# The tech industry needs more gender diversity - here's why

Women remain significantly underrepresented in tech. This despite a number of studies confirming that gender-diverse companies perform better.



Image source: Gallo/Getty

"Even though the situation is improving, the gender gap in the IT industry is still prominent," says Aiste Araminaite-Pivore, head of product at NordLocker. "I'm lucky to represent an international cybersecurity brand which celebrates diversity and whose percentage of female employees is above the average of the tech industry – 34% compared to 25%. But we'd like the number to grow even bigger, and the gender gap in tech still requires attention."

Female misrepresentation affects not only the well-being of individual organisations but also leads to the shortage of professionals in the entire tech sector. It is estimated that there are 3.12 million vacant positions in cybersecurity that could be partially filled, and the hiring pool diversity could increase if not for the stereotypes and misconceptions about gender capabilities.

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## How can the tech sector benefit from gender diversity?

**Diverse businesses are more likely to outperform** less diverse companies on profitability, a McKinsey report has found. The report also reveals that the greater the gender representation, the higher the likelihood of outperformance. When an organisation performs better overall, its success translates into greater talent acquisition, more engaged employees, increased profits and/or investments, and progress in general.

**Women have more purchasing power.** Although women drive the majority of consumer spending, they are still often missing in action when it comes to product design and development. Women are strong tech and social media users, but these products are still overwhelmingly built by men. "Diversity enables tech companies to create products that take everyone into consideration, not just one section of society," Araminaite-Pivore explains. "Including women in creating a tech product can lead to a better user experience and successful innovations, which, as we all know, generate stronger sales."

**Help to close the wage gap faster.** Pay inequity might be one of the major turn-offs that keep women from entering tech. However, statistics show that the gap is narrowing. Getting more women in tech can mean closing the pay gap faster. How? Tech jobs pay more, and the starting salaries for entry-level positions are higher than for jobs in other sectors of the economy.

**Women bring unique ideas to the table.** Gender diversity presents different skills, talents, and creativity, which are critical for the development of tech products and solutions. "From my 14 years of experience in IT, I can confirm that women and men see problems differently, but they complement each other very well in the working environment," says Araminaite-Pivore. "A contrasting approach and diversity of viewpoints make any organisation benefit, as it's likely that no blind spots are left overlooked."

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**Female employees bring more balance to the workplace.** Gender equality isn't just good for women — it's good for everyone. "What I noticed at NordLocker when we have a discussion regarding, let's say, a new feature, the debate is less fierce, and we always manage to reach a more considerate conclusion when female staff is present. My practice shows that females have the power to stabilise heated conversations," says Araminaite-Pivore. "What I've also noticed is that women can usually multiprocess better than their male counterparts, which is critical in tech. I couldn't imagine my team without the quality of multiprocessing."

For women to come to a male-dominated industry is challenging, and the tech industry still has a long way to go toward gender equality in the workplace. Luckily, the situation is getting better every year. Women can drive real progress in any given tech organisation, and companies that embrace diversity and inclusion are always more desired employers.