



General Assembly

Distr.: General
19 July 2021

Original: English

Seventy-sixth session

Item 28 (b) of the provisional agenda*

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 [74/128](#) and is aimed at supporting the Assembly in monitoring the implementation of the guidance provided therein. It is focused on the extent to which selected intergovernmental processes of the United Nations integrate a gender perspective into their work. It provides a quantitative and qualitative assessment of progress achieved and remaining gaps, in comparison with previous years. The report contains recommendations for further measures to enhance the implementation of gender equality mandates throughout the work of the United Nations.

* [A/76/150](#).



Contents

	<i>Page</i>
I. Introduction	3
II. Integration of a gender perspective into the work of selected intergovernmental bodies	3
A. Methodology	4
B. Quantitative findings	4
C. In-depth analysis	14
III. Contribution by the United Nations Entity on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) to the integration of a gender perspective into intergovernmental processes	22
IV. Conclusions and recommendations	24

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 and requested the Secretary-General to report on measures taken and progress achieved in that regard. As mandated in resolution [74/128](#), the present report covers progress made in selected intergovernmental processes since the seventy-third session of the Assembly.

2. The findings herein confirm that, on a year-to-year basis, the incorporation of a gender perspective into the documents of the General Assembly and of the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions has shown a pattern of fluctuation. After a period of consistent increase in the incorporation of a gender perspective into the reports of the Secretary-General submitted to the Assembly, progress has stagnated at the past two sessions. The overall percentage of Assembly resolutions inclusive of a gender perspective reached a new peak at the seventy-fourth session, followed by a slight decrease at the seventy-fifth session. With regard to the Council and its functional commissions, results have fluctuated over the past six years, likely owing to the small sample size of reports submitted to and resolutions adopted by those bodies.

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 the reports of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth and seventy-fifth sessions and of the resolutions adopted by the Assembly during those sessions, as well as the reports of the Secretary-General to the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions in 2019 and 2020. Resolutions adopted by the Council and its functional commissions during the corresponding period were also analysed. The documents examined (reports, resolutions and declarations) were those available in the Official Document System of the United Nations as at 10 June 2021. Where documents were submitted to more than one intergovernmental body or committee, they were considered only once, by the higher body. The same methodology has now been used for more than 10 years, and the analysis of trends therefore gives a comprehensive view of change over time. Because the present report is prepared on a biennial basis, data from the seventy-fourth and seventy-fifth sessions of the Assembly and the 2019 and 2020 sessions of the Council and its functional commissions have been included in the analysis, tables and figures, as applicable.

4. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic had a significant impact on the business continuity of intergovernmental processes during the period under review. Owing to the pandemic, the convening of in-person meetings faced challenges and constraints for the majority of the 2020 session of the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions, as well as throughout the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly. During the first half of 2020, numerous intergovernmental meetings were postponed, scaled down or conducted through correspondence, with a particular impact on the Council and its functional commissions. During the second half of the year, much of the intergovernmental work was conducted through a combination of limited formal meetings held in person and informal meetings held online. The Assembly and its Main Committees adjusted to the pandemic's challenges

and limitations, including through technical or procedural rollovers of some resolutions. It is possible that the impact of the pandemic on the work of intergovernmental bodies influenced the results of the analysis, mainly with regard to the total number of resolutions that the bodies adopted compared with previous sessions.

A. Methodology

5. 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 (including their plural forms), female, male, sexual, reproductive and maternal. Documents containing at least one occurrence of a keyword were considered to include a gender perspective. False positive results, for example “man-made disaster”, were discounted.

6. The selected words indicated above are those most often found in reports and resolutions that address issues related to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Documents that passed through the first filter were analysed in depth in order to assess the extent to which they reflected a gender perspective and at what qualitative level.

B. Quantitative findings

7. In total, 253 reports of the Secretary-General and 312 resolutions adopted by the intergovernmental bodies whose work was reviewed were considered for the present analysis. As at 10 June 2021, the General Assembly alone had considered 222 reports of the Secretary-General and adopted 283 resolutions. At its 2020 session, the Economic and Social Council considered eight such reports and adopted 23 resolutions. The functional commissions, excluding the Commission on the Status of Women, considered 23 such reports and adopted six resolutions. The intergovernmental bodies under analysis therefore had many opportunities to incorporate a gender perspective into their work.

Table 1
Reports and resolutions, 2015–2020

Body	Reports						Resolutions					
	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
General Assembly	222	233	243	231	245	259	283	277	298	279	288	267
Economic and Social Council	8	8	7	11	8	11	23	34	30	32	28	30
Functional commissions	23	30	35	32	29	33	6	14	17	17	12	16
Total	253	271	285	274	282	303	312	325	345	328	328	313

8. Table 1 illustrates the trends over time in the number of reports and resolutions per body, from 2015 to 2020.¹ The total number of reports submitted has varied somewhat over the preceding six years but shows a declining trend overall. The total number of resolutions adopted by all bodies in 2020 descended to a level comparable with that of 2015. Reports submitted to and resolutions adopted by the General Assembly continue to make up the vast majority of all documents included in the analysis.

¹ Information for the period 2013–2018 is contained in the previous report (A/74/222).

9. The General Assembly adopted five resolutions focused exclusively on gender equality issues, namely resolutions [75/156](#) on strengthening national and international rapid response to the impact of COVID-19 on women and girls, [75/157](#) on women and girls and the response to COVID-19, [75/158](#) on trafficking in women and girls, [75/160](#) on intensifying global efforts for the elimination of female genital mutilation and [75/161](#) on intensification of efforts to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls. The first two represented new initiatives responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, while the remaining three were long-standing biennial resolutions.

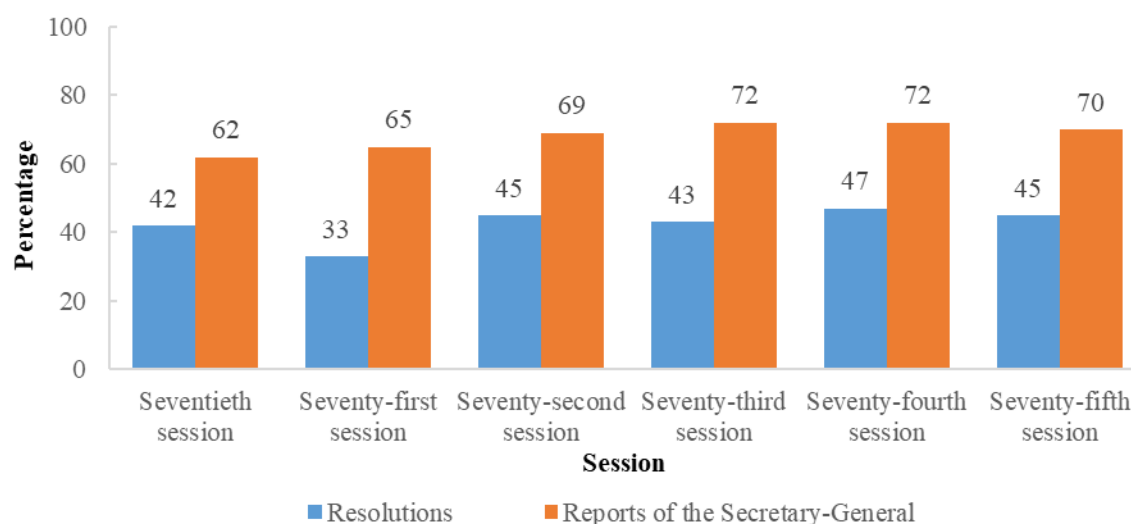
10. The Economic and Social Council continued its practice of adopting an annual resolution on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system (resolution [2020/9](#)). Although it is crucial that intergovernmental bodies address gender equality issues in a targeted and focused manner, it is equally important that a gender perspective be mainstreamed across all areas of work.

