Booking.com
2018 Women in Tech Research

A global study on the continuing tech sector gender diversity challenge and the perceptions and experiences of women on careers in tech

Introduction

The need for greater gender diversity and a more balanced workforce in the global technology industry has never been stronger. Today, technology impacts almost every aspect of our lives, from how we communicate to the ways in which we travel, and how we shop. Tech is a key driver of social and economic change, and around the world, women in tech are transforming businesses, industries, and communities. And yet, they remain a small fraction of the total workforce. The experiences and contributions of women are essential to bring diverse perspectives to tech that can lead to enhanced creativity, more innovative products and solutions, and a positive impact on workplace culture and business. To ensure a healthy and balanced pipeline of future tech talent and eliminate gender stereotypes, it is imperative that every tech organization and government today prioritize equal representation and champion diverse voices from within and outside.

> **Women are still vastly under-represented in the tech sector. What our research *now* tells us is exactly where women experience the biggest barriers and where the opportunity to initiate change is. The optimism and ambition that we see from women globally to be successful in a technology or IT field is inspiring, particularly among the younger generation, who see the potential for a career in tech to deliver against the high aspirations they hold for themselves.**
>
> **To empower women to truly succeed in tech, we as an industry have an opportunity to do more, from putting forth more female role models and eliminating gender bias that starts during recruitment, to investing in initiatives that spotlight the industry as attractive and welcoming at all stages, from new entrants up to the most senior leadership.**

Gillian Tans, Chief Executive Officer, Booking.com

The Research

Through this research, Booking.com sought to better understand the continuing gender diversity challenge in the global tech industry, and unearth the perceptions and experiences of women worldwide when it comes to a career in technology.

Specifically, we wanted to see the tech industry through the lens of female students (high school and undergraduate), professionals currently working in

the industry (both early stage and more experienced) and those who have returned to tech after a break or period of leave (five+ years).

We sought to understand the factors that play into career choice and progression, the impact women feel their gender has on their career, the state of the tech industry in 2018, and women's expectations and ambitions for the future of tech.

10 Key Markets

UK **(789)**

Netherlands **(267)**

France **(746)**

Germany **(795)**

USA **(1,149)**

Spain **(535)**

India **(747)**

Australia **(582)**

China **(650)**

Brazil **(638)**

5 Key Audiences

- High school students (or local equivlents)
- Undergraduate students
- Early career tech professionals (1-5 years' experience)
- Experienced tech professionals (10+ years' experience)
- Re-entrants – women who have taken a career break and returned to the tech sector within the past five years

Total Respondents: 6,898

Timing:

Aug 2 2018 - Sep 6 2018
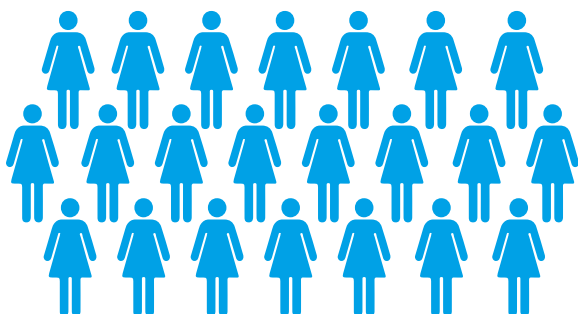
Key Findings

1 **The majority of women in tech – and those who are interested in joining the industry – have a generally favorable view of it.** More than 2 in 5 women globally say their gender has a positive impact on their ability to pursue a career in tech. This is driven largely by recognition of the current under-representation of women in the industry, which many see as an opportunity to enter and contribute to the tech workforce.

2 **The appeal of technology to women remains as strong as ever. For many, the attributes that the tech sector offers align with their career aspirations and how they define their 'dream job.'** Women across different stages of their education and career are drawn to tech for a myriad of reasons – they find the industry to be creative, inspiring, challenging and exciting.

3 **Despite this favorable outlook, women globally find that gender bias during recruitment and a lack of visible female leaders in the tech industry continue to undermine their career opportunities at certain touchpoints in their pursuit of a tech career.** For more than half (52%), this is the case because of the tech sector's largely male-dominated tech workforce. Overall, women globally acknowledge that they continue to face more challenges than men in certain careers.

