



LIETUVOS RESPUBLIKOS
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NEWSLETTER

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After bidding farewell to the year 2018, we wish to inform you that this is the last issue of the Lithuanian Parliamentary Mirror. We sincerely thank you for your interest and kindly invite you, from now on, to visit the [website](#) of the Seimas and the Seimas [Twitter](#) account for the information on the activities of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania. We also invite you to check the Seimas [Flickr](#) account for our numerous photos.

Happy New Year 2019!

Yours sincerely,

Public Relations Unit and Press Office of the Information and Communication Department, Office of the Seimas

SEIMAS

- ADOPTED THE LAW ON THE STATE BUDGET FOR 2019
- ENDORSED A TEN-YEAR PROGRAMME FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL DEFENCE SYSTEM
- ADOPTED A RESOLUTION ON THE GLOBAL COMPACT FOR SAFE, ORDERLY AND REGULAR MIGRATION
- ADOPTED A RESOLUTION ON SUPPORT FOR UKRAINE
- APPROVED THE ACQUISITION OF THE LIQUEFIED NATURAL GAS TERMINAL STORAGE VESSEL
- APPROVED THE NATIONAL PROGRAMME ON DRUG, TOBACCO AND ALCOHOL CONTROL AND CONSUMPTION PREVENTION

PARLIAMENTARY BUSINESS

Seimas adopted the Law on the State Budget for 2019

On 11 December 2018, the Seimas approved the state budget for 2019, which mainly focuses on structural reforms with regard to healthcare, education, social security, innovation, and reduction of taxes and shadow economy.

The revenue of the state budget, including EU and other international financial support, will total over EUR 10.59 billion.

'Next year's budget is oriented towards structural reforms, reduction of poverty and accumulation of the future reserve. The expenditure is mostly set to grow in the areas where reforms are being

implemented, namely, in the fields of education, science, healthcare and social security,' said Vilius Šapoka, Minister of Finance.

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Committee on National Security and Defence: Seimas endorsed a ten-year programme for the development of the national defence system

On 20 December 2018, subject to urgency procedure, the Seimas endorsed a new National Defence System Development Programme for the next ten years. The Programme was adjusted due to the changes in the security situation in the region and increased defence spending.

The new Programme lays establishes objectives and priorities of the Lithuanian armed forces and lays down the key means to achieve the set goals.

The central goal of the National Defence System development remains to be readiness for national-level or collective defence of the country, including enhancement of military power of the Lithuanian Armed Forces, readiness to host military forces of NATO allies deployed to Lithuania in case of a crisis, involvement of different state institutions and the population into preparation for defence, and resilience to information attacks.

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Seimas adopted a Resolution on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration

On 4 December 2018, the Seimas endorsed a Resolution on the United Nations Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration with 73 votes in favour, 21 votes against and 21 abstentions.

The Resolution of the Seimas acknowledges that migration is a global phenomenon and that Lithuania and the international community face constant challenges of uncontrolled irregular mass migration. The Resolution concurrently underlines that cooperation among the Member States of the United Nations relies on the principles of national sovereignty and that the United Nations Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (hereinafter referred to as the Global Compact for Migration) reaffirms the fundamental principle in that the Member States have the sovereign right to determine their national migration policies and legal regulation in this regard. Moreover, the Global Compact for Migration envisages the need to ensure the security of national borders, communities and migrants and counter efficiently human trafficking and smuggling of migrants.

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Seimas adopted a Resolution on Support for Ukraine

On 10 December 2018, the Seimas adopted a Resolution on Support for Ukraine in the Face of Aggression from the Russian Federation. The Resolution was adopted by 79 votes in favour, none against, and two abstentions.

The Resolution strongly condemns the military aggression against Ukraine and aggressive unilateral actions of the Russian Federation as constituting a serious violation of bilateral and multilateral agreements, a breach of standards of international law, and a threat to the wider region and to European security; it further calls for putting an immediate end to the said actions.

The Resolution considers the attack by the Russian Federation against the vessels of the Ukrainian Navy and their crews as well as the blocking of the Kerch Strait on 25 November 2018 to be an act of military aggression under the definition of aggression in the 1974 UN Resolution No. 3314 and believes it to be a serious violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine in breach of the fundamental principles of international law.

