Digitalisation in the public sector
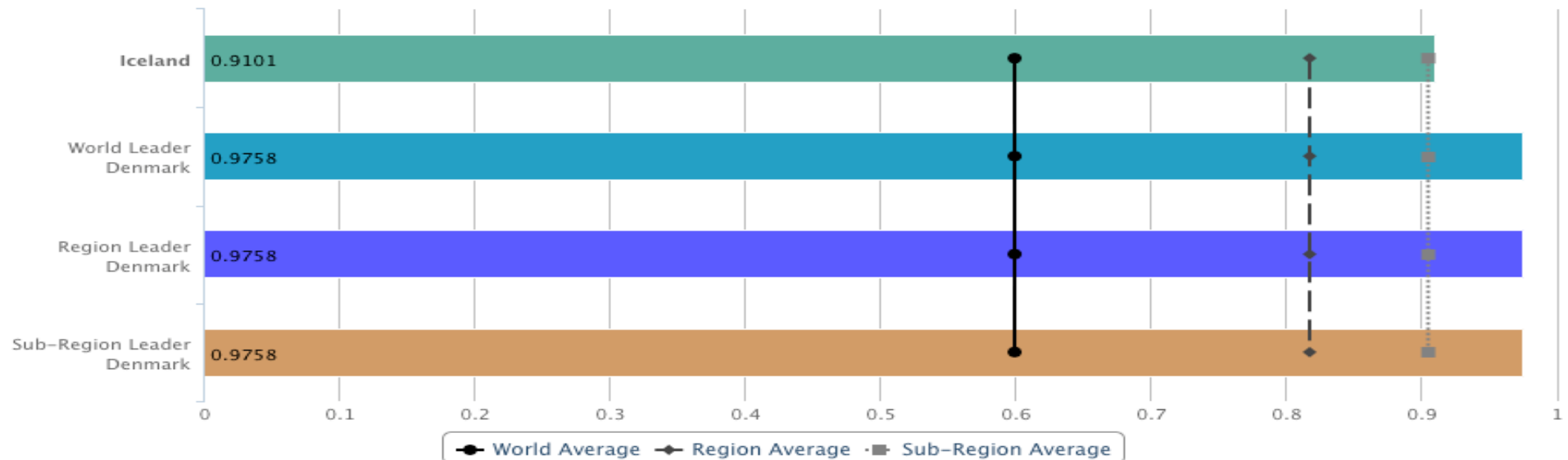
Iceland

