

UPDATE May 22:

Number of confirmed coronavirus cases in Lithuania: 1604*

Deaths: 61

Recovered: 1111

Number of tests performed yesterday: 6039

A total of samples tested in relation to the suspected coronavirus to date: 259 043

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

At the video meeting, EU ministers responsible for tourism discussed a set of guidelines and recommendations for tourism and transport published by the European Commission to assist Member States in phasing out travel restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and to help tourism companies resume operations after months of prolonged restrictions while respecting the necessary precautions.

Vice Minister of the Economy and Innovation Elijus Čivilis, who was representing Lithuania, noted that Lithuania welcomed the recommendations, especially measures aimed at restoring the freedom of movement and tourism activities and abolishing internal border controls in a safe manner. The same rules applied for all countries will much benefit tourism businesses and travellers alike.

Besides, Vice-Minister Čivilis stressed that at the moment Europe needs very fast and creative solutions; he presented the Travel Bubble, a project implemented by Lithuania together with the neighbouring countries, which started to operate among the three Baltic States, when a decision to open the neighbouring borders was taken over a similar epidemiological situation.

‘This example of regional cooperation among countries is the first in the entire EU. With the borders of many countries closed, travel bubbles could revive the tourism industry and contribute to the recovery of incoming tourism at least locally,’ Vice-Minister Čivilis said.

At the conference, it was noted that all Member States feel the consequences of the COVID-19 crisis because regardless of whether their GDP is based on tourism, machinery industry or manufacturing, the economy has been hit equally. Against this background, Lithuania expressed its

position that, when coordinating recovery measures and financial instruments, it is important to focus on all sectors and that the financing for the recovery should be more flexible and rapidly accessible to all Member States.