

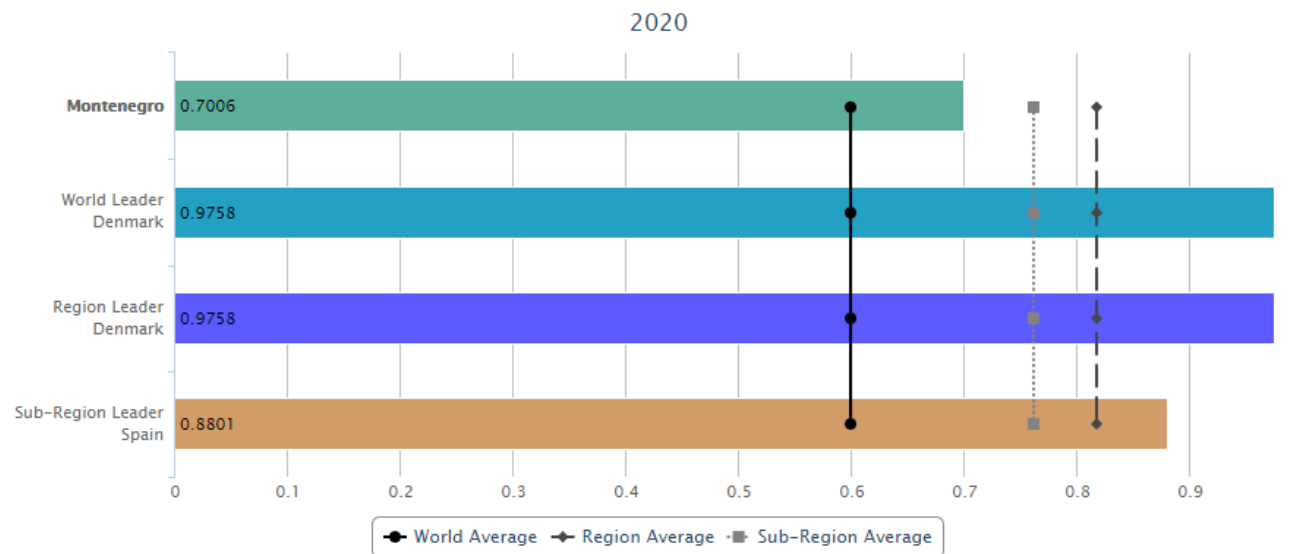
Digitalisation in the public sector

MONTENEGRO

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Digitalization trends in international comparison

