



BUSINESS FORUM 2018

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



HANA HOLMEN

Welcoming words from Hanaholmen

Representatives from Finland, Sweden and Estonia were gathered together at Hanaholmen's Business Forum in the middle of October to discuss artificial intelligence (AI).

"Europe lags behind Asia and USA when it comes to AI. We need to make coordinated efforts to be able to make the most of AI and embrace the challenges", said Hanaholmen's CEO Gunvor Kronman.

According to her, it is important that countries create a stimulating environment for investments.

During 2018 Estonia has been celebrating its 100th anniversary, and at Hanaholmen the Estonian guests were warmly welcomed.

Annika Arras, one of the moderators

at the seminar, emphasised that the Estonians not only consider themselves Baltic, but also very Nordic, thus making cooperation important.

"Digitalisation is a part of the modern Estonia's DNA", said Pär Nuder from AP3 and AMF.

Steering committee 2018

Pär Nuder
Indrek Kasela
Peter Vesterbacka
Camilla Wardi
Hele Karilaid
Gunvor Kronman
Håkan Forsgård
Erik Lund



An executive summary from Business Forum 2018

Publisher: HANAHOLMEN Swedish-Finnish Cultural Centre, Hanasaarenranta 5, 02100 Espoo **Editor:** Håkan Forsgård / Hanaholmen **Editor and layout:** Jessica Santala / Hanaholmen **Articles and other text:** Michaela von Kügelgen **Pictures:** Jakke Nikkarinen

Adapting Society to AI

Keynote by Kersti Kaljulaid

"We not only need to develop AI, but we also need to consider how to adapt our societies", said Estonia's President Kersti Kaljulaid in her keynote address at the Business Forum.

According to her, this is a big challenge - how can we adapt ourselves to machines working side by side with us?

To avoid problems in the future, it is important that legislation is current and includes AI. Think about if there is an accident due to AI - who would be responsible?

"Are we able to create a legal space? We cannot keep on legislating on current existing technology", said Kaljulaid.

She emphasised however that Estonia is a forerunner both within legislation and the technology while Finland and Sweden lag behind.

"Estonians gather data and Finns gather paper in digital format."

Kaljulaid described Estonia as a completely digital and proactive state. Certain decisions are made automatically thanks to information in public databases. For example, an automatic reminder can be sent to citizens whose driver's license is about to expire, and retirees that live alone receive a little larger pension every month without having to fill in extra paperwork.

The larger the influence AI has on decision-making and processes, the more important it is that legislation keeps up.

"Then we can assure ourselves that people are protected. But also companies and ideas."

In Kaljulaid's dream scenario, we combine Estonia's digital know-how with the Nordic welfare society.



Estonia, Finland and Sweden 3.0

Eva Hamilton - Kersti Kaljulaid - Ilona Lundström - Paavo Nõgene

"Artificial intelligence is only as good as the society around us. We stand before an incredible opportunity. There are some threats, but also great promise", said Ilona Lundström.

Eva Hamilton pointed out the importance of creating an education model that encourages everyone to lifelong learning.

"We are heading into an era of e-economy. Who is responsible for educating people? Until now, companies have taken that responsibility", said Hamilton.

The panel also discussed whether AI could be used within politics.

"Why not have a minister that is based on AI? But politics has more to do with us people and how we view a good life on the whole. How can AI help us to reach those goals?"

Eva Hamilton spoke about cyber hygiene and digital identity and emphasised that matters need to be addressed on a European and global level as soon as possible.

"The African Union will likely come to a resolution before the EU", said Hamilton.

Digitalisation is at the centre for development, but many are suspicious.

"Many do not trust digital paper, although it is more secure than physical documents. The same applies to vehicles - many still do not trust self-driving cars, although they are probably safer than we are", said Kaljulaid.

Paavo Nõgene raised the importance of cooperation between the private and public sectors.

"96 percent of accidents occur due to human error, but in order to have smart robots, smart people that work together are required", said Nõgene.

Also within healthcare, digitalisation plays an important role. According to Kaljulaid, many governments are still afraid to collect data.

"But there are secure ways of doing it, Estonia is an example of that."



“AI systems should help and empower society”

Anna Felländer

According to Anna Felländer, every organisation must embrace AI for it to be relevant.

“But CEOs have low skills and confidence with AI”, said Felländer.

She points out the AI can create incredible value, but that working with AI requires that one knows what one is doing.

“AI has the potential to revolutionize the world. In order to embrace the benefits, we need to be aware of the risks. Ethical considerations are easily lost.”

AI sustainability is a new form of corporate social responsibility. According to Felländer, the Nordic countries can move to the forefront in developing AI in a responsible manner.

“AI ethics is a hot subject right now. We do not make more ethical decisions in the Nordic countries than elsewhere in the world, but we are accustomed to taking ethics into account when making decisions.”

Anna Felländer brought up four inadvertent pitfalls for AI: misuse of AI and data, the bias of the creator, immature AI and data and machine bias.

“Unintended ethical breaches are often a result of algorithms learning from historical data carrying prejudices. AI systems should help and empower society, combining the best of technology with the best of humanity.”



How will AI challenge the Nordic societies and its people?

Cecilia Borg - Anna Felländer - Peter Sarlin - Ville Sirviö

Cecilia Borg and Peter Sarlin pointed out that, in short, AI is about teaching a machine to do something. And that AI will never be able to replace our thoughts.

"It's just a computer, it does what we tell it to do. It's not magic", said Borg.

Important to her, it is therefore important to pay attention to the algorithms. For example, if AI sorts female CVs out of a pile of applications because women are traditionally more often rejected by people.

Sarlin highlighted that one of the advantages with AI is to teach machines to perform repetitive tasks so that people can use their time for more meaningful work, have more time for one another and be creative. According to him, we ought to demystify AI.

