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SEIMAS OF 2012–2016 CONCLUDED ITS LEGISLATIVE TERM

On 10 November 2016, the Seimas met for its final sitting

On 10 November 2016, the Seimas met for its final sitting in the legislative term of 2012–2016. The Members of the Seimas who took office on 16 November 2012 completed their mandate on 14 November, after the newly elected Members of the Seimas sworn in.

In her closing speech, Loreta Graužinienė, Speaker of the Seimas, made an overview of the main achievements of the Seimas during the legislative term. “We have worked smoothly, consistently and in a targeted way, performing all the tasks from everyday routine activities to the representation of Lithuania’s interests on the international scene. <...> Today, I can bravely and confidently say that the Members of this legislative term of the Seimas were collectively a strong political power and unanimously adopted joint decisions on key matters for Lithuania. I am grateful to all of you for our work together,” the Speaker said.

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SEIMAS OF 2016–2020. FIRST SITTINGS: FORMATION OF THE LEADERSHIP, POLITICAL GROUPS, COMMITTEES, COMMISSIONS AND PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS OF THE SEIMAS

Members of the Seimas of the 2016–2020 legislative term took the oath of loyalty at the Parliament



On 14 November 2016, the Seimas of the 2016–2020 legislative term convened for the first sitting. The work commenced with the solemn ceremony in the historical Hall of the Act of 11 March. As provided for in the Statute of the Seimas, the inaugural sitting of the Seimas was opened by the oldest Member of the Seimas. That honour was given to Juozas Imbrasas MP, who chaired the sitting until the election of the Speaker of the Seimas.

Dalia Grybauskaitė, President of the Republic of Lithuania, and Gintaras Grušas, Metropolitan

Archbishop of Vilnius, attended the sitting to congratulate the new Seimas.

Welcoming the newly elected Parliament, Dalia Grybauskaitė emphasised that it was in a position to lay the foundations for the qualitatively new stage in the national development and to ensure appropriate conditions for all the people to build a happier life in their home country. “I am ready to work together with each and every one of you, who genuinely care about Lithuania. I wish you a smooth start, resolve and solidarity. May your success turn into the success for all the people of Lithuania,” said the Lithuanian President.

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Viktoras Pranckietis elected as Speaker of the Seimas



On 14 November 2016, in accordance with the Statute, the Seimas elected Viktoras Pranckietis as Speaker of the Seimas.

Before the election to the Seimas, Viktoras Pranckietis dedicated most of his career to academic activities. In 1998, he was conferred a PHD in Biomedicine. During his career in the Lithuanian Academy of Agriculture (currently Aleksandras Stulginskis University), Mr Pranckietis was employed as an Associated Professor, Head of the Department of Horticulture, Dean of the Faculty of Agronomy. Since 2016, Viktoras Pranckietis has been Professor. Mr Pranckietis has authored a number of research books, textbooks, and articles and has bred some plant varieties.

Since 2014, Viktoras Pranckietis has been Member of the Council and Board, Deputy Chair of the Lithuanian Peasant and Greens Union.

The results of the voting by secret ballot show that all 140 ballot papers distributed were returned, out of which 129 ballot papers were valid. Viktoras Pranckietis was appointed Speaker of the Seimas by 93 votes in favour. Whereas, the appointment of Eugenijus Gentvilas as Speaker of the Seimas was supported by 36 votes in favour. The Speaker of the Seimas was appointed for the term of four years.

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Seimas voted in four Deputy Speakers of the Seimas and approved the composition of the Board of the Seimas

On 14 November 2016, the Seimas decided to approve the following Deputy Speakers: **Rima Baškienė**, **Arvydas Nekrošius**, **Gediminas Kirkilas**, and **Irena Degutienė**. Pursuant to the Statute of the Seimas and in view of the recommendation by the Speaker of the Seimas, parliamentarians decided to appoint Deputy Speaker Rima Baškienė as First Deputy Speaker of the Seimas.

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On 14 November 2016, the Seimas approved the composition of **the Board** of the Seimas and **the Conference of Chairs** of the Seimas.

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Seimas decided to reduce the number of Deputy Speakers of the Seimas

On 15 November 2016, the Seimas adopted amendments to the Statute of the Seimas with a view to reducing the number of Deputy Speakers of the Seimas, waiving their entitlement to official vehicles, and reviewing the number of parliamentary committees. The new provisions of the Statute were adopted by 106 votes in favour with 2 votes against and 17 abstentions.

In accordance with the amendments, the number of Deputy Speakers of the Seimas is reduced from seven to five. They, as well as the Leader of the Opposition, are no longer entitled to use official vehicles with drivers and only the Speaker of the Seimas is entitled to it.

