

Facts about e-Estonia

Estonia has nearly 1,3 million inhabitants. In Estonia IT solutions developed within the construction of e-State constitute a part of our state administration. We use information technology as an instrument for increasing administrative capacity and ensuring an innovative and convenient living environment for citizens. That is a lifestyle that values simplicity, speed, comfort and economic savings. Therefore the keywords behind the development of e-State in Estonia are sustainable development and high-quality environment.

In building e-State, Estonia has benefited from its small and adaptable population as well as favorable starting point in terms of economic policy a decade ago. We do small yet good things with help of public-private partnership and are proud of that.

The triumphal progress of Estonia as e-State started largely due to banking. In the beginning of the nineties, effective banking systems of that time were not copied in the banking sector but a modern electronic system was created that allowed money-owners to manage their funds in an electronic environment of a bank without leaving their home or office. The system won approval of users, and at the same time the need arose for people to learn to use computer first but also the need to acquire personal computer and internet connection. Today 98% of banking transactions are effected electronically and the number of users of the Estonian Internet banks is more than 1.5 million clients.

In 2009, 76% of (age 16-74) population is using the Internet, 67% of households have a personal computer at home and 91% of personal computers are connected to the Internet in Estonia. The whole territory of Estonia is covered with the possibility of dedicated links and public internet points. About 1160 WIFI networks for use by public are officially registered.

Banks created infrastructure for identification a person in an electronic environment as a key solution. Soon other entities that wanted to offer their services in an electronic environment also saw their opportunity there. The abovementioned situation created a good basis for emerging e-State. One by one, the electronic Population Register, e-Tax Board, cadastre etc. were created. Today more than 360 information systems of the public sector with services are described in the state information administration system.

Soon after creating the first modern information systems, the need for interactivity between information systems arose. In late 90s a project X-Road started having the objective of creating a secure and standard environment for interconnection or data communication between information systems. In practice, X-Road was ready to use in the beginning of the year 2002 when the Population Register as a first database was integrated into X-Road. By the present, X-Road aggregates 80 different databases with ~1500 services, from which many complex services have been created. More than 500 different organizations have integrated their information systems into X-Road. Since 2005, it is possible to use document exchange centre where mostly organizations of the public sector perform their document management. Today about 500 organizations use the document exchange centre via

X-Road. Large-scale enterprises from private sector also have joined X-Road. Over 22 000 documents were sent electronically in 2009. And over 12 000 documents have been sent within 4 months in 2010.

In 2000, a uniform presentation form of e-State was launched and first results in this field were produced in 2002. The objective was to create a uniform gate of e-State in the Internet for every public e- and m-services. Today a citizen, an enterprise and a civil servant all have their individual view. Public e- and m-services of more than 150 organizations have been aggregated. May 2009 to may 2010 state portal had 2,4 million visits and 19 million page views.

In 2001 the first nation-wide identity card that is primary identity document for Estonian citizens both in the real and digital world were commissioned. Today over 90% of citizens have ID-cards. It is also possible to affix a digital signature that is legally equal to a normal signature by the aid of an ID-card. Over 300 000 people use ID-card electronically which is 70 000 authentications and 40 000 digital signatures daily.

In connection with ID-card and the enactment of a digital signature, preconditions for first nation-wide e-Elections or elections via the Internet were also created. In 2005, nation-wide elections of local governments and 2007 nation-wide elections of the parliamentary assembly were brought to pass that are specific because of the possibility to make a choice at home or elsewhere people had access to the e-election system. In October 2009, 104313 e-voters took part in the election of the local governments in 2009.

Every ID-card owner also got an official e-mail address in the form firstname.lastname@eesti.ee. The address was intended for official communication with the state and is stated as an „official electronic residence“ of the citizen. 65 000 private individuals and over 8,000 companies are using this opportunity today.

In practice, all environments offering e-services have a possibility to access by the aid of identity card. In addition, there is a possibility to use identity card in public transport. Every day 20% of identity card owners enjoy this possibility. ID-card is also used as an access card in case of some events.

Mobile ID-card that by its functionality offers an alternative to electronic functions of ID-card was also commissioned in addition to ID-card in spring 2007. Mobile ID gives an opportunity to use electronic services in the situation where ID-card is not available for some reasons. Today there are over 30,000 owners of Mobile ID in Estonia.

Estonian E-Tax Board should be distinguished because declarations are previously completed and verification of a declaration takes only a few minutes. In 2010, 92,4% of people declared their income electronically. (Total income-tax reports 556 234)

Since the beginning of 2007, it takes only 15 minutes to establish a firm in the Internet in Estonia. The company will be legalized within a few hours and an undertaker may start with business.

Police patrol cars are equipped with computers and an internet connection. Due to good IT-infrastructure of the state, it is possible to receive information about a driver and his car without a driving license or car documents because the system has an access to more than 80 databases due to X-Road in legitimate situations, and policemen can do their work more operatively and better.

E-school where communication between a teacher, a student and a parent is electronic have also proved its place in our society. More than 65% of Estonian schools have joined the abovementioned system and it covers a possibility for 95% of students to take part in the system.

In addition, many public sector institutions offer their services in m-form. For example, a student who passed a state examination can order the result of the examination as an SMS into his/her mobile phone or he/she can get the result in real time. Every year this service is used by almost every school-leaver or approximately 30,000 persons.

Estonia is the state where m-parking system was commissioned first in the world.

In spring 2007, a large cyber attack took place against websites of Estonian government offices and data communication networks. The abovementioned cyber attack pointed out the bottlenecks of different systems that allowed strengthening information system of the whole state and gave a valuable experience to specialists. Simultaneously, it was decided to modify Estonia into the state having the most secure information society in the world by the year 2009. This was accompanied by thorough adjustment of legal environment suitable for the changed situation.

ESTONIA certainly is an e-State. SKYPE has been developed in Estonia and Estonia has its virtual embassy in SecondLife. Several governments that have always been innovative confirm Estonia being an e-State because the Estonian government has used a striking information system of e-Government where all operations are done in an electronic environment without paper for some years now.

LINKS:

www.eesti.ee	Estonian State Portal
www.riso.ee	Department of State Information Systems (RISO)
www.id.ee	ID-card
www.valimised.ee	Elections and E-Voting
www.emta.ee	Estonian Tax and Customs Board
www.rik.ee	Centre of Registers and Information Systems
www.ria.ee	Estonian Informatics Centre

Contacts: Mihkel Tikk
mihkel.tikk@eesti.ee
+372 6630285
www.ria.ee