**[ICT’s Role in Civil Society](http://www.onlineschools.org/state-of-the-internet/soti.html)**

**Key Terms*:* Global civil society** all movements, associations or individual citizens, independent from the state, whose aim is to transform policies, standards or social structures through comunal efforts at a national or international level.

**Digital Divide** refers to the gap between people with effective Access to digital and information technology and those with very limited Access to it, or none at all.

**Task**: Create a table of the contrasting roles of ICT in two countries, I would suggest using the following,

[USA](http://senseable.mit.edu/csa/index.html), [UK](http://www.21stcenturychallenges.org/60-seconds/what-is-the-digital-divide/), [Iceland](http://www1.american.edu/carmel/cn9463a/InternetDiffusion.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+ib-geography-global-interactions-diigo+%28IB+Geography+2009+Global+Interactions+|+Diigo+-+Groups%29), India, [China](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Digital_divide_in_Mainland_China) or [Mexico](http://www.guardian.co.uk/global-development/2010/sep/14/mdg8-mexico-it).

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|  | **Country A** | **Country B** |
| **Internet Penetration Levels** | The Internet Penetration levels have risen in Mexico since the 1990’s from 3% to a 26% in 2010, in which the increase in technological equipment has been a cause of the globalization of urban areas and the introduction of telecommunications in the social way of life. | Iceland has always had higher than average Internet penetration rates, but the addition of free Internet access services has driven the rate up from 49% in December of 1999 to 60% in 2000. |
| **Digital Divide** | The Digital Divide along with the accessibility of Mexico’s Internet Network has increased not very efficiently in the poorer sectors of the society as a result of the low economic income of the people that live in those areas and the lack of aid from the government in technological equipment. | Iceland has been quick to adapt to Internet technology and has one of the world's highest levels of Internet subscriptions and service providers per capita. More than 70 percent of the population had Internet access at work, home or in school (in 2000) so Digital Divide isn’t really visible. |
| **Political Participation** | In 2001 the Mexican Government launched an ambitious project to give access to ITC’s to all Mexicans and provide educational, health and government services online. The project is now taking place mostly in the rural areas, with the goal of letting these communities have access to Internet servers and therefore giving these communities the possibility of having a modernized way of life. | The Icelandic Government implemented an extensive policy (“Iceland to be in the forefront of the world's nations in the utilization of information technology in the service of improved human existence and increased prosperity”) for every Icelander to have access to the Information Society (in schools, private and public sectors) that way the country’s economic competitiveness can increase (due to new technologies) as well as its productivity levels.  A campaign promoting general computer literacy of the nation was implemented. |
| **Social Networking** | The Social Networks have increased a 12% in the last 5 years mostly in urban areas as a result of the introduction of the Social Networks in the access of mobile phones. | The use of social networks in Iceland has increased from 70% of internet users in 2010 to 76% in 2011 |
| **ICT and Finance** | The finance of the ICT equipment has been increasing as a result of the investment of international and national mobile phone companies that are now entering the country. The government of Mexico has invested 6.2 million dollars in the importation of technological equipment into the country as a consequence of the plan generated in 2001. | Due to privatization (in 1991) telecom and the majority of ICT businesses were state-owned and financed. Nowadays, Iceland has moved to a more market-oriented economy with substantial liberalization of financial markets. Iceland doesn’t offer direct subsidies for business investment. Its prime incentives lie in the favorable environment for businesses in general, including low corporation tax, competitive labor costs and payroll costs, and low electricity prices. |
| **ICT & Sedentary Lifestyles** | The information available suggests that in urban areas, as a result of the low average of people with normal access to ICT equipment, the sedimentary lifestyle is non-existent. | The largest consumer of computer products in Iceland is the government, followed by services and then household usage. Iceland’s advanced telecommunications infrastructure encourages households to use technology because high bandwidth connections are available to both businesses and residents. More than 80 percent of the population has access to the Internet and about half that number has access at home this means that sedentary lifestyle levels are very high. |
| **Responses to Natural Disasters** | In Natural Disaster situations, as a result of the earthquake in 1985, in Mexico City, there has been a policy that any building has to have at least basic technological equipment in order to be actually built for safety issues. | After weathering a couple nasty natural disasters, the small island nation is rebuilding its constitution with input from citizens on social media sites (evolution of technologically-enhanced democracy) |

<http://www1.american.edu/carmel/cn9463a/iceland.htm>

<http://www.newmediatrendwatch.com/markets-by-country/10-europe/68-iceland>

<http://www.motherboard.tv/2011/6/16/iceland-is-writing-its-constitution-on-facebook>