

47 335

WOMEN

MEN

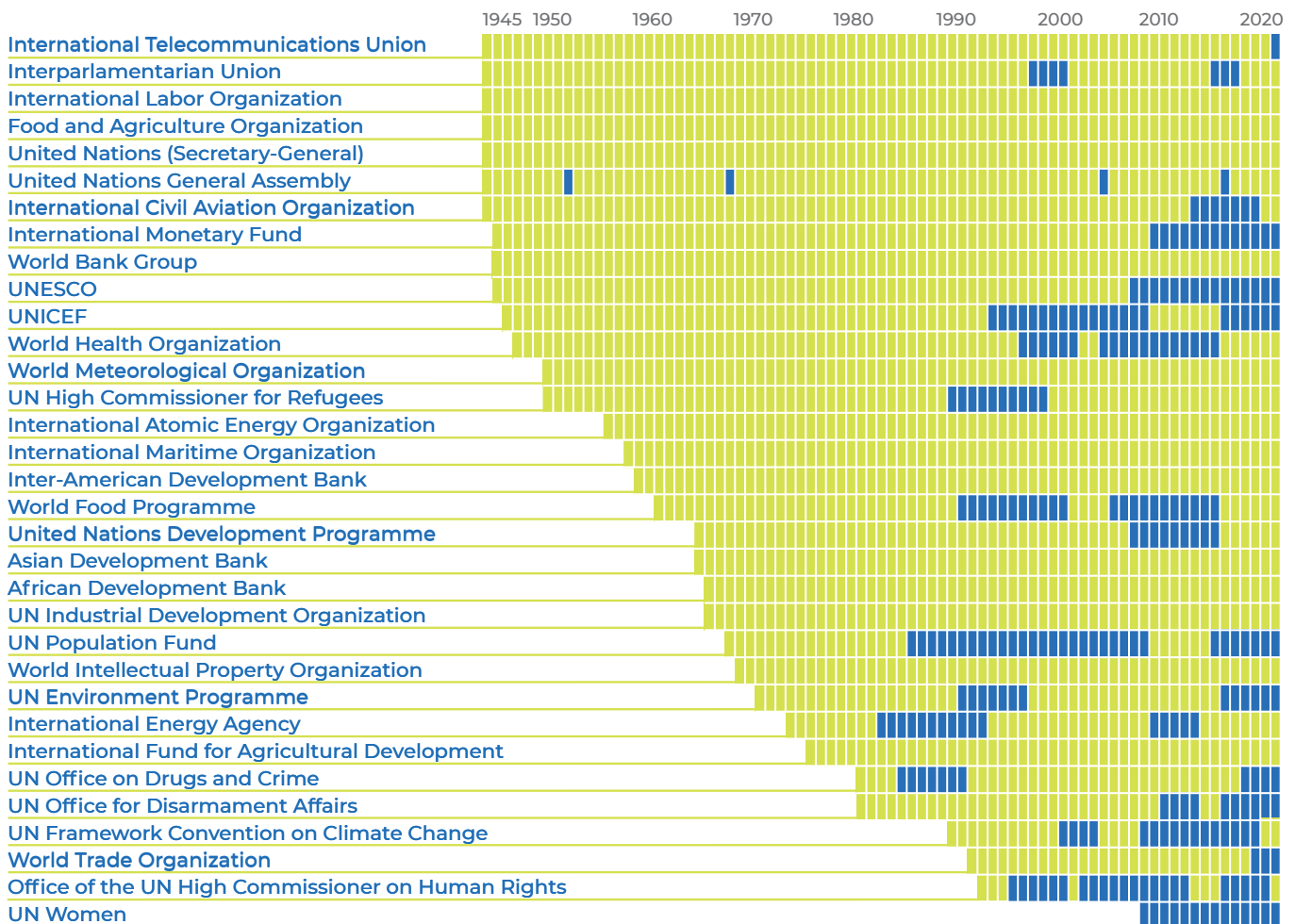
We mapped the number of women leaders in 33 of the world's largest multilateral organizations

Where are the women leaders?

The 77-year-old United Nations Commission on the Status of Women describes itself as the principal global policy-making body dedicated to gender equality. Thanks in part to its efforts, the multilateral organizations that form part of the UN system all describe themselves as being fervently committed to “full and equal” participation of women in everything they do.

