

BUILDING THE FUTURE HUB OF WOMEN IN TECH



How to facilitate women enablement in tech in the CEE region to make it the next power hub in Europe?

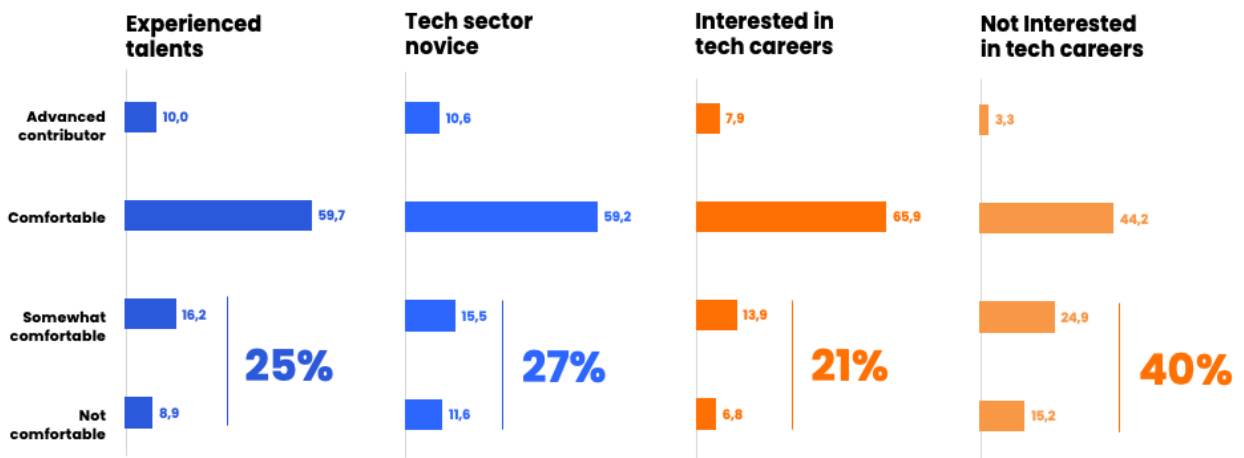
INTRO

The objective of this research was to pinpoint the key gaps and obstacles that deter women from participating in the technology sector and to outline strategies for empowering women at various stages of tech labor market maturity.

A comprehensive quantitative survey of 5475 respondents was conducted across 13 countries, targeting women at different points in their tech careers: those with existing experience in the sector as well as those who are either at the outset of their tech careers or are contemplating entering the field. In addition, results and insights were deepened with 40 international experts.

TECH SKILLS SELF-EVALUATION

There is a considerable gap between how women who have different relation to the tech industry self-reflect on their tech-related skills. The alarming number of general women audience report lack of confidence in their skills and this percentage becomes twice smaller in a group of women who are interested in tech career.



PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE SOURCES:

38%

Of all respondents haven't participated in any of tech skills related activities

62%

Of all respondents have tried more than one type of tech skills related activities

COUNTRIES WITH BIGGEST PARTICIPATION



78%



69%



68%

Top participation of fresh talents:

- 01: Online upskilling courses
- 02: Coding and tech training schools
- 03: A career in tech sector guidance
- 04: Workshops for women in tech sector
- 05: Mentorship

Top participation of experienced talents:

- 01: Online upskilling courses
- 02: Coding and tech training schools
- 03: Mentorship
- 04: A career in tech sector guidance
- 05: Internships or apprenticeships in tech companies

With support from:



TALENT GOALS:

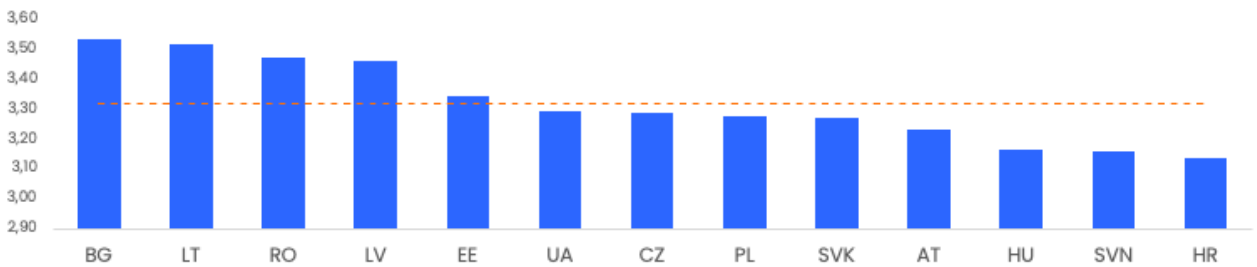
Expressed specialist ambition

Both fresh tech talents who are just starting their career as well as women with more experience mostly have specialist career ambition which should come with clear progression ladder and compensation.

