Green Glass Ceiling

Why in news?

The recent analysis of IMF revealed that Women are being left out of jobs in sustainable sectors despite growing employment opportunities in these green sectors

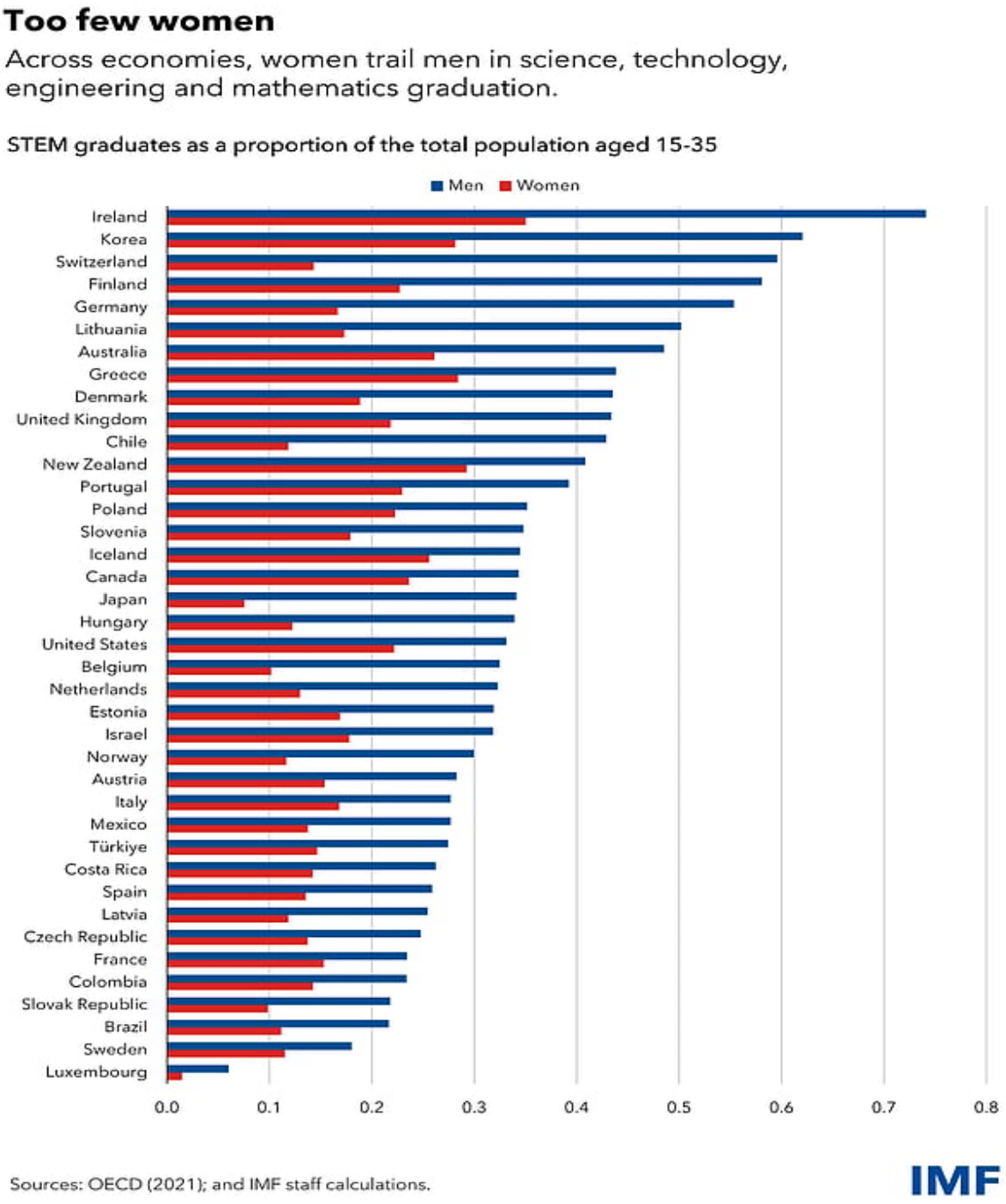
What is green glass ceiling?

- **Green glass ceiling** – It is a hidden barrier were women are ***disproportionately left behind from green jobs*** in sectors such as renewable energy, sustainable agriculture and waste management, forcing them to remain in more polluting sectors.

  Green jobs are the jobs that contribute to environmental preservation or restoration. It plays a vital role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improve environmental sustainability.

- **Gender gap** – This results in gender disparity in green job as men dominate this sector, holding *about 2/3rd of green jobs*, while *women occupy only 1/3rd.*
- **Status of green jobs across world**:
  - **Advanced Economies (AE)** – In AEs, green jobs account for 20% of men's employment but only 6% of women's employment.
  - **Emerging Market and Developing Economies (EMDE**) – EMDEs, where 16% of men's jobs are green compared to just 4.6% for women.
  - **Low-income countries (LIC)** – More evenly distributed between genders.
- **Reason for gender gap** - Lower number of women graduating in fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) as this streams are critical for accessing many green jobs.
  - In countries like Brazil, Colombia and South Africa, ***the gender gap in STEM education and managerial positions*** accounts for a large share of the ***green employment gender gap***.

Polluting jobs
• Polluting job refers to the jobs in sectors such as *manufacturing, fossil fuel extraction and heavy industry*, which are major contributors to greenhouse gas emissions and they ***remain concentrated in lower-skilled, middle-income segments.*** • More women are exposed to the environmental and health hazards associated in the polluting industries, particularly in LICs where *10.7% of women* are employed in these sectors compared to 8.6% of men.



What is the Role of Gender Equality in Sustainable Energy?

- **Reducing Gender gap –** As more gender-diverse workforce and leadership do better on risk management, innovation and problem-solving in combatting the climate crisis.
- **Faster transitions to greener economy –** By achieving gender equality and equal share of women in board membership were more likely to *reduce energy consumption, GHG emissions, and water use*.
    - CO2 emissions can be reduced by 5% more than those with more men in management.
- **Harnessing green jobs** – As the demand for green talent is currently outstripping supply, with green job postings growing 8% per year since 2015, compared to just 6% growth in green talent.

- Push towards green jobs may benefit the higher-earning segments of the workforce, middle and lower income workers many of whom are women remain trapped in traditional, polluting sectors.

SDG Goal 5 - Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

What is green premium?

- **Green premium** – It refers to the *higher wages associated with green jobs*, which are roles that contribute to environmental sustainability, such as in renewable energy, conservation, and sustainable agriculture.
- **IMF analysis –** Shows that these *green jobs tend to pay more than traditional jobs,* reflecting a growing *demand for workers with specific skills* needed in the green economy.
  - The analysis highlights that both men and women benefit from this wage premium, but women enjoy a larger premium—12% compared to 7% for men.
- **Matching demand** – This could indicate that women may be entering sectors or roles within the green economy that are particularly high in demand or that their skills are especially valued in these contexts.
  - Overall, this trend underscores the potential for green jobs not only to contribute to environmental goals but also to promote wage equity among genders in the labor market.

What lies ahead?

- Standardizing the hiring processes to improve unconscious discrimination in recruitment.
- Enhancing STEM education for women.
- Upskilling and reskilling women can be a win-win solution.
- Investments in women's skills development and supporting their green employment will prove critical to empower women and to deliver just, ambitious, and low-carbon transitions.
- Better policy measure to reduce the gender gap in green jobs.

Reference

1. Down To Earth| Green Glass Ceiling

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