4 **Even more so than current tech professionals, the pace of the industry appeals to female high school and university students who are enticed by the opportunities to be successful from a young age and carve their own career path.** The research reaffirms the desirability of the tech industry to the next generation of talent, simultaneously highlighting the opportunity to engage students early on as part of efforts to eliminate barriers to entry and close the tech sector gender gap.
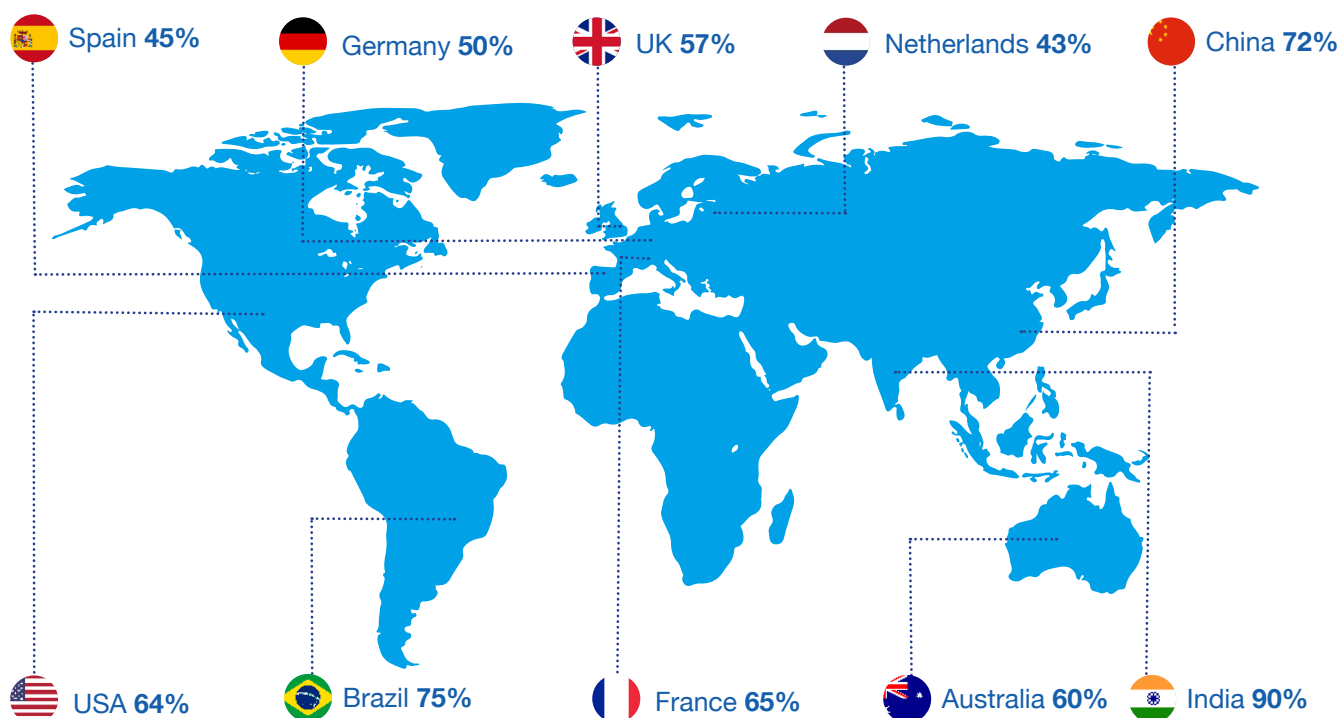
5 **When it comes to choosing a profession, skills development, exposure to topics and education early on has a significant influence on women's eventual selections.** Globally, nearly 4 in 5 women say their career choices are influenced by the skills they learn in school and in higher education (79%) and by the subjects they studied (77%). With this in mind, efforts to bridge the tech gender gap need to begin early on to encourage curiosity and participation in STEM education.

