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Lithuanian Presidency  
of the Council of the EU  
**Parliamentary Dimension**

**LITHUANIAN PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION 1 JULY — 31 DECEMBER 2013**



EU2013.LT

## ARTŪRAS PAULASKAS: HIGH-LEVEL MEETINGS LAY THE FOUNDATION FOR THE MOST IMPORTANT PARLIAMENTARY EVENT ON DEFENCE POLICY



The Seimas Committee on National Security and Defence (CNSD) started the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union with even several high-level meetings where Lithuania's priorities in the Common Security and Defence Policy were presented and the security situation in the world, challenges to the European Union and ways and measures to overcome these challenges were discussed. On 5 July, Chairs of the Seimas Committees on National Security and Defence and on Foreign Affairs met with Elmar Brok, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the European

Parliament, and discussed preparations for the most important parliamentary event on foreign and defence policy – the Interparliamentary Conference for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defence Policy to be held in the Buildings of the Seimas on 4–6 September.

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## ROLE OF NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS AND DEMOCRATIC DEFICIT AT THE FOCUS OF THE MEETING OF THE SEIMAS COMMITTEE ON EUROPEAN AFFAIRS AND MAROŠ ŠEFCOVIČ, VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION



The role of national Parliaments of the EU Member States in consideration of EU affairs and democratic deficit were at the focus of the meeting between members of the Seimas Committee on European Affairs and Maroš Šefčovič, Vice-President of the European Commission responsible for Inter-Institutional Relations and Administration, which took place in the Seimas on 7 July 2013. Mr Šefčovič says he is aware of the fact that Lithuania aims at introducing the euro in 2015 and therefore realises how important it is for the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union to complete the creation of

the Economic and Monetary Union. He believes that the more there is economic and financial integration, the more political integration and greater involvement of national Parliaments in EU affairs is needed.

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## MEETING OF THE CHAIRPERSONS OF THE CONFERENCE OF PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES FOR UNION AFFAIRS OF PARLIAMENTS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION (COSAC)

### MEETING OF THE PRESIDENTIAL TROIKA OF COSAC IN VILNIUS



On 7 July 2013, the Seimas hosted the Meeting of the Presidential Troika (Ireland, Lithuania, Greece and the European Parliament) of the Conference of Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs of Parliaments of the European Union (COSAC). Participants of the meeting approved the agenda of the Meeting of the Chairpersons of COSAC, to be held on Monday, 8 July 2013, and discussed the draft agenda of the Plenary Meeting of the L COSAC, the Outline of the 20<sup>th</sup> Bi-annual Report of COSAC as well as appointment of the Permanent Member of the COSAC Secretariat for 2014-2015.

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### THE SEIMAS HOLDS THE MEETING OF THE CHAIRPERSONS OF THE CONFERENCE OF PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES FOR UNION AFFAIRS OF PARLIAMENTS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION (COSAC)



The Chamber of the Seimas houses the Meeting of the Chairpersons of the Conference of Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs of Parliaments of the European Union (COSAC). The Chairman of the Meeting, Gediminas Kirkilas, Deputy Speaker of the Seimas and Chair of the Committee on European Affairs, thanked Ireland for its successful Presidency of the Council of the European Union during the first half of this year and congratulated Croatia on its accession to the EU on 1 of July 2013.

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#### Speech by Dr Vydas Gedvilas, Speaker of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, at the Meeting of the Chairpersons of COSAC

Priorities of the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the EU presented at the Meeting of the Chairpersons of COSAC

[More about the event](#)

## MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE ON POLITICAL AFFAIRS, SECURITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS, THE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC, FINANCIAL AND COMMERCIAL AFFAIRS, THE COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS, YOUTH AND CHILDREN, HUMAN EXCHANGES, EDUCATION AND CULTURE AND THE WORKING GROUP ON EU-LAC MIGRATION ISSUES OF THE EURO-LATIN AMERICAN PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY (EUROLAT)

### SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS VYDAS GEDVILAS: RELATIONS BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN UNION AND LATIN AMERICA WOULD INCREASINGLY GAIN MORE STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE



For the first time in the history of our country, the Seimas hosts the meeting of the representatives of the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly (EuroLat). In his welcome address at the joint inaugural session of EuroLat, Vydas Gedvilas stressed that the relations between the European Union and Latin America would increasingly gain more strategic importance. “The economic relations between the European Union and Latin America have been developing rapidly – the negotiations for a free trade agreement with Central America, as well as with two countries from the Andean Community,

Peru and Colombia, have been concluded. We also hope that the negotiations with MERCOSUR will be completed soon. We very much appreciate our strategic partnership with one of the BRIC countries, Brazil,” said the Seimas leader.

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## MEETINGS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES OF EUROLAT FOCUS ON SHALE GAS, INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND EDUCATION



the European Parliament and their Latin American counterparts are also held in the Lithuanian Parliament.

