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[SEIMAS HAS CLOSED ITS FIFTH \(AUTUMN\) SESSION](#)

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PARLIAMENTARY BUSSINES

SEIMAS RATIFIES THE ARMS TRADE TREATY

With all 86 attending MPs voting in favour, the Seimas ratified the Arms Trade Treaty.

“This Treaty is aimed at preventing the illicit trade in conventional arms and blocking the diversion of such arms to illicit markets. The Arms Trade Treaty establishes common international standards for regulation of the international trade in conventional arms. Most of the provisions of the Treaty are already binding in the Republic of Lithuania under the European and Lithuanian legislation,” said Andrius Krivas, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, when introducing the draft Law to the Seimas

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MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON RURAL AFFAIRS AND EU COMMISSIONER ANDRIUKAITIS DISCUSSED FOOD SAFETY



On 8 December, the Committee on Rural Affairs of the Seimas headed by Bronius Pauža, Deputy Chair, held a meeting with Vytenis Povilas Andriukaitis, EU Commissioner for Health and Food Safety. Jonas Milius, Director of the State Food and Veterinary Service (SFVS), informed that, despite all the measures taken, swine fever still remained a threat as a result of the actions of the neighbouring countries. According to the SFVS, infected pigs in Belarus were not destructed, but rather processed into food products, which spread in Lithuania was practically impossible to stop.

The members of the Committee pointed out that the only real way to combat the disease was to develop a vaccine. Joint scientific efforts both in the European Union and in Russia, Belarus and Canada were needed to find the means to overcome the disease. Until this was done, Lithuania would still have a challenging task of protecting the European Union from the spread of that infection.

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Speaker of the Seimas Loreta Graužinienė and EU Commissioner for Health and Food Safety Vytenis Povilas Andriukaitis

THE SEIMAS ADOPTED AMENDMENTS TO THE LAW ON ELECTIONS TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT



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The Seimas adopted the amendments to the Law on Elections to the European Parliament, which ensure proper implementation of the requirements under Directive 2013/1/EU in the Republic of Lithuania. This legal act received unanimous vote in favour from 81 members of the Seimas. The requirements of the law currently in force were revised by providing that persons who may vote or stand as candidates in the Republic of Lithuania and any other Member State of the European Union, must choose to vote or stand as a candidate only in one Member State. Citizens of the Member States of the European Union may not vote or stand as candidates if they are deprived of such rights in the home Member State.

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THE SEIMAS GRANTS LITHUANIAN TROOPS THE MANDATE TO TAKE PART IN INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS IN 2015–2016



Photo by Nerijus Vitas from the archives of the Ministry of National Defence of the Republic of Lithuania

During its plenary sitting, the Seimas adopted a resolution, providing for the legal status in international operations in 2015–2016 of the military units of the Republic of Lithuania assigned to the NATO Response Force and EU Battlegroups and Lithuanian troops serving in NATO and EU military commands. The resolution was adopted by 83 votes in favour, with no votes against and one abstention.

According to the resolution, once the North Atlantic Council adopts a decision to send the NATO Response Force and/or personnel of NATO military commands or the Council of the European Union adopts a decision to send EU Battlegroups and/or personnel of EU military commands to an international operation, up to 350 Lithuanian soldiers and civilian personnel from the national defence system may be sent

to such an operation in the period from 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2015 while up to 477 of them may be sent in the period from 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2016.

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EMPLOYERS' AND EMPLOYEES' LIABILITY FOR ILLEGAL EMPLOYMENT IS SET TO INCREASE

In its plenary sitting, the Seimas has adopted amendments to the Labour Code and its secondary legislation, thereby increasing the liability of employers and employees for illegal work and thus contributing to the reduction of the scope of unreported employment. The amendments to the Labour Code were adopted by 93 votes in favour, with no votes against and 30 abstentions.

The new provisions of the Labour Code provide that in cases where illegal work has been determined, the employer will have to compensate the employee for the illegal work by paying him at least the minimum wage for at least three months (unless a different length of illegal service is proven), with taxes included.