Women globally are generally optimistic and have a positive outlook when it comes to a career in tech

64% of women worldwide – including those who currently work in tech and students interested in the field – say that **being female positively impacts their ability to pursue a career in tech**. This optimism is felt most keenly among women in Latin America and Asia, where efforts to close the gender gap – from education and financial inclusion to societal and cultural shifts and corporate initiatives – are opening up more opportunities for women in the tech workforce.
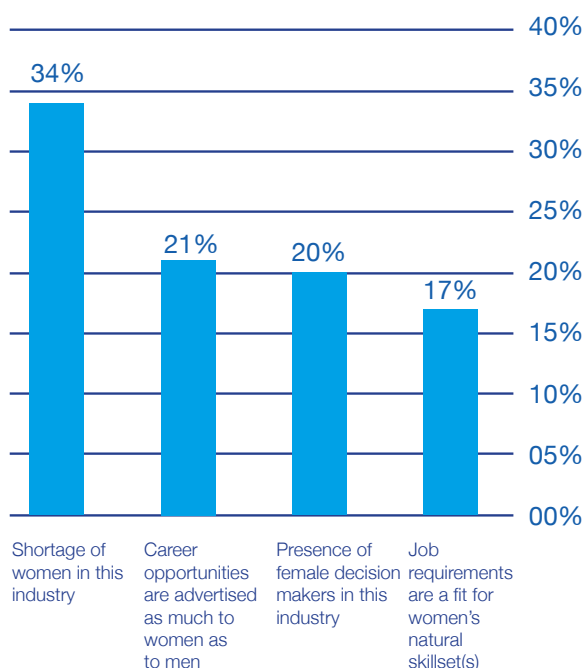
Percentage of women who say their gender POSITIVELY impacts their ability to pursue a career in tech

Spain **45%**   Germany **50%**   UK **57%**   Netherlands **43%**   China **72%**

USA **64%**   Brazil **75%**   France **65%**   Australia **60%**   India **90%**

# This positive view is led by the recognized shortage of women currently in the global tech workforce

More than 1 in 3 women globally sees their under-representation in the global technology industry as an opportunity to enter the workforce and help balance the gender diversity scales, whether by bringing new qualifications, alleviating skills shortages and contributing diverse perspectives.

Reasons why women feel their gender would POSITIVELY impact a career in tech

34% — Shortage of women in this industry
21% — Career opportunities are advertised as much to women as to men
20% — Presence of female decision makers in this industry
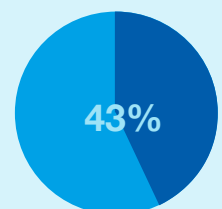17% — Job requirements are a fit for women's natural skillset(s)

The opportunity presented by the under-representation of women is especially acknowledged by students

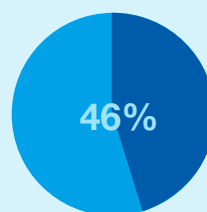**Shortage of women in the industry cited by 34% of women globally**
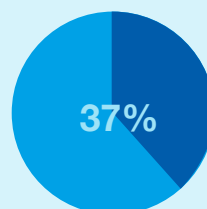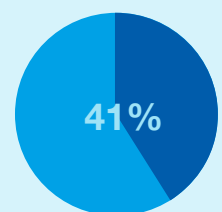

37% — High school girls

43% — Female undergraduate students

And when looking across markets, this is particularly prominent in Spain and the Netherlands
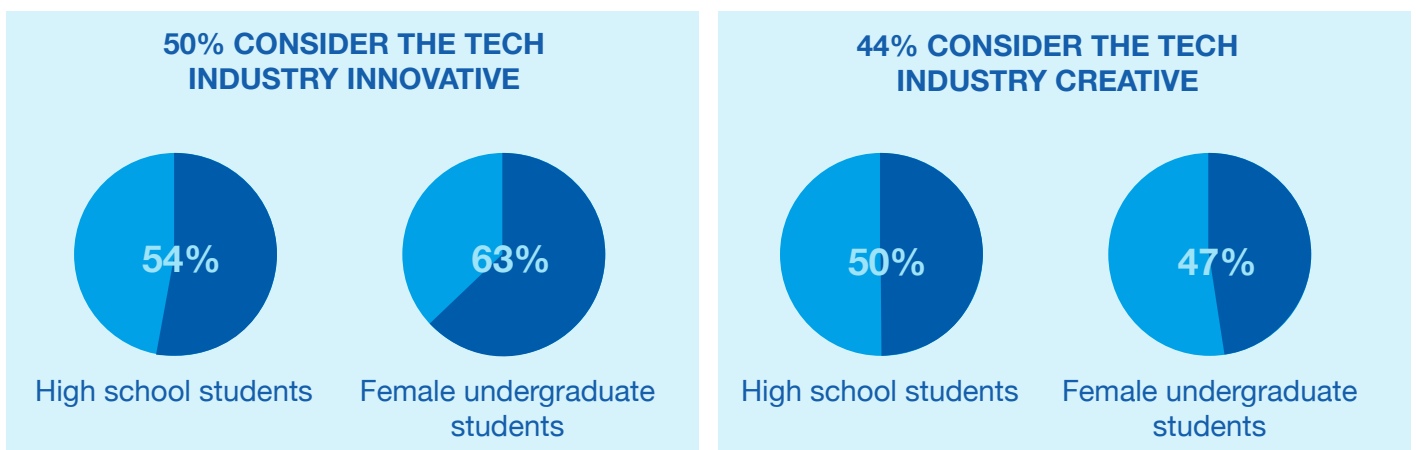