1. General Assembly

11. Figure I illustrates a steady increasing trend in the percentage of reports of the Secretary-General that include a gender perspective until the seventy-third session, at which point progress slowed down. While the percentage has remained relatively high over the past three sessions of the General Assembly, it decreased to 70 per cent at the seventy-fifth session, compared with 72 per cent at the seventy-third and seventy-fourth sessions. The overall percentage of Assembly resolutions that incorporated a gender perspective reached a peak of 47 per cent at the seventy-fourth session, but there was a slight decrease, to 45 per cent, at the seventy-fifth session, showing that the pattern of fluctuation continues.

Figure I

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 222 such reports submitted at the seventy-fifth session, 156 (70 per cent) included a gender perspective (see table 2), a decrease of 2 percentage points compared with the seventy-third and seventy-fourth sessions (see figure I). Nevertheless, the relatively high percentage

confirms that gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls are considered across a broad range of substantive areas.

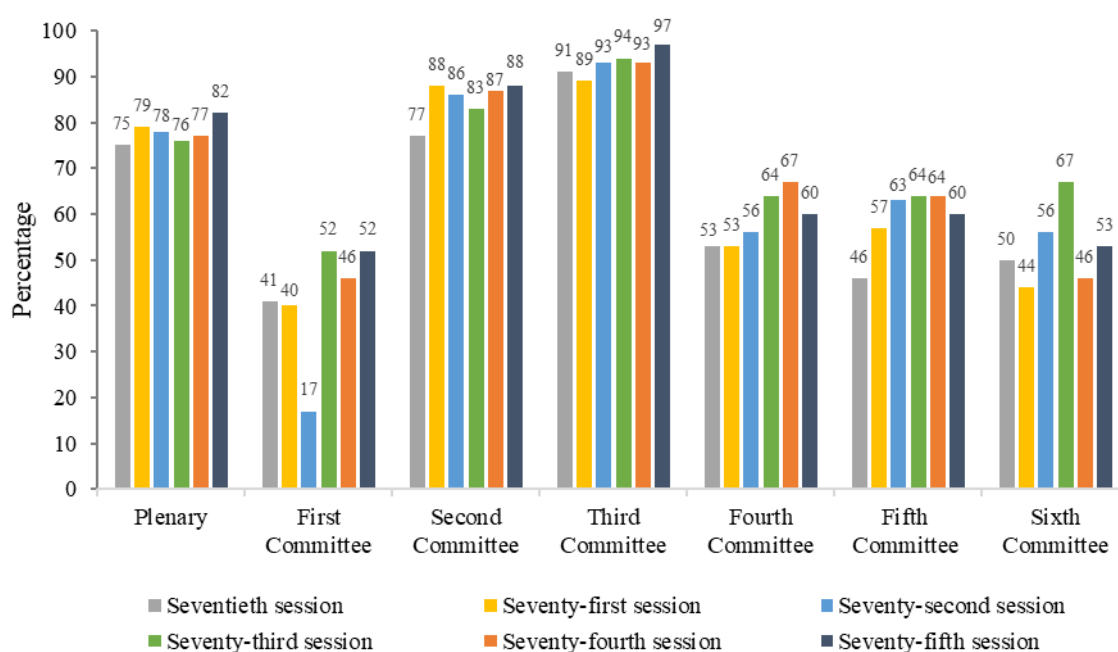
Table 2

Reports of the Secretary-General submitted at the seventy-fifth session that include a gender perspective

Body	Number of reports	Reports that include a gender perspective	
		Number	Percentage
Plenary	38	31	82
First Committee	29	15	52
Second Committee	26	23	88
Third Committee	29	28	97
Fourth Committee	10	6	60
Fifth Committee	75	45	60
Sixth Committee	15	8	53
Total	222	156	70

Figure II

Reports of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly that include a gender perspective, by body



13. Between the seventy-third and seventy-fifth sessions, the decrease in the percentage of reports inclusive of a gender perspective is attributable to the decrease in such reports submitted to the Fourth Committee (Special Political and Decolonization), Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary) and Sixth Committee (Legal), by 4, 4 and 14 percentage points, respectively (see figure II). The proportion of reports integrating a gender perspective submitted to the plenary, Second Committee (Economic and Financial) and Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural

Affairs) increased by 6, 5 and 3 percentage points, respectively, with the Third Committee reaching its highest ever percentage. Reports submitted to the First Committee (Disarmament and International Security) remained the same (52 per cent).

(b) Resolutions

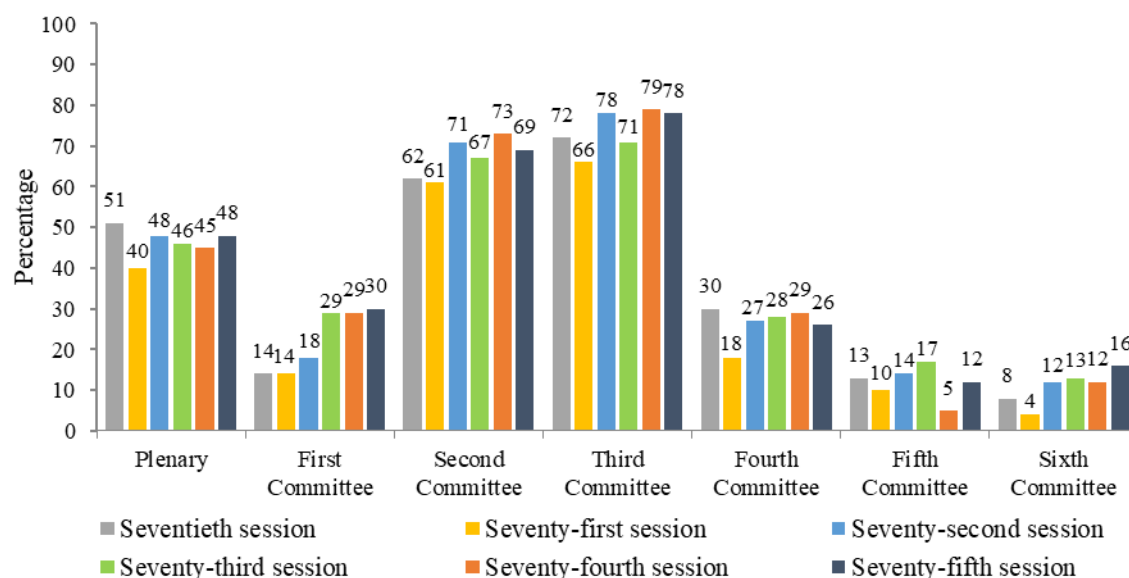
Table 3

General Assembly resolutions adopted at the seventy-fifth session that include a gender perspective

<i>Originating body</i>	<i>Number of resolutions</i>	<i>Percentage of total resolutions</i>	<i>Resolutions that include a gender perspective</i>	
			<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Plenary	67	24	32	48
First Committee	61	22	18	30
Second Committee	35	12	24	69
Third Committee	50	18	39	78
Fourth Committee	34	12	9	26
Fifth Committee	17	6	2	12
Sixth Committee	19	7	3	16
Total	283	100	127	45

14. In total, 45 per cent of the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session (127 resolutions) included a gender perspective, compared with 43 per cent (129 resolutions) adopted at the seventy-third session. That 45 per cent figure is the second highest since such an analysis was first conducted, for the sixty-first session (at which only 23 per cent of resolutions included a gender perspective), and just below the all-time high of 47 per cent for such resolutions, reached at the seventy-fourth session.

