

Multilateralism Index: Pilot Report



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This report is the result of a joint initiative by IPI and the Institute for Economics and Peace. It builds upon previous research by IPI on the state of multilateralism, particularly the work of the Independent Commission on Multilateralism (ICM) carried out between 2014 and 2016.

IPI and IEP would like to thank all the participants in two expert-level roundtables held on February 27, 2020, and December 9, 2021, and one ambassadorial-level consultation held on March 5, 2020, which were instrumental in developing our approach to the index. In particular, we would like to thank Karen Alter, Richard Gowan, Talia Hagerty, Ian Johnstone, Jimena Leiva Roesch, Thong Nguyen, Jenna Russo, Waheguru Pal Sidhu, Jake Sherman, and Albert Trithart for their various comments and contributions over the course of the project.

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CONTENTS

Abbreviations	iii
Preface.....	v
Executive Summary	vii
Introduction.....	1
Origins and Evolution of the Multilateral System.....	2
Contemporary Realities: Continuity and Crisis.....	3
Diversification in Structure and Representation	6
Multilateralism Index Results by Domain	12
Peace and Security	12
Human Rights	20
Environment.....	27
Public Health	33
Trade	46
Annex: Summary of Indicators.....	52

ABBREVIATIONS

COW	Correlates of War
DPKO	UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (now DPO)
DPO	UN Department of Peace Operations
ECOSOC	UN Economic and Social Council
FENSA	Framework of Engagement with Non-State Actors
FTA	Free trade agreement
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDP	Gross domestic product
IEADP	International Environmental Agreements Database Project
IEP	Institute for Economics and Peace
IGO	Intergovernmental organization
IHR	International Health Regulations
INGO	International nongovernmental organization
IVI	International Vaccine Institute
MI	Multilateralism Index
NHRI	National human rights institution
NMCI	National Material Capabilities Index
OHCHR	Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
PPI	Positive Peace Index
PTS	Political Terror Scale
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
TGI	Transnational public-private governance initiative
UCDP	Uppsala Conflict Data Program
UNCTAD	UN Conference on Trade and Development
UNEP	UN Environment Programme
UNHRC	UN Human Rights Council
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

Preface

This project began in the context of conversations at the International Peace Institute about claims that the United Nations–based multilateral system was under siege. In the period 2016–2019, many commentators observed a rise in unilateralist nationalism and spoke of a crisis of multilateralism, broadly defined as a decline in international cooperation, a rise in geopolitical competition, and an overall fragmenting of the international order. This crisis was deemed to be of such severity that in April 2019 the foreign ministers of France and Germany formed the Alliance for Multilateralism to reinforce commitments to a multilateral order based on respect for international law.

The subsequent COVID-19 pandemic and invasion of Ukraine have strengthened concerns about the state of multilateral cooperation. Early responses to the pandemic were characterized more by reactionary isolationism than by international cooperation. And while the Russian invasion of Ukraine has inspired an outpouring of solidarity in many parts of the world, it has also underlined stark geopolitical divisions.

Indeed, the current war in Ukraine is in part a product of this crisis of multilateralism. The conflict follows years of weakening commitments to the international rule of law and the consistent violation of norms on the use of force and human rights, increasing the vulnerability of civilians in armed conflicts in Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Iraq, Mali, Myanmar, Palestine, Syria, Ukraine, Yemen, and elsewhere.

Yet despite years of crisis, the multilateral system continues to function and produce results. What is needed is a better understanding of where the system is strong, where it is weak, and where it is going. What are the trends over time?

To help provide that understanding, IPI, in partnership with the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), has been developing the Multilateralism Index. The index analyzes the multilateral system between 2010 and 2020 based on sixty-five indicators across three dimensions (Participation, Performance, and Inclusivity) and five domains (Peace and Security, Human Rights, Environment, Public Health, and Trade).

The development of the index has been an iterative process. We would like to thank the participants from two expert-level roundtables and one member-state roundtable that helped frame the project, as well as the organizers of the 2020 Paris Peace Forum, where the concept was showcased as a selected project. As this is the inaugural Multilateralism Index, we consider it a pilot version, and we hope to add additional indicators and expand our analysis in subsequent reports.

To adapt a quote by Kwame Anthony Appiah, an index “is like a camera that brings a view of its subject into sharp focus while leaving other features of the landscape blurred or out of frame. Its value comes from what, given its focal distance, it is able to capture.”¹ Our subject, the multilateral system, is large and complex. Inevitably, there are elements that are beyond the frame of the index’s focus. Nonetheless, its initial findings begin to capture a more granular understanding of the crisis of multilateralism that was missing from those early discussions.

Some of the findings align with the notion that multilateralism is in crisis. For example, it will come as no surprise that many of the human rights and peace and security indicators deteriorated between 2010 and 2020. Yet the findings are not all bad for the multilateral system: While performance is down across four of the five domains, inclusivity has improved across the board. Meanwhile, participation shows mixed results.

What does this tell us? While we often frame the crisis of multilateralism as one of decreased international cooperation and a widespread exit from multilateral institutions, leading to an eventual collapse of the system, this is not what we are seeing. Instead, we are seeing a battle over the nature and purpose of the system. The crisis of multilateralism is not about decay. It is about transformation and uncertainty. The international order

¹ Kwame Anthony Appiah, “*Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents* by Isabel Wilkerson,” *New York Times Book Review*, August 4, 2020.

is in transition, but it is unclear what it is transitioning to. As we continue to track changes in the multilateral system over time, we hope the Multilateral Index will provide a basis for informed decision making on the future of multilateralism.

I would like to thank Jake Sherman for pitching the idea of the index to me in late 2019 when he was the director of IPI's Brian Urquhart Center for Peace Operations and for his instrumental work in the early stages of its development before moving on to become minister counselor at the US permanent mission to the United Nations. Special thanks and acknowledgment are also due to our partners at the Institute for Economics and Peace, the true index experts: Executive Director Americas Michael Collins, Director of Research David Hammond, and Research Fellow Alex Vedovi, who was the principal author of this report.

Finally, IPI owes a profound debt of gratitude to our core donors, whose support makes work like this possible. In particular, the Multilateralism Index was funded by generous project grants from the governments of Australia, Finland, Germany, and the Republic of Korea, as well as the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung and the Sasakawa Peace Foundation.

Adam Lupel

Vice President and COO

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Executive Summary

The Multilateralism Index (MI) is the first known attempt to quantifiably assess the state of the multilateral system. It focuses on developments in the multilateral system over the past decade across five domains: Peace and Security, Human Rights, Environment, Public Health, and Trade. The domains are evaluated across a total of sixty-five indicators covering three dimensions: Participation, Performance, and Inclusivity.

This pilot report on the MI identifies several trends across these three dimensions between 2010 and 2020:

- Participation scores for Human Rights, Public Health, and Trade have improved, while the scores for Peace and Security and Environment have deteriorated.
- Performance scores have deteriorated in four out of five domains.
- Inclusivity scores have improved across all five domains.

The report also identifies trends in each of the five domains.

Peace and security

- Most Participation and Performance indicators have deteriorated over the past decade, while both Inclusivity indicators have improved.
- Ratifications of disarmament treaties have slowed in the past decade.
- Due to multiple protracted conflicts, battle deaths were significantly higher between 2010 and 2020 than in the previous decade.
- Despite the increase in battle deaths, the UN Security Council passed fewer resolutions than in the preceding decade, and there were more vetoes from its five permanent members.

Human rights

- Five of the six Participation indicators and three of the four Inclusivity indicators have improved over the past decade, but both

Performance indicators have deteriorated.

- More countries have internationally accredited national human rights institutions than ever before. However, the percentage of countries remains low at 40 percent.
- The average human rights score of countries that make up the UN Human Rights Council is worse than the average score of all countries.

Environment

- Most Participation and Performance indicators have deteriorated over the past decade, while all Inclusivity indicators have improved.
- The lack of robust climate change policies by seven of the world's largest CO₂ emitters was the main driver in the deterioration of the Participation dimension.
- Despite declining slightly in 2020, net CO₂ emissions have steadily risen since 2000.

Public health

- Most Participation and Performance indicators have improved over the past decade. Public Health is the only domain in which the Performance dimension improved.
- In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the World Health Organization experienced a substantial increase in funding from both state and non-state donors in 2020.

Trade

- Most of the Participation and Performance indicators have deteriorated over the past decade, while three of the four Inclusivity indicators have improved.
- Requests for trade dispute mediation at the World Trade Organization (WTO) are down, in part owing to the slowing and eventual cessation of proceedings at the WTO Appellate Body caused by the US blocking the appointment of new judges.
- Between 2018 and 2020, there was a significant uptick in new national policies that obstructed free trade.

Introduction

In the past several years, there has been a much-discussed rise in strain on multilateralism, which is understood here as coordinated action among three or more states. However, there have been few efforts to quantifiably assess the state of the multilateral system. This Multilateralism Index (MI) report is the first known attempt to do so. It focuses on developments in the system over the past decade, providing a snapshot of its relative strength in 2020 compared to 2010. It seeks to answer questions including: What is the state of the multilateral system? What is working? What is not? And how has the multilateral system changed over time?

This report is based on the analysis of uniform, year-on-year quantitative data related to the functioning of the multilateral system over time. However, given that many of the most critical developments in multilateralism cannot be captured by looking at such numbers in isolation, the MI provides necessary context through qualitative analysis and complementary quantitative data sources. As the present report is only a pilot version of the MI, it provides data visualizations for most, but not all, of the individual indicators that make up the index.

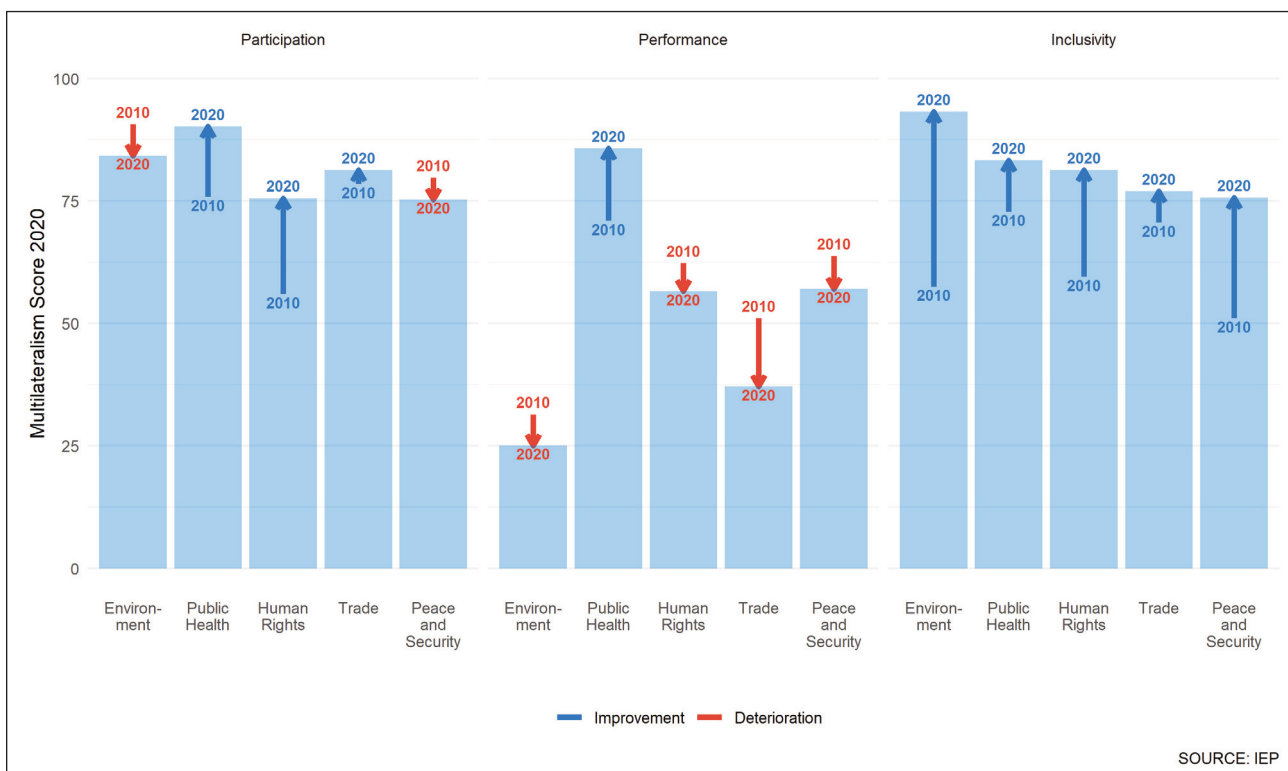
The MI examines five domains of multilateral coordination: Peace and Security, Human Rights, Environment, Public Health, and Trade. Each domain is evaluated across three dimensions (Participation, Performance, and Inclusivity). These three dimensions can be further divided into a number of areas of focus. Where possible, indicators have been selected to address each of these areas (see Annex for a full list of the domains, dimensions, and indicators).

- **Participation:** How the multilateral system is supported, accessed, and utilized by states, including:
 - o *Membership:* The degree to which countries have joined multilateral bodies and agreements and actively engage in the mechanisms and instruments that these bodies and agreements promote;
- **Performance:** How well the multilateral system addresses key focus areas, including:
 - o *State financial contributions:* The level of funding that multilateral bodies receive from states and the number of states that contribute financially to the bodies; and
 - o *Staff:* The degree to which a growing workforce supports the work of multilateral bodies.
- **Inclusivity:** How the multilateral system engages and is supported by non-state actors and the degree to which women are represented in multilateral institutions, including:
 - o *Activity:* The level of implementation of actions by multilateral bodies in pursuit of stated objectives; and
 - o *Outcomes:* The degree to which social, economic, and other measures reflect improvements within multilateral bodies' areas of concern.
 - o *Non-state engagement:* The degree to which non-state actors are able to establish relations with multilateral bodies and participate in their activities;
 - o *Non-state financial contributions:* The level of funding that multilateral bodies receive from non-state actors and the number of non-state actors that contribute financially to the bodies; and
 - o *Gender parity:* The percentage of women in the overall workforces and among the leadership of multilateral bodies.

All indicators in the MI are scored on a scale from 0 to 100, with 0 representing the lowest level of multilateral engagement or achievement possible (or on record) and 100 representing the highest level of multilateral engagement or achievement possible (or on record). The composite domain and dimension scores represent an unweighted average of all relevant indicators. Based on these indicators, Figure 1 illustrates the MI results for 2020 and changes since 2010.

Figure 1. Results of the Multilateralism Index

Between 2010 and 2020, Participation in the multilateral system improved in three domains and deteriorated in the other two, Performance deteriorated in four domains and improved in one, and Inclusivity improved across all five domains.



Origins and Evolution of the Multilateral System

Over the past eight decades, institutions designed to coordinate action among large numbers of states have become foundational to international affairs. While collaboration among countries on issues of shared concern has taken place for centuries, such collaboration took on unprecedented scope, formality, and consequence in the wake of World War II. Following the war, new international bodies were created with the stated purpose of promoting peace, safeguarding human rights, and enhancing the well-being of humanity. The modern multilateral system was born.

At the most basic level, multilateralism refers to the coordination of national actions among three or more states.² While such coordination can occur in

different ways and on different platforms, at the core of the modern multilateral system are formal institutions that allow their members to express their interests, set shared goals, and take collective action according to agreed rules. Foremost among these is the United Nations, which comprises an array of specialized organs and agencies and has served as the standard-bearer of the multilateral system since its founding in 1945.

Over time, the multilateral system has expanded to include hundreds of intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) with complementary or overlapping functions, as well as a variety of associated treaties, conventions, agreements, informal organizations (such as the G20), and alliances, which can be binding or nonbinding in nature.

Following the end of the Cold War, commitment to the multilateral system increased. The 1990s are

² Vincent Pouliot, "The Politics of Multilateral Diplomacy," in *International Pecking Orders: The Politics and Practice of Multilateral Diplomacy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

sometimes referred to as a golden age of multilateralism.³ There was a surge in ratifications of international human rights treaties, driven in part by newly independent countries joining multilateral bodies. The activities of the UN Security Council also increased significantly: while the council passed just 593 resolutions in the first four decades after the UN's founding, it passed over a thousand in the two decades that followed. Moreover, there was a significant uptick in UN-led activities aimed at curbing conflict, with preventive diplomacy missions increasing sixfold and peacekeeping operations increasing fourfold.⁴

This renewed dynamism within the multilateral system was also fueled by the increasing participation of non-state actors. As the number of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) grew exponentially in the 1980s and 1990s, more began to affiliate themselves with activities in the multilateral sphere, particularly at the UN. Their growing involvement was on display in a series of high-profile global summits in the early 1990s that addressed issues such as education, the status of women, human rights, and environmental protection. As an example of their increased presence in this period, while some 250 NGOs attended the first UN environmental summit in Stockholm in 1972,⁵ there were 2,400 NGO representatives at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and 17,000 people in attendance at a parallel forum specifically for NGOs.⁶

Contemporary Realities: Continuity and Crisis

In the first two decades of the twenty-first century, the multilateral system has in many ways built on the gains achieved in the 1990s and continued to operate as it did in that decade. UN bodies continue to help set global agendas and goals; lead peacekeeping, development, and humanitarian activities; issue resolutions; produce social and

economic research; and serve as a forum for states to express their interests and resolve disputes. By some metrics, the system's work has expanded in recent years, as evidenced by the robust consultative process that led to the development and universal adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the 2015 Paris Agreement under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Although in recent years a few member states have threatened to withdraw funding or support for specific programs and agencies, in most cases these threats have not materialized, and the UN's overall work and revenue have continued to grow (see Figure 2).⁷

In 2010, total contributions to the UN system stood at \$40 billion, while in 2020 they reached \$63 billion. The vast majority of additional funding (85 percent) came from increases in voluntary contributions from member states, which are distinct from mandatory (or "assessed") contributions. Despite this growth in revenue, the financial situation at the UN remains complex, and its regular budget has become less secure in recent years. In the past decade, for example, the UN Secretariat has regularly been forced to finance its activities with reserve funds (see Figure 3). This is the result of certain countries withholding funding or making their assessed payments late in the financial year.⁸

Moreover, a large portion of new voluntary contributions has gone to humanitarian relief rather than to the "regular" functioning of the UN. At a time of rising needs and increasing appeals for humanitarian aid, the two UN agencies that experienced the largest increases in voluntary funding were the World Food Programme (WFP) and UNICEF. Between 2010 and 2020, voluntary contributions to the WFP rose from \$4.1 billion to \$8.6 billion, and for UNICEF they rose from \$3.3 billion to \$7.3 billion. Nonetheless, the overall gap between

3 See, for example: Bruce Jones and Susana Malcorra, "It Is Now Time to Focus on Multilateral Order," Brookings Institution, April 19, 2021; and Børge Brende, "What Next for Multilateralism?" *Horizons* 7 (Spring 2016), Center for International Relations and Sustainable Development (CIRSD).

4 Thomas G. Weiss and Sam Daws, "The United Nations: Continuity and Change," in *The Oxford Handbook of the United Nations*, 2nd Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

5 Carole-Anne S nit, "Leaving No One Behind? The Influence of Civil Society Participation on the Sustainable Development Goals," *Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space* 38, no. 4 (2020).

6 Mario Pianta, "UN World Summits and Civil Society: The State of the Art," UN Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), August 2005.

7 Lynn Hong et al., "Funding the United Nations: How Much Does the U.S. Pay?" Council on Foreign Relations, April 4, 2022, available at www.cfr.org/article/funding-united-nations-what-impact-do-us-contributions-have-un-agencies-and-programs.

8 Wasim Mir, "Financing the United Nations Secretariat: Resolving the UN's Liquidity Crisis," International Peace Institute, March 2020.

Figure 2. UN funding (2010–2020)

Voluntary country contributions to the UN grew consistently during the 2010s.

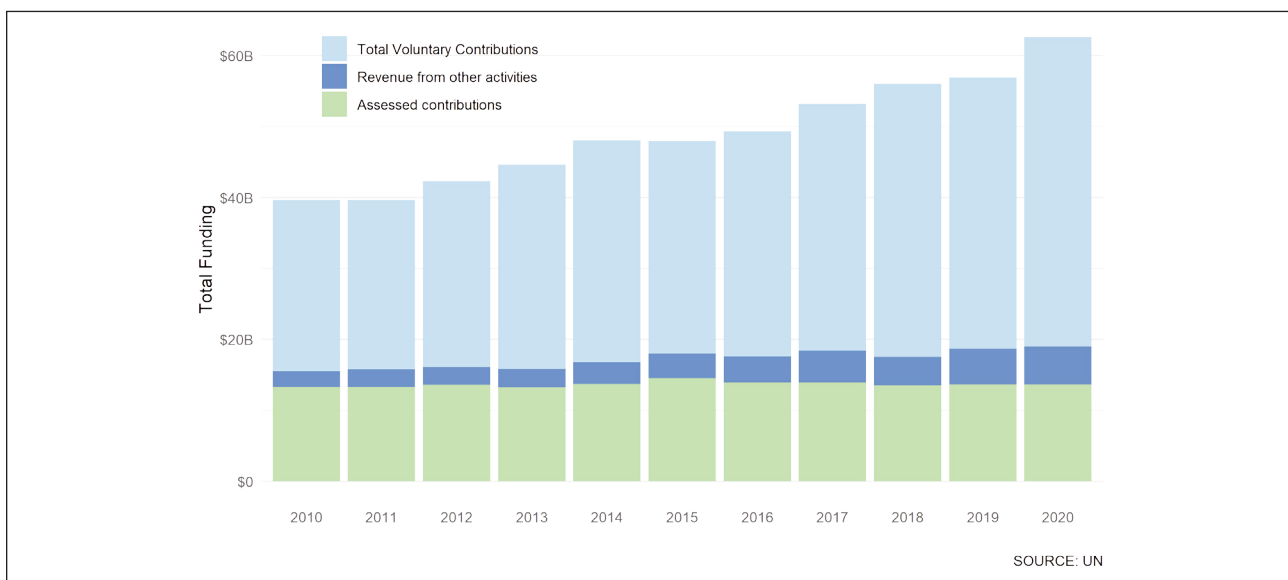
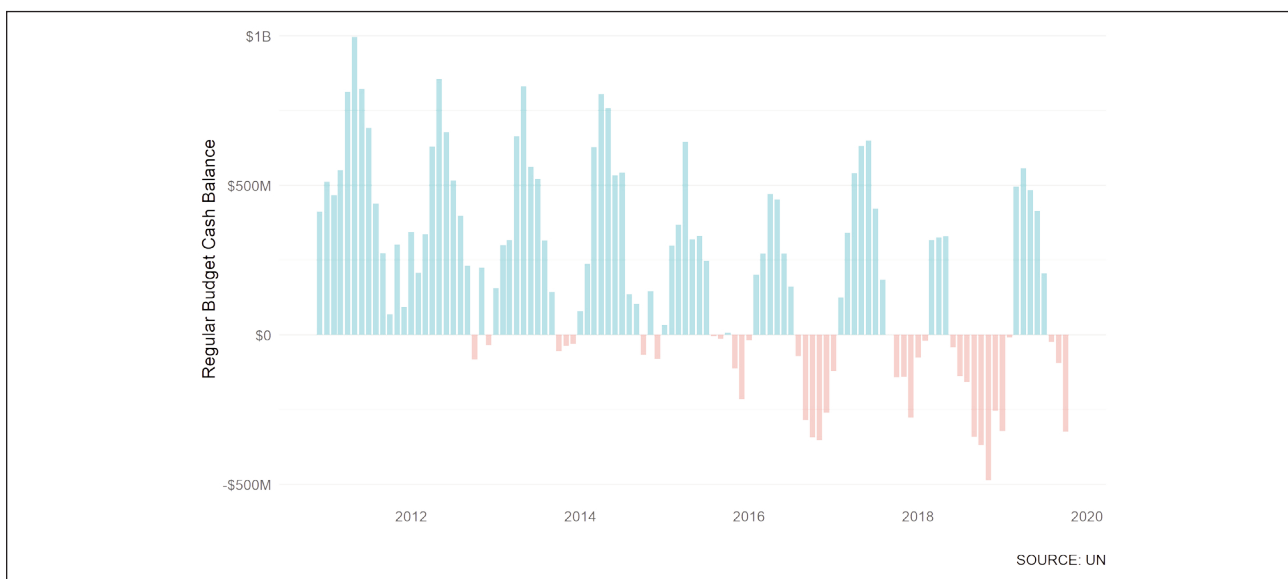


Figure 3. UN regular budget cash balance (2011–2019)

In 2018, the UN was forced to draw on cash reserves for three-quarters of the year.



humanitarian needs and humanitarian assistance in 2020 was greater than any previous year on record.⁹

Coinciding with the growing uncertainty of UN funding, there has been an increase in high-profile incidents and movements that could undermine and fracture established international institutions. The

origins of present-day disillusionment with and hostility toward multilateralism are difficult to pinpoint, as there have always been currents of resistance to international collaboration based on assertions of national sovereignty, and waves of optimism and pessimism about multilateralism have marked the multilateral system's entire history.¹⁰

⁹ Fran Girling, Angus Urquhart, and Sofia Martinez Fernandez, "Chapter 2: Humanitarian and Wider Crisis Financing," in "Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2021," Development Initiatives, 2021.

¹⁰ Weiss and Daws, "The United Nations: Continuity and Change."

Nevertheless, some have voiced concern about a perceived shift in the posture of governments and the general public toward the idea of international collaboration in recent years. Since 2018, for example, UN Secretary-General António Guterres has repeatedly spoken of the mounting threats that populism, nationalism, protectionism, and isolationism pose to the multilateral system.¹¹

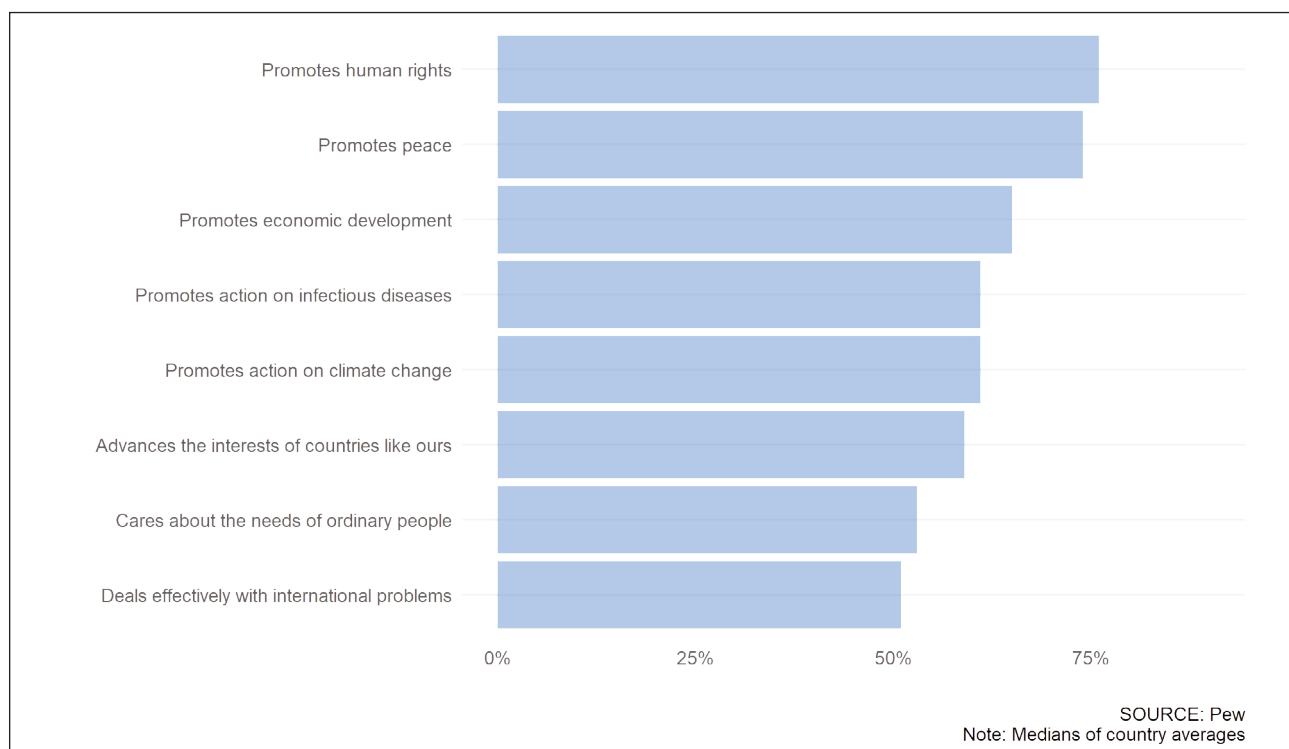
At the same time, global public opinion surveys indicate that levels of trust in the multilateral system—and specifically the UN—have not meaningfully changed in the past two decades. According to data from the World Values Survey, the percentage of people in twenty-five high-, middle-, and low-income countries who expressed “quite a lot” of confidence in the UN has consistently

stood at around 42 percent since 2005.¹²

Similarly, among those from six high-income countries surveyed by Pew between 2007 and 2021, levels of favorable sentiment toward the UN have generally hovered around 60 percent, reaching a high of 68 percent in 2011 and lows of 57 percent in both 2007 and 2020.¹³ Moreover, the 2020 Pew poll, which surveyed individuals from fourteen high-income countries, found that sizable majorities credited the organization with promoting human rights and peace (see Figure 4). However, fewer credited it with addressing other global issues or advancing the interests of countries like theirs, and only about half believed the UN cares about the needs of ordinary people or effectively deals with international problems.

Figure 4. Opinion on UN functioning in fourteen high-income countries (2020)

On average, 76 percent of people credited the UN with promoting peace, while only 51 percent believed it deals effectively with international problems.



11 UN Secretary-General, “Amid Growing Populism, Multilateralism Key to Overcome Global Challenges, Rebuild Trust in Government, Secretary-General Tells Annual Parliamentarians Meeting,” UN Doc. SG/SM/19468, February 21, 2019; United Nations “International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace, 24 April: The Virtues of Multilateralism and Diplomacy,” available at www.un.org/en/observances/Multilateralism-for-Peace-day.

12 Calculations based on World Values Survey data. See: World Values Survey, “Data and Documentation,” available at www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSContents.jsp. The twenty-five countries included here have also been included in each of the World Values Survey’s last three “waves” (2005–2009, 2010–2014, and 2017–2022).

13 Moira Fagan and J.J. Moncus, “Many People Globally See United Nations in a Positive Light, Including Its Handling of Climate Change,” Pew Research Center, September 17, 2021, available at www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2021/09/17/many-people-globally-see-united-nations-in-a-positive-light-including-its-handling-of-climate-change/.

According to data collected by the World Values Survey between 2017 and 2022, the current level of global trust in the UN varies significantly by body.¹⁴ For example, among seven of the most important global multilateral institutions, the World Health Organization (WHO) enjoys the highest level of trust (see Figure 5), with nearly two-thirds of respondents reporting at least “quite a lot” of trust in the organization. In contrast, only 52 percent of people felt the same way about the UN.

