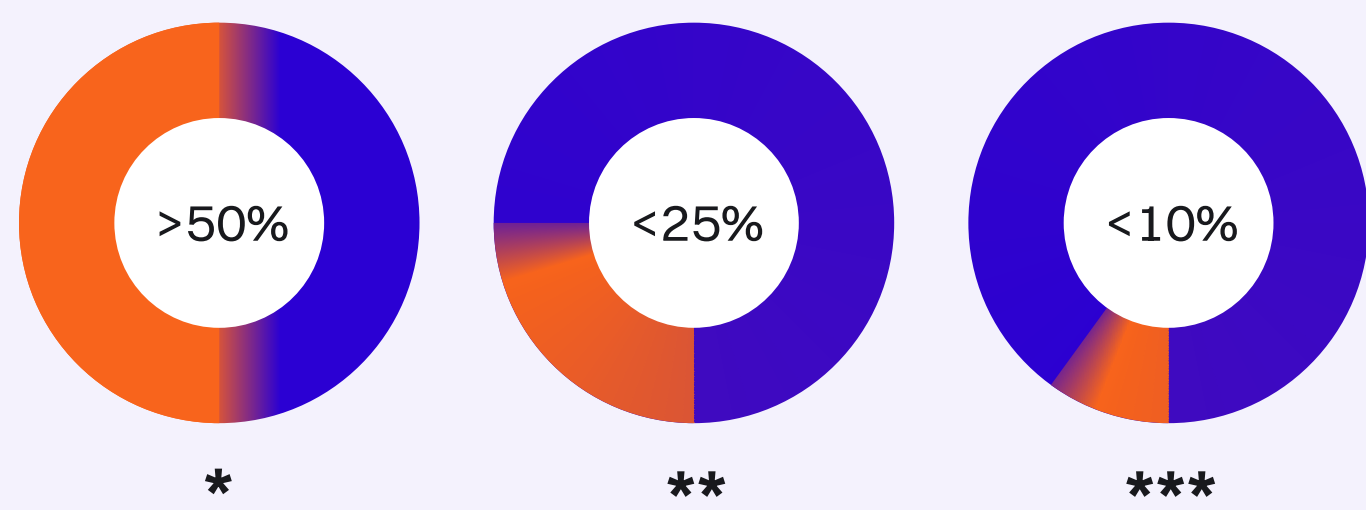


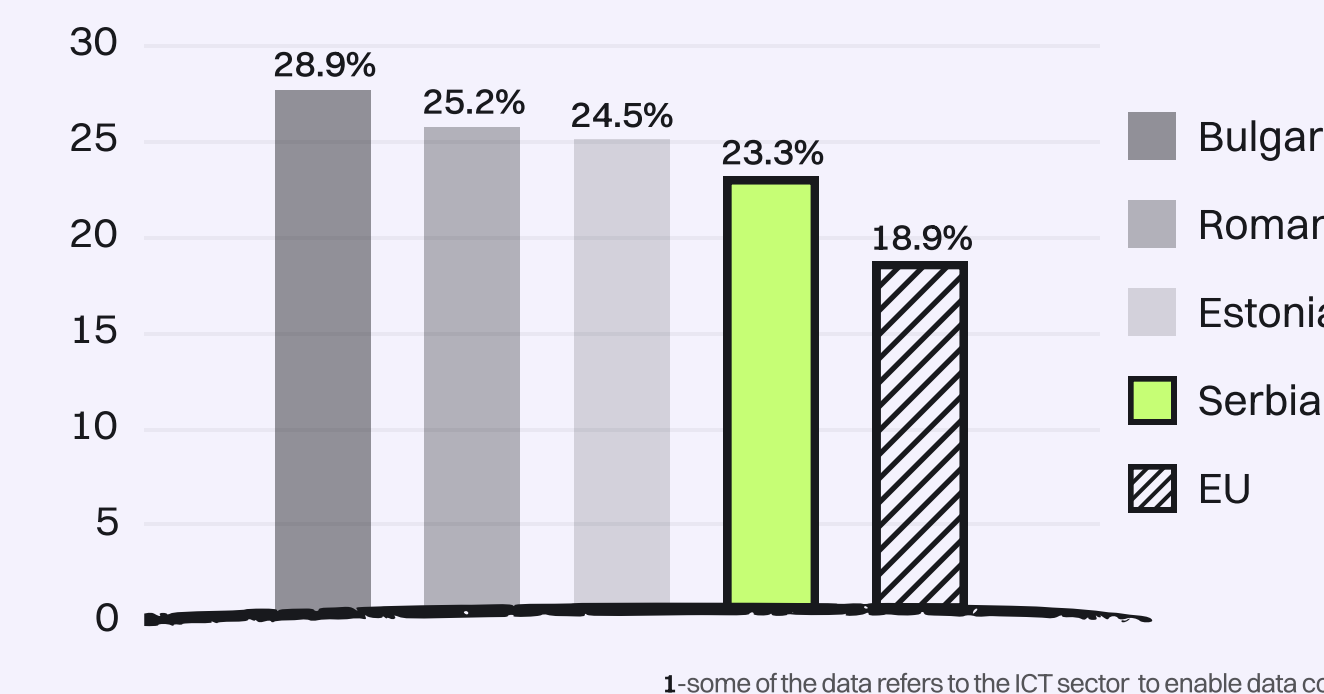
Women in IT in Serbia

2023

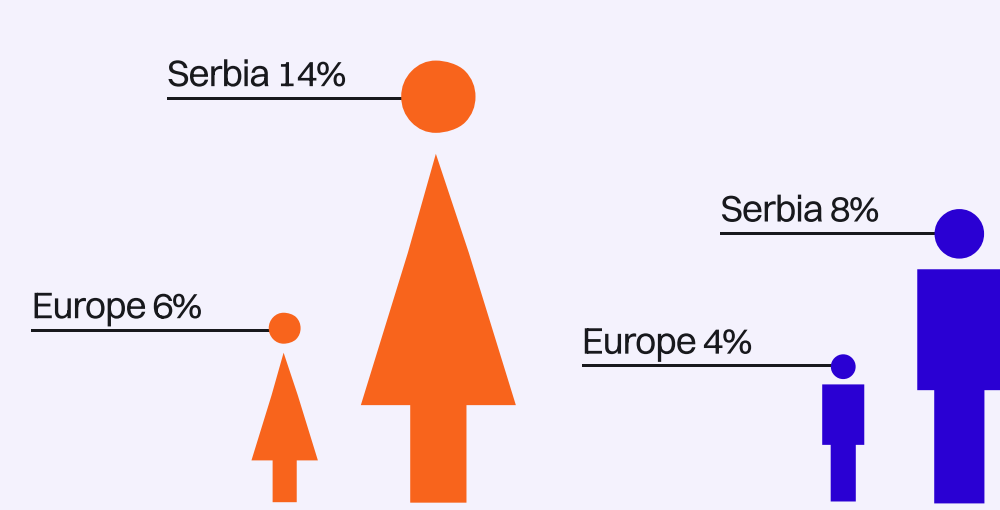
Share of women in population*, in the IT sector** and in the C-suite positions in IT in Serbia***



Serbia has the 4th highest share of women among ICT* experts in Europe



Fastest growing percentage of participation of women in ICT sectors in Europe



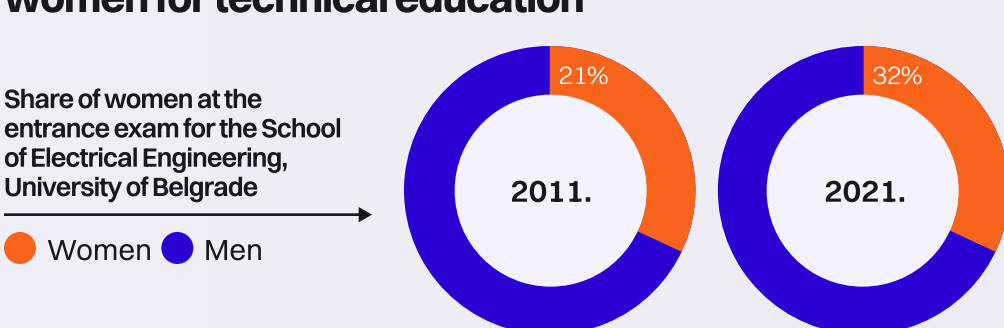
Strategic framework of the Republic of Serbia insufficiently addresses the issue of low use of innovative technologies in order to promote empowerment of women...

...while there is great potential for increasing gender equality through technology, there is also a risk that the gender gap will deepen.

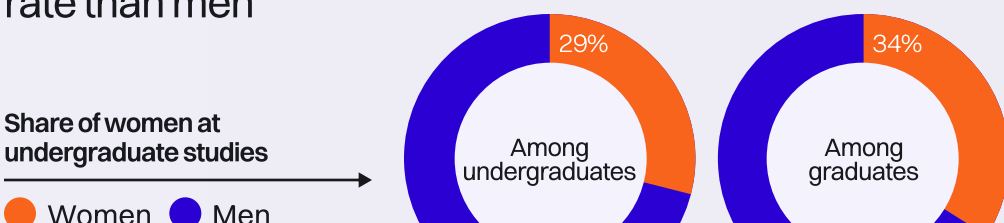
Technical education²

Early exposure to computers, parents' profession and birthplace **are not important factors in the choice of studies and profession**

In the last 10 years there is an **increase in the interest of women for technical education**