Figure III
Resolutions of the General Assembly that include a gender perspective, by body

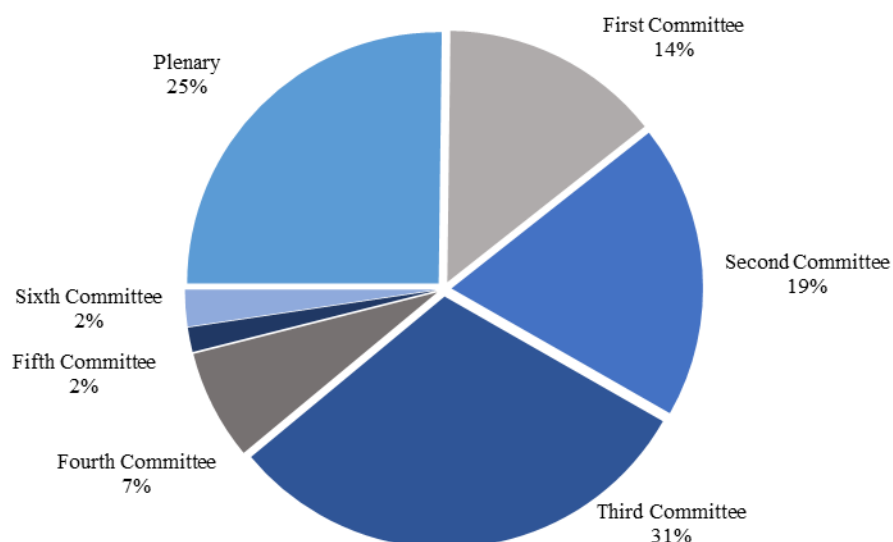


15. The proportion of resolutions inclusive of a gender perspective increased among resolutions adopted in most of the Main Committees and the plenary of the General Assembly between the seventy-third and seventy-fifth sessions (see table 3 and figure III). As in previous years, the proportion of such resolutions was highest in the Second Committee (69 per cent) and the Third Committee (78 per cent), representing an increase of 2 and 7 percentage points, respectively, compared with the seventy-third session.

16. As in previous years, in the plenary and the First, Second, Third and Fourth Committees, comparatively more resolutions were adopted, while fewer resolutions were adopted by the Fifth and Sixth Committees, which affects the proportional increase in the share of resolutions that incorporate a gender perspective (see table 3). There was a slight decrease in the total number of resolutions adopted at the seventy-fifth session, compared with the seventy-third session, by the First Committee (two fewer), Second Committee (four fewer), Third Committee (six fewer), Fourth Committee (two fewer), Fifth Committee (one fewer) and Sixth Committee (four fewer). Meanwhile, the number of resolutions adopted in the plenary increased by four.

17. Figure III illustrates trends over the previous six sessions in the share of resolutions of the General Assembly that include a gender perspective. From the seventy-third to the seventy-fifth session, the most notable increases occurred in the Third and Sixth Committees, in which the percentage of resolutions inclusive of a gender perspective increased from 71 to 78 per cent and 13 to 16 per cent, respectively, with the Sixth Committee reaching a new all-time high. The percentages in the plenary and the Second, Fourth and Fifth Committees fell short of their highest levels. Together, the Assembly in plenary and the First, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Committees adopted approximately two thirds of all resolutions. Several of those bodies have yet to approach the 50 per cent mark in terms of resolutions inclusive of a gender perspective, which suggests that there is a significant opportunity for increased attention to the matter.

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

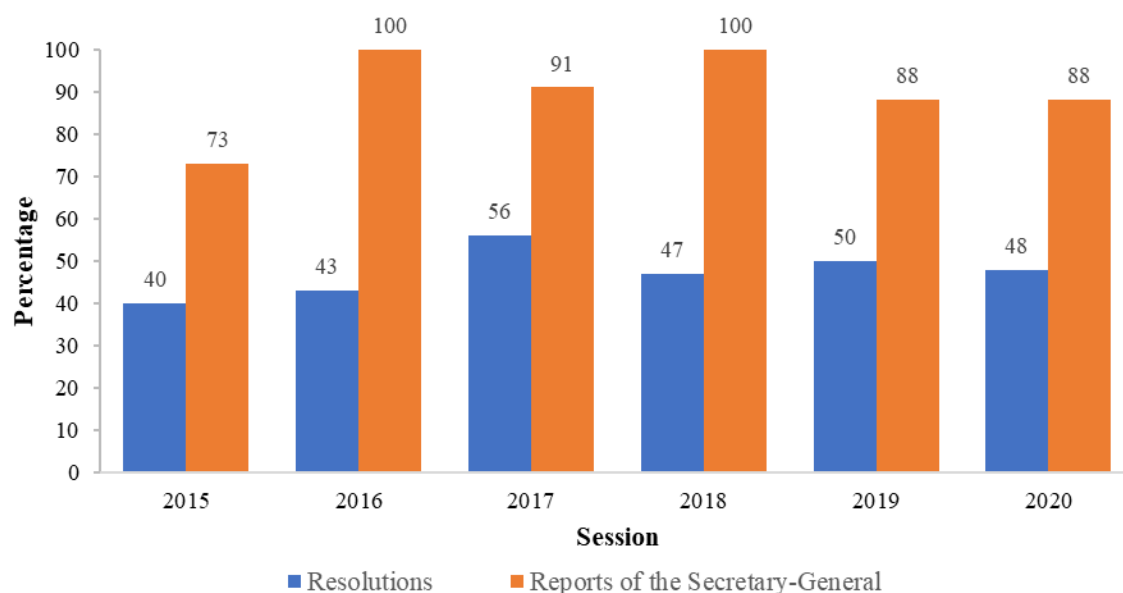


18. Figure IV illustrates that the Third Committee continues to contribute the largest share of resolutions with a gender perspective, accounting for 31 per cent of the total. The Second and Third Committees combined contribute half of all resolutions that include a gender perspective. Overall, the contributions by the Committees remain uneven, and significant additional opportunities remain for a more effective and consistent incorporation of a gender perspective, in terms of both coverage and quality, into their work.

2. Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions

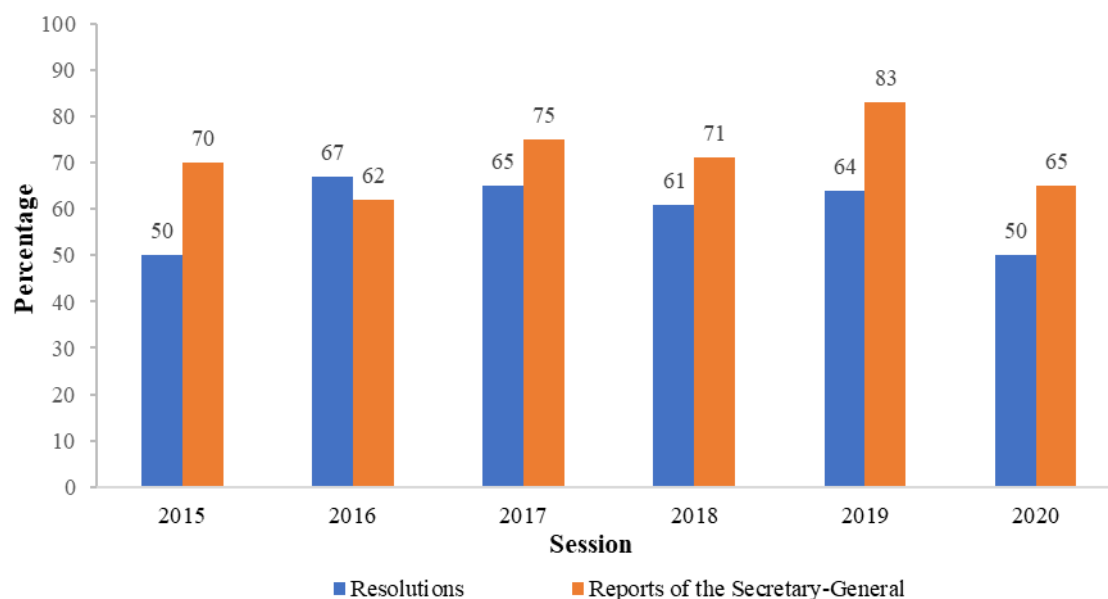
Figure V

Economic and Social Council documents that include a gender perspective, 2015–2020



19. Figure V illustrates the somewhat inconsistent trend in the work of the Economic and Social Council in incorporating a gender perspective into its resolutions. The percentage of resolutions inclusive of a gender perspective saw a slight increase between 2018 and 2020, from 47 to 48 per cent, although in absolute terms, the number of such resolutions decreased from 14 to 11. Despite the slight increase, the percentage remained below the 56 per cent peak attained in 2017. In 2020, the percentage of reports of the Secretary-General inclusive of a gender perspective submitted to the Council was 88 per cent, down 12 per cent from the record high of 100 per cent in 2018, although in absolute terms, the number of reports in both 2020 and 2018 was seven. It should be noted that the sample size for the analysis, as in previous years (see table 1) is small (eight reports), which results in a significant fluctuation in the percentage from year to year.

