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PARLIAMENTARY BUSSINES

SEIMAS EMBARKED ON DELIBERATIONS OF 2016 STATE BUDGET



On 20 October 2016, the Seimas started deliberating the draft Law on the Approval of the Financial Indicators of the 2016 State Budget and the Municipal Budgets (No. XIIP-3651), proposing to endorse the state budget revenue of nearly EUR 8.004 billion, representing a 0.2 % increase as compared to 2015, and to approve over EUR 8.655 billion in expenditure (budget appropriations exceed the revenue by EUR 651.5 million).

In 2016, the national budget, consisting of the state and municipal budgets, together with EU and other international funding of EUR 2.111 billion, is expected to receive nearly EUR 9.394 billion in revenue, which is a 1.3 % increase on the planned revenue in 2015, the appropriations amounting to EUR 10.045 billion.

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THE SEIMAS PROHIBITED PERSONS FOUND GUILTY OF CRIMINAL OFFENCES AGAINST SEXUAL SELF-DETERMINATION AND INTEGRITY OF CHILDREN FROM WORKING WITH THEM

At the plenary sitting on 20 October 2015, the Seimas adopted the amendments to the Law on Fundamentals of Protection of the Rights of the Child, aimed at preventing sexual offences against children. The new provisions were approved by 70 votes in favour, with no votes against and 3 abstentions.

The amendments provide that persons found guilty of criminal offences against sexual self-determination and integrity of children, including sexual abuse, using a child for pornography, and purchase or sale of a child, are banned from working with children in the future. These persons will be prohibited from working or volunteering for institutions, companies and organisations providing social, educational, sports, and health care services for children.

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INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

GEDIMINAS KIRKILAS, CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE ON EUROPEAN AFFAIRS: THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION NEEDS A SPECIAL POST OR BODY FOR REFUGEES

“The European Commission should have a special post or body for refugee matters. The refugee problem is a complex one and requires a single authority to coordinate the entire policy. It could either take the form of a portfolio in the European Commission or be a temporary institution whenever necessary. Most importantly, we should protect European solidarity and Lithuania has already made its decision. However, the European Union (EU) cannot merely focus on burning issues, but must look forward and find solutions to the refugee crisis,” said Gediminas Kirkilas, Deputy Speaker of the Seimas and Chair of the Committee on European Affairs, at the meetings on 5 October, where the Committee and the Committee on Foreign Affairs met with the delegations of Swedish and German parliaments.

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SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS: THERE IS GREAT POTENTIAL FOR LITHUANIA AND KAZAKHSTAN TO DEVELOP COOPERATION



On 7 October 2015, Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, and Adilbek Dzhaksybekov, Akim of Astana, Kazakhstan, discussed the future development of bilateral relations. “Lithuania and Kazakhstan enjoy constructive and friendly political and economic relations that improve each year. Kazakhstan is a key trading partner of our country. Moreover, we see enormous potential for the development of economic, cultural, political and educational cooperation as well,” Ms Graužinienė says.

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OFFICIAL STATE VISIT OF KING CARL XVI GUSTAF OF SWEDEN AND QUEEN SILVIA OF SWEDEN TO LITHUANIA

LORETA GRAUŽINIENĖ, SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS: LITHUANIAN-SWEDISH RELATIONS ARE BOOMING TO BECOME EVEN TIGHTER IN FUTURE



Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, met with King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden and Queen Silvia of Sweden on their official state visit to Lithuania. The Swedish royal couple came to Lithuania together with the Swedish ministers for foreign affairs, for enterprise and innovation, and for defence and the Swedish business delegation.

“From the very first steps as an independent state, Lithuania felt special attention, support and encouragement of Sweden and its people. This is impossible to forget. Today, we are happy that our countries have a close relationship. We have grounds for optimism in all areas,” said Mrs Graužinienė at the meeting.

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THE SWEDISH ROYAL COUPLE AND THE SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS VISITED THE MEMORIAL TO THE VICTIMS OF 13 JANUARY



After the meeting of King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden and Queen Silvia of Sweden with Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, and Members of the Board of the Seimas, the guests visited the Memorial to the Victims of 13 January. The Swedish royal couple were briefed on the story of the restoration of Lithuania's independence and the events of 13 January.



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LORETA GRAUŽINIENĖ, SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS: IN THE FIGHT AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING WE MUST STOP PANDERING TO A CONSUMER SOCIETY



Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, and Queen Silvia of Sweden during her official visit to Lithuania welcomed the participants in the round-table discussion United in the Fight against Human Trafficking and shared their insights. In her welcome address, the Speaker stressed that this discussion in the Seimas would make it possible to assess how Lithuania fulfilled its commitments, what good practices of foreign countries could be adopted in Lithuania, and the challenges we faced, especially in view of the current geopolitical context.

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LORETA GRAUŽINIENĖ, SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS: "I BELIEVE THAT READING IS AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE A TREMENDOUS VALUE FOR OUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN"



The Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania hosted the international conference titled Children's and Young Adults' Reading as Challenge in the 21st century: Libraries Empower Social Changes 2015, initiated by Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania and dedicated to the state visit of H.M. King Carl XVI Gustaf and H.M. Queen Silvia of Sweden to Lithuania.

In her welcome address, Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, noted that the issue of reading by children and teenagers became a great challenge for every society in the era of information technologies. Mrs Graužinienė stressed that she supported all ideas aimed at encouraging children to read.

