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**Advancement of women: implementation of the outcome
of the Fourth World Conference on Women and of the
twenty-third special session of the General Assembly**

Measures taken and progress achieved in follow-up to and implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution [70/133](#) and aims to support the Assembly in monitoring the implementation of the guidance provided in that resolution. It focuses on the extent to which selected intergovernmental processes of the United Nations integrate gender perspectives into their work. It provides a quantitative and qualitative assessment of progress achieved and remaining gaps, in comparison to previous years. The report concludes with recommendations for further measures to enhance the implementation of gender equality mandates throughout the work of the United Nations.

* [A/72/150](#).



I. Introduction

1. In its resolutions on the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and the full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, the Assembly has consistently called upon the bodies of the United Nations system to increase efforts to fully mainstream a gender perspective into all issues under their consideration and within their mandates. At its seventieth session, the Assembly adopted resolution [70/133](#) in which it requested the Secretary-General to report on a biennial basis on the follow-up and progress made in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. The present report covers progress made in a number of intergovernmental processes since the seventieth session.

2. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development confirmed the centrality of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls to the achievement of sustainable development and poverty eradication, and for progress across all the Sustainable Development Goals and targets. It also confirmed that the systematic mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the implementation of the Agenda was crucial. These commitments create clear expectations for gender-responsive implementation and follow-up at all levels, including in the work of intergovernmental processes.

II. Integration of a gender perspective into the work of selected intergovernmental bodies

3. The present report is based on an analysis of the content of reports of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its seventy-first session and of the resolutions adopted by the Assembly at that session, as well as the reports of the Secretary-General at the 2016 session of the Economic and Social Council¹ and its functional commissions. Resolutions adopted by the Council and its functional commissions at that session were also analysed. The reports and resolutions examined were those that were available in the Official Document System of the United Nations as at 10 June 2017. Where documents were submitted to more than one intergovernmental body or committee, they were considered only once. As the same methodology has now been used for seven years, the analysis of trends gives a solid picture of change over time. Given that the present report is the first biennial report, data pertaining to the seventieth session of the General Assembly and the 2015 session of the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions have also been included in the analysis, tables and figures, as applicable.

A. Methodology

4. The documents reviewed for the present report were examined for evidence of the incorporation of a gender perspective, as determined by the presence of the following keywords: gender, sex, woman, man, girl, boy, female, male, sexual, reproductive and maternal, including their plural forms where applicable. Documents with at least one occurrence of a keyword were considered to have included a gender perspective. False positive results, for instance “man-made disaster” or “sexual exploitation” with no mention of the sex of the victims or of the perpetrators, were discounted.

¹ In accordance with General Assembly resolution [68/1](#), the Economic and Social Council programme of work uses a July-to-July cycle.

5. The selected words are those most often found in reports and resolutions that address gender equality issues. In addition, documents that passed the first filter were analysed in more depth to assess the extent to which a gender perspective had indeed been included.

B. Quantitative findings

6. In total, 282 reports of the Secretary-General and 328 resolutions adopted by the intergovernmental bodies whose work was reviewed were considered for the present analysis. As at 10 June 2-17, the General Assembly alone had considered 245 reports of the Secretary-General and adopted 288 resolutions at its seventy-first session. At its 2016 session, the Economic and Social Council reviewed eight reports of the Secretary-General and adopted 28 resolutions. The functional commissions, excluding the Commission on the Status of Women, considered 29 reports of the Secretary-General and adopted 12 resolutions at their sessions in 2016. Thus, intergovernmental bodies had many opportunities to incorporate gender perspectives into their work.

7. Table 1 shows the trends over time in the number of reports and resolutions per body from 2011 to 2016. The trends show a notable steady decrease in the number of reports submitted to, and resolutions adopted by, the Council and its functional commissions.

Table 1
Number of reports and resolutions, 2011-2016

Body	Reports						Resolutions					
	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
General Assembly	245	259	238	249	214	249	288	267	280	275	257	259
Economic and Social Council	8 ^a	11	12	15	17	24	28	30	30	43	37	40
Functional commissions	29 ^b	33	33	33	41	53	12	16	18	31	30	46
Total	282	303	283	297	272	326	328	313	328	349	324	345

^a The Secretary-General submitted seven reports to the Economic and Social Council. To maintain consistency with previous years, one overview was included in the analysis (E/2016/50).

^b To maintain consistency with previous years, one note by the Secretariat submitted to the Commission for Social Development was included in the analysis (E/CN.5/2016/4).

8. Five of the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly had an exclusive focus on gender equality issues, namely on women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control (71/56), trafficking in women and girls (71/167), intensifying global efforts for the elimination of female genital mutilation (71/168), intensification of efforts to end obstetric fistula (71/169) and intensification of efforts to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls: domestic violence (71/170).

9. The Economic and Social Council continued to adopt annual resolutions on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system (2016/2) and on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women (2016/4). In 2016, the Council also adopted a resolution on the multi-year programme of work of the Commission on the Status of Women (2016/3). While it is crucial that intergovernmental bodies address gender equality issues in a targeted and focused manner, it is equally important that a gender perspective be mainstreamed across all areas of work.

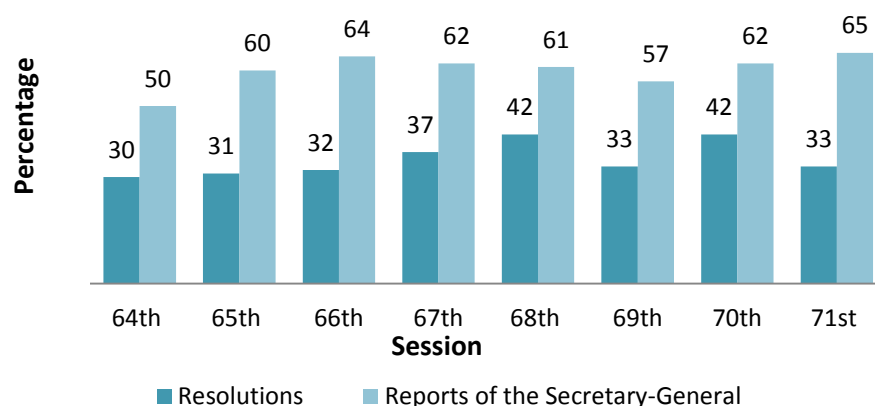
10. The findings in the present report confirm that the year-to-year pattern of inclusion of gender perspectives in documents of the General Assembly and of the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions remains inconsistent.

1. General Assembly

11. Figure I shows that, at the seventy-first session of the General Assembly, the percentage of resolutions with a gender perspective reverted to the level reached at the sixty-ninth session; however, the percentage of reports of the Secretary-General submitted to the Assembly with a gender perspective reached its highest level to date.

Figure I

Trends in the percentage of General Assembly documents that include a gender perspective



(a) Reports of the Secretary-General

12. Reports of the Secretary-General support intergovernmental discussions and can inform resolutions adopted by intergovernmental bodies. Of the 245 reports of the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly at its seventy-first session, 65 per cent included a gender perspective (see figure I and table 2), representing an increase of eight percentage points from the sixty-ninth session. The increase confirms that gender equality and women's empowerment considerations are addressed across a broad range of substantive areas.

13. From the sixty-ninth to the seventy-first sessions (see table 2 and figure II), there was an increase in the percentage of reports with a gender perspective submitted to all Main Committees. The greatest increase occurred in the reports submitted to the Second (Economic and Financial) and Fourth (Special Political and Decolonization) Committees (by 16 and 22 percentage points, respectively). The proportion of such reports submitted to the Third (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Affairs) Committee increased by 12 percentage points, while reports to the First (Disarmament and International Security), Fifth (Administrative and Budgetary) and Sixth (Legal) Committees increased by 11 percentage points. Reports with a gender perspective submitted to the Second and Fifth Committees reached their highest percentage to date (88 and 57 per cent, respectively). While there was an increase in the total number of reports considered in plenary meetings, the inclusion of gender perspectives in those reports decreased by 7 percentage points. At the same time, more

than three fourths of the reports submitted to the Second and Third Committees and of those considered in plenary meetings incorporated gender perspectives.

