

The President, Toomas Hendrik Ilves, will depart for a state visit to the Federal Republic of Germany, accompanied by a representative business delegation.

On Monday and Tuesday, the Estonian Head of State will meet in Berlin with the President of Germany, Joackim Gauck; the Chancellor of Germany, Angela Merkel; the President of the Bundestag, Norbert Lammert; the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Frank-Walter Steinmeier; and the Minister of Finance, Wolfgang Schäuble. He has also scheduled meetings with the National Defence Committee, the European Union Affairs Committee of the Bundestag and with members of the Baltic friendship group.

The meetings will focus on the security situation in Europe, challenges faced by the common foreign policy of the European Union, fiscal policies and the development of economic relations between Estonia and Germany.

In July 2013, when President Gauck paid a state visit to Estonia, the heads of state of Estonia and Germany jointly confirmed that the responsibility Europe currently expects from us is not a burden but a challenge and opportunity to make Europe stronger. Now, two years later, this admittance has become even more obvious. President Ilves is making his state visit at a time when the challenges faced by Europe require unprecedentedly close co-operation between all the countries that share the ways of thinking.

In Berlin, President Ilves will lay a wreath at the Neue Wache memorial that commemorates victims of war and violence, the Bundeswehr Memorial to fallen soldiers and the monument to the people's uprising that took place in 1953 in East Berlin.

He will speak about e-integration in Europe at the umbrella organisation of German chambers of commerce, DIHK, and at an influential think-tank, Körber Stiftung, and he will also pay a visit to the Bayer Pharma research centre in Berlin.

An Arvo Pärt composer concert will be organised to honour the visit of the Estonian Head of State at Berlin Concert Hall, followed by a reception by President Ilves to honour Federal President Gauck.

On Wednesday, President Ilves will visit Kiel to meet with the Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of Schleswig-Holstein, Torsten Albig, and visit the University of Kiel and the research centre, GEOMAR, which focuses on the Baltic Sea and ocean studies.

The Estonian Head of State will be in Hamburg on Thursday to meet with the sitting Mayor, Olaf Scholz, and speak at the conference of euro ministers of the federal republics of Germany and Hamburg-Estonian business forum, which is being organised to celebrate the state visit. He will pay a visit to HSBA business school to learn about the options for combining studies and practice and visit the Kühne&Nagel company.

The official delegation that accompanies the Head of State includes the Chairman of the Committee of Foreign Affairs of the Riigikogu, Hannes Hanso; the Chairman of the Committee of European Affairs, Kalle Palling; the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Keit Pentus-Rosimannus; the Minister of Entrepreneurship, Urve Palo; the Minister of Cultural Affairs, Indrek Saar; the Chancellor of Justice, Ülle Madise; the President of Estonian Academy of Sciences, Tarmo Soomere; the Rector of University of Tartu, Volli Kalm; the Commander of the Defence Forces, Lieutenant General Riho Terras; the Chairman of the Board of the Estonian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Toomas Luman, as the head of the business delegation; the Secretary General of the Minister of Cultural Affairs, Paavo Nõgene; Director General of the Estonian National Heritage Board, Siim Raie; the Mayor of Tartu, Urmas Klaas; and the Deputy Secretary General for Financial Policies and Foreign Relations of the Ministry of Finance, Märten Ross.

President Ilves will be accompanied by a business delegation of 42 members during his state visit to Germany.

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