While recent survey data may not show dramatic changes in opinion about multilateralism among the general public, more discernible shifts appear to have taken place at the government level. For example, the Integrated Crisis Early Warning System (ICEWS) can be used to assess changes in tone and posture in international affairs rhetoric since 1995. Consisting of a database of millions of events over several decades, ICEWS automatically identifies and extracts news articles from around the globe on a weekly basis, coding events by theme and significance. The median sentiment scores

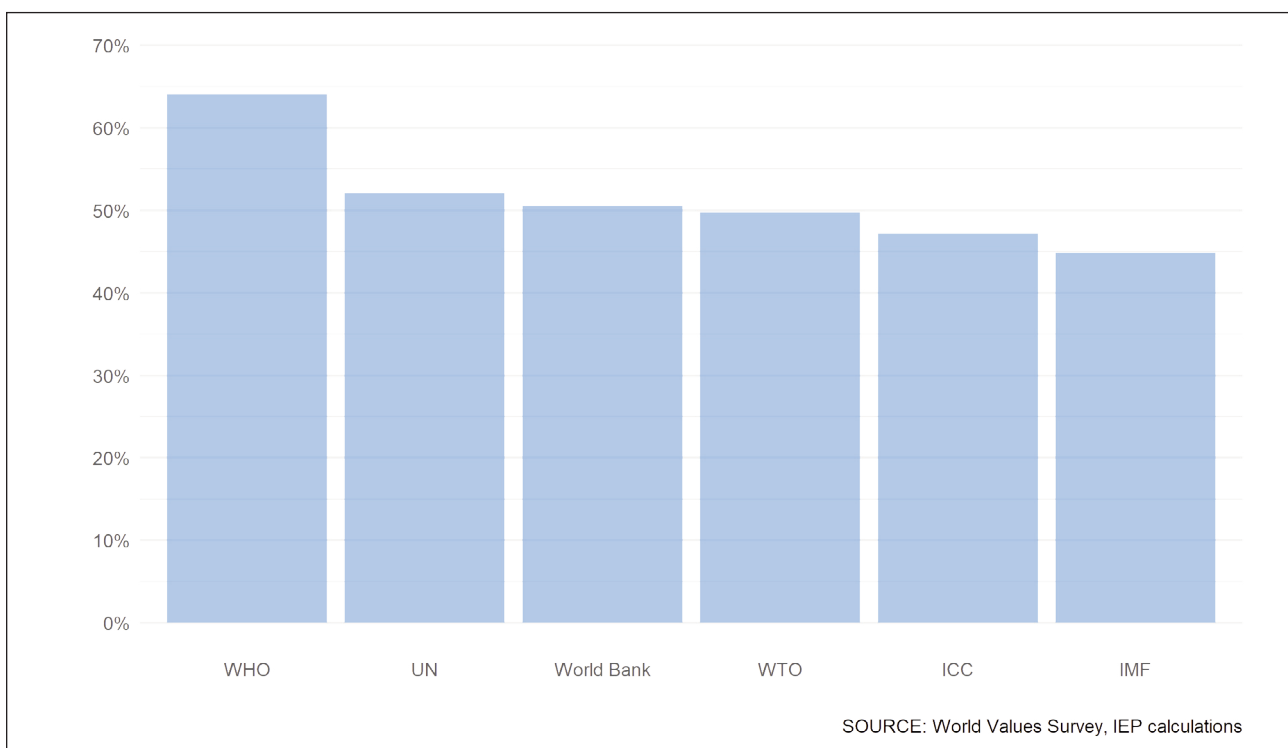
below represent the frequency and relative significance of positive and negative messages and actions of national governments toward other national governments (see Figure 6). They indicate that the frequency and significance of events coded as criticism and condemnation have increased in recent decades relative to those coded as consultation and cooperation, resulting in the overall downward trend since 1995.

Diversification in Structure and Representation

In the face of these challenges, a growing array of multilateral actors has emerged, changing the overall structure of the system and who it represents. At its inception, the UN comprised just 51 countries mostly located in the Americas and Europe. At present, the organization is composed of 193 highly diverse states, each with an equal vote in the UN General Assembly. While achieving global consensus was no easy task in the early days of the UN, it has grown significantly more complicated in

Figure 5. Trust in global multilateral bodies (2017–2021)

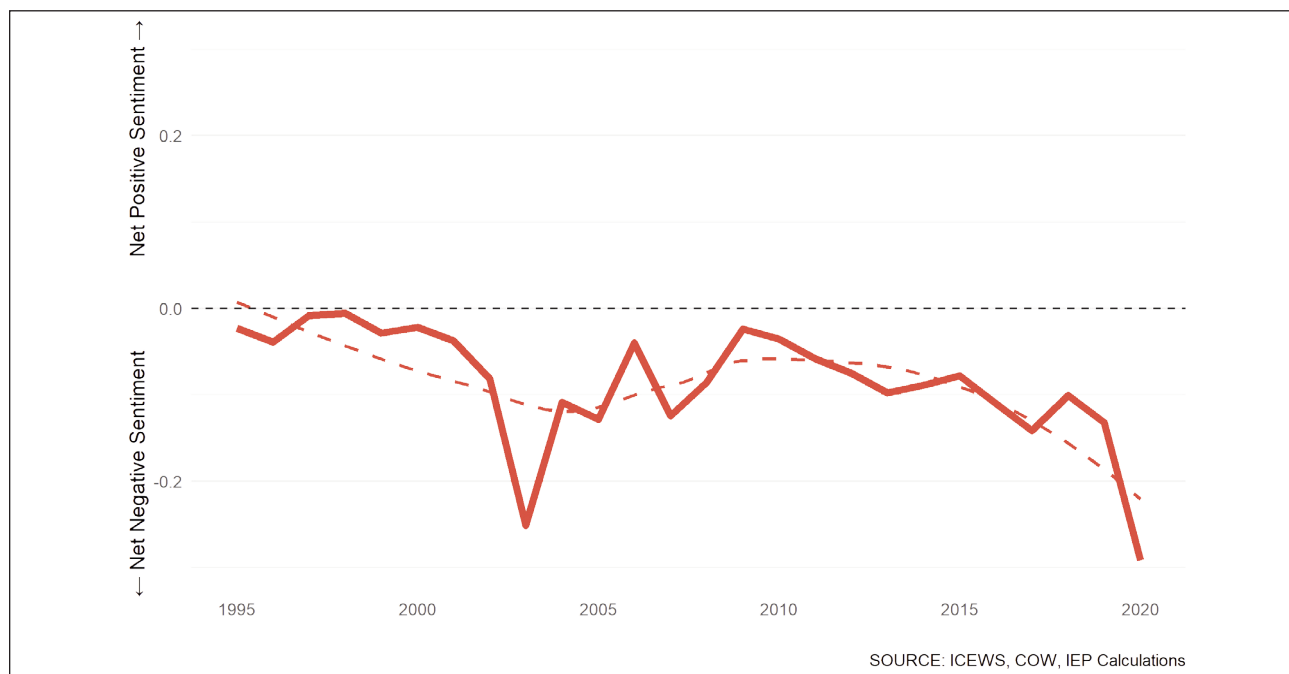
The World Health Organization enjoys the highest level of trust among seven UN bodies.



¹⁴ The seventh wave of the World Values Survey, conducted between 2017 and 2022, included responses from over 87,000 people from fifty-nine high-, middle-, and low-income countries and territories. See: World Values Survey, “WVS Wave 7 (2017–2022),” available at www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSDocumentationWV7.jsp.

Figure 6. Median sentiment in international relations rhetoric (1995–2020)

The intensity of messages and actions based on criticism and condemnation has increased relative to the intensity of those based on consultation and collaboration.



the years since. At the same time, the work of global governance has become ever-more specialized. As a result, the number of institutions and processes addressing issues that transcend the purview of a single state has grown significantly over the past several decades.

In 1945, virtually all of the sixty-four multilateral organizations focused on global governance issues were formal in structure and were composed exclusively of states. In the decades since, the number of active IGOs has grown to over 300, some associated with the UN system and others independent of it. Figure 7 depicts countries' current levels of integration into the multilateral system based on their number of connections with other countries through formal IGOs.

In parallel to the expansion of formal IGOs, two other types of global governance organizations have also multiplied: informal IGOs and transnational public-private governance initiatives (TGIs).¹⁵ Figure 8 shows the growth in the number of formal IGOs, informal IGOs, and TGIs between 1945 and 2017.

Since the 1990s, many countries have embraced informal IGOs as a complement to or substitute for formal, treaty-based institutions to coordinate on international affairs. These initiatives sometimes involve large numbers of states but often bring together smaller numbers of like-minded ones. Such informal IGOs are often seen as better suited for achieving interstate consensus. Examples include the G7, G20, and G77 fora. This trend has been labeled “minilateralism.”¹⁶

Similarly, as the role of for-profit companies, NGOs, and other groups has expanded substantially on the world stage, there has been a marked rise in the number of TGIs, which represent partnerships between state and non-state actors in the conduct of global governance. Such partnerships are often issue-specific and created to augment the work of established IGOs. In many instances, IGOs have played a leading role in the establishment of TGIs to meet the needs of those that would benefit from collaboration with private actors. So rapid has been the growth of public-

¹⁵ Oliver Westerwinter, “Transnational Public-Private Governance Initiatives in World Politics: Introducing a New Dataset,” *Review of International Organizations* 16 (2021).

¹⁶ Moisés Naím, “Minilateralism: The Magic Number to Get Real International Action,” *Foreign Policy*, June 21, 2009.

Figure 7. Level of integration into the multilateral system

Europe and Latin America are the regions most integrated into the multilateral system.

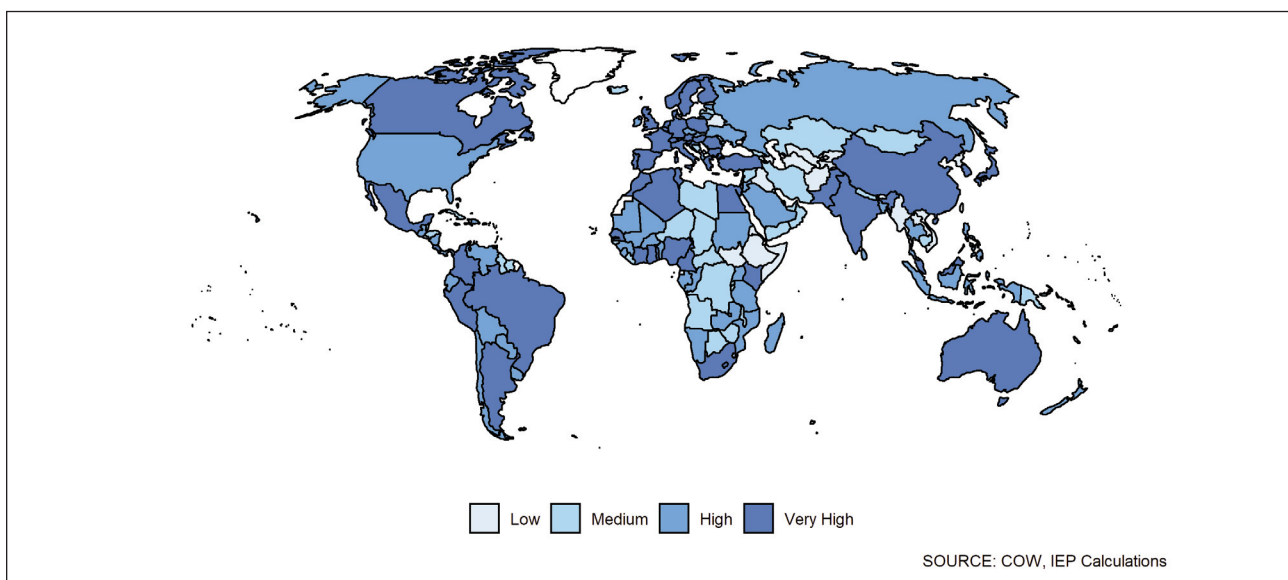
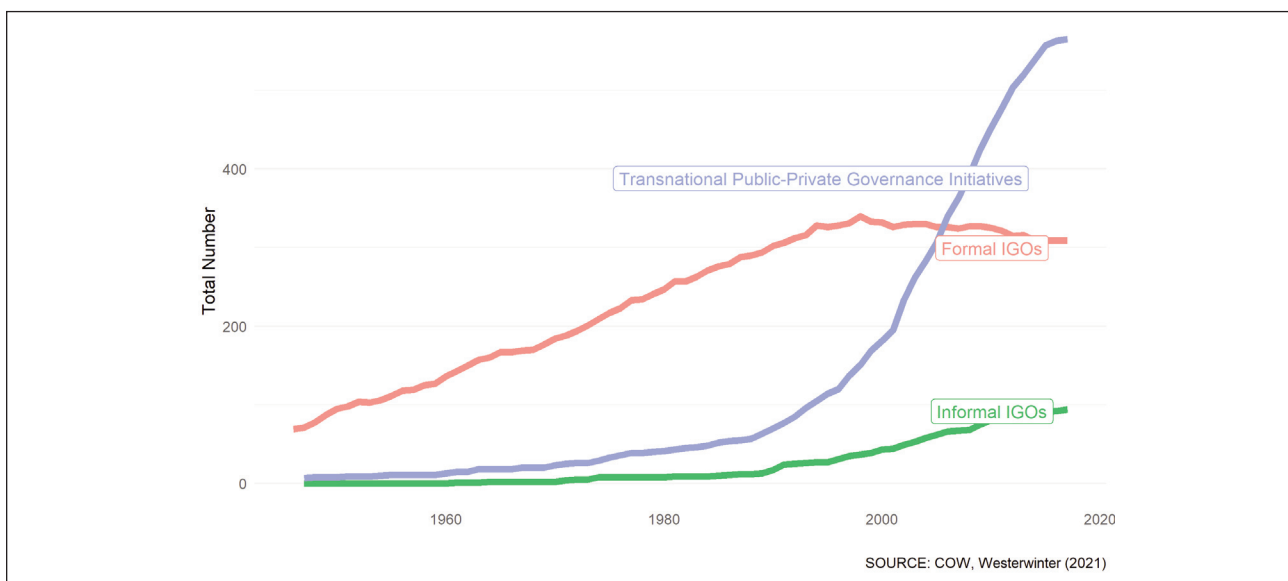


Figure 8. Formal IGOs, informal IGOs, and TGIs (1945–2017)

Owing to rapid growth starting in the 1990s, public-private initiatives are now by far the most common type of global governance organization.



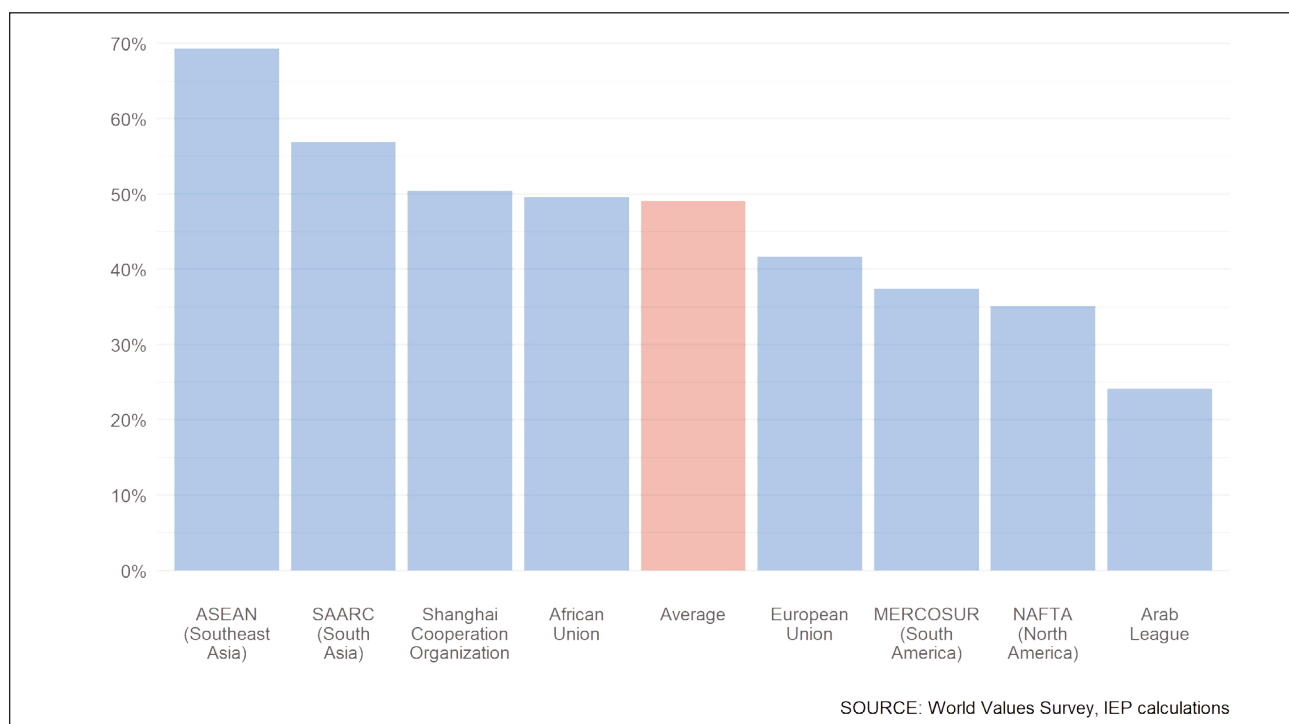
private global governance initiatives—which include organizations like the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria—that they now outnumber formal IGOs nearly two to one.

The greater diversity of types of actors involved in the multilateral system and the nature of multilateral bodies also has a regional component. Since the 1950s, the number of region-specific formal

IGOs has risen significantly. The level of trust in regional bodies varies widely. According to the World Values Survey, the average level of trust in regional organizations was 49 percent (see Figure 9). However, levels of public trust among member states ranged from 69 percent for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to just 24 percent for the Arab League.

Figure 9. Trust in major regional multilateral bodies and trade blocs (2022)

ASEAN has by far the highest levels of trust among people in its member states, while the Arab League has the lowest.



In parallel to these developments related to formal, informal, and public-private global governance bodies, the total number of international organizations has increased by over 33,000 since 1950.¹⁷ According to the 2021–2022 Yearbook of International Organizations, 41,944 organizations are currently active, of which 86 percent are nongovernmental.¹⁸ Many of these international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs) have come to associate themselves with the functioning of the multilateral system and have influenced the system in important ways.

One of the most direct ways NGOs and INGOs formally affiliate themselves with the work of the multilateral system is through “consultative status” with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). More than 6,000 NGOs and INGOs have obtained consultative status with ECOSOC since 1946 (see Figure 10).

In 2021, UN Secretary-General Guterres called for a more “networked” and “inclusive” multilateralism. He advocated for “stronger coordination between regional and international organizations, international financial institutions and public/private alliances” as well as greater reliance on “civil society, business, local and regional authorities and others.”¹⁹

However, a more inclusive multilateralism is defined by more than the number and types of institutions engaged in global governance. It also relates to the composition of the staff and leadership of those institutions. For example, in recent years, the UN has pursued gender parity within its Secretariat as well as its numerous agencies, funds, and programs, and the 2021 Our Common Agenda report established a target to achieve this goal by 2028.²⁰

While the meaningful inclusion of women within multilateral institutions is a multifaceted issue

¹⁷ Weiss and Daws, “The United Nations: Continuity and Change.”

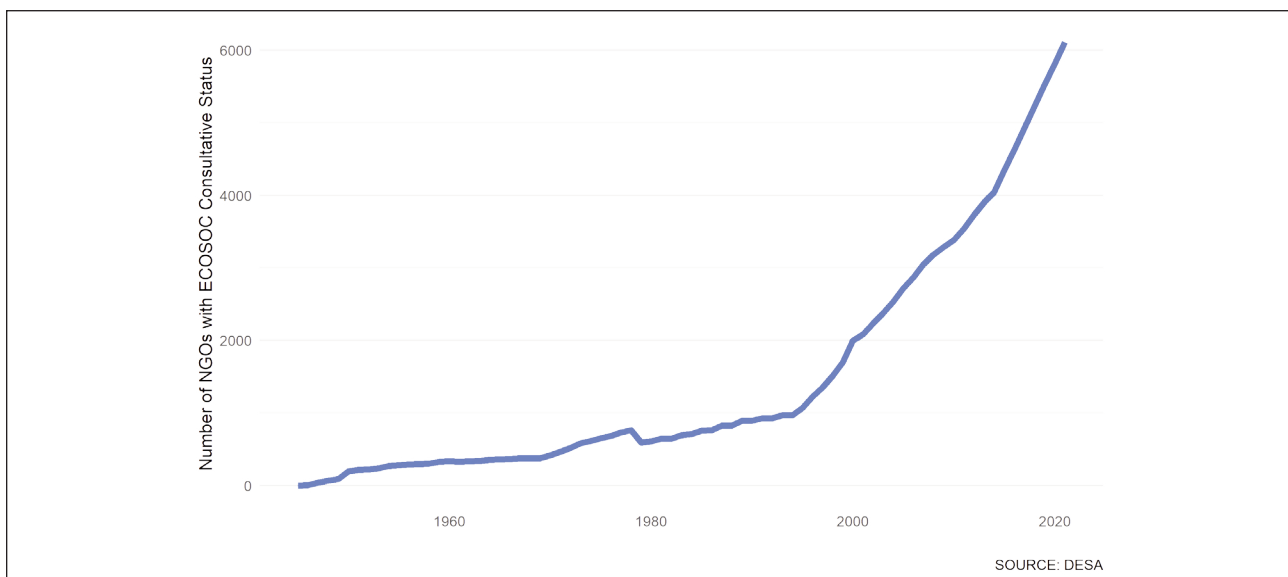
¹⁸ Union of International Associations (UIA), *Yearbook of International Organizations 2021–2022, Volumes 1A and 1B (SET)*, June 2021.

¹⁹ UN, “Secretary-General Stresses Need for More Networked, Inclusive Multilateralism, in International Day of Diplomacy Message,” April 23, 2021, available at <https://press.un.org/en/2021/sgsm20699.doc.htm>.

²⁰ United Nations, “Our Common Agenda—Report of the Secretary-General,” 2021.

Figure 10. NGOs with ECOSOC consultative status (1946–2021)

The number of nongovernmental organizations with consultative status with ECOSOC began expanding rapidly in the 1990s.

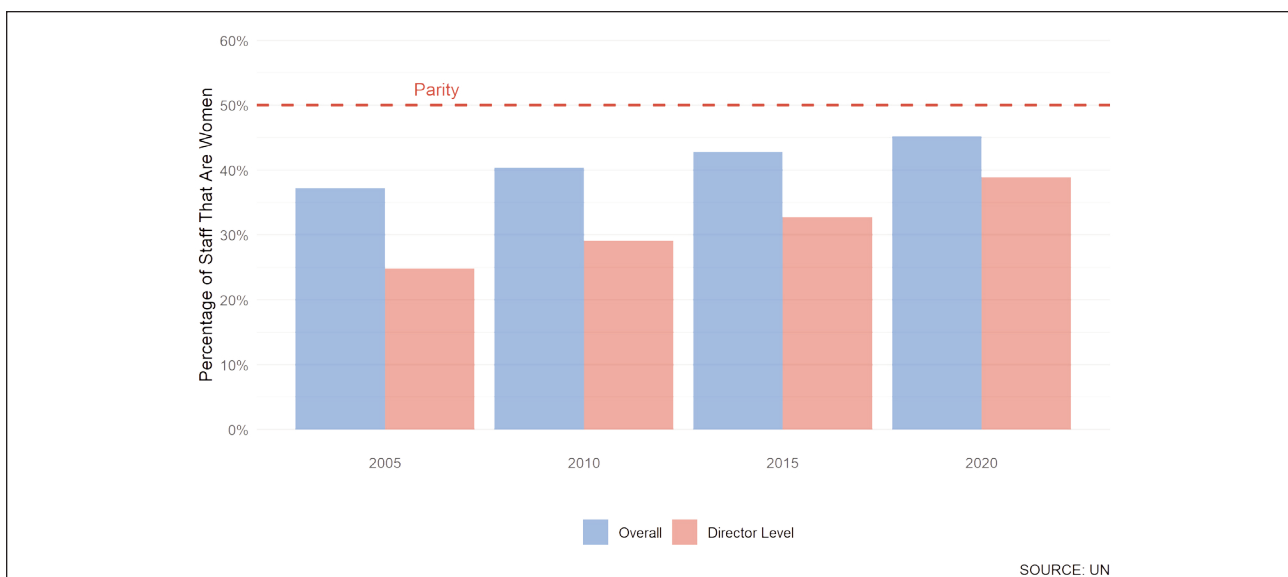


involving organizational culture and a range of other concerns, the proportion of an institution's staff and leadership that are women offers one useful measure. Though women have been underrepresented across all levels of multilateral institutions over the past two decades, they have been most underrepresented in senior positions.

However, as women's representation has risen across the UN system, the increase has been especially rapid at the director level (see Figure 11). Between 2005 and 2020, the proportion of positions held by women rose by fourteen points at the director level (from 25 to 39 percent) and by eight points among staff at all levels (37 to 45 percent).

Figure 11. Proportion of women among all UN staff and in leadership roles (D-1 and D-2 level) (2005–2020)

While underrepresentation persists, the proportion of UN staff positions held by women has steadily increased over the past two decades, particularly at the director level.



Box 1. Weighting commitment to treaties by global power

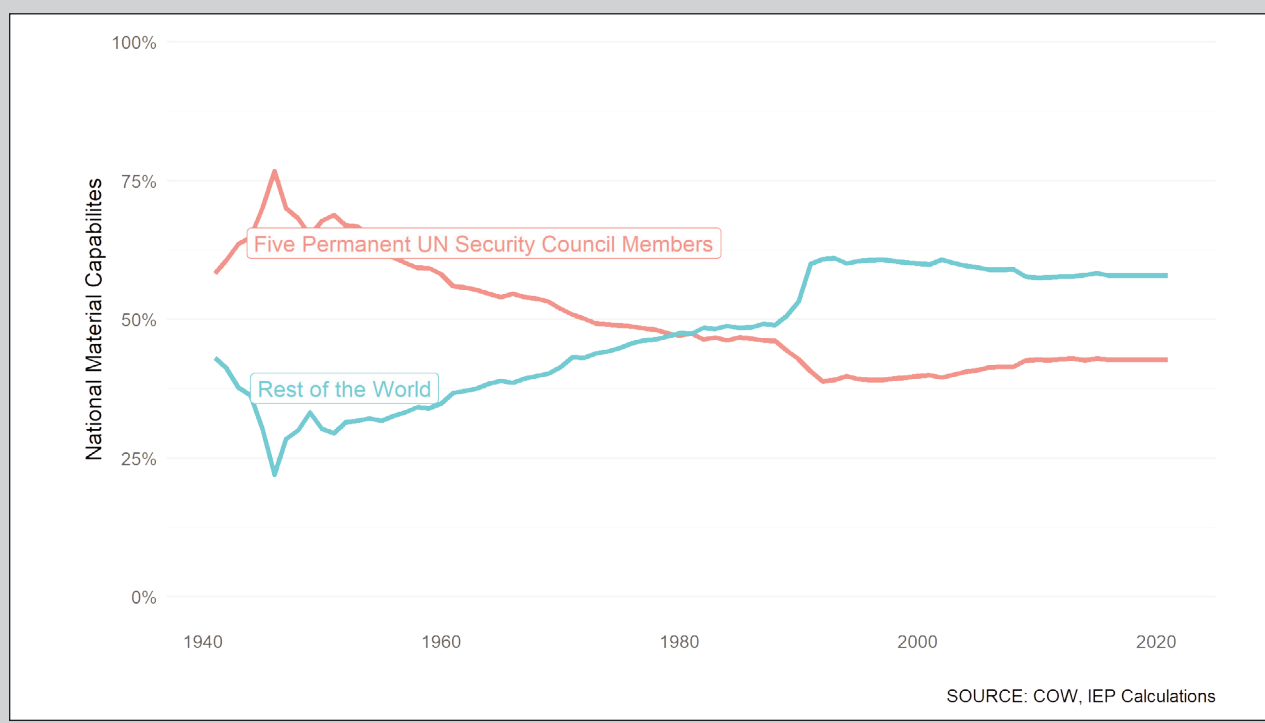
In measuring commitment to treaties over time it is important to account for the evolution of the multilateral system. Any normalized measure must reflect changes in the number of UN member states (for instance, there were 117 member states in 1965, 159 in 1990, and 193 in 2011) as well as the number of relevant treaties in existence in any given year.

It is also important to recognize that not all countries wield equal influence in the multilateral system. The MI thus weights country commitments to treaties by their score in the National Material Capabilities Index (NMCI). The NMCI scores countries' relative power based on six factors: military expenditure; military personnel; energy consumption; iron and steel production; urban population; and total population. When treaty commitments are weighted by the NMCI, each treaty's total score is reflective of the percentage of global power behind it rather than the percentage of countries that have ratified it (out of all existing countries in a given year).

Using the NMCI, it is possible to track shifts in power in the world system. For example, Figure 12 shows the average NMCI score of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council compared to the rest of the world since 1940.

Figure 12. Distribution of global power, permanent members of the UN Security Council vs. the rest of the world (1940–2021)

Around 1980, the share of power held by the five permanent Security Council members was overtaken by that of the rest of the world.



Multilateralism Index Results by Domain

This section details key indicators for each domain (Peace and Security, Human Rights, Environment, Public Health, and Trade) and explains how they are influencing the overall MI.

Peace and Security

In the Peace and Security domain, between 2010 and 2020, most Participation and Performance indicators deteriorated, while two of the three Inclusivity indicators improved. Figure 13 provides a breakdown of MI scores for all fourteen indicators (summarized in Annex).

Participation

Since 1925, countries have introduced and ratified international disarmament treaties in the hope of preventing or regulating interstate conflict. Table 1 summarizes the major disarmament treaties contained in this analysis, while Figure 14 presents a power-weighted composite score of the international community's ratification of these treaties.

During much of the 1940s and 1950s, with only the Geneva Protocol to ratify, global commitment to disarmament treaties was well above 75 percent. With the introduction of new treaties, however, levels of uptake have gradually declined, including between 2010 and 2020.

The UN Security Council is the body charged with preserving international peace and security. It has five permanent members—China, France, Russia (formerly the Soviet Union), the United Kingdom, and the United States—as well as a rotating membership of ten elected members. It is the only body in the UN system with the power to issue resolutions that are binding on member states and to authorize the use of force to maintain or restore international peace and security. Because of this, its resolutions carry great geopolitical weight. However, the five permanent members also hold veto power over all resolutions, which historically has led them to block resolutions counter to their interests.

During the Cold War, the council rarely passed more than twenty-five resolutions a year. With the end of the Cold War, the body was able to agree on resolutions more easily, and it began to regularly

Figure 13. Multilateralism Index scores: Peace and Security

Most Participation and Performance indicators deteriorated in the past decade, while two of the three Inclusivity indicators improved.

