

Common energy policy, promoting the free movement of services for the better functioning of the internal market, as well as strengthening the principle of equality for the member states and persuasively expressing the Community's wish to enlarge are the greatest challenges facing the European Union in the near future President Toomas Hendrik Ilves told Herman Van Rompuy, the recently designated President of the European Council who arrived in Estonia.

Estonia's greatest challenge, President Ilves said, is the adoption of the euro, the European Union's common currency, in 2011. This would strengthen Estonia's internal self-confidence and external trustworthiness, as well as demonstrate that the European Union's enlargement process is open to every country that fulfils the requirements.

"After all, we want the European Union to be trustworthy, intelligible and transparent for the Community's citizens – for all of us," the Estonian Head of State said.

President Ilves considered it important that the European Union be truly uniform and not be divided into new and old or small and large, but be comprised of Community member states that are equal.

"This equality must be visible and perceptible in the European Union on a daily basis," the Estonian Head of State stressed. "Unfortunately, only a few representatives of the countries that joined the European Union six years ago have currently been appointed to high positions, either in the Community's foreign service or the European Commission. We require a very significant change in attitude in this regard".

President Ilves recalled that support for the European Union continues to be strong in Estonia, and nearly 80 percent of the population feels that membership in the Community is beneficial for the country.

Estonian Head of State met with the President of the European Council

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