

# How did Estonia become a new role model in digital education?

TALLINN, ESTONIA, May 7, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Estonia, the leading education nation in Europe (No 1. in PISA test in Europe), has become a role model for digital education. Estonians have made ICT work for education and they have a number of solutions that fully support distance learning.

Estonia, the Baltic nation of just 1.3 million people has attracted the attention of world leaders, academics and venture capitalists thanks to its high-tech digital society.

The numbers speak for themselves: taxes are completed online in under 5 minutes, 99 percent of the Estonia's public services are available on the web 24 hours a day and 99% of schools had already before the Covid-19 been using some type of e-solutions. But how did Estonia become a new role model in digital education?



Little engineer. Source: Renee Altrov

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*Kristel Rillo*

## Strong digital focus

A key initiative started in education as Estonia pledged to put computers in every classroom and by 2000, every school in the country was online. The government also offered free computer training to 10 percent of the adult population. The effort helped raise the percentage of Estonians who use the internet from 29 percent in 2000 to 91 percent in 2016.

Since 2014, Estonians have a lifelong learning strategy that includes also a digital transformation programme. The idea of the programme is to help develop the digital competences of both, the teachers and the students. IT-training courses and instructional materials helped to

integrate digital technology into the learning process in order to develop the digital competence.

Another milestone was that Estonia set itself the goal of digitalising all educational materials already in 2015. Success of the digital transformation of Estonian education system relies on thorough professional development and training of teachers and educational technologists.

In addition to teaching knowledge and skills in the digital field, Estonian education widely uses numerous smart solutions: digital databases, digital textbooks, e-learning materials, digital class diary, digital assessments, not to mention various applications and programs.

School is mostly in the cloud

Today, the Estonian school is mostly in the cloud. 100% of schools use e-school solutions (i.e. eKool, Stuudium). These innovative tools provide an easy way for parents, teachers and children to collaborate and organize all the information necessary for teaching and learning.

„Having a well established startup ecosystem for educational companies in place for some years now the schools are supported to great extent with the e-services from the private sector,“ said Kristel Rillo, head of Digital Education at the Ministry of Education and Research.

She added that educational e-services have been significant for Estonian students and teachers for years and it has made organizing distance learning a lot easier.

To support other countries' education systems during the COVID-19 crisis, Estonia is humbled to share all of its digital education tools for free. The list of tools that are internationally available are here: <http://education-nation.99math.com/>.

The tools are typically co-created between schools, universities, and companies. “A number of tools are prepared for international usage and the companies developing those tools have also kindly agreed to support other countries in need. The aim of this initiative is to support distance learning and work in the education sector during this time of crisis,“ said Märt Aro, Co-Founder of the European EdTech Alliance.

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