

Supporting work life balance to get more women into ICT



Digitalisation provides a unique opportunity for economic growth and the greater inclusion of women in the labour market. The need for STEM and ICT skills is growing in all sectors, from healthcare to manufacturing. With the sector demanding highly skilled employees, women have the chance to enter well-paid jobs with flexible working hours. However, the number of women graduating from STEM courses has remained persistently low in almost all EU countries since 2014. Getting more women into ICT would reduce the persistent gender pay gap in the labour market, which is partly due to a disproportionate amount of women concentrated in modestly paid jobs such as teaching and care-work.



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How to successfully promote gender equality and work-life balance in the ICT sector:

• Forging partnerships

The most successful initiatives to get women into ICT use companies collaborate with a diverse range of partners. These companies worked with universities to enlarge the talent pool of qualified women graduates, as well as with NGOs and service providers to implement work-life balance measures in their organisations. This joined up approach helped businesses both hire and retain women ICT specialists.

• Offering a wide range of services to ensure work-life balance

EIGE's research found that a diverse range of measures to suit the different needs of employees works best. The most effective options to allow work-life balance are telework, flexible work, parent-child office, parent support groups, women networks, and mentoring programmes.

• Fighting unconscious bias and stigma

Organisations identified by EIGE as having good practices had all at some point decided to adapt the culture of their organisation. Changes had been made to ensure that family and care-related leave do not harm the career progression

of employees. Part-time or flexible work options had been introduced to address stigma and bias against parents and carers at work. Senior leaders acted as role models by leaving the office on time and taking holidays as well as family related leave. Companies also checked all communication products for unconscious bias, adjusting both language and image used. Organisations also offered staff training on unconscious bias.

• Normalising parenthood

All of the companies featured in EIGE's examples of good practices had made real efforts to normalise the notion of parenthood within the organisation, from gifts for newborns to celebrating important family milestones and family leave taken at the workplace. Businesses were sending the message that work and parenting can co-exist.

EIGE's project has collected examples of good practices implemented by ICT companies to improve work-life balance in the ICT sector, as well as campaigns to get more women into ICT. These aim to make ICT jobs more attractive to girls and women.

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Downloads



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EN (PDF, 394.71 KB)

Metadata

AUTHOR: EIGE

PUBLISHER: Publications Office of the European Union

ISBN: 978-92-9482-299-4

DOI: 10.2839/904058

KEYWORDS: work-life balance