



**CONNECTING  
WOMEN  
IN DIGITAL**

**TWG-6 TERMS OF REFERENCE:  
WOMEN SHAPING THE AI ECONOMY:  
JOBS, SKILLS AND TRANSFORMATION**

[WP3, Task 3.2]



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## 1. Introduction

This Terms of Reference (ToR) sets out the purpose and scope of WIDCON Thematic Working Group 6, ‘Women shaping the AI Economy: Jobs, skills and transformation’. TWG 6 focuses on women’s role in shaping the AI and data economy by examining how women engage with AI and related emerging technologies across sectors.

TWG6 addresses women’s participation and influence as users, developers, innovators, and decision-makers in the design, deployment, and governance of artificial intelligence.

By strengthening women’s agency in emerging technologies, TWG6 aims to reduce the risk that AI systems reinforce existing inequalities and to support a human-centred, trustworthy digital transformation, in line with the EU AI Act and Europe’s digital and gender equality priorities.

TWG6 will examine how AI is transforming jobs, skills, and working conditions across sectors. It focuses on the impact of AI and data-driven technologies on women’s employment and career pathways, identifying both risks and opportunities, and supporting policies that promote fair access to emerging roles, quality jobs, and lifelong learning in an AI-enabled economy.

## 2. Purpose and Scope of the TWG

This TWG focuses on two tightly connected dimensions of Europe's digital transformation:

*First, it examines women's agency and influence in the AI and data economy.*

The scope covers women's engagement with AI and related emerging/data-driven technologies across sectors, including participation as users, developers, innovators, and decision-makers in the design, deployment, and governance of AI systems, and the conditions that enable or constrain women's voice and decision-making power in AI design, oversight, and accountability. The TWG6 aims, by strengthening women's agency in emerging technologies, to reduce the risk that AI systems reinforce existing inequalities and to support a human-centred, trustworthy digital transformation, in line with the EU AI Act and Europe's digital and gender equality priorities.

*Second, it examines how AI is reshaping jobs, skills, and working conditions.*

The scope includes AI-related occupational change, emerging roles, skills transitions, and the risks and opportunities for women's employment, progression, job quality, and lifelong learning. The TWG will identify cross-sector implications and support policy and practice options that promote fair access to emerging roles, quality jobs, and continuous skills development in an AI-enabled economy.

### 3. Focus Area and Challenge Definition

The core challenge of this TWG6 can be described as follows: ensuring that women can shape the AI and data economy and benefit fairly from AI-driven changes to jobs, skills, and working conditions by strengthening women's agency and influence across the AI lifecycle (use, development, deployment, and governance) and by advancing policies and practices that prevent AI from reinforcing existing inequalities, in line with the EU AI Act and Europe's digital and gender equality priorities.

This challenge emphasizes the need to increase women's participation and decision-making power in AI design, deployment, and oversight; to anticipate and mitigate gendered risks in AI-driven labor-market transformation; and to enable fair access for women to emerge roles, quality jobs, and lifelong learning in an AI-enabled economy.

Towards this challenge, the following guiding questions have been defined so far:

- Which priority actions should be recommended to strengthen women's agency, participation, and decision-making power across the AI lifecycle (use, development, deployment, and governance), so that AI design, deployment, and oversight support a human-centered, trustworthy digital transformation in line with the EU AI Act and Europe's digital and gender equality priorities?
- Which risks and opportunities for women's employment and career pathways should the TWG's policy guidance address, given the AI-driven changes to jobs, skills, and working conditions across sectors?

- Which policies and practices should be supported to enable fair access for women to emerging roles, quality jobs, and lifelong learning in an AI-enabled economy, while preventing AI systems from reinforcing existing inequalities, in line with the EU AI Act and Europe's digital and gender equality priorities?

## 4. Objectives

To achieve the purpose and to tackle the indicated challenge, the following objectives are defined for this TWG6. Note that the list of objectives can be updated by the TWG6 experts.

- Identify the key barriers and enabling conditions that shape women’s agency and decision-making power in the AI lifecycle and translate these into actionable options for EU and stakeholder uptake.
- Develop gender-responsive tools (e.g., checklists) for AI providers and deployers/procurers by helping prevent AI systems from reinforcing existing inequalities, in line with the EU AI Act and EU digital and gender equality priorities.
- Assess how AI is transforming jobs, skills, and working conditions across (chosen) sectors, and identifying the most material risks and opportunities for women’s employment and career pathways (entry, progression, job quality, and learning needs).
- Formulate a set of implementable recommendations (policy and practice) to promote fair access for women to emerging roles, quality jobs, and lifelong learning in an AI-enabled economy, and present these in formats usable by EC services and stakeholders such as policy briefs and stakeholder action guides.