Figure VI
Documents of the functional commissions that include a gender perspective, 2015–2020



20. Figure VI illustrates a decline of 11 percentage points in resolutions adopted by functional commissions that contain a gender perspective, from 61 per cent (11 resolutions) in 2018 to 50 per cent (3 resolutions) in 2020. It also shows a decrease in the proportion of reports of the Secretary-General submitted to functional commissions that include a gender perspective, from 71 per cent (25 reports) in 2018 to 65 per cent (15 reports) in 2020.

(a) Reports of the Secretary-General

Table 4

Reports of the Secretary-General submitted to the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions that include a gender perspective, 2020

Body	Total number of reports	Reports that include a gender perspective ^a	
		Number	Percentage
Economic and Social Council	8	7	88
Functional commissions of the Council	23	15	65
Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice	—	—	—
Commission on Narcotic Drugs	3	1	33
Commission on Science and Technology for Development	2	2	100
Statistical Commission	10	4	40
Commission on Population and Development	5	5	100
Commission for Social Development	3	3	100
United Nations Forum on Forests	—	—	—

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

21. As in the case of the General Assembly, reports of the Secretary-General submitted to the Economic and Social Council included a gender perspective at a higher rate than the resolutions (see table 4 and figures V and VI). In 2020, seven of the eight reports (88 per cent) submitted to the Council integrated gender equality issues.

22. Of the 23 reports submitted by the Secretary-General to the functional commissions in 2020, 15 (65 per cent) reflected a gender perspective (see figure VI and table 4), down from 71 per cent in 2018. All reports submitted to the Commission for Social Development, the Commission on Population and Development and the Commission on Science and Technology for Development included a gender perspective. Of the reports submitted to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Statistical Commission, 33 per cent and 40 per cent included a gender perspective, respectively.

(b) Resolutions

Table 5

Resolutions of the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions that include a gender perspective, 2020

<i>Originating body</i>	<i>Total number of resolutions</i>	<i>Resolutions that include a gender perspective^a</i>	
		<i>Number</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Economic and Social Council	23	11	48
Functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council	6	3	50
Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice	1	—	—
Commission on Narcotic Drugs	5	3	60
Commission on Population and Development	—	—	—
Commission on Social Development	—	—	—
Commission on Science and Technology for Development	—	—	—
Statistical Commission ^b	—	—	—
United Nations Forum on Forests	—	—	—

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

^b The Statistical Commission traditionally adopts decisions, which are not considered in the analysis.

23. In 2020, the Economic and Social Council adopted 23 resolutions, seven fewer than in 2018 (see table 5).² Forty-eight per cent were inclusive of a gender perspective, representing an increase of 1 percentage point compared with the Council's 2018 session (see figure V and table 5). The percentage of Council resolutions in which gender-related issues were considered therefore continued to fluctuate. That variation may be due in part to the changing and relatively small sample sizes, which ranged from 23 to 32 resolutions. It is also worth mentioning that, in 2020, five out of the nine procedural resolutions adopted by the Council integrated a gender perspective, compared with one out of five in 2018. The increase represents a positive trend that should be continued.³

² Draft resolutions of functional commissions submitted for action by the Economic and Social Council or the General Assembly through the Council are counted once, under the body that finally adopts them.

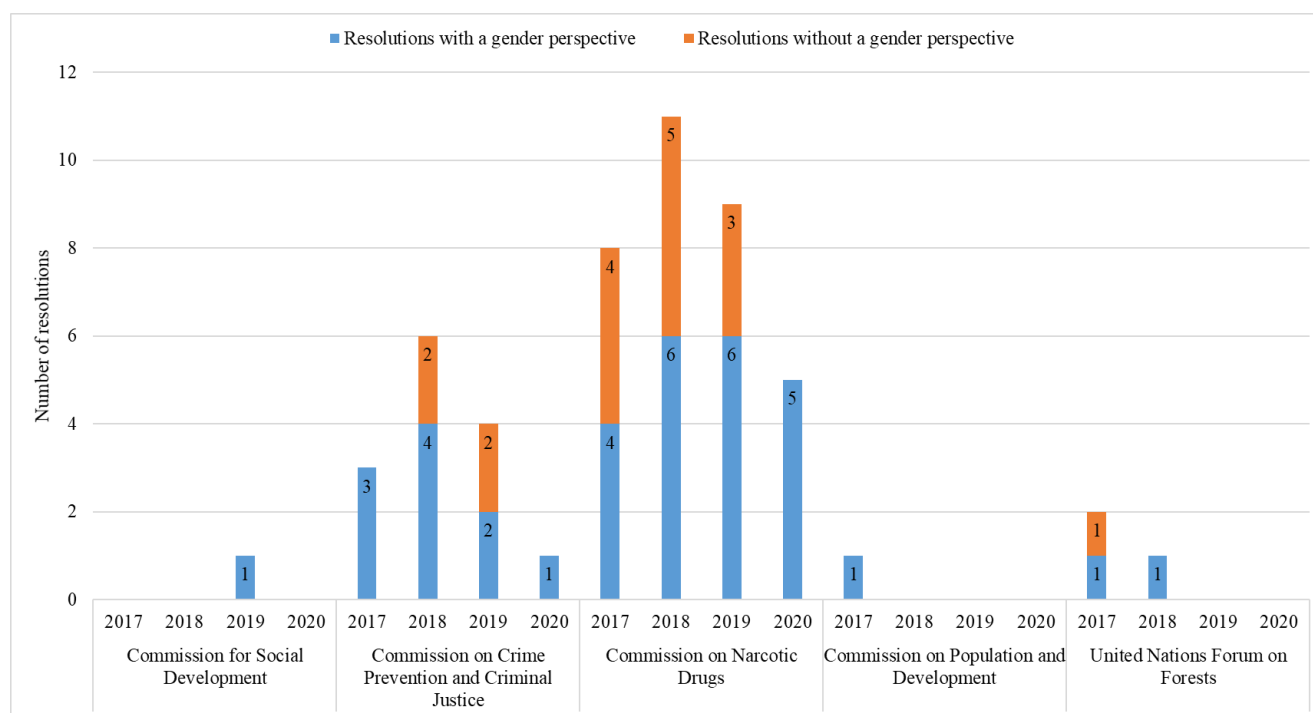
³ See Economic and Social Council resolution [2020/1](#) on the Council's working arrangements.

24. Six of the resolutions adopted by the Economic and Social Council inclusive of a gender perspective had initially been drafted by functional commissions, namely the Commission on Social Development (three), the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (two) and the Commission on the Status of Women (one) and were recommended for adoption by the Council. Those resolutions constitute 55 per cent of the Council's resolutions that included a gender perspective, which confirms the critical importance of the functional commissions in the inclusion of a gender perspective in the work of the Council. Five resolutions with a gender perspective originated in the Council, which indicates that there are opportunities for increased attention to be paid to gender-related issues.

25. The number of resolutions adopted by each of the functional commissions has varied greatly, as shown in figure VII. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice were the only commissions that adopted resolutions in 2020, as all others either prepared draft resolutions for action by the Economic and Social Council or adopted only decisions.

Figure VII

Resolutions of the functional commissions that include a gender perspective



Note: Data for earlier sessions are available in previous reports.

