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- SEIMAS LAUNCHED DEBATE ON THE STATE BUDGET FOR 2018
- COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS ENDORSED THE INITIATIVE FOR THE MAGNITSKY LAW
- SEIMAS SOLEMNLY MARKED THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA

PARLIAMENTARY BUSINESS

Seimas launched debate on the State Budget for 2018



On 19 October 2017, the Seimas launched the debate on the draft Law on Approving the Financial Indicators of the State Budget and Municipal Budgets for 2018 (No XIII P-1227) introduced by Vilius Šapoka, Minister of Finance. The draft focuses on poverty reduction, ensuring national security, promotion of entrepreneurship and productive investment, as well as greater municipal budgets and higher financial autonomy.

It is estimated that governmental revenues will comprise almost EUR 16.082 billion, whereas governmental expenditure will amount to nearly EUR 15.839 billion. This will be the first non-deficit budget since the restoration of Lithuania's independence.

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Committee on Foreign Affairs endorsed the initiative for the Magnitsky Law

On 25 October 2017, at its meeting, the Committee on Foreign Affairs considered and endorsed the draft Law Amending the Law on Legal Status of Aliens (No XIII P-533), thus establishing an additional legal basis for banning aliens from entering the Republic of Lithuania.

On the initiative of 21 Members of the Seimas, the draft Law was drawn up with a view to providing for, in the legal system of the Republic of Lithuania, political sanctions against people related to the case of Sergei Magnitsky, a Russian lawyer who disclosed the financial fraud resulting in fraudulent misappropriation of USD 230 million of taxpayers' money by officials of the Russian Federation and was arrested by Russian authorities and tortured in prison, where he eventually died. The Law also provides for sanctions against people related to cracking down, in violation of human rights and with impunity, on individuals, who disclose the cases of corruption and abuse of office, and on political prisoners or similar individuals. People who have committed, instigated or otherwise participated in corruption or money laundering must not remain unpunished only because they are related to non-democratic authorities. These people must know in advance that a democratic state will enforce sanctions against them for the abuse of authority, when it violates international law and imposes liability in a democratic state.

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Seimas ratified the Agreement on the Development of the Rail Baltic/ Rail Baltica Railway Connection

On 10 October 2017, the Seimas ratified the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Estonia, the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the Republic of Lithuania on the Development of the Rail Baltic/Rail Baltica Railway Connection, which was signed in Tallinn on 31 January 2017. The Law was adopted by 96 votes in favour, none against and one abstention.

The Agreement is aimed at ensuring the completion of the European standard gauge railway infrastructure in the territories of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia by 2025 and providing for the EU and national co-financing.

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Seimas made a decision on the participation of Lithuanian troops in international operations



On 12 October 2017, by 87 votes in favour, the Seimas unanimously adopted a resolution on the participation of military units of the Republic of Lithuania in international military operations.

Thereby the Seimas authorised the deployment of military units of the Republic of Lithuania, consisting of military and civilian staff of the national defence system, for participation in military operations between 1 January 2018 and 31 December 2019.

“Participation in international operations is a way to implement the Lithuanian commitment to international security and NATO’s collective defence, the EU Common Security and Defence Policy, the UN peacekeeping efforts, as well as multilateral and bilateral military cooperation. If we want to be defended, we also need to contribute to the defence of other countries and their interests. As beneficiaries, we are contributing in so far as

we can and in accordance with our level of economic development, defence and military capabilities, and the current security situation in Lithuania. The necessary balance is preserved,” said Raimundas Karoblis, Minister of National Defence while presenting the draft.

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Committee on Legal Affairs: the European Parliament and national Parliaments have launched a new phase of cooperation by starting joint activities in the field of parliamentary scrutiny



Julius Sabatauskas, Chair of the Seimas Committee on Legal Affairs, Rimas Andriakis, Deputy Chair of the Committee on European Affairs, and Jonas Jarutis, Member of the National Security and Defence Committee, visited Brussels between 8 and 10 October 2017. They participated in the meeting establishing a Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group (JPSG) that will carry out parliamentary scrutiny of Europol activities. The meeting was arranged by the European Parliament Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) and the Parliament of Estonia holding the Presidency of the Council of the EU.

