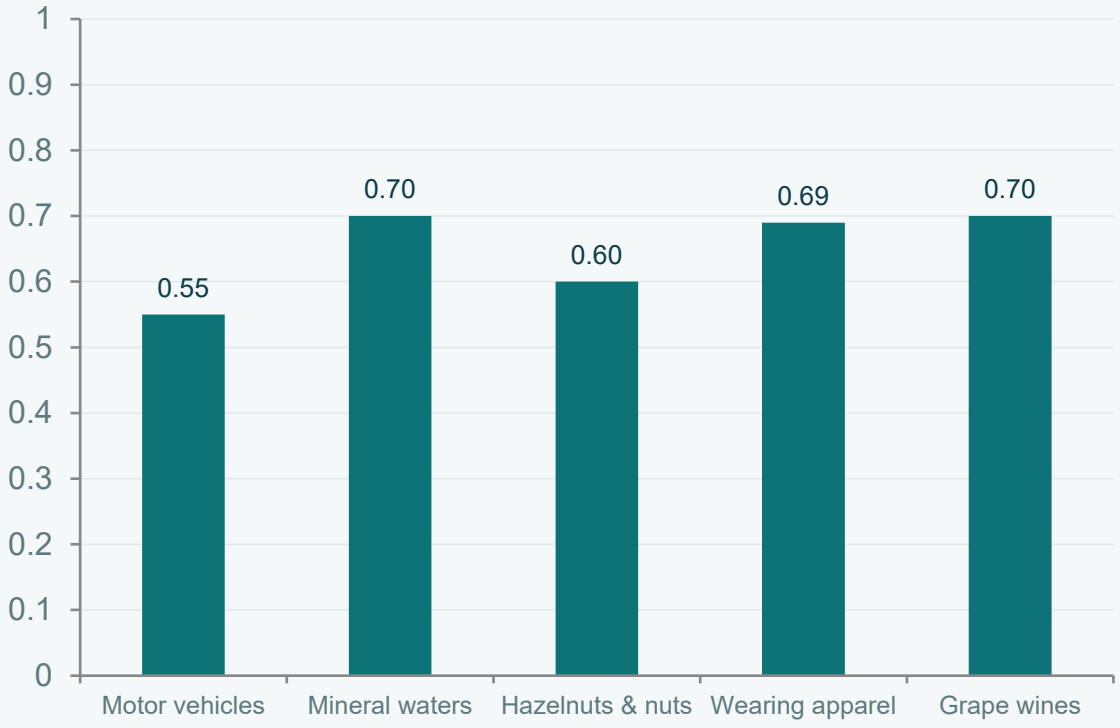
What this means

Encouraging progress on access to employment — but as the next slide shows, employment is not the same as equal pay

Source: Geostat assessment with UNECE, 2021

Finding 3: Persistent Wage Gaps Across Export Sectors

Women-to-men wage ratio by key export sector (2015–2019 average)



Key Findings

- All 5 sectors fall below parity (1.0)
- Motor vehicles: lowest ratio at 0.55
- Occupational segregation drives much of the gap within sectors
- Managers show the highest gender pay gaps across sectors

Source: Geostat — Annual Business Statistics & Structure of Earnings Survey

Two Deeper Patterns

Skill level and ownership both shape the size of the gender gap

Gender Pay Gap by Skill Level

18.3% High-skilled workers (importers)

45% Managers & low-skilled workers (highest gaps)

Pattern: the gender pay gap narrows substantially among high-skilled occupations

Ownership-Equality Link

+20 pp

Higher women-to-men employment ratio

...in companies where women's ownership share is equal to or exceeds men's, compared to majority male-owned firms

Pattern: who owns the company shapes who gets hired and how equitably they're treated

From Pilot to Practice

Methodology, data quality, and the road to regular production

Data Quality Checks

- Cross-validation: trade values vs. business turnover
- Employment figures validated against wage records
- Ownership cross-referenced with NAPR registry data

Known Limitations

- Structure of Earnings Survey is quinquennial — limits occupational detail
- Working hours data insufficient for hourly wage gap calculation
- Monthly wage comparisons may overstate true gender pay gaps

Path to Sustainability

- Databases already exist and are regularly updated
- Microdata linking process now documented & repeatable
- Fits within existing staff resources — no major new investment needed

From Evidence to Policy

Turning data into dialogue with policymakers

Ministry of Economy & Sustainable Development

Using gender-disaggregated trade data to evaluate the SME Development Strategy, especially Priority 4 (export growth) and Priority 6 (women's entrepreneurship)

UN Women Georgia

Ongoing policy dialogue on integrating gender indicators into national trade strategy and women's economic empowerment programming

UNECE / UNCTAD

Georgia's methodology contributes to the broader UNECE Development Account project on gender-responsive trade policy across the region

Challenges & Lessons Learned

⚠ Challenges

- Quinquennial earnings survey limits granular occupational analysis
- Working hours data quality insufficient for precise hourly wage comparisons
- No formal MoU yet between Geostat, MoESD, and UN Women for this specific workstream
- Moving from one-off assessment to regular, institutionalised production

✓ Lessons Learned

Microdata linking is feasible

Existing infrastructure and IT capability made this achievable without major new investment

Ownership data matters

Who owns a company is as important as who's employed there for understanding gender gaps

Disaggregate by skill level

Aggregate wage gaps can mask very different patterns at different occupational levels

Build policy bridges early

Engaging MoESD and UN Women from the start created direct paths from data to strategy

Way Forward

Moving from pilot assessment to institutionalised gender-in-trade statistics

01

Institutionalise Production

Move gender-in-trade indicators from one-off assessment into Geostat's regular statistical programme

02

Improve Working Hours Data

Strengthen working-hours collection to enable accurate hourly (not just monthly) wage gap calculations

03

Formalise Partnerships

Establish a Memorandum of Understanding with MoESD and UN Women for sustained gender-in-trade collaboration

04

Expand Sectoral Coverage

Extend enterprise-level analysis beyond initial pilot sectors to the full range of Georgia's exporting industries

Georgia's methodology — enterprise-level microdata linking for gender-in-trade analysis — is a replicable model now shared with UNECE member states

Key Takeaways

- 🔗 Microdata linking across trade, business, and employment registers reveals gender patterns invisible in aggregate statistics
- 🏢 Ownership matters: men outnumber women 9:1 among two-way trading company owners
- 📈 Progress is possible: women's employment in trading firms improved from 53% to 64% parity in 5 years
- ⚖️ Wage gaps persist across all major export sectors, but narrow significantly among high-skilled workers
- 🤝 Sustainable practice: existing infrastructure + clear policy partners = a replicable model for other countries

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Thank You

გმადლობთ · 谢谢

Reliable Data for Right Decisions!

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