

Presidents of the Baltic countries discuss fight against Covid-19 and economic stability

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During today's remote conversation presidents of Baltic countries – President of Latvia Egils Levits, President of Estonia Kersti Kaljulaid and President of Lithuania Gitanas Nausėda – talked about the latest efforts to curb Coronavirus disease Covid-19 and other issues related to cooperation.

Egils Levits, Kersti Kaljulaid and Gitanas Nausėda exchanged information about each country's progress in containing the Covid-19 outbreak. Presidents of the Baltic countries underlined that apart from focusing on healthcare workers' and public health safety, it is also necessary to start intense planning to achieve economic stability and growth after the crisis at the national and European Union (EU) level. It was underlined during the remote meeting that EU must continue efficient joint efforts in ensuring completely free movement of goods across the EU during the crisis. Presidents of all three countries decided to keep in touch regularly on the matter.

Presidents of Baltic countries discussed on-going joint infrastructure projects and stressed the need to continue these projects. It was underlined during the conversation that Rail Baltica project must keep going. Moreover, EU funding allocated for the project must be invested in a meaningful and efficient way to support the national economies during the emergency.

Meeting also focused on relationship with Belarus, including introduction of special border control to limit the spreading of Covid-19.

Presidents exchange views regarding the rule of law in the EU. All three presidents agreed that it is crucial to preserve democracy during the crisis. Any attempts to switch to authoritarian or totalitarian methods of government, disguised as anti-virus measures, should be prevented.

Egils Levits, Kersti Kaljulaid and Gitanas Nausėda talked about parliamentary work during the crisis and constitutional laws that regulate such work. President Kaljulaid mentioned that in her conversations with Estonian parliament she has referred to the experience of Latvia and President Levits' public comments about the constitutionality of parliamentary sittings during the crisis. Egils Levits told his colleagues about the remote meeting of Latvia's constitutional bodies and communicate about the work of constitutional bodies during a crisis issued after the meeting.

After the meeting that took place on 23 March, President of Latvia Egils Levits said: 'all public authorities and officials should carefully coordinate their steps and engage with each other; legal formalism and departmentalism can impede implementation of Satversme (Constitution), especially at times of crisis. In case of emergency constitutional bodies, agencies, institutions and officials should be able to switch to appropriate work mode, including remote work, limited direct contact between people, more services shifted to digital platforms and other measures that allow government to ensure its core functions and tasks'.



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