26. As in previous years, the work of the Commission on the Status of Women was not included in the analysis in order to avoid biased results. During the biennium 2019–2020, the Commission further strengthened the global normative framework for gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. Its work was instrumental in the accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In the political declaration on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women (see [E/2020/27-E/CN.6/2020/10](#), chap. I, sect. A), adopted by the Commission at its sixty-fourth session, Governments welcomed progress made but recognized that no country had fully achieved gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and

expressed concern that, overall, progress had not been fast or deep enough. In response, they pledged to take further action to ensure the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly through cross-cutting implementation strategies, including the following: eliminating all discriminatory laws; eliminating discriminatory social norms and gender stereotypes; strengthening institutions; mainstreaming gender in sustainable development; matching commitments with adequate financing; strengthening accountability; harnessing technology and innovation; closing data and evidence gaps; and strengthening international cooperation and partnerships to implement commitments. The Commission adopted two resolutions and submitted one draft resolution for adoption by the Economic and Social Council.

C. In-depth analysis

27. The level of attention given to gender equality issues and the placement of references to such issues within reports and resolutions provide an indication of the importance given to the incorporation of a gender perspective. In-depth analysis suggests that reports and resolutions often vary greatly in the level of attention given to gender-related issues. Corresponding data from the seventy-third session of the General Assembly and the 2018 session of the Economic and Social Council, which are used as the main point of comparison throughout the analysis, are available in document [A/74/222](#).

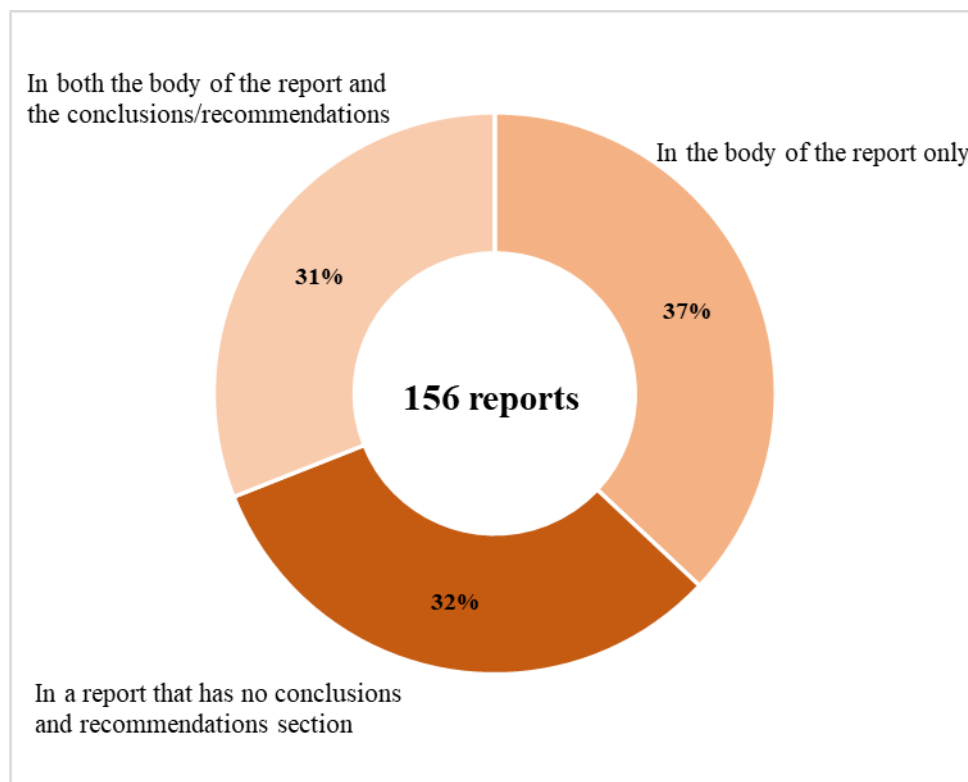
1. Placement of references to gender-related issues

28. The placement of references to gender-related issues within intergovernmental documents determines their prominence and could influence the likelihood of follow-up actions. More attention is drawn to gender equality issues in the reports of the Secretary-General when such references are included not only in the body of the report but also in the conclusions and recommendations. Likewise, the emphasis on gender equality issues in resolutions is stronger when those issues are referred to in both the preambular and operative part and when a specific action or commitment to address the gender-related issue under consideration is included.⁴

⁴ In line with previous practice, an assessment of the placement of references to gender-related issues was not carried out for documents of the functional commissions.

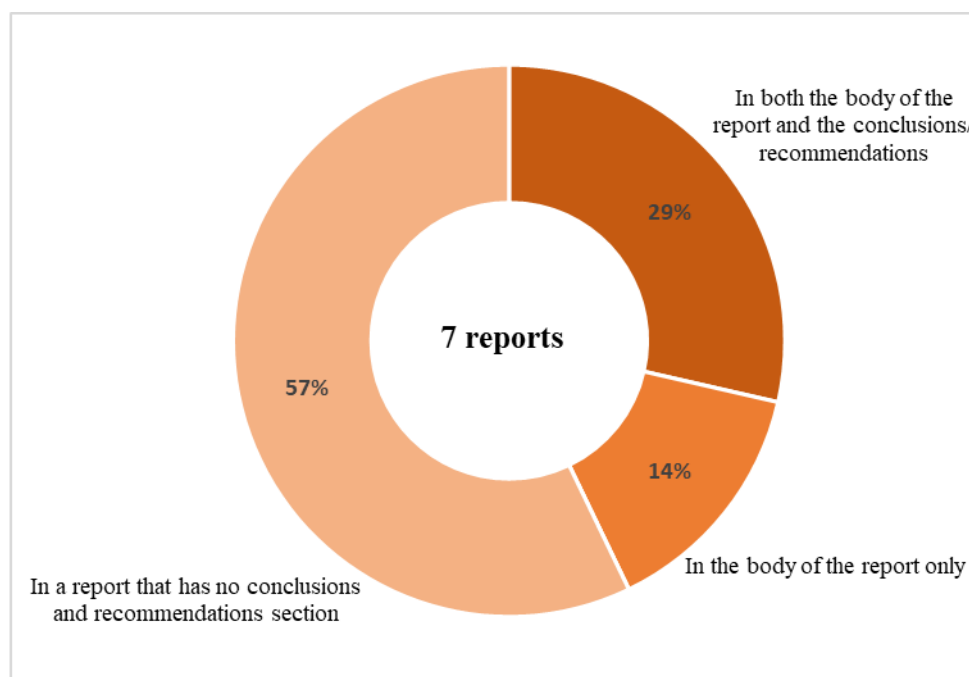
(a) Reports of the Secretary-General

Figure VIII

Placement of references to gender-related issues in reports of the Secretary-General at the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly

29. An analysis of the placement of the relevant references in the 156 reports of the Secretary-General inclusive of a gender perspective indicates that the largest proportion of reports (37 per cent) contained dedicated attention to gender-related issues only in the body of the document. That figure is 4 percentage points lower than in 2018. The proportion that contained dedicated attention to gender-related issues in both the body of the report and the conclusions and recommendations section was the same as in 2018, at 31 per cent, indicating that there is room to improve the inclusion of a gender perspective in both parts of reports. A total of 32 per cent of reports into which a gender perspective had been integrated had no separate section on conclusions and recommendations, for an increase of 4 percentage points since 2018 (see figure VIII).

