

President Toomas Hendrik Ilves in Copenhagen today presented the report of the EU Task Force on e-Health, "Redesigning health in Europe for 2020", to the ministers of health care and social affairs of the European Union member states and representatives of the European Commission. The report was finished as the result of a year's work; the working group, led by the Estonian Head of State, consisted of representatives of patients, the medical profession, the pharmaceutical and ICT industries, legal experts and politicians from different countries.

The recommendations given in the report focus on the proprietary rights of data protection and medical records, as well as the compatibility of health information in a situation where hundreds of IT applications facilitate measuring and assessing one's health status even today.

President Ilves stated that healthcare is lagging behind by approximately ten years when compared to other spheres in the implementation of different IT-solutions. "We know, based on the example of many other services, that information technology applications may completely change and complement our current approach. By implementing different IT solutions for both preventive healthcare and treatment services, we also improve both the welfare of patients and the healthcare system in general," told President Ilves.

"Medical records that are created and stored by a patient, citizen and every person could reach a database that is readily available to a family doctor from his/her smartphone or computer. And from there, encrypted and anonymous information could be forwarded to a central database, where there is a consolidation of information on both the frequency of specific diseases and the effectiveness of various procedures and medications used for their treatment," added the Estonian Head of State.

"The outcome would please the patient, his family doctor, organisers of the health care system, its funders and, ultimately, also researchers," President Ilves explained to the ministers and commissioners.

According to Ilves, the e-health working group was aware, at every stage in the development of its report, that the issues related to the medical records of people and other delicate information, its proprietary rights, distribution, disclosure and processing is highly complicated, both in relation to national and trans-European legislation. And this is the reason why the working group is proposing that the European Union begin the development of a new legal space that

conforms with the digital era: a new "health Schengen", to cite some of the experts, which would allow for the use of such information through mutual consent and arrangements for the benefit of people, using methods that cross the borders of the European Union member states.

"The European Union and its member states must make efforts in the reorganisation that is inevitably going to take place in the sphere of healthcare over the coming decades: efforts that are scheduled and future orientated and comply with the legislation of the member states and the European Union," said Ilves, in encouraging the European Union Member States and the Commission to act.

Please find the full text of the report [here](#) (PDF).

Office of the President  
Public Relations Department  
Phone +372 631 6229