

*Barents JWGT Video-meeting, September 1, 2021*

*11:00*

Dear colleagues!

Let me introduce myself: my name is Demyan Smilevets, I'm the Head of International cooperation Department of the Federal Agency for Tourism of the Russian Federation. I'm glad to participate in the The Barents Euro-Arctic Region Joint Working Group on Tourism Meeting.

Russian Federation pays a special attention to the touristic potential of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation.

We have introduced a polar tourist passport, in which with the help of unique seals it will be possible to capture visits to the most interesting sights of the Arctic zone, as well as Moscow and St. Petersburg dedicated to the Arctic.

From 2021 to 2023, the Russian Federation will chair the Arctic Council, an international organization that unites the efforts of circumpolar states to achieve sustainable development of the circumpolar territories and for cooperation in the field of environmental protection.

In order to show all the beauty of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation and the state's commitment to the idea of sustainable tourism, a number of events are planned within the framework of the chairmanship:

- Conference on Sustainable cruise tourism in the Arctic;
- International Festival "Bering Strait";
- Conference on International Cooperation in the Implementation of Tourist Activities in the Arctic.

Thus, comprehensive work is being carried out to develop tourism in the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation, which is important for the state for a number of social, economic and political reasons.

At the same time, work is actively underway to attract foreign tourists to Russia.

There is a worldwide trend towards independent travel and the digitalization of travel services. In the general structure of the tourist flow, independent trips already account for about 80% of the total. The trend towards lifting visa restrictions is also picking up steam as people want to travel and cross borders without being hindered.

Also today, the temporary closure of borders, and, as a result, a complete stop of inbound tourism leads to colossal losses for the economy. Therefore, along with domestic tourism, the priority of the Federal Agency for Tourism is the development of measures to support inbound tourism

In this regard, Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a decree on the establishment of an electronic visa regime throughout Russia for the citizens of 52 countries including Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Iceland, starting from January 1, 2021.

This step implies access to a fast and convenient format for obtaining a visa without the need to go to the visa center or other provide a confirmation of a hotel reservation or any other documents confirming the purpose of travel for its registration.

It will be issued on a specially created website of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation or through their application, within no more than 4 days. It will be possible to cross the border through any specially equipped checkpoint, regardless of the region, and to travel throughout the country. The period of stay of foreign citizens in Russia is 16 days. You can get it for tourist, business, humanitarian and guest trips.

You should fill out a questionnaire, upload a personal photo and a copy of a foreign passport, pay a consular fee of 40\$ and wait for notification.

The introduction of a single electronic visa throughout our country will create more attractive conditions for foreign tourists and will allow Russia to be more competitive in the global tourist market after the lifting of temporary restrictions aimed at preventing the spread of a new coronavirus infection into the territory of the Russian Federation.

We hope that the measures we are taking will make it possible to fully simplify the entry into our country and attract even more foreign tourists.

COVID-19 безусловно стал серьезным беспрецедентным кризисом для всего мира.

Постепенно маленькими шагами Россия возобновляет авиасообщение с другими странами. Этот процесс проходит при тесном взаимодействии государственных органов. К настоящему моменту на взаимной основе авиасообщение возобновлено с 50 странами. Оперативный штаб еженедельно мониторит информацию по поводу того, как развивается ситуация, и работает над расширением списка стран, в которые может быть возобновлено авиационное сообщение на взаимной основе. Россия открывает авиасообщение осторожно, соблюдая критерии безопасности и учитывая эпидемиологическую ситуацию, к чему призываем другие страны.

Текущая ситуация наглядно показала, что туризм имеет прямое и косвенное влияние на большое количество отраслей: остановка туристических потоков отразилась не только на туроператорах, гостиницах, круизных компаниях, но и на представителях индустрий транспорта, развлечений, общественного питания и т.д.

Понимая, что туризм сам не сможет справиться с возникшими трудностями, государство решило ввести ряд

COVID-19 has certainly become a serious and unprecedented crisis for the entire world.

