

Equality Report for Cisco Norway 2024



Intro

Cisco's mission is to power an inclusive future for all, beginning with our employees. Through our Conscious Culture, we cultivate a positive and fulfilling workplace where every individual can thrive. We welcome individuals from diverse backgrounds to develop their careers at Cisco and are committed to ensuring fair and equitable pay for all employees.

We recognize the existing gap in the representation of women at Cisco, particularly in higher-paying roles, which reflects the broader disparities in STEM education and the technology industry. Cisco is actively working to close these representation gaps through various initiatives. We inspire children and young adults to explore technology careers by collaborating with programs like TENK Tech-Nettverket for Kvinner and Girls in ICT. Our partnerships with organizations such as Ada NTNU and ODA further demonstrate our commitment to bridging the gender gap in technology. This includes adopting an inclusive recruitment approach with balanced interview panels and focusing on nurturing and retaining talent.

We understand that addressing these gaps is an ongoing journey, and we are dedicated to addressing challenges and seizing opportunities. We offer unique experiences for early talent through our Emerging Talent Network and annual intern and graduate programs, paving the way for exciting careers in engineering, sales, services, and supply chain. As we strive to close these gaps, we continue to create new opportunities for attracting, nurturing, and retaining our top talent. We acknowledge that more work is needed, and we are committed to continuous learning and action. This report outlines our progress and efforts to support every employee and develop the technology leaders of the future.

Trine Stromsnes
Managing Director



Equality report for Cisco Systems Norway AS

The below is to clarify the actual conditions with regards to gender equality at Cisco Systems Norway AS in 2024, hereinafter referred to as Cisco.

Gender balance

At the end of 2024, Cisco had 517 employees, of which 117 were women. The board consisted of 3 men and 4 women.

Temporary/Internships/Fixed-Term Contracts.

In 2024, Cisco had 3 employees on fixed-term contracts, which equals 0.19% of the female employees and 0.38% of the male

employees. These employees were employed as summer interns.

Part-time employment is a voluntary option available at Cisco, upon individual request to accommodate individual needs. Cisco had 4 employees working part-time in 2024, which equals 0.85% of the female employees and 0.75% of the male employees.

The average number of weeks of parental leave in 2024

Parental leaves were distributed at 19.8 weeks in average for women and 12 weeks in average for men.



Part 2

Working towards promoting gender equality and to prevent discrimination

All regular employees worldwide at Cisco are required to annually confirm that they have reviewed, understood, and agree to adhere to the policies and guidelines outlined in the Cisco Code of Business Conduct (COBC).

The COBC is Cisco's guide to fostering a culture of integrity, emphasizing:

- Honest and ethical conduct in all relationships
- Full, fair, accurate, timely, and understandable disclosure in public reports and documents
- Protection of all confidential, personal, and proprietary information
- Compliance with applicable government laws rules, regulations, and directives
- Prompt internal reporting of any violations of the COBC
- Compliance by every Cisco employee worldwide
- Creating a conscious culture

The observation of anything that could cause harm to another employee, or Cisco as a company, must be reported either to the manager, People & Communities (HR) representative or to the Ethics office.

Conscious Culture at Cisco is defined as a culture where everyone takes responsibility for fostering an inclusive, collaborative, and respectful environment. This culture supports Cisco's purpose to power an inclusive future for all. Cisco offers a digital e-learning experience called Building Skills for Conscious Culture (BSCC), designed to foster an inclusive, anti-discriminatory, and respectful workplace culture. This training educates employees on unconscious bias, workplace harassment, anti-discrimination, allyship, and conscious culture principles. It aims to equip teams with a common language and skills to recognize and mitigate bias and social injustice, creating a strong, inclusive global culture especially relevant in today's hybrid work environment.

Recruitment

At Cisco, fostering a diverse and inclusive workforce remains integral to our core values, and our recruitment processes continue to reflect this commitment. Recognizing the significant role that interviews and hiring practices play in shaping our teams, Cisco maintains diverse interview panels to ensure a balance of perspectives. These panels—comprising both men and women—work closely with hiring managers to promote fairness, consistency, and equity in candidate evaluations.

