

## ANTI-RIGHTS GROUPS AND COMMUNICATION

### The ideological battle in traditional and social media in Argentina

The investigation “Anti-Rights Groups and Communication-The Ideological Battle in the Media in Argentina,” was carried out in 2019 with the support of the World Association for Christian Communication (WACC), and addressed how traditional media refers to the issues relating to these sectors and how these sectors use the Twitter social network in Argentina.

We monitored traditional media and social media. We analyzed the online editions of two national dailies (*La Nación* and *Clarín*) and one magazine with national circulation (*Noticias*), surveying for three months the articles that appeared in searches with the terms “ideología de género” (gender ideology,) “aborto” (abortion,) and “Con Mis Hijos No Te Metas” (Don’t Mess With My Kids.)” We also analyzed public posts on the social network Twitter with the hashtags #NoSeráLey, (It will not be law) #Aborto (Abortion) and #RelatoVerde (Pro-abortion lies), analyzing twenty posts for each hashtag; and the accounts @AmelieGranata, @AgustinLaje and @FrenteJovenAR, also analyzing twenty posts in each case.

This investigation came about in response to concerns in our organization over the advance of anti-rights groups in Argentina as a result of the 2018 debate in the Argentine parliament on the depenalization and legalization of abortion. These sectors had previously had a marginal voice in Argentina and made themselves heard mainly through existing political parties. After this debate, they launched the campaign “Con Mis Hijos No Te Metas” (“Don’t Mess With My Kids,”) already present in other countries in the region, and openly joined the political arena: by the time of the elections in October 2019 they had a party of their own in the form of Frente NOS, one of the six alliances contesting the first round of the elections. This advance in the conservative anti-rights agenda can be seen in social and political spheres and also in traditional and social media.

Our research sought to investigate how traditional media (newspapers and magazines in this case) cover the issues related to these groups, the way these groups express themselves on social media, and how they interact with feminist accounts.

Some of the results we found were as follows:

#### TRADITIONAL MEDIA:

- 1) We observed a general interest in the issues that conservative sectors bring to the public debate while at the same time there is an attempt to maintain a certain distance from the ideas they raise.
- 2) The media addresses these sectors’ demands in terms of listening to both sides of the story

- with the feminist agenda on the other side—and tries to be impartial in its approach, although the sources used are predominantly conservative (58%.)
- 3) In turn, the advance of these sectors is not considered a social issue—in the sense that they challenge human rights and gender rights agendas—but rather a social and political phenomenon of the time, which is shown in the predominant approach to these issues in the “news” format (63%.)

## **TWITTER:**

- 1) There is a low number of informative, debating posts (33%) by anti-rights groups and far more posts that express opinions (52%) and which manipulate information (48%.)
- 2) The posts by anti-rights groups—which in 90% of cases question gender equality and offer sexist gender stereotypes—are much more popular than those of the feminist movement. The hashtag #Aborto (abortion), for example, used in 76% of cases by the feminist movement, had very few likes and retweets (less than 5% of the total) in comparison with those used by anti-rights accounts, mostly #RelatoVerde (pro-abortion lies) and to a lesser degree #NoSeráLey (it will not be law.)
- 3) The three leading accounts of these groups that we analyzed presented very different profiles, which also shows that there is a diverse participation of these groups in the public debate: from more intellectual, rational and less fanatical figures, such as Agustín Laje; to accounts such as that of the Frente Joven which substantially distorts and manipulates information.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

From the results obtained we recommend:

For traditional media: training in human rights perspectives for news coverage, including the gender perspective. The human rights of women and collectives of sexual and gender dissidence recognized by regional and international treaties are an inseparable part of the human rights paradigm. There are no two positions possible towards the gender agenda.

For social feminist organizations: Training to improve discourse tools for public debate on social networks and security strategies against violence and attacks.

We hope the results of this research will give Argentine and Latin American feminism some tools to generate strategies and the best arguments for debate in the public arena with these sectors that are challenging and seeking to push back the human rights and gender rights agenda.

The full investigation can be consulted at this link:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/bptu7a4zt1r0xrx/antiderechos-FINAL%20%20%282%29.pdf?dl=0>