Chapter 110
Institutional Policies for Digital Inclusion in Spain

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ABSTRACT

This chapter describes the evolution and results of the Spanish Policies of digital inclusion, since its inception in 2000 in the framework of the EU Lisbon Strategy (eEurope 2002) to the present, with special emphasis on cases of greater relevance. It reviews the different plans implemented at the country successively during that period of time. As a result of the Spanish political organization into Autonomous Communities, the direct application of these policies has corresponded to each of them, which adapted the outline to their interests and needs. So, it analyzes the situation in three of the Autonomous Communities, Catalonia, Andalusia and Extremadura, with different demographic and economic characteristics, providing recent indicators and the programs that are in development just now.

INTRODUCTION

The digital inclusion policies in Spain, as it has happened in Europe, have been integrated into the general policies of promotion of the Information Society.

The publication of the book known as the Delors White Paper, "*Growth, competitiveness and employment: The challenges and ways forward into the 21st century*" (European Communities Commission, 1993), is often considered the first milestone in the declaration and promotion of the Information Society at European level, in addition to being Europe's reply to the Clinton-Gore Report *"Technology for America's Economic Growth, a New Direction To Build Economic Strength"* (1993), published nine months earlier in the United States.

The Delors White Paper, the Bagemann Report ("Report on Europe and the Global Information Society", 1994) and the Action Plan of the European Communities Commission Europe's Way to the Information Society. An Action Plan (1994) will be the foundation of the programmes initiated in Europe

with the beginning of the Third Millennium. Thus, the initiative "eEurope - An information society for all" adopted by the special European Council of Lisbon, 23 and 24 March 2000 (European Communities Commission, 1999) constitutes the starting point of the set of common European policies adopted to promote the Information Society.

Spain, belonging to the European Union, then EEC, since January 1, 1986, it is obliged under the accession agreement to adopt the European general guidelines in policies and legislation, especially after the signing of the Treaty of Maastricht (January 1, 1992). That event was the one that marked the beginning of political union and not just economic EU unity. As reflection of the various European initiatives for the Information Society (IS) driven from within the EU has been promoting their own plans, reproducing the broad outlines of those.

In this chapter, we will focus on the description and analysis of the Spanish information policies, especially concerning digital inclusion, throughout these years, as a particular application of the general European policies for the whole of the EU. Due to the particular characteristics of the organization of the State in our country, a large part of the effective implementation of the policies outlined lie in the Autonomous Communities. The efforts and results obtained in the three Autonomous Communities representative for different concepts will be analyzed: Catalonia, Andalusia and Extremadura.
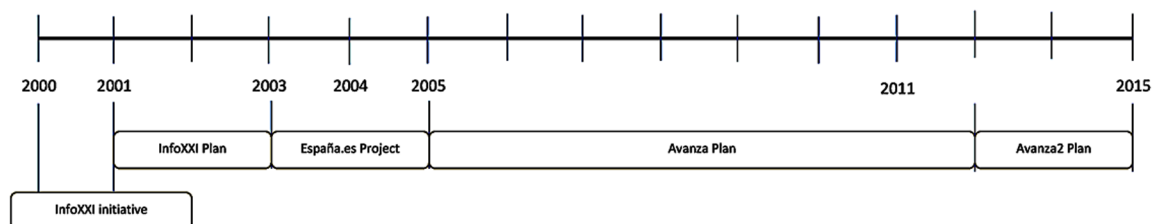
INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES IN SPAIN

In Spain, they started to promote digital inclusion policies since the initiatives for the promotion and development of the Information Society in the year 2000 began (Figure 1).

First Policies: Info XXI Initiative and Plan (2000-2003)

At its meeting of December 23, 1999 the Spanish Council of Ministers approved the Strategic Initiative of the Government for the Development of the Information Society and New Technologies "INFO XXI: The Information Society for everybody" (Ministerio de Ciencia y Tecnología, 2000). Its roots can be found in the agreement of Council of Ministers on 9 April of that year, whose first act was to approve the Royal Decree 1289/1999, of 23 July, by establishing the Interministerial Commission for the Information Society and New Technologies in Spain. It is entrusted to this Committee to the elaboration, development and evaluation of this initiative (Comisión Interministerial de la Sociedad de la Información y de las Nuevas Tecnologías, 2000).

Figure 1. Timeline of public policies on SI in Spain

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