Pia Hansson

Digitalization trends

E-Government Development Index
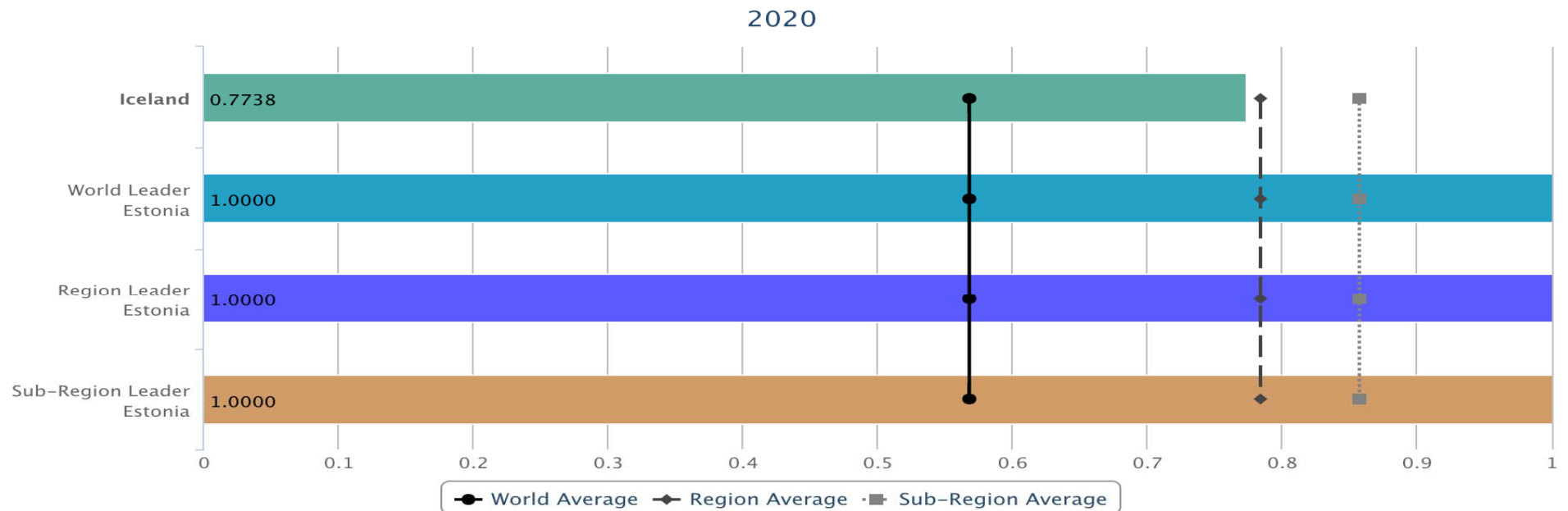
2020

E-Government Development Index	2020	2018	2016	2014	2012	2010	2008	2005	2004	2003
Iceland (Rank)	12	19	27	19	22	22	21	15	14	15
Iceland (Value)	0.91010	0.83160	0.76619	0.79700	0.78354	0.66971	0.71760	0.77936	0.76988	0.70190

Digitalization trends

E-Participation Index

2020

E-Participation Index	2020	2018	2016	2014	2012	2010	2008	2005	2004	2003
Iceland (Rank)	51	75	50	65	83	135	116	63	62	72
Iceland (Value)	0.77380	0.68540	0.66102	0.49019	0.15790	0.04285	0.06818	0.12698	0.11475	0.08620

Digitalization trends in international comparison: OECD DGI

Figure 34. The OECD Digital Government Index Composite Results
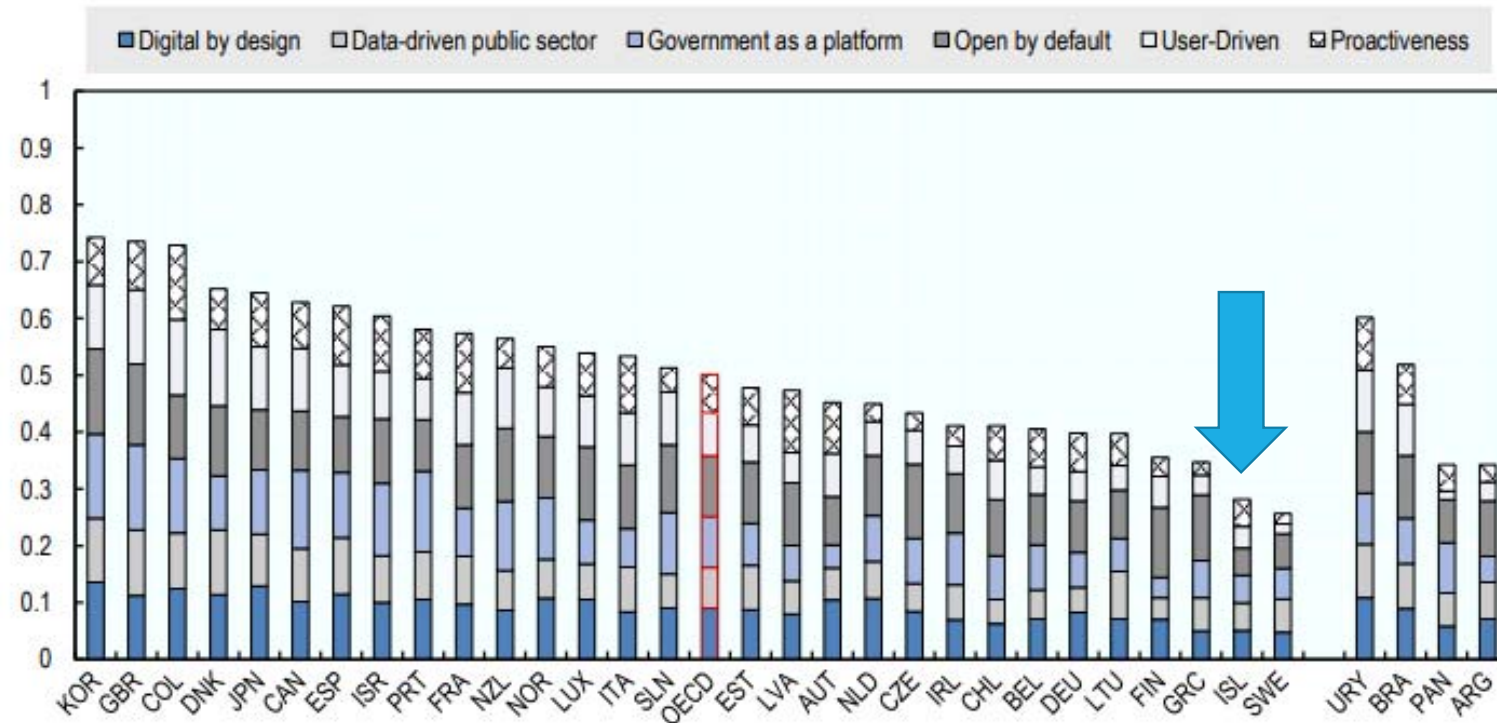
Source: OECD 2020, Digital Government Index 2019, p. 53.
http://www.oecd.org/gov/digital-government-index-4de9f5bb-en.htm