To help bridge the gender divide, Cisco has continued to evolve its talent acquisition approach. We broaden candidate sourcing channels, emphasize skills-first assessments, and reinforce the importance of diverse interview panels and candidate slates. A core element of this transformation remains the Certified Interviewer Training, launched in 2022. Completion of this training continues to be mandatory for all hiring managers and interviewers. The program equips teams to recognize unconscious bias, enhance the candidate experience, and ensure objective and inclusive evaluations across all roles.

Cisco's diverse interview training remains a cornerstone for ensuring thorough and unbiased candidate assessments. Diversity hiring continues to be embedded in all recruitment practices. Cisco's recruitment teams further support this by organizing events and partnerships that help reach underrepresented groups, ensuring that our talent pools reflect the diversity we aim to build within our workforce.

Hiring managers also continue to leverage Textio to craft inclusive job descriptions designed to appeal broadly and attract more female candidates. The recruiting team works closely with hiring teams to ensure our interview panels include diversity in gender, age, nationality, and background wherever possible. Since 2023, Cisco has required that at least one female interviewer participate in each hiring process. In addition, a soft hiring quota remains in place within Cisco's Sales organizations in the North region, aiming for 50% of new hired employees to be female—a practice that is still ongoing.

Cisco's long-standing partnership with Ada at NTNU (Norwegian University of Science and Technology) remains a central component of its recruitment and diversity outreach. Cisco has sponsored Ada for over 12 years, supporting initiatives designed to improve gender balance in technology and engineering fields. Through Ada, Cisco engages with female students via technical and social events, office visits, networking opportunities, and the Ada Veileder mentorship program—where Cisco employees support and guide students pursuing technical degrees.



In 2024, Cisco strengthened its equality and recruitment efforts through expansion of skills-based hiring practices. Cisco further increased its application of skills-based assessments to reduce barriers tied to traditional credential requirements. This approach aims to open more pathways for women and individuals from non-traditional backgrounds to enter technical and customer-facing roles.

Pay and Working Conditions

Cisco's Pay Fairness approach is built on a comprehensive philosophy designed to ensure fair and competitive compensation for all employees, both internally and in alignment with external market rates. The program is an ongoing commitment that ensures employees are paid fairly regardless of Gender.

Cisco use individual salary setting, which must be carried out according to objective criteria that ensure a fair pay process. All employees will be offered an evaluation meeting with their manager prior to the salary review. A support tool for these evaluation meetings has been developed in the HR system. Managers are responsible for preventing pay disparities. Training is provided for managers before each salary review to ensure they understand the assessments and the process. Managers also have an overview of the salaries of their employees in the internal system.

Building an Inclusive Culture at Cisco Norway

Cisco's Women's Community of Practice, "WILD," has established sessions focused on empowering women, fostering technical and soft skill development, and promoting role models to facilitate career advancement within Cisco. The community currently boasts approximately 97 members, representing a diverse range of roles including engineers, UX designers, industrial designers, data analysts, and product owners, all contributing from various departments. This diversity provides a comprehensive organizational perspective. WILD has also conducted several workshops and piloted various study groups, including a book club, with plans to expand these initiatives in the coming years.

In 2023, a dedicated employee group named **Allyship & Inclusion** was established to focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion at Cisco. The group consists of eight committed members and is co led by two employees. The team meets regularly to plan, develop, and implement DEI initiatives aligned with Cisco's overall strategy. Two of the members are also part of the Country Leadership Board, ensuring strong leadership anchoring and alignment with strategic priorities. Members of the Allyship & Inclusion group are actively involved in global employee resource groups such as Women of Cisco EMEA and Pride. This enables knowledge sharing, best practice exchange, and alignment between local and global initiatives.

In addition to local efforts in Norway, Cisco offers a wide range of regional and global DEI programs and initiatives. The Allyship & Inclusion team collaborates closely with relevant internal communities, including networks for women and LGBTQ+ employees, to strengthen inclusion, awareness, and equal opportunities in the organization.

Cisco Norway is committed to advancing gender equality and strengthening diversity within the technology sector. A central part of our mission is to inspire and empower girls and young women to pursue education and careers in STEM, addressing the persistent underrepresentation of women in technology. We believe that a diverse workforce fuels innovation and long-term success, and we work actively to create opportunities for the next generation of female tech leaders.

In 2024, Cisco Norway continued its engagement through several key initiatives. One of the highlights was hosting **Girls in ICT Day** at our Oslo office, where we welcomed 50 participants for hands-on workshops and inspiring talks. The event created an important arena for young women to meet role models, explore educational resources and experience the breadth of opportunities within technology. We also strengthened our support for Technovation Girls, underlining our commitment to organizations that work to increase girls' participation in tech.

