

“Despite the very rapid growth of the last few years, the Estonian economy is still among those in Europe running to catch up, and is not yet among those who have arrived or are the leaders,” President Toomas Hendrik Ilves said on Friday at the forum of the Estonian Employers' Confederation entitled “Flight of the Kite”.

“Our goal must be an innovative, knowledge-based and energy-efficient economy,” the Head of State said.

People’s wellbeing in the future will clearly depend on the development of research and technology, and on the capability to apply the results to everyday life, President Ilves said, adding, “Modern Estonian industry or an affluent Estonia cannot exist without discoveries and new technologies.”

“And now, ask yourselves, do the salaries paid by Estonia’s universities and research centers allow Estonia’s best scientists to leave the world’s top universities and come back home?” the Head of State continued. “In my opinion, the future of the Estonian economy demands rational decisions regarding supplemental financing for the engineering, natural and physical sciences.”

President Ilves also recalled that the expression “flexible work relations” has become notorious in Estonia recently and emphasized that employers cannot have a monopoly on flexibility while workers have one on security.

President Ilves spoke at length on the Danish experience, stating that the in-service and re-training provided in Denmark costs significantly more than we spend on this in Estonia: “If in Estonia six percent of workers have received follow-up and re-training, then in Denmark this indicator is 30 percent. Therefore, we cannot speak about the “Danish model” if we do not speak about the effective organization of retraining, as well as the reimbursement and volume of expenses.”

According to President Ilves, a broad social contract exists in Denmark, whereby it is accepted that everyone including entrepreneurs pay for success, an integrated society and secure future.

Office of the President  
Public Relations Department  
Phone +372 631 6229