

IN THE ISSUE

- MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEES OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE SEIMAS
- SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS VYDAS GEDVILAS TAKES OVER THE PRESIDENCY OF THE CONFERENCE OF SPEAKERS OF THE EU PARLIAMENTS
- GEDIMINAS KIRKILAS, DEPUTY SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS: REMEMBRANCE OF THE HOLOCAUST TO BUILD BRIDGES FROM THE PAINFUL PAST TO OUR FUTURE
- SERBIA'S ASPIRATION TO ACCEDE TO THE EU DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING BETWEEN THE SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS AND THE PRIME MINISTER OF SERBIA
- THE 300TH BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY OF KRISTIJONAS DONELAITIS TO BE INCLUDED IN THE UNESCO LIST OF CELEBRATIONS IN 2014

Lithuanian Presidency
of the Council of the EU
Parliamentary Dimension

PREPARATION OF THE SEIMAS FOR THE LITHUANIAN PRESIDENCY OF THE EU COUNCIL

ON EUROPE DAY, THE OFFICE OF THE SEIMAS LAUNCHED A NEW WEBSITE



With 53 days left until the beginning of the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, symbolically, on 9 May – Europe Day, the Office of the Seimas launched a new website of the parliamentary dimension of the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the EU to Members of the Seimas, journalists and other information consumers. The welcome address by Deputy Speaker of the Seimas Petras Auštrevičius was followed by the contributions from Jonas Milerius, Secretary General of the Seimas, and Loreta Raulinaitytė, Director of the Communications Department and EU-

Presidency Coordinator. The new website, its structure and possibilities were presented by those who created the website.

The website of the parliamentary dimension of the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the EU can be accessed at www.eu2013.lrs.lt or www.pirmininkavimas.lrs.lt. The Presidency website is easy to find by clicking on the banner *Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the EU. Parliamentary Dimension* on the main website of the Seimas.

The key **task and novelty** of the new website is a detailed presentation of comprehensive information about parliamentary dimension events and additional events related to the Lithuanian Presidency to be held in the Seimas. The calendar section will be continuously updated with all available information about events, including invitations, addresses made by participants, documents and photos. The website has a link to a watch live section, photo archives and audio-video archives.

The Presidency website contains a section *Consideration of EU Matters*, while a glossary of terms and concepts related to parliamentary activities in the Lithuanian, English, French and German languages will soon be uploaded too.

The new website provides key information, which was available on the previous website in Lithuanian, English and French: general information on the parliamentary dimension of the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the EU, various documents, press releases, the Presidency glossary, useful links, etc.

The new Presidency website (the old one, which was opened exactly a year ago, on 9 May 2012, is closed now) was developed by the Department of Information Technologies and Telecommunications and the Communications Department of the Seimas. Hopefully, the website will prove to be useful to everyone interested in the first Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

Jolanta Anskaitienė, Public Relations Unit, tel: +370 5 239 6508, e-mail: jolanta.anskaitiene@lrs.lt

MEETING OF THE COMMITTEES OF THE EP AND THE SEIMAS: THERE IS STILL A LOT TO BE ACHIEVED BY ALL 27 MEMBER STATES IN THE AREA OF GENDER EQUALITY



With the approaching Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, Members of the European Parliament Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM), which was the first of the EP Committees to visit the Seimas, and representatives of the Lithuanian Parliament discussed the human rights situation in Lithuania, social security issues and Lithuania's preparedness for the Presidency of the Council of the EU. The Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality under the leadership of Mikael Gustafsson, Chair of the Committee, came to Lithuania according to the plan

for the 2013 EP Committee visits approved by the Bureau of the European Parliament and met with Gediminas Kirkilas, Deputy Speaker of the Seimas and Chair of the Seimas Committee on European Affairs; Kristina Miškinienė, Chair of the Seimas Committee on Social Affairs and Labour; Leonard Talmont, Chair of the Seimas Committee on Human Rights, and other Members of the respective Committees.

[Read more](#)

[Speech by Gediminas Kirkilas, Deputy Speaker of the Seimas and Chairman of the Committee on European Affairs, at the meeting with the delegation of the European Parliament's Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, 4 April 2013, Thursday](#)

THE SEIMAS COMMITTEE ON EUROPEAN AFFAIRS INFORMS THAT LITHUANIA PROPOSES TO ESTABLISH THE PARLIAMENTARY FORUM OF THE EU BALTIC SEA STATES



The Seimas Committee on European Affairs (CEA) proposes to hold the parliamentary forum of eight EU Baltic Sea States that would discuss the implementation, cooperation principles and future trends of the macro-regional European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR).