Lower entrepreneurial ambition

Women who participated in the research show low entrepreneurial ambition. Even though in the short term, they want to gain the skills needed to start their business, they show low interest in building their products or tech business in the long run.

COUNTRY READINESS TO ENABLE WOMEN IN TECH:



All CEE region country respondents reported there is a lack of government investments to attract women to the tech sector.

Respondents from Czech, Hungary, and Croatia also reported not seeing a positive change in the last 5 years in their countries tech sectors.

Bulgarian, Lithuanian, Romanian, and Latvian respondents evaluated all other areas positively.

Many other CEE countries' respondents as areas for improvement identified: still existing women stereotypes, number of quality tech jobs, students preparation for tech careers, programs and initiatives supporting women's tech education and networking opportunities.

TECH SECTOR EVALUATION

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Equal pay is evaluated as the most critical factor that needs the biggest change, especially by experienced talents who have climbed the career ladder.

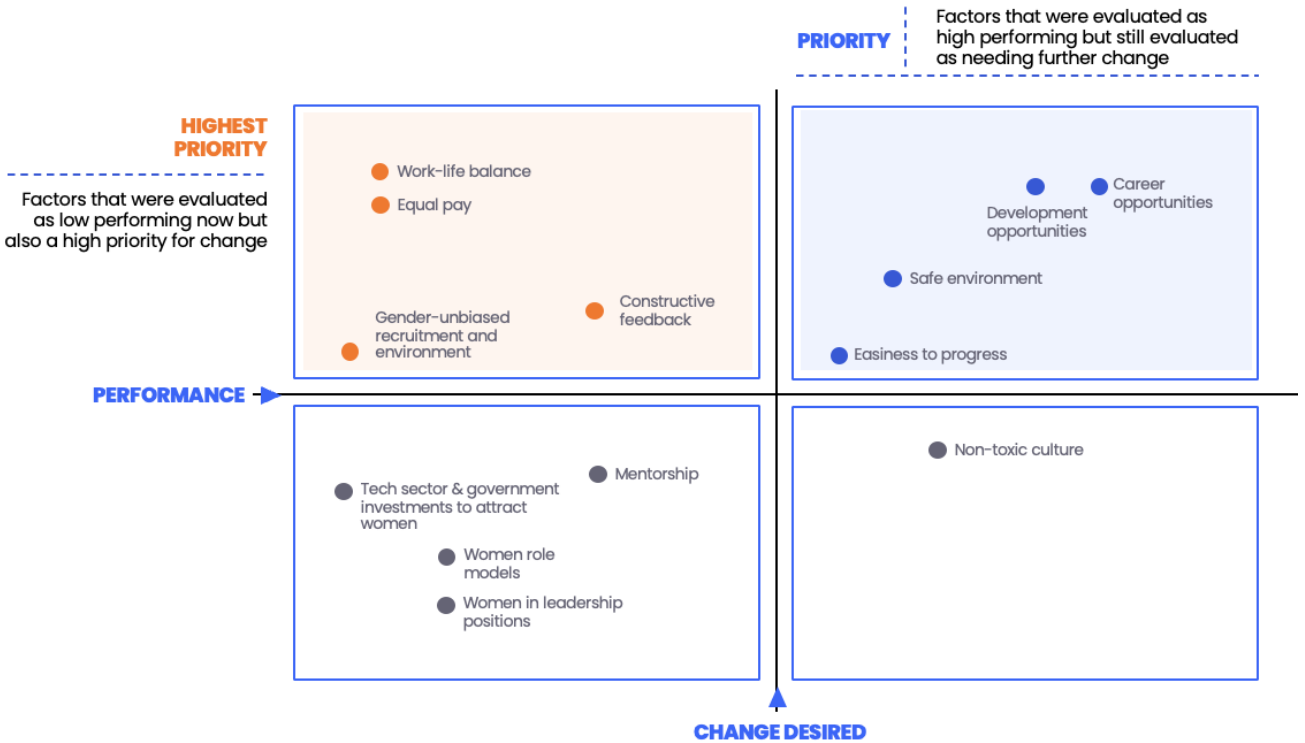
Women in tech face a consistent **lack of quality job opportunities** and career advancement, a challenge present from the start to the end of their careers. This perception that the tech sector lacks suitable roles for women might discourage them from entering the field. Addressing this issue is vital for creating an inclusive and equitable tech industry, where women are encouraged to succeed and lead.