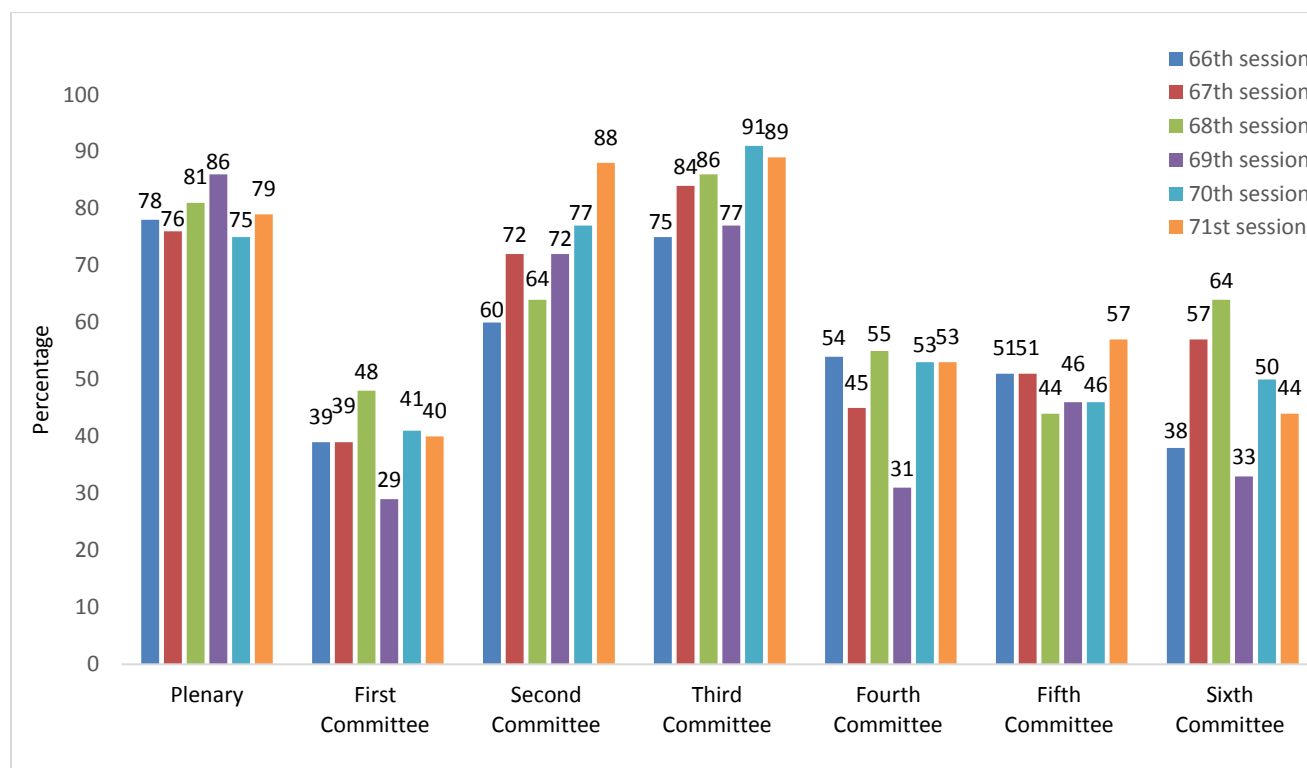
Table 2

Number and percentage of reports of the Secretary-General submitted at the seventy-first session of the General Assembly that include a gender perspective

<i>Body to which reports are submitted</i>	<i>Number of reports</i>	<i>Number including a gender perspective</i>	<i>Percentage including a gender perspective</i>
Plenary	42	33	79
First Committee	30	12	40
Second Committee	26	23	88
Third Committee	35	31	89
Fourth Committee	17	9	53
Fifth Committee	79	45	57
Sixth Committee	16	7	44
Total	245	160	65

Figure II

Trends in the share of reports of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly that include a gender perspective, by Main Committee



(b) Resolutions

14. A total of 33 per cent of the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its seventy-first session integrated a gender perspective. The analysis of resolutions by Main Committee (see table 3 and figure III) shows uneven trends. The percentage of resolutions with a gender perspective that originated in the First, Second, Third and

Fifth Committees increased by 3, 17, 5 and 2 percentage points, respectively, compared with the sixty-ninth session. In contrast, the percentage of such resolutions originating in plenary meetings and in the Fourth and Sixth Committees decreased by 2, 7 and 2 points, respectively. By far, the highest number of resolutions with a gender perspective came from the Second and Third Committees, representing 61 and 66 per cent, respectively, of the total number of draft resolutions that they adopted.. In comparison, such resolutions represented 40, 18 and 4 per cent, respectively, in plenary meetings and the Fourth and Sixth Committees, which were new low points. While the total number of resolutions adopted directly in plenary meetings increased from 15 per cent at the sixty-ninth session to 20 per cent at the seventy-first session, those that included a gender perspective decreased.

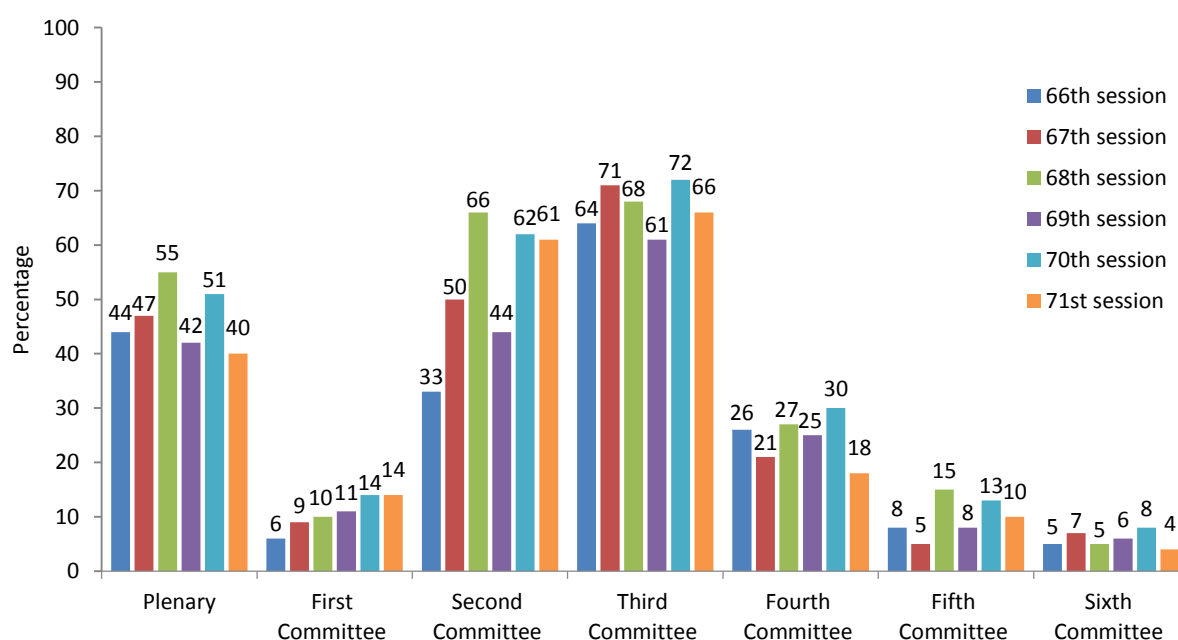
Table 3

Number and percentage of General Assembly resolutions adopted at the seventy-first session that include a gender perspective