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## L. L. ANDRIKIENĖ: MEETINGS OF EUROLAT IN VILNIUS TO STRENGTHEN RELATIONS BETWEEN THE EU AND LATIN AMERICA, AS WELL AS BETWEEN LITHUANIA AND LATIN AMERICA



the meetings of the Standing Committees of EuroLat.

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## CHAIR OF ITRE COMMITTEE, AMALIA SARTORI: WE HAVE TO CREATE A SINGLE ENERGY MARKET WITHIN THE EU



The delegation of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE) of the European Parliament, headed by its Chair, Amalia Sartori, visited the Seimas on 16 July 2013 and met with members of the Seimas Committee on Economics, Kęstutis Daukšys and Birutė Vėsaitė; member of the Committee on European Affairs, Virginija Baltraitienė; and member of the Committee on Education, Science and Culture, Orinta Leiputė.

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## PROTECTION OF EU CITIZENS' RIGHTS AND LEGITIMATE INTERESTS, STRENGTHENING OF THE ROLE OF NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS AND REGULATION OF AUDITING AT THE FOCUS OF THE MEETING BETWEEN JURI COMMITTEE AND MEMBERS OF THE SEIMAS



On 17 July 2013, at the beginning of the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, members of the Committee on Legal Affairs (JURI) of the European Parliament visited the Seimas and got acquainted with the priorities of the Lithuanian Presidency in the area of justice presented by the Chair of the Seimas Committee on Legal Affairs, and discussed the most relevant legislative initiatives in this connection. Mr Sabatauskas noted that protection of EU citizens' and other residents' rights and legitimate expectations would be given special focus during the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council.

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## MEETING OF THE CHAIRPERSONS OF THE COMMITTEES ON RURAL AFFAIRS ON THE REFORM OF THE COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY

### THE DISCUSSION ON THE COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY AFTER 2013 FOCUSES ON DIRECT PAYMENTS, YOUNG FARMERS AND ORGANIC FARMS



Chairs of the EU parliamentary Committees on Rural Affairs are discussing the reform of the common agricultural policy (CAP).

The meeting was welcomed by Vydas Gedvilas, Speaker of the Seimas, who underlined that the common agricultural policy was one of the oldest policies of the European Union; therefore it was only natural that it was reformed in response to new internal and external signals.

“Moreover, it is also one of the most costly policies and therefore requires a huge responsibility on the part of politicians in taking coordinated decisions that satisfy both farmers and taxpayers”, the Speaker of the Seimas said and stressed that, very old farming traditions in Lithuania, as well as diligence and perseverance of our people had enabled us to responsibly represent the agricultural sector not only in Lithuania but also in the European Union.

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Advantages of and challenges to small farming and necessity to change CAP at the focus of the Meeting of the Chairpersons of the Committees on Rural Affairs

[More about the event](#)

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

### EUROPEAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEES OF THE LITHUANIAN AND GERMAN PARLIAMENTS AGREE THAT UKRAINE MUST BE KEPT WITHIN EUROPE



The meeting between Members of the Seimas Committee on European Affairs and the Committee on the Affairs of the European Union of the Bundestag of the Federal Republic of Germany mainly focused on the association agreement between Ukraine and the EU, as well as the Digital Agenda for Europe. “During the opening ceremony of the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the EU in the European Parliament, the President of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso expressed hope that Europe will get back on track to growth during the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the

EU. We sincerely expect that to happen. However, the agenda of the Lithuanian Presidency is ambitious and complex”, said Gediminas Kirkilas, Deputy Speaker of the Seimas and Chair of the Committee on European Affairs.

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### SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS BID FAREWELL TO THE AUSTRIAN AMBASSADOR

Speaker of the Seimas, Vydas Gedvilas, has met with the Ambassador of the Republic of Austria, Helmut B. Koller, who has finished his term of office in Lithuania.

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### PREPARATION FOR THE EU AND THE EASTERN PARTNERSHIP SUMMIT IN VILNIUS DISCUSSED BY THE CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND THE UKRAINIAN AMBASSADOR

On 9 July 2013, the Chair of the Seimas Committee on Foreign Affairs, Benediktas Juodka, met with the Ukrainian Ambassador to the Republic of Lithuania, Valery Zhovtenko, and the Head of the EU Department of the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Vsevolod Chentsov. Relevant issues of Ukraine’s EU integration and preparation for the EU and the Eastern Partnership Summit to be held in Vilnius on 28–29 November 2013, were discussed at the meeting.

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### **CHAIR OF THE SEIMAS COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, PROF. BENEDIKTAS JUODKA, MET WITH THE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF NORTHERN AND EASTERN EUROPE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN**

On 10 July 2013, the Chair of the Seimas Committee on Foreign Affairs, Prof. Benediktas Juodka, had a meeting with the Director of the Department of Northern and Eastern Europe of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mohammad Hassan Fadaifard, and the Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Lithuania, Samad Ali Lakizadeh, who was accompanying him.