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Representatives of political groups announced the establishment of political groups in the Seimas of the legislative term of 2016–2020

On 14 November 2016, Viktoras Pranckietis, Speaker of the Seimas, invited representatives of political groups of the Seimas to announce the establishment of political groups and appointment of representatives to the Conference of Chairs. Representatives of political groups announced the establishment of:



the Lithuanian Peasant and Greens Union Political Group (58)

Chair RAMŪNAS KARBAUSKIS



the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party Political Group (19)

Chair IRENA ŠIAULIENĖ



the Homeland Union – Lithuanian Christian Democrat Political Group (31)

Chair GABRIELIUS LANDSBERGIS



the Liberals Movement Political Group (14)

Chair EUGENIJUS GENTVILAS



Electoral Action of Poles in Lithuania – Christian Families Alliance Political Group (8)

Chair RITA TAMAŠUNIENĖ



the Order and Justice Political Group (8)

Chair REMIGIJUS ŽEMAITAITIS



the Group of Non-attached Members of the Seimas (2)

Chair LINAS BALSYS

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[POLITICAL GROUPS IN THE SEIMAS](#)

Seimas approved Chairs of the Seimas committees and standing commissions. Seimas formed parliamentary delegations of international organisations

On 22 November 2016, the Seimas approved Chairs and Deputy Chairs of the **15 committees**, namely, Committee on Audit, Committee on Budget and Finance, Committee on Culture, Committee on Economics, Committee on Education and Science, Committee on Environment Protection, Committee on European Affairs, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Committee on Health Affairs, Committee on Human Rights, Committee on Legal Affairs, Committee on National Security and Defence, Committee on Rural Affairs, Committee on Social Affairs and Labour, and Committee on State Administration and Local Authorities.

Please click [here](#) for more information on the composition and the leadership of the committees.

In addition, **11 standing commissions** were formed in the Seimas, namely, Anticorruption Commission, Commission for Addiction Prevention, Commission for Ethics and Procedures, Constitutional Commission, Commission for Parliamentary Scrutiny of Criminal Intelligence, Commission for the Rights and Affairs of Participants of Resistance to Occupation and Victims of Occupation, Commission for Suicide Prevention, Commission for Youth and Sport Affairs, Energy Commission, Migration Commission, and Petitions Commission.

Please click [here](#) for more information on the composition and the leadership of the commissions.

The Seimas also formed **10 delegations** to international parliamentary organisations or Assemblies, namely, Seimas Delegation to the Assembly of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania and the Sejm and Senate of the Republic of Poland, Seimas Delegation to 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, Seimas Delegation to the Assembly of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania and the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, Seimas Delegation to the Baltic Assembly, Seimas Delegation to the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly, Seimas Delegation to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Seimas Delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, and Seimas Delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Seimas Delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of La Francophonie, Seimas Delegation to the Inter-Parliamentary Union.



For more information, please visit [the website of the Seimas](#).

Formation of the Government

Saulius Skvernelis nominated for the position of Prime Minister



On 17 November 2016, pursuant to Article 84 (8) of the Constitution, Dalia Grybauskaitė, President of the Republic of Lithuania, nominated Saulius Skvernelis for the position of Prime Minister.

“The ruling majority has already been formed. Saulius Skvernelis has received massive public support during the election when voting and rating candidates to the new Seimas.

The responsibility of a new Prime Minister includes seeing everything and caring for each and every one.

He has to respond to the most pressing issues and cases of immediate need for change; to strike the right balance between the expectations and wishes of the public and the potential of the state. All decisions will have to rest on responsible policy. This is the approach that Lithuanian people look forward to. This represents a huge credit of trust that will have to be justified.

A lot of challenges lie ahead, but the experience accumulated while heading the Police Department and working in the composition of the 16th Government should help to cope with them,” Ms Grybauskaitė said.

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Seimas approved the candidacy of Saulius Skvernelis for Prime Minister

On 22 September 2016, the Seimas approved the candidacy of Saulius Skvernelis for Prime Minister of the Republic of Lithuania with 90 votes in favour to 4 against and 33 abstentions.

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ADOPTED LEGAL ACTS

Seimas agreed to continue the foreign, security and defence policy of Lithuania

On 15 November 2016, a total of 119 Members of the Seimas voted unanimously in favour of adopting the Resolution Concerning the Consistency and Continuity of the Foreign, Security and Defence Policy of the Republic of Lithuania in 2016-2020.

See the text of the Resolution [here](#).

Seimas urged EU Member States to extend sanctions against the Russian Federation

On 17 November 2016, at its sitting, the Seimas adopted a resolution on the situation in Ukraine and sanctions against the Russian Federation. In the adopted document, the Seimas expresses its strong support for Ukraine's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity and urges EU Member States to extend sanctions against the Russian Federation until full implementation of the Minsk agreements.