<i>Originating body</i>	<i>Number of resolutions</i>	<i>Percentage of total resolutions (288)</i>	<i>Number including a gender perspective</i>	<i>Percentage including a gender perspective</i>
Plenary	58	20	23	40
First Committee	64	22	9	14
Second Committee	36	13	22	61
Third Committee	50	17	33	66
Fourth Committee	34	12	6	18
Fifth Committee	21	7	2	10
Sixth Committee	25	9	1	4
Total	288	100	96	33

Figure III

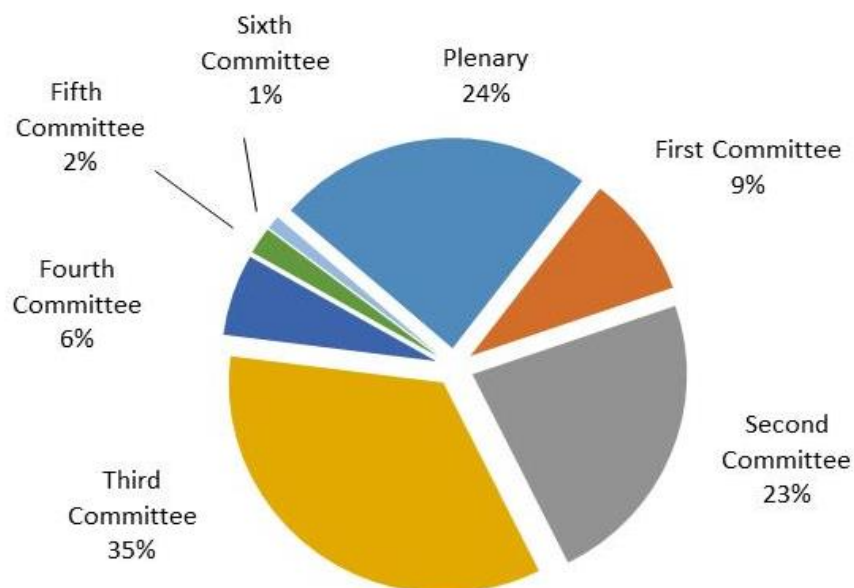
Trends in the share of resolutions of the General Assembly that include a gender perspective, by Main Committee



15. An examination of the contribution made by the Main Committees and the General Assembly in plenary meetings to the pool of resolutions with a gender perspective (see figure IV and table 3) confirms that the Third Committee remains the main source of such resolutions. The Third Committee contributed 35 per cent of all General Assembly resolutions that included a gender perspective at the seventy-first session, which is, however, a decrease of 6 percentage points compared with the sixty-ninth session, when it contributed 41 per cent of those resolutions. The number of contributions by the Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Committees did not change from the sixty-ninth session, while the contribution by the General Assembly in plenary meetings decreased from 25 to 24 per cent. The First and Second Committees increased their contributions to the overall number of resolutions with a gender perspective by 3 and 5 percentage points, respectively (from 6 and 18 per cent at the sixty-ninth session to 9 and 23 per cent at the seventy-first session, respectively). The decrease in contributions by the Third Committee can be explained by the 5 percentage points decrease in its contribution to the overall number of resolutions adopted at the seventy-first session, from 22 per cent at the sixty-ninth session to 17 per cent at the seventy-first session.

Figure IV

Origin of all General Assembly resolutions adopted at the seventy-first session that include a gender perspective



16. The Second and Third Committees remain responsible for submitting more than half of the resolutions containing a gender perspective, accounting for 58 per cent of the total number of such resolutions, compared with 59 per cent at the sixty-ninth session. Given the sizeable contribution of the Second and Third Committees to the overall pool of resolutions, their continued systematic inclusion of gender perspectives will be essential to advancing the issue. Similarly, as only 40 per cent of the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly in plenary meetings included a gender perspective, opportunities for taking better account of gender perspective in this forum need to be explored.

17. Three possible factors may have contributed to the decline in the overall percentage of resolutions with a gender perspective between the seventieth and the seventy-first sessions. The number of resolutions emanating from the Third

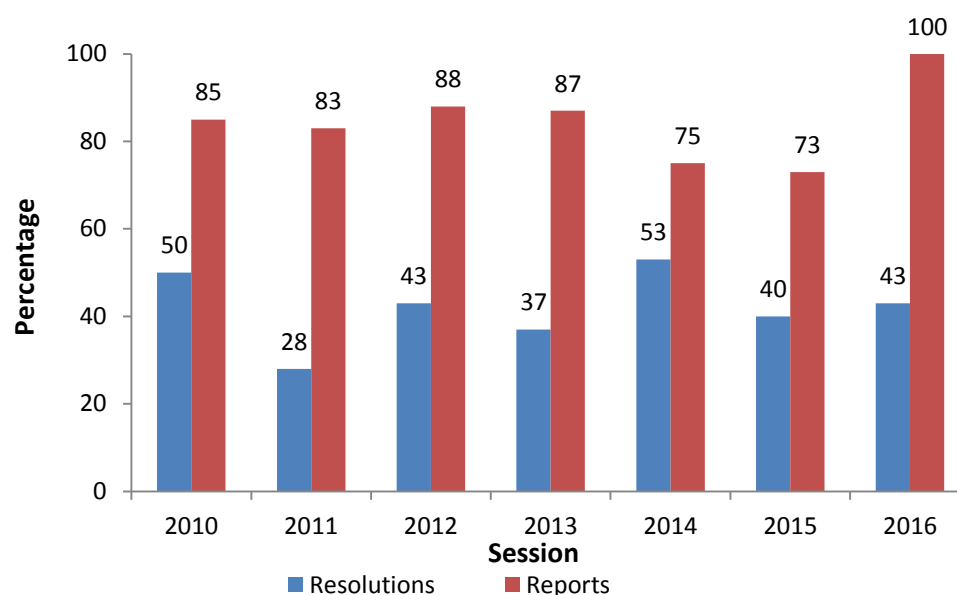
Committee declined, thus reducing the relative weight of its contribution to the total number. The Fourth Committee changed its past practice of adopting a single draft resolution under agenda item 58, on the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples,² and instead adopted 11 resolutions, none of which included a gender perspective.³ The Sixth Committee adopted five new resolutions on the status of observers, without a gender perspective. These resolutions account for 6 per cent of the 288 resolutions adopted at the seventy-first session and analysed for this report, or two thirds of the decline in the overall percentage of resolutions with a gender perspective.

2. Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions

18. Figure V shows inconsistency in the inclusion of gender perspectives in the resolutions of the Economic and Social Council. In 2016, 43 per cent of resolutions and 100 per cent of reports of the Secretary-General to the Council contained a gender perspective. The sample size underpinning the analysis of the present section is very small, with only eight reports.⁴ This represents a decrease of four reports compared with the 2014 session.

