

Nordic Centre of Excellence:
Beyond the Gender Paradox –
Women's Careers in Technology-Driven Research and Innovation
In and Outside of Academe

NCoE Beyond the Gender Paradox - *Diversity from the viewpoint of digitality*

Objective of NCoE: Investigate + enhance women's (and men's) careers in technology-driven research + innovation cross-sectorally (private/public/voluntary)

4 core research areas:

1. Regional science + innovation actors and structures (importance and specificity of rural areas in the Nordic context)
2. Research-intensive, urban science + innovation contexts
3. E-health research
4. Digital Humanities (incl. gaming, new media journalism)

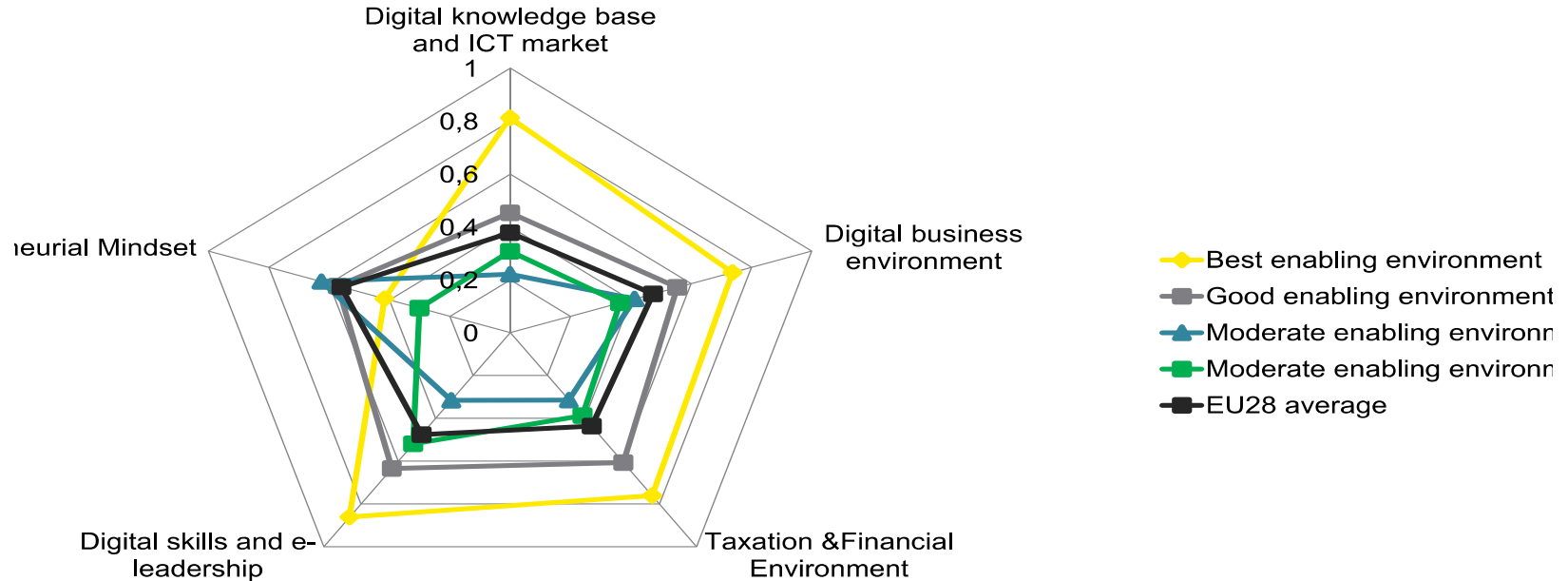




Significance:

- Knowledge economy/digital 4th industrial revolution requires highly educated, increasingly tech-savvy workforce
- Science-society contract is changing – knowledge production occurs both in and outside of the university + actors move between the two
- Digital disruption
- Contemporary citizenship requires critical digital literacy (issues around democratic deficit, 'post-truth' cultures, news as fake, public understandings around data production, consumption, dissemination)
- Uneasy relations to technology: determined by both ubiquity (it's everywhere) and niche disposition (we don't need to know about it, nerd factor)
- Gendered assumptions underlying technology: tech = men
- Many 40-year olds of all genders see themselves as 'dinosaurs' in relation to technology (autodidacts in technology terms) BUT
- These 40-year olds will also be the key decision makers/leaders for another 25 years or so