Figure IX
Placement of references to gender-related issues in reports of the Secretary-General to the Economic and Social Council in 2020

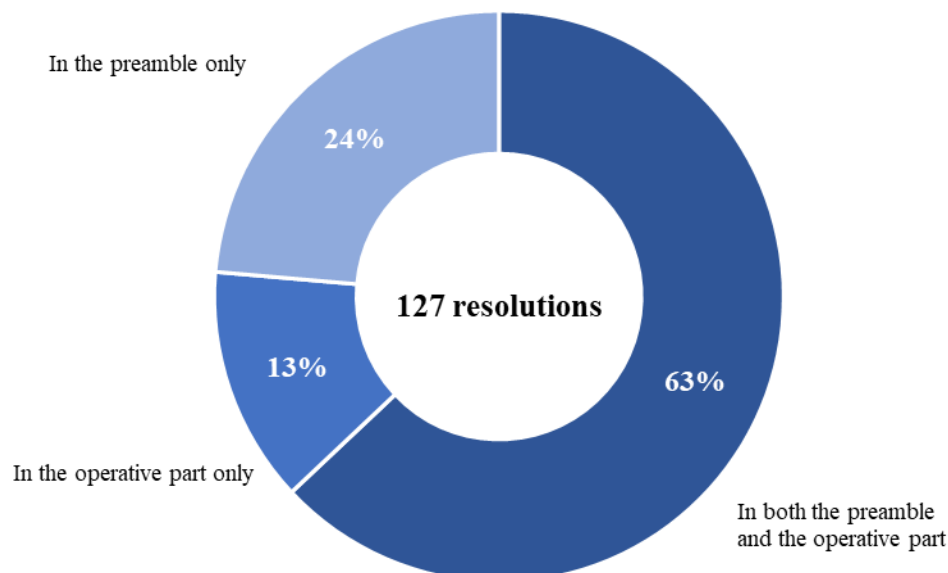


30. As illustrated in figure IX, of the seven reports inclusive of a gender perspective that were submitted to the Economic and Social Council in 2020, two (29 per cent) contained references in both the body and the conclusions and recommendations section, down from three (43 per cent) in 2018. One (14 per cent) had such references in the body of the document only, down from three (43 per cent) in 2018. Four (57 per cent) had no separate section on conclusions and recommendations, up from one (14 per cent) in 2018.

31. The analysis set out above indicates that further efforts are needed to enhance the integration of a gender perspective into reports, in particular in conclusions and recommendations sections, thereby providing a stronger basis for gender-responsive intergovernmental action. That finding should be considered in the context of the request made by the Secretary-General in an inter-office memorandum to all members of the Senior Management Group issued in August 2018 to place gender equality at the centre of the Organization's work, including through the inclusion of gender analysis and gender-disaggregated data in reports to intergovernmental bodies and the recognition of the positive contribution of women as agents of change.

(b) Resolutions

Figure X

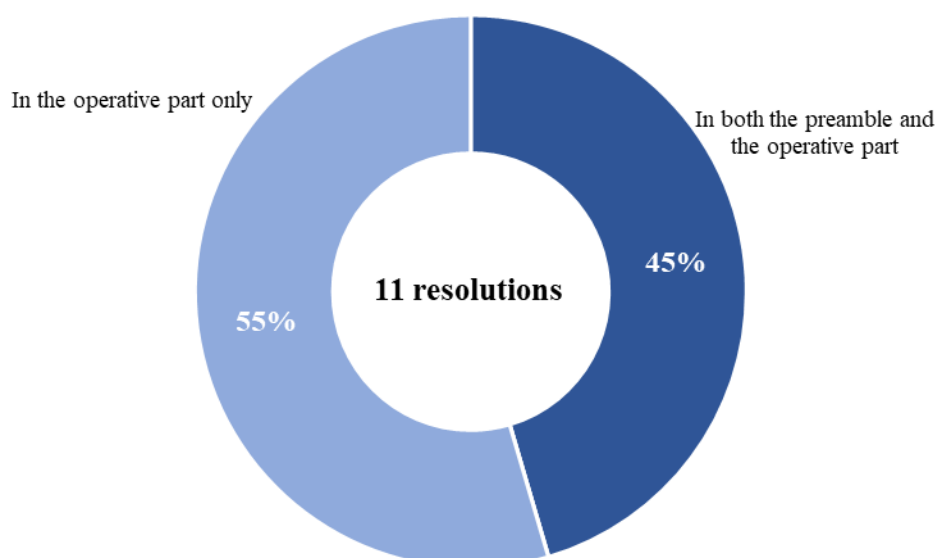
Placement of references to gender-related issues in resolutions adopted at the seventy fifth session of the General Assembly

Note: One resolution was a declaration, which was included in the category “In both the preamble and the operative part”.

32. The analysis of the placement of gender-specific references in resolutions of the General Assembly and of the Economic and Social Council revealed that such references were most frequently included in both the preamble and the operative part (see figures X and XI).

33. Of the 127 resolutions adopted at the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly that were inclusive of a gender perspective, 63 per cent included references in both preambular and operative paragraphs (see figure X), which represents a slight increase of 1 percentage point compared with the seventy-third session and indicates a positive trend that can be pursued further. Twenty-four per cent of the resolutions contained gender-specific references solely in the preamble, an increase from 18 per cent at the seventy-third session. Thirteen per cent included a gender perspective in the operative part only, a decrease from 20 per cent at the seventy-third session. The increase in resolutions with references in only the preamble indicates that opportunities should be sought by the Assembly and its Main Committees at the seventy-sixth and future sessions to include a gender perspective throughout all resolutions, especially in the operative part.

Figure XI
Placement of references to gender-related issues in resolutions of the Economic and Social Council in 2020



34. Of the 11 resolutions (see figure XI) inclusive of a gender perspective that were adopted by the Economic and Social Council in 2020 (48 per cent of the total number of resolutions adopted by the Council that year), 5 (45 per cent) contained a gender perspective that were adopted by the Economic and Social Council in 2020 (48 per cent of the total number of resolutions adopted by the Council that year) in both the preamble and the operative part, a decrease of 26 percentage points compared with 2018. Meanwhile, six resolutions had gender-related references in the operative part only, an increase of 44 percentage points. In 2018, 14 per cent of the resolutions adopted by the Council inclusive of a gender perspective had such references in the preamble only; in 2020, no resolutions fell into that category. The decrease in the first category indicates a negative trend, and opportunities should be sought by the Council to include a gender perspective throughout all resolutions, in both the preamble and the operative part.

2. Qualitative assessment

Methodology

35. Although a gender perspective may be reflected in key sections of a report or resolution, its impact depends on the strength of the analysis and language used. To assess that 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 analysis.

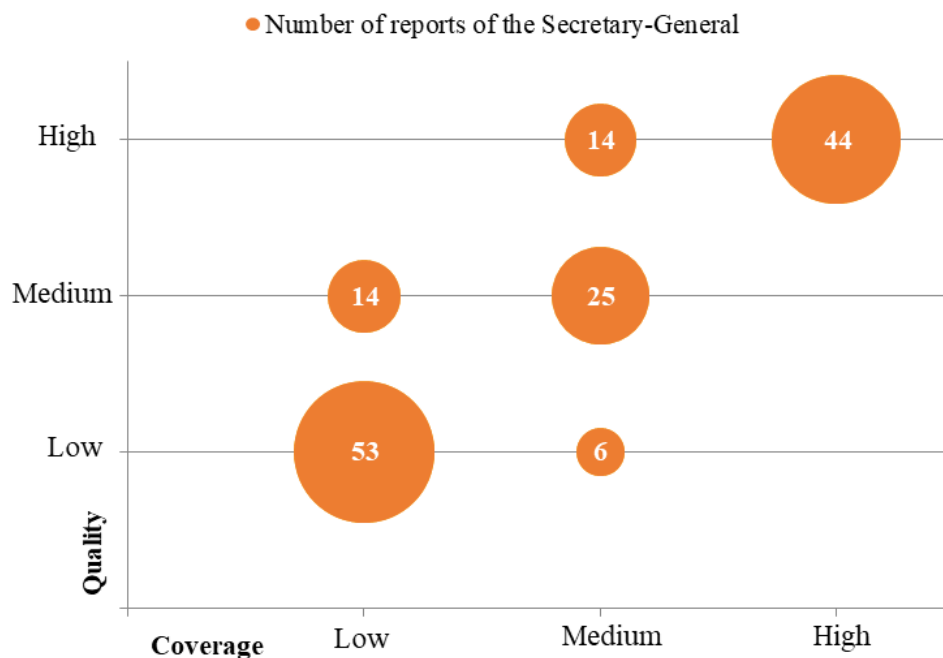
36. Reports that included a specific section on gender-related issues and several references throughout the rest of the report were considered to have a high level of coverage, whereas a single reference or a few short references were defined as a low level of coverage, with medium coverage falling somewhere in between. In the quality analysis of reports, cursory references such as “including women” were characterized as low quality, whereas reports that provided precise facts and evidence, including quantitative data disaggregated by sex and/or explicit gender analyses, ranged from medium to high quality. Assessing the quality of such reports is an important step towards differentiating cursory references to gender-related terminology from more substantive analyses of gender equality issues.

