The ONE MINUTE READ Series – Introducing Smart Cities

Week 6 - Lessons from Estonia

"How Estonia became the most Innovative Economy in Emerging Europe"

12ᵗʰ August 2019 | Tay Kok-Chin, Chairman, Smart Cities Network

*The Republic of Estonia, in northern Europe, was once within Soviet Union but gained independence on 20ᵗʰ August 1991. Despite having a population of only 1.3 million, it is the **most innovative economy** in Emerging Europe, and the 24ᵗʰ most innovative globally, according to the 2019 Global Innovation Index. They were the ones who started Skype, and many other innovative solutions.*

We can learn a few things from them.

1) **Innovation is independent of size of the city**

   The country has shown the world that innovation has little or nothing to do with size of the city or country.

2) **Launch of the e-Residency Platform**

   To overcome its smallness, they launched this platform for anyone to become an e-citizen from Dec 2014, with only Euro100. More than 20,000 have applied.

3) **A Digital Nation**

   The Estonian Government has created the digital platform to support businesses, where applicants (like an e-Resident of Estonia) can open and run a global European Union (EU) based company completely online, regardless of the location of the applicant in the world.

4) **Tips for other Governments**

   https://www.forbes.com/sites/adigaskell/2017/06/23/how-estonia-became-the-digital-leaders-of-europe/#160addf2256d

   a) *Start by creating a decentralized and distributed platform that allows existing components to be connected, and new components to be easily added, regardless of whether they're developed by public or private entities.*

   b) *Make sure your procurement systems allow you to get the very best tools and systems for the job.*

   c) *Use systems that have already achieved success to allow them to be implemented faster.*