46% — Spain

41% — Netherlands

Women globally find the tech industry highly appealing and are attracted to it for a variety of reasons. They most commonly describe it as innovative, creative, and inspiring, but not nurturing

How Women Describe the Tech Sector

Nurturing — 12%   **Creative — 44%**

Empowering — 44%   Flexible — 21%   **Inspiring — 26%**

Innovative — **50%**   Inclusive of different backgrounds — 21%

Exciting — 27%   Diverse — 26%

Female high school and undergraduate students are particularly drawn to the innovative and creative aspects of the tech industry.

50% CONSIDER THE TECH INDUSTRY INNOVATIVE

54%
High school students

63%
Female undergraduate students

44% CONSIDER THE TECH INDUSTRY CREATIVE

50%
High school students

47%
Female undergraduate students

For women, a career in tech can align with what they consider to be their 'dream job'

Reasons why women globally are personally interested in a career in technology

Factor	Percentage
Offers work that challenges them	34%
Allows them to be creative	33%
Provides a high salary	32%
Offers them work that inspires them	30%
Aligns with their natural skillset	27%
Gives them the ability to carve their own path	25%

MOST important factors to women globally when defining their 'dream job'

Factor	Percentage
Offers them work that inspires them	84%
Aligns with their natural skillset	83%
Gives them the ability to carve their own path	81%
Provides a high salary	80%
Offers work that challenges them	80%
Allows them to be creative	79%

Gender bias during recruitment and a lack of visible female leaders continue to undermine tech opportunities for women

Despite the appeal of the tech industry and the perceived opportunities it offers, women globally still have reservations, and at certain key touch-points, view being female as more detrimental to their pursuit of a tech career.

The research shows that gender bias is still deeply rooted within tech and in fact, begins at the hiring stage before women even enter the workforce, potentially holding them back from a successful future in tech.

32% of women globally say that gender bias during recruitment is a barrier to their ability to successfully pursue a tech career. When looking across markets, perceptions of gender bias at the hiring stage vary significantly

USA **33%**

UK **22%**

France **45%**

Netherlands **18%**

Germany **22%**

Spain **41%**

Brazil **59%**

India **38%**

China **35%**

Australia **32%**

The lack of visible women in senior, leadership or decision-making roles who can serve as inspiring role models to the next generation of female tech talent is a particular challenge that women face in their consideration and pursuit of a tech career. The research concludes that more ambitious, successful women taking on leading roles in tech need to be spotlighted to open the eyes of those considering working in tech to the possibilities and opportunities that lie ahead of them before they narrow down their career choices.

32% of women globally say the lack of visible female decision makers in the tech industry is a barrier to their ability to successfully pursue a tech career.

