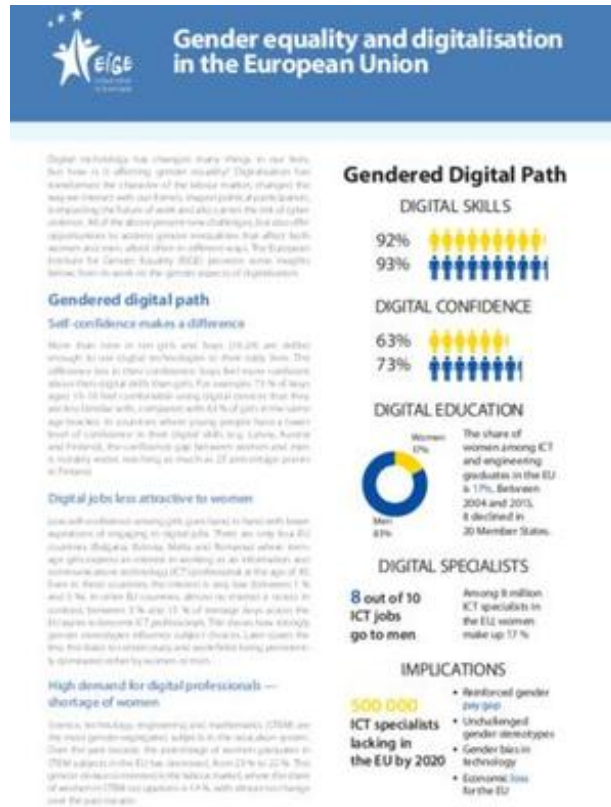


Gender equality and digitalisation in the European Union



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Digital technology has changed many things in our lives, but how is it affecting gender equality? Digitalisation has transformed the character of the labour market, changed the way we interact with our friends, shaped political participation, is impacting the future of work and also carries the risk of cyber violence. All of the above present new challenges, but also offer opportunities to address gender inequalities that affect both women and men, albeit often in different ways. The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) provides some insights in this factsheet, from its work on the gender aspects of digitalisation.

Gendered digital path
Self-confidence makes a difference

More than twice as many girls and boys (19.2%) are self-confident enough to use digital technologies to their fully best. The difference lies in their confidence levels but more confidence about their digital skills than girls. For example, 71% of boys aged 15-18 feel comfortable using digital devices that they are less familiar with, compared with 61% of girls in the same age bracket. In countries where young people have a lower level of confidence in their digital skills, like Latvia, Russia and Finland, the confidence gap between women and men is notably wider, reaching as much as 23 percentage points in Finland.

Digital jobs less attractive to women

Jobs well-represented among girls (compared to boys) with lower aspirations of engaging in digital jobs. There are only four EU countries (Belgium, Greece, Malta and Romania) where teenage girls express an interest in working as an information and communications technology (ICT) professional at the age of 16. Even in these countries, the interest is only low (between 1% and 3%). In other EU countries, almost no interest is shown in contrast, between 1% and 13% of teenage boys across the EU express interest in ICT professionals. This shows how strongly gender stereotypes influence subject choices. Last year the top 10 digital occupations and work roles being pursued by graduates ranked by women or men.

High demand for digital professionals — shortage of women

Digital technology, engineering and mathematics (DEM) are the most gender-unequal subjects in the school curriculum. Over the past decade, the percentage of women graduates in DEM subjects in the EU has decreased, from 23% to 22%. The gender distribution remains the same, thanks to the share of women in DEM has remained at 43%, with almost no change over the past decade.

Gendered Digital Path

DIGITAL SKILLS
92%
93%

DIGITAL CONFIDENCE
63%
73%

DIGITAL EDUCATION
Women 17%
Men 8%

The share of women among ICT and engineering graduates in the EU is 17%. Between 2004 and 2013, it declined in 20 Member States.

DIGITAL SPECIALISTS
8 out of 10 ICT jobs go to men
Among 8 million ICT specialists in the EU women make up 17%

IMPLICATIONS

- Reduced gender pay gap
- Unchallenged gender stereotypes
- Gender bias in technology
- Economic loss for the EU

500 000 ICT specialists lacking in the EU by 2020

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violence. All of the above present new challenges, but also offer opportunities to address gender inequalities that affect both women and men, albeit often in different ways. The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) provides some insights in this factsheet, from its work on the gender aspects of digitalisation.

This factsheet is based on the results from the report Study and work in the EU: set apart by gender prepared at the request of the Estonian Presidency (2017); the research note Women and men in ICT: a chance for better work–life balance, prepared at the request of the Bulgarian Presidency (forthcoming 2018); and the report Gender equality and youth: opportunities and risks of digitalisation (forthcoming), prepared at the request of the Austrian Presidency (2018). More information on the data referred to in the text, including exact references can be found in the report.

Downloads



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