

Gender Dialogue Table

The benefits of gender diversity in the tech industry

Tuesday 5, June. 14.00 – 17.30 hrs.

It is hardly news that there is a persistent gender gap in the tech industry. The 2016 World Economic Forum “Future of Jobs” report indicated that in the mobility sector, only 19% of employees were women and in the ICT sector overall, women comprised 24% of the workforce.

The glass ceiling is also a reality: according to Women 20 (W20), the official engagement group of the G20 advocating for gender equality, only 21% of leadership positions in the technology industry are held by women. The emergence and growth of new fields such as artificial intelligence seems likely to deepen gender gaps. The Global Gender Gap Report 2018 revealed that only 22% of AI professionals globally are female, compared to 78% who are male. This accounts for a gender gap of 72% yet to close.

What is now being disclosed and analyzed is that gender inequality is not only bad for women; it is also bad for business. Organisations with a diverse workforce deliver better results than those that do not encourage diversity. According to Credit Suisse (2016), companies where women make up more than 15% of the executive team have been 50% more profitable than companies where women make up less than 10%. UN and McKinsey’s findings reveal similar trends: firms with diversity at senior management levels perform better in all dimensions of organisational effectiveness.

The central question of this new dialogue table will be: Why do women remain underrepresented in the tech industry? In events and conferences, it is very common to see all male panels, particularly in high-level discussions.

Bridging the gender gap in the tech industry is not easy. A gender diverse workforce is not only achieved through hiring more women, it requires office environments where women feel welcome and respected, and that is a matter of culture and education. In order to create gender parity and diversity, we need a multidimensional approach that includes:

- Education and public policies that promote gender equality
- Business organisations that create the right environment and promote a culture that does not penalise women.
- Women learning to believe in themselves and be more assertive.

Moderator: Paula Ferrari, Regional Marketing Director, GSMA Latin America

Speakers:

- Elena Estavillo, CONECTADAS, President and Associated Director, AEQUUM
- Marta Vegas, Gerente de Relaciones Institucionales y Negocio Responsable, Telefónica
- Catalina Irurita, VP de Marketing, Comunicaciones y Relaciones Corporativas, Ericsson
- Ana Valero, Directora de Regulación para Latinoamérica, Telefónica