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| **Subject:** | **Online Open Consultation of the Council Working Group International Internet-related public policy issues** |
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| **Comments to the open consultation:** | * What are the different challenges facing persons with disabilities and specific needs (e.g. lack of ICT skill sets etc.) in accessing and using the Internet?   The persons with disabilities often find obstacles in access to telecommunications services, internet included, due to the lack of services with the necessary characteristics or because the price is still being little affordable.  In the same way, another obstacle faced by persons with disabilities to have equal access to telecommunications services is the lack of the necessary and appropriate physical infrastructure, which promote the inclusive access for these persons. Additionally, the lack of the equipment with the necessary features that permit to improve and/or increment the access and the use of the persons with disabilities of Internet.   * What possible approaches and examples of good practices are available to address these challenges?   Following the reform of telecommunications that had place in Mexico in 2013, it was established in the Federal Telecommunications and Broadcasting Law a chapter relating to the “Rights of Users with Disabilities”.  In the mentioned Law, it was stipulated that the Federal Executive and the Federal Telecommunication Institute shall promote the equal opportunity access to telecommunications services for users with disabilities.  Furthermore, the Law establishes that the users with disabilities have with the following rights:   * Request and receive advice from the concessionaires on the use of telecommunications services; * Subscribe and be informed of the commercial conditions established in standard adhesion contracts, which shall have formats with accessibility features in accordance with the established by the regulatory body; * Have upon request of the user, terminal equipment with features, programs or applications that allow accessibility to telecommunications services for people with mobility, visual and hearing disabilities; * No discrimination in the subscription and provision of telecommunications services; * Concessionaires or authorized entities facilities or centers accessible to the public shall be adjusted, modified or equipped with mechanisms allowing proper attention to persons with disabilities; * The Internet portals and websites or customer service phone lines of the concessionaires or authorized entities shall have accessibility features provided that they do not imply disproportionate charges for the concessionaires or authorized entities.   Likewise, the Law establishes the obligation of the agencies of the Federal Public Administration, as well as decentralized public agencies, state-owner companies, Congress, Judiciary Power of the Federation and the autonomous constitutional bodies shall have accessibility features for persons with disabilities.  Finally, the Law sets that the Federal Executive and the Federal Telecommunication Institute shall promote access for persons with disabilities to new information and communications systems and technology, including the Internet.   * What are the gaps in addressing these challenges and how can these gaps be filled?   To deal with the existent challenges to give access to the persons with disabilities is necessary establish the appropriate measures to guaranty that the persons with disabilities:   * Not be discriminated in the subscription and provision of telecommunication services; * Receive the adequate attention by the trained personnel; * Receive counseling on the use of the telecommunication services; * Can make full use of the benefits that have the information and communication technologies, included the internet. * What is the role of governments in addressing these challenges and gaps?   The information and communication technologies, as the telecommunication and broadcasting services ought to be available for any person, without any kind of discrimination, due to it is responsibility of the State to establish the conditions and mechanisms, which ensure that all the people have equal access at these services, especially with regard to access for persons with disabilities.  To achieve this, and in compliance with the established in the Federal Telecommunications and Broadcasting Law, the Federal Telecommunication Institute is in the process of issue the “General Guidelines of Accessibility to Telecommunication Services for Persons with Disabilities”, which will have the goal of promoting the access of users with disabilities to telecommunication services, on equal conditions with the other users.  In the mentioned guidelines, it will be established the appropriate measures for guaranty the access on equal terms, through the establishment of features of formats with accessibility functions, terminal equipment, centers of attention, websites, etc.  Likewise, these guidelines will establish the obligation of the Federal Telecommunication Institute of promoting and implementing social programs, access and use of telecommunication services, as well as the new systems and information and communication technologies, Internet included, to the persons with disabilities.  The above with the purpose of complying with the established in the Federal Telecommunications and Broadcasting Law, relating to the rights of users with disabilities. |