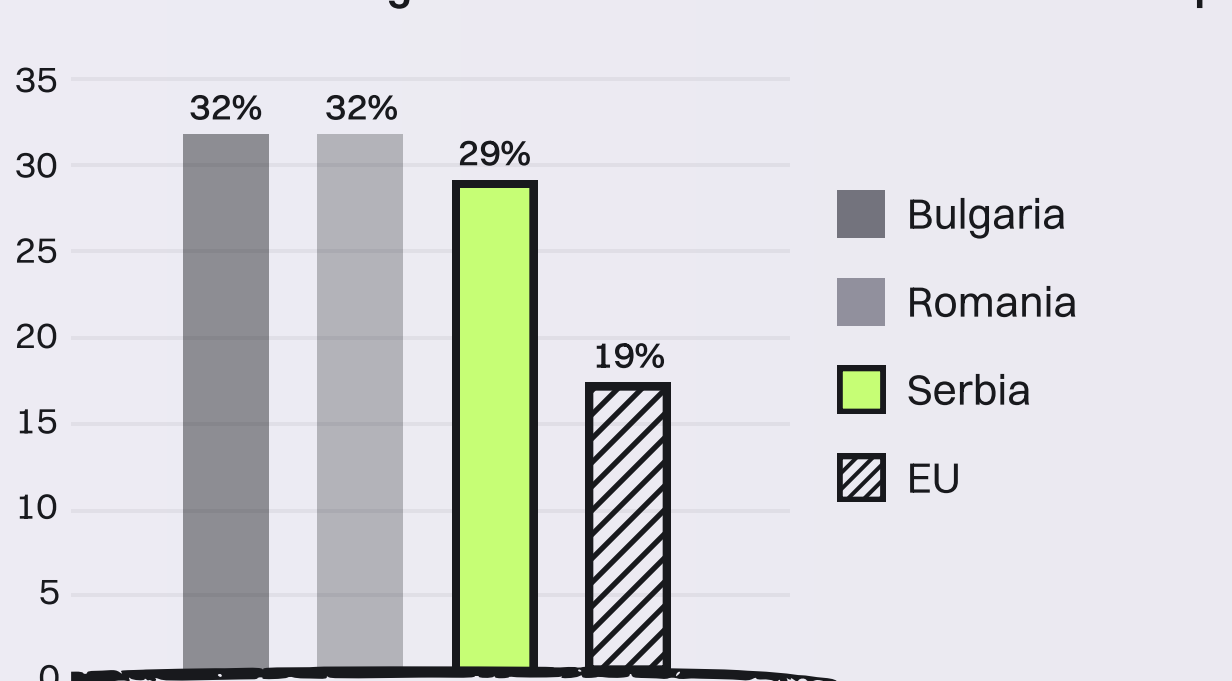


Women graduate from technical universities at a higher rate than men



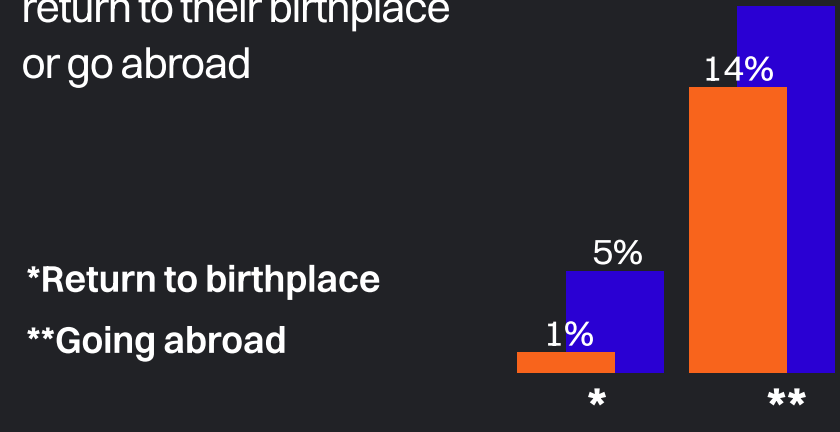
"Gifted student paradox" - majority of women in IT industry were excellent students throughout their education and strongly considered alternatives to IT as they were academically versatile

Serbia has the 3rd highest share of female students in ICT in Europe



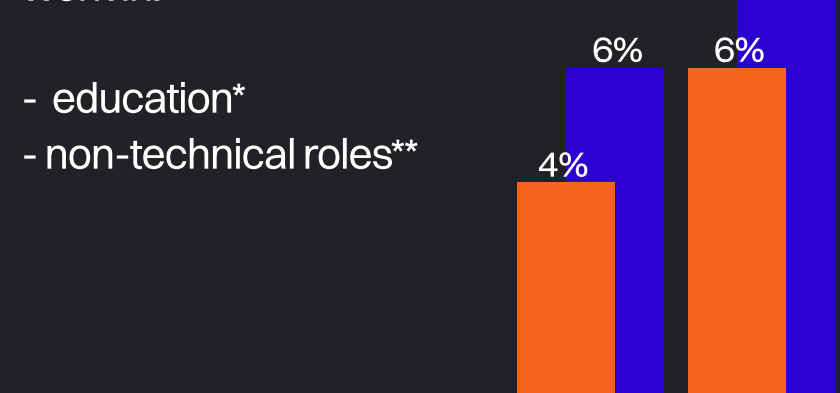
IT graduates' career paths³

Women are less likely to return to their birthplace or go abroad

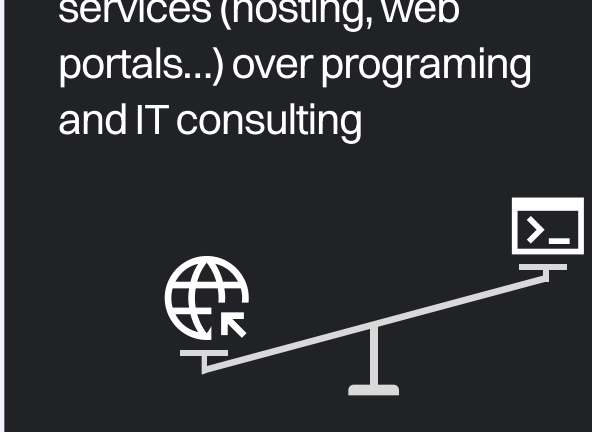


*Return to birthplace
**Going abroad

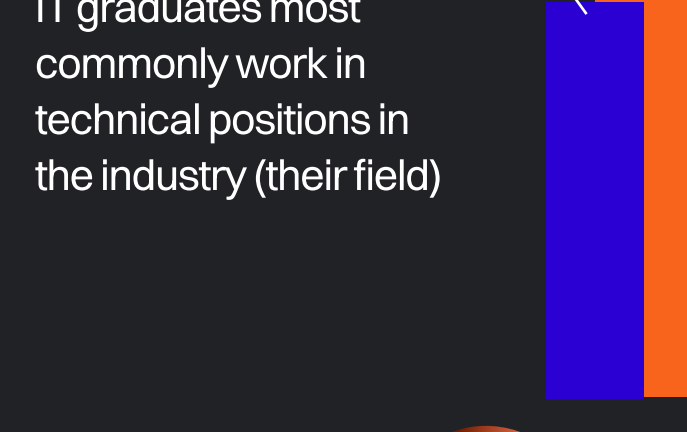
More women with IT diploma work in:



Women chose information services (hosting, web portals...) over programming and IT consulting



Both male and female IT graduates most commonly work in technical positions in the industry (their field)



*Return to birthplace
**Going abroad

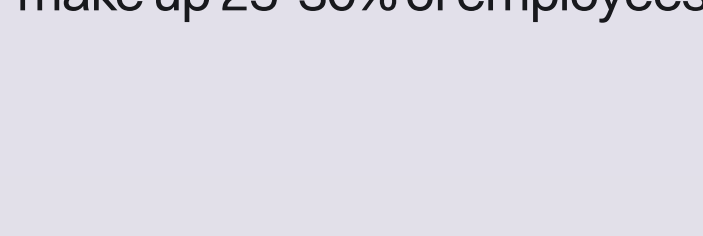
Female IT graduates are less likely to become freelancers* and even less likely to become entrepreneurs**



