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PARLIAMENTARY BUSSINES

SEIMAS ADOPTED THE LAW REGULATING CONTROL OF CERTAIN DOPING SUBSTANCES

On 7 May 2015, the Seimas, by a unanimous vote of 92 MPs who took part in the voting, adopted the Law on Control of Certain Doping Substances, governing the control (supervision) and other activities related to certain doping substances. The law sets forth that certain doping substances will include the substances that act to either stimulate or inhibit the body's physical and mental responses, namely, anabolic androgenic steroids; growth hormone; growth hormone secretion promoters affecting the muscle, tendon or ligament protein synthesis (degradation), vascularisation, energy utilisation, regenerative capacity or fibre type change; and erythropoietic-stimulating substances. The lists of these substances will be approved by the Minister of Health.

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GOVERNMENT PRESENTED ITS ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT TO THE SEIMAS



On 7 May 2015, Prime Minister **Algirdas Butkevičius** presented to the Seimas the Government Annual Performance Report for 2014. During his presentation, the Prime Minister highlighted that the year 2014 was exceptional for the Government due to unpredictable external factors and underlined the importance of the tasks that lay ahead. In particular, Mr Butkevičius highlighted the completion of the construction of the LNG terminal and successful preparation for the introduction of the euro.

According to the head of the Government, the past year was full of pressures, not least because of the international policy-related challenges, as power-based politics gained even more momentum in the East of Europe. “Russia’s aggressive actions in Ukraine have endangered economic and social stability sand reinvigorated concerns over the security of national borders and territory that have long been forgotten in the civilised world,” Mr Butkevičius said. In his view, national decisions to increase the spending on national defence were of particular importance in this regard.

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INTELLIGENCE INSTITUTIONS ARE GRANTED THE POSSIBILITY TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ABOUT PAST FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS

On 7 May 2015, the Seimas adopted amendments to the Law on Intelligence, under which intelligence institutions will now be able to obtain from financial companies, establishments and other legal persons not only information about the ongoing financial transactions, but also data on the transactions carried out in the past.

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SEIMAS ADOPTED AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSULAR STATUTE IN CONNECTION WITH MATERIAL ASSISTANCE

On 14 May 2015, with 70 votes in favour, none against and 3 abstentions, the Seimas adopted amendments to Article 22 of the Consular Statute. The Statute is supplemented with a provision stipulating that material assistance will be provided, in foreign states, by the Lithuanian government to citizens of the Republic of Lithuania who have contracted a disease or have been injured and who have been affected by an accident or have been victims of a criminal act or other offence. The government will provide material assistance where a victim, citizen of the Republic of Lithuania, has no access to assistance from other sources, and this assistance is repayable.

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SEIMAS REINFORCED TOURIST PROTECTION



Klaipėda

At its plenary meeting on 19 May 2015, the Seimas adopted amendments to the Law on Tourism to reinforce consumer (tourist) protection and monitoring of tourism service providers. The amendments were drafted in view of the cases of insolvency and bankruptcy of tour operators last year, when consumers (tourists) had to shoulder the direct damages.

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COMMITTEE ON EUROPEAN AFFAIRS IDENTIFIED LITHUANIA'S EU POLICY PRIORITIES FOR 2015–2020

On 15 and 20 May 2015, the Committee on European Affairs discussed the draft Strategic Guidelines for Lithuania's EU Policy for 2015–2020, Growing and Safe Lithuania in an Efficient European Union, drafted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The strategic EU policy guidelines for 2015–2020 are meant to ensure implementation and continuity of a coherent, active and results-oriented Lithuania's EU policy driven by national and EU interests and to make certain that public authorities concentrate on delivering growth and safety in Lithuania as part of a strong and effectively functioning European Union.

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SEIMAS ADOPTED AMENDMENTS TO THE LAW ON PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO THE PUBLIC

On 21 May 2015, the Seimas adopted the amendments to the Law on Provision of Information to the Public. It revised the existing regulation of information provision to adapt it to the changed geopolitical situation and thereby to enhance the protection of the information space against information harmful to national security.

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INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS CONGRATULATED LATVIA ON THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RESTORATION OF ITS INDEPENDENCE



During her working visit to Riga on 4–5 May 2015, Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, attended the solemn sitting of the Saeima of the Republic of Latvia and congratulated the country on the 25th anniversary of signing the Declaration on the Restoration of Independence. The Speaker wished every success to the neighbour state on its path of freedom. “We set on the path of Independence together with our hands joined in the Baltic Way. Our common aspiration to freedom respected no borders. The three Baltic States were like three siblings, who showed the world the most beautiful mutual understanding, solidarity and unity; and the freedom gained by our countries provided a powerful impetus for other soviet countries to break free from the soviet yoke”, the Speaker of the Seimas noted.

