

On Thursday in Tartu, President Toomas Hendrik Ilves opened the international Baltic Dynamics Conference, which, under the slogan “Innovation – Key from Slowdown to Growth”, focuses on the topics of innovation, enterprise, and competitiveness.

Opening the conference, President Ilves said that today all three Baltic countries stand at the threshold of a change in their economic paradigm, where the engine of rapid growth and competitiveness—cheap labor—has faded, and our economies can only develop further by creating added value for products and services. “Therefore, innovation is the natural key for steering the economy from a downturn to the course of new growth.”

“Taking into account the slowdown of economic growth that we are facing today, we must clearly change our attitudes as well as our investment priorities,” the Head of State said. “The question is not only in our science, information technology or economy. The question is in education and maybe also the mentality of the society generally.”

In his presentation, the Estonian Head of State highlighted three keywords, which generally are not discussed when speaking about innovation: the freedom of movement, education in the broadest sense and the quality of life. According to the President, Estonia must compete with countries that are much better off than we are and countries that have more favorable climates. “In order to attract bright people to Estonia, we must primarily deal with these three topics,” the Head of State was convinced.

“And one more important nuance related to them—European cooperation,” the President added. “I mean regional cooperation between countries around the Baltic Sea as well as further afield. I really hope that you will turn your attention to this aspect of cooperation.”

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