

Generation Equality Forum: Recruitment in tech today: Gender stereotypes and the impact on young people A play by the Generation Connect Europe Youth Group

Main outcomes and recommendations:

- During the play, speakers emphasized on gender stereotypes as one of the root causes of low participation of women and girls in the ICT sector, which is in many cases still highly male dominated.
- The session pointed to challenges ranging from cultural norms and biases, lack of self-confidence, online and offline harassment, which all hinder girls and women's full participation in STEAM education, and, subsequently, limit their opportunity to occupy tech-related job positions.
- The shortage of qualified talent in the ICT industry was also underlined, as outdated teaching methods lead to a mismatch between academic skills and real-world industry needs. This has particular implications for women, less likely to apply for high tech positions without prior practical experience and knowledge. Investigating and fixing the "leaky pipeline" of women leaving technology is key both for promoting gender equality, as well as for ensuring growth of national economies.
- The play emphasized that a starting point to overcome gender stereotypes in ICT companies' recruitment processes is to avoid labelling educational major or field of study. With the proper mentorship, everyone, independently of its gender, should be free to choose a field of study of its passion and subsequently pursue a career in the related sector.
- Speakers also convey that recruiter of tech companies should avoid running a pre-evaluation based on age and gender in order to attract a various and mixed pool of talented candidates who have the potential to contribute to the company's activities.
- Finally, in line with ITU-UN Women joint report "[Digitally Empowered Generation Equality: Women, Girls and ICT in the context of Covid-19 in selected Western Balkan and Eastern Partnership Countries](#)" the following recommendations were shared to foster women and girls' participation in the ICT sector: support extra-curricular STEM enrichment programs for girls; train teachers in digital literacy and competence to ensure effective use of technologies in schools; collect precise gender-disaggregated data within the ICT industry; conduct ICT accessibility national assessments with a precise focus on the status of digital inclusion of women and girls in ICTs; upskill and retrain women to work in ICT; institute gender-sensitive recruiting efforts to encourage more women applications in ICT companies.