But are these values reflected in the leadership of these organizations? For decades now, the anecdotal evidence has pointed to a different reality. To bring clarity and accountability to this discussion, we've undertaken a comprehensive mapping of the gender of the leaders of these organizations. This report shows what we've learned so far.

A male-dominated landscape

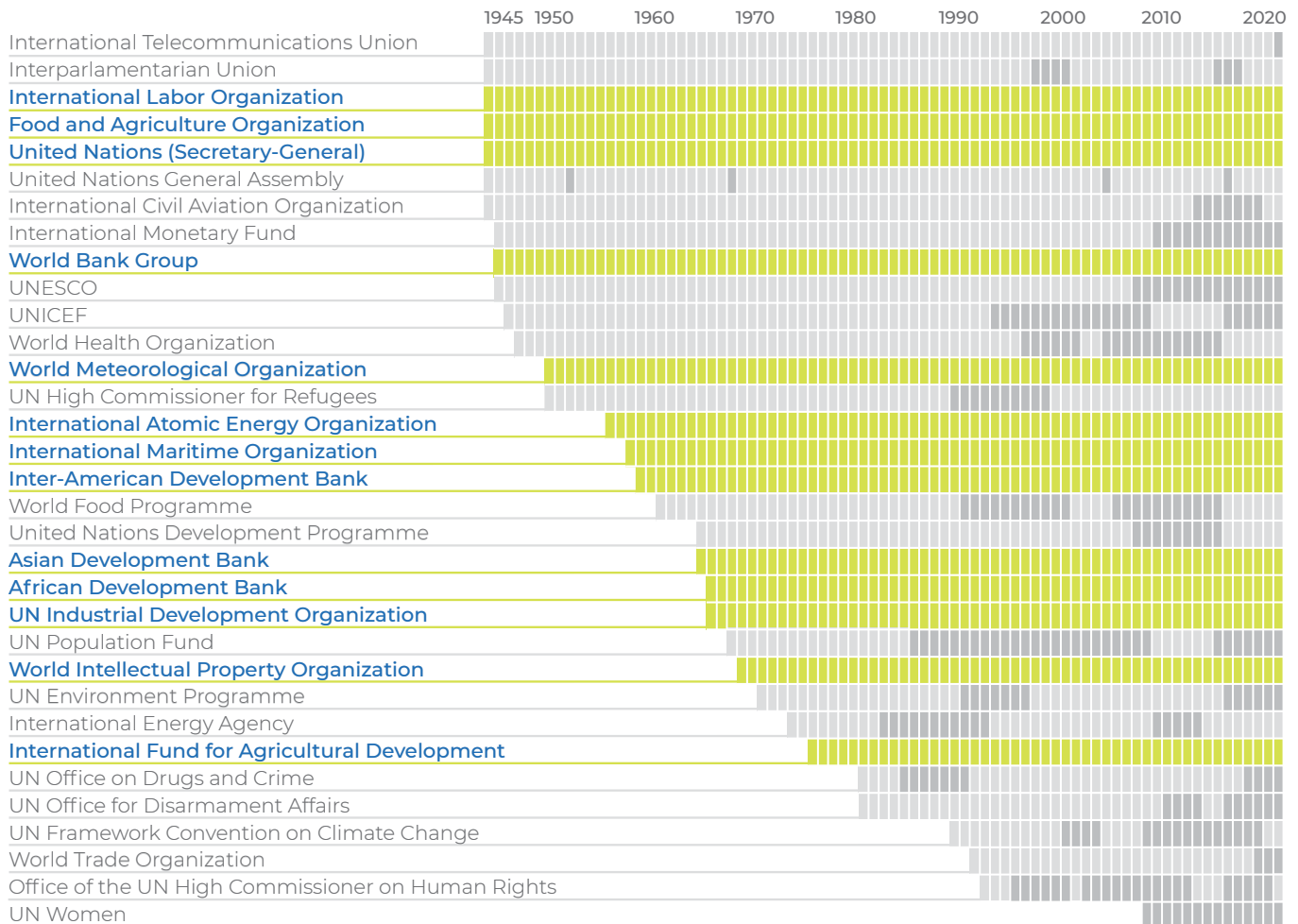


Since 1945, these organizations have collectively had a total of 382 leaders. 335 of them were men and **only 47** were women.

In all, women have been in charge for only **12% of the time** since 1945.

And despite recent progress, only **one third** of these organizations are currently headed by a woman.

