



PRESS RELEASE

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“Digital Revolution in Pink!”

As the ‘digital tsunami’ is bringing new and transforming waves in our daily, social and professional lives, the demand for digital skills is rapidly growing. In Europe alone, 900,000 jobs in the ICT field are projected to be vacant by 2020. Moreover, employers in the private and public are demanding diversity in creativity and cross-disciplinary competences on a higher and wider level. However, in today’s workforce, gender related diversity is totally unbalanced, the digital industry being predominantly male. Why is this so? Why do women constitute only 20 percent of this workforce? Why is female talent hidden and wasted when there is a continuous job hunt for talent today ?

Today, only 29 percent of 1,000 women in the EU have an ICT related degree and only 4 of them stay in the digital industry (compared to 95 men per 1,000 men). These numbers diminish annually. Additionally, women leave the tech sector early to mid-career more frequently than men, and much more so than in other industry sectors. The percentage of women in leadership roles is also disappointing. In the EU, only 19.2% of ICT-sector workers have female bosses, compared to 45.2% of non-ICT workers. Only 9 percent of women over 45 with ICT-related degrees remain in the sector. All these alarming facts should be taken seriously by decision makers in the Digital Economy.

Challenges in economic opportunities for women are significant. According to the OECD report: “Women are the most underutilized economic asset in the world’s economy”. The McKinsey study¹ argues that if women reached parity with men in the workforce, it would add up to \$28 trillion, or 26 percent, to annual global GDP in 2025 compared with a business-as-usual scenario. The latest ‘EU survey on women active in the ICT sector’² indicates that bringing more women into the EU digital sector would bring about a €9 billion annual GDP boost. There is compelling evidence that women can be powerful drivers of economic growth worldwide and in Europe in particular.

“This is not a problem, but it’s rather a UNIQUE opportunity for including and empowering women in the Digital Economy. It is a matter of strengthening and reinforcing the confidence and motivation of girls and women to adopt more e-Skills and go for a career in STEM.

¹ http://www.mckinsey.com/insights/growth/how_advancing_womens_equality_can_add_12_trillion_to_global_growth

² http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-905_en.htm

According to ECWT Director Eva Fabry: “ECWT has been from the start in 2010 actively participating in the European Commission’s **e-Skills for Jobs** Initiative. Currently, the ECWT is taking a liberty to show its commitment and responsibility in this domain by starting a new tradition in Europe, bringing together the present and next generations of female, tech talents with the goal to promote women’s careers in STEM, and measurably increase the number of them choosing STEM careers while contributing to bringing forward the Digital Single Market and the economic competitiveness of Europe”.

The **1st European Celebration of Women in Computing** took place **25-26 April 2016** in Brussels. This year’s event was a flagship event at *e-skills for Jobs 2016 campaign* in which 16 leading global IT and telecom companies, one U.S. and two European universities and 10 leading global and European NGOs joined the event as partners.

The European Celebration of Women in Computing (ECWC) event is modeled on the Grace Hopper Celebrations in the U.S. that started with 800 participants fifteen years ago, attracting, last year, almost 13 thousands girls.

The **European Celebration of Women in Computing** will be organized by the ECWT annually, on a rotating basis around Europe.

This year’s event, the **1st European Celebration of Women in Computing**, brought together over 350 female tech talents starting their tech careers and 150 leading businesses and research representatives, providing them with opportunities for networking, getting inspired by incredible career paths, learning leadership skills, finding role models, understanding the gender dimension in innovation and presenting their own tech innovations, with the goal of going for a tech career.

The two-day event combined a Career Fair with 50 interactive workshops, presentations and plenary sessions – all embedded into the Ada. Ada.Ada Salon and a magical experience, organization by Zoe Philpott Design production, along with Zoe Philpott’s magnificent portrayal of Ada Lovelace, Mathematician and Lord Byron’s daughter. Yesterday evening was transformed through music, storytelling, creative direction, design, and Victorian food and drinks. The guests were touched by the inspirational, educational and entertaining 19th Century Salon atmosphere, hosted by Ada Lovelace and presented by Zoe Philpott, the guest actress from the UK.

On this occasion, the 25th of April the ECWT launched and announced the winners of the three [new European Awards](#) in recognition of the significant contribution of women in Computing:

Ada Lovelace Computing Excellence Award –

Valentina Dagiene, Professor of Vilnius University, Founder of BEBRAS, Lithuania

ECWC Social Impact Award:

Nino Nanitashvili, Lead Advisor, Elva Community Engagement, Georgia

CWC Emerging Leader Award:

Marija Herceg, Researcher, University of Dzemal Bijedic, Bosnia Herzegovina

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#WinC2016

#WomenInTech

www.womenincomputing.eu

About ECWT

The European Centre for Women and Technology (ECWT) is a European multi-stakeholder partnership of more than 130 organizations and a rapidly growing digital community members network in 28 European countries, representing high-level expertise in women and technology development from government, business, academia and non-profit sectors working together to measurably and significantly increase the number of girls and women in technology and ICT in specific. ECWT is today the leading European level platform for ensuring the gender dimension of the Digital Agenda through finding ways and means for measurably and significantly increasing the number of girls and women in STEM. ECWT helps organizations to find the best talents and helps girls and women to match their career lifecycles with industries needs through providing a community of excellence, leveraging resources and research, presenting and rolling out best practices, innovative actions and services and benchmarking and measuring impact. The European Centre for Women and Technology is a European non-profit organization registered in Norway.

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