“In December 2007, the European Council, attended by me as Prime Minister, charged the European Commission with submitting the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region by June 2009 at the latest. This initiative followed the Strategy on the Mediterranean Region. The EUSBSR was approved in October 2009. However, a political debate on the EUSBSR

was practically absent at the European level. The parliamentary dimension could fill this gap,” said Gediminas Kirkilas, Deputy Speaker of the Seimas and CEA Chair.

[Read more](#)

SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS VYDAS GEDVILAS TAKES OVER THE PRESIDENCY OF THE CONFERENCE OF SPEAKERS OF THE EU PARLIAMENTS



At the annual Conference of Speakers of the Parliaments of the European Union held in the Cypriot capital of Nicosia, Vydas Gedvilas, Speaker of the Seimas, took over the Presidency of the Conference and invited the Speakers of the EU national Parliaments, President of the European Parliament and Speakers of the EU candidate countries to events of parliamentary dimension of the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

[Read more](#)

MEETING OF MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE SEIMAS: ISSUES RELATED TO ENSURING CONSUMER INTERESTS CAN BE RELEVANT DURING THE LITHUANIAN PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL OF THE EU



With the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union (EU) drawing close, the delegation of the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO) of the European Parliament (EP) paid a visit to the Seimas where they discussed with Members of the Seimas issues related to the introduction of advanced innovations into businesses, ensuring of consumer interests and public procurements.

[Read more](#)

COSAC SECRETARIAT AT THE SEIMAS

In preparation for the events of the parliamentary dimension of the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, the Secretariat of the Conference of Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs (COSAC) visited the Seimas on 30 April 2013. At the meeting with Gediminas Kirkilas, Deputy Speaker of the Seimas and Chairman of the Committee on European Affairs, and Petras Auštrevičius, Deputy Speaker of the Seimas and Deputy Chairman of the Committee on European Affairs, the COSAC Secretariat discussed the draft agendas of the Meeting of the Chairpersons of COSAC scheduled for 7–8 July 2013 and the Plenary Meeting of COSAC to be held in Vilnius on 27–29 October 2013.

[Read more](#)

PARLIAMENTARY BUSSINES

ADOPTED AMENDMENTS TO THE INSURANCE LAW PREVENT THE INSURER FROM TREATING GENDER AS A RISK FACTOR IN LIFE INSURANCE



The Seimas has adopted amendments to the Law on Insurance (draft No. XIP-4723(2)), harmonising the Law with the judgement of the Court of Justice of the European Union delivered on 1 March 2011 in Case C-236/09.

The adopted amendments will prevent the insurer from treating the gender of an insured individual as a risk factor. The EU Member States are obliged to implement these provisions by the judgment delivered on 1 March 2011 by the Court of Justice which declared Article 5(2) of Council Directive 2004/113/EC of 13 December 2004 implementing the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services providing an exemption for the use of sex as an actuarial factor in the calculation of premiums and benefits invalid with effect from 21 December 2012.

[Read more](#)

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

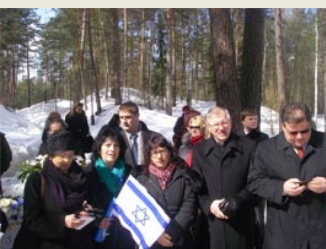
MIGRATION ISSUES DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING BETWEEN THE SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS AND DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION FOR MIGRATION



On 28 March 2013, Vydas Gedvilas, Speaker of the Seimas, met with William Lacy Swing, Director General of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), who was visiting Lithuania. During the meeting, the parties discussed the opportunities for cooperation between Lithuania and IOM, events of the parliamentary dimension to be organised during the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union and migration issues.

[Read more](#)

GEDIMINAS KIRKILAS, DEPUTY SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS: REMEMBRANCE OF THE HOLOCAUST TO BUILD BRIDGES FROM THE PAINFUL PAST TO OUR FUTURE



“I am happy that our meeting takes place at a time when many of the issues that clouded our relations in the past have been resolved. In 2011, the Law on the Good Faith Compensation for Immovable Property of the Jewish Religious Communities was passed, sending yet another positive signal. On 17 January 2013, the Seimas adopted the Resolution on the Proclamation of 2013 the Year of Remembrance of the Vilnius Ghetto to mark the 70th anniversary of liquidation of Vilnius Ghetto. We hope that it will help us build bridges from the painful past to our future”, Gediminas Kirkilas, Deputy Speaker of the Seimas, said during the meeting with the members of the March of the Living delegation.