UK **29%**

Netherlands **40%**

France **30%**

Germany **32%**

USA **32%**

Spain **34%**

India **23%**

Australia **38%**

China **31%**

Brazil **21%**

The impact of a lack of visible decision makers in tech is felt most prominently by female high school students who are considering a career in tech, showing that more needs to be done to unearth and spotlight successful women in tech that can inspire and engage the younger generation.
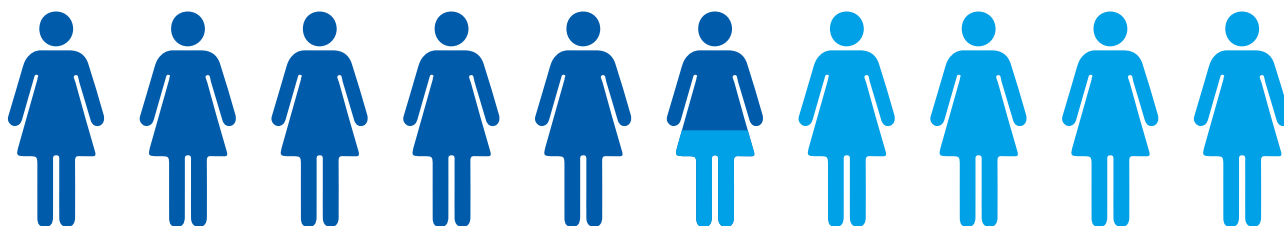
32% Lack of female decision makers within this industry

40%
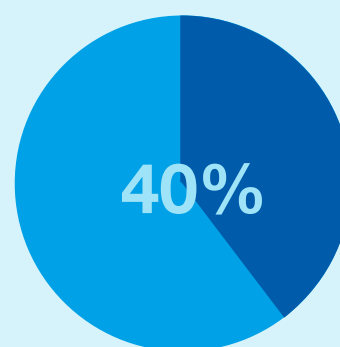
High school girls

The male-dominated workforce is another major hurdle for women in their pursuit of a tech career

More than 1 in 2 women (52%) globally say the overwhelmingly male composition of the tech workforce negatively impacts their ability to pursue a career in tech

When looking across markets, the impact of a heavily male workforce is felt more acutely in many Western countries – leading with the UK – and least among women in India.

USA 52%

UK 60%

France 42%

Netherlands 58%

Germany 52%

Spain 57%

Brazil 35%

India 23%

China 49%

Australia 57%

Overall, women globally acknowledge that they face more challenges than men in certain careers.

More than three in four women globally say they experience more challenges to enter (78%) and grow and succeed (77%) in certain careers than men. When looking across markets, this disparity in the tech career experience is felt more so by women in Brazil, India and China than in other countries, according to the research.

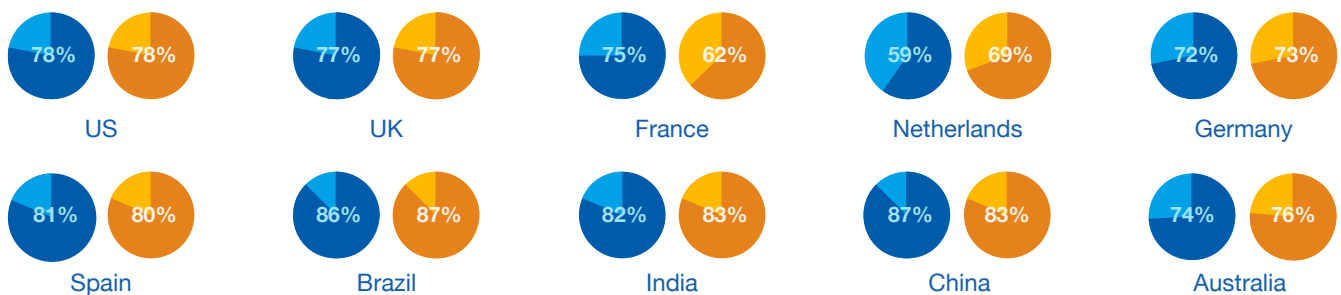| 78%	78%	77%	77%	75%	62%	59%	69%	72%	73%
US		UK		France		Netherlands		Germany	

81%	80%	86%	87%	82%	83%	87%	83%	74%	76%
Spain		Brazil		India		China		Australia	

% who say that women face more challenges to **enter** certain careers than men

% who say that face more challenges to **grow and succeed** in certain careers than men

While experienced across all audiences – from students to career professionals and women who have returned to the tech industry after a break – this sentiment is expressed more strongly by more experienced tech professionals who have been in the industry for 10 or more years.