## 5. Expertise Required

To ensure high-quality and informed recommendations, the TWG6 will consist of **12 to 15 members** with diverse geographic and stakeholder representation. Members must be part of the Forum and have relevant expertise in the TWG6 topic.

Preferred expertise should be in one or more of the following areas (members should cover one or more):

- Gender equality in the digital/AI economy, including barriers/enablers for women's participation, leadership, and decision-making across AI value chains.
- EU AI Act and trustworthy/human-centered AI governance: risk management, transparency, human oversight, accountability, and operational compliance implications for providers/deployers.
- AI literacy and workforce capability building (designing organizational measures, training approaches, and role-based competence needs).
- Labor-market impacts of AI and data-driven technologies: task change, occupational transitions, job quality, working conditions, and gender-differentiated effects (risk/opportunity analysis).
- Skills policy and lifelong learning: reskilling/upskilling models, micro-credentials/qualification pathways, employer engagement, and access/equity mechanisms.
- Data economy and emerging technologies (incl. sectoral deployment contexts), with attention to gendered access to innovation, entrepreneurship, and adoption.

- Evidence-to-policy and monitoring: translating findings into implementable policy guides, defining feasible implementation conditions (owners/incentives) and “light-touch” monitoring signals relevant to EU priorities on women in ICT/digital skills.

The TWG6 will prioritise geographical diversity and women’s participation and leadership to ensure a balanced representation of perspectives across different EU countries and other regions, as well as a balance between gender studies and digital/AI domain representatives to merge theoretical and practical expertise. This approach will support the development of comprehensive guidelines and best practices that reflect the full range of European experiences and challenges in strengthening women’s participation and influence in the AI and data economy and in AI-driven workforce transformation.

## 6. Value Proposition for Members

Participating in the TWG6 **Women shaping the AI Economy: Jobs, skills and transformation** offer a unique opportunity to shape the future of an AI-enabled economy and equity across Europe. Members will collaborate with peers across the Forum to co-develop targeted, evidence-based recommendations and policy guides for the European Commission and relevant stakeholders, focused on strengthening women's agency and influence across the AI lifecycle (use, development, deployment, and governance) and supporting fair access to quality jobs, emerging roles, and lifelong learning in an AI-enabled economy. By joining this TWG, the members will be able to:

- Influence European policy on gender equality in the AI and data economy, including the implementation agenda for trustworthy, human-centred AI in line with the EU AI Act.
- Access and contribute to a high-level platform that showcases leading practices and innovations in gender-responsive AI governance and inclusive AI-enabled workforce transitions (jobs, skills, and working conditions).
- Engage with a dynamic community of peers focused on systemic change and gender equality in Europe's digital transformation, with direct relevance to AI-driven economic and labor-market shifts.
- Co-author strategic outputs to be disseminated at the Women in Digital Annual Summit and beyond, increasing both the visibility and practical uptake of the TWG's recommendations.
- Gain early access to emerging data, best practices, and insights through collaborative research, peer exchange, and expert consultation.

Together, this TWG6 will not just be identifying challenges, it will be shaping solutions that will resonate across sectors and organizations, empower women, and help secure a digitally inclusive Europe.



## 7. Roles and Management of the TWG

The TWG6 will be composed of three main roles. Each of them is listed below, explaining how it will be selected and what the main responsibilities are for them:

- **Secretariat:** The secretariat is formed in the WIDCON project to manage the Forum as well as the TWGs. Main responsibilities:
  - Facilitate the development of the TWG supporting the chair in the management.
  - Collect and provide a list of registrations for each TWG to the Chair.
  - TWG progress revision and logistics.
  - Communication and dissemination of the TWG results.

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- **Chair and Co-chair:**
  - Selection guidelines:
    - Each TWG in the WIDCON project has an assigned partner from WIDCON, who leads the TWG and serves as the chair of the TWG.
    - For this TWG, the chair will be appointed by University Polytechnic of Catalunya (Spain).
    - The co-chair will be selected among the Chair organization, WIDCON partners or the Forum members, evaluating the person's expertise in

the TWG topic and possibilities to contribute to the TWG management process.

- Main responsibilities:
  - Select TWG members
  - Organize and schedule the meetings, provide meeting minutes.
  - Align the TWG's target scope with the overall project vision and refine it according to the TWG topic.
  - Lead the TWG discussions and the presentation of its results.
- **Expert:**
  - Selection guidelines:
    - 12 to 15 experts will be selected for each TWG from registered Forum members in the TWG.
    - The expert's selection will be made by a joint effort of the chair, co-chair and secretariat members, analyzing each profile (available online in LinkedIn, other systems or presented as a CV) and motivation (expressed in the application form).
    - The expert selection criteria will be oriented on multiple factors:
      - The person's experience in the digital and gender equality areas.
      - The person's dedication to contributing to the TWG's aim.
      - The TWG team as a whole should present diverse sectors (listed above).
      - The TWG team as a whole should present diverse geographical and/or cultural regions.

