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75inQ Public Comment:

Chips Act 2

Introduction

75inQ welcomes the Commission's initiative in reviewing the efficiency of the Chips Act. We hold the view that several weaknesses of the Chips Act could be curbed by emphasizing gender equality in the field of semiconductors.

Comments

In the European Union context, the share of women in semiconductor-related ICT specialist roles is about 19.5% as of 2023, according to the European Commission's Digital Decade progress reports. According to McKinsey, they account for only 17% of overall tech roles in the semiconductor industry.¹ The EC document detailing the problem the initiative aims to tackle mentions the EU lacks manufacturing capacities as well as monitoring capacities. Ensuring gender equality in the semi-conductor workforce would mitigate that issue, at least on the staffing aspect of the necessary increase in capacity. In other words, where the share of women in the industry is increased to match the male workforce without decreasing the latter, the skill shortage would be made up for.²

Article 8 TFEU states that the EU shall in all its activities eliminate inequalities and promote equality between women and men. Promoting and ensuring gender equality in the field of semi-conductors would not only be a solution to the detailed problem, but also the fulfillment of an obligation the EU set for itself.

Such a measure could reap high social impacts, depending on the instruments deployed. Hiring quotas alone would likely not increase the workforce of an already understaffed work field. Where engineering education paths and specialisations in semi-conductors

¹<https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/semiconductors/our-insights/how-semiconductor-companies-can-fill-the-expanding-talent-gap>

²<https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/semiconductors/our-insights/how-semiconductor-companies-can-fill-the-expanding-talent-gap>

are promoted and incentivised among young women, economic inequality between men and women would decrease. Great job creation would come as a result.

Suggestions

To meet such objectives, a new arm should be added to the original act, within new articles if not through a new chapter.

Those shall include:

1. A gender mainstreaming provision
2. A provision urging member states to conduct awareness campaigns among young female professionals, in order to orient them towards the semiconductor industry
3. Incentivising semiconductor studies for women, through targeted subsidy schemes
4. Establishing gendered quotas in the semiconductor industry.

About 75InQ:

The 75inQ foundation works to accelerate the transition to sustainable energy by promoting gender equality in line with the Sustainable Development Goals developed by the United Nations. The Dutch foundation conducts research, awareness campaigns, community outreach and facilitation to pursue these objectives. 75inQ focuses on SDG7 and SDG5 by accelerating diversity in the energy sector towards a more inclusive and sustainable energy transition. 75inQ has an active community of 1400 female professionals in the energy sector.

