Women economic participation and ICT in the Mediterranean Region: Constraints and opportunities

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Women active in the ICT sector

• Study prepared for DG CONNECT in 2013

The study aimed at identifying the problems of women in the ICT sector and its causes

FINAL REPORT

A study prepared for the European Commission
DG Communications Networks, Content & Technology
What are we faced with?

- A low number of women working in the sector and the leaky pipeline
- Difficulties for women to reach managerial and decision-making positions in the digital sector
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Female participation in the ICT sector in Europe
Female leaky pipeline in digital jobs

Among those who studied a bachelor degree in ICT fields, the older the women are, the less likely it is that they work in the ICT sector.

Female Leaky Pipeline

- Women less than 30 years: 20% work in IT
- Women 31-45 years: 15.4% work in IT
- Women over 45 years: 9% work in IT
Difficulties of women reaching managerial and decision-making positions

Although this is a general problem in all sectors, the percentage of female bosses in the ICT sector is much smaller than in other non-ICT sectors.
The Gender Payment Gap

Adjusted GPG in the ICT sector is 0%, while in the non-ICT service sector it is 5%.
What is behind this?

1. **Cultural traditions & stereotypes** about women’s role in society

2. **Internal barriers, socio-psychological factors**: lack of self-confidence, lack of bargaining skills, risk-aversion and negative attitudes towards competition

3. **External barriers, ICT sector features strengthening the gender gap**: strongly male dominated environment, complex reconciliation between personal and professional life, and lack of role models in the sector
Women in EU digital sector = GDP boost for Europe

If women participated in the EU digital sector at the same rate as men, the gain for the European GDP each year would be around 9 bn EUR (1.3 times Malta's GDP)
Key priorities for action

Priority 1
Build a renewed image of the sector among women and mainstream society
Create role models through visibility of key women in the sector.

Priority 2
Empower women in the sector
Promote harmonised educational curricula to foster straightforward ICT career paths.

Priority 3
Increase the number of women entrepreneurs in the ICT sector
Improve access to seed and venture capital programmes for women entrepreneurs.

Priority 4
Improve working conditions in the sector
Highlight the improved performance of businesses employing women.
Transversal actions

Transversal action 1

**Improve data availability**
Data is available but not always broken down by gender (women researchers in ICT, female ICT entrepreneurs, women in managerial positions in ICT companies).

Transversal action 2

**Identify and Exchange Best Practices**
Support the most successful existing initiatives and involve men in all actions.
Priorities for action: Change the image of the sector among women and the whole society
Priorities for action: Empower women in the sector

Social stereotypes
Low self-confidence
Poor negotiation skills
Lower leadership ambition
Personal preferences

More flexibility to reconcile family and professional life

No wage differences for women and men in same positions

9% higher salaries than other non-ICT service sectors

Opportunities for women in ICT
Priorities for action: Increase the number of women entrepreneurs in ICTs

Women represent only 19.2% of all entrepreneurs in the ICT sector, while they represent 53.9% of entrepreneurs in the non-ICT service sectors and are 31.1% of all self-employed Europeans.
Priorities for action: Improve working conditions

It is key to highlight the improved performance of businesses employing women in management: **35% higher Return on Equity and 34% better total return to shareholders.**

- Women vs. men in the ICT sector
  - Less satisfied with working conditions
  - Can apply less their ideas
  - More stress
  - More discrimination

- Women in the ICT sector vs. women in other sectors
  - Less satisfied
  - Less motivated
  - Less time to get work done
  - More discrimination
Thank you

No, this is not my boyfriend's computer.