

"Viljandi is Estonia's very own point of balance between Tartu and Tallinn. Keeping our traditions alive and bringing folklore to a multitude of hearts, the Viljandi Culture Academy steadfastly works on making the Estonian living environment cosier and richer", President Toomas Hendrik Ilves said at the 60th anniversary of the University of Tartu Viljandi Culture Academy in Ugala Theatre.

The head of state recognised Viljandi's significance in recent Estonian history and culture, referring to the cultural figures of the national awakening era, local teachers and keen farmers, the Sakala newspaper, which was first published 134 years ago, and naturally the Culture Academy, the folk music festival and Ugala Theatre.

Experiences gained in Viljandi, the mentality of the school and the education – in other words, the folklore mentality of the whole of Viljandi still have a strong effect on the nature and future of our cultural life, echoing through all the corners of Estonia, President Ilves noted and emphasized: "The Viljandi Culture Academy sustains and improves our culture that is based on our own traditions and experiences, and our own uniqueness."

The head of state reminded that in order to maintain their identity, small nations must make a far greater effort, work more purposefully and look further into the future than greater nations need to.

In this way, throughout the centuries and in spite of the pessimism of others, we have sustained and developed our culture, President Ilves said and assured: "Viljandi is an important point in that – one of the hubs."

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