

President Toomas Hendrik Ilves and President Sauli Niinistö of Finland, who is on a state visit to Estonia, today spoke at the FinEst Future Forum, an event organised by the Mektory innovation and business centre of Tallinn University of Technology.

President Niinistö acknowledged the flexibility and ability of Estonian state authorities to adjust in adopting and implementing e-services and mentioned the need to find new, future-oriented solutions amid toughening global competition and continued economic recession.

"Start-up companies that focus on outsourcing new, successful business models are an example that should be followed in the general economy," said the Finnish Head of State, who also added: "Finland has a lot to learn from Estonia's e-governance efforts."

According to President Ilves, good relations between Estonia and Finland offer various good opportunities: "We can set an example for the rest of Europe to show how today's convenient e-services, such as e-prescription, can become a cross-border service. To achieve that goal, we promptly need to reach a common understanding about legal solutions and the shaping of processes, as this is the only way to use these opportunities offered by technology."

He assured that distances have no importance for countries in digital worlds, as the required information can be safely channelled across borders by means of networks.

President Ilves, who has been an initiator of Estonian-Finnish digital co-operation for some years, emphasised that the agreement on cross-border data exchange and development of services between Estonia and Finland, which was signed last week by the prime ministers of our two countries, will set an example for the whole European Union.

Should the European Union fail to go along with the opportunities offered by digital world, it will become a beautiful museum, warned President Ilves and he invited Estonia and Finland to jointly tackle the prevailing understandings that are characteristic of the 19th century.

"We – Estonia and Finland – can show the European Union that it is possible to move data and that the process works effectively. This would make the close co-operation between Estonia and Finland a future model for many others, said President Ilves.

Office of the President  
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