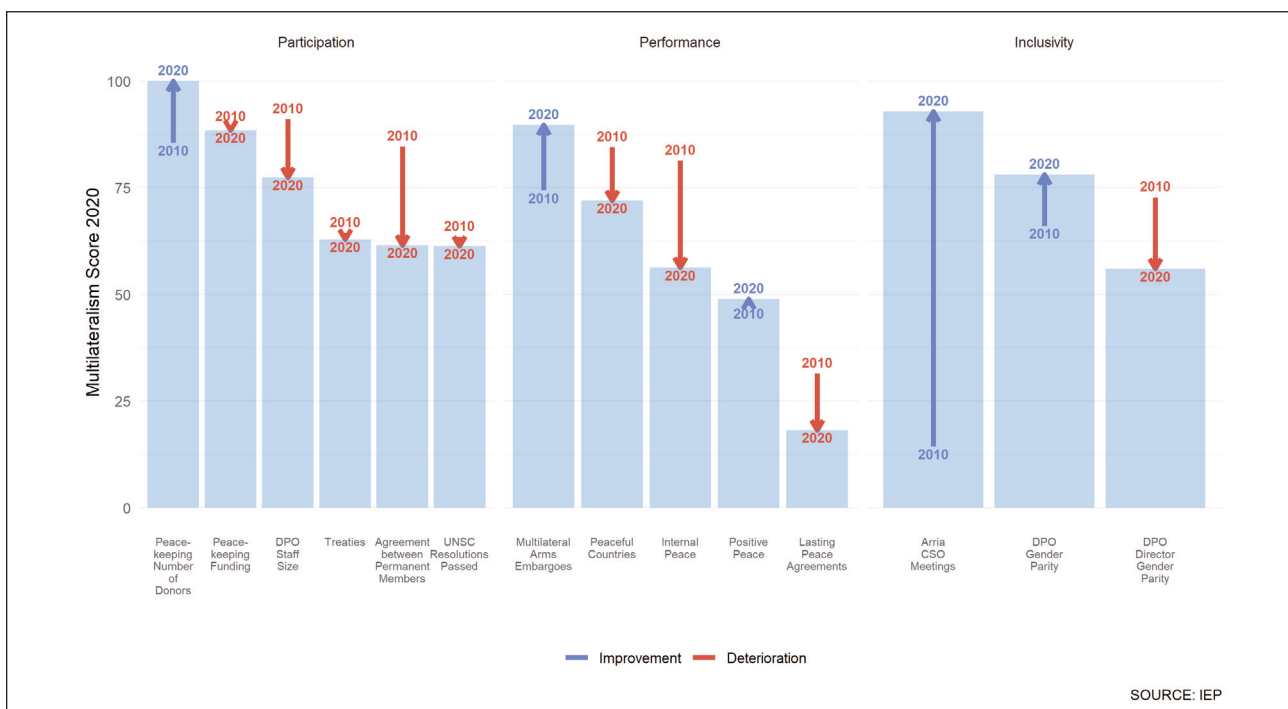


Table 1. Peace and security treaties addressed in this domain

Instrument	Year of Introduction
Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare (Geneva Protocol)	1925
Antarctic Treaty	1959
Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water	1963
Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies	1967
Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons	1968
Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil Thereof	1971
Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction	1972
Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques	1977
Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies	1980
Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects	1981
Treaty on Open Skies	1992
Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction	1993
Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty	1996
Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction	1997
International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism	2005
Convention on Cluster Munitions	2008
Arms Trade Treaty	2013
Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons	2017

pass more than fifty—and as many as ninety-three—per year. In the 2010s, however, the passage rate declined (see Figure 15).

While the number of resolutions is still much higher than during the Cold War, the recent decline in the rate of passage of resolutions has coincided with an uptick in vetoes (see Figure 16).

In the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s, the Soviet Union issued the most vetoes, while the US issued the most vetoes in the 1970s and 1980s. In the 1990s and 2000s, there were fewer vetoes than in the prior decades, but in the 2010s, Russia and China began issuing more. Most vetoes over the past decade have been on resolutions related to the Middle East in general and Syria in particular (see Figure 17).

Figure 14. Power-weighted commitment to disarmament treaties (1945–2020)

With the introduction of several new disarmament treaties in the past decade, net global commitment has declined.

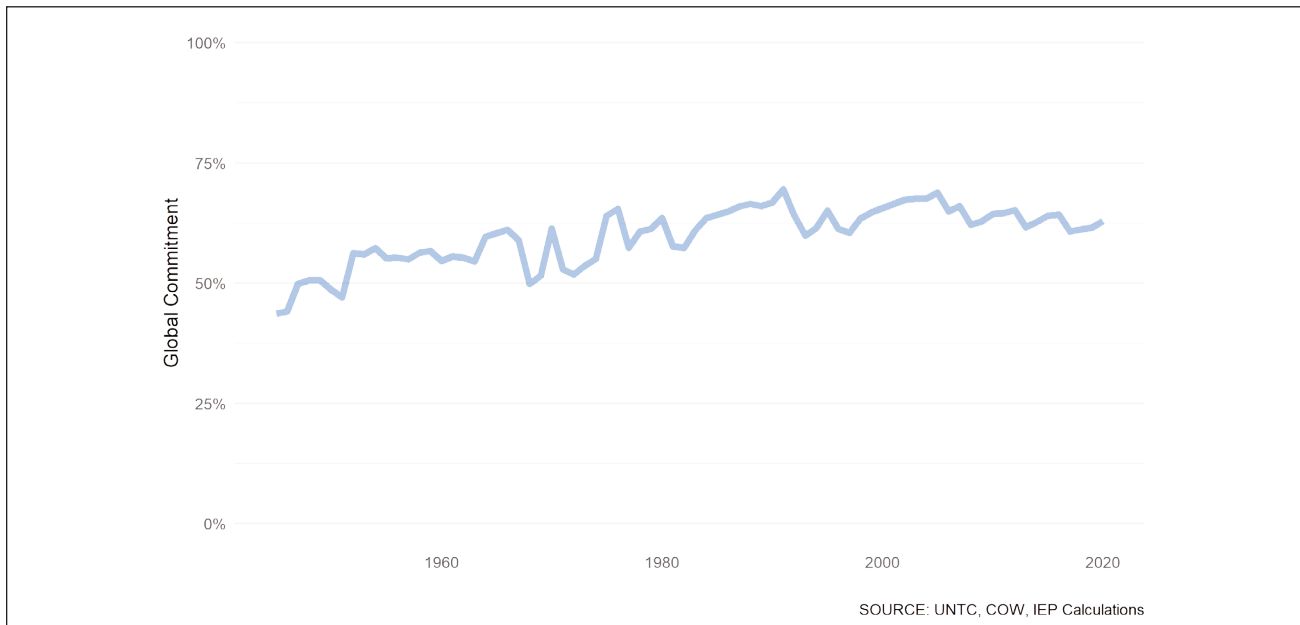


Figure 15. UN Security Council resolutions passed (1945–2020)

After a large increase in Security Council resolutions in the 1990s, the number in the past decade has decreased.

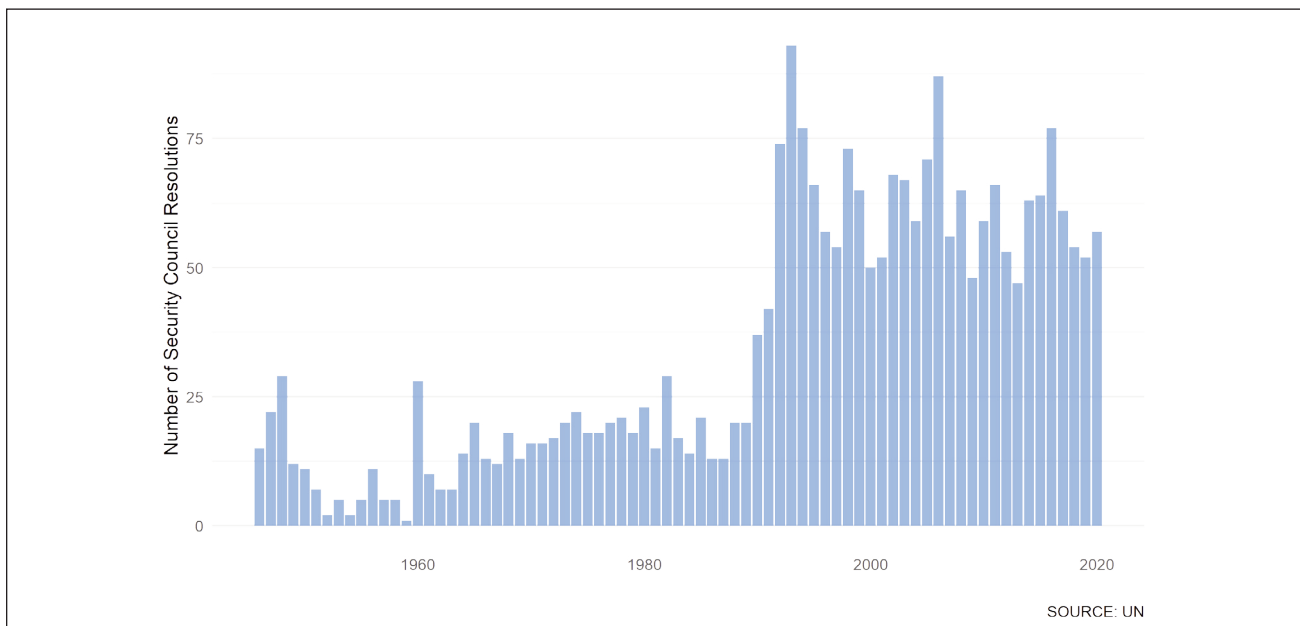
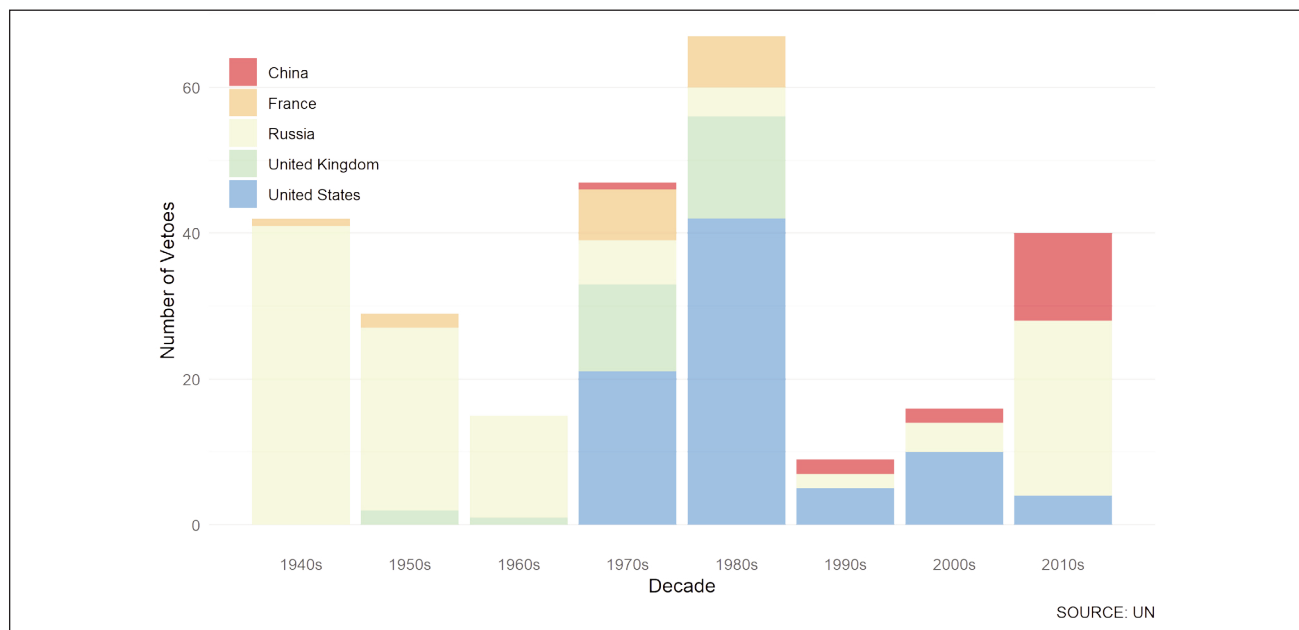
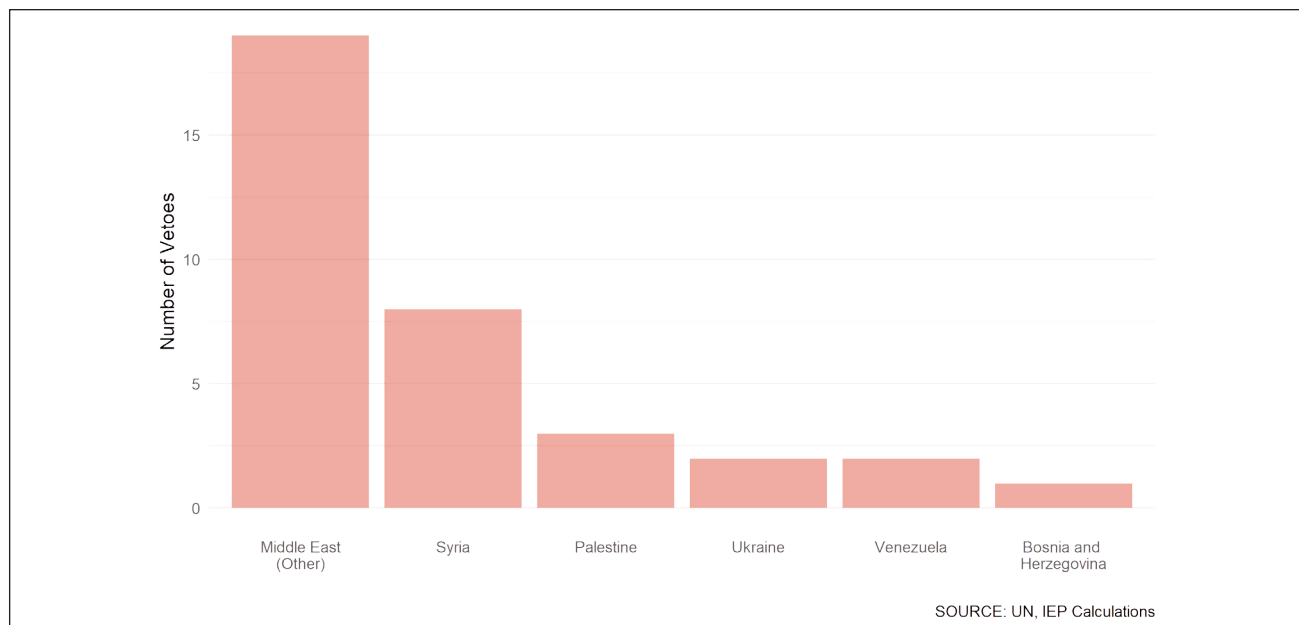


Figure 16. UN Security Council vetoes by decade (1940s–2010s)

The number of vetoes issued in the 2010s was higher than in the 1990s and 2000s combined.

**Figure 17. UN Security Council vetoes by topic (2010–2019)**

In the past decade, the council has primarily vetoed resolutions concerning the Middle East in general, as well as Syria and Palestine specifically.



Performance

Global battle deaths are a key measure of overall levels of peacefulness in the world. Overall, battle deaths and the severity of wars have declined since 1946. In the past three decades, however, conflict trends have shifted with the rise in smaller, more localized conflicts involving both states and non-state actors.²¹ After a decade in which global battle deaths remained

under 30,000 per year for all but two years, the 2010s saw a substantial increase in annual battle deaths, which peaked at well over 100,000 during the height of the Syrian civil war (see Figure 18). Moreover, with the number of state-based conflicts rising over the past decade, the number of countries at peace in 2020 fell to its lowest level since at least 1975, when data is first available (see Figure 19).

Figure 18. Global battle deaths (1989–2020)

Battle deaths in the past decade reached their highest levels since the end of the Cold War.

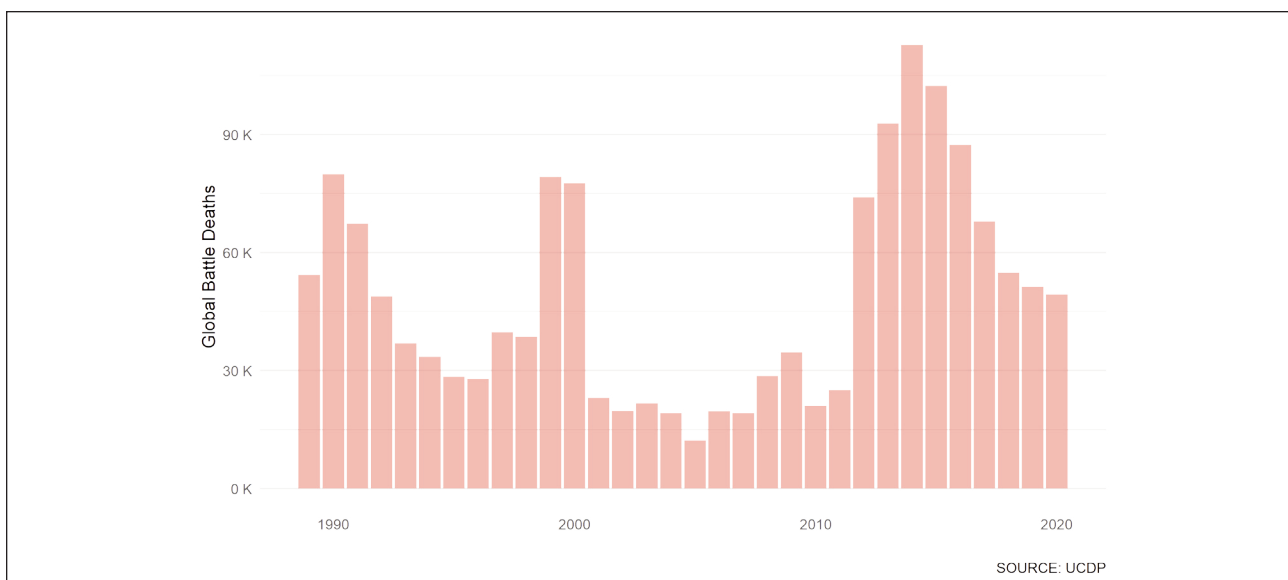
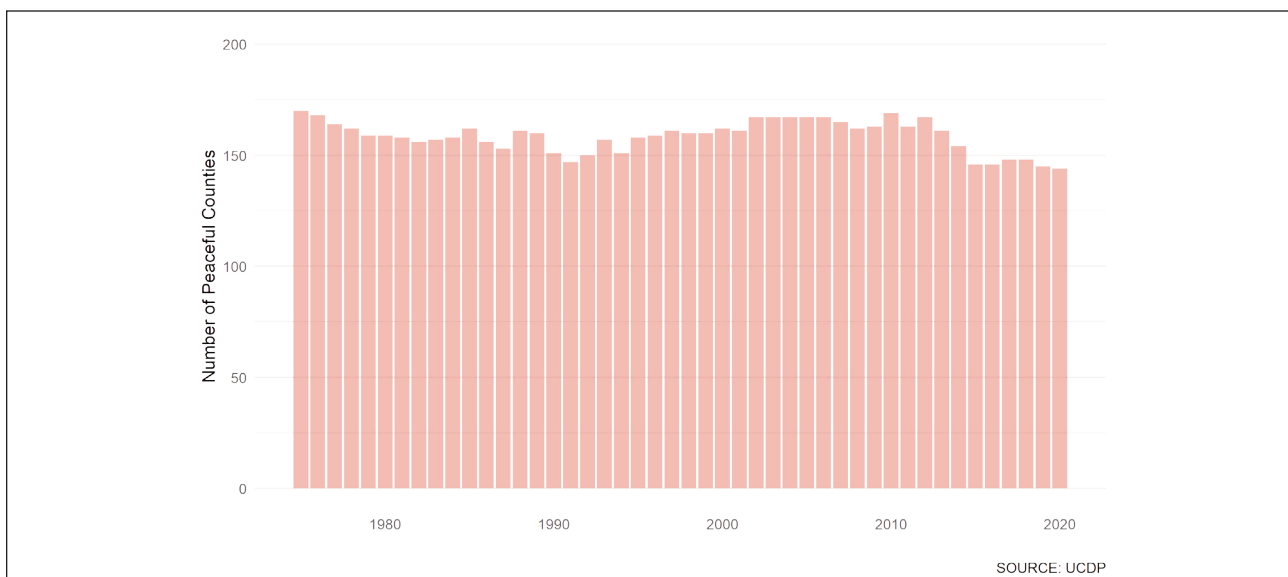


Figure 19. Peaceful countries (1975–2020)

The number of countries not affected by state-based conflict has declined in the past decade.



²¹ United Nations, "A New Era of Conflict and Violence," available at www.un.org/en/un75/new-era-conflict-and-violence.

The PA-X Peace Agreement Database is a comprehensive repository of peace agreements from the past three decades, containing over 1,900 agreements.²² Using this database, the success rate of peace agreements can be calculated by assessing levels of violence in a country after the signing of an agreement. “Lasting peace agreements” are defined as those for which the signing of a peace agreement was followed by fewer than 100 battle deaths in each of the subsequent five years. Figure 20 applies this definition to two sets of agreements: those signed between 1990 and 2005 and those signed between 2005 and 2020. Those signed between 1990 and 2005 had a success rate of about 36 percent, while those signed between 2005 and 2020 have thus far had a success rate of about 18 percent.

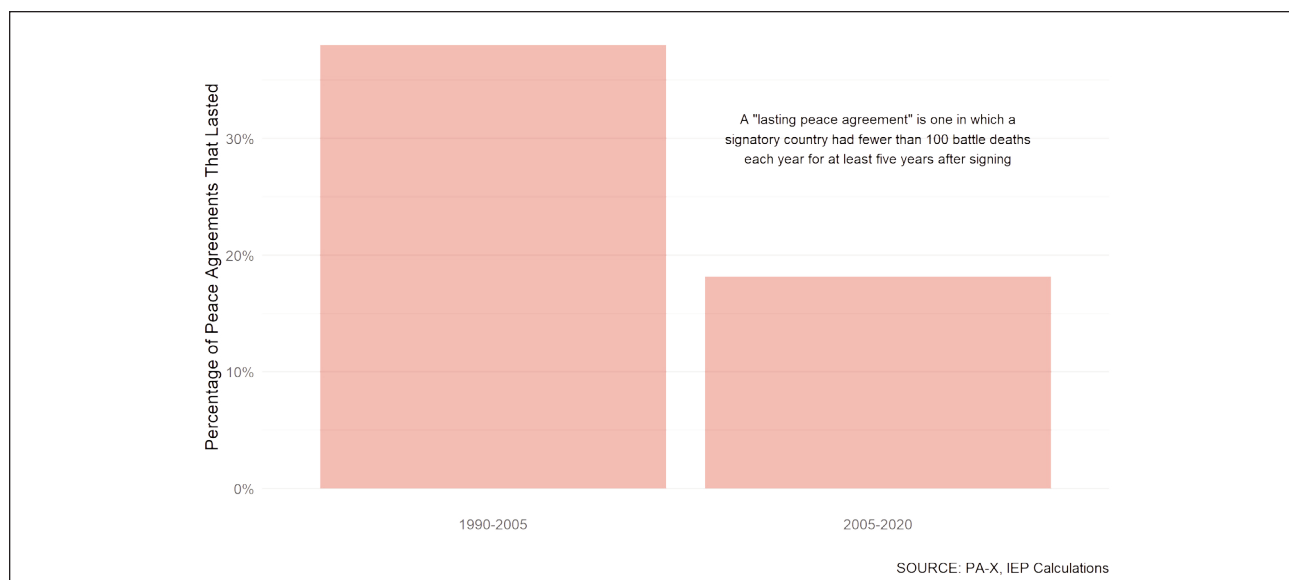
Arms embargoes are another mechanism used to curb conflict. Such embargoes often involve coordinated action by multiple states, in which case they are a type of multilateral sanction. Multilateral arms embargoes can serve as both a practical and a symbolic tool to constrain the capacity of a state or non-state actor to prosecute a conflict. The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) maintains an archive of multilateral arms

embargoes from 1950 to the present.²³ According to its records, seventy-nine embargoes have been imposed during that time, most by the UN and the European Union. Forty-four of these have been either lifted or suspended since their implementation, with lifted embargoes having an average lifespan of 6.8 years. Between 2010 and 2015, the number of active multilateral arms embargoes rose from twenty-nine to an all-time high of thirty-nine before declining to thirty-five as of 2020.²⁴

Peace encompasses not only the absence of violence but also the social conditions that sustain harmonious social relations within and between societies. For this reason, the concept of “positive peace” has been developed to denote the “attitudes, institutions and structures that create and sustain peaceful societies.”²⁵ The Institute for Economics and Peace created the Positive Peace Index (PPI) to quantitatively assess the degree to which countries exhibit these characteristics. Drawing on twenty-four indicators, the PPI assigns countries a score on a scale of 1–5, with 1 representing the best possible level of positive peace and 5 representing the worst possible level. Taking the average scores of the 163 countries included in the PPI, it can be seen that positive peace

Figure 20. Lasting peace agreements (1990–2005 vs. 2005–2020)

The success rate of peace agreements between 2005 and 2020 was half what it was between 1990 and 2005.



²² The PA-X database includes a repository of 1,959 peace agreements, including 1,932 agreements signed between 1990 and 2020. See: PA-X, “Peace Agreements Database,” University of Edinburgh, available at www.peaceagreements.org/.

²³ SIPRI, “Multilateral Sanctions Including Arms Embargoes”, <https://www.sipri.org/research/armament-and-disarmament/arms-and-military-expenditure/dual-use-and-arms-trade-control/multilateral-sanctions>.

²⁴ SIPRI, IEP calculations.

²⁵ Institute for Economics & Peace (IEP), “Positive Peace Report 2022: Analysing the Factors that Build, Predict and Sustain Peace,” January 2022.

around the world improved slightly over the past decade, from 3.00 in 2010 to 2.91 in 2020.

Inclusivity

The UN Security Council does not provide formal channels for the participation of civil society in its activities. While an NGO working group on the Security Council was created in 1997,²⁶ and peacekeeping operations have increasingly aimed to engage civil society in their activities,²⁷ the council does not accredit NGOs in the same way as the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), nor does it allow NGOs to attend its sessions in the same way as the UN Human Rights Council (UNHCR).

However, in the past two decades, representatives of civil society have been called on to brief Security Council members on different conflict-related issues during “Arria-formula” meetings. These meetings were established in 1992 by Diego Arria, who was then president of the Security Council, to

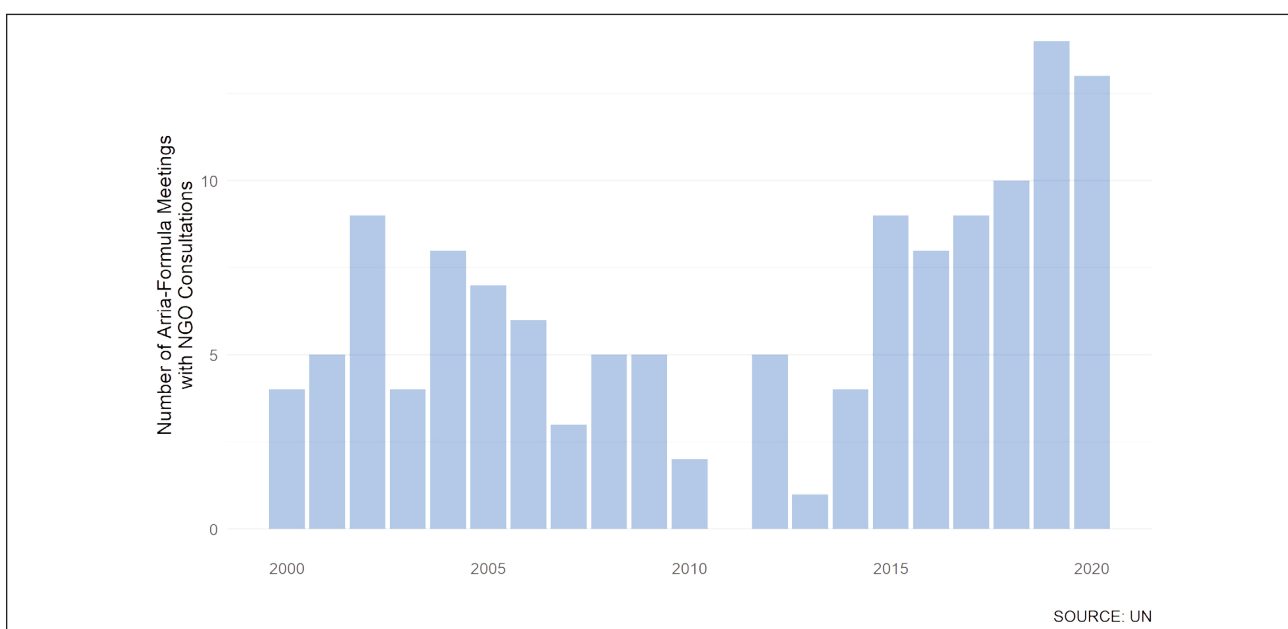
enable council members to discuss issues and hear testimony from non-members, including non-state actors, without the many obligations of formal council meetings.

Since their inception, more than 310 Arria-formula meetings have been held, and since first being invited to participate in 2000, civil society representatives have provided testimony at 61 percent of these meetings. In 2010, two Arria-formula meetings were held, both involving civil society representatives; in 2020, twenty-two Arria-formula meetings were held, thirteen of which involved civil society representatives (see Figure 21).

With regard to gender parity, the UN Department of Peace Operations (DPO), formerly known as the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), has fewer women among its staff than many other UN agencies, though this has improved somewhat in recent years (see Figure 22). In 2005, 32 percent of DPO staff were women, while in 2020, this figure stood at 39 percent. The percentage of women

Figure 21. UN Security Council informal consultations with civil society representatives (2000–2020)

Security Council members hosted Arria-formula meetings that included civil society representatives thirteen times in 2020, up from two times in 2010.



²⁶ See: NGO Working Group on the Security Council, “Information Statement,” January 2020, available at www.ngowgsc.org/content/information-statement.

²⁷ Aditi N. Hate, Lisa Moore, and Dirk Druet, “Understanding and Improving Engagement with Civil Society in UN Peacekeeping: From Policy to Practice,” UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and UN Department Field Support (DFS), May 2016.

occupying director-level roles (at the D-1 and D-2 level) remains even lower. In 2005, 18 percent of DPO director-level staff were women, which

doubled to 36 percent by 2010 before dropping to 28 percent as of 2020.

Figure 22. Proportion of women DPO staff, overall and director-level (2005–2020)

Women have lower levels of representation in DPO than in the UN system overall.



Human Rights

In the Human Rights domain, between 2010 and 2020, all Participation indicator scores increased except for the number of countries that were donors to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). Both Performance indicators deteriorated, while three of the four Inclusivity indicators improved. Figure 23 provides a breakdown of MI scores for all twelve indicators (summarized in Annex).