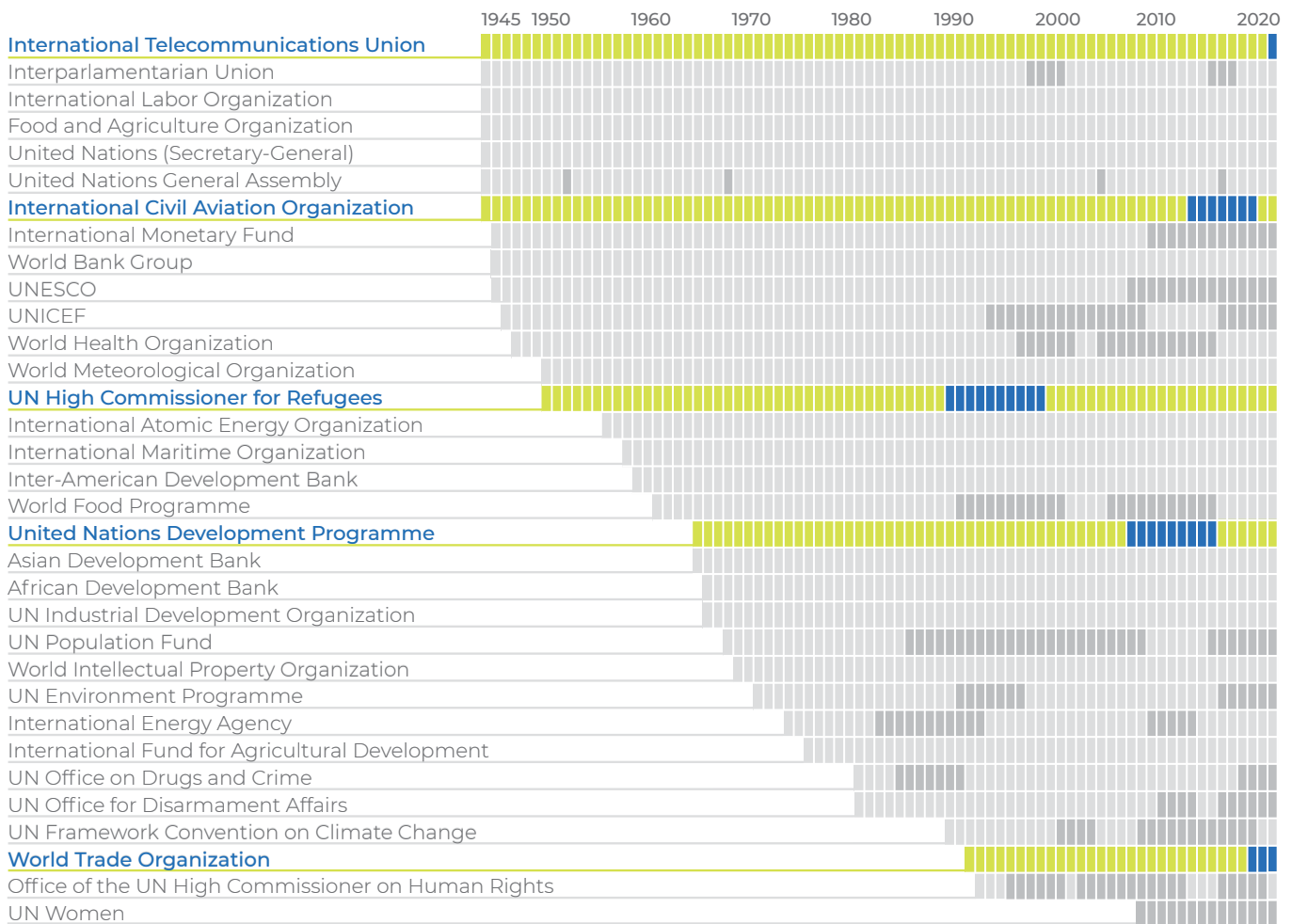
The Group of 13



13

of these organizations - including all four of the world's largest development banks - have **never** elected a woman as their leader.