Percentage who say that women face more challenges to **enter** certain careers than men

74%	81%	75%	82%	79%
High school students	Undergraduate students	Early career tech professionals	**Experienced tech professionals**	Re-entrants

Percentage who say that face more challenges to **grow and succeed** in certain careers than men

73%	78%	76%	81%	77%
High school students	Undergraduate students	Early career tech professionals	**Experienced tech professionals**	Re-entrants

The technology industry holds strong appeal for the younger generation, highlighting the opportunity that exists to further engage them and initiate change

Research findings reaffirm the desirability of the tech sector to the next generation of talent, who find the prospect of a career in tech particularly appealing because of the opportunities it presents in line with their career ambitions and aspirations today. These findings simultaneously highlight the opportunity to further reach and engage students around the opportunities the tech sector offers.

Reasons women say they're personally interested in a career in tech

It allows the potential to be creative in their role

43%	40%	32%	29%	31%
High school students	Undergraduate students	Early career tech professionals	Experienced tech professionals	Re-entrants

Vs. 33% Global average

It offers the ability to carve their own path

30%	27%	24%	22%	24%
High school students	Undergraduate students	Early career tech professionals	Experienced tech professionals	Re-entrants

Vs. 25% Global average

It provides the chance to be successful from a young age

29%	25%	23%	20%	25%
High school students	Undergraduate students	Early career tech professionals	Experienced tech professionals	Re-entrants

Vs. 25% Global average

Skills development, exposure to subjects and overall education during a young age has a significant influence on women's eventual career selections.

Globally, nearly 4 in 5 women say their career choices are influenced by the skills they learn in school and in higher education (79%) and by the subjects they studied (77%). With this in mind, efforts to bridge the tech gender gap need to begin early on to encourage curiosity and participation in STEM education.

Factors that influence career choice for women overall (those currently in the tech industry as well as students interested to pursue a career in tech)

Being exposed to certain skills early on

US	UK	France	Netherlands	Germany
81%	74%	73%	69%	78%

Spain	Brazil	India	China	Australia
74%	85%	88%	84%	79%

The subjects they are studying or have studied

US	UK	France	Netherlands	Germany
76%	69%	73%	73%	74%

| Spain	Brazil	India	China	Australia
72%	84%	88%	85%	74%

Booking.com

Parental encouragement – and dedicated industry organizations – also impact women's career choice, and can be key channels to bridging the tech gender gap

2 in 5 women globally are likely to follow in the career footsteps of their parents when considering a profession, a figure that increases among women in India and China. The influence of parents' career path tends to be the strongest among

those who are already in the tech industry versus students considering a career in tech. Tech industry organizations, such as Girls Who Code, also tend to influence career selection, particularly among women in India and China compared with those in other markets.

Percentage of women who will choose/have chosen a career similar to what their parents do

40% Global average

64% India
52% China

25% Undergraduate students
51% Re-entrants
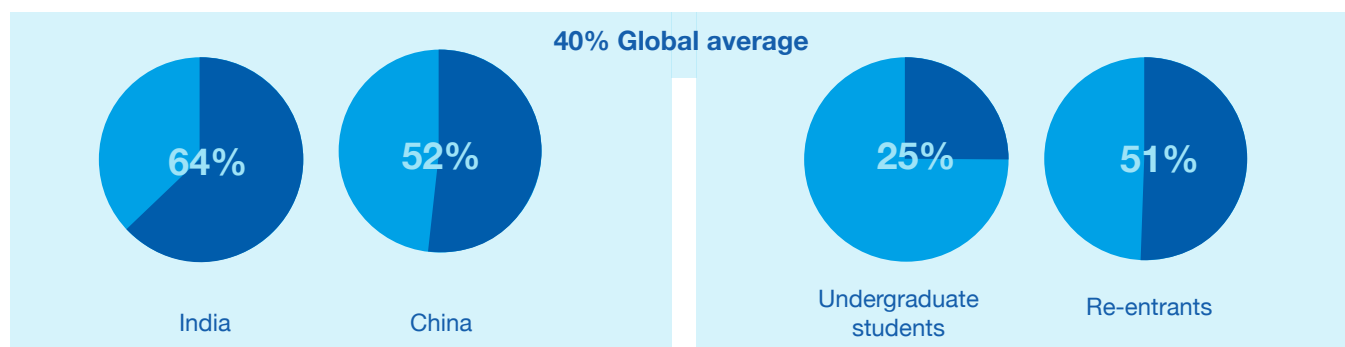
Percentage of women who are likely to turn to tech-related organizations they are part of when sourcing information on potential career options

20% Global average

27% India
36% China