Although women account for only 17% of researchers in Japan, 23% of PCT patent applications from Japan included at least one female inventor in 2019, the same proportion as Sweden, where one-third of researchers are women.

There is also a large variation by year. For instance, of all the patents filed in Uruguay, 70% included at least one female inventor in 2018 but only 45% in 2019, according to WIPO data.

These trends reflect the picture we have already observed in higher education and at the research level: fields related to technology and engineering have traditionally been dominated by men, but women have been increasingly entering these fields. Although the number of PCT applications by women has grown in every field in the past decade, their share remains below 20% in fields related to engineering, such as civil engineering (18%), machine tools (18%), mechanical elements (16%) and engines, pumps and turbines (16%).

According to WIPO, female inventors are proportionally more internationally mobile than men, although men are closing this gap. Men are also more likely than women to participate in registering patents with a larger group of inventors (WIPO, 2016).