

"Estonia and Finland, two good neighbours and strong allies, have clearly understood that one of the keys to the success of all the Baltic sea countries is efficiency and the ability to cope," said the President Toomas Hendrik Ilves, at today's meeting with Sauli Niinistö, the new Head of State of Finland, who arrived on his first official visit to Estonia after being appointed to office.

According to President Ilves, there is no reason to become negligent in shaping the financial policies of countries as the crisis is not yet over.

"Solidarity in the European Union means responsibility – the ability to cope with one's problems without burdening the other member states," emphasised the Estonian Head of State. " On the other hand, we need governments to explain to people why some decisions are inevitable. Without the support of our people – or the electorate – we will be unable to take the steps that are needed to overcome the crisis."

He acknowledged Finland's support of Estonia during the integration with the European Union and also while joining the Schengen visa area and eurozone, describing it as "reaching a friendly hand and giving considerable support".

"We are now linked by large regional projects, the most important being Rail Baltica and the common Baltic Sea electricity market," said President Ilves. "All of this is a part of the competitiveness of our region in general, our breakthrough and security in the most generic sense."

The Estonian and Finnish heads of state also described the environmental protection of the Baltic Sea – an issue that became visible, once again, in light of the phosphorous pollution of River Luga in Kingissepa – as important.

"All the countries concerned must be mutually open, reliable partners to each other on occasions like that, while ensuring that contamination of this kind does not happen again in future," said President Ilves.

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