3 - this segment is based on fieldwork research in IT professionals' career path gender gap (method: survey of 230 alumni from the Faculty of Electrical Engineering, University of Belgrade)

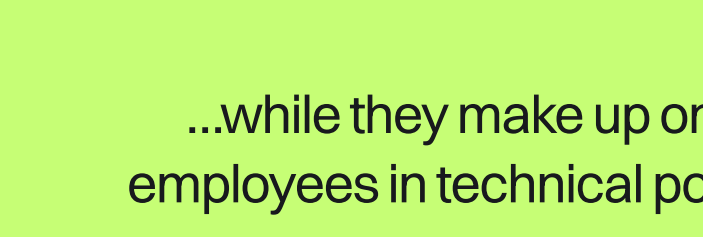
Women in IT companies in Serbia

make up 25-30% of employees

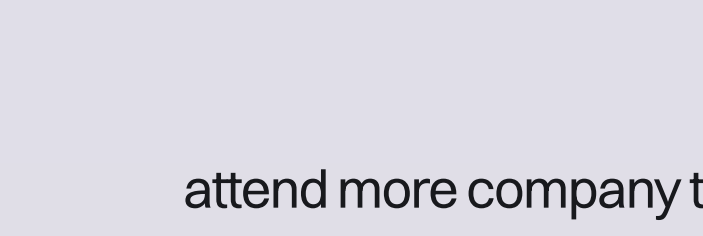


make up 2/3 of employees in non-technical positions (finance, marketing, HR)...

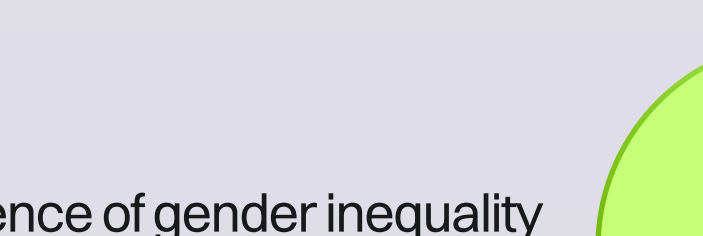
...while they make up only 1/3 of employees in technical positions



attend more company trainings



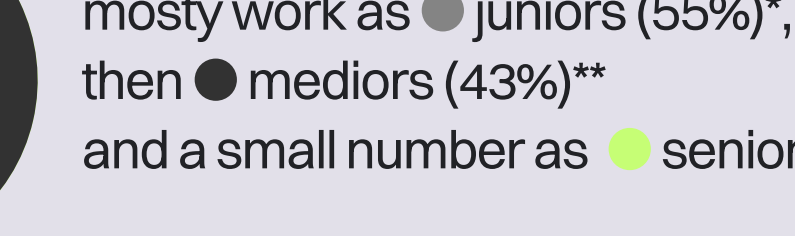
experience of gender inequality varies depending on the employer



often experience lack of self-esteem and doubt their capabilities, they are self-critical regardless of their age and seniority



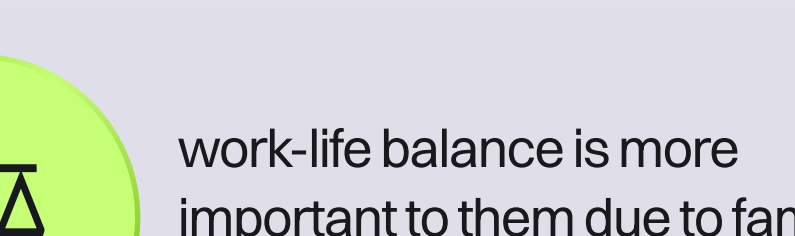
mostly work as juniors (55%)*, then mediators (43%)* and a small number as seniors (2%)*



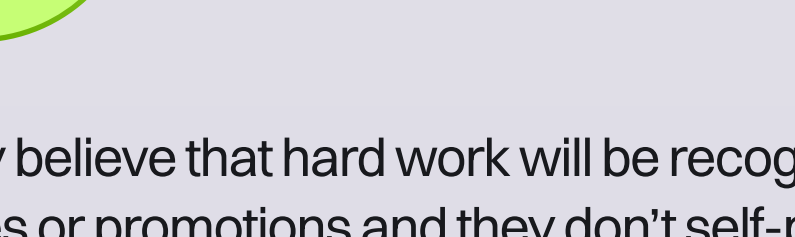
more educated on average - 20% more women have finished undergraduate, master or doctoral studies



work-life balance is more important to them due to family and household responsibilities



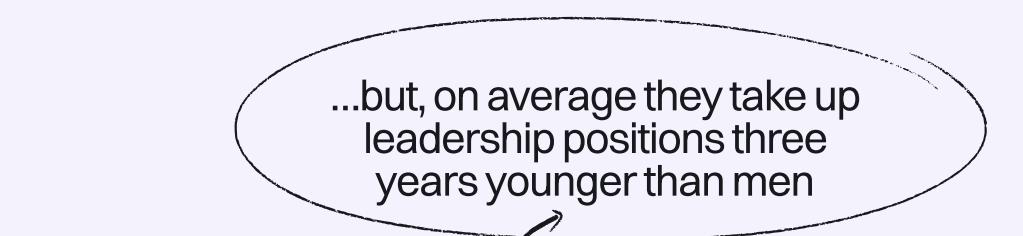
They believe that hard work will be recognized, never ask for raises or promotions and they don't self-promote, however the trust in meritocracy decreases with years of employment



