II DonaTIC Barometer Woman in Tech Research in Catalunya 2024

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Executive Summary

This report offers a detailed analysis of female representation in the ICT sector, addressing gender inequalities from a global, European, and Catalan perspective. Its objective is to highlight key challenges and progress made, as well as to propose actions to reverse the current situation.

Global Data on Women in ICT

A nivel global, las mujeres en las TIC representan el 35 % de la fuerza laboral en el sector tecnológico.

- Globally, women represent 35% of the workforce in the technology sector.

- The proportion of women in leadership roles significantly decreases as one moves up the hierarchy. Worldwide, in the ICT field, women only occupy 26.4% of leadership positions. The ICT sector has one of the lowest ratios in terms of gender gap in leadership transitions.

- Only 10% of startup founders are women, although some sources raise this global figure to 15–20% when there is at least one female founder.

- In Europe, startups with at least one female founder account for 15% of startups created, yet in 2023 only 3% of total capital was allocated to all-women teams.

- Only 1 in 50 European unicorns has female representation on the founding team, highlighting the structural marginalization of Women in ICT in high-growth tech companies.

- In Europe, only 19.4% of ICT specialists are women—a figure lower than the global average of 22%.

- 50% of women ICT specialists leave the sector before the age of 35—a significantly higher rate than men.

- Inequality in the ICT sector contributes to the global tech talent shortage. It is estimated that the EU will face a shortage of up to 3.9 million ICT professionals by 2027. Increasing female participation could help reduce this gap and boost GDP.

Data in Catalonia (from the II DonaTIC Barometer Survey):

- 31.88% of people working in the ICT sector in Catalonia are women, below the global 35% average.

- According to IDESCAT, there are 160,500 ICT workers in Catalonia, of whom 51,167 are women.

- In Catalonia, 20.8% of general management positions in tech companies are held by women—a percentage slightly above the average of other sectors (16%).

- 19% of ICT companies have no women on their board of directors. Additionally, in one-third of these companies, female representation on the board is below 25%.

- In Barcelona, 20.8% of startup founders are women, higher than the European average.

- In 2023, only 10% of tech companies in Catalonia achieved gender parity in new hires.

- 26.4% of ICT specialist roles are held by women.

- One in two companies does not promote women at the same rate as their male colleagues. However, 49.5% of companies have promoted at least 40% of their female employees.

- 43.4% of ICT companies acknowledge the existence of pay gaps between women and men in equivalent roles. However, 8 out of 10 survey respondents deny such differences exist.

- 4 out of 10 companies in the tech sector do not have an equality plan. Only 61.6% of ICT companies have developed such a plan.

According to the Department of Education and Vocational Training of the Generalitat de Catalunya:

- Only 17.2% of those enrolled in ICT university degrees in Catalonia are women. This figure has improved from 9.6% in 2015–2016.

- 12.66% of ICT degree graduates are women.

- Only 5.49% of women enrolled in Computer Science are the first generation in their families to pursue an ICT degree, compared to 26.92% of men.

- Women represent 12.2% of those enrolled in intermediate and higher vocational training programs in ICT.

Recommendations from the II DonaTIC Barometer

Recommendations for the ICT Business Sector in Catalonia

- Diversify recruitment profiles: Incorporate talent from non-university pathways such as vocational training, bootcamps, and alternative tech schools to increase the presence of women in ICT.

- Corporate transparency: Implement accountability mechanisms for salaries and promotions to reduce the gender gap in the sector.

- Objective performance evaluations: Adopt clear, measurable criteria to avoid gender bias in internal promotions.

- Sex-disaggregated data monitoring: Collect and analyze data on recruitment, promotions, and salaries to detect inequalities and implement improvements.

- Equality plans and diversity policies: Ensure all ICT companies develop concrete strategies to reduce the gender gap and promote diversity.

- Collaboration with training initiatives: Partner with educational centers and training programs to ensure skills are aligned with the sector's needs.

- Foster inclusive work environments: Implement work-life balance measures, equality training, and actions to eliminate structural barriers within companies.

Recommendations for Public Administrations

- Digital training for primary and secondary school teachers: Develop training programs to ensure teachers have the necessary tools to teach digital and tech skills from early ages, countering social and cultural biases.

- Integrate computational thinking into school curricula: Make computational thinking and programming mandatory in education to ensure all students acquire basic digital skills.

- Emergency plan for primary and secondary education: Promote the inclusion of female role models in learning materials and encourage schools to review and remove gender-stereotyped content from STEM and ICT subjects.

- Specific actions for vocational training: Provide scholarships for girls, launch communication campaigns, and monitor female presence in ICT training programs.

- Increase university seats in ICT degrees: Adjust the educational offer to meet demand for tech professionals and encourage women to pursue technological careers.

- Monitor gender parity in ICT access: Collect and analyze data to ensure education policies have a tangible impact.

- Personalized guidance programs: Identify female talent in high school and vocational training to facilitate their transition to ICT studies.

- Awareness campaigns to break gender stereotypes: Implement media and digital platform campaigns to foster diversity in the tech field.

- Institutional and corporate collaboration: Build alliances between governments, universities, and companies to promote a more inclusive and diverse ICT ecosystem.

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