Figure V

Trends in the share of Economic and Social Council documents that include a gender perspective



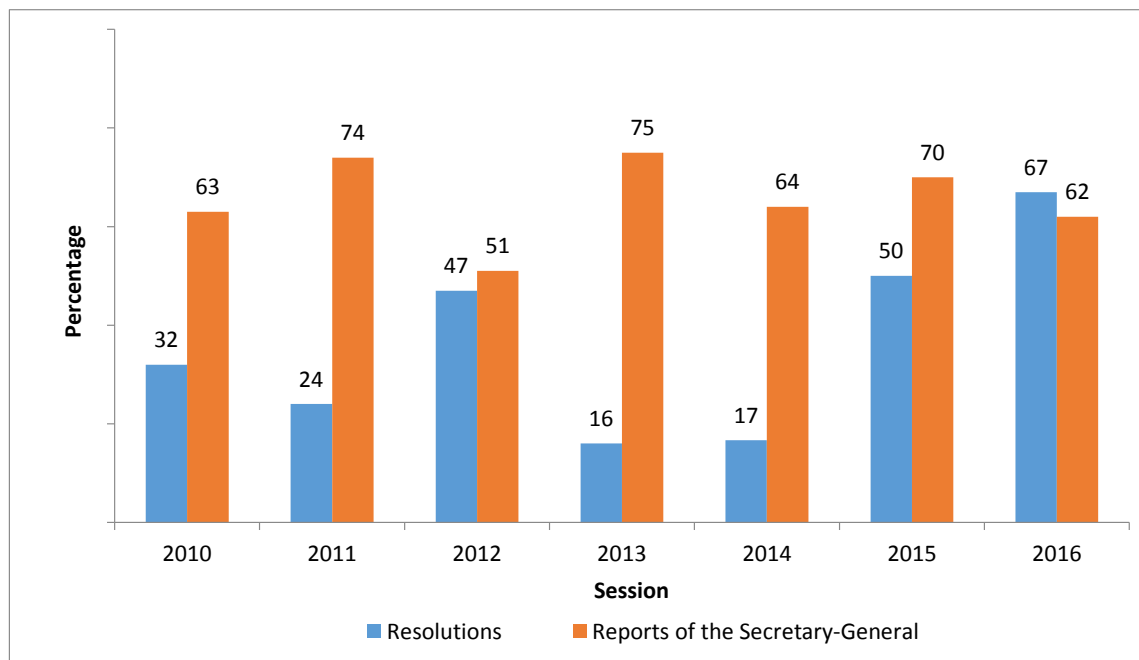
19. Figure VI shows a substantial increase in the inclusion of gender perspectives in the resolutions of the functional commissions, from 17 per cent in 2014 to 67 per cent in 2016. Of the reports of the Secretary-General submitted to the functional commissions, 62 per cent reflected a gender perspective in 2016, which is down by 2 percentage points compared with 2014 and down by 8 percentage points compared with 2015, when 23 out of 33 reports (i.e. 70 per cent) included a gender perspective.

² General Assembly resolution [70/102](#).

³ General Assembly resolutions [71/108](#) to [71/118](#).

⁴ The Secretary-General submitted seven reports to the Council. For purposes of consistency with the 2014 analysis, a note by the Secretariat was also included ([E/CN.5/2016/4](#)).

Figure VI
Trends in the share of documents of the functional commissions that include a gender perspective



(a) Reports of the Secretary-General

20. As is the case for the General Assembly, reports of the Secretary-General submitted to the Economic and Social Council are more likely to include a gender perspective than Council resolutions (see figure V and table 4). Of the eight reports of the Secretary-General submitted to the Council in 2016,⁵ six are recurrent reports and two are newly mandated reports relating to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development ([E/2016/64](#) and [E/2016/75](#)).

21. Of the 29 reports submitted by the Secretary-General to the functional commissions in 2016, 18 reports (62 per cent) included a gender perspective (see figure VI and table 4). The Statistical Commission and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs had the lowest percentage of reports including gender perspective, with 20 and 50 per cent, respectively. All reports submitted to the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, the Commission for Social Development and the Commission on Population and Development included a gender perspective.

⁵ The majority of documents submitted to the Council originate either from subsidiary bodies or other entities of the United Nations system.

Table 4

Number and percentage of reports of the Secretary-General submitted to the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions that include a gender perspective^a

<i>Body to which report is submitted</i>	<i>Number of reports</i>	<i>Number including a gender perspective</i>	<i>Percentage including a gender perspective</i>
Economic and Social Council	8	8	100
Functional commissions of the Council	29	18	62
Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice	5	4	80
Commission on Narcotic Drugs	4	2	50
Commission on Science and Technology for Development	2	2	100
Statistical Commission	10	2	20
Commission on Population and Development	5	5	100
Commission for Social Development	3	3	100
United Nations Forum on Forests ^b	4	3	75

^a These results do not include the Commission on the Status of Women, owing to its exclusive focus on gender equality issues.

^b The United Nations Forum on Forests meets biennially and last met in 2015. For purpose of the present analysis, data from 2015 has been included in the table.

(b) Resolutions

22. The number of resolutions adopted by functional commissions varied greatly between 2010 and 2016, as represented in figure VII. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice consistently prepare several draft resolutions for final adoption by the General Assembly; the Statistical Commission traditionally only adopts decisions, which are not considered in this analysis; and the United Nations Forum on Forests meets biennially and last convened in 2015, when it adopted a ministerial declaration.

23. In 2016, the Economic and Social Council adopted 28 resolutions⁶ (see table 5), 4 fewer than in 2014. A gender perspective was included in 43 per cent of the resolutions, representing a decrease of 10 percentage points compared with 2014, but an increase of three percentage points compared with 2015. The pattern of significant fluctuation in the work of the Council thus continues, from a low of 28 per cent in 2011 to a high of 53 per cent in 2014. The decrease of gender perspectives in resolutions adopted at the 2016 session can partially be attributed to the simultaneous decrease in the total number of resolutions adopted at that session (from 30 resolutions in 2014 to 28 in 2016) and the adoption of three new procedural resolutions that did not include a gender perspective.⁷

24. Nine of the 12 resolutions adopted by the Economic and Social Council with a gender perspective had initially been drafted by functional commissions, including the Commissions for Social Development, on the Status of Women, on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, on Narcotic Drugs and on Science and Technology for Development. This confirms the critical importance of the gender-responsive contribution of the functional commissions to the work of the Council.

25. The functional commissions (excluding the Commission on the Status of Women, owing to its exclusive focus on gender equality issues) registered a significant increase in attention to gender equality issues in their resolutions, from

⁶ Draft resolutions that the functional commissions recommended for adoption by the Economic and Social Council, or by the General Assembly through the Council, are counted once, under the body that adopted them.

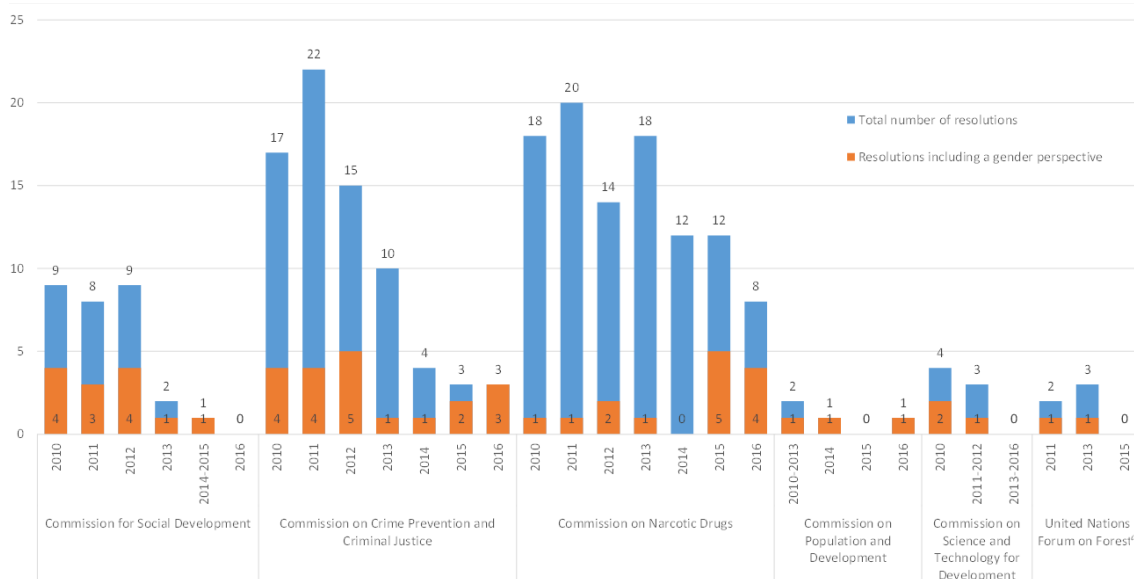
⁷ Economic and Social Council resolutions 2016/10, 2016/11 and 2016/12.