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INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: EVENTS, MEETINGS, VISITS

Committee on European Affairs: region's energy independence and security remain a top priority for the Baltic States and Poland



On 1–2 October 2017, the chairs of the EU affairs committees of the Lithuanian, Latvian, Estonian and Polish Parliaments held a meeting in Klaipėda where they unanimously agreed that energy independence and security remained a top priority for the Baltic States and Poland. The parliamentary representatives had the opportunity to visit the Liquefied Natural Gas Floating Storage and Regasification Unit terminal (LNG FSRU) *Independence*, and learn in detail about the potential of the terminal.

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Viktoras Prancietis, Speaker of the Seimas, met with the delegation of the National Assembly of Kuwait



On 3 October 2017, Viktoras Prancietis, Speaker of the Seimas, met with the delegation of the National Assembly of Kuwait, led by Shuaib Shabab Al-Muwaizri, Chairman of the Kuwait-Lithuania Parliamentary Friendship Group. The cooperation between Lithuania and Kuwait and the security situation in Europe and the Middle East were discussed in the meeting.

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Committee on National Security and Defence met with Members of the Polish National Defence Committee



On 5 October 2017, Members of the Committee on National Security and Defence of the Seimas met with a delegation of Members of the National Defence Committee of the Sejm of Poland, which was headed by Michał Jach, Chair of the Committee. They discussed the security situation in the region, military cooperation, energy security projects, and other issues relevant to Lithuanian and Poland, the region and Europe as a whole. Military intelligence and air defence also received a lot of attention.

Vytautas Bakas, Chair of the Committee on National Security and Defence of the Seimas, said that the meeting would further strengthen the inter-parliamentary cooperation between Lithuania and Poland. "We have discussed a number of aspects important to both countries. These meetings help advancing the inter-parliamentary cooperation, which is very important in today's context," he said.

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The success of the Seimas delegation in the NATO Parliamentary Assembly session in Bucharest



9 October 2017. The pro-active behaviour of the Seimas Delegation to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly received a wide acclaim during the past session. As many as three members of the delegation were elected to significant post within the Assembly. Rasa Juknevičienė, Head of the Seimas Delegation to the NATO PA, was elected Vice-President of the Assembly for a second term of office. She was also elected to the position of Vice-Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on NATO Partnerships of the NATO PA Political Committee. Juozas Olekas, Deputy Head of the Seimas Delegation, was elected Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on Future Security and Defence Capabilities of the NATO PA Defence and Security Committee. Aušrinė Armonaitė, Member of

the Seimas Delegation to the NATO PA, became Rapporteur for the Sub-Committee on Transition and Development of the NATO PA Economics and Security Committee.

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Viktoras Pranckietis, Speaker of the Seimas: our objective is the EU's internal unity and responsible external action



On 10 October 2017, Viktoras Pranckietis, Speaker of the Seimas, had a Brussels-based meeting with Antonio Tajani, President of the European Parliament. They discussed the future of the EU, cooperation with the Eastern Partnership countries, and the most important aspects of energy, economy and security policy.

“Currently the EU is facing serious challenges. Our fundamental interest lies in further strengthening of the European project, unity within the EU, and effective

and responsible action in external relations. We are committed to the strengthening of the European defence in full coherence with NATO. We have also decided to join permanent structured cooperation (PESCO). Cyber security is particularly relevant in this context, and we support all initiatives in this area. Importantly, the EU recognises the threat posed by disinformation to Member States and Europe as a whole,” said Mr Pranckietis.

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Viktoras Pranckietis, Speaker of the Seimas, during his visit to Romania: it is essential to promote the greatest possible rapprochement of Eastern partners with the EU

On 15–17 October 2017, Viktoras Pranckietis, Speaker of the Seimas, paid an official visit to Bucharest, Romania, where he met with the leadership of the Romanian Parliament and representatives of the Government. The Speaker of the Seimas met with Călin Popescu-Tăriceanu, President of the Romanian Senate; Nicolae-Liviu Dragnea, President of the Chamber of Deputies; Grațiela Gavrilescu, Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Environment; and Teodor-Viorel Meleşcanu, Minister of Foreign Affairs. The meetings focused on closer bilateral security and economic cooperation, cooperation between the European Union and Eastern Partnership countries, as well as top matters related to energy, security, politics, and economy.