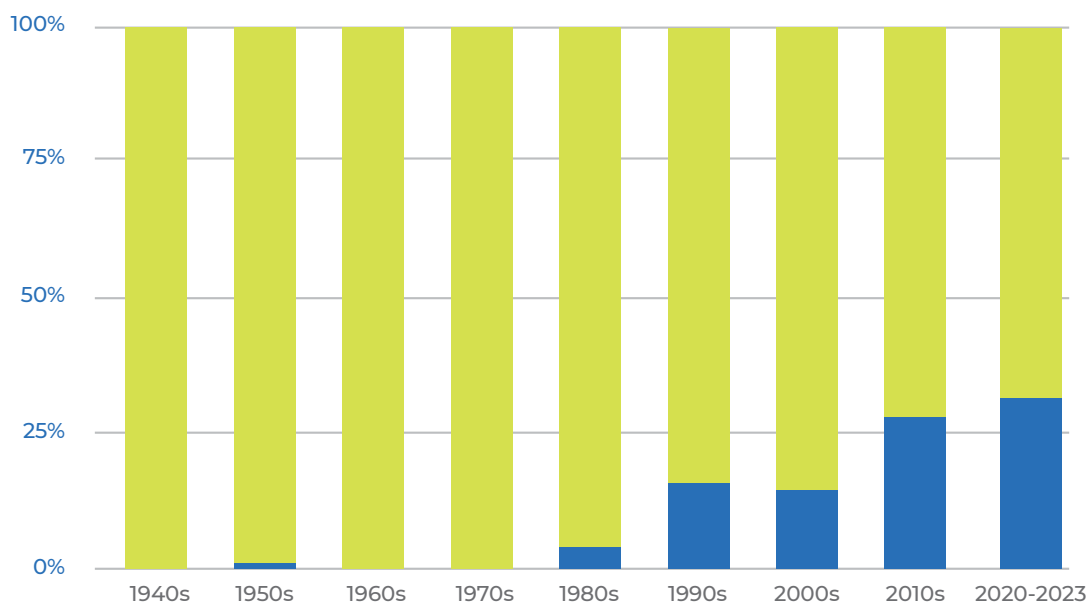
Better late than never



5 organizations have elected a female president **only once** in their entire history.

The frustratingly slow pace of progress

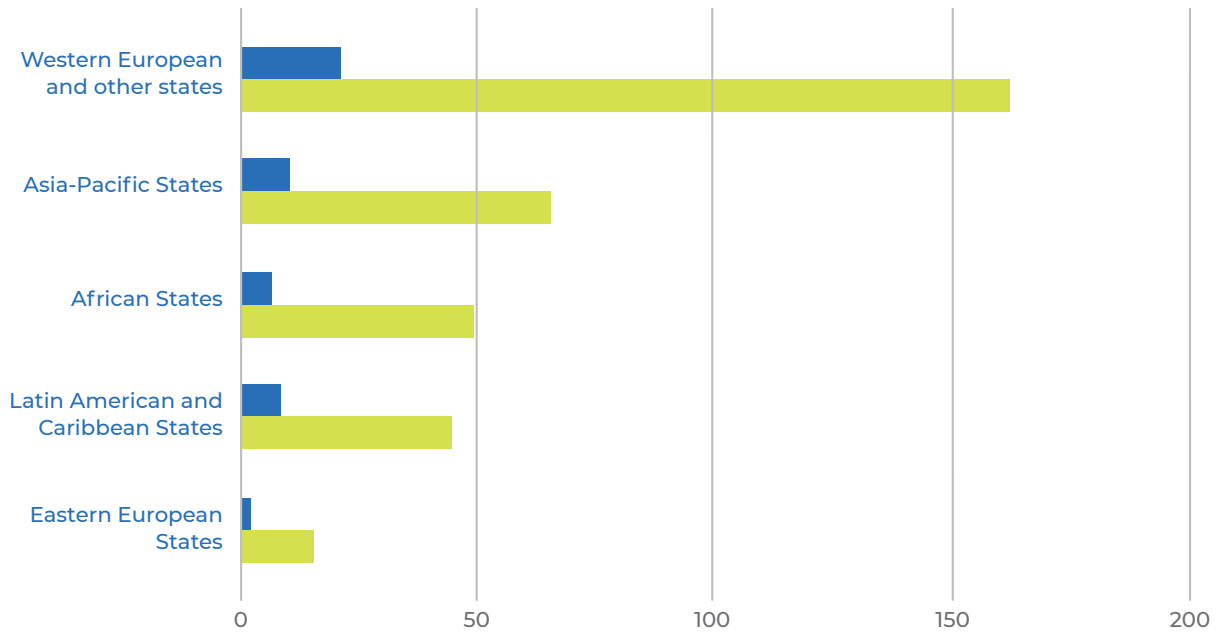
When we examine the percentage of time that women have led these organizations over the decades, we can see that progress has been slow and insufficient. In the first four decades following World War II, women were nearly absent from such positions. It was only from the 1980s onwards that a positive but modest trend of increasing female leadership emerged.