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SEIMAS ADOPTED THE LAW ON APPROVAL OF THE STATUTE ON USE OF COMBAT WEAPONRY IN THE NATIONAL DEFENCE SYSTEM

The Seimas has adopted, under the special urgency procedure, the new version of the Law on Approval of the Statute on Use of Combat Weaponry in the National Defence System by 81 votes in favour, with none against and 1 abstention. The Statute defines the general principles, cases and scope of the use of military force and establishes the procedure for the adoption of decisions to use it. It also provides for the rights of soldiers when performing the tasks of the armed forces in peacetime and formulates the concept of military force.

“The objective of the Law is to respond to the changes in the geopolitical situation and have the means to face a new type of threats of unconventional warfare. It is about the possibility to use the army in response to local armed incidents and violations of the state border, which by their nature do not amount to aggression”, said Artūras Paulauskas, Chair of the Committee on National Security and Defence.

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SEIMAS RATIFIED THE TREATY ESTABLISHING THE EUROPEAN STABILITY MECHANISM AND RELATED DOCUMENTS



On the basis of the Constitution, and having regard to the decree of the President of the Republic of Lithuania Dalia Grybauskaitė, the Seimas has ratified the Treaty establishing the European Stability Mechanism signed by the euro area countries in Brussels in 2012 and amended in 2014, and the documents relating thereto. This Law received 82 votes in favour, with 1 vote against and 1 abstention.

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MRS RAUDONIENĖ APPOINTED SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE SEIMAS



The Office of the Seimas has a new head. On the recommendation of Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, members of the Seimas appointed Daiva Raudonienė as Secretary General of the Seimas. The relevant Resolution Concerning the Appointment of Daiva Raudonienė as Secretary General of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania received 111 votes in favour, with none against and 1 abstention.

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The session focused on Lithuania's accession to the euro zone, strengthening of national defence and security, finance, reducing of social exclusion, the economy, public administration, energy, law and order, protection of the environment, health, education, science and culture and other matters.

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LORETA GRAUŽINIENĖ, SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS: “CELEBRATION OF THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RESTORATION OF INDEPENDENCE OF LITHUANIA IS AN EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY TO SHOW THE WORLD ONCE AGAIN THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ROAD OUR NATION TOOK IN THE STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE”



With the 25th anniversary of the Day of Restoration of Lithuania’s Independence approaching, the Board of the Seimas resolved to set up a working group tasked with drawing up a programme of a solemn commemoration of this significant anniversary until 31 January 2015. The group of politicians and experts will be headed by Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas.

“The day of 11 March 1990 provided the Lithuanian people that had been under occupation for 50 years with a prospect of an independent and free life and an opportunity to build

the country’s well-being together with the world community of democratic nations. The 25th anniversary of the restored independent state is an excellent opportunity to show the world once again the importance of the road our nation took in the struggle for independence and to assess the achievements of our mature state today,” says Loreta Graužinienė. The Speaker of the Seimas believes that the programme of the commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the restoration of the independent state of Lithuania will be meaningful and comprehensive and that the celebratory programme and events will encourage active participation of people not only in Lithuania, but also in all European countries and the world.

On 11 March 1990, the Supreme Council – Reconstituent Seimas adopted the Act on the Re-establishment of the State of Lithuania with 124 votes in favour and 6 abstentions. Herein the Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania, expressing the will of the nation, decreed and solemnly proclaimed that the execution of the sovereign powers of the State of Lithuania abolished by foreign forces in 1940, was re-established, and henceforth Lithuania was again an independent state.

The Act is stored in the archives of the Seimas along with other parliamentary acts adopted. The Lithuanian State Modern Archives keep the second original of the Act of 11 March, which is signed not only by Vytautas Landsbergis, President of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania, and Liudvikas Sabutis, Secretary of the Council, but also by the deputies of the Supreme Council, who took part in voting for the re-establishment of the independent state.

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