

UPDATE May 16:

Number of confirmed coronavirus cases in Lithuania: 1534*

Deaths: 55

Recovered: 988

Number of tests performed yesterday: 7 793

A total of samples tested in relation to the suspected coronavirus to date: 224 040

*The number of confirmed infection cases. Until 28 April, information has been provided on positive laboratory test results rather than on positive cases (people).

The Government has decided today to go further in relaxing the lockdown restrictions given the current epidemiological situation. Schools will soon reopen, so will cafes, restaurants and bars, which will be able to serve their customers indoors. Restrictions on wearing face masks will be eased too. They will be mandatory only in specific places, while elsewhere - recommended.

According to Prime Minister Saulius Skvernelis, the current situation allows us to slowly phase down the restrictions. Consistency is key for us to emerge from the pandemic safe and sound.

‘This is done gradually so as to avoid going back to the tight restrictions across all the sectors. We need to understand that bringing life back to normal too soon can have immediate adverse consequences. That is why we are looking for ways to safely ease those areas that had to be restricted given the pending threats and risks, said Prime Minister.

According to the State Commander of National Emergency Operations, Minister of Health Aurelijus Veryga, it is very important to keep a cold mind and prudence as we continue the lockdown exit. After all, no one will do that for us.

‘I would love to go back to normal life as it was a few months ago. I and I very much hope that this will soon be the case. It takes huge efforts to do that. However, in order to really be able to soon

enjoy the things we have badly missed, we still have to stay focused and maintain discipline for a while', said Minister Veryga.

Nose and mouth covers

Everyone over the age of 6 will be required to wear nose and mouth covers at the marketplace, and other trading venues, events, excursions, and public transport boarding points. Also in public indoor areas, except when eating and drinking in public catering establishments and exercising.

In all other cases, nose and mouth covers (face masks, respirators) will not be required but still recommended.

Given the favourable epidemiological situation, groups of up to 5 people will be allowed to gather in public spaces. Earlier it was no more than 2 people.

Education

As of 18 May, kindergartens and preschool groups will reopen - this was agreed as early as last week by the Cabinet of Ministers. So will non-formal education of children. Pre-school, pre-primary and non-formal education of children shall be carried out by ensuring the required conditions laid down by the State Commander of National Emergency Operations for public health safety, hygiene and the provision of persons with necessary personal protective equipment.

Primary schools will also be able to open their doors as of 25 May, and so will special schools for pupils with special education needs due to congenital or acquired disorders. It will be up to school communities to decide whether their school continues to operate at home or in classrooms. It will be also possible to hold consultation for secondary school graduates preparing for maturity exams. Basic and secondary education will continue from home.

As of 25 May, colleges, universities that are not able to offer studies remotely will be allowed to resume work, as well as vocational education establishments that are not able to offer studies remotely or in the case of individual studies.

AS of 30 May, basic and secondary education will be allowed to resume in schools. This is also the day for non-formal education to resume work where the specificity of the programmes prevents remote education.

Events and personal celebrations

The Government previously agreed that, starting from 18 May, it would be possible to organise outdoor events with no more than 30 participants. The organisers would be required to ensure a safe social distancing, i.e. 10 square metres per participant and at least 2 meters distance between the people.

The Government has gone further and decided this week to relax the restrictions: as of 30 May, the events will be allowed to happen indoors and outdoors with a maximum of 30 spectators and an area of at least 5 square meters per person is ensured. The distance of at least 2 meters between people will have to be ensured.

As of 30 May, outdoor and indoor high-performance athletic competitions will be allowed without the participation of spectators.

This is also the date when private celebrations will be allowed to resume in public outdoor and indoor spaces with no more than 30 persons participating in the celebration.

Leisure

Restrictions will continue for visiting cultural, leisure, entertainment and sports facilities.

As of 18 May, restrictions will relax for outdoor leisure activities, providing for at least 5 sq. m. of space (previously 10) per person and the distance of at least 2 m (previously 10) between people and/or groups of people.

It has been decided to allow larger groups (5) to visit and have excursions to educational trails, observation towers, parks, zoos and botanical gardens located in open areas,

Restrictions will be partly lifted of visits and excursions to archives, libraries and museums. In all the cases at least 5 sq. m. of space per visitor and the distance of at least 2 m between people must be ensured.

From 18 May, cafes, restaurants, bars and other indoor entertainment venues will be able to open. They will be allowed to stay open 8 a.m. To 10 pm. No such restrictions will apply in the case of takeaways or outdoor cafes.

More lenient requirements have been offered for sports clubs. In all cases, an area of 5 square meters instead of 10 as before will have to be ensured per person, and a distance of at least 2 meters between groups of people instead of the previous 10 meters. This requirement will take effect as of 18 May.

The Government has also given green light for casinos and arcades to reopen (8 a.m. to 10 p.m.) This provision will take effect as of 18 May.

As of 30 May, health centres providing recreational services will reopen.

As of 18 May, restrictions will relax for sailing on small, recreational, sports, private and conventional vessels and other floating equipment or means. When sailing in groups of more than 5 people, (previously 2) keeping the distance of at least 1 m.

Cross-border movement

Since 11 May, Lithuania has allowed entry of Polish nationals arriving for the purpose of work, business or studies. AS of 15 may, persons lawfully residing in the Republic of Poland will be allowed to enter the country, provided that they have not travelled outside the Republic of Poland in the past 14 days before the entry to the Republic of Lithuania. 14 days' isolation will not apply to them.

The same is true of the citizens of Latvia and Estonia coming to Lithuania, as well as to persons lawfully residing in these countries.

Another exception as regards entry to the country has been made for journalists entering the Republic of Lithuania at the permission of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, 14 days' isolation will not apply to them.

Seafarers' transit through the country will be enabled as of 15 May. This will be possible only after the shipping company or the ship's agent has ensured their safe transportation.

Flights

Regular passenger flights to international airports of the Republic of Lithuania shall only be allowed on the routes that have been approved to resume by the Government at the recommendation of the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Non-scheduled flights carrying more than 10 passengers to international airports of the Republic of Lithuania shall fall subject to an individual permission to operate issued by the Lithuanian Transport Safety Administration

The lockdown will continue from 16 March 2020, 00:00, until 31 May 2020, 24:00.