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Address by Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, on the occasion of the proclamation of the Declaration on the Renewal of Independence of the Republic of Latvia

SOCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEES OF LITHUANIAN AND NORWEGIAN PARLIAMENTS EXCHANGED THEIR EXPERIENCE



On 8 May 2015, the Seimas Committee on Social Affairs and Labour met with the delegation of the Standing Committee on Labour and Social Affairs of the Storting of the Kingdom of Norway. The committees exchanged information on the social challenges in Lithuania and Norway in the areas of employment, labour force, occupational health and safety, dignity at work, social partnerships and social dumping.

The Chair of the Storting Committee on Labour and Social Affairs, **Arve Kambe**, referred to social dumping as the most pressing problem in Norway. The meeting participants highlighted the importance of holding consultations with the Norwegian Government and employers’ organisations for avoiding exploitation of foreign workers by paying them lower wages in Norway. With the growing rate of unemployment in Norway, which has already exceeded 4 percent, this issue is getting increasingly relevant. The Norwegian MPs believe that foreign workers should receive fair wages.

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LORETA GRAUŽINIENĖ AND THE OTHER PA-UFM SPEAKERS DISCUSSED MIGRATION ISSUES IN LISBON



On 11 May 2015, Speaker of the Seimas, Loreta Graužinienė, attended the Second Summit of Speakers of Parliaments of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean in Lisbon, Portugal. The main purpose of the Summit was discussing migration, asylum and human rights in the Mediterranean region.

The Summit emphasised that migration pressures should be treated as a priority by all governments. The participants noted that the EU did not have a unified position on its migration policy so far.

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SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS MET WITH THE INCOMING AMBASSADOR OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA TO LITHUANIA



Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, on 14 May 2015, met with Wei Ruixing, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China, and congratulated him on commencing his term of diplomatic service in Lithuania.

“We will mark the 25th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Lithuania and the People's Republic of China next year. During this period, a solid foundation has been laid for our bilateral cooperation. Today, the People's Republic of China is an important Lithuania's partner in Asia and we want to develop and deepen our political dialogue with it and strengthen economic relations between Lithuania and China. We would also like to see an increased focus on culture and education,” said Loreta Graužinienė.

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GEDIMINAS KIRKILAS, CHAIR OF THE SEIMAS COMMITTEE ON EUROPEAN AFFAIRS: “CROATIA IS AN EXCELLENT PARTNER TO LITHUANIA IN THE EU AND NATO”



“Croatia is a sincere and true partner to Lithuania in the European Union and NATO. We may be proud of the fact that Croatia joined the EU during the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the EU. I am happy to note that the new President of Croatia, Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic, is seeking a more active role for her country in the EU and NATO and more intensive cooperation between the Adriatic and Baltic Sea regions,” said the Deputy Speaker of the Seimas and Chair of the Seimas Committee on European Affairs, Gediminas Kirkilas, at the meeting with the Head of the Office of the Croatian Embassy in Vilnius, Ambassador **Davor Vidiš** on 21 May 2015.

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THE SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS BID FAREWELL TO THE LAST AMBASSADOR OF THE KINGDOM OF BELGIUM IN LITHUANIA



Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, on 21 May 2015, received Peter Gaston Marcella Lescouhier, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Belgium to Lithuania. The Ambassador arrived to bid farewell before the closing of the Belgian embassy in Lithuania.

The Speaker of the Seimas expressed her gratitude to the Ambassador for his consistent and focused diplomatic service in Lithuania and his personal input in developing the political, economic and cultural relations between Lithuania and Belgium. Further mutual cooperation in different areas was discussed in the meeting.

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SPEAKER OF THE SEIMAS MET WITH THE PRESIDENT OF THE GERMAN BUNDESTAG



At the meeting on 29 May 2015, Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, and **Norbert Lammert**, President of the German Bundestag, discussed cooperation between Lithuania and Germany, the Eastern Partnership, the situation in Ukraine, and the scope for deepening parliamentary relations between Lithuania and Germany.

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THE SEIMAS HOSTED THE SIXTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF MEMBERS OF THE SEIMAS OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA, THE SEJM AND SENATE OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND, AND THE VERKHOVNA RADA OF UKRAINE

TRILATERAL ASSEMBLY: “WE NEED TO GO BEYOND POLITICAL DECLARATIONS”



On 28 May 2015, the Assembly of Members of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, the Sejm and Senate of the Republic of Poland, and the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine opened in the Seimas. Within two days, the sixth session focused on the implementation of the Minsk agreements, results of the EU Eastern Partnership Summit held in Riga on 21–22 May 2015 and other relevant issues.

Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, noted that the main items on the agenda have been dealt with and taken forward during the decade. “Today, like in 2005, we have set the objectives of further dialogue, regional cooperation, energy security and European integration of Ukraine. This suggests that Lithuania, Poland and Ukraine move towards important changes in a targeted and ambitious manner,” stressed Ms Graužinienė. In her view, priority has to be given to the development of public institutions, their reform and coordination, as well as real assistance to Ukraine. “I am pleased that Lithuania maintains the same consistent position at these meetings,” emphasised the Speaker.



The Marshal of the Polish Senate, **Bogdan Borusewicz**, a ten-year activist of the Assembly, said that Poland has set up many bilateral assemblies with various countries, including Lithuania and Ukraine, while a trilateral Assembly is the only one. In his view, this shows how much significance we attach to regional cooperation. In this parliamentary triangle or the Luts'k Triangle as referred to by the leader of the Senate, two countries are EU and NATO members, while the third one is seeking membership. Mr Borusewicz noted that European integration has always been at the top of the agenda of the Assembly, and Ukraine had had European aspirations already before 2013/2014.

Meanwhile, the Chairperson of the Verkhovna Rada, **Volodymyr Groysman**, stressed that in meeting the current challenges we must take a stance to condemn the aggression and disregard for international law. He said that passive position of Russia on the Minsk agreements calls for our actions. "We maintain that Russia fulfilled none of their items. [...] Despite the declaration of a ceasefire Russia is breaking it almost every day," the Chairperson of the Ukrainian parliament said.

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TRILATERAL ASSEMBLY: "THE HOSTILITIES THREATEN TO RISE AGAIN IN UKRAINE, THUS DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS TO SETTLE THIS MILITARY CONFLICT SHOULD BE BACKED BY TOUGHER MEASURES"



In his speech during the second session titled *Lithuania, Poland, and Ukraine. Areas Where We Are, Could and Must Be United and Work Together* on 29 May 2015, Prof. **Benediktas Juodka**, Chair of the Seimas Committee on Foreign Affairs, talked about recent geopolitical developments in the region, situation in Ukraine, potential of the partners, and ways to help to Ukraine.

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TRILATERAL ASSEMBLY: "IT IS CURRENTLY IMPORTANT TO PROVIDE UKRAINE WITH UNCONDITIONAL ASSISTANCE"



During the second session entitled *Lithuania, Poland, and Ukraine. Areas Where We Are, Could and Must Be United and Work Together* on 29 May 2015, **Petras Vaitiekūnas**, Signatory to the Act of Independence, former Minister of Foreign Affairs and diplomat of Lithuania, stressed the need to strengthen sanctions of the civilised world against Russia because of the ongoing war in Ukraine, provocations and barefaced lies to the world about the events in Ukraine.

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PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF LITHUANIA, POLAND, AND UKRAINE ADOPTED A DECLARATION



On 29 May 2015, the Assembly of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, the Sejm and Senate of the Republic of Poland, and the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine adopted, by common agreement, a declaration covering security, defence and cooperation issues. The document is mainly focused on Ukraine and its future prospects.

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[Declaration](#) of the Assembly of Members of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania, the Sejm and Senate of the Republic of Poland, and the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine

[More photos about the event](#)



COMMITTEES OF THE BALTIC ASSEMBLY DISCUSSED TOPICAL ISSUES OF TOURISM AND LABOUR MARKET IN LITHUANIA, LATVIA AND ESTONIA

JOINT MEETING OF THE ECONOMICS, ENERGY AND INNOVATION COMMITTEE, EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND CULTURE COMMITTEE & WELFARE COMMITTEE OF THE BALTIC ASSEMBLY



A joint meeting titled *Building a Baltic Tourism Region – Investment for Tomorrow* was held by the Economics, Energy and Innovation Committee, the Education, Science and Culture Committee, and the Welfare Committee of the Baltic Assembly (BA) in Jurbarkas.

