

"I am especially pleased that the new Arcwood production plant will be opened in Põlva. This should take all of those who think that life in Estonia should only be concentrated in or around four centres down a peg or two," said President Toomas Hendrik Ilves last night at the opening on the outskirts of Põlva of a new Arcwood by Peetri Puit plant, a company that manufactures large glued timber structures.

"I have continuously emphasised that we need business and entrepreneurship throughout our country. Everywhere. We need to make people who live at greater distances from bigger cities the belief that life in their locality will go on, and give people a sense of social security. This will make people stay there, despite urbanisation. And it will also make it worthwhile for employers to invest into these places," said the Head of State.

He spoke of how it will support the development of Estonia, and all of us in turn, by providing our people with work outside of the big centres. This is also important for the wood industry.

"In the past 14 years, Arcwood has grown from an enterprise with five employees into a modern company with one hundred employees; the new investment will create new jobs and investments and will open new markets."

President Ilves spoke of how Estonia could become a centre for the smart use of wood. To this end, we also need a modern and responsible, environmentally sustainable wood industry, which would allow our architects, engineers and builders to make use of this domestic renewable resource, build a more robust Estonia and increase our exports.

"Therefore, several important aspects have come together in Põlva – regional development, expanding the reach of exports and the smart utilisation of wood. I do hope that today will contribute to progress in Põlvamaa and Estonia in general," said President Ilves as he wished Arcwood strength and success.