

Less than 3% of Brazil's 180,000 Public Schools Have a Computer

Contributed by Lucas Parente
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Approximately 100 parliamentarians of over 20 countries participated this Monday, June 6, in the opening ceremony in Brazil of the 3rd general assembly of the International Parliamentarians' Association for Information Technology (IPAIT).

The opening session happened in the Lower House of Congress in Brasília. The objective of the IPAIT is to discuss digital exclusion.

For the entity's Vice President, Deputy Luiz Piauhylo (Democratic Workers Party [PDT] of the state of Pernambuco), the event helps reduce exclusion in the country.

"We will strengthen the collaboration among nations and try to balance the use of communication and information technology tools," he said.

There are 30 million people with Internet access in Brazil, which represents approximately 17% of the population.

According to the Executive Secretary of the Ministry of Communications, Paulo Lustosa, Brazil has 180 thousand public schools and only five thousand of them (2.7%) have computer labs.

According to Lustosa, there are projects being created to end digital exclusion in Brazil. The Connected PC (PC Conectado), for example, is one of the four axes of the Ministry's Brazilian Digital Inclusion Program.

The program focuses especially on families with income between three and ten minimum wages (US\$ 374 to US\$ 1,248), which have means to use part of their income to purchase a computer, as well as on small businesses.

PC Conectado offers financing to buy computers, but it would still mean a big sacrifice for people living on low income. The computers will be sold in installments of around US\$ 20 a month for 24 months

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