37. Resolutions were analysed against one variable only and categorized as having a low, medium or high level of focus on gender equality issues. Resolutions that included a single or a few passing references were considered to have a low focus. Resolutions with a high level of focus on gender-related issues were identified by the occurrence of keywords in several paragraphs and the inclusion of specific language on the situation and needs of women and girls and/or men and boys.

(i) *Reports of the Secretary-General*

Figure XII

Coverage and quality of gender equality references in the reports of the Secretary-General at the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly that include a gender perspective, by frequency



38. The distribution of the reports of the Secretary-General across the two variables in figure XII demonstrates wide variation in both the coverage of gender equality issues and the characteristics of those references. There tended to be a correlation between coverage and quality; reports in which little space was devoted to gender equality issues were also likely to have only superficial references, whereas reports with extensive coverage tended to include more detailed information and deeper analysis.

39. At the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly, 44 reports (28 per cent) out of the 156 that incorporated a gender perspective were rated as having high levels of coverage and quality, an increase of 3 percentage points compared with 25 per cent at the seventy-third session, although the absolute number of reports was the same at both sessions (44). A total of 25 reports (16 per cent) make up the cluster at the centre of figure XII, indicating medium levels of coverage and quality; at the seventy-third session, 42 reports (24 per cent) were in that category. The largest cluster of reports in figure XII is the group of 53 rated as having low levels of coverage and quality, accounting for 34 per cent of the total number of reports inclusive of a gender perspective. The corresponding cluster at the seventy-third session comprised 54 reports (31 per cent).

40. In the smaller clusters outside of those with a direct correlation between coverage and quality, namely the low-medium, high-medium, medium-low and medium-high clusters, some changes can be observed, most notably the decrease in the group of reports with high coverage and medium quality, from five (3 per cent) at the seventy-third session to none at the seventy-fifth session. The absolute number of reports with medium coverage and high quality remained the same, at 14; however, the percentage increased slightly, from 8 to 9 per cent. There were slight increases in the number of reports with medium coverage and low quality, from five (3 per cent) to six (4 per cent), and in the group of reports with low coverage and medium quality, from 10 (6 per cent) to 14 (9 per cent). Taken together, the absolute number of reports rated high-high, high-medium or medium-high decreased from 63 to 58, but the percentage increased from 36 to 37 per cent. The group of reports rated low-low, medium-low and low-medium increased from 69 (40 per cent) to 73 (47 per cent). The group of reports rated medium-medium decreased from 42 (24 per cent) to 25 (16 per cent).

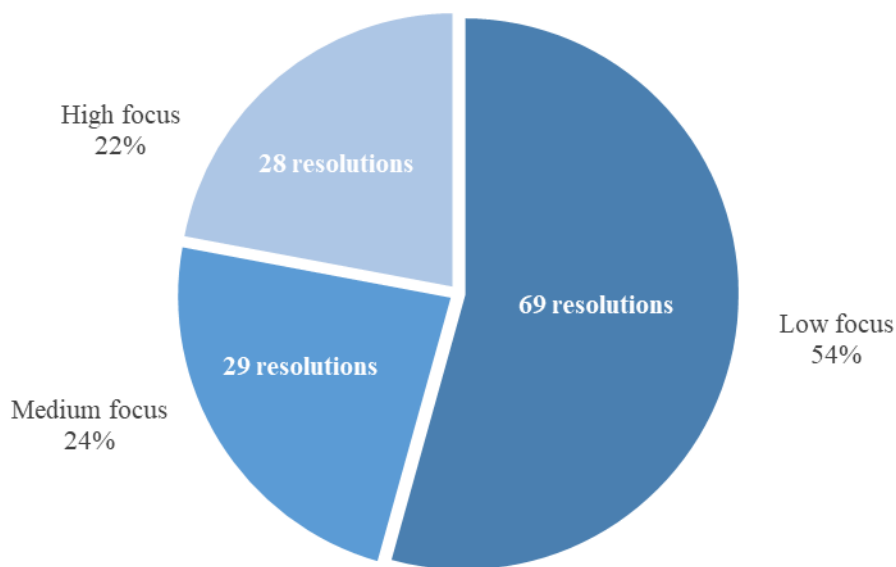
41. For example, the report entitled “Follow-up to the International Year of Older Persons: Second World Assembly on Ageing” ([A/75/218](#)) is considered to be of high quality and coverage because it provides an in-depth analysis of labour force participation by older persons, disaggregated by sex, and the gender barriers to the full and equal access of older women to the labour market. Another example of a highly ranked report is that on addressing inequality and getting back on track to end AIDS by 2030 ([A/75/836](#)), in which gender inequality is regarded as a major contributor to the continuing AIDS epidemic, reflecting a strong gender perspective throughout. The report entitled “Composition of the Secretariat: staff demographics” ([A/75/591](#)) is considered to have high coverage and quality because it contains a large amount of sex-disaggregated data and an in-depth analysis of key challenges and opportunities in achieving gender parity within the staff composition of the United Nations. Some reports improved significantly in terms of the quality and coverage of gender equality references compared with previous iterations. For example, the annual report on the status of the Convention on the Rights of the Child ([A/75/307](#)) submitted at the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly ranked higher than the previous year because it included new, specific gender analysis. Examples can also be found of reports that had previously ranked highly in coverage and quality but did not include a gender perspective at the seventy-fifth session, such as the annual report on the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture ([A/75/316](#)). The annual report on the budget performance of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur had previously ranked highly in coverage and quality, but the report submitted at the seventy-fifth session ([A/75/865](#)) reflected a decrease in the integration of a gender perspective.

42. Overall, the findings of the qualitative assessment indicate that progress has been made in the integration of a gender perspective into reports of the Secretary-General, best illustrated by the increase in the percentage of reports with a high level of coverage and/or quality of gender analysis. However, the cluster of reports with a low level of coverage and/or quality of gender analysis continues to comprise the largest share of the reports inclusive of a gender perspective.

(ii) *Resolutions*

Figure XIII

Extent of focus on gender equality issues in the resolutions of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly that include a gender perspective



43. The number of resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session that incorporated a gender perspective was 127 (see table 3), slightly lower than the 129 such resolutions at the seventy-third session. As illustrated in figure XIII, 22 per cent (28 resolutions) had a high level of focus on gender equality issues, which constitutes a small decrease compared with the seventy-third session (24 per cent, or 31 resolutions). The percentage of resolutions with a medium level of focus on gender equality issues decreased from 28 per cent (36 resolutions) to 24 per cent (29 resolutions). Meanwhile, the percentage of resolutions with a low level of focus on gender equality issues increased in both relative and absolute terms, from 48 per cent (62 resolutions) to 54 per cent (69 resolutions). Given that the category of resolutions with a low level of focus was the only group to increase compared with the seventy-third session, more work can be done to strengthen gender mainstreaming in resolutions of the Assembly.

44. Further analysis indicates that resolutions that included a gender perspective for the first time were more likely to contain cursory references only. On the other hand, resolutions that had contained a gender perspective at previous sessions were more likely to include a medium to high level of focus on gender-related issues. Results also indicate that, once a high level of focus is obtained in a given resolution, that focus tends to be maintained year on year. Going forward, the General Assembly and its Main Committees should continue to deepen the attention paid to gender equality issues.

