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### ABSTRACT

Global processes of digitalisation are transforming learning and work. University students in all nations are under pressure to develop positive and productive technology-related skills and dispositions. This study investigates the attitudes of 1,006 Latvian and Ukrainian university students towards information technology. Survey responses from the Attitudes towards Information Technology scale were collected, validated, analysed and interpreted. By generating group-response profiles and conducting multivariate analyses of variance, the attitudinal orientations of participants were compared, and significant differences between gender and nation subgroups identified. From a gender perspective, one noteworthy finding is that males in both countries expressed a significantly higher interest in learning about IT than females. From a national perspective, Ukrainians reported significantly higher optimism about IT in the workplace than Latvians. This study produces several novel findings addressing the attitudes of Eastern European university students towards information technology and their readiness for digitalised learning and work.

### KEYWORDS

Information technology attitudes; technology readiness; digitalisation; higher education; Ukraine; Latvia

## Introduction

Information technology (IT) continues to drive global transformations in education and work. Today, guided by programs such as Industry 4.0 (Xu, Xu, and Li 2018; Oztemel and Gursev 2018) and Society 5.0 (Fukuda 2019), businesses and organisations are entering a deeper phase of digitalisation, incorporating emerging technologies such as machine learning, Internet of Things, big data analytics, smart sensors, virtual/augmented reality, additive manufacturing and others (Atzori, Iera, and Morabito 2010; Rűßmann et al. 2015). These technologies are enabling objects, devices and human-machine systems with new physical, sensorial and cognitive capacities for addressing complex tasks (Romero et al. 2016). In digitalised environments, humans and machines will increasingly function together as ‘intelligent assemblages’ capable of producing knowledge and

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