

Digital Transition and Why It Matters





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Digital technologies present enormous growth potential for economy in the world.

Digital technology is changing people's lives. It is an opportunity for increase business and economy benefits. The European Union aims to realize a Europe fit for the digital age, by empowering people, businesses and administrations with a new generation of technologies, where the digital transformation that will benefit everyone.

The European Union has elaborated a EU's digital strategy that aims to make this technological transformation work for people and businesses, while helping to achieve its target of a climate-neutral Europe by 2050.

Digital technologies will have a profound impact on our way of living and doing business in the next future. They will have a strong impact on labour market and economy.



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The digital transformation provides new avenues for the economic empowerment of women and can contribute to greater gender equality.

The Internet, digital platforms, mobile phones and digital financial services offer “leapfrog” opportunities for all and can help bridge the divide by giving women the possibility to earn additional income, increase their employment opportunities, and access knowledge and general information.

Internet and the technologies can be an opportunity for reducing the gender gap in the economy.

As we know, at the moment, the women are under-represented in ICT jobs, top management and academic careers and men are four times more likely than women to be ICT specialists.

At 15 years of age, on average, only 0.5% of girls wish to become ICT professionals, compared to 5% of boys.

Women-owned start-ups receive 23% less funding and are 30% less likely to have a positive exit compared to male-owned businesses.



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Since 2010, the Digital Agenda for Europe has sought to harness the power of technology to drive the EU's economic growth for the benefit of all European citizens. Yet women continue to find themselves at a disadvantage when it comes to acquiring digital skills and entering the digital labour market. This has resulted in an EU-wide skills deficit and slow growth in this sector.

The European digital transition and the new digital job opportunities can offer the possibility to break the digital divide among women and men.

Europe's digital transition is one of the goals of the European Green Deal.

During the Digital Decade, Europe aims to face two important challenges: the green transition and the digital transition.

These might seem like two distinct issues, but really, they are twin challenges: neither can succeed without the other. And, they are both equally important for Europe's future.



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The European Commission has adopted the Digital Europe Programme Work Programme for 2023-2024 (two multiannual work programmes).

These work programmes include strategic investments that will be instrumental in making this Europe's Digital Decade. The Digital Europe Programme aims to bolster Europe's technological sovereignty and bring digital solutions to market for the benefit of citizens, public administrations, and businesses while contributing to the objectives of the European Green Deal

These programme aims to reinforce EU critical digital capacities by focusing on the key areas of climate and environment protection technology, data, AI, cloud, cybersecurity, advanced digital skills, and deployment for the best use of these technologies.

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The European Union, after the pandemic crisis, has allocated A significant portion of the Next Generation EU funding to sustain a digitally focused growth strategy. This EU strategy can increase its equitability by introducing innovations that enhance citizens' welfare and support economic resilience.

EU priorities are addressed to:

- ❑ Building a real data-driven economy as a catalyst for innovation and job creation
- ❑ Supporting improved connectivity and deploying cutting edge and resilient digital infrastructures (e.g. 5G)
- ❑ Enhancing the digitalization and innovation of Public Administration (including judicial and healthcare system)
- ❑ Favouring the digital transition of enterprises
- ❑ Improving capabilities in crucial sectors leveraging digital capabilities (e.g. AI, cloud and cybersecurity)
- ❑ Adapting the education systems to support digital skills and facilitating reskill and upskill.



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The global COVID-19 pandemic crisis has accelerated the rate of digital transformation. While initially to accommodate the “new normal” of a nearly all-digital world, businesses and public sector are quickly learning that this “new normal” has shifted to an ongoing normal.

Citizens, workers and in particular unemployed are not ready to manage this new challenge. As reported in the Digital Economy and Society index (DESI) report analysis 2022 done for the European Commission, report based mainly on 2021 data and tracks the progress made in EU Member States in digital, the digital gap among woman and men is still high in the different member States.

In this report the Women in Digital Scoreboard assesses Member States' performance in the areas of internet use, internet user skills, specialist skills and employment based on 12 indicators. The Commission's 2021 Women in Digital Scoreboard confirms that there is still a substantial gender gap in specialist digital skills. Only 19% of ICT specialists and about one third of science, technology, engineering and mathematics graduates are female.



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There is no progress, as these figures have been stable over the last few years. The Digital Compass has set the target that the EU should have 20 million employed ICT specialists, with convergence between women and men, by 2030.

As reported in the document of European Parliament 2022 “Report on closing the digital gender gap: women’s participation in the digital economy” in the last year in EU there is a significant gender gap remains in specialist digital skills, though the gap is closing in internet user skills.

Digitalisation fundamentally changed our lives, creating new opportunities but also multiple challenges.

Equal labour market opportunities and treatment at work, and striving for gender balance in the digital sector, is utmost important not only the EU’s economy, expressed for example in terms of GDP growth, but also as a matter of plain justice for all the talented women and girls choosing a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) career path.



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As written in a recent study commissioned by the European Parliament's Policy Department for Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs, at the request of the FEMM Committee, biases and inequalities persist in STEM fields and the digital sector (e.g., digital technologies, Computer Science, Information Technology, Information and Communication Technology, Artificial Intelligence, cybersecurity).

The digital transition is the most important challenges of the future of economy in the European Union and in all member countries. So it is crucial to learn and to acquire new digital competences for became more competitive and in line with the needs of labour market in Europe. To acquire digital skills became crucial for women that have still a digital divide against the men in the STEM and in the future professions.

In these future scenarios it is strategic to reskill the competences for the labor market and to reduce the gender gap in the ITC and STEM skills.

The digital transition is the most important challenges for the future in Europe and in the world and it is the bridge among the actual economy and the economy of the future.



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What is in concrete the digital transition?

Digital transformation is the integration of digital technologies by companies and the impact of the technologies on society.

The most important tools of the digital transaction are the digital platforms, the Internet of Things, cloud computing and artificial intelligence, these tools are among the technologies affecting most of economy sectors as transport, energy, agri-food, telecommunications, financial services, factory production and health care.

Technologies could help to optimise production, reduce emissions and waste, boost companies' competitive advantages and bring new services and products to consumers.

These digital tools can have an strong impact on the future of economy. Boosting digitalisation brings many benefits to society.



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Artificial intelligence (AI) could benefit people by improving health care, making cars safer and enabling tailored services.

It can improve production processes and bring a competitive advantage to European businesses, including in sectors where EU companies already enjoy strong positions, such as the green and circular economy, machinery, farming and tourism.

For having a strong impact on the economy the digital transition needs to reduce the digital gap by improving the digital skills.

During the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, more public and private services have become digital. This requires digital skills and secure and reliable digital identification systems.



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The digital transition will be reshaping the world economy, the life of citizens, the business and the labor market that will require new skills and competences. The digital transition can be an opportunity for improving the gender equality in the economy but it is necessary to improve the participation of women in the Technologic and STEM education.

Women's participation in the digital sphere is therefore not just a matter of gender equality – it is a prerequisite for sustainable development.

THANKS FOR ATTENTION