45. Resolutions adopted by the General Assembly addressed gender equality issues in various ways, including through general calls to integrate a gender perspective into the area under consideration, recognition of the importance of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in the area under consideration and recognition of

gender-specific vulnerabilities and gender gaps. Some resolutions contained a call for the full, equal and effective participation of women in decision-making in the area under consideration. There were also many calls for the gathering of data disaggregated by sex.

46. The analysis above shows that several resolutions contained a high focus on gender equality issues. For example, in its resolution [75/90](#) on the situation in Afghanistan, the General Assembly highlighted the important role of women in the peacebuilding process and the specific needs of women in conflict zones and society as a whole. It also recognized the gains made in women's leadership and economic empowerment. Another resolution with a high focus on gender issues is resolution [75/154](#) on inclusive development for and with persons with disabilities, in which the Assembly recognized that women and girls with disabilities were among the most marginalized in society and that extra attention was needed to ensure their full and equal participation in society. The Assembly also highlighted the importance of sex-disaggregated data. In its resolution [75/167](#) on child, early and forced marriage, the Assembly recognized that child, early and forced marriage was a major impediment to the empowerment of women and girls and expressed deep concern about the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the incidence of, and efforts to end, the harmful practice. In response to the pandemic and its adverse impacts on women and girls, the Assembly adopted two new resolutions focused entirely on gender equality issues, namely resolutions [75/156](#) and [75/157](#) (see para. 9).

47. The analysis also shows an increase in the proportion of General Assembly resolutions with a low focus on gender equality issues, only two of which had previously contained higher levels, namely resolution [75/164](#) on assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa and resolution [75/201](#) on the review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture. The increase could be attributed to 11 new resolutions with a low gender focus being adopted at the seventy-fifth session, such as resolution [75/36](#) on reducing space threats through norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviours, which contained only a passing reference to gender.

48. The analysis identified examples of resolutions that positively increased their focus on gender issues compared with the previous year, such as General Assembly resolution [75/264](#) on cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe, which reflected a significant increase in its integration of a gender perspective. In the resolution, which included a stand-alone paragraph on women and girls and the impact of COVID-19, the Assembly also welcomed the policy brief by the Secretary-General on the topic.

III. Contribution by the United Nations Entity on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) to the integration of a gender perspective into intergovernmental processes

49. 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. It has responded to new and expanded guidance from Member States and supported the development of a comprehensive set of global norms, policies and standards on gender equality and the empowerment of women (see [E/CN.6/2020/2](#) and [E/CN.6/2021/2](#)).

50. As in previous years, the provision of substantive support to the Commission on the Status of Women, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Human Rights Council, the Security Council and other intergovernmental bodies remained a central feature of the normative work of UN-Women, even within the constraints imposed by the pandemic. With the aim of strengthening the integration of a gender perspective into the work and outcomes of those bodies, UN-Women continued to focus on synergies between achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and progress in other areas of sustainable development. With the pandemic threatening to undermine or even reverse gains in gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, UN-Women has taken a leading role in responding to the crisis and offering sustainable gender-responsive solutions during the decade of action for the Sustainable Development Goals.

51. In 2020, UN-Women placed high priority on the activities related to the 25-year review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. As part of that process, 173 Governments prepared national reports, many in collaboration and consultation with UN-Women, civil society and other stakeholders. The national reviews contributed to the global synthesis report of the Secretary-General on the review and appraisal process ([E/CN.6/2020/3](#)).

52. The Entity provided strong evidence of progress and gaps in gender equality and the empowerment of women and contributed to the development of specific recommendations to accelerate the implementation of commitments. It continued its efforts to strengthen the integration of a gender perspective into its work and improve coherence, consistency and coordination between its normative and operational aspects. The 25-year review and appraisal process was also an opportunity to galvanize impactful initiatives and partnerships to close gaps and intensify action.

53. The Entity contributed to and supported events held by other intergovernmental bodies to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, including a high-level panel discussion of the Human Rights Council, in February 2020, a multi-stakeholder hearing convened by the President of the General Assembly, on 21 July, and a high-level meeting of the Assembly at its seventy-fifth session, on 1 October.

54. The Entity also collaborated in a virtual joint event organized by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary, together with the Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women. The virtual panel discussion provided an opportunity to call upon Governments and other actors to draw upon and utilize the work of the Commission on the Status of Women to design gender-responsive policies and other interventions in the response to and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. It also served to confirm the long-standing interaction between the three commissions and the catalytic role of the Commission on the Status of Women in promoting gender mainstreaming.

55. To commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#), UN-Women conducted a month-long series of virtual events complemented by advocacy and outreach activities to increase visibility and advance the leadership of women in securing sustainable peace. It also coordinated the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security ([S/2020/946](#)), which served to strengthen the knowledge base on that topic, document achievements and challenges and capture trends and evidence from new research, data and practices.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

56. During the reporting period, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions continued their efforts to accelerate the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls across the full spectrum of their work. The Assembly, at its seventy-sixth session, should seize the opportunity to further advance that commitment.

57. Progress in gender mainstreaming remains uneven among the intergovernmental bodies of the United Nations reviewed. The proportion of reports of the Secretary-General inclusive of a gender perspective decreased slightly. With regard to the General Assembly, the decrease represents a disruption of a consistent upward trend that lasted until the seventy-third session. With regard to the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions, results have fluctuated over the past six years, likely owing to the small number of reports submitted to them, resulting in a small sample size. The qualitative assessment herein indicates that the cluster of reports with low levels of coverage and/or quality of gender analysis continues to comprise the largest share of the reports inclusive of a gender perspective. Those findings highlight the pressing need for further efforts for a more systematic inclusion of a gender perspective in reports of the Secretary-General across the board, together with a further strengthening of the quality of gender analysis and the inclusion of a gender perspective in the conclusions and recommendations.

58. The percentage of General Assembly resolutions inclusive of a gender perspective reached a new peak at the seventy-fourth session. Although it decreased slightly at the seventy-fifth session, the percentage remained above the level reached at the seventy-third session. At the same time, resolutions categorized as having low levels of quality and coverage continued to comprise the largest share of resolutions inclusive of a gender perspective and to increase disproportionately in relation to other categories. The proportion of resolutions of the Main Committees of the Assembly inclusive of a gender perspective varied significantly, with a majority of the Committees yet to achieve 50 per cent. The Economic and Social Council reached higher levels in 2019 and 2020 than in 2018, but was not able to repeat its peak result of 2017. Meanwhile, the proportion of resolutions of its functional commissions inclusive of a gender perspective was lower than the past four sessions, in part owing to the low number of resolutions adopted in 2020 overall. There are therefore significant opportunities for greater attention to be paid to the incorporation of a gender perspective into the work of all intergovernmental bodies.

59. The challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic notwithstanding, UN-Women was able to provide effective normative support to intergovernmental processes and bodies, including in the context of the 25-year review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The Entity will continue to support the work of the Commission on the Status of Women and other intergovernmental bodies, including as they strengthen the global normative framework for gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of the pandemic.

60. The General Assembly may wish:

(a) 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;

(b) To urge all Governments and all other stakeholders to address gaps and challenges and take specific, measurable, time-bound and fully funded new actions for the accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, in line with the commitments made in the political declaration on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women;

(c) To commit itself to intensifying its own efforts to integrate a gender perspective into its work in plenary meetings and in its Main Committees, and to encourage the President of the General Assembly and the Bureaux of its Main Committees to monitor progress in integrating a gender perspective into resolutions at each session;

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

(e) To request author departments to take further steps towards ensuring that reports of the Secretary-General prepared for intergovernmental bodies reflect gender analyses and to encourage further measures to improve the quality of such analysis, including through the use of data disaggregated by sex and age, the reflection of the contribution of women and girls as agents of change and of the impact of proposed policies and programmes on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and also encourage the inclusion of a gender perspective in the conclusions and recommendations of all reports prepared for intergovernmental bodies;

(f) To continue 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 the integration of a gender perspective, in terms of coverage and the quality thereof, in resolutions and other outcome documents of intergovernmental bodies.