- Main responsibilities:
  - Will participate in the TWG activities, providing their insights, sharing best practices and ideas for possible improvement paths.
  - Will contribute to the summary of the discussed questions and actionable recommendations.

Participation in multiple TWGs should be controlled to guarantee diversity and concentration on specific areas of expertise. There are no hard limits yet, but chairs may apply an assessment tool (point system) to manage oversubscription and ensure balanced representation across TWGs.

## 8. Experts' Expected Commitment and Participation

To ensure the success and impact of this Thematic Working Group, experts are expected to contribute actively to internal TWG6 activities and relevant Forum/project touchpoints. This includes participating in periodic online meetings/workshops, sharing evidence, examples, and perspectives from their contexts, and supporting the collaborative development, review, and refinement of outputs. The level of engagement is intended to match the ambition to produce practical, actionable insights and recommendations on women's participation and influence in the AI economy and on AI-driven changes to jobs, skills, and working conditions.

Each expert will be part of a dedicated TWG6 aligned with their area of expertise and the project's core focus: **Strengthening women's agency and influence across the AI lifecycle and enabling fair access for women to jobs, skills, and lifelong learning in an AI-enabled economy**. Members are expected to:

- Participate in **regular virtual meetings and workshops** —on average every 3–4 weeks, with more frequent sessions (e.g., biweekly) during high-output phases such as drafting or review.
- Contribute to **literature reviews, case analysis, and policy consultations** related to the TWG's scope.
- Share **data, insights, or institutional examples** relevant to their country or field.
- Collaborate on the **drafting and peer review of key deliverables**, including interim reports and recommendations.

- Provide **constructive feedback and thought leadership** in group discussions and document reviews.
- Attend the **Annual Women in Digital Summit**,<sup>1</sup> a high-level, in-person event designed to:
  - **Showcase the work of the TWG**, including findings and recommendations.
  - **Facilitate dialogue with policymakers, stakeholder representatives.**
  - **Build visibility** for the WiD Forum and its experts at the European level.

Experts' dedication is expected to be approximately 5 hours per month.

The experts of the TWG6 will expand their professional network and contribute meaningfully to advancing gender equity in the digital space. As recognition for their contributions, the WIDCON project will ensure expert visibility on its website and social media platforms, highlighting their input and reinforcing their role in shaping the discourse on women's digital inclusion.

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<sup>1</sup> Participation in the Annual Summit is not compulsory to participate in the TWG but we encourage participants to attend the event and we will support participants with a travel allowance.

## 9. Support to Participants

The WIDCON project provides dedicated support to facilitate the effective participation of members in the Thematic Working Groups. This support is designed to ensure smooth collaboration, efficient communication, and fair access to project activities.

**Collaboration tools:** Each TWG will have a dedicated **private SharePoint space**, managed by the respective Chair, where members can upload, access, and exchange relevant materials and documents. Additionally, an **independent channel on Discord** will be created for each TWG, offering an interactive space for members to share updates, events, news, and initiatives related to the group's thematic focus.

**Support for participation in the Annual Summit:** Members of the TWGs are encouraged to take part in the WIDCON Annual Summit. To ensure inclusiveness and active participation, the WIDCON project allocates specific funding to support travel and accommodation for TWG6 members attending the Annual Summit. This support is coordinated by the Secretariat in collaboration with TWG Chairs and is prioritised for active members who have significantly contributed to their TWG's work. Clear guidance on eligibility criteria, application procedures, and reimbursement processes will be circulated to all TWG6 members in advance of each Annual Summit.

## 10. Initial Work Plan

To guide activities while allowing flexibility, the TWG will follow this initial work plan, that can be adapted according each TWG needs

**Consultation formats** can include:

- **Online meetings and workshops:** enabling broad participation across geographical boundaries.
- **Collaborative online platforms:** for real-time document sharing, discussions, and continuous feedback.
- **Focus groups and interviews:** direct consultations with stakeholders to capture diverse perspectives.

In the first TWG meeting, a roundtable discussion will be organized to divide the main challenge into micro-ones, areas of barriers, and its more detailed specifications. This will combine more creative and more structured approaches in highlighting the existing challenges and laying the path to further discussion on who is affecting it and what actions could be taken to change it.

Further meetings will follow the format, where a quick recap of the previous meeting results will be done, with a possibility to raise some new questions or insights generated after the meeting. Further, the meeting will concentrate on a new discussion topic, using different formats, depending on the discussed question (interviews and reviews to estimate the main barriers and extract the best practices, roundtable discussions and workshops to generate new ideas, etc.).

The discussions will be summarised, providing concentrated key points and actionable recommendations. Considering some questions or ideas might be too specific or not widely accepted, each decision or report should be consensus driven. If the decision is not supported by at least 2/3 of the TWG members, an additional discussion session should be used to express the arguments for and against. After this session, the majority opinion is used to make the decision. This should lead to a more unified vision and final recommendations validated by the full TWG.