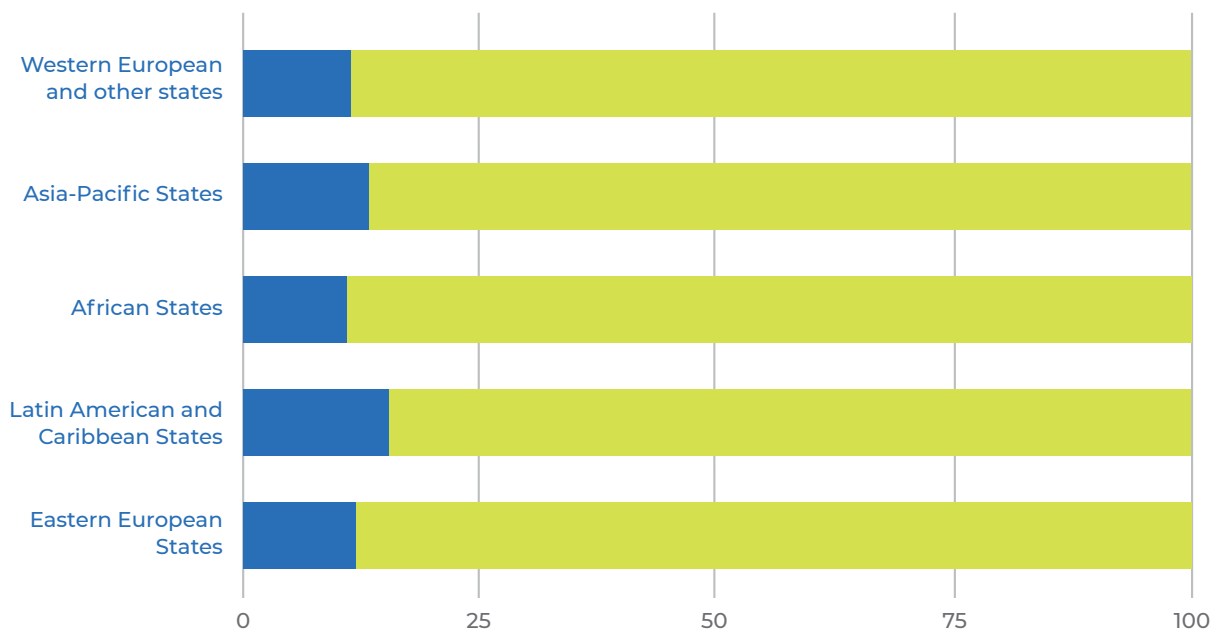
Across the globe, underrepresentation remains constant

Since progress on gender equality varies globally, we analyzed the data across countries and regions. Despite slight differences in the share of women leaders by region, the message is clear: women **everywhere** are consistently underrepresented in the top jobs of the multilateral system.

Number of female and male leaders at 33 multilaterals since 1945 by region of origin



Share of female and male leaders at 33 multilaterals since 1945 by region of origin



Our data show that women's representation is slightly better at the organizations in charge of areas such as **children, food, population and health**.

But looking at the institutions that have only been run by men, one would think the world lacks female professionals with outstanding careers in politics, finance, international development, labor, nuclear energy, intellectual property, meteorology, agriculture, industrial development and maritime affairs. In fact, those fields are full of female professionals more than qualified to fill leadership positions.

How did we do this?

The information in this report is based on publicly available sources, such as institutional websites, that list the name, nationality and gender of an organization's leaders.

Data for this report was gathered during January and February of 2023. We welcome and appreciate all comments and suggestions for providing the clearest possible picture of the role of women in these organizations.

Next Steps

In the second half of 2023, GWL Voices will publish a more extensive version of this report that will include data on the gender composition of the **senior management teams** and the **governing bodies** of each of the 33 organizations. Since not all organizations currently disclose this information (or they do so partially), GWL Voices will be making formal written requests for data that is not already published on institutional websites. Our goal is to ensure open access to reliable, comparable and accurate data in collaboration with each organization.

GWL Voices will host an event later this year to review the results of the upcoming report and prompt an in-depth debate about the specific governance reforms that could accelerate the transition to gender-balanced leadership in these organizations.