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### **DEPUTY SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS PETRAS AUŠTREVIIČIUS DISCUSSED THE FUTURE OF THE EU WITH MEMBERS OF THE LANDTAG OF SAXONY-ANHALT**



On Wednesday, 17 July 2013, Petras Auštrevičius, Deputy Speaker of the Seimas and Deputy Chair of the Committee on European Affairs, met with the delegation of the State Diet (Landtag) of Saxony-Anhalt and Norbert Beckmann-Dierkes, Head of the Baltic Office of Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung.

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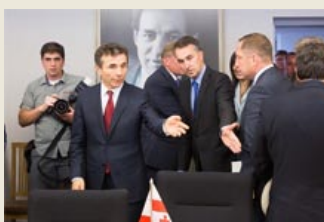
### **MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND CULTURE THANKED POZNAN ACADEMICS FOR ADVANCING THE STUDIES OF THE LITHUANIAN LANGUAGE**



During their visit to the Republic of Poland, Larisa Dmitrijeva and Ona Valiukevičiūtė, members of the Seimas Committee on Education, Science and Culture, met with Prof. Bronisław Marciniak, Rector of Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan, Prof. Andrzej Lesicki, Vice-Rector of the University, Prof. Habil. Dr Piotr Wierzchoń, Director of the Institute of Linguistics, and Adjunct Prof. Juozas Marcinkevičius, Department of the Baltic Studies, Institute of Linguistics.

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### **MEMBERS OF THE SEIMAS AND THE PRIME MINISTER OF GEORGIA DISCUSSED GEORGIA'S PROSPECTS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION**



On 18 July 2013, Members of the Seimas met with Bidzina Ivanishvili, Prime Minister of Georgia, and the delegation under his leadership, and took part in an informal discussion on Domestic and Foreign Policy and A Strategy for the Future organised by the Seimas European Club. The discussion focused on the current political situation in Georgia. MPs expressed their support for Georgia's rapprochement with Europe in hope of further steps at the Eastern Partnership Summit to be held in Vilnius in November.

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### **SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS ENCOURAGED SWISS BUSINESSES TO INVEST IN LITHUANIA MORE ACTIVELY**



Vydas Gedvilas, Speaker of the Seimas, met with Didier Burkhalter, Vice-President and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Swiss Confederation. The Speaker presented the priorities of the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union and the parliamentary dimension events that had already taken place and those that are planned. Mr Gedvilas also mentioned the EU-Swiss negotiations on introduction of an automatic exchange of banking data which will hopefully be opened this autumn. "The Lithuanian Presidency will aim at a smooth and effective settlement of the issues related to the EU-Swiss institutional framework," the Speaker of the Seimas said.

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### **SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS: IT IS NECESSARY TO BOOST LITHUANIA-ISRAEL YOUTH RELATIONS**



Vydas Gedvilas, Speaker of the Seimas, having met with Shimon Peres, President of Israel, on his state visit to Lithuania, underlined the necessity to boost bilateral youth relations. The Speaker of the Seimas believes that the young generation must be aware of the history and its painful moments, so that when the time comes, they can build their own future, free of anti-Semitism, racial hatred, intolerance and other forms of extremism. "A particular focus must be given to youth education and boosting of relations through sports, culture and other areas. This could be the target for the

Lithuanian and Israeli Ministries of Education and Culture whose cooperation we seek to enhance. We hope that you will support these initiatives," Mr Gedvilas said.

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### **SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS: SPEAKERS OF NORDIC AND BALTIC PARLIAMENTS ARE EXPECTED IN LITHUANIA NEXT YEAR**

At the meeting of the Nordic and Baltic Parliamentary Speakers in Ilulissat (Greenland), Vydas Gedvilas, Speaker of the Seimas, emphasised the need to cooperate on the implementation of the Eastern Partnership. "Continuous and consistent involvement of our countries in the Eastern Partnership policy-making is highly important and very much needed. Moreover, practical achievements in the field are evident; we, as well as the countries we work with, such as Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia and Armenia, feel the benefit of those achievements," Mr Gedvilas said.

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### **SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS COMMENDS MOLDOVA'S PROGRESS IN EU INTEGRATION**



Vydas Gedvilas, Speaker of the Seimas, met with Igor Corman, President of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova. Mr Gedvilas congratulated Mr Corman on the occasion of the 22<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of Independence Day and Moldova's National Day. "May I wish you every success in establishing for your citizens a safe and prosperous state based on European values," Speaker of the Seimas said.

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### **AT THE SEIMAS: UKRAINIAN BIKERS EXPRESS THEIR HOPE FOR EU MEMBERSHIP**



Ukraine is a European country and willing to become a full-fledged member of the European family of nations. This was the message brought to the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union by a delegation of 15 bikers from Ukraine headed by Rustam Raupov, Member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.

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