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Members of the Committee on Legal Affairs met with the Minister of Justice of Luxembourg



On 24 October 2017, Members of the Committee on Legal Affairs met with Félix Braz, Minister of Justice of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, and his delegation.

Julius Sabatauskas, Chair of the Committee on Legal Affairs, welcomed the guests and gladly noticed that the visit of the Minister almost coincided with the official visit of another distinguished guest from Luxembourg, i.e. Henri, Grand Duke of Luxembourg, on 25–27 October 2017. The Chair of the Committee emphasized that

both visits were essential in enhancing bilateral relations. The Chair of the Committee also noted the rapidly growing defence cooperation between Lithuania and Luxembourg in recent years and underlined that Lithuania was grateful to Luxembourg for its solidarity and contribution to the security of the region.

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EVENTS

Seimas solemnly marked the 25th anniversary of the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania



On 25 October 2017, the Seimas hosted a solemn commemoration dedicated to mark the 25th anniversary of the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania. The event was opened by the Speaker of the Seimas, who conveyed the congratulatory words on behalf of Dalia Grybauskaitė.

In his speech, Viktoras Pranckietis, Speaker of the Seimas, emphasised that the Constitution was the foundation the state was built on. It was a social contract of the political forces and the nation.

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Photo and documentary exhibition to mark the 25th Anniversary of the Constitution



On 25 October 2017, a photo and documentary exhibition entitled Towards the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania: the 25th Anniversary of the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, arranged by the Office of the Seimas, was opened in the Stained Glass Gallery of the Seimas. The exhibition was opened by Irena Šiaulienė, Deputy Speaker of the Seimas, and Petras Giniotas, Signatory to the Act of Independence of Lithuania.

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PHOTOS



Meeting of the Committee on European Affairs with the Rt Hon. Baroness Anelay of St Johns, Minister of State for the Commonwealth and the UN at the Foreign & Commonwealth Office. 4 October 2017



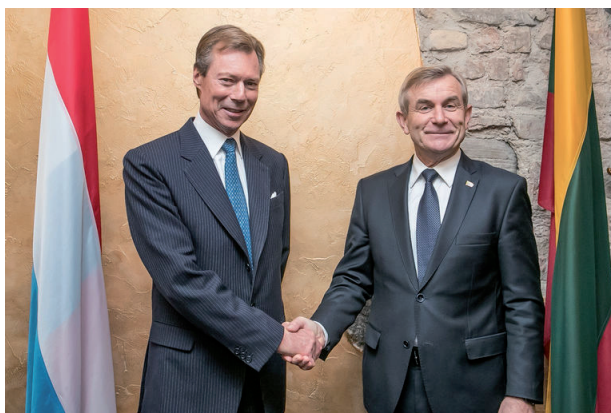
Meeting between the delegation of the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea and Members of the Seimas Group for Inter-Parliamentary Relations with the Republic of Korea. 5 October 2017



Meeting of the Committee on European Affairs with Margrethe Vestager, European Commissioner for Competition. 10 October 2017



Meeting of Viktoras Prancietis, Speaker of the Seimas, with Dang Thi Ngoc Thinh, Vice President of Vietnam. 23 October 2017



Meeting of Viktoras Prancietis, Speaker of the Seimas, with Grand Duke Henri of Luxembourg. 26 October 2017



For more photos of the October 2017 events and meetings, see [here](#) or please visit the Seimas [Flickr](#) and [Instagram](#) accounts.

TEXT

Press Office of the Information and Communication Department

Jolanta Anskaitienė, Adviser, tel: +370 5 239 6508, e-mail: jolanta.anskaitiene@lrs.lt

LAYOUT

Vidas Stropus, tel: +370 5 239 6204, e-mail: vidas.stropus@lrs.lt

PHOTOGRAPH

Džoja Gunda Barysaitė, tel: +370 5 239 6215, e-mail: dzoja.barysaite@lrs.lt

Olga Posaškova, tel: +370 5 239 6205, e-mail: olga.posaskova@lrs.lt

Information and Communication Department

Loreta Raulinaitytė, Director, tel: +370 5 239 6762, e-mail: loreta.raulinaityte@lrs.lt

Public Relations Unit of the Information and Communication Department

Artūras Zeleniakas, Head, tel: +370 5 239 6201; e-mail: arturas.zeleniakas@lrs.lt

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