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## **KAZAKHSTAN, LITHUANIA DISCUSS COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF TOURISM**

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This week, the second meeting of the Kazakh-Lithuanian working group on promoting tourism services and products was held in the format of a video conference, Kazinform has learnt from the press service of the Kazakh MFA.

More than 50 participants from both sides joined the discussion of cooperation in tourism, the industry most affected by the global COVID-19 pandemic. Among them are heads of national companies, major tourism associations, transport departments and airlines, as well as entrepreneurs from Kazakhstan and Lithuania.

From the Kazakh side, the Working Group was headed by Vice Minister of Culture and Sports of the Republic of Kazakhstan Urken Bisakayev, from the Lithuanian side - Vice Minister of Economy and Innovation of the Republic of Lithuania Vitalija Jankauskaitė-Milčiuvienė. During the meeting, the parties presented bilateral tourism potential, as well as exchanged experience on supporting the industry and stimulating it during the global pandemic.

An important emphasis was placed on the issue of opening direct flights between the two countries. The Civil Aviation Committee of the MIIR RK and the state company «Lithuanian Airports» confirmed their readiness to continue negotiations in this direction and to organize a meeting of experts as the restrictions caused by the spread of coronavirus are lifted.

In the context of launching a direct flight, the parties emphasized the need for more coordinated joint work in the field of familiarizing the public of the two countries with the sights and opportunities of Kazakhstan and Lithuania.

A distinctive trend of the meeting was the mutual interest in cooperation in the field of new tourism products, in particular, in the field of eco and rural tourism, as well as health tours. In this regard, the rich experience of Lithuanian associations and sanatoriums was noted, which, according to the leadership of the National Resort Association of the Republic of Kazakhstan, can become a promising direction of Kazakh-Lithuanian cooperation in the field of tourism.

At the site of the Working Group, Kazakh and Lithuanian companies actively exchanged contacts, presentations and other data. The Lithuanian side invited the Kazakh side to take part in the International Tourism Exhibition «Adventur» (Vilnius, March 19-21, 2021).

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