

SPACE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH SYMPOSIUM (E1)
Space Culture – Public Engagement in Space through Culture (9)

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DRAWING A GENDER ANALYSIS THAT DOCUMENTS AND DESCRIBES THE
GENDER-SPECIFIC SITUATIONS, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES THAT EXIST IN THE
MEXICAN SPACE SECTOR.

Abstract

In most technology companies the percentage of women is between 20% and 30%, between 10% and 20% if we look only at technical posts and about 15% in councils. When you look to the space sector, the number of women its smaller. For example, women astronauts remain a minority, representing only the 10% of persons traveling in space missions.

The numbers show that half of the population is not being represented in this field area, and we are still ignoring that societies and economies are deeply gendered. It is necessary to encourage more girls to pursue an STEM career or to participate in space activities from their area of expertise, because being an astronaut is not the only way to space, it is necessary to make space for women. It is necessary to highlight the participation of women in the space sector, because female mentors will break down stereotypes of what women should be doing, by becoming clear examples that space can be reachable from anywhere.

In Mexico, only 31% of the students in engineering are women, and around 10% are working in something related to space. The Mexican Space Agency (AEM) is the responsible of the Mexican space policy, and is an actor with global responsibility, interacting with the International space community. AEM was created on 2010 making of it a brand-new Space Agency, this is an area of opportunity for the Mexican space sector, because it is possible to start promoting a gender equality space policy, and to be considered as an example for all the Latin American countries.

This paper intends to make an assessment of the situation of Mexican women in science and space technology from a gender perspective, highlighting the role played by women in order to bring to light the contributions of women in the space field.