

At the meeting today between President Toomas Hendrik Ilves and José Manuel Barroso, the President of the European Commission, many of the challenges that the European Union is already facing, or will face in the near future, were discussed.

The energy security and energy independence of the Union were discussed at length, in which regard President Ilves stressed the need for the formation of common European Union understandings.

At the meeting, the bilateral negotiations being conducted by several European Union member states, including Estonia, regarding visa-free travel to the United States were also raised.

“We feel it is necessary and inevitable that all the citizens of European Union states, or in brief all European Union citizens, have the opportunity to travel to the United States visa-free, because this would mean equal treatment for all the member states,” said President Ilves, recalling that a large number of the Community members have had visa-free travel for decades.

“We understand that this is a complicated technical process, a difficult task, that involves the member states of the Community, the European Commission and the United States,” said President Ilves.

The Government of Estonia plans to sign the Memorandum of Mutual Understanding necessary for the visa waiver program at the Minister of the Interior level on March 12th.

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