

Gender views and new technologies

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The idea of a gathering to discuss this topics would have been unthinkable only a decade ago. It was only in 2015 that, following the first “Ni una menos” campaign, which stands for “Not one woman less”, the 4th wave of feminism took the streets of Buenos Aires and spread its message nationwide.

That historic rally brought awareness to several demands that were being voiced by women throughout the years and were still unanswered and completely absent from the political agenda. It constituted a turning point for Argentina. Since then the feminist wave took its place in the media with the necessary strength to voice its claims and proposals.

Social media played a vital role in the success of the “Ni una menos” rally. This hybrid present we live in, where we spend a large portion of our lives online, has democratized the way to communicate ideas.

It is no longer necessary for any political movement that wants to express an idea in a public place to turn up in the news and reach the traditional media in order to gather support. Social media, hashtags, contacts and acquaintances have become the way to multiply and broaden any call into action.

The use of new technologies as a tool to further promote those causes that belong to the public debate has served its purpose to gain attention to gender issues and allowed it to be the source of new legislation and public policies.

Still, these are only the first steps. Gender issues such as gender violence or gender disparity at an institutional level are now visible but there is a long way ahead of us until all those topics branded as “Gender issues” reach the entire society, beyond the feminist collective.

Though important, visibility is not enough. It is essential to issue rules and regulations as well as to provide support to equality of genders and gender views from the different state authorities.

In 2019, law 17.499 was enacted by Congress. This law is known as “Micaela’s Law”. It sets a legal mandate for every person working in any public office, whether it is at the Executive, Legislative or Judicial branch and regardless of level or rank, to attend seminars on gender issues and violence against women. The seed that prompted this law was the social reaction to the femicide of a girl called Micaela García who was raped and murdered in 2017 in the Entre Rios Province. The person convicted for committing such a terrible crime had been released on parole after having completed part of his sentence for having sexually abused two women in the past.

Micaela’s Law instructed the Ministry for Women, Gender and Diversity, as the enforcement authority, to

coordinate seminars and to present yearly reports of the result of these seminars.

The report for 2020 shows that there is a similar level of compliance all through the different areas of government. It points out that the goal sought by Micaela's Law is to "put on the spotlight the political and institutional decision to incorporate a view sensitive to both gender and diversity within the State, through training and workshops provided to its agents, employees and public servants".

Gender issues are not limited to violence against women and girls. While it is evident that tackling violence is centre and key for any public institution, this legislation clearly promotes an equal society free from any form of gender based violence.

The seminars' approach is set from a feminist perspective, which challenges the State to face an institutional reconfiguration and a critical review of everyday practices within the Government.

They reflect on the necessity to critically eradicate any sort of stereotypes, prejudices and cultural and social practices based on old ideas in order to deconstruct those biases.

The 23 Provinces and the City of Buenos Aires have expressed their support and commitment to the terms of the Law.

El Centro de Formación Judicial or Centre for Judicial Training (CJT) within the Superior Court of the City of Buenos Aires organizes the seminars for the judges, officers and employees since late 2019.

In order to reach a large number of officers and employees the seminars are online.

A special program designed for judges was approved in 2020.

The contents of this special edition were thought and proposed by Judge Alicia Ruiz, a member of the Superior Court of Justice of the City of Buenos Aires. Judge Ruiz is a renowned expert in gender issues. During its 2 editions 58 Judges participated in the seminar.

So far, approximately 3.000 individuals enrolled.

Let us consider for a moment what reality shows. While the world is not fair and does not present equal opportunities for men, it is significantly worse for women. In several countries male supremacy, discriminatory division of labor and the subordination of women presents itself as issues that challenge gender equality as a genuine human right.

The speed gathered lately by gender perspectives, especially in comparison with that from the 60s, 70s and 80s, is not only based in the extensive work carried out by civil society and governments, but due to the use of new technologies.

Proposals originated in Poland or Turkey are rapidly embraced by women from Argentina, Brazil or Spain. There are no longer iron curtains or walls that may silence the recognition of women's equal human rights. On the other hand, the lack of long term policies and the lack of an extended conscience, amidst speeches promoting old masculine privileges may promote the *status quo* both in public and private areas.

An example that shows this is the fact that, during the Covid 19 pandemic, while countless women and girls become the heads of their families due to the extended loss of jobs and the economic shut down, they were victims of an increased violence that is reflected in the number of femicides that skyrocketed during 2020's lockdown.

The issues related to gender may present different approaches, from education, as is the case proposed by Micaela's Law, to the design of public policies that allow and even promote a bigger role for women in the decision-making process.

According to the Guidelines from the Inter-American Commission of Women, "every country in the region it is possible to find discourses against gender equality". The document highlights that these debates do not take place within the scientific or legal areas but the political ones and points out that it is at that level where representatives of the citizens should become arbitrators of the deep discussion

that promote the use of gender view as a tool towards equality as a natural, humane, universal and unalienable right.

Numbers are usually more meaningful than words. According to UN Women, both in politics and in public life leadership, women participation is still insufficiently equal, despite the fact that they constitute part of the 2030 sustainable development goals.

1. Only 23 countries have women as Chiefs of Government or State.
2. 119 countries never had a woman as Chiefs of Government or State.
3. Only 10 countries are led by a female Chief of State and 13 countries are led by a female Chief of Government.
4. In just 14 Countries the Government Cabinet were composed by 50 % or more women.
5. If an annual increase in these numbers reaches 0.52% equality will arrive no sooner than 2077.

In the Legislative Branch:

1. Women's quota represents a 25% which has increased 11% since 1995.
2. Only 3 Countries have a 50% or more congress women. Those countries are Rwanda (61%); Bolivia (53%) and Arab Emirates (50%).
3. 19 Countries have 40 % or more Congress Women. 9 of those countries are from Europe, 5 from Latin

America and the Caribbean, 4 from Africa and 1 from the Pacific Region.

4. In 27 Countries Congress Women represent less than 10 % of their Congresses.

The UN considers that equal representation in Congress will probably be met in 2063.

In 2010 the Superior Court of Justice from the City of Buenos Aires opened a Gender Office. Since its creation it has been led by Judge Alicia Ruiz and its goal is the promotion and organization of activities aiming to reach gender equality within the judiciary. This goal is pursued by activities organized independently or jointly with other public offices whether local or federal.

It is worth noting that both the intranet and the Court's website contain lists legislation, jurisprudence, activities organized by the office, news and a list of books to be found in the Court's library.

These are examples that show the commitment of the Court of Justice with gender issues.