Women continue to perceive the tech sector's work environment as not entirely free from **harassment**, feeling it is not completely safe for them. This highlights an urgent need for the industry to foster a more secure and respectful workplace, ensuring it is welcoming and safe for all employees.

The survey consistently highlighted **work-life balance** as a significant obstacle, with women particularly struggling to reconcile their personal responsibilities with the demands of careers in technology. This challenge underscores the need for more flexible and supportive workplace policies to accommodate the diverse life situations of individuals in the tech sector.

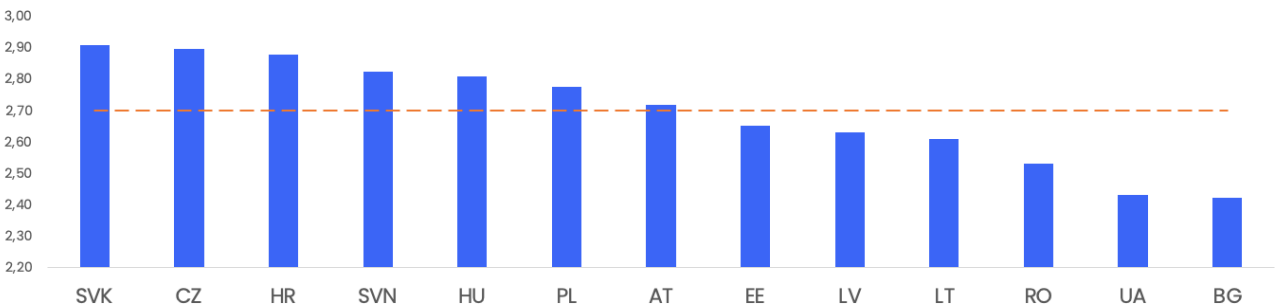
FACTORS PERFORMANCE AND IMPORTANCE

Factors that influence women’s experience entering or progressing in the tech sector performance and importance evaluation



BARRIERS FOR WOMEN TO ENTER AND SUCCEED IN TECH

Average per country, scale 1-5



UNIVERSAL BARRIERS FOR ALL CEE COUNTRIES:

Belief that it is harder for older women to succeed in the tech sector than for young women

Fewer opportunities to engage in technology-related activities and learn about technologies compared to men

A challenge to have a good work-life balance in the tech sector

COUNTRY SPECIFIC BARRIERS:

In Slovakia, Czech, Croatia, Slovenia, Hungary, Poland, Austria, Estonia, and Latvia women also believe that is harder for women to succeed in the tech sector than for men.

Croatian and Slovenian women also believe that stereotypes about women’s incapability to work in the tech sector are true.

KEY MOTIVATIONS TO JOIN TECH SECTOR

Experienced talents:

- Pursuing better pay
- Seeking work flexibility
- Seeking career growth opp
- Passion for technology
- Seeking work-life balance

Fresh talents:

- Pursuing better pay
- Seeking work-life balance
- Seeking work flexibility
- Seeking career growth opp
- Seeking remote work opp

Both experienced and fresh talents have indicated better pay as the main motivation for joining tech sector. However, difference is observed in later selection of motives. Fresh talents are more driven by work-life balance and work flexibility, whereas experienced talents were more motivated by career growth opportunities.

Rise of existing motive for work-life balance and flexibility among Fresh talents is followed by increase in motivation by remote work opportunities. This likely is a consequence of COVID-19 and extensive period of work from home culture. Which fresh talents have experienced first-hand in consideration stage. Whereas most of experienced talents were already in tech sector.

