



ECWT is from 1 November 2020 until 31 October 2024 partner in the ERASMUS+ Knowledge Alliance project European Centre of Vocational Excellence in Microelectronics and is involved in four other ERASMUS+ projects at present.

ERACON 2023 is the largest convention focusing on Erasmus+ initiatives and this year it is the 19th ERACON conference and exhibition that is attracting 291 organizations from various countries within the EU the 26-30th June in Rome.

On the 27th June 27 the European Centre for Women and Technology hosted a thematic workshop titled WOMEN IN TECH: LET'S BREAK THE SILICON CEILING! in the context of ERACON 2023.

The workshop focused on one of the strategic priority agendas of the European Commission the European Chips Act and reversing the semiconductor skills shortage and provided practical guidance and invited to new joint actions for achieving growing diversity, equity and inclusion in the European Microelectronics industry.

Keynote speakers of the event were Eva Fabry, Director of ECWT, Maria Boura, Executive Advisor Strategy, Leadership, and 5G and co-founder Women Leadership Hub and Diego Domenici, Outreach expert from Trust-IT Services and Dimitris Raftopoulos, Knowledge Broker ECWT moderated the highly interactive session.

In her introduction the director of ECWT gave an overview of the latest European progress in the microelectronics sector and the relevant Pact for Skills initiatives and presented ECOVEM as the primary initiative putting in place a Centre of Vocational Excellence in Microelectronics with (i) targeted programs to enhance coding and STEM interest among

girls to go for careers in microelectronics, (ii) launching of a DEI Lighthouse in Microelectronics in collaboration with Pact for Skills and WEF, (iii) a European Role Models Databank and with National Chapters and (iv) a European webinar series showcasing good examples of DEI in Microelectronics and Digital Transformations.

Executive Advisor Maria Boura shared her vast experiences from ERICSSON and focused on “How can we attract more women to engage in the semiconductors industry (in ICT, in tech in general) and benefit from the excellent potential they represent and How can we get more women to take on senior leadership positions, so that we can build a better world for all of us?” Maria shared her own career experiences and gave hands-on advice regarding how new generations can meet the key challenges.

Communication and Outreach Expert Diego Domenici’s organization TRUST-IT is at present, working to bring together the various stakeholders in the semiconductor industry in Europe and strengthen the sector by creating opportunities for dialogue and collaboration.

Diego shared the experiences of TRUST-IT from a series of interviews with female leaders from across Europe, where they had discussed the issue of diversity in STEM disciplines and the barriers that prevent women from entering fields such as the chips industry. The full interviews will be published in the near future.

Finally the panel discussed the Global Gender Gap Report 2023 statistics, women in STEM, and microelectronics in particular, and women in leadership roles, as well as Europe's ambitious goal for supporting DEIS.

Furthermore, utilizing an interactive method with strong audience participation, the discussion focused on

- How can we encourage the next generation of engineers to learn more about the microelectronics industry?
- How can we encourage more women to hold senior leadership roles at the top of the business and governmental sectors in order to create a better society for all of us?

The event concluded with each panelist discussing their vision for breaking down obstacles and creating critical mass for the reforms mentioned.