

President Toomas Hendrik Ilves met today with the Minister of Education and Research, Mr. Tõnis Lukas, Chairman of the Cultural Affairs Committee of the Riigikogu, Mr. Peeter Kreitzberg, member of the board of the Parents' Association, Ms Liisa Pakosta, and Chairman of the Estonian Association of School Headmasters, Mr. Toomas Kruusimägi.

Legislative proceedings on the new Basic School and Upper Secondary Schools Act were discussed in Kadriorg. The government has proposed some substantial changes during the second reading of the draft act, concerning the organisation of schools and provisions for the admittance of students. The head of state asked that some serious consideration be given to the possible effect of such amendments.

“It is quite obvious that the reform of curricula and the school network cannot be avoided. However, we have to consider one, five, and twelve year perspectives when adopting decisions related to education. Considering the small size of Estonia, it is quite possible to identify, quite specifically, what the desired and undesired effects of the new act would be,” said President Ilves. He recommended taking sufficient time to discuss such issues, and he adjured the representatives of the citizens' society to provide their constructive contribution and hoped that the parliament will take their proposals into consideration.

“Education is such an important topic and one that affects each and every one of us, so the solutions here cannot be imposed by force, regardless of the very acute differences. Decisions adopted in this way would probably not be permanent. General consensus can and will never be found in a democratic society, but the support should be as wide-based as possible for decisions that have a long-term effect on the whole of society. We should do everything possible to ensure that the reforms are initiated, above all, with the future security of children in mind,” said the head of state.

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