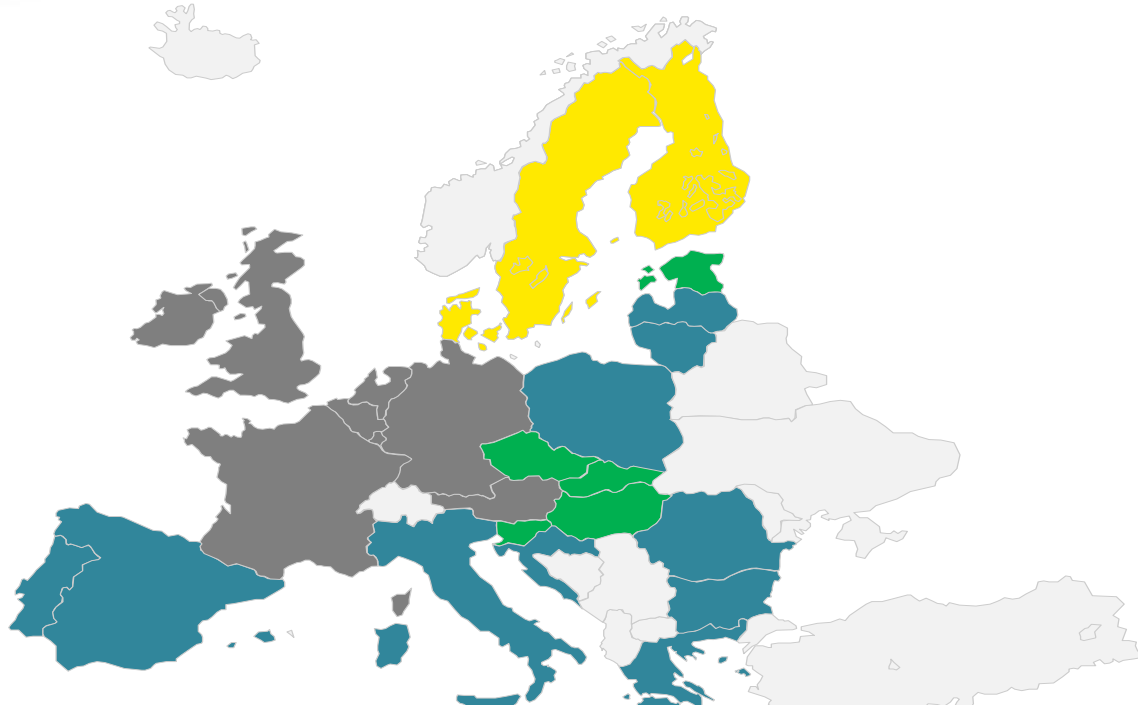
EU Digital Entrepreneurship Scoreboard 2016





UPPSALA
UNIVERSITET

Best performing countries: Sweden, Finland + Denmark



New Skills Agenda for Europe 2016

- Over 40% of the European workforce lack basic digital skills.

Nordwit research focus

the effects of digitalization on female-dominated research and work areas (e.g. e-health, digital humanities)





Digital Humanities

- **Contested terrain**, in uneven development across Nordic countries, marginal in many higher education institutions
- **Core areas of work/research funding**: digitizing collections + data sets (library + archive work); computational linguistics; social media research; computational history + archaeology
- **Little attention paid to**: digital arts, production of digital systems + their compatibilities (Uppsala University Hospital: 33 000 systems in place), critical digital literacy



Issues + questions

- Assumption: only 'nerds' go there (but we're all involved through digital everydayness)
- Big data – who's using them?
- What do we actually need to know?
- Critical digitality is not osmotically acquired
- Knowledge/skills acquisition in critical digital literacy need to begin early in education, and to continue
- Continuing professional development (does it exist?/where are the priorities?)
- Digital divides are proliferating: within families, across generations, across social groups, within professions, across and within disciplines, across and within companies, across and within countries, etc.

Interesting new developments from a gender perspective

- In Digital Humanities centres, women are often the leaders, men the technology service providers (web developers etc.) = inversion of conventional gender role structures (where men lead, women service)
- New 'Digital Cultures' undergrad courses attract majority female students (= women not put off by technology)
- No cut-off point for acquiring critical digital literacy, no necessary gender bias
- Female role models in DH do work



UPPSALA
UNIVERSITET

Some implications

- Critical digital literacy important for knowledge economy, contemporary citizenship, everyday life
- Digital divides are created, and not inevitable
- Critical digital literacy needs to be systematically integrated into education from early on just like maths and language learning
- Continuing professional education is also key
- Curriculum re-design for the digital future necessary at all levels
- Critical digital literacy costs (Humanities are not zero-cost education)

Need for recognition of the importance of generating digital inclusiveness.

Nordic Centre of Excellence

NORDWIT

A green stylized human figure with arms raised, positioned to the right of the text 'NORDWIT'.



UPPSALA
UNIVERSITET



UNIVERSITY
OF TAMPERE

WESTERN NORWAY RESEARCH INSTITUTE
VESTLANDSFORSKING
www.vestforsk.no

Nordic Centre of Excellence

NORDWIT

A green stylized human figure with arms raised, positioned to the right of the text 'NORDWIT'.

Thank you for your attention!