17 per cent in 2014 to 67 per cent in 2016 (see figures VI and VII and table 5). The increase can be attributed, however, to the decrease in the total number of resolutions (18 in 2014 compared with 12 in 2016).

26. The higher proportion of resolutions of the functional commissions that include a gender perspective can be attributed to the proportional increase of such resolutions adopted by the Commissions on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and on Narcotic Drugs. One hundred per cent (or three resolutions) of the draft resolutions adopted by the former included a gender perspective in 2016, compared with 25 per cent in 2014; and 50 per cent (or four out of eight resolutions) of the draft resolutions adopted by the latter included a gender perspective, compared with 25 per cent in 2014. As these two Commissions, once again, contributed by far the largest number of resolutions to the outputs produced by the functional commissions (11 out of the total 12 resolutions), the impact of their work on the overall statistic is decisive. At the same time, the Commission on Population and Development adopted one draft resolution that included a gender perspective, as it also did in 2014. The Commissions for Social Development and on Science and Technology for Development and the United Nations Forum on Forests did not adopt any resolutions.⁸

Figure VII

Trends in the share of resolutions of the functional commissions that include a gender perspective



^a The United Nations Forum on Forests meets every two years.

⁸ In 2016, the Commission for Social Development recommended three draft resolutions for adoption by the Council, on the social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (adopted as 2016/7), on rethinking and strengthening social development in the contemporary world (adopted as 2016/8), both of which included a gender perspective, and on future organization and methods of work of the Commission for Social Development (adopted as 2016/6). The Commission on Science and Technology recommended two draft resolutions for adoption by the Council, on science, technology and innovation for development (adopted as 2016/23) and on assessment of the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (adopted as 2016/22), both of which included a gender perspective. In 2015, the United Nations Forum on Forests prepared a draft resolution on international arrangements on forests beyond 2015, with no gender perspective, for adoption by the Council (2015/33) (reflected in the analysis used for table 5 and figure VII).

Table 5
Number and percentage of resolutions of the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions that included a gender perspective in 2016

<i>Originating body</i>	<i>Number of resolutions</i>	<i>Number including a gender perspective</i>	<i>Percentage including a gender perspective</i>
Economic and Social Council	28	12	43
Functional commissions of the Council	12	8	67
Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice	3	3	100
Commission on Narcotic Drugs	8	4	50
Commission on Population and Development	1	1	100
Commission for Social Development	0	0	0
Commission on Science and Technology for Development	0	0	0
United Nations Forum on Forests	0	0	0

27. As in previous years, the work of the Commission on the Status of Women was not included in the analysis of content covered in the present report, in order to avoid biased results. The Commission's work during 2016 confirmed that it is the unchallenged leader at the global level on gender equality and the empowerment of women. The agreed conclusions on the priority theme of women's empowerment and the link to sustainable development (E/2016/27, chap. I.A) provided a detailed road map for the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Commission urged Governments and all other relevant stakeholders to take action in the following five areas: strengthening normative, legal and policy frameworks; fostering enabling environments for financing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls; strengthening women's leadership and women's full and equal participation in decision-making in all areas of sustainable development; strengthening gender-responsive data collection, follow-up and review processes; and enhancing national institutional arrangements. The Commission also adopted two resolutions and submitted two draft resolutions for adoption by the Council.

28. The work of the Commission on the Status of Women as a catalyst for gender mainstreaming has assumed an even more important role in recent years, especially as the Commission also contributes to the follow-up to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to accelerate the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. The Commission's work can facilitate the integration of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls through national, regional and global reviews of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and ensure synergies between the follow-up to the Beijing Platform for Action and the gender-responsive follow-up to the 2030 Agenda.

C. In-depth analysis

29. The level of attention given to gender equality issues and the positioning of the references to such issues within reports and resolutions provide an indication of the importance given to gender perspectives. In-depth analysis suggests that reports and resolutions often vary greatly in the level of attention given to gender equality issues.

1. Positioning of references to gender issues

30. The position of references to gender issues within intergovernmental documents determines their prominence and could influence the likelihood of follow-up actions. The reports of the Secretary-General draw more attention to gender equality issues when such references are included not only in the body of the report but also in the conclusions or recommendations. The emphasis on gender equality issues in resolutions is stronger when those issues are referred to in the preambular and operative parts and when a specific action or recommendation to address the gender issue under consideration is included. Such an assessment was carried out for documents of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council only, to maintain comparability with previous findings.

31. A significant number of reports of the Secretary-General that include a gender perspective do not contain a separate conclusions or recommendations section. Such reports tend to vary in content but may include, for example, certain budgetary documents (e.g. [A/71/640](#) and [A/71/732](#)) or reports on the status of conventions.⁹ As these reports may contain multiple references to gender equality but lack a conclusions or recommendations section, the level to which they promote a gender perspective cannot be determined by the positioning of references but rather by their coverage and quality. Therefore, an additional category (not applicable) for such reports has been added since the previous report ([A/70/180](#)) to reflect more accurately how gender issues are approached in all types of reports of the Secretary-General.¹⁰ This adjusted methodology informs the findings in the following section.

32. An analysis of the positioning of relevant references in reports of the Secretary-General shows that, in many of them, only passing attention is given to gender equality issues (see figures VIII and IX). Of the 160 reports with a gender perspective submitted to the General Assembly, 33 per cent contained relevant references in the body of the report only; and 28 per cent included references in both the body of the text and in the conclusions or recommendations (figure VIII). Thirty-nine per cent of reports with gender equality references did not include a conclusions or recommendations section. There were no reports that included references only in the conclusions or recommendations section. These percentages are very similar to the results from the sixty-ninth session.

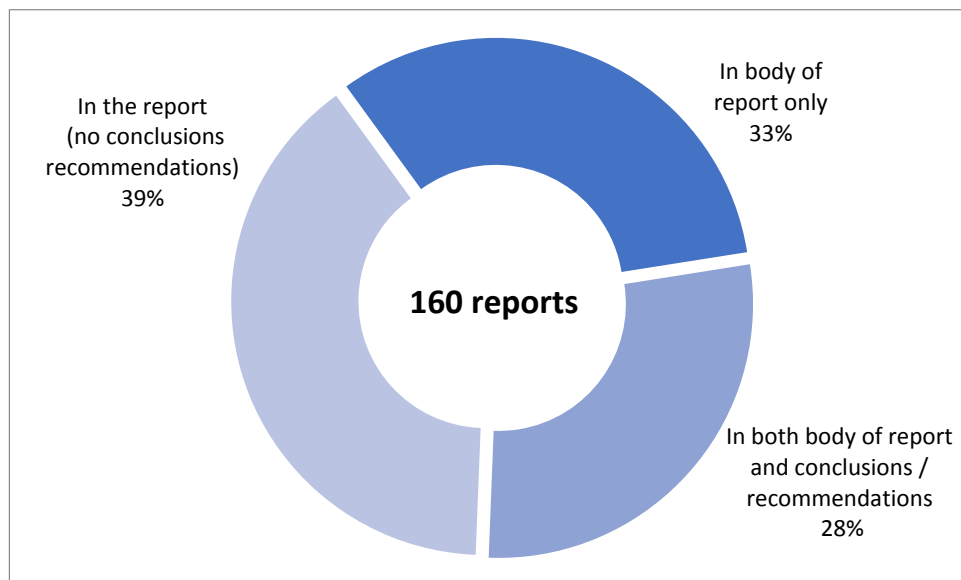
33. As shown in Figure IX, of the eight reports with a gender perspective that were submitted to the Economic and Social Council, 50 per cent contained references to gender equality in the body of the text only, an increase of 39 percentage points compared with 2014. Thirteen per cent of those reports included references in both the body of the text and in the conclusions or recommendations, a reversal from 2014 when in more than half of the reports with a gender perspective, the references were included both in the body and in the conclusions and/or recommendations section, while only 11 per cent included references in the body of the text.