In his address, Bronius Pauža, Chairman of the BA Economics, Energy and Innovation Committee, gave a brief overview of the history of Jurbarkas, dating back to the 13th century, and then focused greatly on the matter of Baltic cooperation. Mr Pauža stressed that the joint meeting of the BA committees was a continuation of the work that had been launched earlier. The Chairman reminded the participants of the fact that back in 2013 the Baltic Assembly called on the governments to elaborate a joint long-term Baltic tourism strategy for 2014–2020 as the basis for regional profiling and cooperation in the tourism industry. During the conference of the Baltic Assembly on 11 October 2013, the Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Lithuanian Medical Tourism Cluster, the Lithuanian Resorts Association, the Latvian Health Tourism Cluster, the Latvian Resorts Association, and the Estonian Health Tourism Cluster. The Chairman of the BA Committee said that the aim of the joint meeting was to learn of the implementation of this and other documents, ways to better promote the Baltic region, and the main challenges for efficient Baltic cooperation in the tourism sector.

[More about the event](#)

MEETING OF THE BA WELFARE COMMITTEE AND THE BA EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND CULTURE COMMITTEE



On 5 June 2015, Klaipėda hosted the joint meeting of the BA Welfare Committee and the BA Education, Science and Culture Committee. The meeting was devoted to discussing the labour market of the Baltic States with regard to its outlook and the key challenges and policy responses related to it. The participants of the event included Jolita Vaickienė, Irena Šiaulienė and Valerijus Simulik, members of the Seimas Delegation to the Baltic Assembly; Orinta Leiputė, member of the Seimas Committee on Education, Science and Culture; members of parliaments of the Baltic States; specialists from the Lithuanian Ministry of Social Security and Labour and the Ministry of Education and Science and guests from the Nordic Council.

Jolita Vaickienė, Chair of the meeting, Chair of the BA Welfare Committee and Chair of the Seimas Committee on Audit, welcomed the participants and expressed her satisfaction that the meeting was held in the city of Klaipėda which, due to its geographical location, is a good example how the resources that are already on place can be used for greater benefit for city and state in whole.

Orinta Leiputė, Member of the Seimas, also delivered a welcome address on behalf of the Seimas Committee on Education, Science and Culture. She noted that the committee examines problems pertaining to higher education and vocational training, continuously monitors training of specialists for the labour market, the quality of studies in higher

education institutions, and cooperation between science and business by exercising parliamentary scrutiny. Particular attention is currently paid to graduate employment issues. Ms Leiputė noted that the Seimas adopted, in April this year, amendments to the Law on Education that should open the door to a long-term and continuous monitoring of labour matching. She believes that the data collected will make it possible to determine how long it takes for educated people to get employed, the duration of their employment and average wage, as well as the proportion of unemployed people according to educational institutions, their education level, training or study programmes, study area, field and form. Monitoring of labour matching will help to identify what skills will be necessary for Lithuania's economic development.

[More about the event](#)

EVENTS

SEIMAS MARKED THE 95TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CONSTITUENT SEIMAS



Sitting of the Constituent Seimas. Source: the Wroblewski Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences

At its plenary sitting on 14 May 2015, the Seimas marked the 95th anniversary of the Constituent Seimas. Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, pointed out that the Constituent Seimas was the first representative of the Lithuanian nation that had its first democratic, universal and direct elections.

Convening in Kaunas on 15 May 1920, the members of the Constituent Seimas unanimously approved the Act of Independence of Lithuania: "The Constituent Seimas, expressing the will of the People of Lithuania, hereby proclaims that the independent state of Lithuania is re-established as a democratic republic within its ethnographic borders and free from any official obligations that had ever been undertaken in respect to other states."

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PHOTO MOMENTS



The Speaker of the Seimas, Loreta Graužinienė, met with the Speaker of the Saeima, Inara Mūrniece. 5 May 2015



Informal meeting between the US soldiers deployed in Lithuania and Members of the Seimas. 8 May 2015



Discussion "Solidarity is the future of the European Union". 8 May 2015



The Speaker of the Seimas, Loreta Graužinienė, paid tribute to WWII victims at the Memorial of Ponary. 8 May 2015



*Discussion "Review of the European Security Strategy: what Europe needs today to ensure security".
15 May 2015*



*The Speaker of the Seimas, Loreta Graužinienė, took part in the unfurling ceremony of Lithuanian and Georgian flags.
26 May 2015*



The delegation of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine met with Vydas Gedvilas, First Deputy Speaker of the Seimas. 27 May 2015



Photo exhibition illustrating the activities of the Russian democrat Boris Nemtsov. 27 May 2015



*The Chair of the Committee on National Security and Defence, Artūras Paulauskas, and other committee members met with Colonel General Stepan Poltorak, Ukrainian Minister of Defence.
28 May 2015*



Parliamentary Assembly of Lithuania, Poland, and Ukraine adopted a declaration. 29 May 2015

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

TEXT

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