

The meeting of the President, Toomas Hendrik Ilves, and the Lithuanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Linas Linkevičius, who arrived in Estonia for a visit, focused on Lithuania's preparations to join the euro area in the coming years; the topics discussed also included the European Union's budget agreements for 2014-2020 that were not passed today by the European Parliament, which requested new discussions on the budget.

"This means that Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania must continue the current close co-operation to defend our interests. For all of us, it is still important for the next budget of the European Union to diminish the differences in levels of agricultural support in Europe and include the establishment of transport and energy links between the Baltic states and the rest of Europe," told President Ilves. "This would mean, however, that we must all be very clear about whether we accept the need for Rail Baltica and to embrace or abandon the establishment of a new nuclear power station in Lithuania."

President Ilves and Foreign Minister Linkevičius also discussed Lithuania's Presidency of the European Union during the second half of this year; Lithuania has mentioned Eastern Partnership as one of its priorities during this period.

According to the Estonian Head of State, the further enhancement of democracy, states based on the rule of law, market economy and internal transparency in Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, Armenia and Azerbaijan would serve the interests of Europe.

"This is their opportunity – and I mean an opportunity, not an obligation – to come closer to the European Union. The same opportunity was once given to the Baltic states; we wanted and knew how to use it and this opened a door to the European Union for us," said President Ilves. "The integration of Eastern Partnership countries with the European Union only depends on their own wishes and readiness to adopt, more and more each day, the principles and values that bind the European Union."

The European Union must give its east partners advice, support and assistance – provided that we see whether this is needed and used, emphasised the Estonian Head of State.

President Ilves met with Lithuanian Foreign Minister

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