34. The findings above confirm that, despite progress in systematic attention to gender equality issues in reports, more efforts are needed by author departments to include a gender perspective both in the body of reports and in the policy recommendations that the Secretary-General submits to intergovernmental bodies.

⁹ Other examples include the reports on measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction ([A/71/122](#)) and on strengthening and coordinating United Nations rule of law activities ([A/71/169](#)).

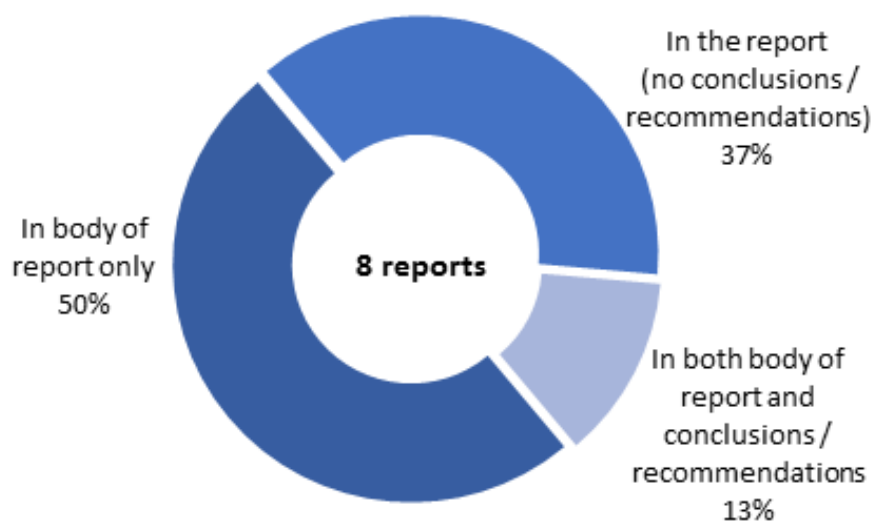
¹⁰ In figures VIII and IX, this category is identified as “In body of report (no conclusions/recommendations)”.

Figure VIII
Position of references to gender issues in reports of the Secretary-General for the seventy-first session of the General Assembly



Note: No reports included references to gender issues in the section on conclusions and/or recommendations only.

Figure IX
Position of references to gender issues in reports of the Secretary-General to the Economic and Social Council in 2016



Note: No reports included references to gender issues in the section on conclusions and/or recommendations only.

35. The analysis of the positioning of gender-related references in resolutions of the General Assembly and of the Economic and Social Council revealed that such references were most likely to be found in both the preambular and operative parts of resolutions (see figures X and XI). Sixty-six per cent of resolutions of the Assembly and 67 per cent of resolutions of the Council included gender equality

references in both the preambular and operative parts. The second most likely scenario was the inclusion of a gender perspective in the operative part only, with no reference to gender issues in the preambular part (24 per cent of resolutions of the Assembly and 17 per cent of resolutions of the Council). Few resolutions integrated a gender perspective in the preambular part only (10 per cent of resolutions of the Assembly and 16 per cent of resolutions of the Council). These findings are consistent with those of past years.

Figure X

Position of references to gender issues in resolutions of the seventy-first session of the General Assembly

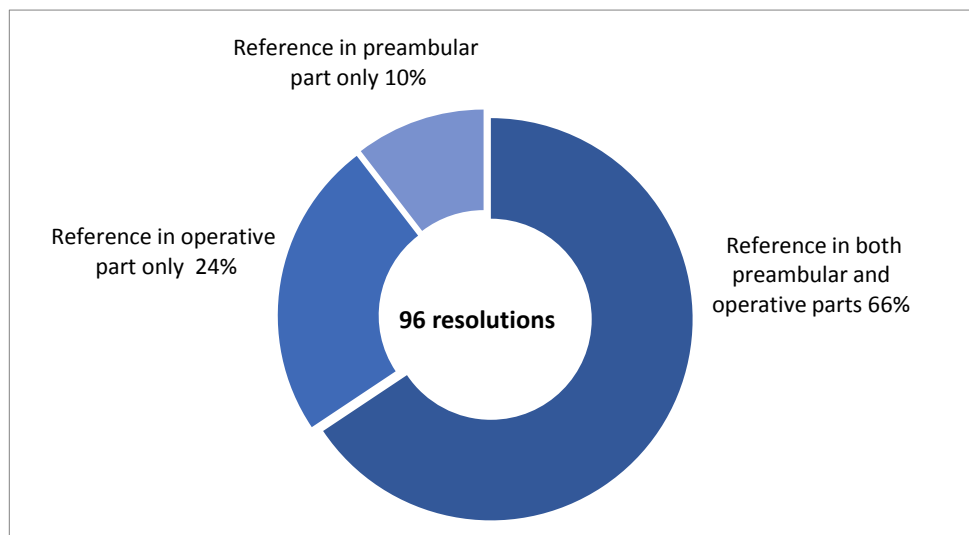
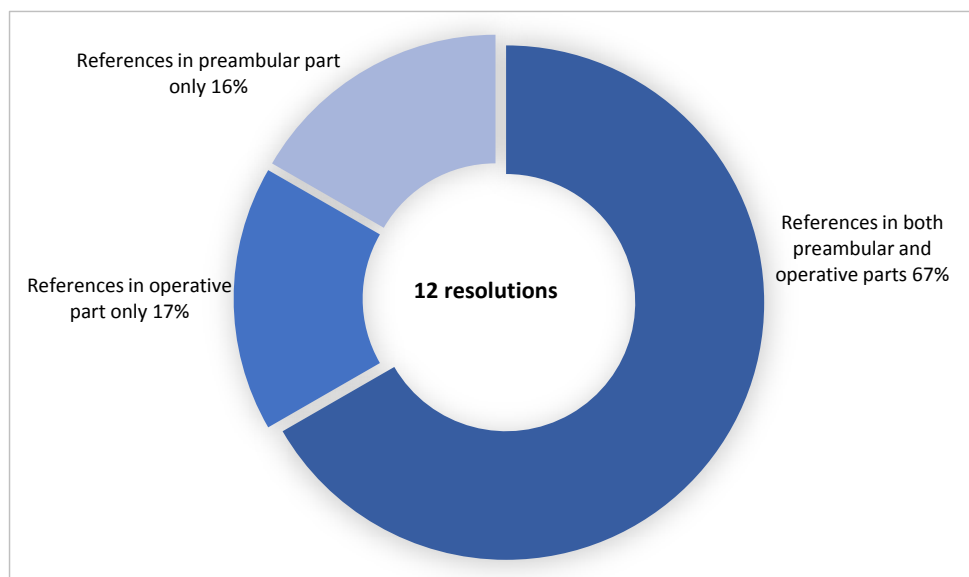


Figure XI

Position of references to gender issues in resolutions of the Economic and Social Council in 2016



2. Qualitative assessment

(a) Methodology

36. Although gender perspectives may be reflected in key sections of a report or resolution, their impact depends on the strength of the analysis and language used. To assess this strength, reports of the Secretary-General and resolutions were reviewed against two qualitative variables, namely the “coverage” of gender equality issues and the “quality” of the gender equality discussion.