Participation

In the 1960s, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights began to be codified into binding international treaties. The first of these was the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which the UN General Assembly adopted and opened for signature in 1965. In the following decades, eight additional major global human rights treaties were introduced. Together, these nine agreements constitute the “core” international human rights instruments (see Table 2). All but two of these have been ratified by at least 85 percent of current UN member states (see Figure 24).

There are several other international and regional

human rights agreements that could also be included in an analysis of this kind, such as the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1948), as well as the major regional human rights agreements in Europe (1950), the Americas (1969), and Africa (1981). This analysis, however, focuses on the nine core treaties.

Figure 25 depicts the power-weighted ratifications of all existing treaties as a percentage of all possible ratifications between 1966 and 2020. The introduction of new treaties at different points in time expands the pool of total possible ratifications, often leading to temporary drops in net ratification levels as states take time to ratify them. Historical ratification levels are also affected by new states’ entry into the world system, which expands the pool of total possible ratifiers.

While the total number of ratifications has never been higher, the pace of ratifications has slowed notably since the 1990s (see Figure 26). The most ratifications within a single year (eighty-four) occurred in 1990, representing 20 percent of all possible new ratifications that year. By contrast, there were only six new ratifications in 2020, which was the lowest number of new ratifications since 1966. Moreover, ratifications in 2020 represented

Figure 23. Multilateralism Index scores: Human Rights

Most Participation indicators and Inclusivity indicators have improved in the past decade, while both Performance indicators have deteriorated slightly.

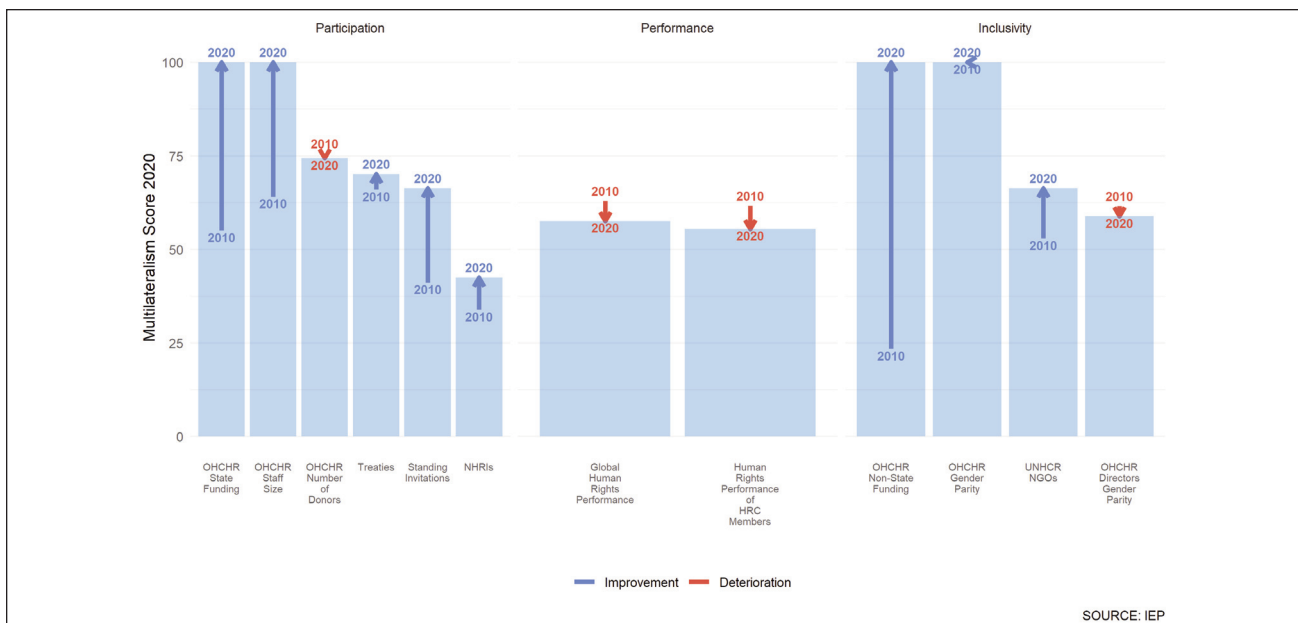
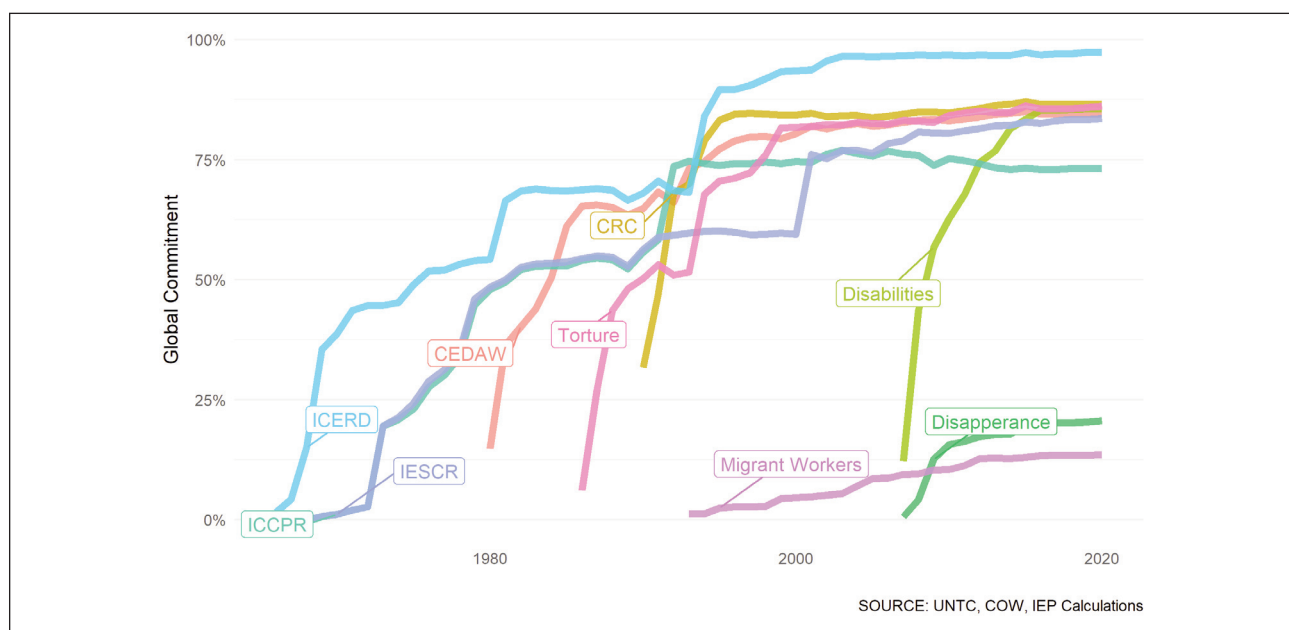


Table 2. Human rights treaties addressed in this domain

Instrument	Year of Introduction
International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)	1965
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)	1966
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)	1966
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)	1980
Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)	1985
Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)	1990
International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICRMW)	1991
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)	2007
International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (CPED)	2007

Figure 24. Power-weighted commitment to individual human rights treaties (1965–2020)

The nine core human rights treaties have been ratified at significantly different rates since 1965, though most have now been ratified by the vast majority of countries.



less than 2 percent of all possible new ratifications, the lowest-ever rate.

Although ratifications of the core human rights treaties are key to understanding the international community's commitment to multilateralism in the domain of human rights, other measures shed further light on levels of commitment over time.

One example is financial commitments. Over the past twelve years, overall voluntary contributions by countries to the UN's principal human rights organ, OHCHR, increased by 68 percent. However, the total number of donor countries fell from eighty-two to sixty-one (see Figure 27).

Another way to measure the international

Figure 25. Power-weighted commitment to all nine core human rights treaties (1965–2020)

Total ratifications as a percentage of all possible ratifications have gradually climbed over the past several decades.

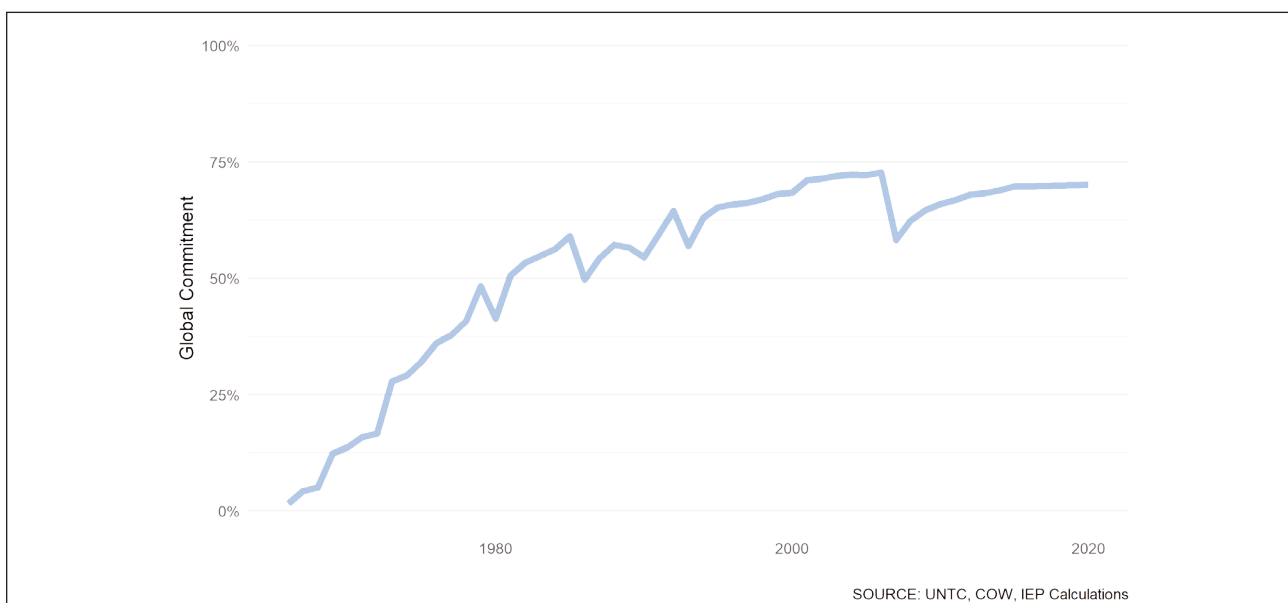
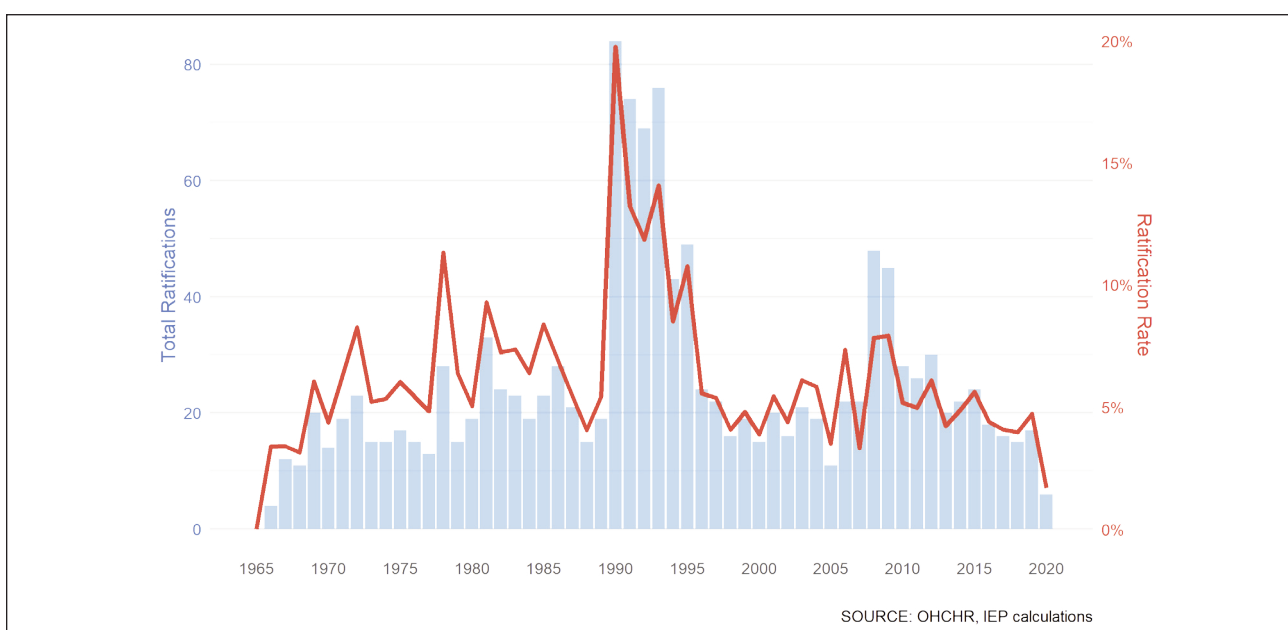


Figure 26. Annual ratifications and ratification rates of human rights treaties (1965–2020)

Both the raw number of ratifications and the ratification rate fell markedly between 1990 and 2020.



community's multilateral commitment to human rights is in relation to established compliance mechanisms. Beyond agreeing (in principle) to the provisions of human rights treaties, states can demonstrate a willingness to be held accountable to their commitments in several ways. These include the establishment of national human rights institu-

tions (NHRIs), which must meet international standards known as the "Paris Principles." As of 2020, eighty-two UN member states had fully accredited NHRIs (around two-fifths), while thirty-one had partially accredited NHRIs, and seventy-six had not submitted applications for accreditation (see Figure 28).

Figure 27. Country contributions to OHCHR (2008–2020)

Total country contributions to OHCHR rose from \$107 million to \$180 million between 2008 and 2020.

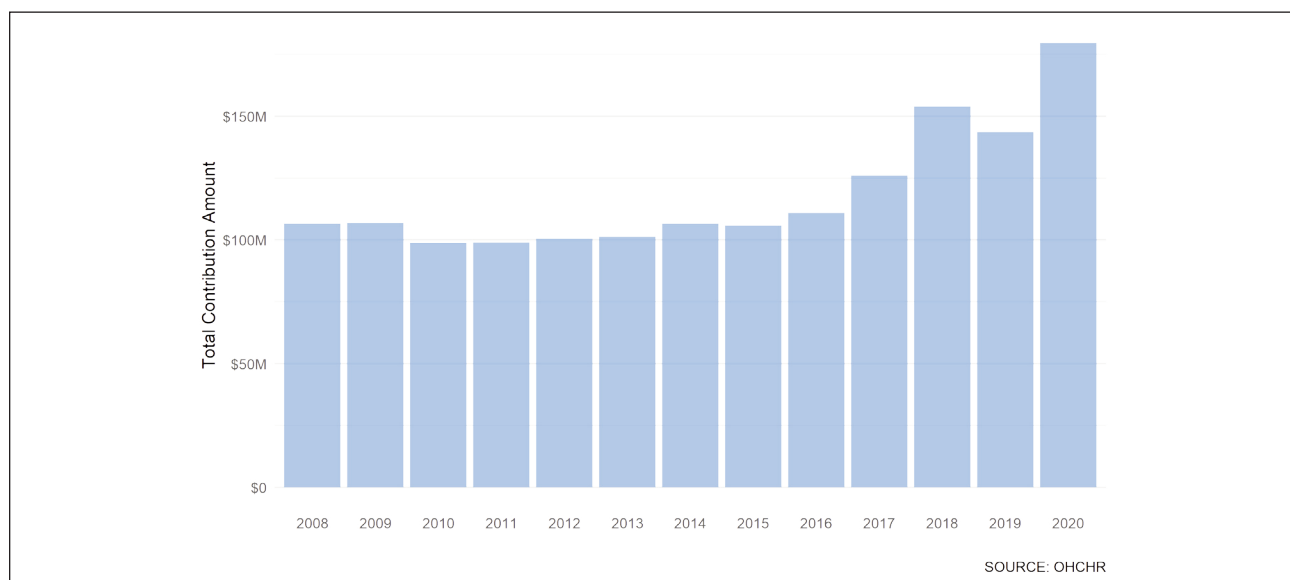
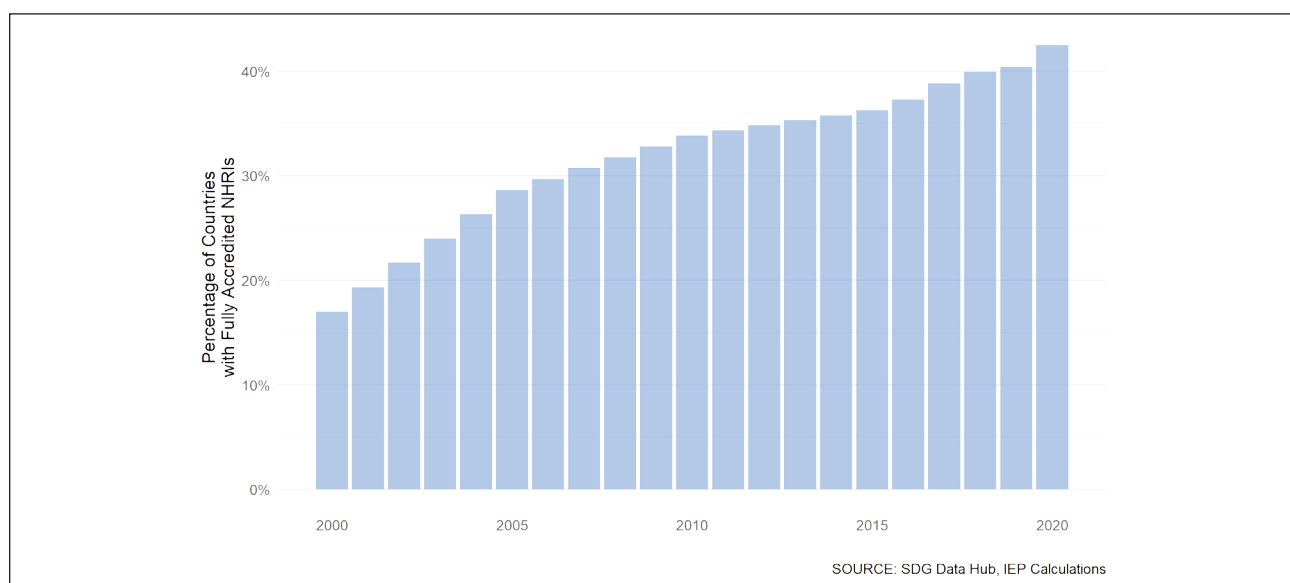


Figure 28. Countries with fully accredited NHRIs (2000–2020)

Two-fifths of countries have national human rights institutions fully compliant with the Paris Principles.

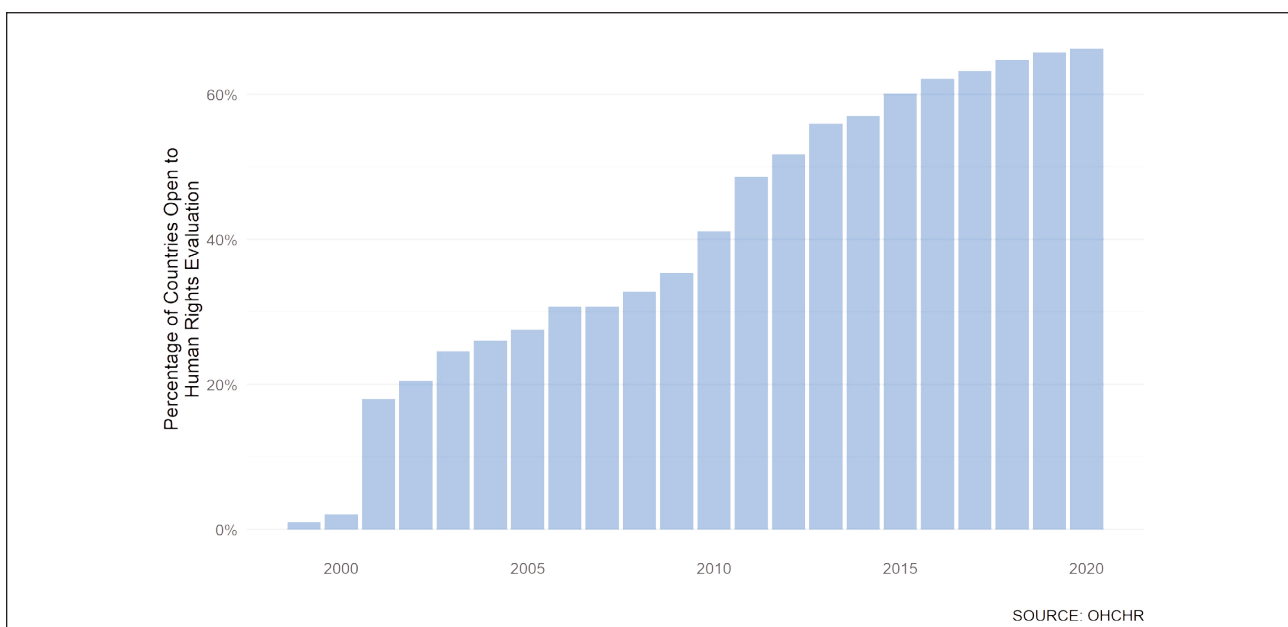


States can also demonstrate their commitment to human rights by issuing standing invitations for independent human rights experts to assess their national human rights situation through “special

procedures.” As of 2020, 127 UN member states (nearly two-thirds) had issued such invitations (see Figure 29).

Figure 29. Countries open to external human rights evaluation (1999–2020)

Nearly two-thirds of countries have extended standing invitations to OHCHR for visits by special procedures to assess their domestic human rights situations.



Performance

While the Participation of the international community in the human rights domain of multilateralism has expanded slightly since 1995, its Performance is more difficult to quantify. One of the most widely used measures of human rights abuses is the Political Terror Scale (PTS). While it does not cover all of the rights addressed in the core international human rights treaties, the PTS draws on reports from Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and the US State Department to assign annual human rights scores to countries based on many fundamental rights and freedoms on a scale of 1–5. A 1 represents a situation in which a government does not violate the rights of its people, while a 5 represents a situation where a government perpetrates extreme abuse. Figure 30 shows the average composite score of all evaluated countries between 1976 and 2020, while Figure 31 shows the average composite score for the rotating member-

ship of the forty-seven countries that made up the UN Human Rights Council between 2006 and 2020.

Inclusivity

NGOs with consultative status with ECOSOC can attend UNHRC meetings as observers. The UNHRC meets three times per year. Before the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted attendance levels, the number of NGO observers had more than doubled since the UNHRC was created in 2006 (see Figure 32).

Another key facet of Inclusivity in the multilateral system is the representation of women, which OHCHR has made progress on in recent decades. Between 2005 and 2020, as the number of regular OHCHR staff grew from 116 to 710, women have consistently made up over 50 percent of the staff. However, at the director level, OHCHR has experienced a slight decline in the representation of women over the past two decades, from 33 percent in 2005 to 29 percent in 2020 (see Figure 33).

Figure 30. PTS human rights scores, global average (1976–2020)

The average PTS human rights scores (on a 1–5 scale) has deteriorated slightly over the past several decades.

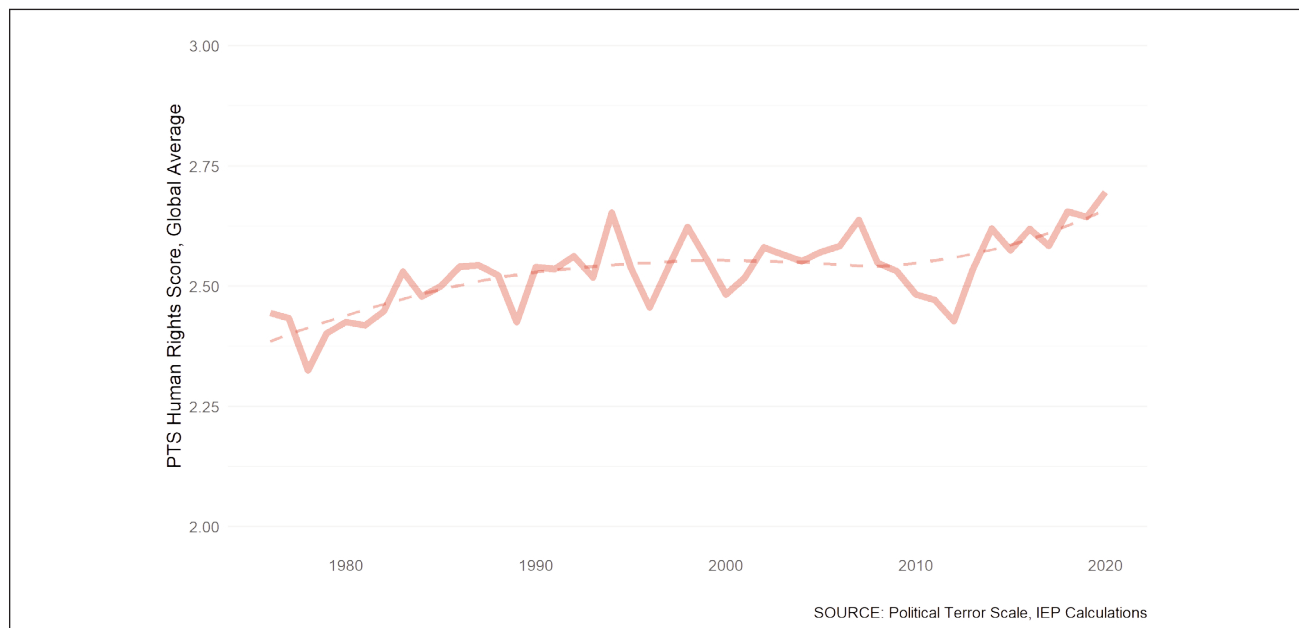


Figure 31. PTS human rights scores, average of UNHRC members (2006–2020)

Members of the UNHRC on average have worse human rights scores than non-members.

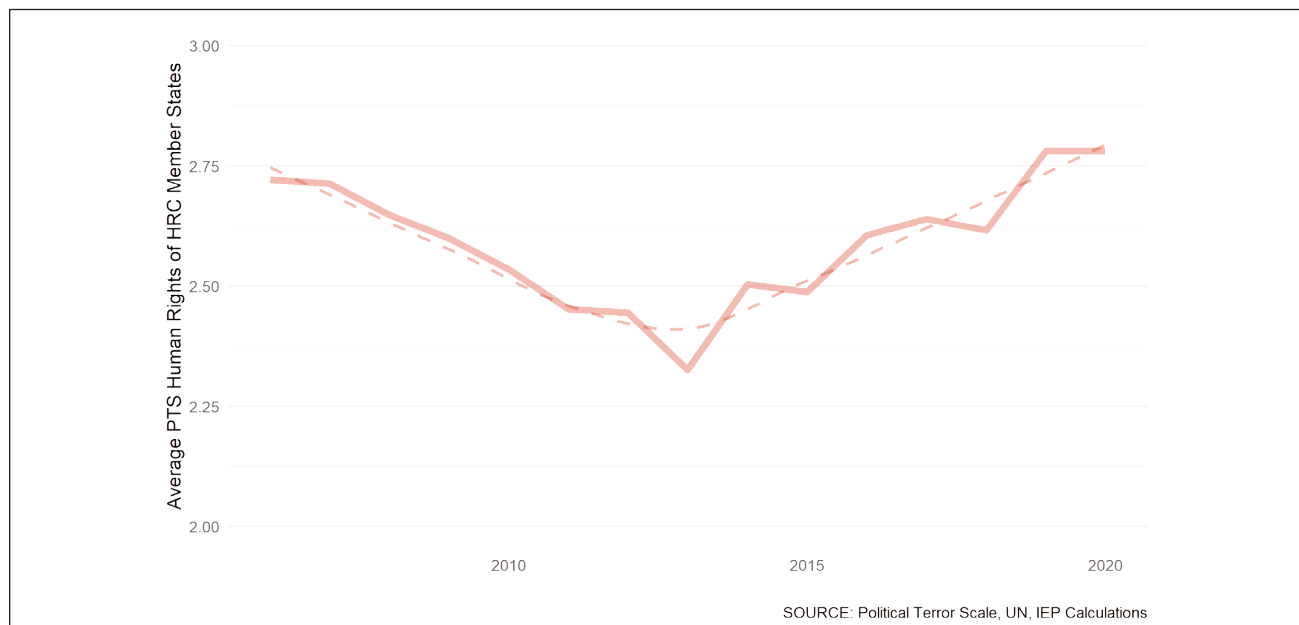


Figure 32. Average NGO attendance at UNHRC sessions (2006–2020)

Before the COVID-19 pandemic caused a dip in NGO participation, the average number of NGO observers at UNHRC sessions more than doubled between 2006 and 2019.

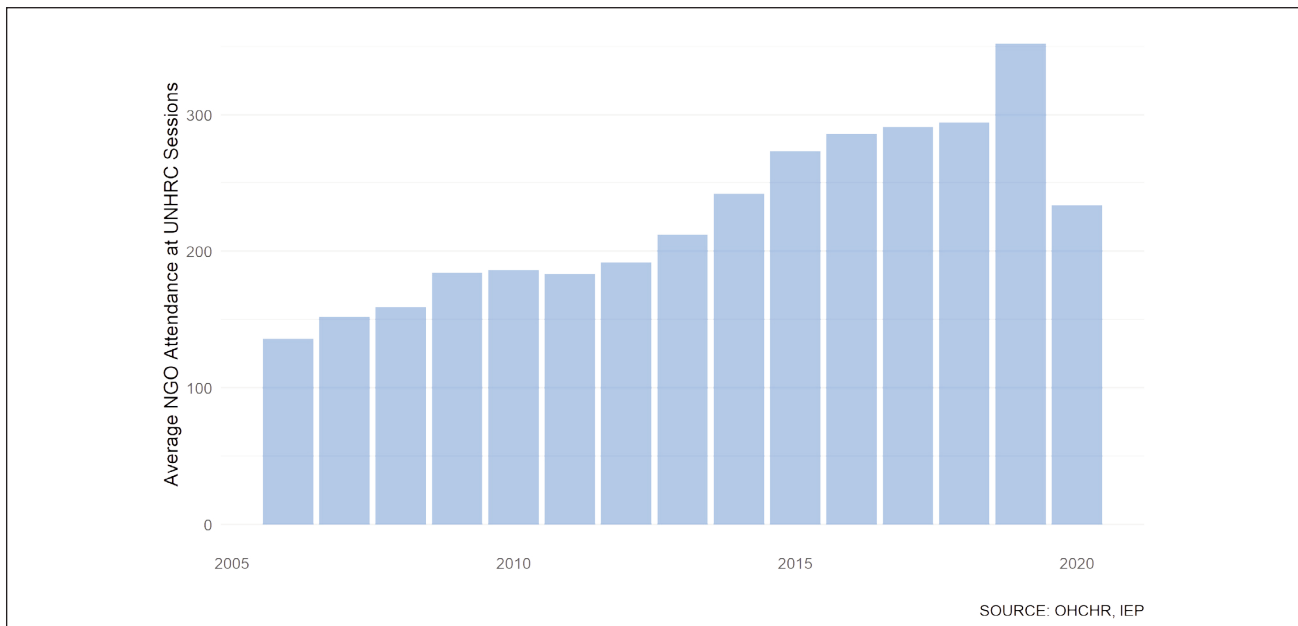


Figure 33. Proportion of women OHCHR staff, overall and director-level (2005–2020)

While women have occupied more than half of OHCHR staff positions since at least 2005, they have been underrepresented in leadership roles, and this underrepresentation has become slightly worse over the past two decades.



