

Global leaders for innovation and technology

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Starting March 2017, Autonomous Vehicles are allowed on the streets and roads of Estonia. We are writing to you, global heralds of the field, to invite you to reap the benefits which Estonia has created: a modern regulative environment, an advanced technological infrastructure and a forward-thinking society.

There is a long list of reasons why we in Estonia are so sympathetic towards your field of research. Out of all institutions and organization you are most aware of the enormous benefits self-driving vehicles can offer -safer roads and increased mobility for the people, significant environmental advantages, increased urban space, and reduced costs for the society among many others.

Estonia has a long tradition of promoting innovation. In 2000, the parliament passed a law declaring Internet access a fundamental human right of its citizenry.

Since 2005 Estonia became the first country in history to hold legally binding general elections over the Internet with secure authenticated procedures. In 2014 we became the first country in the world to introduce virtual residency – e-residency – a transnational digital identity available to anyone around the globe interested in administering a location-independent business online, with access to the EU single market.

We hope this convinced you of our unique way of thinking about the government, society and the role of regulation in transforming the relationship between citizens, communities and the public sector. We like to consider Estonia as a cradle of digital technology inside the European Union. A test ground for innovation, which has inspired to sprout such global players as Transferwise, Skype or Starship Technologies among others.



Here is a list of objective arguments to support Estonia to become a testing ground for autonomous vehicles:

1. **Estonian public sector is flexible on national and municipal level;**
2. **Starting from 2018 5G mobile networks are introduced;**
3. **Remote controlling of AVs is possible already within current legal framework -i.e it is legal to test AVs on Estonian roads under certain conditions;**
4. **As hosts for NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence and the EU IT Agency our competence of cyber security is in everyday practice on highest level;**
5. **Public co-funding of testing-grounds, competence centres and training;**
6. **Critical mass of innovative companies;**
7. **Nationwide electric vehicle fast-charging network;**
8. **High-level academic competence in the related research areas;**
9. **Community is forward-thinking and supportive of next generation technology;**
10. **And although this might be somewhat open to criticism, Estonia is the most beautiful country in the world.**

We recognize that in a globalised world such as we live in, countries will need to compete (and are already competing) for citizens and businesses. Just like companies are competing for customers.



In Estonia, we are determined to reduce regulatory restrictions for innovation. We want to accelerate innovation that serves societies, not hold it back. When bright ideas meet a can-do attitude anything is possible **-this is our national policy.**

We kindly invite you to be part of the growth-encouraging environment for autonomous vehicles Estonia has to offer. And we offer our help to start the dialogue of how best reach this goal.

Taavi Rõivas

Vice-President of the Parliament of Estonia Riigikogu
Prime Minister of Estonia 2014-2016

Kalle Palling

Vice-Chairman of Environment Committee and E-Estonia Parliamentary Support Group of Parliament of Estonia Riigikogu