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Seimas specified the procedure for organising referenda

On 20 December 2018, the Seimas adopted amendments to the Referendum Law, specifying the provisions for the procedure for organising a referendum, a referendum campaign, and vote counting; increasing the number of polling stations abroad; and providing for payment of salaries to members of voting commissions. According to the amended Law, the services of the public enterprise Lietuvos paštas (Lithuanian Post) will no longer be used and the postal functions will instead be entrusted to members of voting commissions and courier companies.

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Seimas approved the acquisition of the Liquefied Natural Gas Terminal storage vessel

On 18 December 2018, the Seimas adopted the amendments to the Law on Liquefied Natural Gas Terminal as the legal basis for securing long-term imports of liquefied natural gas (LNG) to Lithuania and optimising and reducing the operating costs of the LNG Terminal. The new provisions were approved by 99 votes in favour to 1 against and 17 abstentions.

The adopted amendments entitle the Government and the LNG Terminal operator to take decisions on acquiring the LNG vessel in the most economically advantageous way by the end of 2024 and on establishing a financing mechanism for the acquisition of the LNG storage vessel and the reduction of the operating costs of the LNG Terminal.

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National Programme on Drug, Tobacco and Alcohol Control and Consumption Prevention approved

On 13 December 2018, the Seimas adopted the National Programme on Drug, Tobacco and Alcohol Control and Consumption Prevention for 2018–2028.

For the first time in Lithuania, this strategic document is aimed at assessing the problems related to alcohol, tobacco and drug consumption and potential solutions thereof in an integrated manner, while recognising that the use of psychoactive substances must first of all be seen as an obstacle to ensuring human physical and mental health as well as personal and social well-being.

The Ministry of Health states that the priorities and lines of action set by the Programme have been formulated following the consultations with society, discussions in working groups, and the external expert assessment of the drug policy pursued in Lithuania. ‘Unanimous agreement has been reached that national, local and non-governmental efforts should be geared towards assisting each member of society to avoid or reduce the harm caused by alcohol, tobacco and drug consumption and take care of personal health and well-being as well as of those of the person’s family or community members,’ underlines the Ministry.

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Seimas ratified the Agreement on the Automatic Academic Recognition signed with Latvia and Estonia

On 18 December 2018, the Seimas ratified the Agreement signed by the governments of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, on the Automatic Academic Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education. The intergovernmental Agreement was signed in Vilnius on 8 June 2018.

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Seimas ratified the Agreement with the US on Cooperation in Science, Technology and Innovation

On 20 December 2018, the Seimas ratified the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Lithuania and the Government of the United States of America for Cooperation in Science, Technology and Innovation, which was signed in Vilnius on 25 June 2018.

The Agreement will replace the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Lithuania and the Government of the United States of America for Scientific and Technological Cooperation signed in Vilnius on 22 June 2009, which expired in 2015.

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INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: MEETINGS, EVENTS

Lithuania will hold the Presidency of the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference (BSPC) for a year and will organise the 29th BSPC

On 5 December 2018, the Board of the Seimas gave its approval for the Lithuanian Presidency of the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference (BSPC) from August 2019 to August 2020, including the organisation of the 29th BSPC in Vilnius in August 2020.

Lithuania last hosted the BSPC in 2005. Currently, the BSPC Presidency is held by the Norwegian Storting.

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PHOTOS



Meeting between Viktoras Pranckietis, Speaker of the Seimas, and Manfred Ritter Mautner von Markhof, Ambassador of the Sovereign Order of Malta. 12 December 2018



'Maltese Soup' charity campaign. 13 December 2018



Meeting of the delegation of the National People's Congress of China with Members of the Seimas. On the left – Gediminas Kirkilas, Deputy Speaker of the Seimas and Chair of the Committee on European Affairs. 17 December 2018



Meeting between Viktoras Pranckietis, Speaker of the Seimas, and Marek Kuchciński, Marshal of the Polish Sejm. 19 December 2018



The Speaker of the Seimas welcomed the participants of the exhibition titled *Poland. The Heritage of Parliamentarism until 1791*, dedicated to the 550th anniversary of the Polish parliamentarism.
19 December 2018

[Photo album](#) (49 photos)



Viktoras Pranckietis, Speaker of the Seimas, met with María Teresa Fernández de la Vega, President of the Spanish Council of State.
19 December 2018



For more photos of the December 2018 events and meetings, see [here](#) or please visit the Seimas [Flickr](#) and [Instagram](#) accounts.

TEXT

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