UN GIRLS ADVOCACY FORUM
Elevator Pitch by Eva Judge

Lack of access to technology

One of the key themes that emerged from girls' conversation circles on the CSW67 priority theme included lack of access to technology and concern for cybercrimes. This is a residing issue in Ireland that continues to put girls at a disadvantage in the education system and opportunities to study and work in STEM. Schools do not receive the funding they require in order to give every girl an equal opportunity to learn and internalise key skills and knowledge that is increasingly in demand for a large majority of jobs in today's society which typically favour men.

There is a lack of opportunities in areas like computer science and digital technology which is discouraging girls in schools in my area. In comparison, all boys' schools in my area are being privileged with a wide variety of different opportunities such as, apprenticeships with international companies and corporations and many educational talks and presentations on pursuing careers in these areas.

For girls that do have access to technology, they are at risk of being exposed to harmful and exploitative experiences on the various platforms that they are using in day-to-day life for educational and communicative purposes. Many of my peers and myself have been victims of harassment regarding appearance and have received unsolicited sexually explicit images and texts from strangers online and then continue to be told that we have to be careful of this as if we are the reason for this happening to us.

In an attempt to resolve the issues that girls face, girls should be fully supported by society as a whole in learning how to correctly use and navigate the technology that they should have the right to access in order to support their digital literacy, safety and security. Furthermore, governments in Ireland must take responsibility and play their part in improving the access and safety measures of technology for girls in Ireland, for example, two thirds of young women in the country have been harassed online and what have the government done for us?

Overall, through the lack of access to technology and concern for cybercrimes, it is evident that girls in today's society are at a disadvantage and a lack of technological recognition. This has caused there to be a significant gap between boys and girls and the opportunities provided to them when concerned with their digital educations and possible future careers. The government must take responsibility for the blind eye they are turning at the constant and inexplicable disregard to our education and to our gender as a whole.