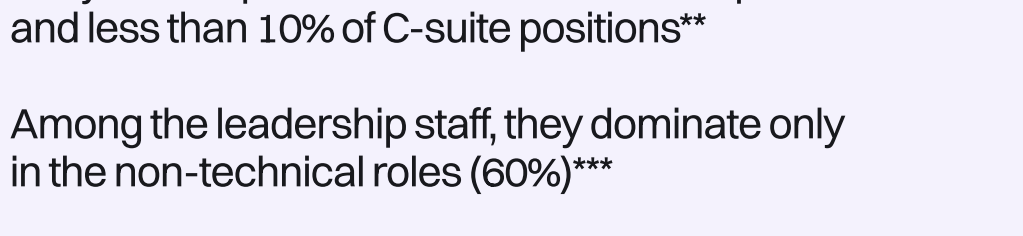
4 - this segment is based on gender gap field research in the business sector (method: quantitative and qualitative analysis of five IT companies in Serbia)

Climbing the career ladder

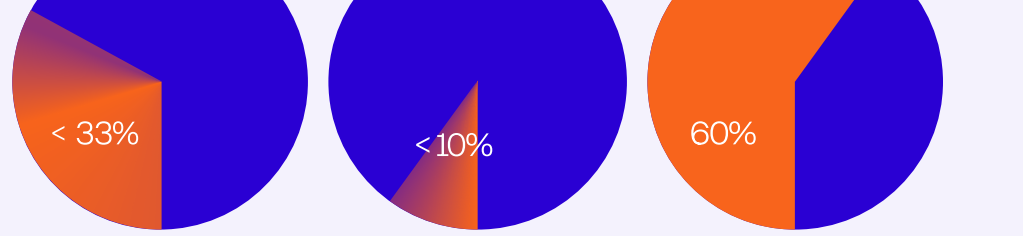
Share of women in technical positions declines as they climb the company hierarchy



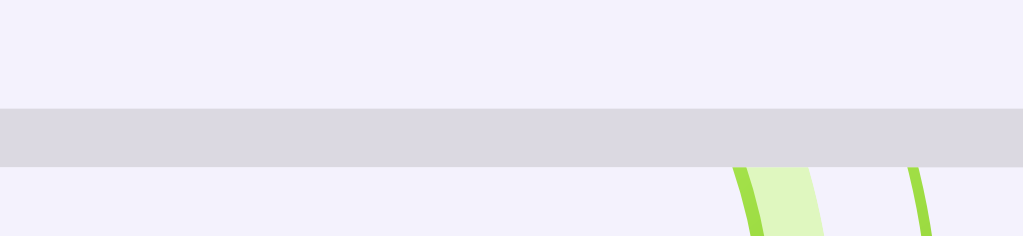
They feel isolated in "masculine spaces" and they feel lonely in the leadership positions



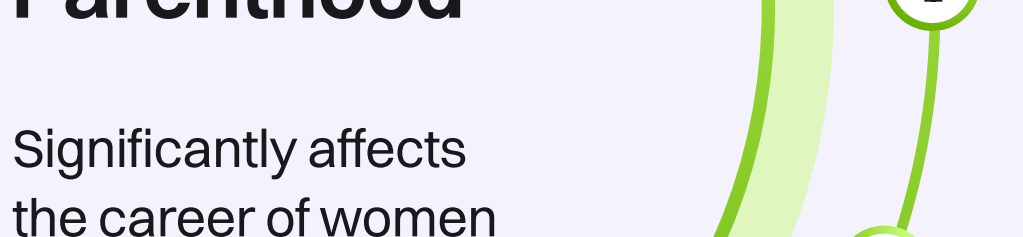
They have a greater chance for progress if there already are women in company's top leadership



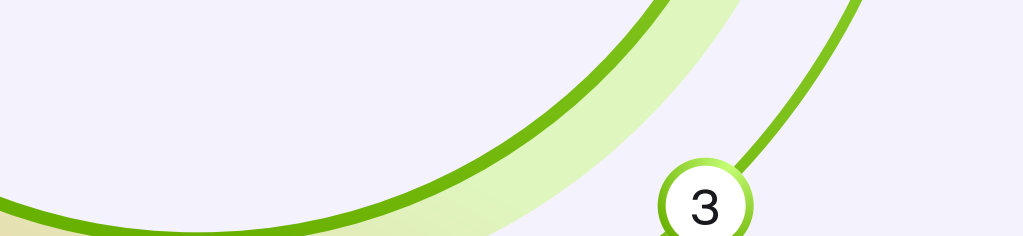
Women in non-technical leadership roles earn more than men in same roles, while in all other roles they earn less



Example



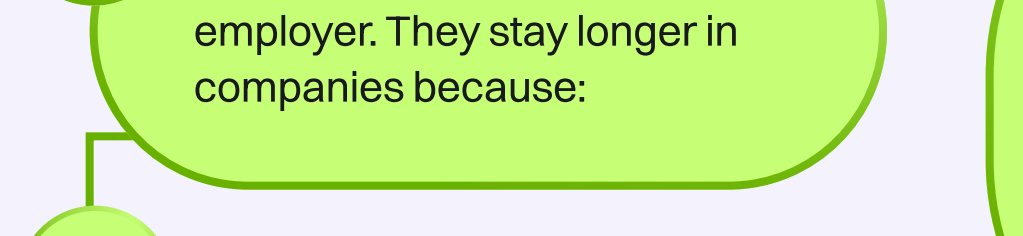
Company in which almost 1/3 of positions are technical:



