

Closing the digital breach ^[1]

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Calificación:



In Puerto Rico an invisible gap is opening, in which thousands of children, young people and adults fall every day. They are those that do not have the capacity or the opportunity to have access to a computer or to training that would help them to survive in the new digital era. That invisible gap has a name: the digital breach. In Puerto Rico, this phenomenon is a reality that not only attempts against the progress of whole communities, but also against the global competitiveness of our economy. Governor Aníbal Acevedo Vilá must implant an official policy that involves the private, public and communitarian sector so that in less than one decade that digital breach is closed. Otherwise we risk marginalizing thousands of Puerto Ricans and put into play the competitiveness of the Puerto Rican economy in the era of globalization. Little or nothing is spoken of the digital breach in Puerto Rico and is paradoxical that while this Administration invests million in the promotion of projects related to the biotechnology, thousands of Puerto Rican young people and children nowadays don't know how to use a computer or they precariously use it for their studies. Closing the digital breach does not have to take a long time. In order to begin, the private companies and the universities are natural allies for the formation of regional partnerships conformed by schools and communities to improve the quality of the education and the access to the technology and the information. These partnerships, not only guided by the principles of the public policy, but also by regional and particular necessities, would become an important unifying and catalytic factor to place in the hands of thousands of citizens the power of the information and the knowledge. Also, the creation of an independent organism to be in charge of public policy is necessary, because otherwise the effort would be diluted between the diverse public agencies like the Department of Education or Industrial Development Company. The implantation of this public policy would be atoning with what the Government is trying to establish on the development of biomedical and biomolecular sciences. Although it is

certain that in the last years the State has invested great sums in qualifying the public libraries with computers, also has done it in absence of a governing public policy that directs the educative system towards the development of the knowledge in technology, sciences and the mathematics. In fact, the Government knows little or nothing about the use and the access that the students and the community have had to the computers. In addition, it is not only about investing in computer networks, but how they are used to maximize the educative and mainly communitarian experience. In that sense, closing the digital breach would give the opportunity to be inserted actively in this initiative, providing them with a high sense of citizen participation, condition absent almost always in the economic or social development impelled by the State. Closing the digital breach is a challenge of all the developing economies and Puerto Rico does not have to be isolated of this reality. To approach the subject openly and to look for solutions is not only a passage of advance and an investment to improve our economic competitiveness in the era of globalization, but also an act of social justice.

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