THE HIGHEST DESIRES ARE NOT FULFILED



Better compensation emerged as the primary motivator for women to enter the tech sector, yet the persistence of pay inequality remains a significant concern. Additionally, while work flexibility and work-life balance were identified as the second most important incentives, the reality falls short of expectations, with many women in tech reporting a lack of these very elements in their roles. This discrepancy between initial motivations and actual experiences may dampen women's enthusiasm for the tech field, potentially affecting their willingness to mentor and inspire others to join the industry.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

A JOURNEY IN PROGRESS

From the first glance, the tech industry seems to have made a fair amount of progress in being welcoming and accessible to women talent, however, a closer look reveals some further obstacles to career progression as well as deeper attitudes and perceptions that might diminish talent chances of achieving their full potential in tech.

SELF-EVALUATION

There is a considerable gap between how women who have different relationships to the tech industry self-reflect on their tech-related skills. An alarming number of general female audience reports lack of confidence in their skills, and this percentage becomes twice smaller in the group of women who are interested in a tech career.

1/4 cross both experienced and fresh talent groups do not feel entirely comfortable regarding general technology usage.

HIDDEN ATTITUDES

There is evidence that even though the tech sector work environment is considered safe and welcoming, stereotypes in workplace might result in self-doubt and influence perceived chances of further career success.

The perceived difficulties in achieving work and life balance and succeeding as an older employee is related to perception that men have more career opportunities than women do. These two areas can be focused on in order to improve the attitudes and realities of women progressing in a tech company.

MENTORSHIP IMPORTANCE

While many women engage in tech skills-related activities like online courses and coding schools, career advancement in the tech sector still has room for growth. Though development opportunities exist, there's a clear lack of mentorship programs tailored to women, and regular constructive feedback is often missing. Experts emphasize mentorship and sponsorship as key for career growth, yet these opportunities are rare for women, highlighting the need for stronger support from management and colleagues to promote inclusivity and advancement in the sector.

NEXT PRIORITIES

Career progression is an area that is generally evaluated positively, but it is also seen as one of the areas where additional focus and change would be welcome.

There is a generally positive sentiment regarding tech sector work environment, but there is a lack of measures that allow women to smoothly progress with their careers.

CHANGE OF PRIORITIES

Women have short-term plans to gain experience on how to build a tech business, but a reduced number of participants show long-term eagerness to build a product or create a business with experienced talent being more discouraged than fresh to pursue these goals.

WHO SHOULD ACT?

There is a general consensus that governments should do a lot more to attract more women to the tech sector as the educational opportunities are already in place yet women still indicate there is not enough quality job opportunities and there is still a raising issue of unequal pay.

Tech sector experience of the Ukrainian in exile

Key insights how Ukrainian women, amidst the challenges of war, are integrating into the value-added sector, focusing on opportunities for economic empowerment and overcoming barriers to participation.

BARRIERS TO PROFESSIONAL INTEGRATION

Language: Local language proficiency often limits job opportunities and workplace integration.

Diplomas and Certificates: Many host countries prioritize formal qualifications over practical experience.

Workplace Communication: Differences in communication styles create challenges in team integration and performance evaluation.

Immigration Processes: Bureaucratic hurdles delay career progression, particularly for those with family responsibilities.

Biases: Expats face biases related to nationality, gender, and age, though less severe than in Ukraine.

SUPPORT SYSTEM

Corporate Support: Some companies offer relocation assistance, accommodation, and professional development.

Professional Networks: Platforms like Telegram help expats navigate job searches and build connections.

Mentorship Programs: Initiatives like Lithuania's "Women Go Tech" guide expats in career advancement.

Government Aid: Language courses and streamlined immigration processes ease integration.

COMPARISON OF PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES

Job Postings: Inclusive job requirements in countries like Sweden contrast with rigid expectations in Ukraine.

Gender Inclusion: Host countries often provide more opportunities for women in leadership and technical roles.

Work-Life Balance: Flexibility in countries like Sweden is a stark contrast to Ukraine's fast-paced work culture.

Impact of War: Increased hiring of women in Ukraine due to men being at risk of conscription, though with persistent pay disparities.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Expand mentorship programs for professional integration
- Provide comprehensive language and cultural training
- Strengthen professional networking opportunities
- Implement gender-balancing initiatives in tech workplaces
- Create stronger connections between academia and industry

Despite challenges, Ukrainian female expats exhibit resilience in building professional lives abroad. Improved support systems, inclusive policies, and mentorship opportunities can further enhance their integration and contributions to the tech sector globally.

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