



<https://ufmsecretariat.org/event/webinar-international-womens-day-digitall/>

7 March 2023 - 11:00 13:00 CET

Online event

Background

The theme chosen for International Women's Day, 8 March 2023 (IWD 2023) is, "DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality". This theme aligns itself with the priority theme chosen for the upcoming 67th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW-67), "Innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls".

IWD 2023 will explore the impact of the digital gender gap on widening economic and social inequalities.

Innovation and digital tools provide opportunities for greater access to information, education and skills and open possibilities for increased employment and business opportunities. They allow for services that improve access to health, legal and financial services and allow traders to access global markets for their products.

However, while the digital revolution carries with it immense potential to improve social and economic outcomes for women, it also poses the risk of perpetuating existing patterns of gender inequality.

Despite recent improvements, a large gender gap continues in technology and innovation,. Women and girls are underrepresented in industries, academia and the broader technology sector. As the UN Women's Gender Snapshot 2022 report ¹reveals, globally, women hold only 2 in every 10 science, engineering and information and communication technology jobs. At the 20 largest global technology companies, women are 33 per cent of the workforce in 2022 but hold only one in four leadership positions. Women inventors make up only 16.5 per cent of inventors listed on international patent applications globally.

It is currently estimated that female workers make up 26% of all workers in Data and Artificial Intelligence roles, 15 per cent of workers in Engineering roles and 12% of workers in Cloud Computing roles².

At the current pace, it will be only in 2080 until women are involved in half of all patented inventions within the five largest Intellectual property offices. Lack of digital and technological inclusion comes indeed with massive cost. Women's exclusion from the digital world has shaved \$1 trillion from the gross domestic

¹ UN Women, PROGRESS ON THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS THE GENDER SNAPSHOT 2022

² McKinsey Global Institute, 'The future of women at work: Transitions in the age of automation', MGI, Washington DC, June 2019.



product of low- and middle-income countries in the last decade alone—a loss that will grow to \$1.5 trillion by 2025 unless concrete action is taken³.

The gap in digital skills can also exacerbate inequalities in the world of work more broadly. The future of work and trade in goods and services will be increasingly digitalized, marginalizing those who do not have the necessary skills or access to the most recent technologies and digital platforms. Conversely, narrowing the gender gap in digital skills could contribute to narrowing the gender wage gap by providing access for women to higher skilled ICT-related roles.

As entrepreneurs, women can largely benefit from E-commerce. This provides them with opportunities to gain access to new markets and greater profits, especially in the developing world. In a context of increasing globalization, lack of access or insufficient skills to enter the digital marketplace as well as lack of access to finance are growing hurdles for women entrepreneurs and women-led SMEs. The increased digitalization of products and services can also perpetuate inequalities. While the **Fourth Industrial Revolution** (or “**Industry 4.0**”) is unleashing a new era of economic disruption in the labour market and the manufacturing industry, women are at risk of being further excluded. Digital transformation and the fundamental change in the technological environment captured by the industry 4.0 concept, is having, in fact, a profound impact on the content and nature of jobs and, as a result, on the skills required to perform them.

In addition to impacting opportunities for education and employment, the digitalization of social services such as pensions and benefits, although potentially increasing accessibility for some and improving efficiency and transparency, can also exclude those without access to the internet or digital skills.

Objectives of the meeting

The event aims to raise awareness on the gendered impacts of innovation and technology, as well as on the interventions that are needed to address them.

More specifically, the event will offer the opportunity to have an exchange on :

- *How to ensure that we leave no-one behind from the digital transformation, looking at the future of work in the digital economy and the under-representation of women in key emerging technological sectors.*
- *How to create a gender-transformative innovation ecosystem, by not only attracting, but also retaining and promoting women in STEM careers.*
- *How to ensure that technology and innovation responses to the needs of women and girls are inclusive and accessible, including in sectors that are relevant to the SDGs – for instance digital technologies to support financial inclusion for women among many others.*
- *Recommendations on how to better mainstream gender in digital policies and investments – both public and private*

³ UN Women, PROGRESS ON THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS THE GENDER SNAPSHOT 2022



Agenda

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Time

11:00 – 11:15	<p>Opening remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>UfM priorities on Digitalization and Technology for Gender Equality, Amb. John Paul Grech, Deputy Secretary General, Social and Civil Affairs Division- Union for the Mediterranean</i> • <i>Keynote speaker: UNIDO Women in industry 4.0, Ms Neila Amara, International Project Manager on Gender at UNIDO</i>
11:15 – 13:00	<p>Round table : Potential synergies among good practices and upcoming initiatives in the Euro-Med region will be presented and discussed by the panelists (regional and national experts)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tech entrepreneurship (Ms Ayah EL-Arief, K12 Edtech Entrepreneur MENA WBC Ambassador, Egypt) 2. Women in AI (Ms Zohra Slim, Co-Founder Instadeep, Tunisia) 3. Ouissal Programme (Ms Clara Guitrooy, Secretary General Euro-Mediterranean-Arab Association) 4. Digital Platforms (Ms Chiraz Bensemmane, Entrepreneur Founder, coachtribe.co, Algeria) 5. Women in STEM (Ms Anastasia Zabaniotou, President RMEI, Network of Mediterranean Engineering Schools) 6. Med Women in Tech Network (Ms Sana Afaouiz, Founder and Director Womenpreneur, Mena Region) 7. Al-Kawa EU Regional Programme for Digital and Financial inclusion (Ms Anne-France Wittmann, Policy Officer, DG NEAR) 8. Gender Lens in Fintech (Mr Christophe MALHERBE, Team leader EU-funded MED MSMEs Regional Programme)
13.00 – 13:15	<p>Q&A and Closing remarks</p>

Simultaneous translation in Arabic, English and French will be provided throughout the meeting.