

## European Ombudsman to visit Lithuania on the latest leg of his accession tour

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The European Ombudsman, **P. Nikiforos Diamandouros**, will visit Lithuania from 19 to 21 April on the latest leg of his tour of the accession countries. During his visit, the Ombudsman will meet with the Seimas (Parliament) Ombudsmen of Lithuania, the Acting Chairman of the Seimas, Mr Česlovas Juršėnas, the Chairman of the Committee on Human Rights of the Seimas, Mr Gediminas Dalinkevičius, the Chairman of the Committee on European Affairs of the Seimas, Mr Vytenis Andriukaitis and the Deputy to the Chancellor for European Union Affairs, Mr Petras Auštrevičius. Mr Diamandouros will give a public lecture on *"Building a citizen-centred Europe - the role of the European Ombudsman"* at the Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania and address students at the Law University of Lithuania on the topic *"Democracy, accountability and the institution of the ombudsman"*.

Commenting on the upcoming visit, the Ombudsman said: "With only two weeks to go before enlargement, I am delighted to have the opportunity to meet with my Lithuanian counterparts and with Lithuanian citizens to raise awareness of the rights linked to European citizenship, including the right to complain to the European Ombudsman".

### Programme

The European Ombudsman's formal programme will begin on Monday 19 April, with a meeting with the Head of the European Commission Delegation to Lithuania, Mr Michael Graham, and then with the Acting Chairman of the Seimas, Mr Česlovas Juršėnas. During the afternoon, the Ombudsman will meet with the Seimas (Parliament) Ombudsmen of Lithuania (Mr Romas Valentukevicius, Ms Elvyra Baltutytė, Ms Rimantė Šalaseviciute, Mr Kestutis Virbickas and Ms Zita Zamžickienė), before continuing to the National Library of Lithuania to give his public lecture.

On Tuesday 20 April, the Ombudsman will address students at the Law University of Lithuania, before meeting with the Deputy to the Chancellor for European Union Affairs of the Government, Mr Petras Auštrevičius. The Ombudsman will then have a working lunch with Members of the Committee on Human Rights of the Seimas, including the Committee's Chairman, Mr Gediminas Dalinkevičius. During the afternoon, the Ombudsman will meet with two Deputy Chairmen of the Seimas, Mr Vytenis Andriukaitis and Mr Gintaras Steponavičius, who also respectively serve as the Chairman and Member of the Committee on European Affairs. The Ombudsman will then meet with Mrs Aušrinė Burneikienė, Equal Opportunities Ombudsman and Mrs Gražina Imbrasienė, Ombudsman for the Protection of Children's Rights,



before meeting with Mr Zenonas Namavičius and Mr Vytautas Sinkevičius, judges of the Constitutional Court. The visit will end with a press conference on Wednesday 21 April, in the Press Conference Hall of the Seimas.

**Background**

The European Ombudsman is currently undertaking an information tour of the ten accession countries in order to inform citizens of their rights. Lithuania is the ninth country on the Ombudsman's tour, with a trip to Poland planned before 1 May.

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