Environment

In the Environment domain, between 2010 and 2020, most Participation and Performance indicators deteriorated, while all Inclusivity indicators improved. Figure 34 provides a breakdown of MI scores for all ten indicators (summarized in Annex).

Participation

Even though the vast majority of countries has ratified (or otherwise accepted, approved, or acceded to) the three major international climate change treaties, CO₂ emissions have continued to climb over the past several decades. Table 3 provides an overview of the climate change treaties included in this analysis, while Figures 35 and 36

show the power-weighted global commitment to the individual treaties and to the overall climate change treaty regime.

The discrepancy between the near universal support enjoyed by the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the lower level of power-weighted support for the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement can primarily be attributed to the US, which never ratified the Kyoto Protocol and withdrew (temporarily) from the Paris Agreement in 2020 (see Figure 36).

The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) is the lead environmental agency within the UN system. It helps set global agendas, oversees research, engages in advocacy and awareness-raising, and coordinates multilateral action in relation to

Figure 34. Multilateralism Index scores: Environment

Most Participation and Performance indicators deteriorated in the past decade, while both Inclusivity indicators improved.

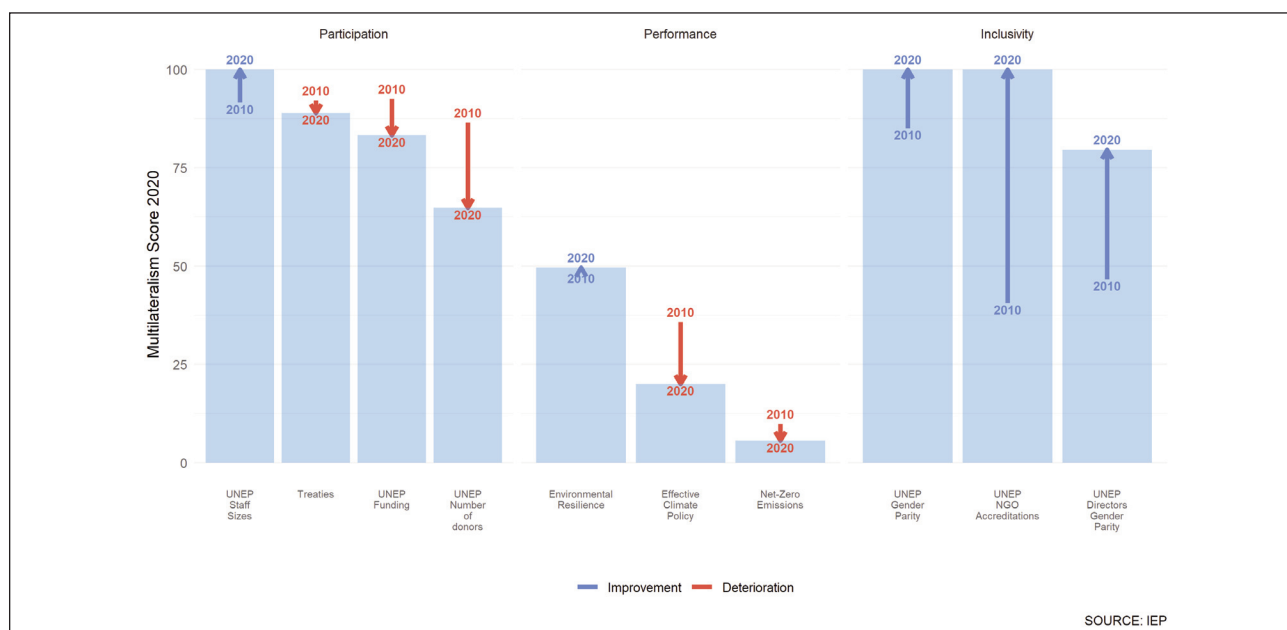


Table 3. Climate action agreements addressed in this domain

Instrument	Year of Introduction
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)	1992
Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (Kyoto Protocol)	1997
Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (Paris Agreement)	2016

Figure 35. Power-weighted commitment to individual climate change agreements (1994–2020)

Most countries have embraced the world's three major climate change treaties.

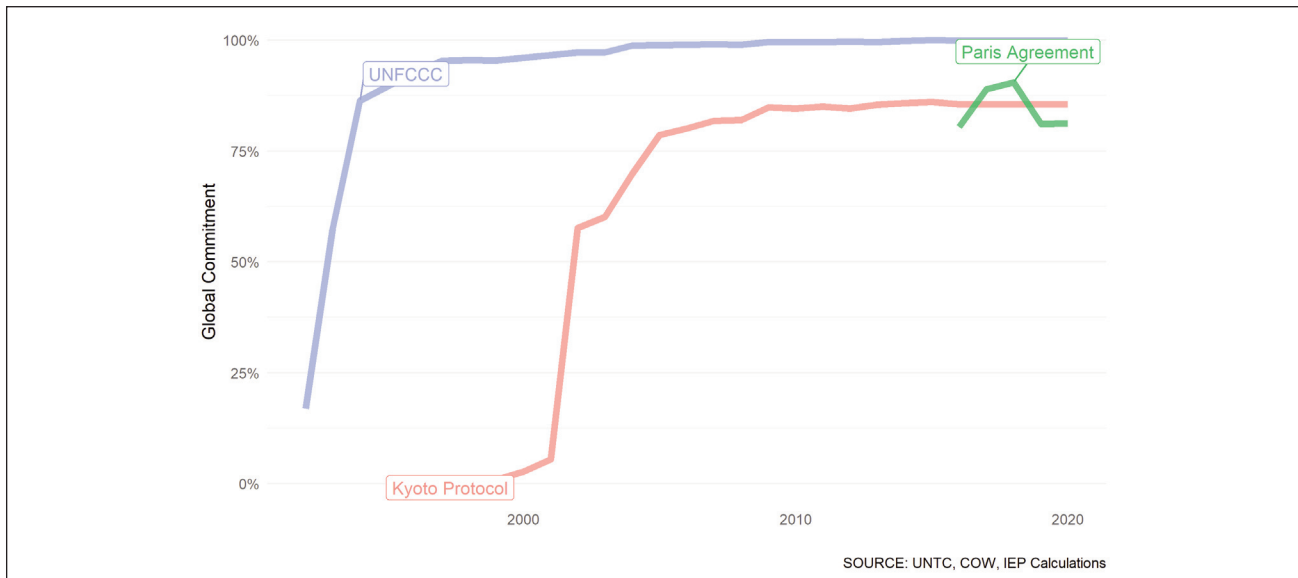
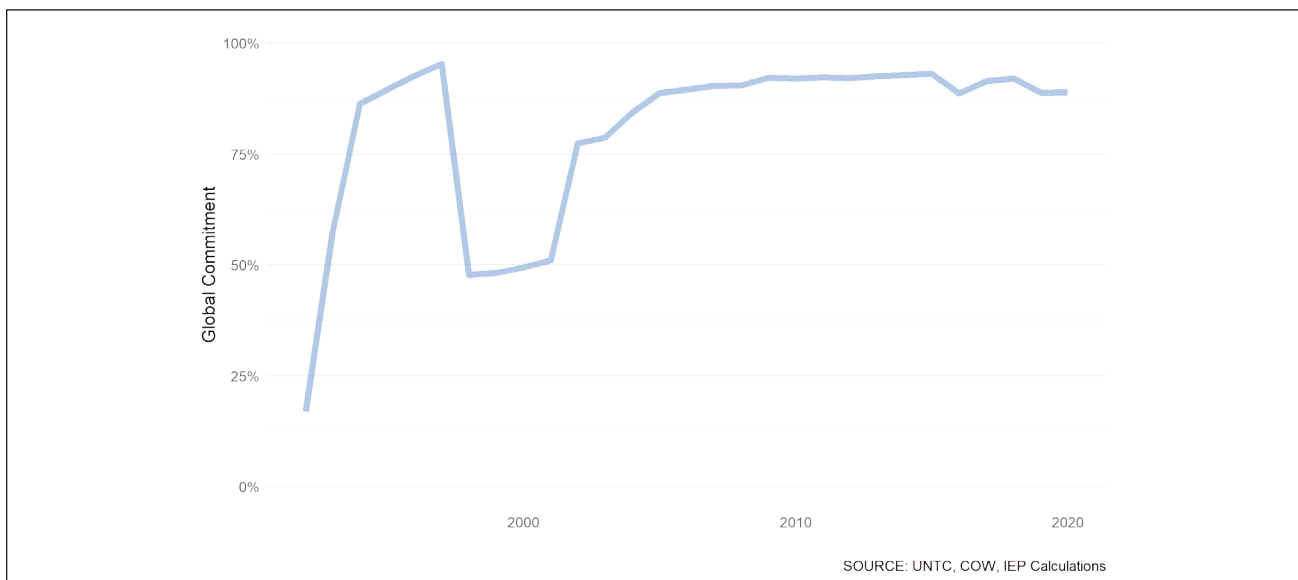


Figure 36. Power-weighted commitment to the overall climate change treaty regime (1980–2021)

Global commitment to climate action treaties has declined slightly in the past two decades.



climate change and other environmental concerns.²⁸ Since UNEP's establishment in 1972, it has relied on volunteer contributions from UN member states to fund its activities. At present,

about 95 percent of its funding comes from such contributions, while about 5 percent comes from the UN regular budget.²⁹

²⁸ UN Environment Programme (UNEP), "About UN Environment Programme," available at www.unep.org/about-un-environment.

²⁹ UNEP, "Check Your Contributions," 2022, available at www.unep.org/about-un-environment/funding-and-partnerships/check-your-contributions.

While total funding and the number of donor countries both rose substantially between the early 1970s and the mid- to late-2000s, both have experienced declines over the past decade (see Figures 37 and 38). Total UNEP funding peaked at

\$89 million in 2008 and has since declined to \$74 million as of 2020. Similarly, the number of donor countries peaked at 125 in 2003 before falling to 81 as of 2020.

Figure 37. UN Environment Programme country contributions (1973–2020)

The total amount of country contributions to UNEP fell from a high of \$89 million in 2008 to \$74 million in 2020.

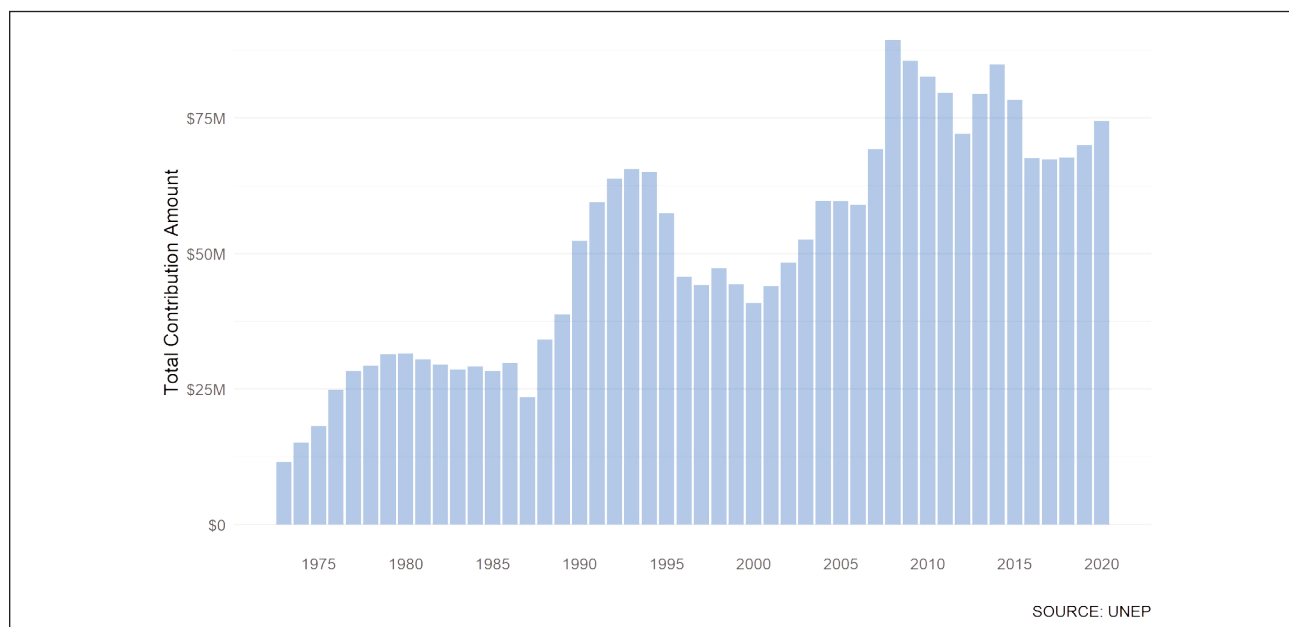
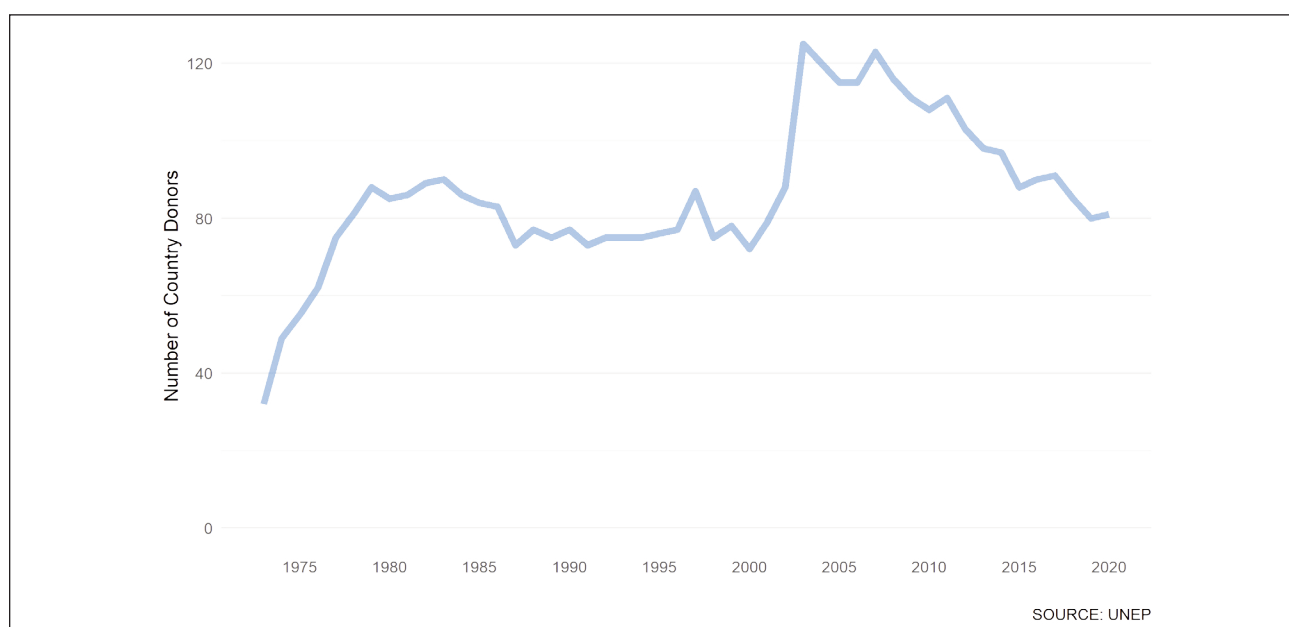


Figure 38. UN Environment Programme donor countries (1973–2020)

Since peaking at 125 in 2003, the number donor countries to UNEP fell to 81 by 2020.



Performance

Figure 39 shows the global average for levels of environmental resilience as measured by the Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative (GAIN) index. This index summarizes a country's "vulnerability to climate change and other global challenges in combination with its readiness to improve resilience."³⁰ Global gains have been minimal since 1995.

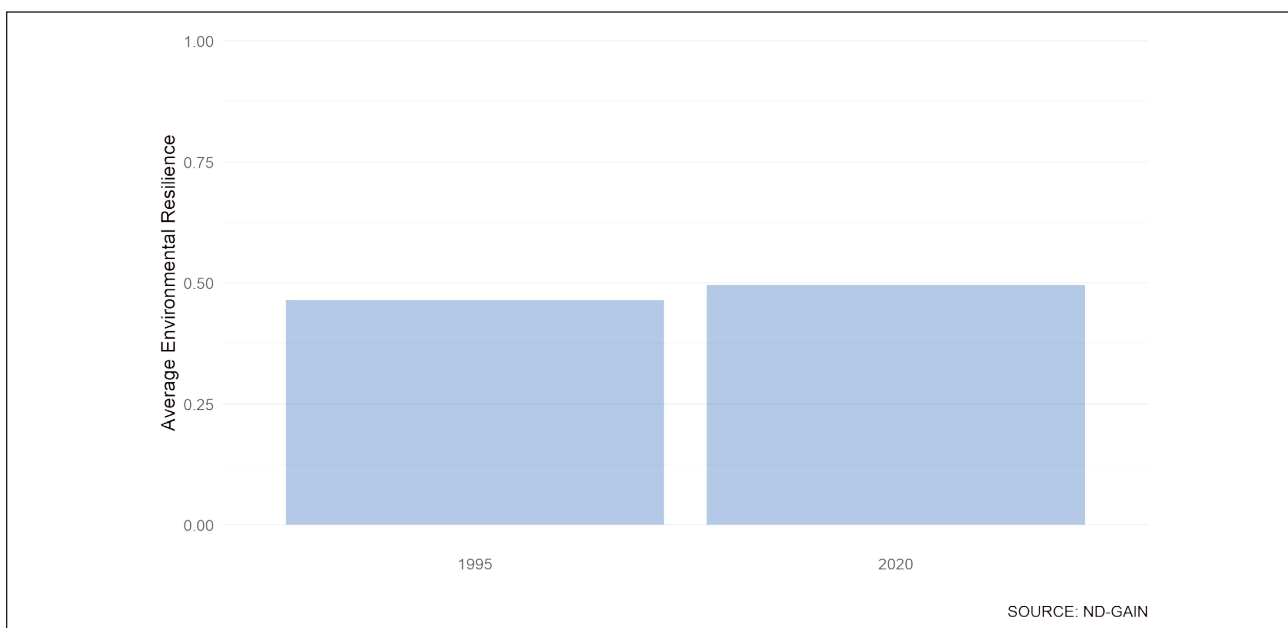
The Climate Action Tracker assesses the climate action policies of seven of the countries with the highest CO₂ emissions, including China, the US, India, Russia, Japan, Indonesia, and the Republic of

Korea. The policies of these countries remain largely insufficient to achieve the Paris Agreement's 1.5°C target (see Figure 40).

As a result, global net CO₂ emissions—the balance of CO₂ produced against CO₂ removed from the atmosphere—have continued to increase since 2000 (see Figure 41). While carbon sequestration has increased in recent decades, increases in carbon emissions have far outpaced it, with net emissions reaching an all-time high in 2019. The slight drop in 2020 is likely due to a reduction in activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 39. Environmental resilience, global average (1995, 2020)

The average global score on Environmental Resilience has not increased substantially since 1995.



30 University of Notre Dame, "ND-GAIN Index," available at <https://gain.nd.edu/our-work/country-index/>.

Figure 40. Climate action policies of highest CO₂-emitting countries (2011–2021)

The climate change policies of seven of the biggest polluters in the world are predominantly insufficient.

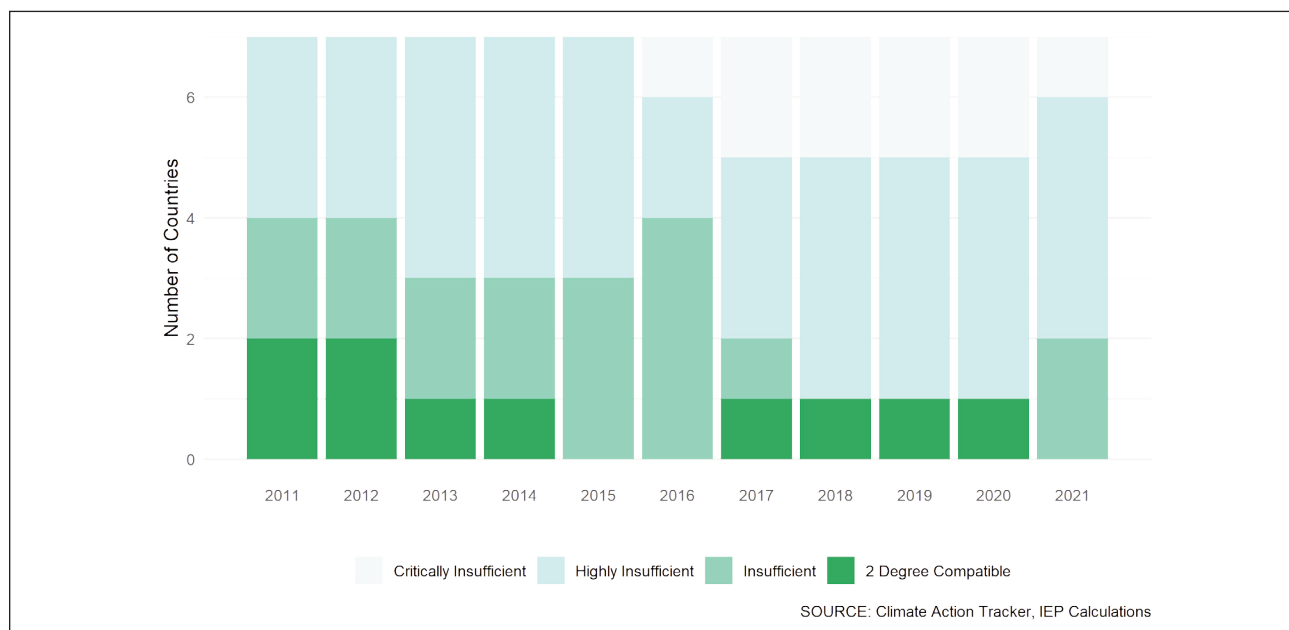
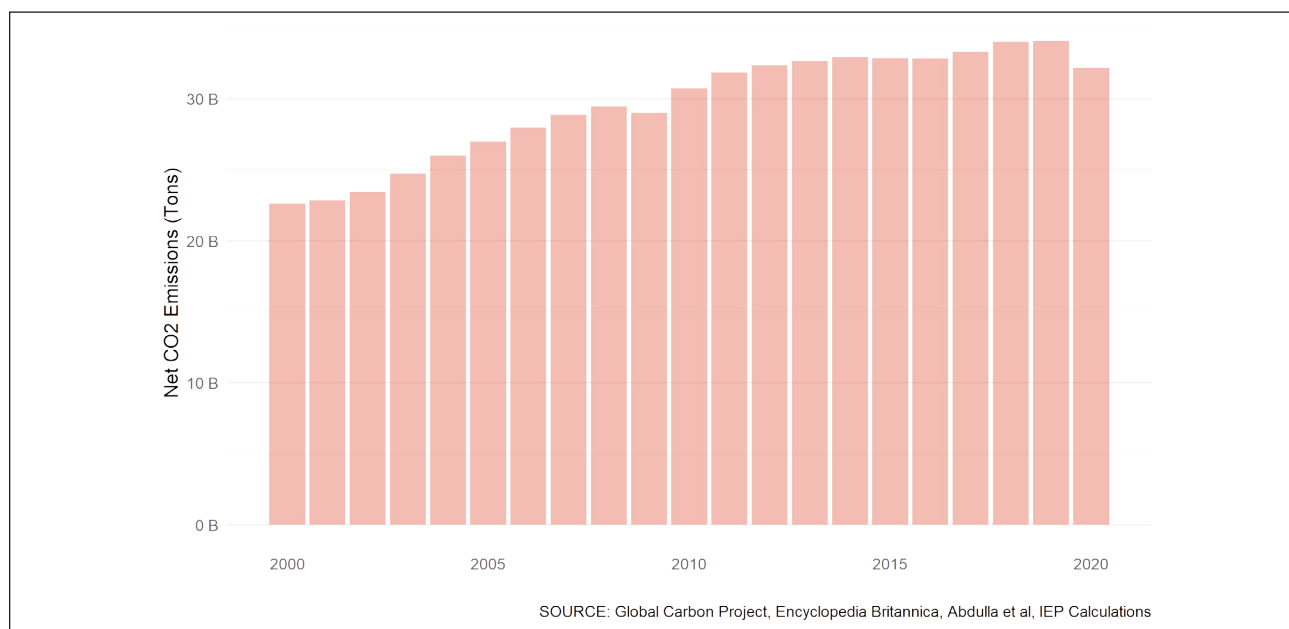


Figure 41. Net CO₂ emissions (2000–2020)

Despite declining slightly in 2020, net CO₂ emissions have steadily risen in the past two decades.



Inclusivity

Civil society has played a greater role in multilateral action on the environment in recent decades. For example, UNEP has given observer status to a growing number of nongovernmental and private

organizations that apply for accreditation, a process that is currently administered by the UN Environment Assembly. The oldest active accreditation on record belongs to the International Council of Environmental Law and dates back to 1995. Since then, hundreds more organizations

have obtained observer status, and over 620 NGOs and private organizations had observer status as of December 2020 (see Figure 42).³¹

As with other UN agencies, UNEP has in recent years tracked the balance of women and men among its

staff in an effort to achieve gender parity (see Figure 43). While only 36 percent of UNEP staff were women in 2005, by 2020 this had increased to over 50 percent. The percentage of women occupying director-level roles (at the D-1 and D-2 level) has risen from 22 percent in 2005 to 40 percent in 2020.

Figure 42. UNEP-accredited non-state organizations (2010–2020)

Between 2010 and 2020, the number of private and nongovernmental organizations with observer status with UNEP more than doubled.

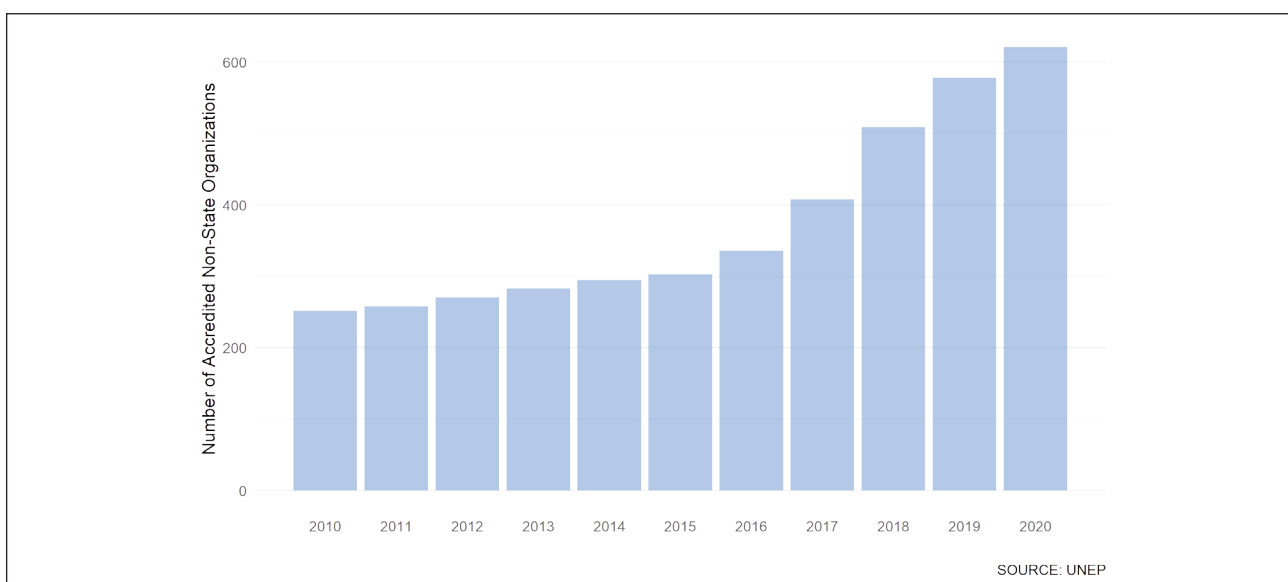


Figure 43. Proportion of women UNEP staff, overall and director-level (2005–2020)

Since 2005, UNEP has achieved gender parity among its overall staff and achieved fairly consistent progress toward parity at the director level.



31 UNEP, "List of Accredited Organizations," available at www.unep.org/civil-society-engagement/accreditation/list-accredited-organizations.

Public Health

In the Public Health domain, between 2010 and 2020, most Participation and Performance indicators improved, while three out of the five Inclusivity indicators deteriorated. Figure 44 provides a breakdown of MI scores for all fifteen indicators (summarized in Annex).

Participation

The World Health Organization (WHO), a specialized agency of the United Nations, is the world's premier global health body. Its constitution was created in 1946, and within a few years, the vast majority of independent countries had become members. As other countries became independent in the decades that followed, most were quick to accept the WHO constitution and join the organization. At present, WHO has 194 members, including all UN member states except Liechtenstein, as well as two non-UN member states (the Cook Islands and Niue).

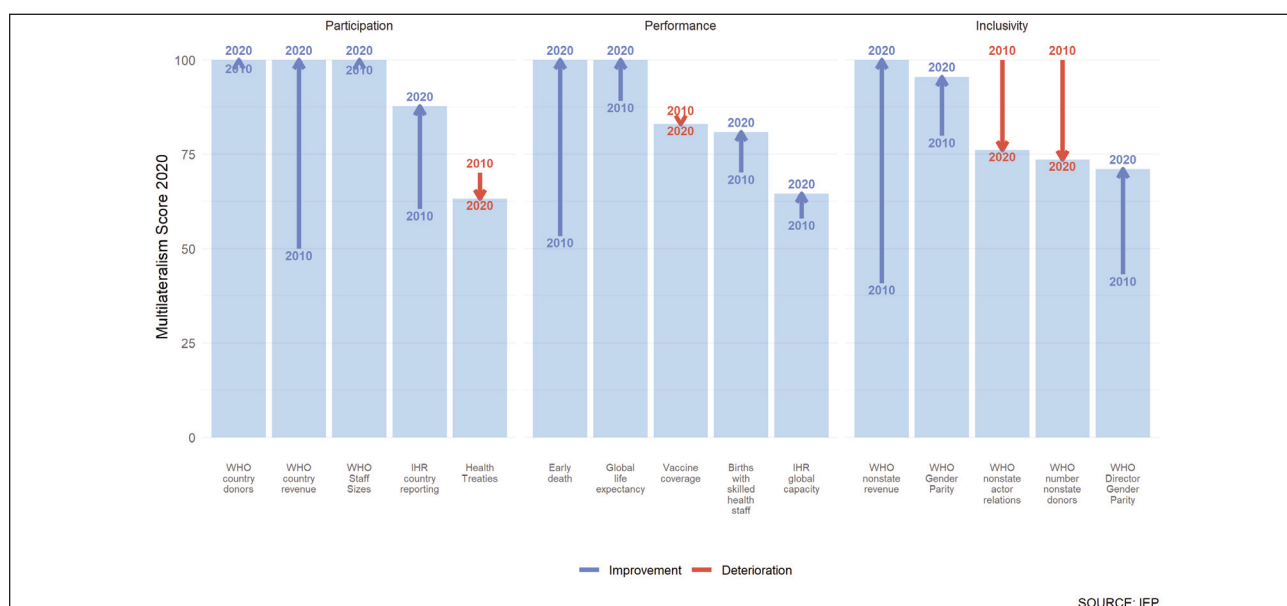
In 1996, five decades after the introduction of the WHO constitution, another major international

health agreement established the International Vaccine Institute (IVI). The IVI aimed to promote global access to vaccines by strengthening the capacity of low-income countries in vaccine development.³² However, the agreement was ratified by relatively few countries. Between 1996 and 2005, only fourteen countries became party to the agreement, and between 2005 and early 2020, just two more joined. Nonetheless, since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a notable uptick in ratifications and accessions to the agreement, with five more countries becoming party to it between mid-2020 and mid-2022.³³

Aside from the WHO constitution, perhaps the most significant international public health agreement is the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. Introduced in 2003, it is the first international “treaty” developed under the auspices of WHO and has been ratified by the vast majority of UN member states (only fifteen are not party to it). In 2012, the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products, a special addition to the original treaty, was introduced. At present, about a third of countries have ratified the protocol.