E-Government Development Index

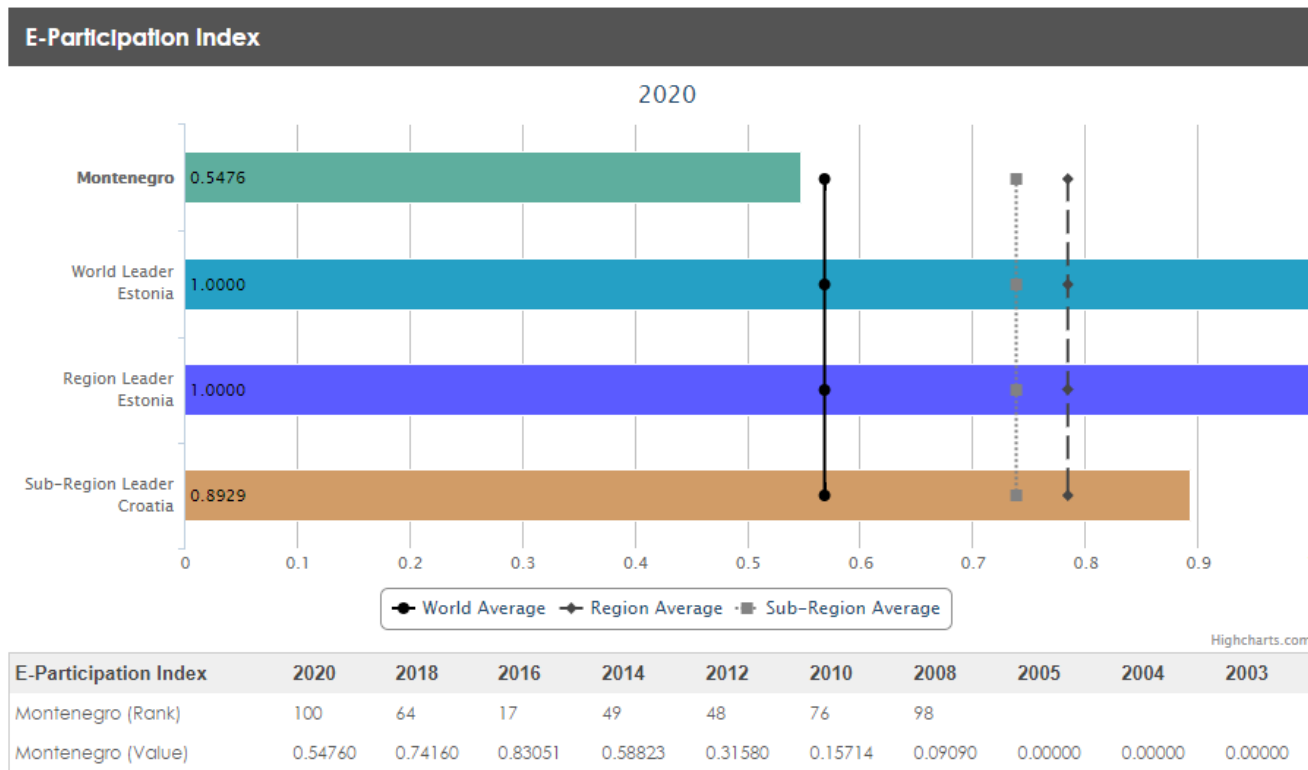


Highcharts.com

E-Government Development Index	2020	2018	2016	2014	2012	2010	2008	2005	2004	2003
Montenegro (Rank)	75	58	47	45	57	60	100			
Montenegro (Value)	0.70060	0.69660	0.67326	0.63455	0.62181	0.51014	0.42820	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000

Source: UN EGDI, <https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/Data-Center>

Digitalization trends in international comparison



Source: UN EGD, <https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/Data-Center>

C2ESS countries according to the UN E-Government Development Index 2020

Country	Group	Quartile	Rank 2010	Rank 2020	EGDI 2020	Rank Change
 Estonia	VHEGDI	VH	20	3	0.9473	+17
 Iceland	VHEGDI	VH	22	12	0.9101	+10
 Cyprus	VHEGDI	V3	42	18	0.8731	+24
 Malta	VHEGDI	V3	30	22	0.8547	+8
 Liechtenstein	VHEGDI	V2	23	31	0.8359	-8
 Luxembourg	VHEGDI	V2	25	33	0.8272	-8
 Montenegro	HEGDI	H3	60	75	0.7006	-15
 Andorra	HEGDI	H3	57	80	0.6881	-23
 San Marino	HEGDI	H2	184	96	0.6175	+88

Source: <https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/Data-Center>

Digitalization trends

- Creating of digital Montenegro is in focus of developmental policy, especially over the last 20 years.
- The importance of the development of the information society was recognized in the strategic document in 2004, although individual initiatives for the informatization of the state administration also existed at the end of the 1990s.
- At the moment, public sector digitalization relies on two important services: **e-government portal** (web services of public administration) and **eDMS** (electronic document management system in public administration).
- The enactment of the **Law on Electronic Administration** and its implementation created legal preconditions for the transition from traditional procedures to electronic procedures.

Digitalization trends

- Montenegro has adopted a **National Interoperability Framework** (in line with the European Interoperability Framework - EIF) which promotes electronic communication between authorities by providing a set of common models, principles and recommendations.
- The development of common (shared) information systems, that all electronic service providers have to use, has been provided, primarily the **National Electronic Identification System (NS-EID)**, the **National System for the Collection of Administrative Fees (NS-NAT)** and the **Unified Information System for Electronic Data Exchange (JISERP)**.
- Although there are various initiatives, by public administration and the economy, business sector, NGOs, etc., and there is an awareness of the importance of creating a digital Montenegro, there are still major inequalities between all elements of the (future) digital ecosystem.

Digital public services

- Digital services are listed and offered through the e-Government portal (www.euprava.me), which has been operational since 2011. There are **593** services on the portal, of which **185** are electronic services, and **408** are of informative type of services.
- Although there is a large number of electronic services, the previous year was characterized by the development and faster implementation of some important services within e-health, e-education, etc., which were realized using the JISERP system.
- When it comes to the local level, the services provided by local governments are mostly of an informative type, and can be found on the portals of local units.