Gradually, with small steps, Russia is resuming air traffic with other countries. This process takes place in close cooperation of State bodies. To date, air traffic has been resumed with 50 countries on a mutual basis. We weekly monitor information on how the situation is developing and work to expand the list of countries to which air traffic can be resumed on a reciprocal basis. Russia opens air traffic cautiously, observing safety criteria and taking into account the epidemiological situation, which we call on other countries to do same.

The current situation has clearly shown that tourism has a direct and indirect impact on a large number of industries: the suspension of tourist flows affected not only tour operators, hotels, cruise companies, but also representatives of the transport, entertainment, food service, etc.

Realizing that the tourist industry itself will not be able to cope with the difficulties, the state decided to introduce a

мер поддержки – преимущественно для малого и среднего бизнеса. Мы реализовали такие меры поддержки, как Субсидии для туроператоров на возмещение убытков, связанных с авиаперевозками, Возмещение расходов авиакомпаний на вывоз туристов, Беспроцентные кредиты на выплату зарплат и т.д. Помимо этого, мы освободили туроператоров, работающих на международных направлениях от ряда финансовых обязательств.

Кроме того, Правительством Российской Федерации был утвержден национальный проект "Туризм и индустрия гостеприимства", разработанный в целях осуществления мер государственной поддержки туристской отрасли. Национальный проект направлен на развитие туристской инфраструктуры, повышение доступности внутреннего туризма и совершенствование управления в этой сфере. В рамках нацпроекта мы планируем выделять регионам средства на благоустройство центров городов, строительство гостиничных комплексов, давать инвесторам дешевые кредиты для строительства туристической инфраструктуры, выделять гранты на обустройство туристических маршрутов, создание кемпингов и других быстровозводимых объектов размещения. А также субсидировать поездки туристов с помощью программ кешбэка, организации чартеров и других мер.

number of support measures-mainly for small and medium-sized businesses. We have implemented such support measures as Subsidies for tour operators to compensate for losses related to air transportation, Compensation of airline expenses for the export of tourists, 0% loans for the payment of salaries, etc. In addition, we have relieved tour operators working on international destinations from a number of financial obligations.

In addition, the Government of the Russian Federation approved the national project called "Tourism and the Hospitality Industry", created in order to implement measures of state support for the tourism industry. The national project is aimed at the development of tourist infrastructure, increasing the availability of domestic tourism and improving management in this area. As part of the national project, we plan to allocate funds to the regions for the improvement of city centers, the construction of hotel complexes, to give investors cheap loans for the construction of tourist infrastructure, to allocate grants for the arrangement of tourist routes, the creation of campsites and other prefabricated accommodation facilities, as well as subsidize tourist trips through cashback programs, charters, and other measures.

В целях стимулирования доступных внутренних туристических поездок мы запустили программу, предполагающую кэшбэк за отдых по России. Запущен уже четвертый этап. Для того чтобы получить 20% от стоимости тура по России, необходимо купить его с 16 июня по 14 сентября, а поездку совершить до 24 декабря. Кэшбэк будет начислен на специальную российскую платежную систему. Данный этап программы проходит в рамках исполнения поручения Президента России о совершенствовании механизма по стимулированию доступных, внутренних туристических поездок в 2021 году.

Текущая антикризисная поддержка должна, на наш взгляд, обеспечить устойчивость туризма уже сейчас, а в дальнейшем, стать частью большой комплексной программы по восстановлению отрасли, над которой мы усердно работаем.

In order to encourage affordable domestic tourist trips, we have launched a program that provides cashback for holidays in Russia. The fourth stage has already been launched. To get 20% of the cost of a tour in Russia, you need to buy it from June 16 to September 14, and make the trip until December 24. Cashback will be credited to a special russian payment system. This stage of the program is part of the implementation of president's order on improving the mechanism for stimulating affordable, domestic tourist trips in 2021.

The current anti-crisis support should, in our opinion, ensure the sustainability of tourism now, and in the future become part of a large comprehensive program to restore the industry, on which we are working hard.