women make up 46% of employees

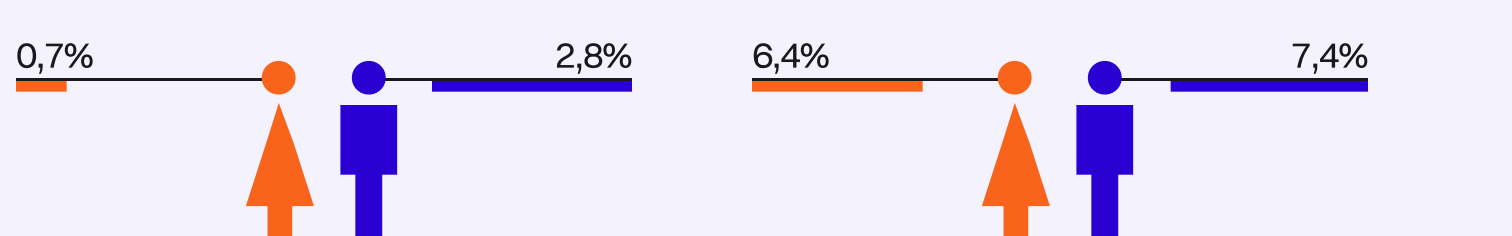


but take up only 19% of leadership roles

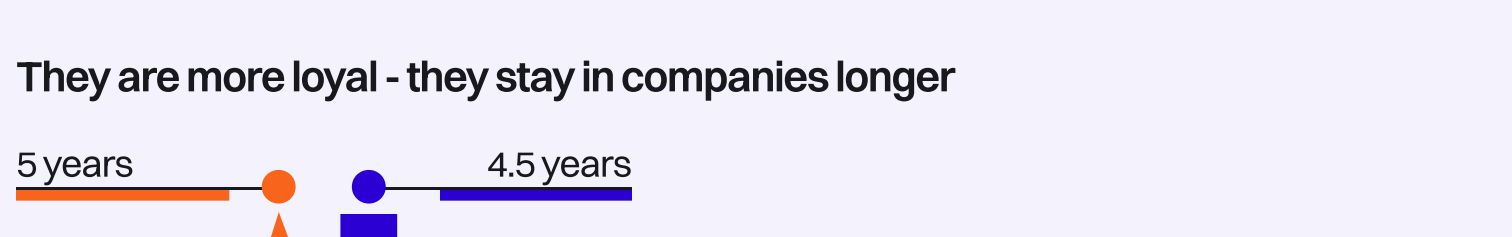


Changing jobs

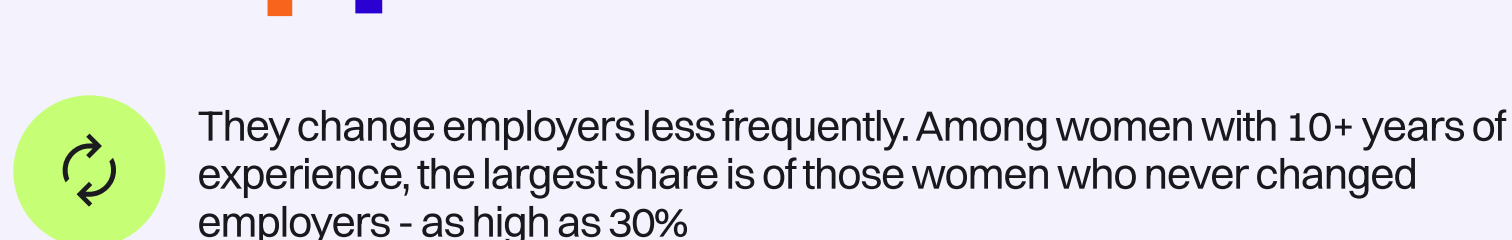
On average they get fired far more rarely* and they quit somewhat less than men**



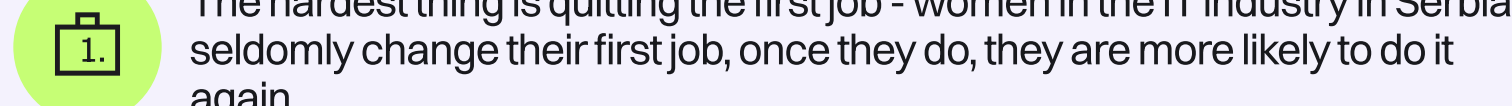
They are more loyal - they stay in companies longer



They change employers less frequently. Among women with 10+ years of experience, the largest share is of those women who never changed employers - as high as 30%



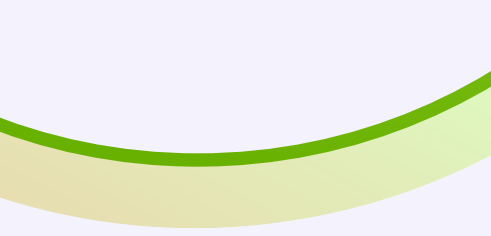
The hardest thing is quitting the first job - women in the IT industry in Serbia seldomly change their first job, once they do, they are more likely to do it again



Parenthood⁵

Significantly affects the career of women (that have children)

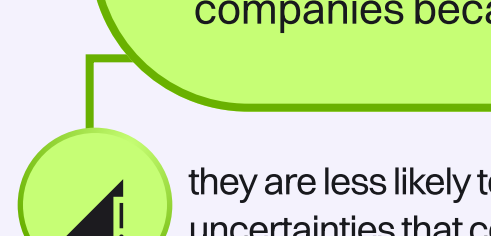
They experience a career slow-down due to maternity leave



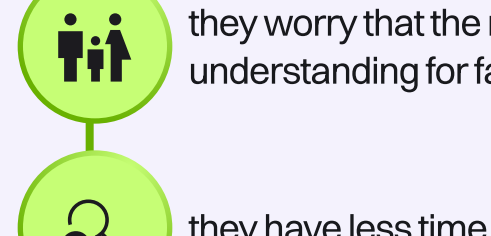
They have significantly less free time due to the traditional labour divide around childcare, household and family, which is why they rarely



They take a significantly higher number of sick leave days compared to their female colleague without kids or male colleagues with children



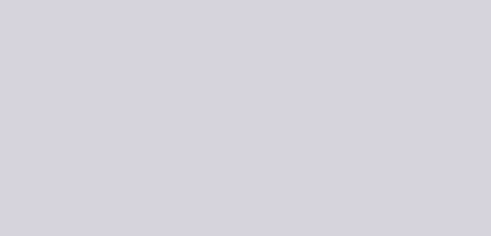
They are more loyal towards the employer. They stay longer in companies because:



