

President Toomas Hendrik Ilves met today with Aleksandr Shokhin, president of the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, who is visiting Tallinn in connection with a meeting between his union and the coordinating council of the Estonian Employers Confederation.

The Estonian head of state welcomed the initiative of the two organisations in developing their partnership, which is hoped will have a clear and rapid positive influence on economic relations between Estonia and Russia.

President Ilves stressed the need for progress in the construction of the new highway bridge in Narva, which he called the “most important infrastructure project between our two countries”.

The need to enter into the bilateral framework agreements required for more rapid improvement in economic relations between Estonia and Russia was also emphasised at the meeting.

President Ilves confirmed that Estonia was very interested in Russia joining the World Trade Organization as soon as possible, since it would undoubtedly boost and simplify trade and economic relations between Russia and its neighbours – including Member States of the European Union.

The Estonian head of state and Mr. Shokhin also discussed ways in which goods flows could be increased between their countries and how tourism could be developed, for which both agreed that there were excellent opportunities.

The meeting was also attended by Estonian Employers Confederation president Enn Veskimägi.

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