Figure 44. Multilateralism Index scores: Public Health

In contrast to all other domains, the Performance indicators for Public Health mostly improved.



32 United Nations, *Agreement on the Establishment of the International Vaccine Institute: Amendments to the Constitution of the International Vaccine Institute*, October 28, 1996.

33 See the status of ratifications at: https://treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mdsg_no=IX-3&chapter=9&clang=_en.

These four health agreements are summarized in Table 4, and Figure 45 depicts the combined, power-weighted ratifications of these agreements between 1946 and 2020. Following the introduction of the IVI agreement in 1996 and the special tobacco protocol in 2012, global commitment to the Public Health agreement regime experienced a drop from which it never fully rebounded.

In addition to the four agreements outlined above, which countries can join at their discretion, among the most important global health agreements are the International Health Regulations (IHR), to

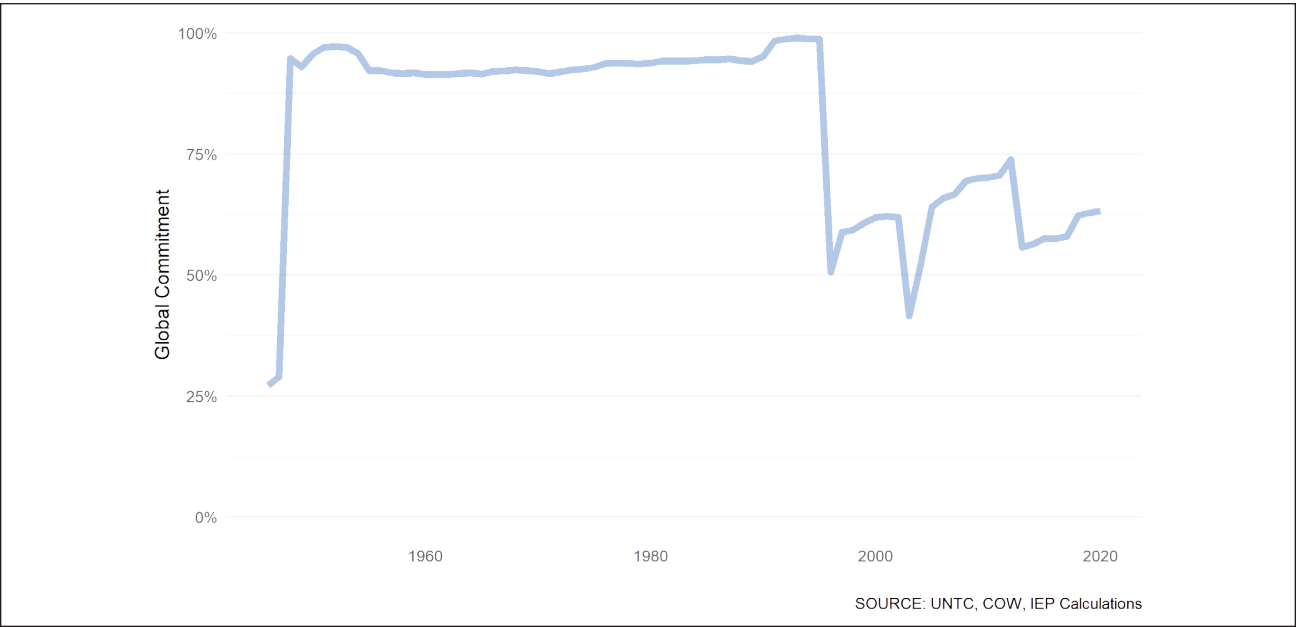
which all WHO members are legally bound by virtue of their membership. First adopted by the World Health Assembly in 1969 and revised in 2005, the IHR aim to “prevent, protect against, control and provide a public health response to the international spread of disease.”³⁴ One key change in the 2005 revision was the addition of a mechanism to label certain public health events a “Public Health Emergency of International Concern.” Between 2007 and 2020, this designation was applied just six times, including to the 2009 H1N1 swine flu pandemic and to the COVID-19 pandemic.³⁵

Table 4. Public health agreements addressed in this domain

Instrument	Year of Introduction
Constitution of the World Health Organization (WHO)	1948
International Health Regulations	1969/2005
Agreement on the establishment of the International Vaccine Institute (IVI)	1996
WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control	2003
Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products	2012

Figure 45. Power-weighted commitment to the overall public health treaty regime (1948–2020)

Following its introduction in 1948, the constitution of WHO was ratified by virtually all countries, but the level of ratification of subsequent health agreements has been lower.



34 World Health Organization (WHO), “International Health Regulations (2005),” January 2008.
35 Lucia Mullen et al., “An Analysis of International Health Regulations Emergency Committees and Public Health Emergency of International Concern Designations,” *BMJ Global Health* 5, no. 6 (2020).

As part of the updated agreement, a system for monitoring compliance with the IHR was also put in place. Based on the regulations' criteria, WHO member states are required to conduct self-assessments of their core public health capacities and submit annual reports on their findings. Since first being instituted in 2010, levels of participation in this monitoring system have gradually increased. While 61 percent of WHO members submitted reports in 2010, 88 percent submitted them in 2020 (see Figure 46).

While the global health agreements score experienced a decline between 2010 and 2020, another measure of WHO's strength—staff size—increased over the same period. The number of WHO staff has more than doubled since 1999, peaking at 8,200 employees in 2010 before declining over the next several years. But in 2020, the number of WHO staff grew to a record 8,300 employees, which was surpassed again in 2021 with 8,700 employees (see Figure 47).

Figure 46. Percentage of countries submitting International Health Regulations reports (2010–2020)

In 2010, 118 countries submitted IHR self-assessment reports, by 2020, this number had risen to 172.

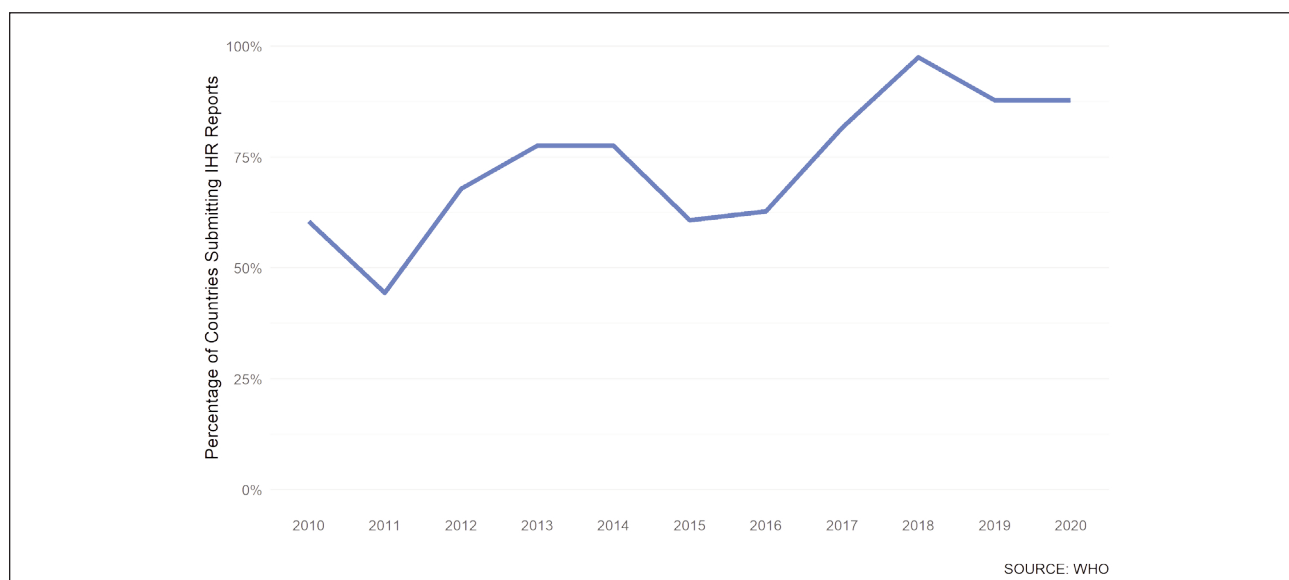
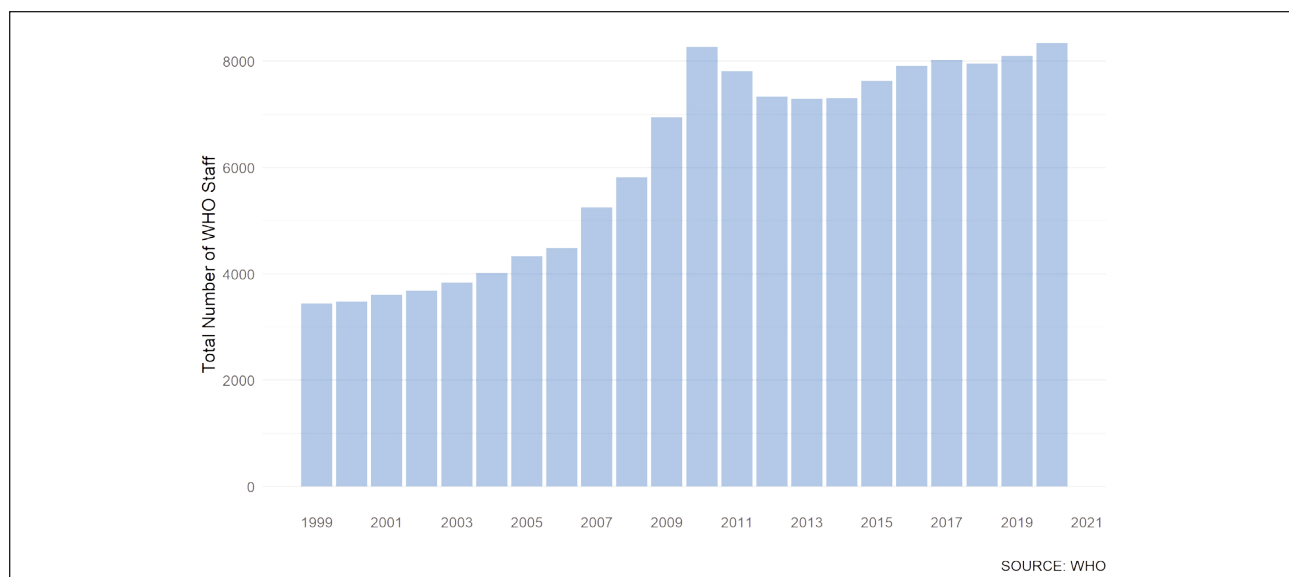


Figure 47. WHO staff (1999–2020)

The number of WHO staff members has more than doubled since 1999.



WHO's funding has also grown. Revenue from donor countries doubled over the past decade, from \$1.25 billion in 2010 to \$2.50 billion in 2020 (see Figure 48). Moreover, the vast majority of WHO funding comes from voluntary contributions, and virtually all of the additional \$1.25 billion in funding is a result of increases in voluntary contributions. Since 2012, for example, while non-voluntary contributions rose by 5.4 percent (from \$474 million to \$500 million), voluntary contributions rose by 161 percent (from \$767 million to just over \$2 billion).

The increasing share of voluntary contributions could be interpreted as a sign of member states' growing commitment to the body. However, it may actually be the result of a longstanding campaign by several major donor countries to "freeze" increases in assessed contributions to expand WHO's reliance on earmarked contributions. In this way, these countries can reorient WHO's work toward their own public health priorities instead of those independently established by the organization itself. Critics have noted that this development has caused WHO to focus more on specific diseases rather than the larger social and economic determinants of health and to

underinvest in the public health capacity needed for pandemic prevention and management.³⁶

Countries' levels of participation in both non-voluntary and voluntary contributions to WHO are also high. Since the 2010–2011 biennial budget, all WHO members (as well as associate members Puerto Rico and Tokelau) have regularly made assessed payments to WHO. In addition, in most budget cycles, the majority of countries have made voluntary contributions to WHO. In 2020–2021, 53 percent of donor countries made voluntary contributions, an increase from 46 percent in 2018–2019 but down from a high of 72 percent in 2014–2015.

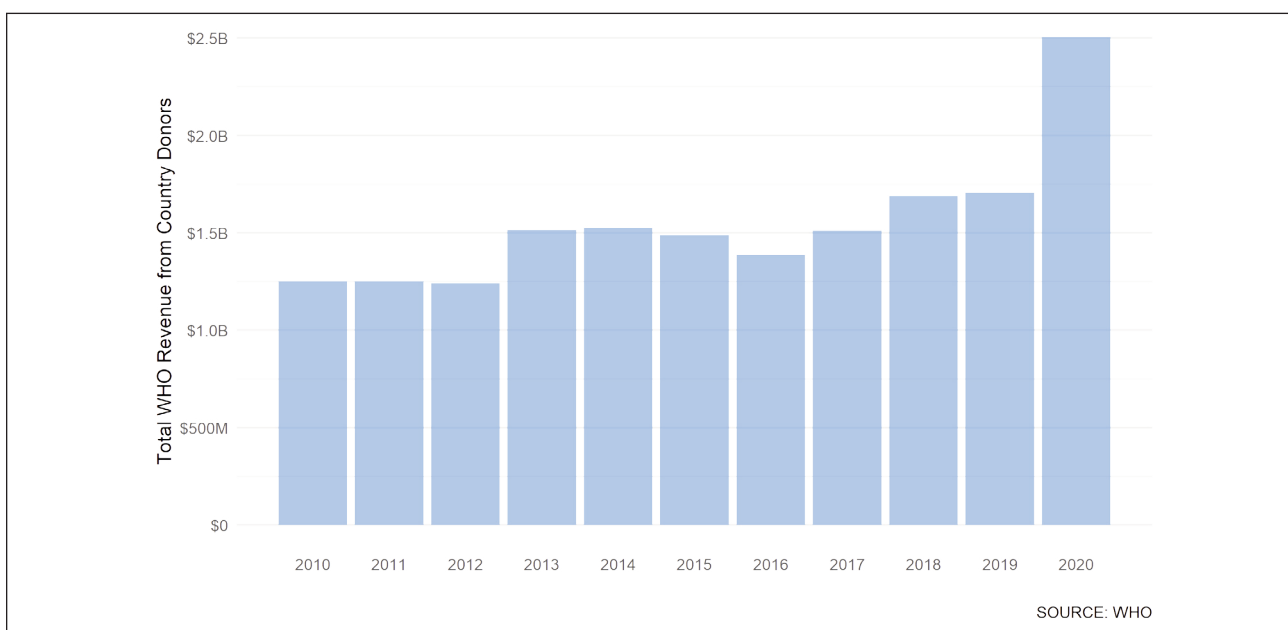
Performance

Over the past several decades, global health indicators have consistently improved. This was also largely the case for the period between 2010 and 2020, when there were improvements in five of the six indicators for health outcomes and health system functioning.

Life expectancy is perhaps the most basic health indicator. Since 1960, the average person's lifespan has been extended by twenty years, rising from 52.6

Figure 48. WHO revenue from donor countries (2010–2020)

There was a sizable increase in funding received by WHO with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.



36 WHO, "Seventy-Third World Health Assembly—Resolutions and Decisions, Annexes," WHO Doc. WHA73/2020/REC/1.

years then to 72.7 years today (see Figure 49). This has resulted from several factors.

One factor is the reduced probability of premature death from noncommunicable diseases such as cardiovascular diseases, cancer, diabetes, and chronic respiratory diseases. Each year, these diseases cause “premature” or “early” mortality for millions of people between the ages of thirty and seventy. However, in the past two decades, the probability of death from noncommunicable diseases has steadily declined, falling from 24 percent in 2000 to 19 percent in 2019 (see Figure 50).

Additional factors in the overall increase in life expectancy are improvements in infant and maternal mortality rates. These improvements have been facilitated by advances in the reach and capacity of health systems globally. For example, it is estimated that just 63 percent of deliveries in 2000 were attended by personnel trained in maternity care compared to 70 percent in 2010 and 80 percent in 2018.³⁷

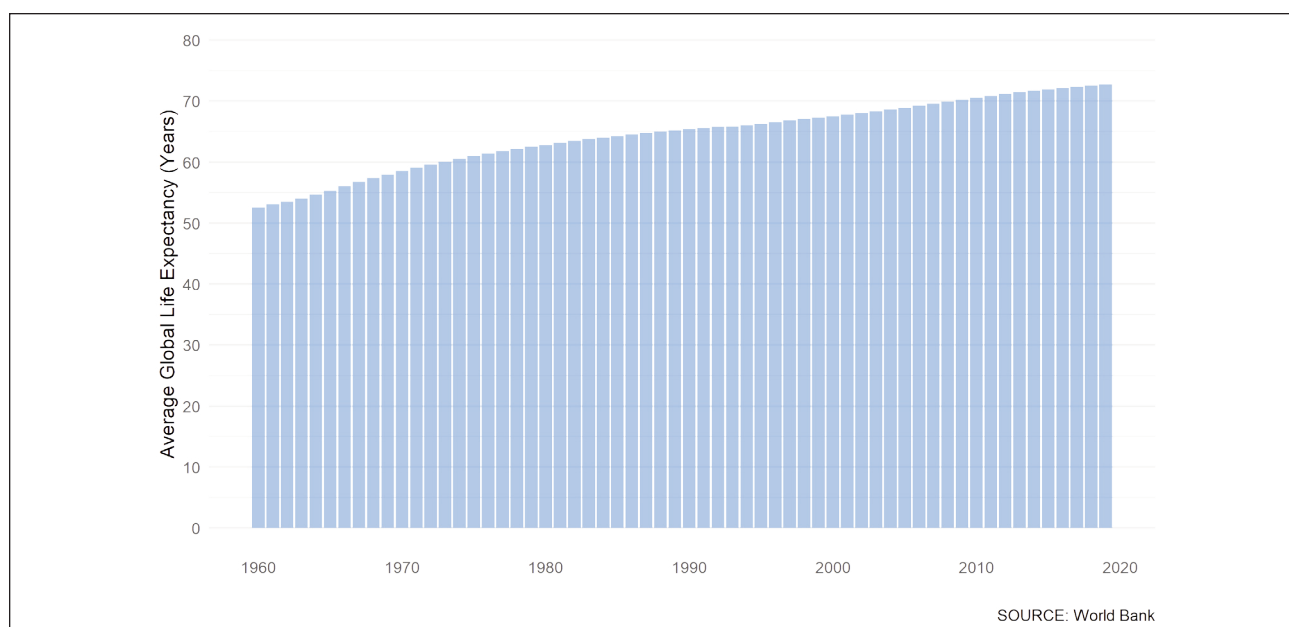
Another area of improvement over the past several decades is global rates of vaccination and immunization against a wide array of life-threatening diseases,

which WHO estimates prevents 3.5 to 5 million deaths each year. But despite a massive increase in vaccinations of infants and children since 1980, WHO has signaled that coverage has plateaued—or even fallen—in recent years.³⁸ After peaking at 86 percent coverage from 2016 to 2019, the infant vaccination rate for the diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis (DTP) vaccine—which can be used as a proxy for overall vaccine coverage—fell to 83 percent in 2020 (see Figure 51). A recent report from UNICEF found that this trend continued in 2021, with the DTP vaccination rate falling to 81 percent, meaning that between 2019 and 2021, global routine immunization rates experienced their biggest decline in three decades. This drop has been attributed to a variety of issues, including strains on and disruptions to health systems caused by COVID-19, as well as armed conflict, climate emergencies, misinformation, and pandemic lockdowns.³⁹

There has been a similar decline in the capabilities of countries to detect, assess, report on, and respond to public health events and risks in recent years. The IHR “core capacities” comprise thirteen measures of a country’s ability to deal with public

Figure 49. Average global life expectancy (1960–2019)

Globally, the average person’s lifespan has been extended by twenty years since 1960 and by two years in the past decade.



³⁷ World Bank, “Births Attended by Skilled Health Staff (% of Total),” available at <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.STA.BRTC.ZS>.

³⁸ WHO, “Vaccines and Immunization,” available at www.who.int/health-topics/vaccines-and-immunization.

³⁹ Stephanie Nolen, “Sharp Drop in Childhood Vaccinations Threatens Millions of Lives,” *New York Times*, July 14, 2022.

Figure 50. Likelihood of early death (2000–2019)

The global likelihood of premature death from noncommunicable disease has steadily fallen in the past two decades.

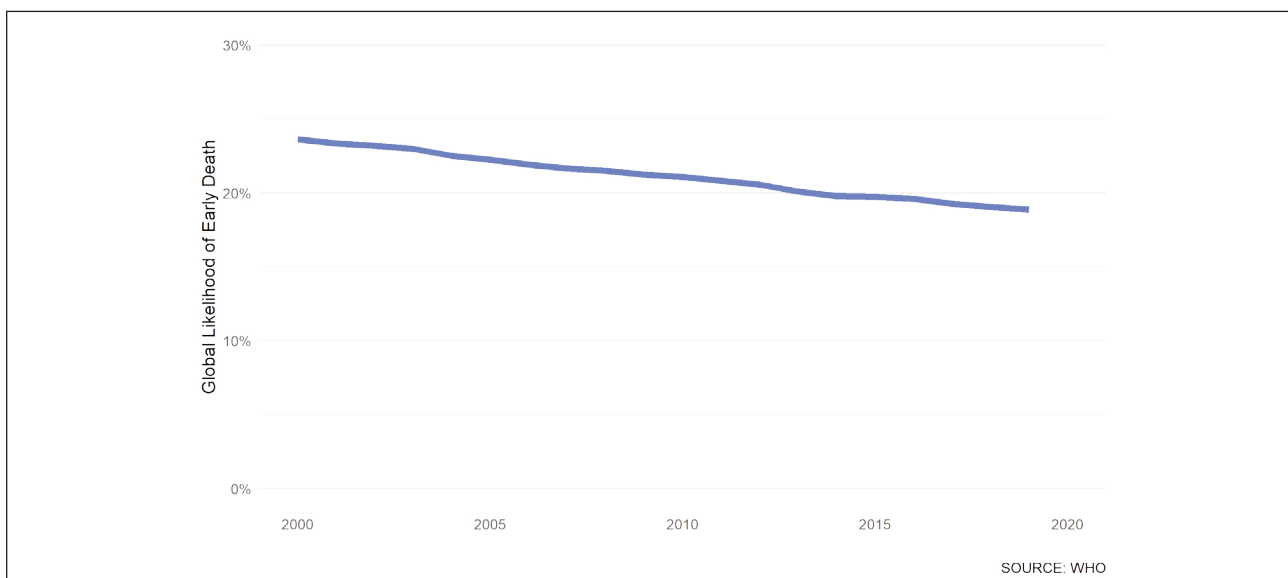
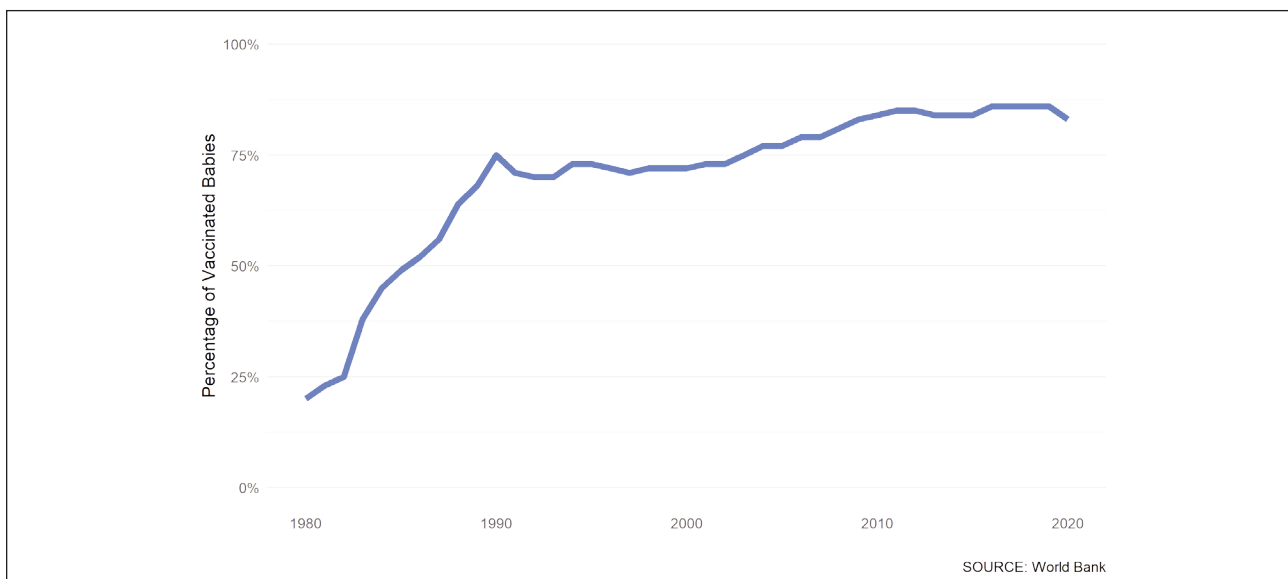


Figure 51. DTP vaccine coverage (1980–2020)

After rising rapidly in the 1980s and slowly climbing over the next two decades, vaccine coverage plateaued and even declined slightly between 2010 and 2020.



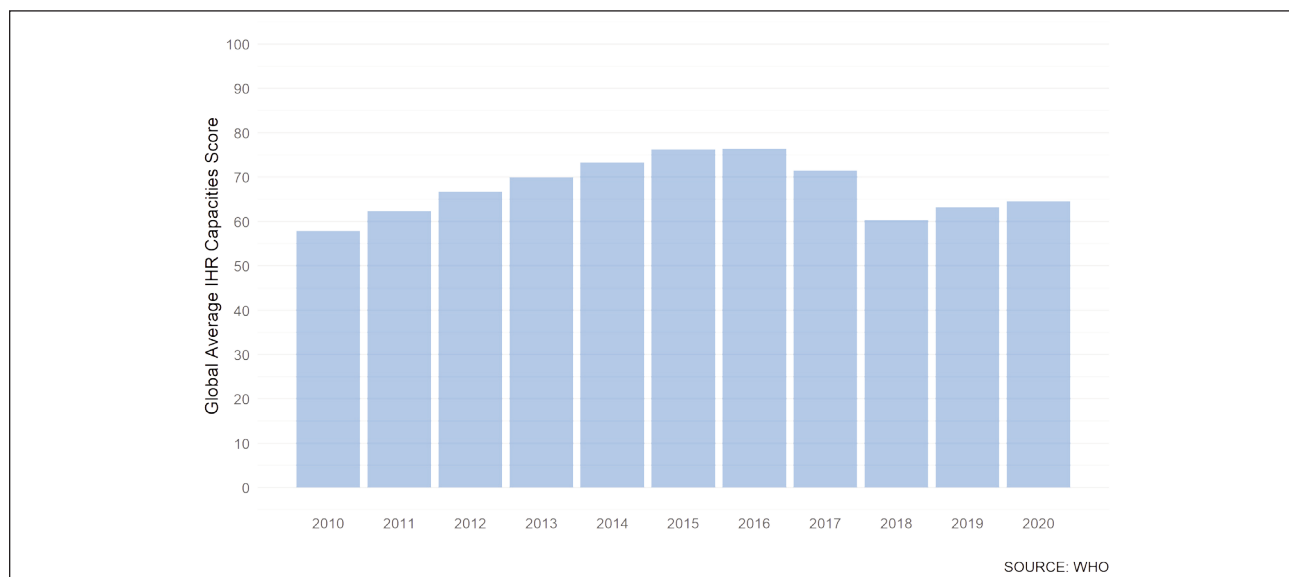
health events, including financing, food safety, laboratory capacity, surveillance, communication, national points of entry, chemical events, and radiation emergencies.⁴⁰ Based on IHR self-assessment reports, WHO tracks the percentage of

countries that have achieved or maintained each of these capacities on an annual basis (see Figure 52). While the average global capacity score rose between 2010 and 2016, it fell in 2017 and 2018 and remains below its 2016 peak.

40 WHO Global Health Observatory, "International Health Regulations (IHR) Core Capacity Index," 2022, available at www.who.int/data/gho/indicator-metadata-registry/imr-details/4824.

Figure 52. Average IHR global capacity score (2010–2020)

The global average score across thirteen International Health Regulations capacities rose from 57.9 in 2010 to a high of 76.5 in 2016 before falling to 64.6 by 2020.