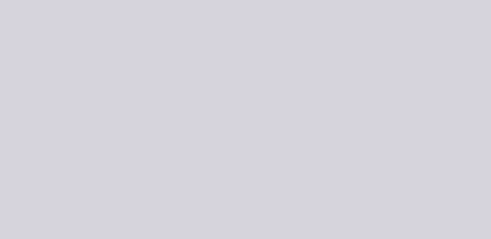
they are less likely to accept the risks and uncertainties that come with joining the new team



they worry that the new employer won't have understanding for family circumstances



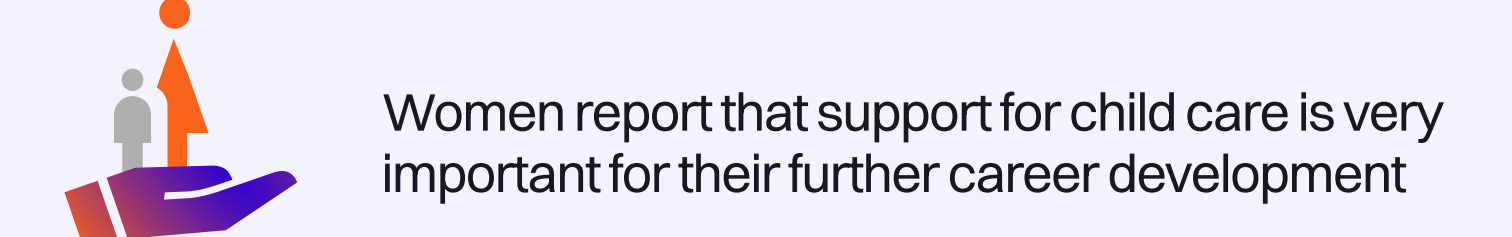
they have less time to look for another job



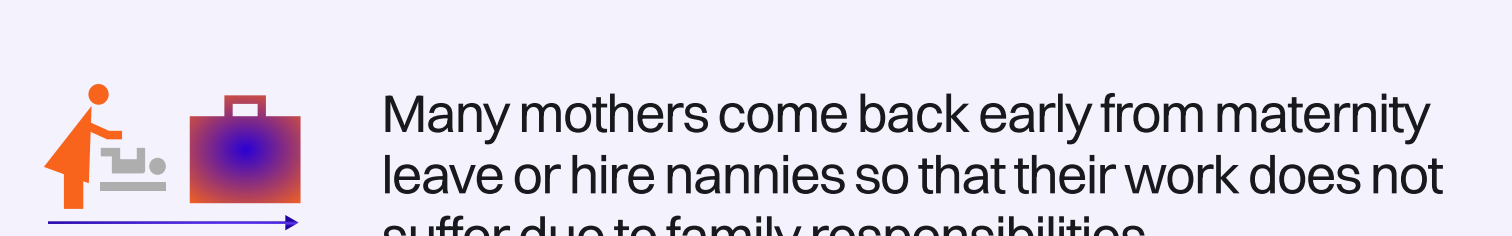
5 - this segment is based on field research about gender gap among women in IT industry in Serbia (method: 32 in-depth interviews)

Support for child care

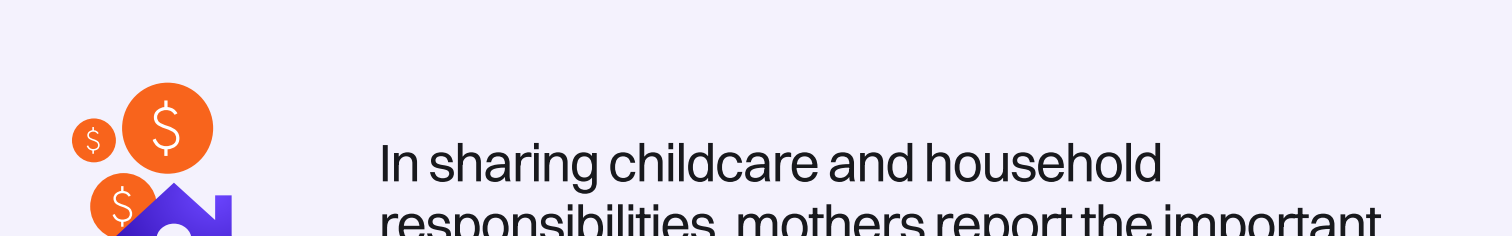
Women report that support for child care is very important for their further career development



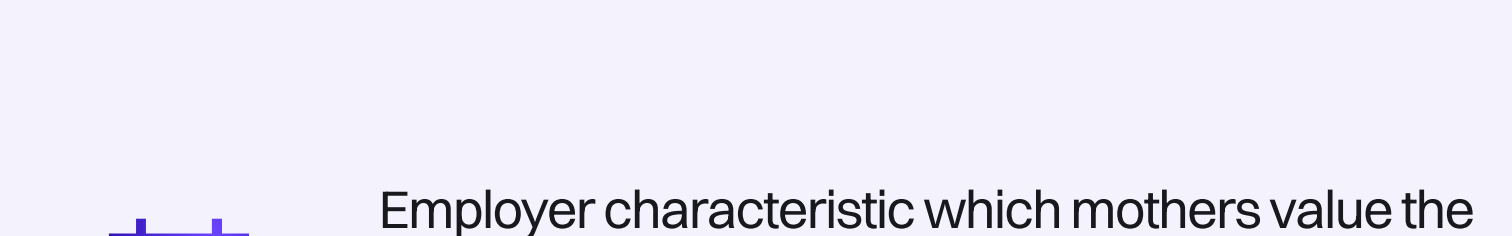
Many mothers come back early from maternity leave or hire nannies so that their work does not suffer due to family responsibilities



