

A large, stylized orange chevron graphic pointing to the right, with the text "High performance. Delivered." centered within its shape.

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# Digital Skills Help Narrow the Workplace Gender Gap, Accenture Research Finds

## Singapore Ranked 5th Globally for Women Advancing at Work

SINGAPORE; March 28, 2016 – Digital skills and technologies are helping women in Singapore find, and advance at, work, but men remain the dominant wage earners, Accenture research shows. Women’s success in becoming digitally fluent – the extent to which they embrace and use digital technologies to become more knowledgeable, connected and effective – moved Singapore to 5th place among 31 countries participating in Accenture’s research.

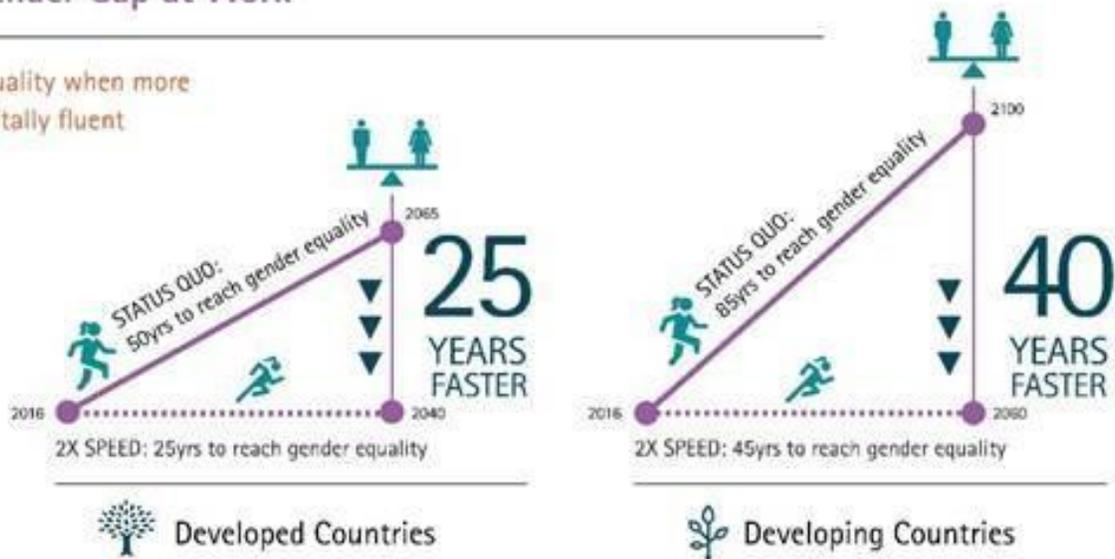
The new research report from [Accenture](#) (NYSE:ACN), [Getting to Equal: How Digital is Helping Close the Gender Gap at Work](#), provides empirical proof that women are using digital skills to gain an edge in preparing for work, finding work and advancing at work. While women still lag behind men in digital fluency in all but a handful of countries, improving their digital skills can change the picture.

If governments and businesses can double the pace at which women become digitally fluent, gender equality could be achieved in 25 years in developed nations, versus 50 years at the current pace. Gender equality in the workplace could be achieved in 45 years in developing nations, versus 85 years at the current pace.

“Women represent an untapped talent pool that can help fill the gap between the skills needed to stay competitive and the talent available,” said Pierre Nanterme, Accenture’s chairman and chief executive officer. “There is a clear opportunity for governments and businesses to collaborate on efforts that will empower more women with digital skills – and accelerate gender equality in the workforce.”

## Closing the Gender Gap at Work

Speed to gender equality when more women become digitally fluent



Source: *Getting to Equal: How Digital is Helping Close the Gender Gap at Work*, Accenture 2016

Although digital fluency helps women advance in their careers, its impact has not closed the gender gap among executives – or extended to pay equality. In Singapore, men are still, by far, the dominant earners by household for all three generations. This will change as more millennial women and digital natives move into management. The research found that, in Singapore, seven in 10 millennial and Gen X women surveyed aspire to be in leadership positions.

Men use digital to prepare for and find work more frequently than women (100 percent and 90 percent, respectively). Yet, the research found that, when women and men have the same level of digital proficiency, women are better at leveraging it to find work. Nearly 60 percent (58 percent) of all survey respondents in Singapore – men and women combined—agreed that digital enables them to work from home; 42 percent said it provides a better balance between personal and professional lives; and 48 percent report digital has increased access to job opportunities.

Women’s digital fluency is toward the lower ends of the scores in the research model and the gap between men and women is the second largest. The model helps measure how digitally fluent women are compared to men, as well as how much that fluency is helping to drive positive changes in their education, employment and advancement at work.

The scores for education are relatively low for women and Singapore is one of the countries where men outperform women, according to the model. But 74 percent of millennial and Gen X women report having earned a university degree, compared to only 11 percent of their mothers. Despite the low scores for digital fluency and education, women here do reasonably well for employment and advancement at work. Singapore’s advancement score is the fifth highest in the model.

“Although Singapore has performed better than the global average in terms of overall gender diversity, the research also found that Singapore has one of the biggest digital gaps between men and women, in which digital

fluency will undoubtedly play a bigger role in helping to close the gender gap,” said Teo Lay Lim, Accenture Senior Managing Director, ASEAN, and Country Managing Director, Singapore. “At Accenture in ASEAN, women currently make up 49.4 percent of our workforce, and we are committed to grooming the next generation of women leaders. This means meaningful investments in building women’s digital skills – through education, training and on-the-job learning – which will help speed their progress at every career stage.”

This is the first time that Accenture has published its [ASEAN gender workforce demographics and statistics](#). Moving forward, Accenture intends to report annually on its progress across diversity and inclusion globally.

“By taking a bold step towards increased transparency around our gender diversity statistics, Accenture is strengthening our commitment to levelling the playing field for women in the workplace. With access to an increased talent pool in the region, this will allow us to better serve the needs of our clients, people and communities. Encouraging young women and girls to develop Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) skills is critical to both our business and the region’s continuous development, and I believe that women have a lot to contribute in this area,” Teo added.

## Methodology

To identify and better understand the role of digital fluency in workforce gender equality, the Accenture Digital Fluency Model was developed. A survey was conducted in December 2015 and January 2016 of more than 4,900 women and men in 31 countries to assess the extent to which people are using digital technologies in their personal and home life, as well as in their education and work. The sample included equal representation of working men and women, representing three generations (Millennials, Gen X and Baby Boomers) across all workforce levels at companies of varying size. The margin of error for the total sample was approximately +/- 1.4 percent. Digital technologies include virtual coursework, digital collaboration tools (webcams, instant messaging), social media platforms and use of digital devices, such as smart phones. Survey responses were combined with published reports and publicly available information on education, employment and leadership and research from the World Bank, the OECD, World Economic Forum and the ITU World Telecommunication. Countries included in the Model are Argentina, Australia, Austria, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, Greater China (includes Hong Kong and Taiwan), India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, the Nordics (Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden), Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and United States.

## About Accenture

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experience and specialized skills across more than 40 industries and all business functions – underpinned by the world’s largest delivery network – Accenture works at the intersection of business and technology to help clients improve their performance and create sustainable value for their stakeholders. With approximately 373,000 people serving clients in more than 120 countries, Accenture drives innovation to improve the way the world works and lives. Visit us at [www.accenture.com](http://www.accenture.com).

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