Cisco Norway is a proud sponsor of the TENK Tech Nettverket for Kvinner, and its annual **TENK Tech Camp** for teenage girls in Oslo. Our involvement in the 2024 camp was impactful, with over 800 girls from 10 different Norwegian cities participating in a wide range of technology camps. Through this partnership, our employees also have the opportunity to use volunteer days to contribute directly. These activities provide hands-on experiences that help build confidence, curiosity and long-term interest in STEM among girls across the country.

In addition to these external initiatives, Cisco Norway hosts the annual **Women of Impact (WOI)** event. The 2024 edition served as an important platform for employees from Cisco and our partner Advania to provide a space for meaningful discussions on gender-related challenges, the importance of allyship and the broader impact of women in technology. The event fosters open dialogue, shared learning and an environment where employees can reflect on how to drive positive cultural change.



Through WOI, we reinforce our commitment to internal growth and development. We strive to ensure that our employees are equipped to contribute to a more diverse, inclusive and sustainable future, while creating a safe and supportive space for important and impactful conversations.

The **"Allyship Beyond Gender: A Conversation About Inclusion & Diversity at Work"** event was a significant initiative hosted by Pride & Allies and Women of Cisco EMEA on June 10, 2024. This event was the first Pride Season Event in North (EMEA) and aimed to foster a more inclusive workplace environment.

This event engaged approximately 300 participants, both on-site across Norway, Switzerland, and Sweden, and virtually via Webex. Its primary goals were to deepen understanding of inclusion, promote active allyship, and model inclusive leadership.

Key figures included Trine Strømsnes (GM, Cisco Norway, Denmark, Iceland) and Cathrine Dyhr-Nielsen (DEI Consultant), who emphasized that inclusive leaders drive growth by activating diversity. The event defined an ally as someone using privilege to create a more equitable environment. Participants were encouraged to join inclusive communities and practice allyship through simple steps like "Start small," "Show up," and "Get proximate."



Development Opportunities and Promotion

Oda Network is the leading network for diversity in tech in the Nordics, and Cisco is proud to be a silver sponsor. This sponsorship is a testament to Cisco's prioritization of diversity and inclusion, providing valuable access to events, mentorship programs, and other opportunities to support and engage with the community.

The Executive Shadow Program at Cisco offers a unique mentorship experience where employees can shadow senior executives, gaining firsthand insight into leadership roles and strategic initiatives. This program is especially valuable for career development, as participants engage closely with executives involved in high-impact projects and events, such as Cisco Live. Through this immersive experience, mentees not only build meaningful relationships but also acquire practical knowledge and exposure to Cisco's business operations and culture, empowering them to advance their careers.

The multiplier effect is Cisco's dedicated sponsorship initiative designed to accelerate the careers of high-potential and critical-to-retain employees by leveraging leadership influence and advocacy. Sponsorship in this context means leaders actively championing and creating opportunities for these individuals, especially across diverse groups, to bridge opportunity gaps and accelerate career progression. For Cisco, this program helps build a strong pipeline of future leaders, fosters an inclusive culture, drives innovation, and enhances business success.

DARE and JUMP is Cisco global Development Program designed to empower emerging leaders to take charge of their career and own their success; it has more than 900 active alumni. JUMP, with over 1700 global alumni, is a Global Leadership Program designed to understand the experiences of women leaders at Cisco.

Facilitation

Cisco continues to build a workplace where employees have equal opportunities to succeed, regardless of working location, personal needs, or life situation. The Hybrid Workplace model remains central to this effort, ensuring seamless collaboration, inclusion, and flexibility through Cisco's own advanced technology. In 2024, hybrid practices were further strengthened through improved meeting tools, clarified hybrid work guidelines, and continued flexible working hours to support work-life balance.

Cisco Norway participated in the Great Place to Work® survey in 2024 and was ranked #1 in Norway among large-sized companies. Employee feedback highlighted strong satisfaction with work-from-anywhere flexibility, and the trust-based culture.

Employee wellbeing remains a key priority. Cisco provides a comprehensive 24/7 Employee and Family Assistance Program (EAP), offering confidential support in areas such as mental health, stress management, family matters, legal and financial guidance, and

work-life balance. These services are available to employees and their immediate family members.

