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Make the digital single market inclusive!



The Juncker Commission placed the completion of the Digital Single Market (DSM) as one of its ten priorities. However, the current approach of the European Commission is way too narrow. It neglects the vast potential that digitalisation can have for a more participatory, inclusive and equal society. We are faced with a severe gender gap within the digital sector: Only 9% of developers in the EU are women, women represent only 19.2% of entrepreneurs in the digital sector and only 30% of the workforce is female.

With the report on "Gender equality and empowering women in the digital age", we want to send a clear signal towards the Commission and the Member States: A single digital market needs to be inclusive! We need to break persisting stereotypes about girls and tech. Education curriculums need to include coding and new media from an early stage; we need to make women in ICT visible and implement targeted mentoring programmes.

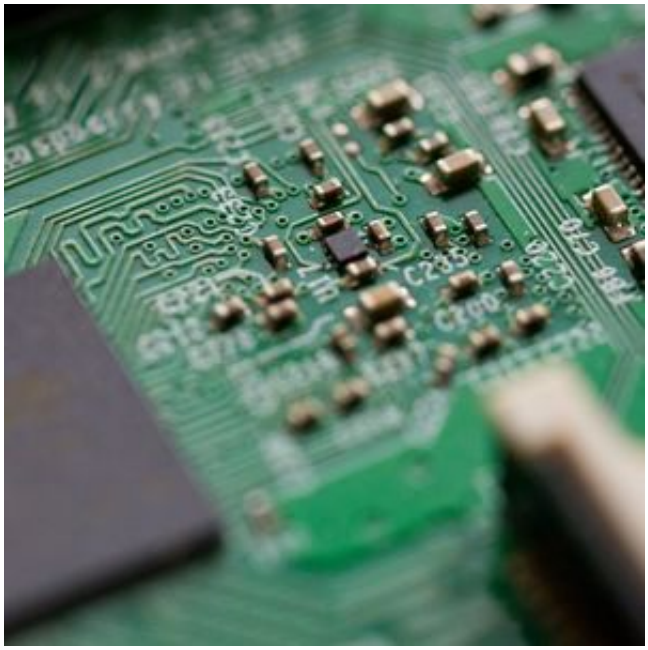
In order for Europe to remain at the forefront of innovation, we need a strong political commitment to tackle the gender imbalance in the ICT sector. The report highlights the importance of making funds available for female entrepreneurs to create ICT-related businesses and digital start-ups. The Commission can make an important difference here by setting up targeted support programmes in cooperation with the European Investment Bank.

Finally, there is a strong business case for tackling the gender gap: Equal participation of women in the ICT sector would lead to a gain of around 9 billion Euros in GDP each year. Opportunities are numerous and time is overdue – it is now on the Commission to put gender equality on all its memo pads, and women and girls at the centre of the Digital Agenda.

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