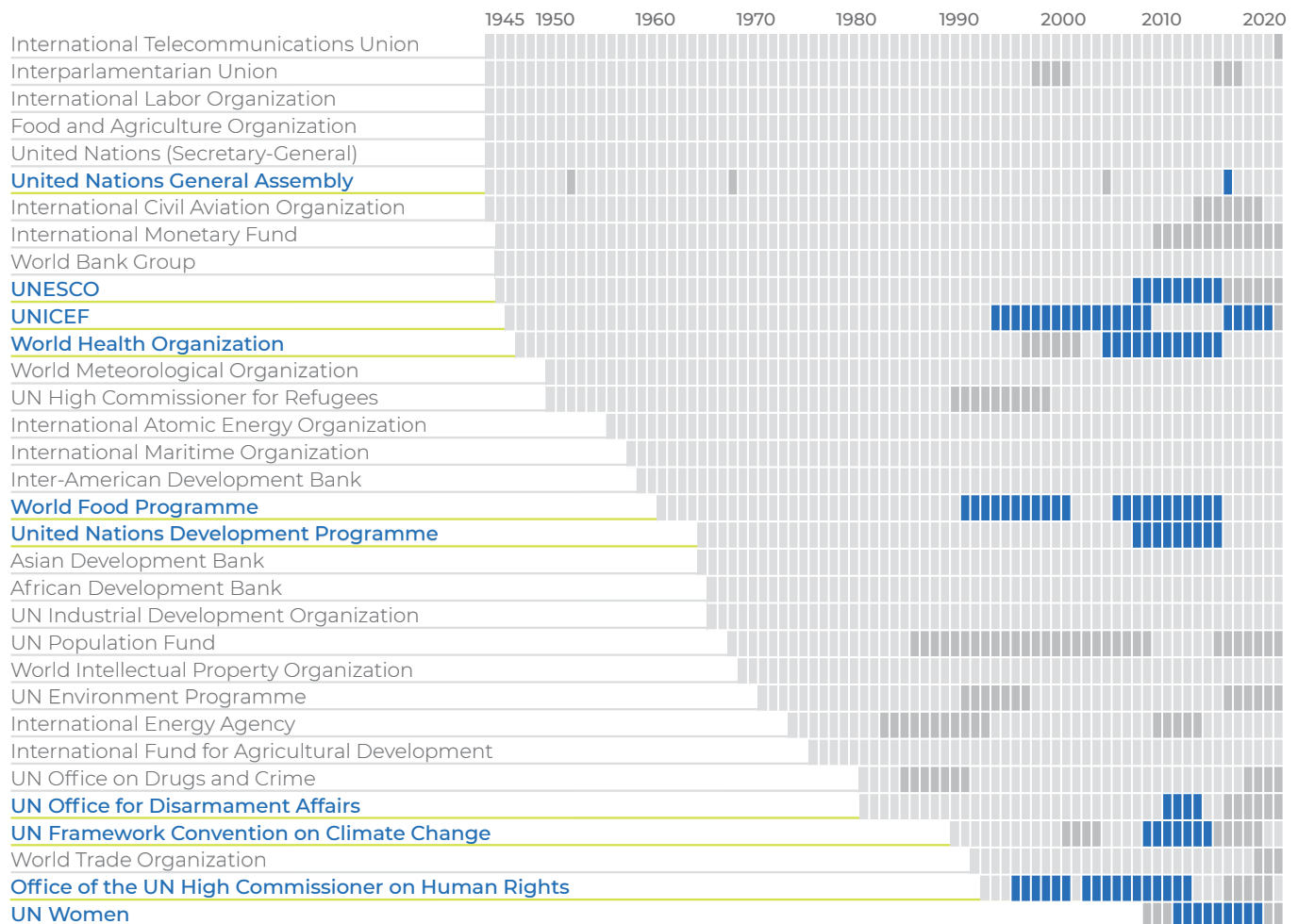
We will also publish an annual update to the report that will show which organizations are making the most progress, and will offer on-going commentary and analysis of upcoming elections in the UN system organizations.

About GWL Voices

GWL Voices for Change and Inclusion is an advocacy group for multilateralism and gender equality made up by the voices of 62 Global Women Leaders.

We believe that to achieve equitable development, women must have proportional representation at every level of multilateral organizations, from field offices to headquarters, as well as in secretariats and governing bodies. We will continue to advocate for increased participation by women until the UN system fully embodies its stated values and principles.

We speak from experience



10
 of the organizations
 have been led by 15
 women that belong
 to GWL Voices.

#GWL | VOICES
FOR CHANGE & INCLUSION