In sharing childcare and household responsibilities, mothers report the important role and influence of their income for the budget



Employer characteristic which mothers value the most is understanding for family circumstances, which primarily relates to flexible working arrangements, especially when children are ill

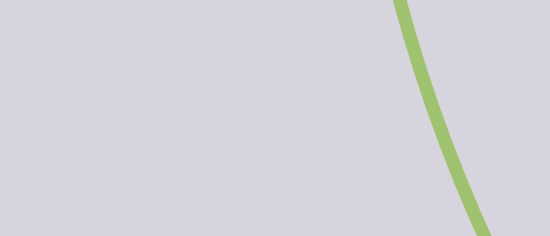


The attitude of IT companies regarding gender equality

Job advertisements



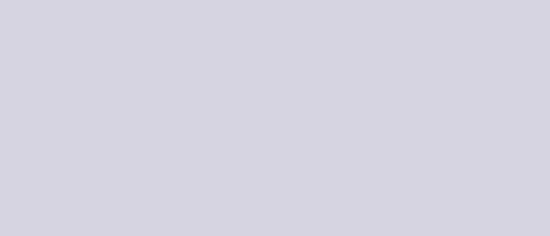
companies mention work-life balance



mention specific benefits for mothers



e.g. understanding for family circumstances, extra days off

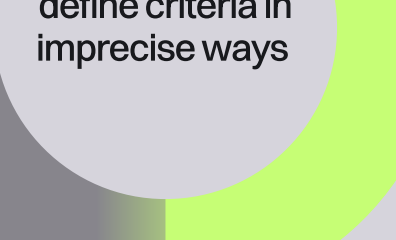


IT companies in Serbia usually:

- do not have gender equality policy
- do not educate their staff about the importance of having such policy (except for large international companies)
- do not have fully gender-sensitive job ads

IT companies place great focus on the passion for work, learning and development, but women have less time for additional education, due to extra time they invest in household and child care (especially in the first years of motherhood)

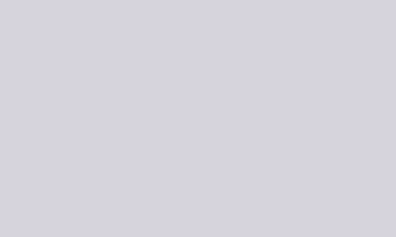
define criteria in imprecise ways



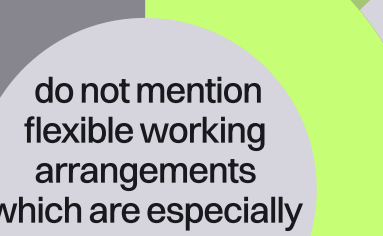
e.g. "good knowledge of English language" instead of "minimum B2 level in English language"



and women are commonly more self-critical than men and potentially read such criteria as higher than the employer understands them



do not mention flexible working arrangements which are especially important to mothers

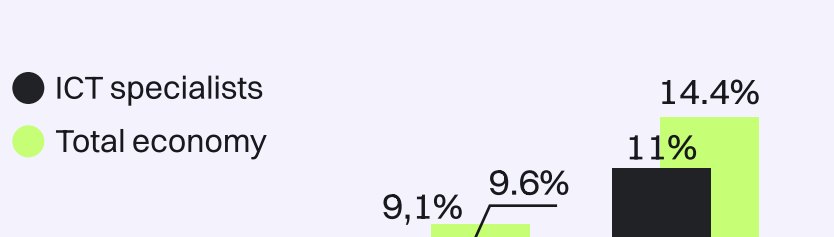


Men negotiate better for higher salaries, while women commonly get them due to their competence and experience

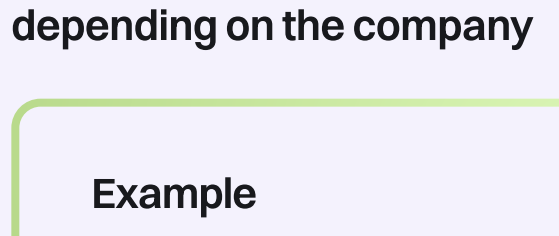


The pay gap

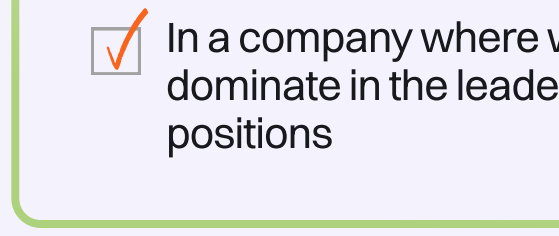
In ICT sector in Serbia* it is more pronounced than in the rest of the economy, whilst in the EU** it is vice versa



It is more or less pronounced depending on the company



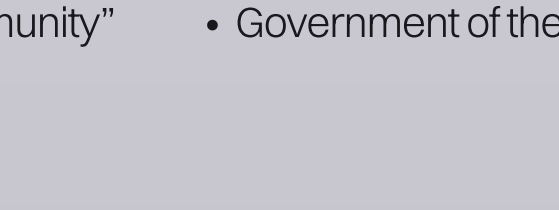
Example



The pay gap is as high as 17%



In a company where women dominate in the leadership positions



The biggest share of the total pay gap does not stem from the pay gap in comparable positions, but because men dominate the highest paid positions (leadership positions in the technical roles)



Sources used for desk research

• Statistical office of the Republic of Serbia (2020) "Women and men in the Republic of Serbia" • Statistical office of the Republic of Serbia (2021), "Gender equality index in Serbia" • Eurostat (2015-2023)

• Helloworld (2022), "The pulse of the Serbian IT community"

• Government of the Republic of Serbia, "Gender equality strategy 2021- 2030"

• Social inclusion and poverty reduction unit Government of the Republic of Serbia (2021), "Gender equality index in Serbia 2021"