"AI isn't a black box. It might be hard to understand, but so are humans and they are widely in use. With AI you know exactly why it works the way it does. We need to have AI by humans, with humans, for humans", said Sarlin.

Anna Felländer called for a reality check - what is the current situation?

"Eventually all data will become AI. With GDPR you need to structure it", said Felländer.

Ville Sirviö pointed out that the decision-making process needs to be faster. Estonia has been a forerunner, but the Nordic countries need to look over their processes.

"What are our abilities to make fast changes in legislation? We should look ahead, what is happening in 10 or 20 years? The speed of the public sector is not enough now."





“The era of AI will not start with a big bang”

Christian Guttman

Professor Christian Guttman has dedicated 25 years to AI and finds it unbelievable how many people still use the word today.

“When I told [people] that E-mail is a great thing 23 years ago everyone said it’s for geeks”, said Guttman.

And in 20-30 years it will not be strange to travel by self-driving cars to the store, pick up pre-packaged food, pay with facial recognition and have a kitchen robot that prepares the food.

“These prototypes exist already. But the era of AI will not start with a big bang, it’s a slow progression with small changes.”

Guttman mentioned a statement by Denmark’s prime minister that said that 100 per cent of jobs will be affected by AI. Some view this as a threat; according to Guttman it is an incredible possibility. Thanks to AI, both monotonous and dangerous tasks can be eliminated.

“AI kills work, not jobs. This will enable high value jobs.”

A number of traditional jobs will disappear, at the same time that AI creates new jobs. For example, in the future a person can work as an AI architect or deep learning engineer.

AI can also make work possible that otherwise would not have been so. It is impossible for a doctor to go through thousands of patient records, but it can be done with AI.

Although there is much that is positive about AI, there are also challenges. The two largest have to do with ethical guidelines and AI competence.

“We have less than 10,000 experts in the world who have enough AI competency. Now we should focus on the tasks that really bring value to the organisation”, said Guttman.

How prepared are the Nordic businesses for the AI revolution?

Katarina Cornelius - Christian Guttman - Leo Kärkkäinen - Teemu Salmi - Peter Vesterbacka - Piret Mürk-Dubout

Compared with Asia and the USA, the Nordics and Baltics are a small region, but according to Peter Vesterbacka, we far too often use it as an excuse for not doing something. He mentioned that many were skeptical that a concept like Slush would succeed in Finland, since tech is so big in Silicon Valley.

"Why do we give up before the race has even started? We have to believe that we can win", said Vesterbacka.

According to Piret Mürk-Dubout, we mystify AI too much when we instead should see the possibilities, for example, with automating routine work. Neither should not knowing enough be an excuse.

"We need to start, even though we don't have the promise of the end result", said Mürk-Dubout.

Guttman also pointed out that we need to overcome our intuition that we do not understand - when the internet came, there were many who did not understand what it meant. More investments in AI are needed, but also the will to try it out.

"To read a book about driving a car is not the same as driving the car", said Guttman.

According to Katarina Cornelius, the largest challenge is creating a more sustainable society with both human and artificial intelligence.

"How can we solve complex problems like climate change?" asked Cornelius.

According to Guttman, AI will not only help to solve climate change, but also contribute to finding a cure for cancer.

During the course of the day, many called for better and more current AI legislation, but Teemu Salmi pointed out that those that legislate cannot do it faster than the innovations.

"We put too much focus on the policy making too early. We also need to be specific. We talk about AI as it's one thing, but what's the problem or the opportunity we are trying to solve?" said Salmi.



Voices from the Audience

Rebecca Åkers - Allan Selirand



Rebecca Åkers, studying at Hanken

"There are more opportunities for development than I thought, and I feel more well-informed now", said Åkers after the seminar.

She wonders how much we will be able to change society and our work due to AI.

"It is important that different types of people are there and work to develop AI so that it is a broad process and not as easy for angles (bias) to emerge."

Åkers also noted that AI is what we make of it. "We don't need to be afraid of it."

Allan Selirand, Enterprise Estonia

"For us Estonians, it's the first time we take part in this triangle with Finland and Sweden", Allan Selirand said after the seminar.

He enjoyed the seminar and the networking and hopes that this is the starting point for something new.

"We need a space where companies can more openly talk about their experiences", Selirand said.

He also pointed out that a Nordic collaboration is a unique and very welcome opportunity for Estonians. According to him AI might be one of the few fields where the economic background doesn't matter so much.

"We can be in the same position as the Nordics."



The speakers and panelists of Business Forum 2018

Kersti Kaljulaid, President of Estonia

Cecilia Borg, CEO, Citerus

Katarina Cornelius, Head of Business Transformation, Cybercom

Anna Felländer, Founder, AI Sustainability Center, Advisor to the Minister of Digitalization, Affiliated faculty, KTH

Christian Guttman, VP and Global Head of Artificial Intelligence, Chief AI Scientist, Tieto, Professor

Eva Hamilton, Professional Board Member

Leo Kärkkäinen, CAIO, Nokia

Ilona Lundström, Head of Enterprise and Innovation Development, Ministry of Economic Affairs, Finland

Piret Mürk-Dubout, Chairman of the Board, CEO of Tallinn Airport

Paavo Nõgene, CEO, Tallink Grupp

Teemu Salmi, CIO, Digitalization and IT, Stora Enso

Peter Sarlin, Co-Founder & Executive Chairman, Silo.AI, Professor of Practice, Hanken School of Economics

Ville Sirviö, CEO, Nordic Institute for Interoperability Solutions

Peter Vesterbacka, Entrepreneur

Moderators:

Annikka Arras, CEO, Miltton Estonia

Jussi Pekka Rantanen, Producer, News anchor, YLE



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