Digitalization trends

- Internet access and usage is among the highest in the world. 99% of households use the internet on a regular basis.

- Iceland is a digitally advanced country. The government's policy is to advance Iceland's ranking further with the continued development of an advanced digital society.
  - E-government ranking for 2020 #12 of 193
  - E-participation ranking for 2020 #51 of 193

- Digital ID provides access to almost all public services electronically

- Applications and information requests can be signed with a digital signature

E-participation

- Electronic voting in municipalities, i.e. in Reykjavik on improvements to your neighbourhood

- Electronic voting within political parties and unions increasingly common

- Rewriting the constitution following the crash in 2008
  - National forum of 950 citizens to discuss constitutional reform
  - 25 delegates by popular vote for the constitutional committee
  - Proposed bill to parliament for vote
  - Constitutional draft posted online – access for all citizens – discussed widely on social media
  - Draft presented to parliament – subsequent national referendum in 2012

Governance of public sector digitalisation

- Policy and Action Plan 2018-2020

- In 2018, all ICT affairs within the government were moved to the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs, although cybersecurity is managed by the Ministry of Transport and Local Government. A special taskforce was established under the name of Digital Iceland.

- The focus for 2018-2020 is:
    - increasing self-services through the national portal Island.is
    - strengthening the IT infrastructure
    - increasing public agencies cooperation with the help of IT e.g. cloud solutions.

Governance of public sector digitalisation

- Digital Iceland was published in 2020 and it sets the framework for the projects carried out under the leadership of both the Ministry of Local and Economic Affairs and the task force Digital Iceland, in cooperation with all agencies, municipalities, ministries and enterprises.

- The strategy is an important part of the government's plan on improved 12 Digital Public Administration Factsheets - Iceland digital communication to the public. It also supports the objectives defined in the Nordic/Baltic Partnership, as stated in the Digital North Declaration

Digital Government Infrastructures

- The governmental portal www.government.is is a website that links and redirects to all Icelandic ministries. It contains information and online facilities for all government departments (ministries, directorates, etc.).

- The portal www.island.is played a central role in the new policy formulation for the Information Society for 2013 - 2017. It has three main functions:
  - It operates as a government information and service portal. It provides easy access to information on public services and to a large number of public forms.
  - It operates as a toolbox. Tools which are of use to all public bodies have been developed on the island.is website. These include centralised authentication, electronic document delivery (C2G and B2G), electronic document distribution (G2C and G2B) and an electronic service layer.
  - Since May 2011 it has provided a 'My pages' services. There people obtain individualised access to information about themselves in key registers owned by the authorities and access to documents sent to them electronically by public bodies.

Flashpoint: COVID-19

- Website launched with all relevant information on COVID-19 – run by the national civil management and the Directorate of Health – www.covid.is
  - Statistics on COVID-19 and vaccinations
  - Rules for quarantines
  - Restrictions on gatherings and social distancing
  - Travel to and within Iceland
  - Quarantine and containment zones
  - Ordering tests
  - Pre-registering for travel to Iceland
  - Information about Iceland's economic measures

Flashpoint: COVID-19

- Contact tracing app *Rakning C-19* mandatory to download for all arriving in Iceland

- Widely used by citizens

- Test appointments and results provided with the app

- Digital solutions used in arranging COVID-19 testing, for example, digital registration, consultation, notification of results also on official website for all health related issues – www.heilsuvera.is

- Unique partnership with deCODE Genetics on testing, mapping the contamination and tracing the different strands of COVID—19 www.decode.com

Conclusion

- Iceland is digitally advanced but in public participation and citizen engagement the development has been more modest

- Rather high public trust in digital services offered by the authorities

- The limited capacity of the small administration in Iceland has resulted in increased cooperation with the private sector, as was for example the case with the design of the contact tracing app for COVID-19, and furthermore, the digital ID is owned and operated by private companies, including banks, communication companies and investors