# Gender equality, digital nomads and remote workers

Across Europe the increase in remote and hybrid workers and digital nomads are reshaping cities. Cities believe that this offers opportunities for local economic development but is there a risk that it might deepen gender inequality?

This was the topic of the 3rd Remote-IT Online Forum on 24 April, led by Ad Hoc Experts Sally Kneeshaw and Alison Partridge. The main areas of focus are summarised below along with a comprehensive list of references and links to further information.

### Why gender equality matters to cities looking to attract and retain digital nomads and support remote workers

| **Challenges** | **Risks** |
| --- | --- |
| Women do more unpaid care work. | Remote work can entrench gender roles. |
| Safety, mobility, and visa issues affect women more. | Digital nomads are not a gender-balanced group - there is not much research but at least 60% of digital nomads are man |
| Proximity bias in hybrid roles. | Reduced visibility = fewer promotions |
| Sectors dominated by women are often not compatible with remote and hybrid working. | Gender divides in tech and entrepreneurship remain |

### Examples of what works

| **City** | **Good Practice** |
| --- | --- |
| **Umeå** | Gender sensitive planning, safe public spaces, youth-led design |
| **Vienna** | Mainstreaming gender equality across departments, women in tech |
| **Milan** | Gender Atlas: data, visibility, mobility and safety audits |
| **Barcelona** | Digital equity, inclusive innovation, STEM support for women |

### Four tips for cities

**A. Create inclusive infrastructure including:**- Local, affordable co-working  
- Childcare, quiet zones, safe design

**B. Enable welcoming local support networks e.g.**- Mentorship for women  
- Visibility for diverse role models

**C. Consider the importance of safety & wellbeing** - Lighting, transport, healthcare access  
 - Violence prevention and safety-first planning

**D. Start with better data** - Collect gender-disaggregated data  
 - Evaluate, share and improve policy decisions

### 5. References and links to more information.

**URBACT Gender Equal Cities Resources and Links**

**URBACT.EU**

[**Gender Equal Cities Reports**](https://urbact.eu/gender-equal-cities-report-2022)

[**Online Training Gender Responsive Procurement**](https://urbact.eu/knowledge-hub/procurement)

**Council of European Municipalities and Regions**

[**Charter for Equality in local life**](https://ccre-cemr.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Charter_2022_EN.pdf)

**European Institute for Gender Equality**

**Datastore**

[**Toolkits on Gender Mainstreaming, Budgeting and Procurement**](https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/toolkits-guides)

[**SALAR- Swedish Local Authority Association Gender Impact Assessment**](https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/toolkits/gender-impact-assessment/swedish-municipalities-salar?language_content_entity=en#:~:text=Between%202008%20and%202013%2C%20SALAR,of%20resources%20regardless%20of%20sex.)

**City of Vienna**

[**Manuals on gender mainstreaming and more**](https://www.wien.gv.at/english/administration/gendermainstreaming/principles/manual.html)

**City of Umea**

[**Good Practice**](https://urbact.eu/good-practices/gender-equality-heart-city)

[**Film**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VsZNJa5TYbM)

[**https://visitumea.se/en/equality-umea**](https://visitumea.se/en/equality-umea)

**Article-** [**https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2024/oct/30/the-worlds-most-feminist-city-how-umea-in-sweden-became-an-idyll-for-women**](https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2024/oct/30/the-worlds-most-feminist-city-how-umea-in-sweden-became-an-idyll-for-women)

[**Park re-design**](https://www.makespaceforgirls.co.uk/case-studies/umea)

[**Make Space for Girls**](https://www.makespaceforgirls.co.uk/)

[**Women in Forestry**](https://urbact.eu/articles/gender-equality-forestry-industry)

**London:** [**Creating places that work for Women and Girls**](https://live-qeop.pantheonsite.io/sites/default/files/attachments/Creating%20places%20that%20work%20for%20Women%20and%20Girls%20Handbook%20FINAL_0.pdf)

**Catalonia-** [**Schoolyards Research**](https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7158781055913603072/)

**What Women Look at Research-**[*https://www.liebertpub.com/doi/full/10.1089*](https://www.liebertpub.com/doi/full/10.1089)

[**Mobility and Gender Research**](https://cities-today.com/research-shows-how-safety-concerns-impact-womens-travel-patterns/)

**Recommended reading: Invisible Women -by Caroline Criado Perez**

[Milan Gender Atlas](https://www.letteraventidue.com/en/prodotto/508/milano-atlante-di-genere)

ANDREOLA, F.; and MUZZONIGRO A. (2021),

**STEAM and Enterprise**

[Weiberwirtschaft Berlin](https://weiberwirtschaft.de/home/) The women's cooperative WeiberWirtschaft has established Europe's largest center for female founders and entrepreneurs.

Barcelona Activa featured in Gender Equal Cities Report and [Lidera](https://urbact.eu/articles/barcelona-opens-its-first-workspace-women-entrepreneurship-organizations-and-entities)

[La Rochelle IAP](https://urbact.eu/sites/default/files/2023-01/GenderedLandscape%20Final%20IAP%20CdA%20La%20Rochelle%2C%20English.pdf)

[**Reducing the gender gap in STEAM**](https://urbact.eu/good-practices/reducing-gender-gap-steam) **Good Practice**