

The President of the Republic, Toomas Hendrik Ilves, met today in Copenhagen with the speaker of the Danish Parliament, Mogens Lykketoft, and gave a speech on European issues in the parliament building at the invitation of the Danish Institute of International Studies.

During their conversation, President Ilves and Speaker Lykketoft briefly touched upon the issues of the European economic and financial crisis.

"Both Denmark and Estonia have pursued responsible budget policy for years and coped with setbacks. The euro is the currency in Estonia and the crown in Denmark. Instead of blaming the budgetary and economic difficulties of Europe on the euro, we should first investigate the reasons why some countries – whether they are using euro or not – are on the verge on bankruptcy while others are not. Estonia and Denmark, together with most of the other Baltic Sea region member states of the European Union, are an example to others of how to anticipating crises and adopt a speedy recovery process," told President Ilves.

In the evening, the President gave a longer speech about the future of Europe in the Danish parliament building, where he discussed the issue of the so-called new and old member states within the context of the credit crunch that has prevailed for four years.

"Of course, first of all we need to cope with the current financial crisis in Greece and in the other countries that face difficulties. However, in the medium term, we must discuss the principles for running Europe. I think that smart solutions, contributing high added value, are the only advantages of Europe in the future and, therefore, we need to contribute to innovation, education and free competition right now. Northern Europe could establish itself as a regional example," added Estonian President.

This morning, President Ilves met with Hans Skov Christensen and Hans Brask, the Chairman of the Board and the CEO of the Baltic Development Forum, respectively, to discuss the current status of the Baltic Sea Strategy of the European Union and possible co-operation spheres.

President Ilves dwelled longer upon the European Union e-health report that was presented yesterday; the proposals made within the framework of the report should be first considered

within the framework of the Baltic Sea Strategy. "Our IT-awareness and readiness should allow us to enter into arrangements between member states to allow the free movement of health records. Once the required legal space has been established, Danish entrepreneurs could see a doctor in Tallinn while an Estonian student could do the same in Copenhagen. A patient's ID card and the necessary IT applications would allow doctors to obtain required information about the status of patient, such as previous medication, blood parameters and X-rays, which would allow medical professionals to draw further conclusions concerning future treatment without the additional expense in terms of both time and money," President Ilves added.

The Head of State will return to Estonia from his working visit to the Kingdom of Denmark today, Tuesday, late at night.

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