Citizens
around 90%
choose personal
contact

Business
80% or more
choose personal
contact

E-participation

- Montenegro joined the OGP initiative in 2012 and, as a participating country, signed a declaration on open government. Obligations defined by this initiative are: *improvement of public services, participation of citizens, access to information - openness of state administration bodies, more efficient management of public resources, increase of public integrity.*
- A system for electronic participation has been developed on the eGovernment portal (<https://www.euprava.me/eparticipacija>). Through this service, citizens can actively participate in the creation of laws and other strategic documents and can express opinions and views in public debates.
- In 2019, the portal "Voice of Citizens ePetition" was launched again (www.epeticije.gov.me). Citizens of Montenegro can submit petitions for initiatives within the competence of the Government of Montenegro, with 3,000 collected instead of the previously required 6,000 signatures.

Governance of public sector digitalisation

- Ministry of Public Administration, Digital Society and Media is in charge of developing digital society in Montenegro.
- All other Ministries are responsible for digital development in their areas of governance.
- According to the **Law on Electronic Administration**, the Government has to appoint the *Council for e-government*, which will have the task of monitoring the development of e-government, proposing measures to improve e-government, considering professional issues in the field of information and communication technologies and coordinating activities related to the development of e-government.

Governance of public sector digitalisation

- According to the [Government's Work Program](#), there are several strategies (with action plans) in the field of digitalization that should be created and adopted during 2021:
 - Digital Transformation Strategy of Montenegro 2021-2025
 - Strategy for digitalization of the education system 2021-2027
 - National Digital Health Strategy in Montenegro for the period from 2021 to 2025
 - Cyber Security Strategy of Montenegro 2022-2026
- All strategies, at least in the initial proposal, emphasize the benefits in terms of faster and more efficient transformation and adjustment of business in the new environment, improving business productivity through the use of ICT and the like.
- In the process of digitalization, Montenegro actively cooperates with international organizations through the implementation of projects as well as the exchange of experience in the process of creating a digital society.

Flashpoint: COVID-19

- The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the great importance of technology, as well as the key role of efficient, open and accountable government.
- The development of the *coronainfocg* portal (www.coronainfocg.me) was initiated, to provide information and recommendations regarding the coronary virus pandemic. At the beginning of 2021, it has changed in www.covidodgovor.me.
- In addition to the increase in the use of all existing services on the e-Government Portal and the significantly higher number of requests submitted via e-mail, e-services in the field of **health** and **education** were mostly used.
- Bearing in mind the increased interest of citizens in electronic services in the field of health on the portal www.ezdravlje.me - through a website or mobile application, the use of electronic services such as ePharmacy, eRecipe, eFind, eEnsurance, eOrdering, eAppointment is enabled.

Flashpoint: COVID-19 and contact tracing

- It was noticeable that many services, which were developed before, got their real use during the pandemic.
- An **electronic service COVID-19** was launched for insured persons tested for the presence of a new coronavirus, in order to obtain feedback on test results.
- Before the start of the **immunization process**, an electronic service for citizens to register for immunization was created on the covidodgovor.me portal.
- There were no initiatives in Montenegro to use or develop an application on infected persons.

Flashpoint: Electronic enrollment in educational institutions (www.upisi.edu.me)

- Connecting the systems of the e-government portal with other governmental systems in order to more efficiently complete business processes will encourage and enable the improvement of e-services to the highest level of sophistication.
- E-services for enrollment in educational institutions are one of the examples of successful projects implemented by the Ministry in charge of education and the Ministry in charge of digitalization, all within the UNDP project funded by the EC. The services were developed relying on a single information exchange system (JISERP).
- Entering a unique personal identification number removes data from three different registers, which relieved parents of submitting certain evidence, such as a birth certificate and confirmation that they are beneficiaries of material security or are children without parental care.

Conclusion

- The importance of digitalization has been recognized both at the state level and in the private sector as well as by international institutions.
- The Covid-19 pandemic has encouraged various actors in society, especially the business sector in the field of IT, to unite with the intention of launching initiatives and encouraging digital transformation in Montenegro, of course, with the strategic lead of the Government.
- However, it is evident that IT staff is in short supply, insufficient investment is made in the education of employees who must keep up with the growing trends in information technology development, while quality staff is difficult to maintain due to lack of adequate reward mechanisms.

Conclusion

- One of the weaknesses in the current process of informatization of public administration, that has to change if the digitalization is a priority, is the insufficient promotion of electronic public services by institutions that provide services, but also the insufficient level of digital literacy and/or motivation and possibilities in the use of these services.
- Although it should be easier to implement digital transformation in small countries, it should be kept in mind that a **clear vision** and **strategy** at the highest level is needed first and foremost.
- This strategy should include all citizens, the entire economy, the non-governmental sector, and all other actors, because we cannot talk about the digital ecosystem if not everyone feels the benefits of digitalization.