



Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean



THE GENDER-BASED DIGITAL DIVIDE: A REFLECTION OF SOCIAL INEQUALITY

- The gender-based digital divide refers to differences between women and men in the access to computers and the use of electronic devices and the internet (ICT).
- In Latin America, women are equal to men in access to computers and in the internet connection at home.

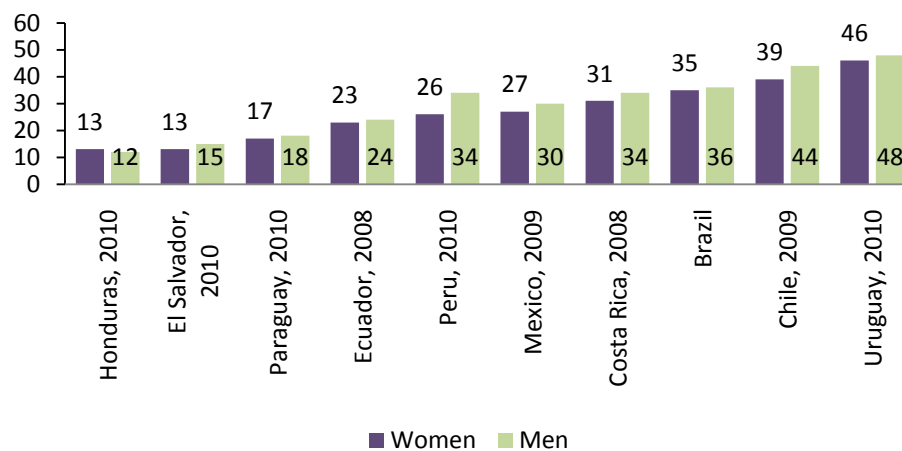
**LATIN AMERICA (10 COUNTRIES): ACCESS TO INTERNET AT HOME
AT NATIONAL LEVEL, BY SEX**
(In percentages)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), calculations based on special tabulations of household surveys.

- Regarding the use of technology, there is a digital divide in all the countries of the region, with a lower percentage of women than men who report using the Internet from anywhere (home, work, educational institutions, community centers, etc.)

LATIN AMERICA (10 COUNTRIES): USE OF INTERNET BY SEX
(In percentages)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), calculations based on special tabulations of household surveys.

- The Survey on Monitoring and Evaluation of *Gobierno en Línea 2012* of Colombia reaffirms that men have greater knowledge than women when carrying out online procedures (obtaining student loans, pay taxes and others, contact public entities). This survey also shows that women use far less devices. And the most pronounced gap is recorded on mobile devices such as cell phones, tablets, and others.
- Gender inequalities present in the family, school and the workplace are also expressed in the differences in the skills and abilities of individuals to access and use programs, computer equipment and resources of the new technological paradigm.

Why is it necessary to overcome the gender digital divide?

- The use of Internet and digital information devices implies being part of a “connected” society, where digital inclusion operates as a competitive advantage and key of integration, also contributing in a meaningful way to the welfare of the people. Women can not be excluded from this process, a condition of being an active part of society and a factor of women’s empowerment.
- Women, like men, are entitled to reap the benefits that these tools provide in terms of increases in labor productivity, more efficient use of time and the job search, lower cost of access to information in areas such as health and education.
- The response of the states to close the gender digital divide through public policies with a gender perspective helps to enhance the positive impact of new information and communications technologies (ICT) in reducing existing gender social gaps.

What are the main strategies to overcome the gender-based digital divide?

- Promote training activities (basic and specialized digital literacy) permitting the inclusion of women through the acquisition of the necessary skills for using ICT adapted to their profiles, guiding the training to issues that transcend the mere use of the ICT including other substantive aspects (empowerment, communication, integration, rights, combat the gender violence, etc.).
- Develop programs for the digital inclusion of women who suffer greater inequalities and who are excluded from ICTs.
- Promote the development of a digital citizenship responsible use of the internet and the information provided, which for women involves confronting the risks of everyday use of ICT , related to harassment of minors and gender violence.
- Mainstream gender in policies for access and use of ICTs, so that these policies consider gender inequalities and different needs of men and women in the information society.



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