

The President, Toomas Hendrik Ilves, took part in high-level panels that focused on digital development and geopolitics at the World Economic Forum in Davos. The Estonian Head of State met with the leaders of several global technology enterprises within the framework of the World Economic Forum, such as Kudelski Group, Google and Cisco; he also met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada, John Baird. The Head of State will return to Estonia tonight.

In the past, very few work groups focused on digital society issues at the Davos Forum, and even then the activities were mostly aimed at information and communication sector enterprises. However, in recent times, we can see a huge shift – digitalisation is a headline issue at all the Forum events. This change is more evidence that the new digital era is influencing all economic spheres.

President Ilves invited the representatives of enterprises to pool their efforts in shaping the policies: "A successful digital economic space will require the free cross-border movement of data as one of the pre-requisites. The drafting of regulations required for the development of a digital market would be more efficient through the joint contribution and efforts of the various economic sectors. In the European Union, more support is available to initiatives that are not strictly confined to the administrative area of a single commissioner, but to problems that affect several sectors. Today, issues related to the development of technology match such a description."

At a panel on Ukraine that brought together several high-level politicians from both Ukraine and Europe and mostly focused on the further economic challenges that Ukraine is facing, President Ilves spoke about the inevitability of reforms, recalling the decades that followed Estonia's restoration of independence. President Ilves stated that even though Russia's aggression is an objective external factor, which will complicate every day organisation in Ukraine for its government, the implementation of inevitable reforms is something that Ukraine must primarily do by itself, and the European Union can only take a supporting role in this regard.

The World Economic Forum (WEF) is a Swiss-based non-profit organisation with headquarters in Geneva that organises a top annual meeting each January in a mountain resort in Davos, Switzerland. In addition, WEF organises six to eight regional events every year in different places all over the world. This year's event brought together thousands of business leaders, top level politicians, intellectuals and journalists from all over the world. Over four days, the participants discussed the most serious challenges that the global economy faces, focusing on

their reasons and the possible consequences. Estonia is taking part in the meeting at the level of Head of State for the second year at the invitation of the founder and organiser of the Forum, Professor Klaus Schwab.

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