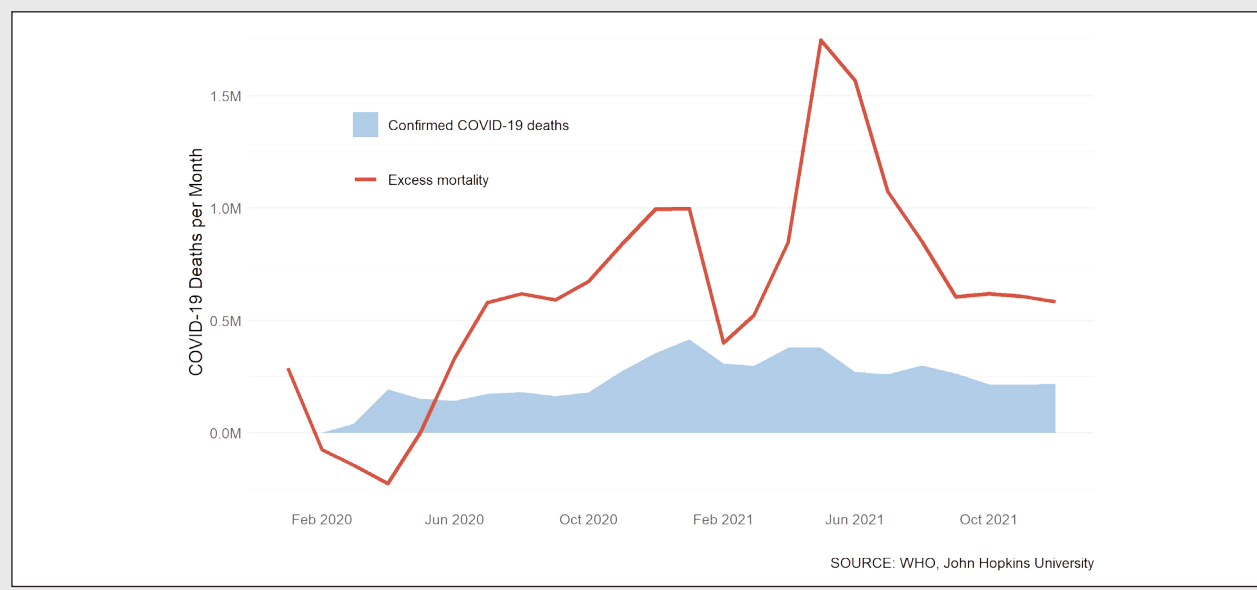


Box 2. Health-focused multilateral institutions and the COVID-19 pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has been by far the most significant global public health event in a century. In 2020 and 2021, there were about 5.4 million confirmed COVID-19 deaths worldwide (see Figure 53). However, because of limitations in countries' abilities to test, track, and report on COVID-19 infections, the true death toll is likely significantly higher. Excess mortality estimates (i.e., the difference between the

Figure 53. Confirmed global COVID-19 deaths vs. estimated excess mortality (2020–2021)

Excess mortality estimates indicate that the true number of COVID-19-related deaths is nearly three times larger than the confirmed death totals.



number of actual and expected deaths in a given time period) suggest that the pandemic directly and indirectly caused 14.9 million deaths in 2020 and 2021. In contrast, the H1N1 swine flu pandemic is estimated to have resulted in fewer than 290,000 deaths globally.⁴¹

Because of the global reach and impact of the disease, the pandemic has brought about substantial increases in international collaboration and communication in the areas of medical research and global public health management. It has also dramatically elevated the profile of WHO as people and governments around the world have turned to—and heavily criticized—the organization for its coordination and guidance on the pandemic response.⁴²

As a result of these unprecedented developments, the COVID-19 pandemic’s impact on WHO—and on health-focused multilateralism more generally—is not easily quantifiable in the context of the regular functioning of the global health system, particularly using a framework based on snapshots of activity in 2010 and 2020. While the pandemic led to a notable uptick in WHO funding, it is difficult to quantitatively capture the expansion of capacities and challenges that multilateral public health bodies experienced in 2020. However, a qualitative assessment of some of WHO’s experiences and activities during the pandemic can provide insight into current strengths and vulnerabilities of multilateralism in the area of global public health.

In early January 2020, WHO alerted the international community of the detection of a “cluster of pneumonia,” which was shortly thereafter determined to be a novel coronavirus, in Wuhan, China.⁴³ By the end of the month, WHO had labeled COVID-19 a “Public Health Emergency of International Concern,” and on March 11th it declared a pandemic.⁴⁴ Over the course of the pandemic, in addition to providing public health guidance and technical support to national health systems, WHO has led a number of innovative endeavors to facilitate global collaboration in combating COVID-19. For example, in April 2020, it established the Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator, an international, multistakeholder initiative aimed at expediting the development, production, and equitable distribution of COVID-19 tests, therapies, and vaccines. It also launched the COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund, which raised more than \$250 million from the private sector between 2020 and 2021, with a total of more than 675,000 individual, nongovernmental, and corporate donors.⁴⁵

Despite such initiatives, WHO has been criticized for its performance in leading the multilateral response to COVID-19. In the early days of the pandemic, some of the loudest condemnations centered on allegations of political influence on WHO’s messaging about the origins of COVID-19 and the threat it represented—accusations that others critiqued as politically motivated.⁴⁶ As the pandemic has evolved, there have also been criticisms of WHO’s capacity to lead a coordinated global response. However, many of these apparent shortcomings appear to be tied less to the organization’s institutional capacity than to the reticence of member states to fully collaborate to combat the pandemic.⁴⁷

41 Patrick Janukavicius, “High H1N1 Prevalence and Mortality Rates a Concern,” *Canadian Medical Association Journal* 186, no. 3 (February 2014).

42 James Bell et al., “United Nations and World Health Organization Receive Positive Ratings Across Most Countries,” in “International Cooperation Welcomed Across 14 Advanced Economies,” Pew Research Center, September 21, 2020, available at www.pewresearch.org/global/2020/09/21/united-nations-and-world-health-organization-receive-positive-ratings-across-most-countries/; Jesse B. Bump, Peter Friberg, and David R. Harper, “International Collaboration and Covid-19: What Are We Doing and Where Are We Going?” *BMJ* 372, no. 180 (2021).

43 World Health Organization (@WHO), “China has reported to WHO a cluster of #pneumonia cases—with no deaths—in Wuhan, Hubei Province. Investigations are underway to identify the cause of this illness,” Twitter, January 4, 2020, 12:13 pm, <https://twitter.com/WHO/status/1213523866703814656>; World Health Organization (@WHO), “BREAKING: WHO has received the genetic sequences for the novel #coronavirus (2019-nCoV) from the Chinese authorities. We expect them to be made publicly available as soon as possible,” Twitter, January 11, 2020, 3:23 pm, <https://twitter.com/WHO/status/1216108498188230657>.

44 World Health Organization (@WHO), “LIVE: Press conference on the Emergency Committee meeting on #2019nCoV,” Twitter, January 30, 2020, 1:37 pm, <https://twitter.com/WHO/status/1222967082733559808>; World Health Organization (@WHO), “Media briefing on #COVID19 with @DrTedros. #coronavirus,” Twitter, March 11, 2020, 11:16 am, <https://twitter.com/WHO/status/1237774421307228160>. Twitter, March 11, 2020, 11:16 am, <https://twitter.com/WHO/status/1237774421307228160>.

45 WHO Foundation, “COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund,” available at <https://covid19responsefund.org/en/>.

46 Kathy Gilsinan, “How China Deceived the WHO,” *Atlantic*, April 12, 2020.

47 Bump, Friberg, and Harper, “International Collaboration and Covid-19.”

A prime example of these dynamics are the goals of “global solidarity [and] international cooperation to ensure global access to medicines, vaccines and medical equipment to face COVID-19,” which WHO member states agreed in May 2020 would guide their collective response to the pandemic.⁴⁸ Although they resolved, in principle, to ensure international collaboration, in practice, many countries—particularly high-income ones—have prioritized national needs.

Since the development of the first COVID-19 vaccines in late 2020, this has been particularly reflected in “vaccine nationalism,” which WHO leadership has decried on both moral and public health grounds.⁴⁹ The resulting inequitable access to vaccines led to significant discrepancies in vaccination rates between high-, upper-middle-, lower-middle-, and low-income countries in the first year of vaccine availability (see Figure 54). The equitable distribution of vaccines in conflict-affected areas has been particularly challenging.⁵⁰

In an effort to reduce this discrepancy, one of the central pillars of WHO’s ACT Accelerator has been the COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access, known as “COVAX.” With over 190 participants, COVAX coordinates the multilateral transfer of vaccines from mostly high-income donor countries to mostly low-income recipient countries. As of March 2022, twenty-three donor countries—as well as the European Union and Hong Kong—had donated 1.47 billion vaccines to the COVAX initiative, of which 60 percent has been delivered to recipient countries. This falls far short of the needs of recipient countries. By comparison, more than seven times as many doses (11.31 billion) had already been administered globally by then, mostly in China, India, the US, and Europe. COVAX donor countries alone had already administered 2.35 billion vaccines to their 1.25 billion citizens—an average of almost two doses per person.⁵¹

To address these and other limitations to the international community’s ability to carry out coordinated global action on health, the World Health Assembly announced the launch of a process to develop an international agreement on pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response in December 2021.⁵² Drawing on the precedents set by both the IHR and the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, the agreement could strengthen WHO, increase its accountability, and better position it to coordinate countries’ responses to public health events. Among other things, the agreement may entail provisions to anticipate future outbreaks, guarantee equitable access to pandemic countermeasures, and ensure predictable funding for health emergencies, including from domestic budgets.⁵³

48 WHO Doc. WHA73/2020/REC/1.

49 UN News, “WHO Chief Warns Against ‘Catastrophic Moral Failure’ in COVID-19 Vaccine Access,” January 18, 2021, available at <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/01/1082362>.

50 Katherine DeLand, “Vaccine Equity in Conflict Affected Areas: The Challenges of Development, Production, Procurement, and Distribution,” International Peace Institute, May 2022.

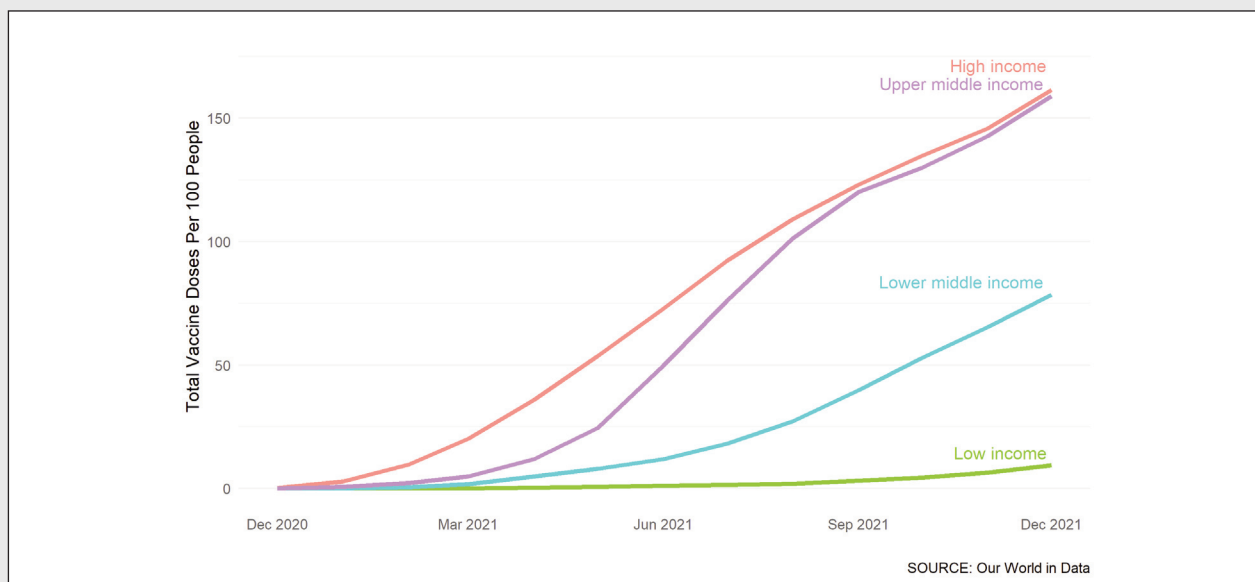
51 IEP calculations. See: Our World in Data, “COVID-19 Vaccine Doses Donated to COVAX,” March 23, 2022, available at <https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/covax-donations>.

52 WHO, “World Health Assembly Agrees to Launch Process to Develop Historic Global Accord on Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response,” press release, December 1, 2021, available at www.who.int/news/item/01-12-2021-world-health-assembly-agrees-to-launch-process-to-develop-historic-global-accord-on-pandemic-prevention-preparedness-and-response.

53 WHO, “Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response Accord: Q&A,” July 19, 2022, available at www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/pandemic-prevention-preparedness-and-response-accord.

Figure 54. COVID-19 vaccine doses by country income level (2020–2021)

High-income countries had higher vaccination rates by February 2021 than low-income countries had in December 2021.



Inclusivity

As with country contributions, WHO funding from non-state donors rose significantly over the past decade, with revenues spiking with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Between 2010 and 2020, non-state funding increased from \$663 million to \$1.63 billion, accounting for two-fifths of WHO's total revenue in 2020 (see Figure 55).

Nonetheless, the number of non-state donors declined moderately during the same period. There were 292 non-state donors for the 2010–2011 biennial budget but only 215 for 2020–2021 (see Figure 56). Excluding contributions from other UN organizations, the largest non-state donors to WHO in the past ten years have been the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the GAVI Vaccine Alliance, the European Commission, and Rotary International. Between 2010 and 2021, these four organizations made their largest contributions on

record, which together totaled more than \$6 billion. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation was not only the largest donor to WHO among non-state actors but also the second largest donor overall (behind Germany) both in 2020 and over the course of the decade.

Beyond funding, WHO has also engaged non-state actors in its work since shortly after its inception. Between 1950 and 2016, such relationships were overseen by WHO's Standing Committee on Nongovernmental Organizations, which received and assessed applications from NGOs wishing to establish formal ties with WHO and reviewed their reports on activities with the WHO.⁵⁴ While there is limited available documentation on the number of NGOs in official relations with WHO in the twentieth century, a 1990 directory listed 167 organizations.⁵⁵ In 2000, there were about 210 affiliated NGOs,⁵⁶ which later rose to an all-time high of about 285 in 2010.⁵⁷

54 WHO Executive Board, *First Report of the Standing Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations*, WHO Doc. EB5/87, January 18, 1950; WHO, "Former Standing Committee on Nongovernmental Organizations," available at www.who.int/about/collaboration/non-state-actors/former-standing-committee-on-nongovernmental-organizations.

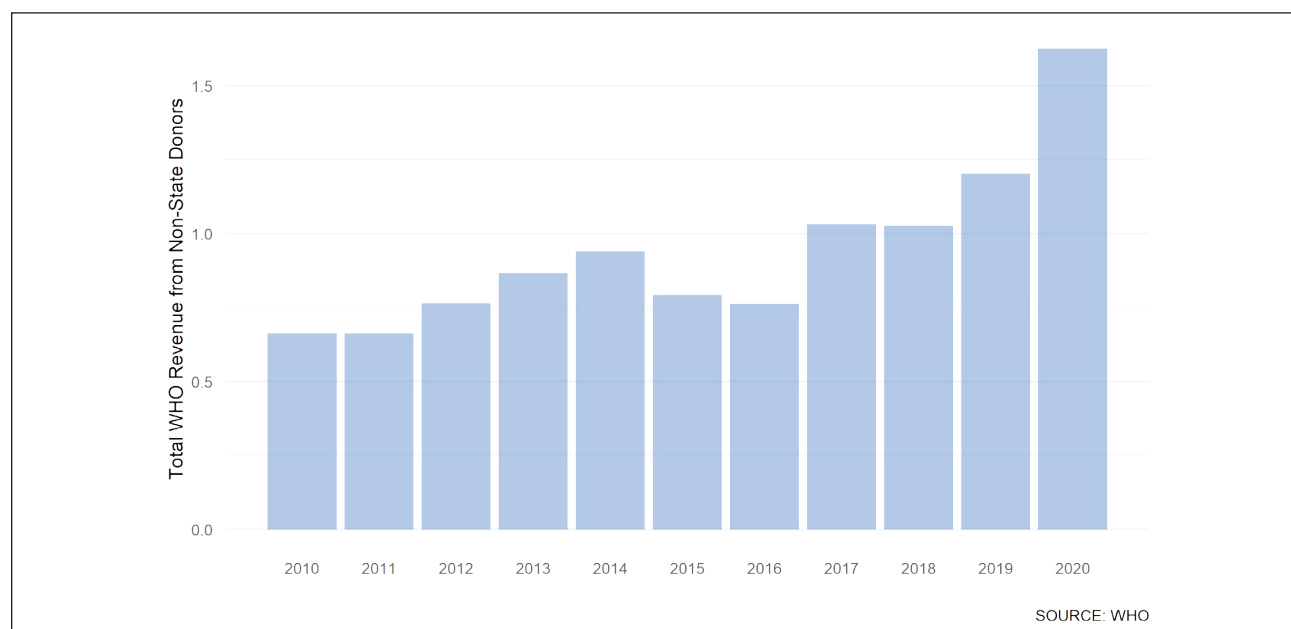
55 WHO, "Directory of Nongovernmental Organizations in Official Relations with the World Health Organization," WHO Doc. ECO/NGO/1990, October 1990.

56 WHO Executive Board, *Collaboration with Nongovernmental Organizations—Report of the Standing Committee on Nongovernmental Organizations*, WHO Doc. EB105/28, January 28, 2000.

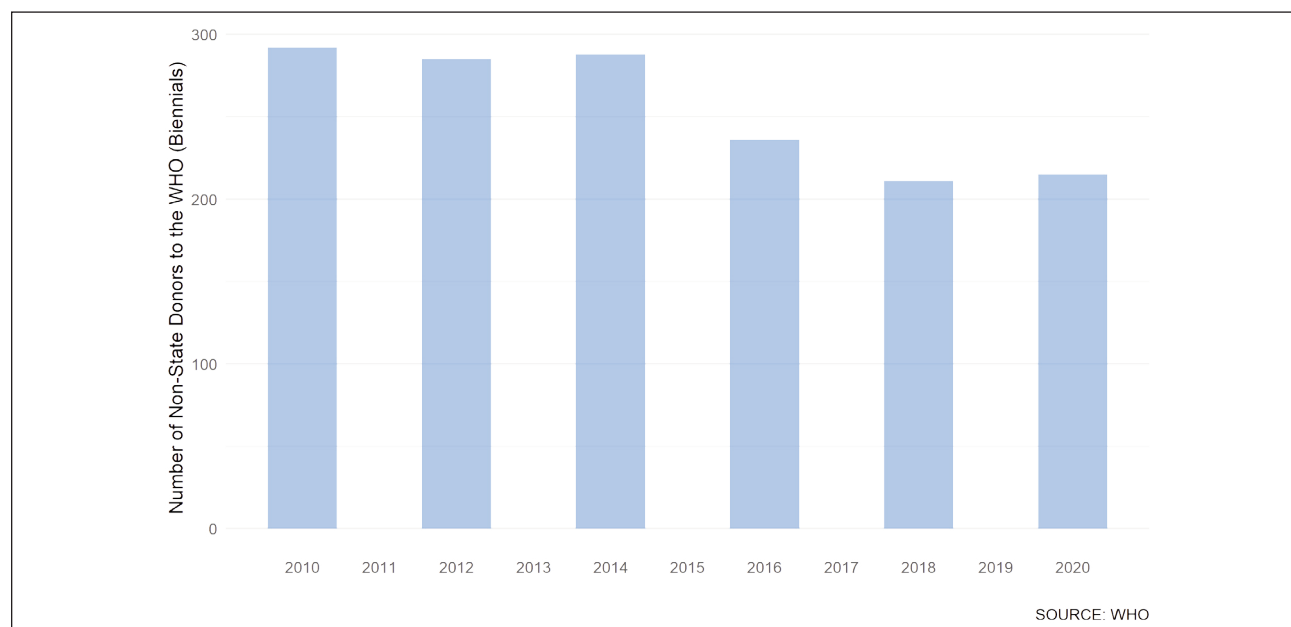
57 WHO Executive Board, *Reports of Committees of the Executive Board—Standing Committee on Nongovernmental Organizations*, WHO Doc. EB126/28, January 22, 2010.

Figure 55. WHO revenue from non-state donors (2010–2020)

As with country contributions, there was a sizable increase in WHO's non-state funding at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Figure 56. Non-state WHO donors (2010–2020)**

In the past decade, the number of non-state donors declined moderately.



In 2016, WHO established the Framework of Engagement with Non-State Actors (FENSA), which replaced the Standing Committee on Nongovernmental Organizations. FENSA expanded the types of non-state actors able to enter into official relations with WHO beyond NGOs, including private sector entities, philanthropic foundations, and academic institutions.

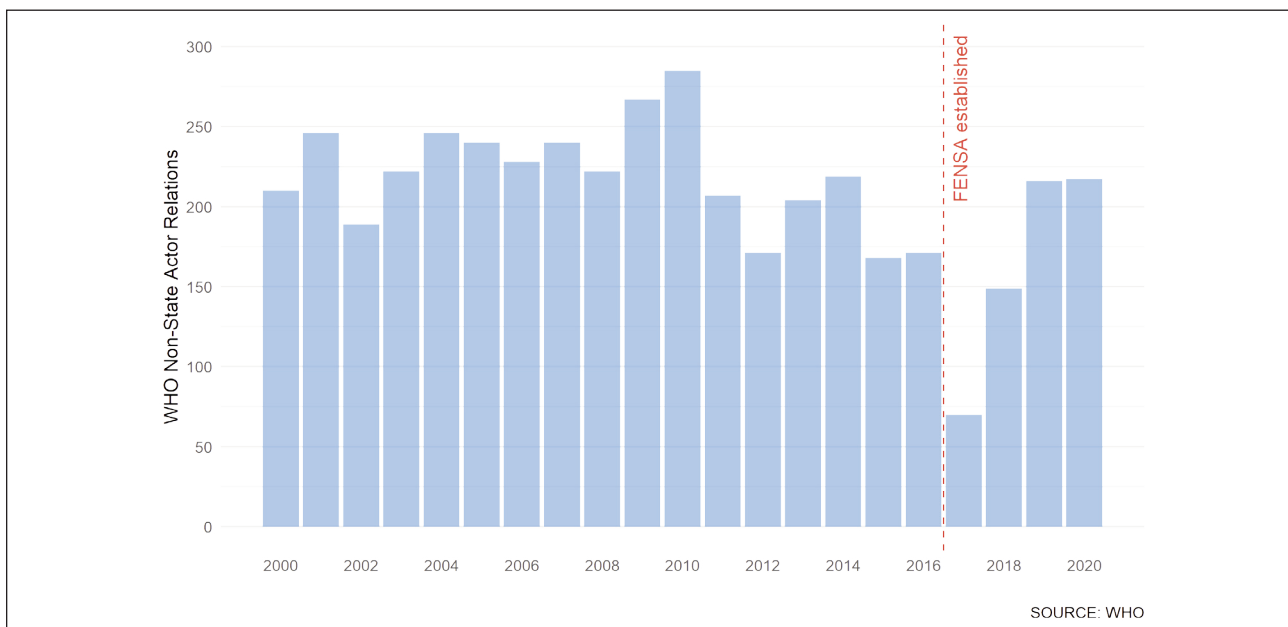
FENSA's establishment reportedly arose out of concerns among civil society organizations and some governments about the growing influence of for-profit interests on the functioning of WHO. Its purpose is therefore to formalize and provide clearer guidelines for such organizations' engagement with WHO, and it represents the first comprehensive regulatory framework of non-state actors within the UN system. Despite its overriding objective to better regulate corporate influence, some in civil society have critiqued FENSA for treating business interests the same as public interest groups in the name of "inclusiveness."⁵⁸

Independent of its qualitative impact on WHO's functioning, the transition period following the establishment of FENSA coincided with a temporary drop in the number of organizations with official relations with WHO. In 2017, the first full year of FENSA's implementation, the number of non-state actors with official relations (and active collaboration) with WHO fell from 170 to 70 (see Figure 57).⁵⁹ By 2019, the number had rebounded to 216 but remained well below the high of about 285 in 2010.

Regarding gender parity, women have generally been underrepresented among WHO staff. However, the organization has made significant progress in the past two decades, both overall and at the director level (see Figure 58). In 2005, 36 percent of the overall staff and 21 percent of director-level staff (at the D-1 and D-2 level) were occupied by women. By 2010, this had risen to 40 percent for overall staff and 22 percent for director-level staff, and by 2020 it had reached 48 percent overall and 36 percent for directors.

Figure 57. Non-state actors with official relations with WHO (2000–2022)

The number of non-state actors with official relations with the WHO peaked in 2010 at around 285.



⁵⁸ Karolin Seitz, "FENSA—A Fence against Undue Corporate Influence?" Brot für die Welt, Global Policy Forum, and German Catholic Bishops' Organisation for Development Cooperation (MISEREOR), September 2016.

⁵⁹ WHO, "WHO Register of Non-state Actors," available at <https://publicspace.who.int/sites/GEM/default.aspx#>; WHO Executive Board, *Reports of Committees of the Executive Board—Standing Committee on Nongovernmental Organizations*, WHO Doc. EB138/48, January 30, 2016.

Figure 58. Proportion of women WHO staff, overall and director-level (2005–2020)

Since 2005, WHO has made steady progress toward achieving gender parity among both its overall staff and staff at the director level.



Trade

In the Trade domain, between 2010 and 2020, most of the Participation and Performance indicators deteriorated, while three of the four Inclusivity indicators improved. Figure 59 provides a breakdown of MI scores for all fourteen indicators (summarized in Annex).

Participation

The World Trade Organization (WTO) is the premier multilateral institution for regulating and facilitating international trade. Established in 1995, it replaced the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which was a treaty established in 1948. The membership of the WTO/GATT has gradually grown and now comprises the vast majority of countries (see Figure 60). Table 5 provides a summary of the international trade commitments analyzed in this domain.

Free trade agreements (FTAs) between two or more countries have become increasingly common since the Treaty of Rome established the European Economic Community in 1958. Accelerating

markedly starting in the 1990s, the number of active FTAs has grown to over 300. However, while multilateral FTAs (those involving three or more countries) emerged first and were originally more common, bilateral FTAs became more common in the 1980s and 1990s. Although the number of both has continued to rise in the past several decades, by 2003, bilateral agreements overtook multilateral agreements as the most common type of FTA (see Figure 61).

Contributions to the WTO budget are non-voluntary, and they are determined based on calculations of each member state's share of international trade in goods, services, and intellectual property rights. However, funding for the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) is based on voluntary contributions (primarily from states, but also from non-state parties). Because UNCTAD funding is discretionary, it presents a good measure of countries' levels of financial commitment to multilateral trade bodies over time. Total contributions to UNCTAD peaked in 2011 at \$29.6 million (see Figure 62). However, the number of donor countries peaked in 2009 at 87, falling to 77 in 2018.

Figure 59. Multilateralism Index scores: Trade

Most Participation and Performance indicators have deteriorated in the past decade, while three of the four Inclusivity indicators have improved.

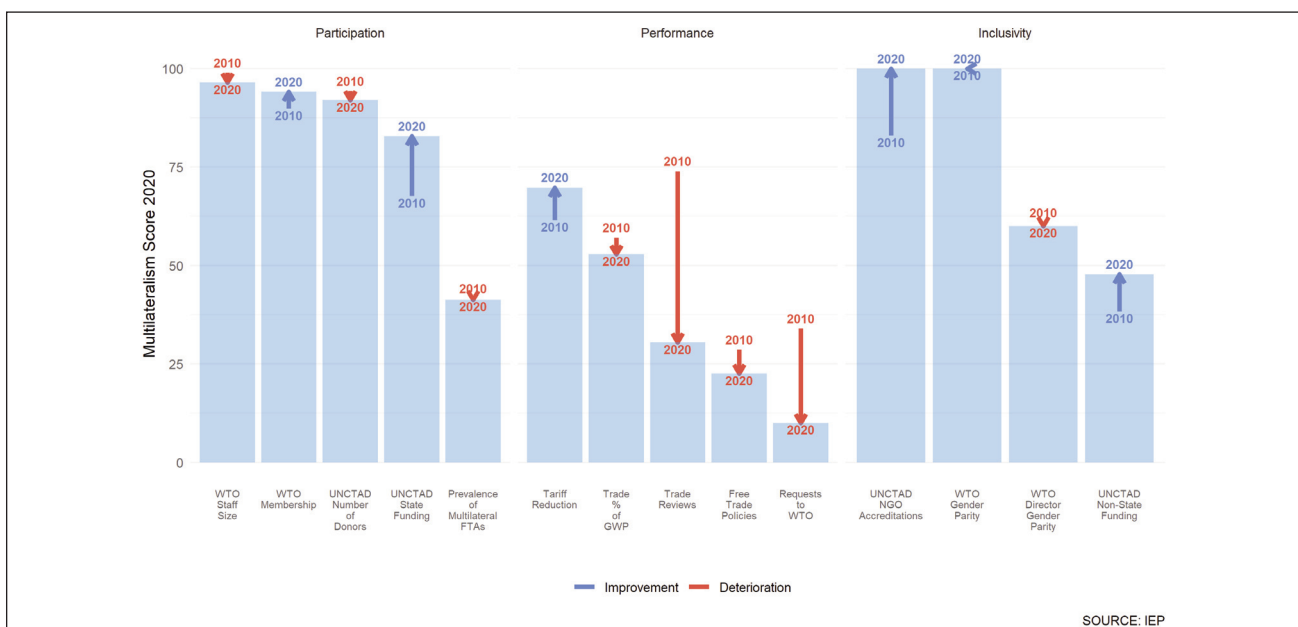


Figure 60. GATT/WTO membership (1948–2020)⁶⁰

Of the 193 UN member states, 160 are WTO members; an additional 23 observer countries have standing applications to join.