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MEMBER OF THE SEIMAS PAVILIONIENĖ: WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS AND THE SWEDISH MINISTER DISCUSSED THE SITUATION OF WOMEN IN LITHUANIA



In a meeting on 8 October 2015, members of the Seimas, Marija Aušrinė Pavilionienė, Giedrė Purvaneckienė and Dalia Kuodytė, and the Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Margo Wallström, discussed the legal situation of women in Lithuania, achievement of gender equality in the labour market and opportunities for international cooperation in addressing women's issues.

Ms Pavilionienė stressed that after Lithuania's accession to the European Union the focus on gender equality was much narrower than before. Moreover, the legislation promoting gender equality was being blocked at the Seimas, whereas initiatives aggravating the situation were welcomed. Marija Aušrinė Pavilionienė also noted that Lithuania had not yet adopted laws on reproductive health and artificial insemination and could offer no high quality sex education. "The lack of such laws and programmes has a negative influence on girls' and women's health and on the prevention of trafficking in human beings," the member of the Seimas said during the meeting.

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SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS WENT ON AN OFFICIAL VISIT TO THE GERMAN FEDERAL REPUBLIC

SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS DISCUSSED THE CHALLENGES POSED BY THE REFUGEE CRISIS



On 14 October 2015, Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, met with Prof. Norbert Lammert, President of the German Bundestag, in Berlin. The meeting focused on the bilateral relations and the most relevant problems faced by the EU namely the refugee crisis, security of the European Union's external borders and energy security policy.

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Also about the event: Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas:

["We see opportunities to enhance economic relations between Lithuania and Germany"](#)

MEMBERS OF THE SEIMAS EUROPEAN AFFAIRS AND ECONOMICS COMMITTEES MET WITH THE COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT



On 16 October 2015, Members of the Seimas Committee on European Affairs and Committee on Economics met with Violeta Bulc, Commissioner for Transport. The aim of the meeting was to discuss EU transport policy issues important for Lithuania, with greater focus on the progress of the Rail Baltica project. Committee members also drew the Commissioner's attention to the problems emerging in the Lithuanian transport sector due to the minimum hourly wage requirement applied in Germany; inconsistent transposition of EU legal norms into national law; weekly rest period requirements in Belgium and France; and the issues related to Italy's requirements to submit special permits for carriers transporting goods from/to third countries.

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LORETA GRAUŽINIENĖ, SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS, EXPRESSES HER GRATITUDE FOR THE SUCCESSFUL TAKE-OVER OF THE LEAD ROLE IN NATO'S AIR POLICING MISSION IN LITHUANIA



Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, welcomed the newly appointed Hungarian Ambassador, Zoltan Jancsi. The Speaker used the opportunity to congratulate the Ambassador on the Hungarian National Day, as the 23rd of October, which marks the Hungarian Uprising, is a very important day for Hungary.

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SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS MET WITH THE LATVIAN AMBASSADOR AND DISCUSSED THE IDEA OF A JOINT TV PROGRAMME



On 23 October 2015, Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, met with the newly appointed Ambassador of the Republic of Latvia, Einars Semanis. Matters of bilateral cooperation in connection with energy, security, transport and culture were discussed at the meeting.

Mrs Graužinienė noted the importance of closer cooperation between Lithuania and Latvia for regional security, the Eastern Partnership and EU integration. The role of the Baltic States in intensifying EU integration was especially underlined.

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LORETA GRAUŽINIENĖ, SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS, INVITED THE SPEAKER OF THE DANISH FOLKETING TO LITHUANIA



Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, met with the newly appointed Ambassador of Denmark to Lithuania, Dan Eddie Frederiksen. The Speaker discussed with the Ambassador the bilateral relations between Lithuania and Denmark and cooperation at the EU, NATO, and Nordic-Baltic levels.

Mrs Graužinienė expressed her appreciation of the active Danish-Lithuanian cooperation in connection with politics, economy, culture and security. She pointed out that it was necessary to continue promoting bilateral partnership in the areas of education, science and advanced technology in order to attract investment and innovation to Lithuania.

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SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS, LORETA GRAUŽINIENĖ, MET WITH THE NEWLY APPOINTED AMBASSADOR OF GREECE



The Speaker of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, Loreta Graužinienė, met with the newly appointed Ambassador of Greece to Lithuania, Iraklis Asteriadis. The Speaker noted that Lithuania highly valued the versatile cooperation with Greece, our country's important partner in the European Union and NATO. The EU monetary policy, new challenges currently facing Europe and Eastern Partnership issues were discussed at the meeting.

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PHOTO MOMENTS



Delegation from the Riksdag of the Kingdom of Sweden, led by Björn von Sydow and Hans Wallmark, Chairmen of the Friendship Group for Relations with the Baltic States, visited the Seimas. 5 October 2015



Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, met with the members of the Parliamentary Friendship Group for Relations with the Baltic States from the German Bundestag. 5 October 2015



The delegation of the German Bundestag met with Kęstutis Masiulis, Head of the Seimas Group for Inter-Parliamentary Relations with the Federal Republic of Germany, and other members of the Group. 5 October 2015



The delegation from the Bundestag of the Federal Republic of Germany met with Gediminas Kirkilas, Deputy Speaker of the Seimas and Chair of the Committee on European Affairs of the Seimas, Benediktas Juodka, Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and members of the committees. 5 October 2015



Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, met with Andrus Ansip, Vice-President of the European Commission. 8 October 2015



Members of the Seimas Committee on Foreign Affairs met with Margot Wallström, Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs. 8 October 2015



Artūras Paulauskas, Chair of the Committee on National Security and Defence, met with Gen. Joseph Votel, Commander of United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM). 23 October 2015



Loreta Grauzinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, met with Chairmen of the Constitutional Courts of Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, Latvia, and Lithuania. 26 October 2015

For more photos of the October 2015 events and meetings, see [here](#).

TEXT

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