Are Public Policies Aimed In The Right Direction?
Analysis of the True Reason of Spanish Households for Have No Internet Access

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ABSTRACT

Digital divide is one of the major problems of Information Society and is linked with social exclusion. This work is focus on Spain situation and its relative position in the European Union, and study the major key points of it through the household reasons for have no Internet Access, taking into account socio-economics variables, as a key point that can be help to understand the relative situation of Spain in the European Union related with ICT and to elaborate suitable public policies to reduce digital divide. Results have shown that the most important reason that Spanish households do not have access to Internet is that people feel they do not need it, because they not consider Internet useful or interesting. It is proposed the design of public policies that take into account the important lack of motivation and good attitude towards Internet in the most of Spanish households without Internet.

Keywords: Clustering, Digital Divide, Household, ICT Access, ICT Skills

INTRODUCTION

Digital divide is one of the major problems of Information Society. It is linked with others concerns such as poverty and social exclusion (Korupp & Szydlik, 2005; Novo-Corti, Varela-Candamio, & Garcia-Alvarez, 2014).

There are three key points that have to be into account in the design of public policies to reduce digital divide: the infrastructure, linked with technological gap, the possibility of access, related with economic barriers and the knowledge to access, linked with education barrier (International Telecommunication Union, 2013) (see Figure 1).

Supranational institutions are involved in boosting ITC implementation, because they are aware of their importance for social and
economic welfare. That is the case of United Nations (International Telecommunication Union, 2013) or the European Digital Agenda (European Union, 2010). This goal is related with several public policies that should be attended (See Table 1).

To afford this matter is necessary to relate the issue to a specific country or group of homogenous countries, because there are significant differences between them. Firstly, we analyzed the European Union Countries differences in ICT, towards a cluster analysis, in order to classify them attending the level of ICT infrastructure development.

Secondly we focus on Spain situation and its relative position in the European Union, and study the major key points of it through the household reasons not to have Internet Access, taking into account socio-economics variables, as a key point that can be help to understand the relative situation of Spain in the European Union related with ICT and to elaborate suitable public policies to reduce digital divide.

State of the Question

Modern societies have to face new causes of social inequality. One of that causes is the digital divide (Korupp & Szydlik, 2005). The impact of this gap is the first step for being aware of the need for new public policies to solve this problem. For achieving this objective, the problem has to be visualized and affected groups should be taken into account (Assadi & Chard, 2014; Barreiro-Gen, Novo-Corti, & Varela-Candamio, 2013; Cushman & Klecun, 2006; Turk & Trkman, 2012).

ICT have become widely available to the general public, both in terms of accessibility as well as costs (EUROSTAT, 2014). A majority (55%) of households in the European Union

Table 1. Public policies involved in breaking the digital divide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infrastructure (technological gap)</th>
<th>Country infrastructure</th>
<th>Economic Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Possibility of access (economic barrier)</td>
<td>Household income</td>
<td>Employment</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Social protection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge to access (education barrier)</td>
<td>Individual education</td>
<td>Education</td>
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