

Estonian President Toomas Hendrik Ilves has seen firsthand how his country has taken advantage of the digital revolution. He shared that experience in a session chaired by World Bank's Senior Vice President and Chief Economist Kaushik Basu on May 27, 2014. Estonian business and government leaders realized early on that computers could help compensate for a limited workforce and a lack of physical infrastructure. Today the tiny country is performing better than the European Union average on measures of information technology achievement. Estonia's public sector is highly advanced in providing sophisticated public services online.

In the country's private sector, which ranks high in terms of the number of start-ups per person, telecommunications companies and banks have laid down vital cornerstones. Hand in hand with this, the public sector has been crucial in providing a favorable legislative environment, but also in funding the country's key technology infrastructure. The result has been an electronic identification system and an array of innovative e-services. In addition, major public-private partnership initiatives for computer training and awareness-raising significantly contribute to Estonia's status as a world leader in information technology.

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