37. Reports that included a specific section on gender equality issues as well as several references throughout the report were considered to have high coverage, a single reference or a few short references were defined as low coverage and medium coverage fell somewhere in between. The quality analysis of reports characterized cursory references such as “including women” as low quality, while reports that provided precise facts and evidence, including quantitative data disaggregated by sex and/or explicit gender analysis, were classified ranging from medium to high quality. Assessing the quality of such reports is an important step towards differentiating perfunctory references to gender-related terminology from a more attentive analysis of gender equality issues.

38. For example, the report on the implementation of the Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008-2017) ([A/71/181](#)) was considered to be of high quality as it undertakes a careful gender analysis of poverty while reviewing gender-related structural challenges to poverty in cross-cutting issues, including education, health care and informal employment. Other examples are the report on international cooperation against the world drug problem ([A/71/316](#)) and the biennial report on the review of the implementation of the commitments made towards Africa's development ([A/71/203](#)), which were given higher qualitative and quantitative ratings than their previous iterations.

39. Resolutions were analysed against one variable and categorized as having a low, medium or high focus on gender equality issues. Resolutions that included a single, passing reference to gender equality issues were considered to have a low focus and resolutions with a high focus on gender equality issues were identified by the occurrence of a keyword in more than one paragraph or by the inclusion of specific language on the situation and needs of women and girls or men and boys.

(b) Reports of the Secretary-General

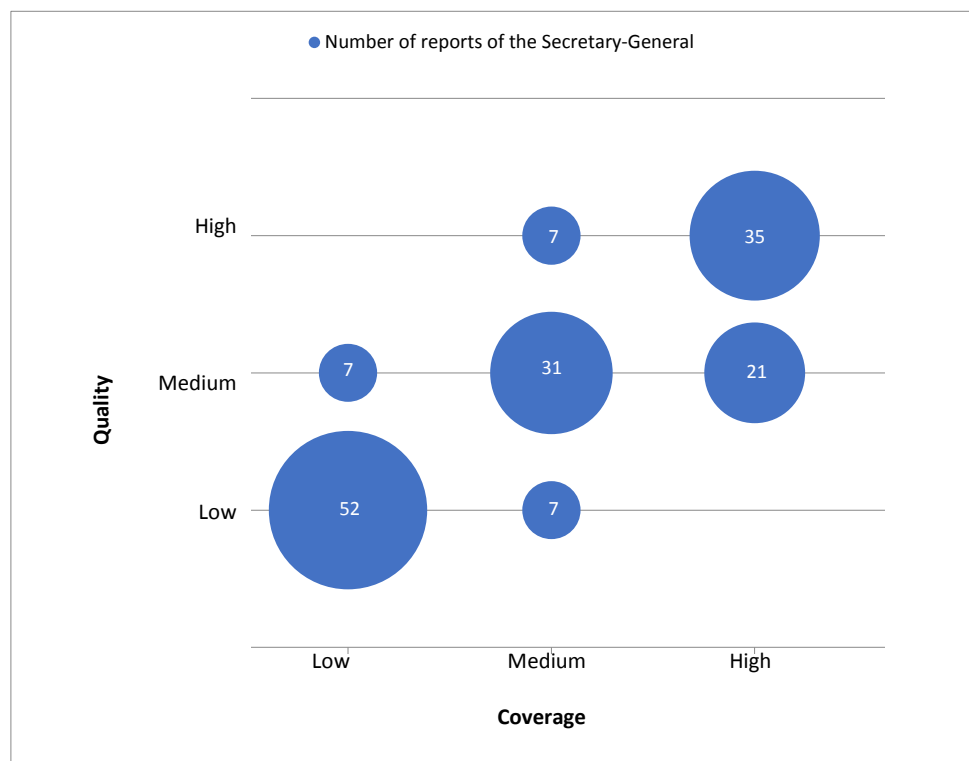
40. The distribution of the reports of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly across the two variables of coverage and quality is illustrated in figure XII below. The distribution of reports across the two axes demonstrates that reports varied widely both in the coverage of gender equality issues and in the characteristics of those inclusions. There tended to be a general correlation between coverage and quality: reports that did not give much coverage to gender equality issues were also likely to have only superficial references to the issues, while reports with extensive coverage tended to include more precise information and a deeper analysis. As at the sixty-ninth and seventieth sessions, there were more reports with low coverage and of low quality (52 of 160 reports) than reports with high coverage and of high quality (35 of 160 reports).

41. The percentage of reports rated as high/high, medium/high or high/medium increased from 37 per cent at the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly to 39 per cent at the seventy-first session. This percentage, however, was 43 per cent at the seventieth session. At the same time, the percentage of reports rated as low/low, medium/low and low/medium decreased from 47 per cent at the sixty-ninth session to 41 per cent at the seventy-first session. The percentage of reports in the middle

spectrum (medium/medium) increased slightly from 16 per cent at the sixty-ninth session to 19 per cent at the seventy-first session.

Figure XII

Coverage and quality of gender equality references in reports of the Secretary-General for the seventy-first session of the General Assembly, by frequency



42. The strength of the gender perspective in reports of the Secretary-General that did not have a separate conclusions or recommendations section was assessed using the coverage and quality test. Of the 63 reports in this group, 43 per cent were rated as high/high, medium/high or high/medium, representing an increase of 7 percentage points from the sixty-ninth session. The percentage of such reports of the Secretary-General rated low/low, medium/low or low/medium was 38 per cent, reflecting a decrease of 2 percentage points from the sixty-ninth session. The percentage of such reports in the middle range (medium/medium) decreased from 24 per cent at the sixty-ninth session to 19 per cent at the seventy-first session.

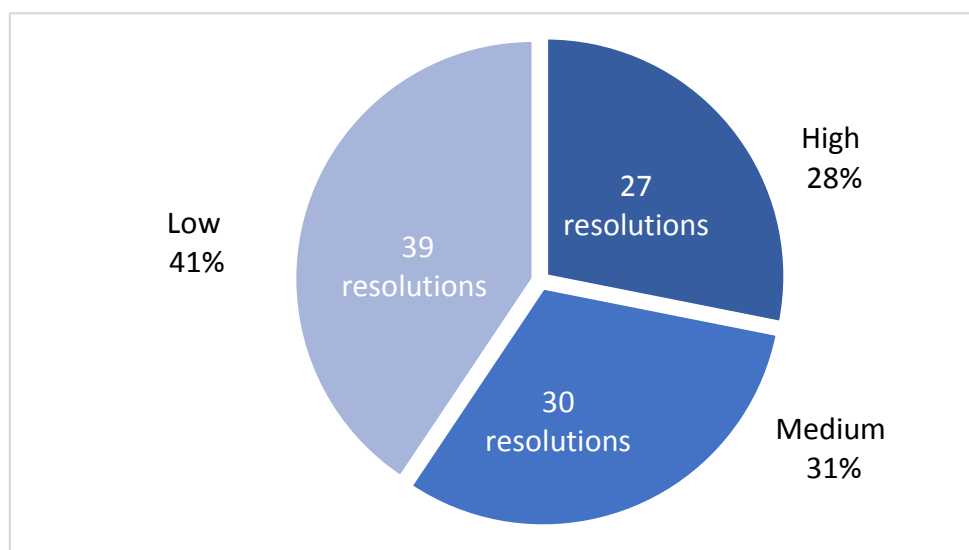
(c) Resolutions

43. As shown in figure XIII, of the 96 resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its seventy-first session that included a gender perspective, 27 resolutions (28 per cent) showed a high focus on gender equality issues, which is similar to the sixty-ninth session, which had 25 resolutions (27 per cent) in this group. The percentage of resolutions with a medium focus on gender equality issues increased by 10 percentage points compared with the sixty-ninth session, from 21 to 31 per cent. This suggests that resolutions with a gender perspective at the seventy-first session had a higher focus on gender equality issues in terms of quality and coverage than at the sixty-ninth session.

