

The President, Toomas Hendrik Ilves, opened today at the Mektory V innovation and entrepreneurship centre, "Quo vadis, Estonia" symposium, which takes place within the framework of the fifth international meeting of Estonia's friends and will this time focus on the role of e-democracy, e-governance and information technology in a modern society. In his opening address the Head of State spoke about Estonia's success in the sphere of information technology and the advantages of using e-governance solutions from both the perspective of the state and the citizens.

President Ilves described the diversified range of e-services, available in Estonia; the principles that Estonia has followed for the development of information technology; the background and the reasons for our digital success story and co-operation between Estonia and other countries for the development of uniform and shared e-governance systems both today and in the future.

According to the Head of State, the secure digital signature represents the foundation for the success of e-governance solutions in Estonia. The presence of a working electronic identity and digital signature allows us to set an example for other countries.

The establisher of Proteus Digital Health, Andrew M. Thompson, also took the floor at the symposium, focusing on the newest e-health solutions. According to Thompson, new technologies allow to monitoring of the regularity of administration of medications and also the effect of medications on a specific individual, thus contributing to better treatment and more efficient use of health care resources. Thompson also introduced the digital school system, applicable in the USA, which will help the least privileged children to obtain a better education.

The traditional meeting of Estonia's friends was opened yesterday by an EE seminar "Global Estonians – Contributing for a Smarter World", followed in the evening by the Estonian National Symphony Orchestra's (ERSO) concert, "Suur suvine kohtumine. Sõbrad" (Great Summer Gathering. Friends), this year conducted by Neeme Järvi and Taavo Virkhaus. This morning, friends met with the Prime Minister, Taavi Rõivas, and in the evening, a concert-reception will take place at Oandu Water Mill; jazz quarter of Andre Mustonen is being the main performer.

This year, more than 120 entrepreneurs, politicians and opinion leaders from 21 countries all over the world, including, for example, Martti Ahtisaari, the President of Finland from

1994-2000, Minister-President of Schleswig-Holstein, Torsten Albig, and a member of the Canadian Parliament, Peter van Loan, will take place inattended the gathering of Estonia's friends. This year, the central idea involves the development of e-democracy and Estonia's progress in the sphere of information technology.

The idea to launch an international meeting of Estonia's friends was born in 2010. The gathering is aimed to thank and recognize business, political and cultural figures whose actions and advice have helped Estonia to become a truly European country with a dynamic economy and thriving culture and who may play a key role in bringing foreign investments to Estonia.

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