

“Traffic safety—one of the most important topics in Europe—is becoming a burning issues in Estonia,” stated President Toomas Hendrik Ilves at yesterday's meeting with Vice-President of the European Commission and Commissioner for Transport, Jacques Barrot.

The Estonian Head of State repeated the facts, which he stated in his television appearance on September 1st, that during the last 16 years, over 4,000 people have been killed on the country's roads and streets, which is equal to the number of residents in the town of Põltsamaa.

“Positive changes depend on every driver, his or her attitudes, but also on governmental intervention—I mean supervision, corrective policies, as well as safe infrastructure,” said President Ilves.

Transport Commissioner Barrot thanked the Estonian Head of State for raising the issue of traffic safety, adding, “Estonia must make serious efforts in this field.”

President Ilves and Transport Commissioner Barrot also spoke about the extremely long queues of vehicles on the Estonian-Russian border caused by the Russian customs. “This is a problem that must be emphatically included in the agenda for the transport dialogue between Europe and Russia,” said the Estonian Head of State, while acknowledging Transport Commissioner Barrot's affirmation that he has focused his attention on the question of the vehicle queues.

The future of the Via Baltica and Rail Baltica were also discussed at the meeting.

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