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Seimas adopted a resolution on the strategic Lithuania–US partnership

On 17 November 2016, at its sitting, the Seimas adopted a resolution on the strategic Lithuania-US partnership. The document notes that Lithuania commits itself to a responsible NATO membership by strengthening its defence and increasing defence spending to reach at least 2% of GDP as early as by 2018.

The Seimas also takes note that US leadership and engagement in Europe constitute the foundations of security and prosperity on the continent. Therefore, Lithuania along with the US, is determined to further strengthen the transatlantic relations, promote the principles of freedom and democracy, enhance measures for NATO's presence and military deterrence in Central and Eastern Europe, establish a mutually beneficial free trade area, and develop strategic projects in the fields of economy, energy and security.

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Seimas ratified the Agreement on the participation of the Republic of Croatia in the European Economic Area

On 15 November 2016, the Seimas ratified the Agreement on the participation of the Republic of Croatia in the European Economic Area (hereinafter referred to as the EEA) adopted in Brussels on 11 April 2014.

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INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Viktoras Pranckietis, Speaker of the Seimas: *Lithuania will continue its strong support for Ukraine and Ukraine's legitimate fight for freedom and territorial integrity*



On 28 November 2016, Viktoras Pranckietis, Speaker of the Seimas, met with Andrii Parubii, Chairperson of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, who was paying a working visit to Lithuania.

At the meeting, the leaders of both parliaments discussed the situation in Ukraine, the course of reforms in Ukraine, Lithuanian support, and prospects for interparliamentary cooperation.

Mr Pranckietis noted that the Seimas was the most active EU national parliament in terms of expressing support for Ukraine. Since 2013, the Lithuanian Parliament has adopted eight resolutions, with the latest one adopted by the newly elected Seimas, expressing support for Ukraine and declaring the continuity of foreign policy.

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Rasa Juknevičienė MP elected as Vice-President of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly



On 21 November 2016, at the 62nd Session of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, held in Istanbul, Rasa Juknevičienė, Member of the Seimas, was elected as a Vice-President of this important parliamentary forum.

In her new capacity, Mrs Juknevičienė will focus on the following priorities: strong transatlantic relations, active engagement with Ukraine and Georgia, which are seeking membership in the Alliance, and better reciprocal understanding in studying threats to southern Europe and the Baltic States.

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EVENTS

150th anniversary of the birth of Justinas Staugaitis, Speaker of the Seimas, marked at the sitting of the Seimas



On 24 November 2016, the 150th anniversary of the birth of Justinas Staugaitis, Signatory to the Act of Independence of Lithuania, Speaker of the Seimas and Bishop of Telšiai, was marked at the sitting of the Seimas.

In his introductory speech, Viktoras Pranckietis, Speaker of the Seimas, noted that the upcoming commemoration of the centenary of the restoration of the state of Lithuania committed us to recalling the founding fathers of the Republic of Lithuania, who were at the very beginnings of the modern state and shaped the directions of its development. "One of them was Justinas Staugaitis, who was the Deputy Chairman of the Council of Lithuania, Signatory to the 16 February 1918 Act of Independence of Lithuania, Speaker of the Seimas and first Bishop of Telšiai. This year we are marking his 150th birth anniversary. It was symbolic that the newly elected Seimas started its work on the 14th of November, which was the birthday of Justinas Staugaitis," the Speaker of the Seimas said.

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PHOTOS



Viktoras Prancietis, Speaker of the Seimas, met with Anne Hall, US Ambassador.
28 November 2016



Viktoras Prancietis, Speaker of the Seimas, met with Jana Vanaveski, Ambassador of Estonia.
28 November 2016



Saulius Skvernelis, appointed Prime Minister, met with Andriy Parubiy, Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.
28 November 2016



Representatives of the Homeland Union - Lithuanian Christian Democrat Political Group of the Seimas met with Andriy Parubiy, Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, and his delegation.
28 November 2016



Speaker of the Lithuanian Seimas and Chairman of the Ukrainian Verkhovna Rada opened the exhibition titled *Lithuania and Ukraine: 25 Years of Partnership*.
28 November 2016



Andriy Parubiy, Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, and his delegation visited the January 13th Memorial.
28 November 2016



Viktoras Pranckietis, Speaker of the Seimas, met with Amir Maimon, Ambassador of the State of Israel.
29 November 2016



Viktoras Pranckietis, Speaker of the Seimas, met with Vassiliki Dicooulou, Ambassador of Greece.
29 November 2016

For more photos of the November 2016 events and meetings, see [here](#).

TEXT

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