44. Of the 27 resolutions with a high focus on gender equality issues, 21 had explicit references to a corresponding report.¹¹ Sixty-seven per cent of the corresponding reports had references to gender issues not only in the body but also in the conclusions or recommendations. These figures suggest a strong correlation between gender issues in the conclusions or recommendations of reports of the Secretary-General and related language in the operative part of the corresponding resolutions. The correlation was also noted in the previous report on this issue (A/70/180).

Figure XIII

Extent of focus on gender equality issues in resolutions including a gender perspective at the seventy-first session of the General Assembly



45. In its resolutions the General Assembly addressed gender equality issues in different ways, including by calling for an integration of a gender perspective into the issue under consideration, the recognition of the importance of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in the issue under consideration and the recognition of gender-specific vulnerabilities and gender gaps in several areas. In the resolutions, the General Assembly called for the full, equal and effective participation of women in decision-making in the specific field under consideration and for the empowerment of women and girls, and included a gender perspective when addressing human rights issues. There were also increased calls for implementing gender mainstreaming and gathering sex-disaggregated data.

46. Many of the medium-focus and high-focus resolutions included paragraphs on integrating a gender perspective. For example, in the resolution endorsing the New Urban Agenda (71/256), the signatories to the Quito Declaration on Sustainable Cities and Human Settlements for All envisaged cities promoting gender equality and preventing violence and harassment against women and girls in private and public spaces, while encouraging gender-responsive urban planning and housing policies. Similarly, in its resolution on agriculture development, food security and nutrition (71/245), the General Assembly recognized the role of women in the agricultural sector as well as the gender gap in access to agriculture-related technology. Further examples are the Assembly resolutions on strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations (71/127)

¹¹ For example, in General Assembly resolution 71/164, the preambular section contains a paragraph that explicitly references a report of the Secretary-General (A/70/185).

and on international cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development (71/128), which apply a gender perspective to cross-cutting issues in humanitarian settings.

III. Integrating a gender perspective into intergovernmental processes: the contribution of the United Nations Entity on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women)

47. During the period under review, the United Nations Entity on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) continued to play the central role assigned to it by Member States in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, at all levels, in support of the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. UN-Women has made great strides in leveraging the transformative and comprehensive commitments to gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls undertaken by Member States since 2015. UN-Women has responded to new and expanded guidance, requests and expectations from Member States, supporting the development of a comprehensive set of global norms, policies and standards on gender equality and the empowerment of women (see E/CN.6/2017/2). In particular, the normative support included the provision of evidence and strengthening of the knowledge base, advocacy and outreach, awareness-raising, and partnership-building. It brought together stakeholders to strategize on advancing common objectives.

48. The normative support of UN-Women to the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the high-level political forum on sustainable development and thematic intergovernmental processes helped to increase the attention paid to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and to expand the integration of gender perspectives into their outcome documents. As noted by the General Assembly, UN-Women had to draw on voluntary contributions to carry out its mandate relating to the provision of normative support (see 70/133).

49. The Commission on the Status of Women remained a key focus of the normative support of UN-Women. UN-Women supported the Commission in establishing a road map for the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda in 2016 (E/2016/27),¹² and in providing in 2017 comprehensive guidance on ensuring women's economic empowerment in the changing world of work (E/2017/27-E/CN.6/2017/21). The Entity also expanded its collaboration with the secretariats of other functional commissions in support of the commissions' expanded inclusion of gender perspectives in their work. To this end, UN-Women, together with the secretariats of several functional commissions, hosted a round-table discussion with Chairs of functional commissions on the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda, on 7 July 2017. This event was a key opportunity for participating functional commissions to present their efforts for integrating gender perspectives in their work and in their contributions to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. It also provided an opportunity for those functional commissions to further expand ongoing collaboration, interaction and information exchange on issues of common interest.

¹² Driving the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

50. UN-Women is seizing new opportunities to support Member States in the follow-up processes to outcomes, such as the 2030 Agenda. In the context of the high-level political forum for sustainable development of 2017, this included systematic outreach efforts to draw attention to Sustainable Development Goal 5 and to gender perspectives across voluntary national reviews, an expert group meeting on Goal 5 and its interlinkages to other Goals, especially those under review at the 2017 session of the high-level political forum, on 30 and 31 May, and sharing key messages on the outcome of the session.

51. Following a decision adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to continue and to enhance the Lima work programme on gender, and in particular to develop a gender action plan in order to support the implementation of gender-related decisions and mandates under the Convention, UN-Women deepened its collaboration with the secretariat of the Convention and with parties in support of that effort, and it will continue to engage with all stakeholders towards the adoption of the plan at the twenty-third session of the Conference of the Parties.

52. UN-Women is placing priority on supporting the work towards a global compact for migration that is fully gender-responsive, in response to the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (General Assembly resolution 71/1). Together with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, UN-Women convened an experts meeting in November 2016 that developed a series of recommendations for addressing women's human rights in the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration. UN-Women also regularly contributes to the ongoing consultations of phase 1 of the process and will continue to provide technical inputs as the intergovernmental process moves forward.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

53. **The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, together with other intergovernmental outcomes in the period covered by the present report, have further strengthened the global normative framework for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and given further impetus to gender mainstreaming across the full range of the implementation activities, at all levels and by all stakeholders. The General Assembly, at its seventy-second session, should seize the opportunity to further advance this commitment.**

54. **Progress in gender mainstreaming remains uneven in the intergovernmental bodies of the United Nations reviewed in the present report. The percentage of General Assembly resolutions containing a gender perspective maintained the level reached at the sixty-ninth session, but was below that of other sessions. While the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council made solid progress in reflecting gender perspectives in their outcomes, the Council's own progress was more modest and remained below the peak reached in 2014.**

55. **The proportion of reports of the Secretary-General that contained a gender perspective to the General Assembly and, especially, to the Economic and Social Council increased, reaching 100 per cent for the latter, but it continued to fluctuate with regard to reports submitted to functional commissions. Opportunities thus remain for a more systematic inclusion of gender perspectives across the board in reports of the Secretary-General, together with a further strengthening of the quality of the gender analysis and the inclusion of gender-responsive recommendations.**

56. UN-Women continued to play its central role in supporting intergovernmental processes, despite resource constraints. It will continue to provide its expert and technical support for the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda, for systematic gender mainstreaming and the strengthening and deepening of the global framework for gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

57. The General Assembly may wish:

(a) To call upon States and all other stakeholders to systematically mainstream a gender perspective in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda;

(b) To reiterate its call upon all intergovernmental bodies of the United Nations system to fully mainstream a gender perspective into all items under their consideration and within their respective mandates;

(c) To commit to intensifying its own efforts to integrate gender perspectives in its work in plenary meetings and main committees, and to encourage the President of the General Assembly and the Chairs and Bureaux of its main committees to monitor progress in integrating a gender perspective in resolutions during each session;

(d) To call upon the Economic and Social Council to accelerate the inclusion of a gender perspective in its resolutions, and upon the functional commissions to ensure that draft resolutions prepared for action by the Council or the General Assembly include a gender perspective;

(e) To call upon States and all stakeholders to systematically reflect a gender perspective in all phases of the preparatory process towards a global compact on migration;

(f) To request the Secretary-General to take steps towards ensuring that all reports prepared for intergovernmental bodies reflect gender analysis, use data disaggregated by sex and age, include examples and case studies on the impact of policies and programmes on women and girls, and include gender-responsive recommendations;

(g) To strengthen the capacity of UN-Women to fully implement its normative support function, provide policy analysis, knowledge and evidence in support of intergovernmental deliberations, continue to raise awareness about opportunities to mainstream a gender perspective into the work of intergovernmental bodies and processes and provide technical assistance on strengthening a gender perspective in resolutions and other outcomes of intergovernmental bodies.