[Read more](#)

MEMBERS OF THE LITHUANIAN, LATVIAN AND ESTONIAN PARLIAMENTS SIGNED THE JOINT DECLARATION ON THE AGRICULTURAL POLICY



On 12 April 2013 in Riga, the joint meeting of the Rural Affairs Committee of the Riigikogu, the Economic, Agricultural, Environmental and Regional Policy Committee of the Saeima and the Committee on Rural Affairs of the Seimas adopted the Joint Declaration on the Common Agricultural Policy of the European Union after 2013. The declaration notes that since the accession to the EU, Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian farmers have been receiving the lowest level of direct payments, which prevents them from enjoying equal opportunities within the European single market.

[Read more](#)

SERBIA'S ASPIRATION TO ACCEDE TO THE EU DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING BETWEEN THE SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS AND THE PRIME MINISTER OF SERBIA



The Speaker of the Seimas, Vydas Gedvilas, had a meeting with the Prime Minister of Serbia, Ivica Dačić, and the Serbian delegation who are visiting Lithuania. Bilateral cooperation between Lithuania and Serbia and Serbia's aspiration to accede to the EU were discussed during the meeting.

[Read more](#)

VYDAS GEDVILAS, SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS, ATTENDS THE CONFERENCE OF SPEAKERS OF THE EU PARLIAMENTS IN NICOSIA

"Inter-parliamentary cooperation in the European Union should be developed on the basis of the existing formats," stressed Vydas Gedvilas, Speaker of the Seimas, at the Conference of Speakers of the EU Parliaments held in the Cypriot capital of Nicosia.

At the Conference, the Speakers of Parliaments discussed the implementation of Article 13 of the Treaty on Stability, Coordination, and Governance (Fiscal Compact). Article 13 of the Treaty stipulates that "the European Parliament and the national Parliaments of the Contracting Parties will together determine the organisation and promotion of a conference of representatives of the relevant committees of the European Parliament and representatives of the relevant committees of national Parliaments in order to discuss budgetary policies and other issues covered by this Treaty." The Article underlines the cooperation between the national Parliaments and the European Parliament, which should play an important role in the process of economic coordination and governance in the EU.

According to Mr Gedvilas, the proposals on the implementation of Article 13 of the Treaty can be debated; however, the equality of all the Parliaments should be respected by focussing on effective cooperation and economically justified decisions.

[Read more](#)

LITHUANIAN AND CROATIAN SPEAKERS DISCUSSED THE PROSPECTS OF CROATIA'S ACCESSION TO THE EU

On 22 April 2013, Vydas Gedvilas, Speaker of the Seimas, met with Josip Leko, Speaker of the Sabor of the Republic of Croatia, in the framework of the Conference of Speakers of the EU Parliaments taking place in the Cypriot capital of Nicosia. At the meeting they discussed the scope for strengthening inter-parliamentary cooperation between Lithuania and Croatia as well as the prospects of Croatia's accession to the EU on 1 July this year.

[Read more](#)

EVENTS

THE 300TH BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY OF KRISTIJONAS DONELAITIS TO BE INCLUDED IN THE UNESCO LIST OF CELEBRATIONS IN 2014



The upcoming 37th Session of the UNESCO General Conference in November will consider entering the 300th birthday anniversary of Kristijonas Donelaitis, a classical Lithuanian writer, into the UNESCO list of anniversaries of eminent personalities to be celebrated in 2014.

[Read more](#)

Text

Jolanta Anskaitienė, Head of the Public Information and Media Division,
tel: +370 5 239 6508, e-mail: jolanta.anskaitiene@lrs.lt

Design

Neringa Motiejūnaitė, tel: +370 5 239 6204, e-mail: neringa.motiejunaite@lrs.lt

Photograph

Olga Posaškova, tel: +370 5 239 6205, e-mail: olga.posaskova@lrs.lt

Communications Department

Loreta Raulinaitytė, Director, tel: +370 5 239 6762, e-mail: loreta.raulinityte@lrs.lt

Public Relations Unit of the Communications Department

Artūras Zeleniakas, Head, tel: +370 5 239 6201; e-mail: arturas.zeleniakas@lrs.lt

If you do not wish to receive more newsletters in the future, please inform about it by e-mail: jolanta.anskaitiene@lrs.lt