

President Toomas Hendrik Ilves, who was on a working visit to Belgium yesterday, said at a meeting with Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt that the development of a gap between the so-called old and new European Union member states must be resisted.

“The split between the older and newer members of the Union is becoming deeper,” said the Estonian Head of State.

According to President Ilves, the fissure dividing the European Union into old and new members is not in the interests of Estonia, which is characterised by the greatest support for the Union of any European Union member state.

“If together we are able to bridge the gap that has developed between the “old and new”, then the idea of a European core is no longer so attractive,” said the Estonian Head of State, setting himself in opposition to the idea of a dual-speed European Union.

In Brussels, President Ilves also met with King Albert II of Belgium, who was interested, among other things, in the development of information technology in Estonia, as well as the Estonian view of relations with Russia.

The Estonian Head of State also visited the Brussels Christmas Market, which the City of Tallinn has been invited to attend as an honoured guest, and met with members of the Estonian Society in Belgium.

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