The TWG will operate for a period of up to 9 months, ensuring sufficient time for research, analysis, stakeholder consultation, and the development of actionable recommendations.

To guide activities while allowing flexibility, the TWG will follow this initial work plan, that can be adapted according each TWG needs.

## Phase 0: Preparation of the TWG

- Approval of the Terms of Reference (ToR) by the Secretariat.
- Formal launch of the TWG and the Call for Interest.
- Deadline for applications and expert selection.

## Phase 1: Initiation (Month 1)

- **Kick-off meeting:** to introduce participants, clarify objectives, and establish working rules.
- **Expert mapping:** review of participants' expertise and identification of potential gaps requiring additional consultation.

- **Formalisation of participation:** Signing of the ToR (within the deadline) by all TWG members and submission to the Chair. The ToR must be accepted as issued. Individual edits, footnotes, or disclaimers are not permitted. Clarifications are handled via email and FAQs prior to signature. Lack of signature by the deadline triggers reserve-list activation.

## Phase 2: Problem analysis and research (Months 2–3)

- **Structuring of the problem:** Develop a taxonomy of the main barriers
- **Literature review and data collection:** Collect relevant case studies, statistical data, and reports.
- **Consultations:** Conduct discussions, expert interviews, and stakeholder focus groups.
- **Interim reporting:** Consolidate initial findings for group review and feedback.

By the end of **Month 3**, the TWG should have confirmed its challenge and collected sufficient material to proceed.

## Phase 3: Development of recommendations (Months 4–7)

- **Case study identification:** Highlight successful examples and regional best practices
- **Defining intervention areas:** Identify priority fields for action (policy, education, industry).
- **Drafting solutions:** Formulate targeted recommendations and practical interventions.

- **Integration workshops:** Organise sessions to consolidate findings, align on recommendations, and refine proposed solutions. At least one workshop should be organised per TWG.
- **Drafting outputs:** Assign writing responsibilities for sections of the deliverable.

**By Month 7:** A structured draft (Table of Contents and drafted sections) should be completed.

#### Phase 4: Validation and finalisation (Months 8–9)

- **Peer review and validation:** Share the draft with external experts and stakeholders for feedback.
- **Refinement and finalisation:** Integrate feedback and produce the final report and recommendations.
- **Dissemination planning:** Prepare strategies to communicate findings to policymakers, industry, and education stakeholders. Presentation of Best practices and/or results at the WiD Annual Forum.
- **By Month 9:** The deliverable must be completed and validated.

## 11. Expected Outcomes

The TWG is expected to produce a subset of the following key deliverables:

- **Policy brief.** Summarising key barriers, best practices, and expert recommendations and providing actionable insights for policymakers, with a focus on strengthening women's agency and influence across the AI lifecycle and enabling fair access to emerging roles, quality jobs, and lifelong learning in an AI-enabled economy, in line with the EU AI Act.
- **Organization briefing toolkit.** Providing presentation decks, executive summaries, and briefing notes for dissemination among organizations to support implementation of gender-responsive AI governance and inclusive AI-enabled workforce transitions (jobs, skills, and working conditions).
- **Educational framework.** A guide for integrating AI literacy, role-based competence development, and gender-responsive approaches into upskilling/reskilling and digital skills training programs, emphasising tailored approaches based on EU-wide best practices.
- **Best practices repository.** Case studies, success stories, and best practices on gender-responsive AI governance, inclusive AI deployment, and AI-enabled workforce transitions that can serve as models for other regions or institutions.

## 12. Review and Adjustments

A mid-term review may be conducted to assess progress and make necessary adjustments to ensure alignment with objectives and expected outcomes. The TWG's work plan may be adapted as needed to accommodate emerging insights or stakeholder feedback.

The review may be done by the WIDCON Secretariat, in collaboration with the Governing Board, evaluating the progress and achieved results in month 5. For this period the phase 1 should be finished, and a structured summary of the challenges and objectives of the TWG6 should be provided. Also, the initial version of at least one outcome should be provided.

## 13. Conclusion

By bringing together a group of experts dedicated to addressing women’s participation and influence in the AI economy, with a specific focus on AI-driven transformation of jobs, skills, and working conditions.

By setting out clear objectives, required expertise, an operational work plan, and agreed working methods, it enables targeted research, collaborative analysis, and the development of actionable, evidence-informed recommendations.

Through this process, the TWG6 will generate practical outputs: policy guidance, briefing materials, and a repository of relevant practices that can inform European Commission services and stakeholders, support implementation aligned with the EU AI Act, and contribute to more inclusive, human-centered, and trustworthy digital transformation across education, labor-market, and organizational contexts.