

"Europe needs responsibility in financial and economic life, compliance with promises and agreed rules – all that has helped Lithuania to be successful," told the President, Toomas Hendrik Ilves today, at his meeting with the new Prime Minister of Lithuania, Algirdas Butkevičius, who made the second foreign visit of his term in office to Estonia.

President Ilves confirmed Estonia's full support for Lithuania joining the euro area; hopefully, this will take place in the coming years.

"The problems that we see today in the euro area are not the problems of the euro as a currency. The euro is a good, solid currency. However, the irresponsibility of some euro area countries and non-compliance with the established rules have brought us trouble," admitted the Estonian Head of State. "A responsible Lithuania – and also Latvia – joining the euro area would only add a competitive edge to Lithuania and Latvia themselves, our region in general and, ultimately, the whole euro area."

The Estonian President and the Lithuanian Prime Minister discussed pan-Baltic transport projects and energy issues.

President Ilves enhanced the importance of the strong commitment of Tallinn, Riga and Vilnius to the establishment of the express railway connection, Rail Baltica, which would provide the Baltic states with a modern land-based connection with the rest of Europe, and they also discussed the further development of the Via Baltica transport corridor.

When speaking about the nuclear power station, which is planned to be built in Lithuania as a joint venture between the Baltic states and Poland, the Estonian Head of State told: "We are waiting for the official, comprehensive answer from the Republic of Lithuania – from both the government and the parliament – on the status of the nuclear power station within your new energy strategy."

According to President Ilves, Estonia has politically supported the Visaginas project for six years, on the condition that Estonian energy enterprises will invest into the building of the nuclear power station if the project is economically profitable and the project management is

transparent.

The Estonian Head of State wished Lithuania luck during its Presidency of the EU Council in the second half of this year.

"We appreciate and support Lithuania's initiative in attaching importance to regional co-operation. The priorities of Lithuania during the presidency – energy security, Eastern Partnership, uniform strengthening of border management issues and the Baltic Sea Strategy – are also important issues for Estonia," told President Ilves.

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