

President Toomas Hendrik Ilves opened "Estonia ICT Day – Digitally Smart Solutions for Sustainable Development" yesterday at the World Bank; Estonian representatives of the private and public sectors introduced our e-solutions at the event.

In his address, President Ilves emphasised that the digital development of a country results in the better involvement of people in social processes and the distribution of innovation, which help to boost the economy. "However, having a cable is not enough to achieve these objectives; most of the work needs to be done at the level of governance, different regulations and legislation," he added.

The Head of State remarked that the absence of cross-border e-services or a digital common market, which work marvellously in the United States of America, is one of the major disadvantages for the European Union. "The problem of the European Union is the fact that we have 28 digital markets, all with different taxation systems, and this affects our economic competitiveness. Europe can no longer compete with the USA or Asia and we stand to lose hundreds of billions of dollars each year," said President Ilves.

Apart from President Ilves, presentations were given at the World Bank by Taimar Peterkop from the Information System Authority of the Republic of Estonia, Villem Alango from Datel and the e-Governance Academy, Arne Ansper from Cybernetica, Kris Hiiemaa from Erply, Taavi Einaste from Nortal, Tiit Anmann from SignWise and Andrus Viirg from Enterprise Estonia.

The introduction of Estonia's e-services includes an overview of our technical solutions, such as digital identity and X-road, and the attitude that is characteristic of Estonia in general – an openness to technology and innovation may be the key to the development of a country. The purpose of the event was to establish contacts with the World Bank and enhance the opportunities of Estonian enterprises to become involved in various projects implemented by the World Bank in developing countries.

The upcoming World Bank Development Report 2016 on Internet and Development is being prepared under the joint leadership of President Ilves and Chief Economist of the World Bank, Kaushik Basu. This report will offer Estonia a unique opportunity to share our experience of the establishment of an e-state and shape the mentality of the sector, particularly in developing countries and international organisations. The report investigates how relying on information

technology could influence economic growth and the efficiency of the public sector; why this has been successful in some countries and not in others; what changes would be needed in legislation, educational systems and institutions and how to influence societies towards become accepting and open to changes.

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