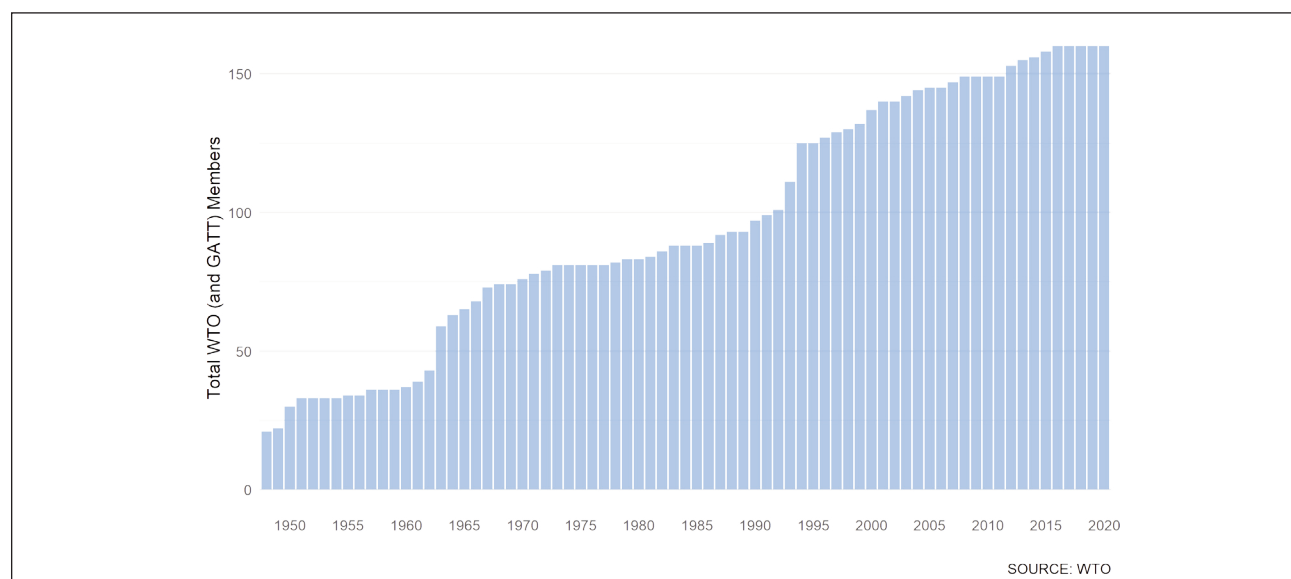
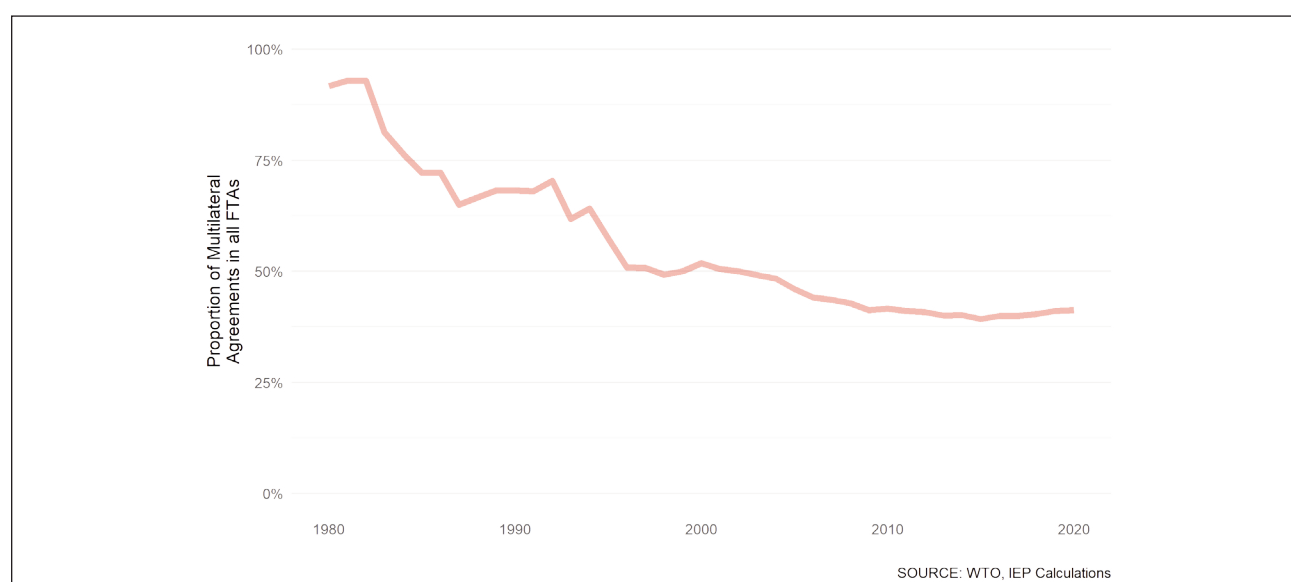


Table 5. Trade commitments addressed in this domain

Instrument	Year of Introduction
General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade/WTO Membership	1948/1995
300+ Free Trade Agreements	1958–2020

Figure 61. Multilateral agreements as a proportion of all FTAs (1980–2020)

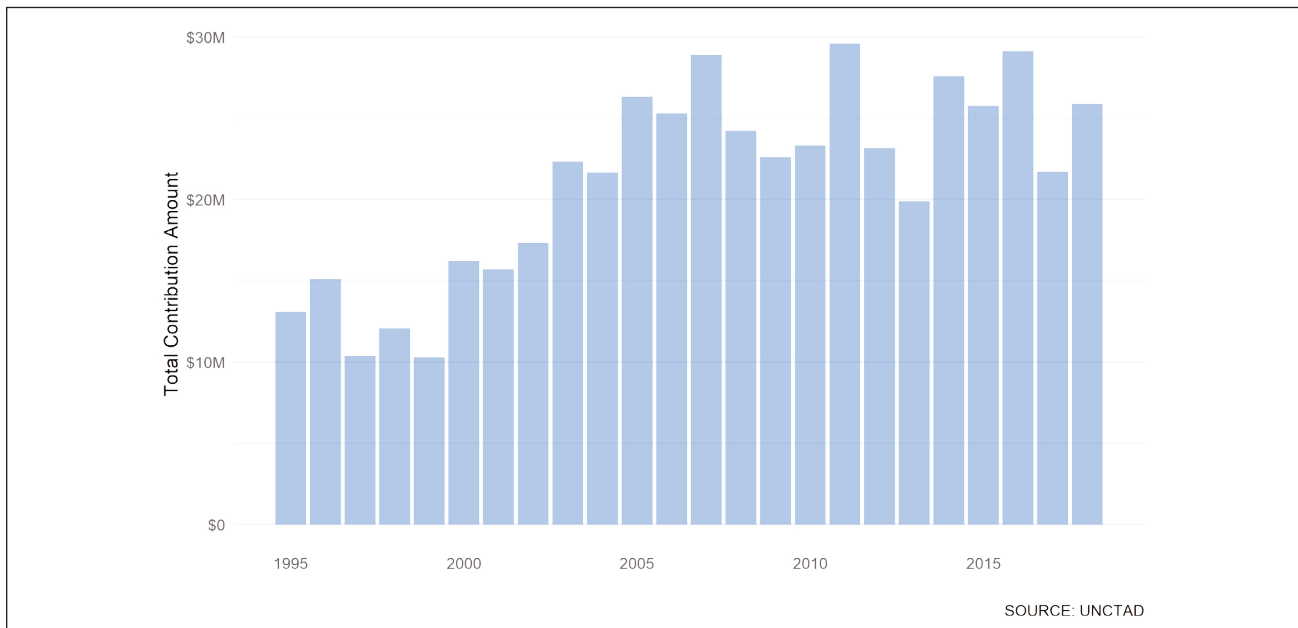
In 2003, bilateral FTAs became more numerous than multilateral FTAs.



⁶⁰ The WTO replaced the GATT in 1995.

Figure 62. UNCTAD state funding (1995–2018)

Total funding to UNCTAD has declined slightly since peaking in 2011.



Performance

Over the past decade, countries have enacted thousands of new national policies that have an impact on international trade relations. Global Trade Alert has tracked these policies and categorized them based on whether they facilitate or inhibit international trade. The proportion of trade-facilitating measures hit an eight-year high in 2016, at 33 percent, with 805 new trade-facilitating policies compared to 1,627 new trade-inhibiting policies. However, it hit a record low of 22 percent in 2019, with 449 new trade-facilitating policies compared to 1,639 new trade-inhibiting policies. Moreover, in absolute terms, the following year witnessed the introduction of the most trade-inhibiting policies; there were 2,608 new trade-inhibiting policies in 2020 (see Figure 63).

The global average tariff rate, weighted based on total product volume and value, has fallen significantly since the mid-1990s, standing at less than 2 percent in 2017 (see Figure 64). In contrast, while trade as a percentage of global GDP has risen in the past several decades, it has declined slightly since 2008 (see Figure 65).

Resolving international trade disputes between countries is one of the key functions of the WTO. Since its creation in 1995, the WTO's dispute-settlement activities have gradually increased. However, in December 2019, these activities were undermined as a result of the cessation of the work of its Appellate Body—the “de facto Supreme Court of world trade.”⁶¹ This resulted from the US blocking the appointment of new members, starting in 2018, in protest of what its government saw as overreach and unfair rulings related to US interests. As the terms of the body's members expired, its membership gradually fell from seven down to zero by November 2020. As a result, the average number of active dispute-settlement proceedings fell from an all-time high of fifty-four per month in 2019 to thirty-seven in 2020. Similarly, the number of “requests for consultations,” which originate dispute-settlement activities, fell to an all-time low in 2020 (see Figure 66). With the change of presidential administration in the United States in 2021, it had been anticipated that the appointment of judges would resume; however, the new administration has continued the policy of not appointing new judges.

61 Jamey Keaten and Paul Wiseman, “World Trade without Rules? US Shuts Down WTO Appeals Court,” AP, December 10, 2019.

Figure 63. Trade-facilitating policies as a percentage of all new trade-affecting policies globally (2009–2020)

The number and percentage of trade-facilitating policies have fallen since 2016.

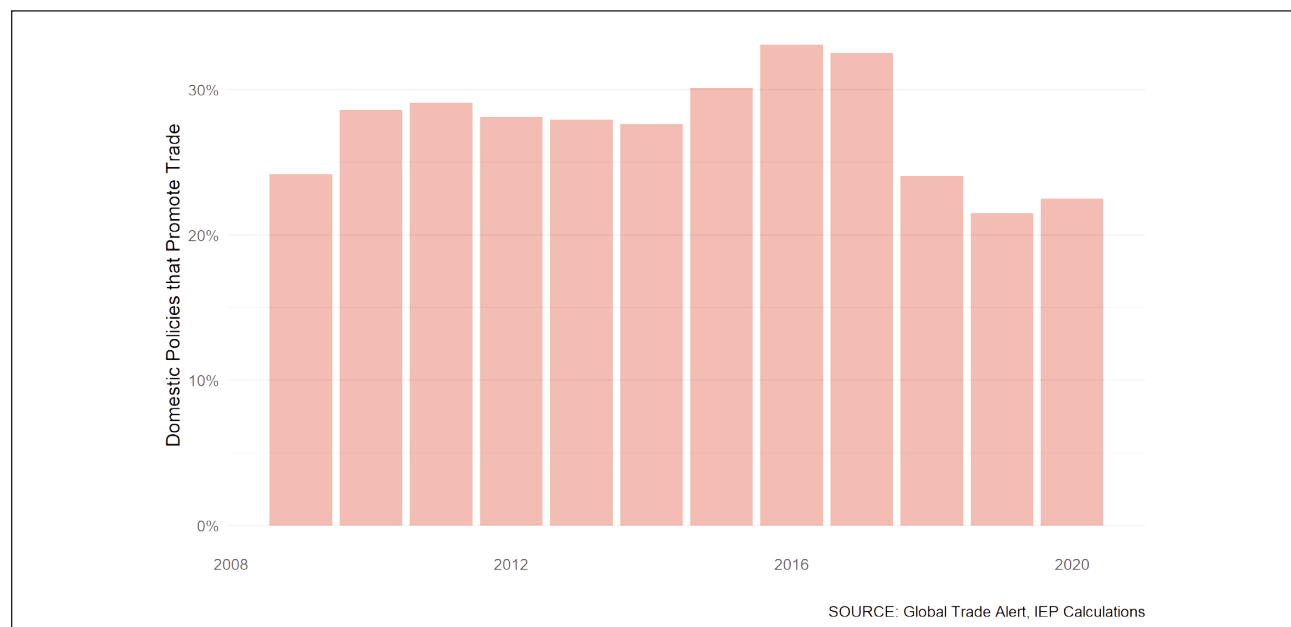


Figure 64. Average weighted world tariff rate (1988–2017)

The global average tariff rate has steadily fallen since 1994.

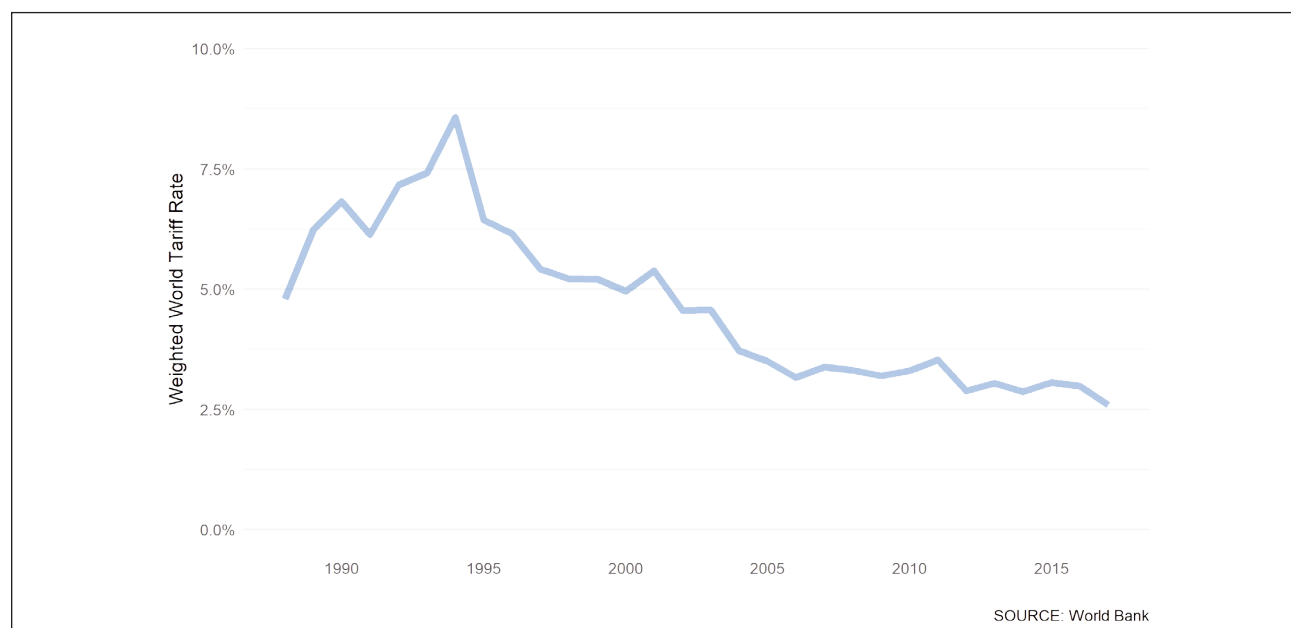


Figure 65. Trade as a percentage of global GDP (1970–2020)

After reaching a high of 61 percent in 2008, trade as a percentage of global GDP has fallen slightly in the past decade.

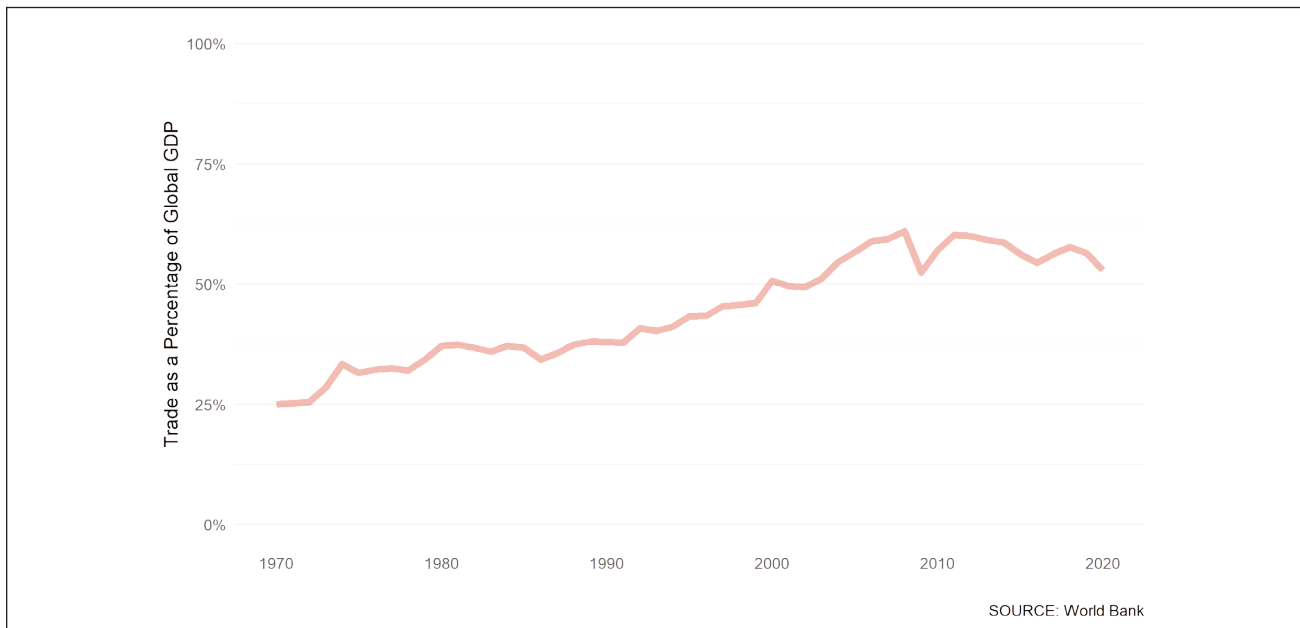
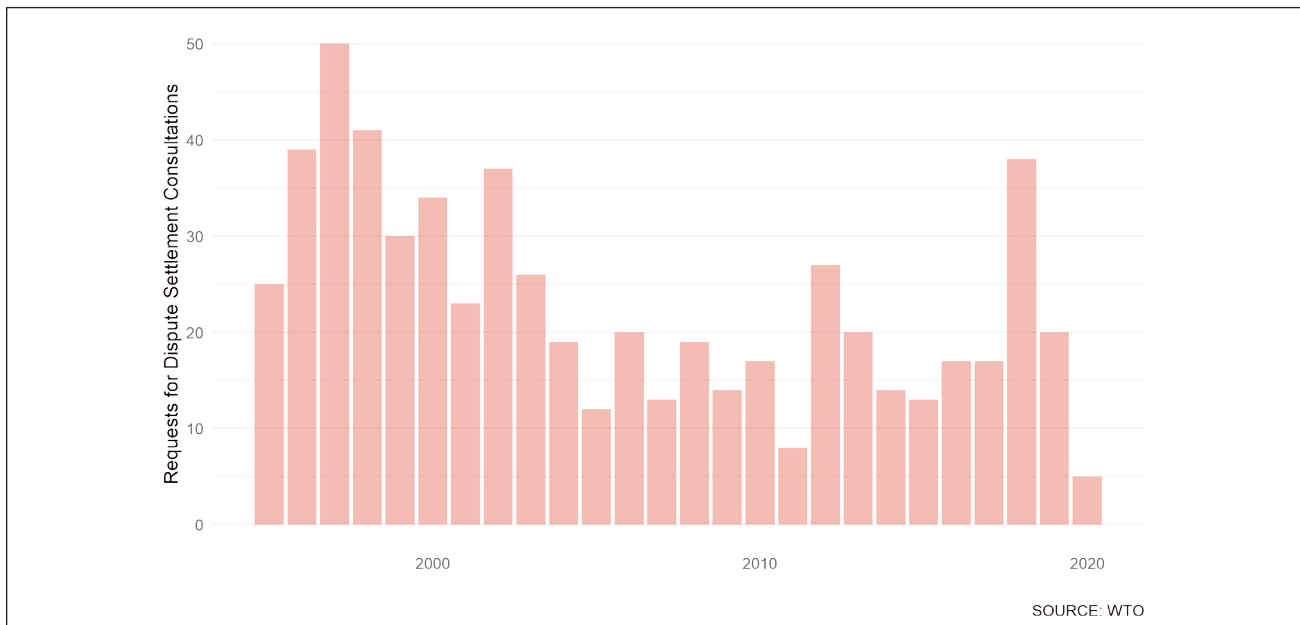


Figure 66. WTO dispute-settlement consultation requests (1995–2020)

The number of requests by countries for consultations regarding trade disputes fell to an all-time low in 2020.



Inclusivity

While funding for UNCTAD comes primarily from donor countries, other actors can also make voluntary contributions to the organization. Of this non-state funding, the vast majority comes from intergovernmental organizations such as the European Union and other UN entities. Only a small fraction of total contributions comes from private and subnational donors. UNCTAD has received on average about \$619,000 per year from

such sources in recent decades (see Figure 67).

With regard to gender parity within multilateral trade institutions, over the past two decades, women have consistently made up just over half of the staff of the WTO (see Figure 68). At the director level, the representation of women has been lower, though it has increased since 2005, with the percentage of Grade 11 and Grade 12 roles occupied by women doubling from 15 percent in 2005 to 30 percent in 2020.

Figure 67. UNCTAD non-state funding (1995–2018)

Non-state funding to UNCTAD peaked in 2011 at \$1.6 million.

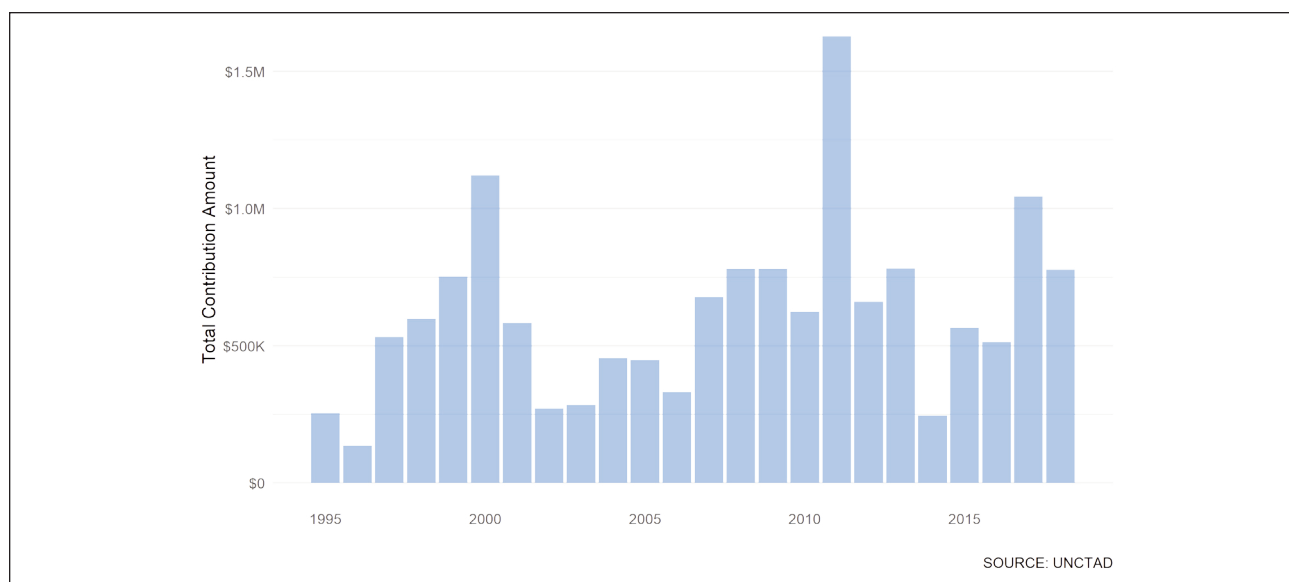
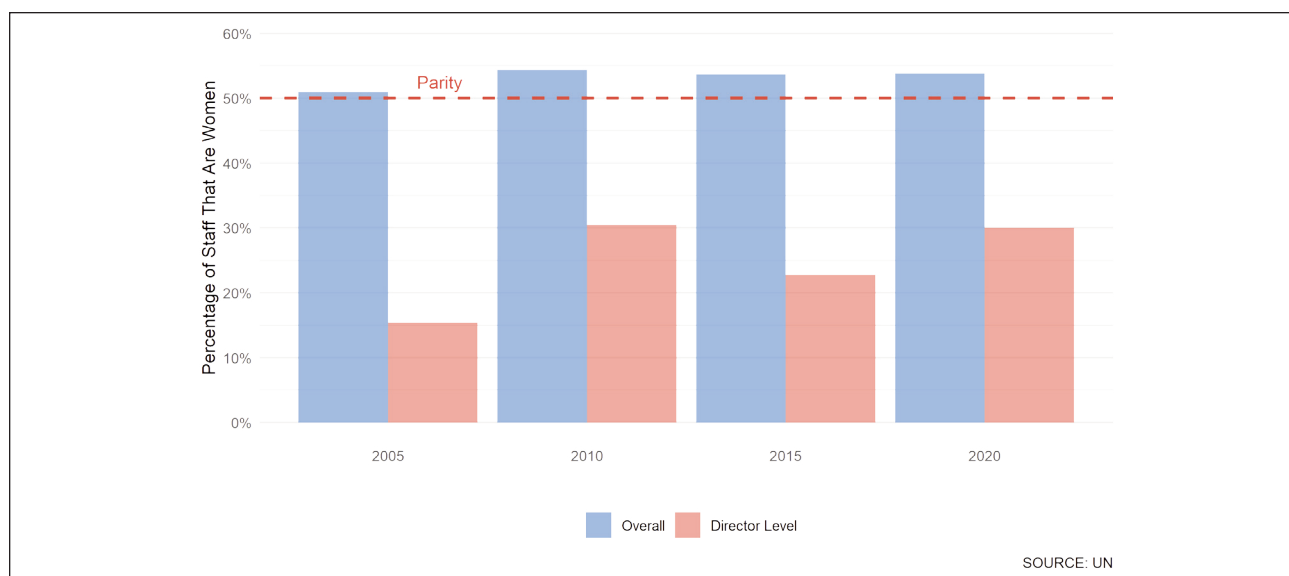


Figure 68. Proportion of women WTO staff, overall and director-level (2005–2020)

Women have occupied more than half of WTO staff positions for most of the past two decades, though they have been underrepresented in leadership roles.



Annex: Summary of Indicators

Domain	Dimension	Indicator	Source	Score of 0	Score of 100
Peace and Security	Participation	Power-Weighted Disarmament Treaties	UN; COW; IEP	No UN member states have ratified any treaties	All UN member states have ratified all treaties
		UN Security Council Vetoes	UN	Highest number of vetoes on record	No vetoes
		UN Security Council Resolutions	UN	No resolutions	Highest number of resolutions on record
		UN Peacekeeping Funding	UN	No funding	Highest funding on record
		UN Peacekeeping Number of Donors	UN	No donors	Highest number of donors on record
	Performance	DPO Staff Size	UN	No staff	Highest number of staff on record
		Battle Deaths	UCDP	Highest number of battle deaths on record	No battle deaths
		Number of State-Based Conflicts	UCDP	Highest number of conflicts on record	No conflicts
		Multilateral Arms Embargoes	SIPRI	No embargoes	Highest number of embargoes on record
		Lasting Peace Agreements	PA-X	All peace agreements are in countries with more than 100 battle deaths in the following year	All peace agreements are in countries with no subsequent battle deaths
	Inclusivity	Positive Peace	IEP	All countries have a positive peace score of 5	All countries have a positive peace score of 1
		DPO Gender Parity	UN	No women	50 percent women
		DPO Directors Gender Parity	UN	No women	50 percent women
		Arria-Formula Meetings with Civil Society Representation	UN; Security Council Report	No meetings with civil society organizations	Highest number of meetings with civil society organizations on record

Domain	Dimension	Indicator	Source	Score of 0	Score of 100
Human Rights	Participation	Power-Weighted Human Rights Treaties	OHCHR	No UN member states have ratified any treaties	All UN member states have ratified all existing treaties
		OHCHR State Funding	OHCHR	No donors	Highest funding on record
		OHCHR Number of Donors	OHCHR	No donors	Highest number of donors on record
		Percentage of Countries with Fully Accredited National Human Rights Institutions	SDG Data Hub	No countries have an NHRI that complies with the Paris Principles	All countries have an NHRI that complies with the Paris Principles
		Percentage of Countries with Invitations for Special Procedures Visits	OHCHR	No countries have issued standing invitations	All countries have issued standing invitations
		OHCHR Staff Size	OHCHR	No staff	Highest number of staff on record
	Performance	Global Average PTS Human Rights Score	PTS	All countries score a 5 on PTS	All countries score a 1 on PTS
		Average PTS Human Rights Score UNHRC Members	OHCHR; PTS	All countries score a 5 on PTS	All countries score a 1 on PTS
		OHCHR Non-state Funding	OHCHR	No funding	Highest funding on record
	Inclusivity	Number of NGO Observers in UNHRC Sessions	OHCHR; IEP	No NGOs	Highest number of NGOs on record
		OHCHR Gender Parity	UN	No women	50 percent women
		OHCHR Directors Gender Parity	UN	No women	50 percent women

Domain	Dimension	Indicator	Source	Score of 0	Score of 100
Environ- ment	Participation	Power-Weighted Climate Change Treaties	IEADB; COW	No UN member states have ratified any agreements	All UN member states have ratified all existing agreements
		UNEP State Funding	UNEP	No funding	Highest funding on record
		UNEP Number of Donors	UNEP	No donors	Highest number of donors on record
		UNEP Staff Size	UNEP	No staff	Highest number of staff on record
	Performance	Sufficiency of Climate Policy of Seven of the World's Largest Polluters	Climate Action Tracker	All countries have critically insufficient policies	All countries have policies to exceed the 1.5-degree target
		CO ₂ Emissions	Global Carbon Project	Highest CO ₂ emissions	No CO ₂ emissions
		Environmental Resilience	Notre Dame GAIN Index	All countries score 0 in the Notre Dame GAIN index	All countries score 100 in the Notre Dame GAIN index
		UNEP Gender Parity	UN	No women	50 percent women
	Inclusivity	UNEP Directors Gender Parity	UN	No women	50 percent women
		UNEP Non-state Accreditations	UNEP	No accreditations	Highest number of accreditations on record

Domain	Dimension	Indicator	Source	Score of 0	Score of 100
Public Health	Participation	Power-Weighted Global Health Agreements	UN Treaty Collection; COW	No UN member states have ratified/signed any agreements	All UN member states ratified/signed all existing agreements
		IHR Country Reporting	WHO	No WHO member states have submitted IHR-SPAR monitoring reports	All WHO member states have submitted IHR-SPAR monitoring reports
		WHO Staff Size	WHO	No staff	Highest number of staff on record
		WHO Number of Donor Countries	WHO	No donor countries	Highest number of donor countries on record
		WHO Country Revenue	WHO	No country revenue	Highest amount of country revenue on record
		Global Life Expectancy	World Bank	Lowest global life expectancy on record	Highest global life expectancy on record
	Performance	IHR Global Capacity	WHO	All WHO member states score 0 across all IHR-SPAR capacity measures	All WHO member states score 100 across all IHR-SPAR capacity measures
		Births with Skilled Health Staff Present	World Bank	No births with skilled health staff	All births with skilled health staff
		Vaccine Coverage	World Bank	No vaccines	Universal vaccine coverage
		Early Death	WHO	Highest early death rate on record	Lowest early death rate on record
		WHO Gender Parity	UN	No women	50 percent women
	Inclusivity	WHO Directors Gender Parity	UN	No women	50 percent women
		WHO Non-state Actor Relations	WHO	No non-state actor relations	Highest number of non-state actor relations on record
		WHO Number of Non-state Donors	WHO	No non-state donors	Highest number of non-state donors on record
		WHO Non-state Revenue	WHO	No non-state revenue	Highest amount of non-state revenue on record

Domain	Dimension	Indicator	Source	Score of 0	Score of 100
Trade	Participation	WTO/GATT Membership	WTO	No UN member states are WTO/GATT members	All UN member states are WTO/GATT members
		UNCTAD State Funding	UNCTAD	No funding	Highest funding on record
		UNCTAD Number of Donors	UNCTAD	No donors	Highest number of donors on record
		Prevalence of Multilateral Free Trade Agreements	WTO	No multilateral free trade agreements	All free trade agreements are multilateral
		WTO Staff Size	WTO	No staff	Highest number of staff on record
	Performance	Trade-Facilitating Policies	Global Trade Alert	All domestic trade policies can be classed as protectionist	No domestic trade policies can be classed as protectionist
		Global Average Trade Tariffs	World Bank	Highest tariff level on record	No trade tariffs
		Requests for Consultations	WTO	No requests for consultations	Highest number of requests on record
		Trade as a Percentage of Global GDP	World Bank	No trade	All GDP based on trade
		Trade Review Policy Mechanisms	WTO	No trade reviews	Highest number of trade reviews on record
	Inclusivity	UNCTAD Non-state Funding	UNCTAD	No funding	Highest funding on record
		UNCTAD NGO Accreditations	WTO	No accreditations	Highest number of accreditations on record
		WTO Gender Parity	WTO	No women	50 percent women
		WTO Directors Gender Parity	WHO	No women	50 percent women

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