

MANIFESTO FOR DIGITAL INCLUSION

The global pandemic resulted from the uncontrolled expansion of Covid-19, has brought the world economy to a complete standstill. This unprecedented situation has made visible and aggravated the gaps of **precariousness, inequality and exclusion** in the lives of the most vulnerable social groups, such as women, migrants, especially those in an irregular situation, or the countries of the Global South with respect to those of the North.

The forced social distancing has **made us even more dependent on technology** in our academic, social or working life. It also has highlighted that many people do not have access to something we take for granted : Internet **connection and basic knowledge how to use technological devices**. For example, in Spain, according to UNICEF, 100,000 families do not have access to the Internet due to their lack of economic resources, which also limits them in acquiring devices to be connected to the digital world. These households are mostly made up of people who earn less than 900 euros per month.

During the last months, many **NGOs that work with vulnerable people, those with economic difficulties and/or at risk of social exclusion**, such as women victims of patriarchal violence and/or undocumented migrants, have faced first hand **the limitations** that this **digital divide** imposes on their lives. Our work has been severely limited and has taken us away from the persons we work with, when they needed us most. Thus, in the era of the networked society, the lack of access to the Internet prevents us from guaranteeing people's fundamental rights. **We can no longer consider it a luxury, but rather a fundamental element for the exercise of our most basic human rights**, such as the right to education, to decent work, to leisure and culture, or to non-discrimination, among many others.

For this reason, several NGOs have joined together through the **Internet is a Right campaign** to make visible the situation of people affected by the digital divide.

We urge the Government in Europe, regional institutions and other competent bodies to examine our proposals and take concrete steps to promote the eradication of the digital divide. Likewise, we also encourage non-organized civil society and the rest of the associations and entities of the third sector to join these demands. In relation to all of the above, we demand the need to:

- **Extend** the coverage and quality of **public Wi-Fi**, creating free access areas in all cities and municipalities.
- **Provide a program of subsidies or bonuses** to those in situations of economic difficulty for the acquisition of devices with Internet connection. Mobile phones alone are not enough to guarantee digital inclusion. Many of the online activities, such as job searches, creation of a curriculum, school education for children or training courses for adults, need adequate tools to be carried out.
- Public schools, adult education centers and NGOs working with vulnerable people should be able to **lend equipment** (such as computers or tablets) that they can make available to users in need.

- **To strengthen** digital education for adults. The Internet is a complex tool, especially for older people, migrants from countries with less access to the Internet or women facing a gendered digital divide.
- **Provide free training** to people with economic difficulties and/or at risk of social exclusion on the use of devices, document management, job search and crisis support We urge to take into account the conditions in which many families and migrants live who do not necessarily have access to the internet, know how to use it or can write an email in the language of countries where they reside ; the waiting times to receive advice are very long and contribute to the uncertainty and instability of these people.
- **Ensure** that all asylum seekers in reception centers have access to an internet connection and the appropriate devices to achieve this
- All the measures to eliminate the digital divide must have as a base the **principle of equality** between women and men and non-discrimination that guarantees equity without bias as to sex, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, and other grounds, in the access to such measures.

Internet access and digital literacy have become the "new normality", essential pillars for the exercise of other human rights and fundamental freedoms, such as the right to work (processes of social and labour insertion, teleworking, training and access to employment) or the right to health (telematic consultations). All this is to break, among others, the glass ceiling, the freedom of assembly and meeting (connectivity with family members and interest groups), the right to freedom of religion or belief (religious assistance), and, of course, protection against male chauvinist abuse thanks to the possibility of asking for help and reporting through mobile applications, websites and online chat.

All people have the same right to access the Internet, and this right must be guaranteed, under equal conditions. **What we are asking for is a democratization of access to the digital world and , breaking down the economic and social barriers that prevent such access.**

Asociación Por Ti Mujer
 Asociación Rumiñahui
 Acse Hispanoamericanos en Valencia
 Plataforma Intercultural de España
 Casa Perú Valencia
 Asociación MIRA España
 ASLAMEC Asociación Latinoamericana de Castellón
 Mujeres Supervivientes de Violencia de Género
 Malen Etxea
 Alianza por la Solidaridad
 Corporación para la educación y autogestión ciudadana
 Movimiento contra la Intolerancia
 Colectivo Sirirí
 Association la voie des femmes-L'avenir des filles
 Accoes Casa de Colombia
 Servicio Jesuita a Migrantes
 Alia. Asociación por la Igualdad de Oportunidades
 Fundación de Familias Monoparentales Isadora Duncan

Associazione Saponi da Ascoltare

Asociación de vecinos de Cerdanyola, Vocalía de las dones de Cerdanyola

AESCO ONG

Red Europea de Mujeres Migrantes (ENoMW)

Asociación de Movilidad Humana

Red de Mujeres Latinoamericanas y del Caribe en España

SEDOAC- Servicio Doméstico Activo

Red de Hondureñas Migradas

Haurralde Fundazioa

Associació de Cooperació al Desenvolupament Infàncies i Dones del Món

GENERA Red de Mujeres Feministas por la Equidad de Género