To further support health and wellbeing, Cisco offers on-site medical checks and health assessments, fully covered by the company. Weekly physiotherapy and massage services are available at the office, complemented by digital resources and webinars focused on mental and physical health. The Oslo office also includes a quiet room for privacy and restoration, as well as access to an on-site gym and wardrobe/locker facilities that promote healthy routines and active breaks during the workday. Through these initiatives, Cisco aims to maintain a supportive, flexible, and healthy working environment where employees feel valued and empowered to perform at their best.

The Opportunity to Combine Work and Family Life

At Cisco, we embrace the philosophy that "Work is not a place you go. It's what you do," as stated by Francine Katsoudas, the Executive Vice President and Chief People, Policy & Purpose Officer. Cisco recognizes that the traditional office environment is not a one-size-fits-all solution. That's why we are advocating a flexible, innovative, and inclusive approach to work. This approach enables better alignment between work responsibilities and personal or family needs, while strengthening inclusion and equal opportunities for all employees.

Cisco Norway offers several enhanced leave options designed to support employee well-being, work-life balance and inclusion. These benefits go beyond statutory requirements and help ensure that employees have flexibility during important life events.

- Birthday Day Off: Employees receive one additional paid day off each year to celebrate their birthday.
- Day For Me: Cisco designates 4 paid days off annually for employees to pause, step away from work and spend time on personal well-being or meaningful moments. This initiative encourages team members to prioritize self-care and wellness, which is essential for maintaining a healthy work-life balance.
- Grandparent Leave: Employees may take three paid days off for each new grandchild, to be used within one year of the child's birth or adoption placement.
- Time2Give: Employees are granted 10 paid days off per year to volunteer or contribute to causes that matter to them.
- Critical Time Off (CTO): Because life can be unpredictable, employees may take paid time away—without using vacation or regular Paid Time Off—when facing significant personal or family challenges. This includes situations such as the death of a family member, arranging care for oneself or a loved one, or managing the aftermath of a natural disaster.
- It is also possible to take time off to vote on election day and moving house day.

Cisco maintains an inclusive culture where relationship-building, mutual support, and psychological safety are emphasized. In 2024, internal community initiatives continued to happen, with employees organizing activities through Cisco Fun Group and Cisco Play Group. These groups facilitate both social and physical activities—including bowling, quizzes, painting, tennis, yoga, climbing, and floorball—offering opportunities for employees to connect across teams and backgrounds. All activities are employee-driven, encouraging participation, community building, and cross-functional collaboration.



Goals and Actions for 2025

Cisco Norway is committed to continuous improvement in diversity, equity, and inclusion. Building on our 2024 efforts, we have set the following key goals and actions for 2025:

Goal 1: Enhance DEI Awareness and Engagement Across All Dimensions of Diversity

- **Action 1.1:** Broaden the scope of DEI initiatives to explicitly include LGBTQ+ themes, disability inclusion, and other underrepresented groups, promoting active allyship across all dimensions of diversity. This includes increasing the number of DEI-focused events (e.g., Pride events, allyship workshops) and increase employee participation rates in these events and training sessions.
- **Action 1.2:** Optimize internal communication channels (SharePoint, newsletters, Webex Teams) to actively promote DEI initiatives, resources, and success stories. This will involve tracking engagement metrics (views, clicks, shares) for DEI content.
- **Action 1.3:** Redefine and communicate the purpose, vision, and goals for the Allyship and Inclusion group at Cisco Norway to ensure clarity and broader understanding among all employees.
- **Action 1.4:** Strengthen leadership engagement and sponsorship for DEI initiatives, ensuring consistent awareness, commitment, and active participation from the Country Leadership Board, with all members actively sponsoring or leading at least one DEI initiative or event in 2025.

Goal 2: Strengthen Competence Development in Critical DEI Areas

- **Action 2.1:** Develop and implement targeted training programs focused on key DEI topics, including advanced unconscious bias mitigation, inclusive leadership practices, and cultural competence for a hybrid workforce.
- **Action 2.2:** Provide diverse opportunities for employees to engage with and learn about DEI topics, including participation in external industry forums and conferences, aiming to increase interest, knowledge and inspiration at relevant external DEI conferences (e.g., She Conference).

Powering an Inclusive Future for All

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