



SHORT INFORMATION REGARDING TO THE STRUVE ARC COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEETING 2010, VILNIUS, LITHUANIA

Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania

Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania, stands where the Neris and Vilnia rivers join, among tree-covered hills. The Old Town is one of the largest historic city centres in Eastern Europe, and in 1994 it joined the UNESCO World Heritage List. The Baroque squares and churches recall its importance as an international trading centre in the sixteenth century. Today, tall new buildings reflect the city's development in the twenty-first century.

Arriving to Vilnius

Unfortunately, since bankruptcy of Lithuanian national airlines FlyLAL in autumn 2008, flights to Vilnius from other European destinations are limited. The most popular airlines are the following: AirBaltic (SAS Group), Aer Lingus, Austrian Airlines, Brussels Airlines, Czech Airlines, Finnair, Lufthansa Czech Airlines, LOT. Vilnius has a reasonable choice of train and bus links, the most popular are with Belarus, Kaliningrad, Latvia, Poland, Russia and Ukraine. Vilnius Railway Station, like the Bus Station, is situated in the city centre.

Travel information

The International Airport of Vilnius and the railway/bus stations are within the distances of 7 km and 4 km respectively from the CONGRESS HOTEL. Most convenient way to get to the CONGRESS HOTEL is by taxi or by public bus No.2 (see info <http://www.marsrutai.info>). Station Opera (1st stop) you can reach in about 20-30 minutes from the airport.

Vilnius trolleybuses and buses start running at 5 in the morning and stop at midnight. For bus timetables visit www.vilniustransport.lt. There is E-Ticket (Electronic ticket) available. For the first time it's necessary to buy a card. The card can be used both for single and monthly public transport tickets. Tickets for trolleybuses or buses cost 2 Litas if bought at press kiosks, while tickets cost 2.50 Litas if bought on the trolleybus/bus. If you came to Vilnius for a short visit, you can buy a one-, three- or ten-day ticket.

A trip on a minibus costs 3-4 Litas, and you pay to the driver. The minibus stops at request at any place in the street. To save time, drivers stop at your request only, so, remember to tell the driver in advance where you want to get off.

Taxi

It is cheaper and safer to call a taxi in Vilnius by telephone (than to get on the taxi queueing at the airport). A receptionist at every hotel will do that for you. The taxi fare is from 1.25 Litas to 3 Litas per kilometre in the city. Do not get surprised if you are charged a taxi fare of from 2 to 10 Litas for getting on a taxi. Short telephone numbers to call a taxi (do not dial the code in Vilnius): 1445, 1422, 1313, 1818, 1446, 1445, 1421, 1411, 1410, 1403, 1441. Ordering taxi online <http://www.etaksi.lt/en/order-taxi-online>

Currency

The currency used in Lithuania is the Litas, which rate is fixed to Euro. The official rate: 1 Euro costs 3,4528 Litas, while banks apply different rates in the range of 3,44 – 3,46. Credit cards are welcomed in the larger cities, where there are many cash points that accept Visa, MasterCard and other popular credit or debit cards.

City map

You can browse Vilnius by interactive online mapping services www.maps.lt or www.vilnius-life.com/map/map.php.

Accommodation

We recommend you to stay in the CONGRESS Hotel, the conference venue (****). However you are free to choose any of the surrounding hotels within walking distance from the conference venue. We recommend you to arrange accommodation by completing the Hotel Reservation Form and delivering it to the travel agency "FILARETAI TRAVEL". The travel agency contact details: tel. +370 5 268 59 66, fax +370 5 268 59 67, info@ft.lt, www.ft.lt. Of course, you can book any hotel (including the CONGRESS) directly or via hotel Internet ordering systems like www.vilniushotels.lt; www.vilnius-tourism.lt/

Venue

The Struve Arc Coordinating Committee meeting venue is the CONGRESS Hotel located in the city centre with easy access by road and plenty of parking. The conference centre and hotel assures a wide range of services including free Wi-Fi Internet access. The venue address is Vilniaus street 2/15.

Website: <http://www.congress.lt/>

Programme overview

15th September

- Arrival to Vilnius
- 20.00 - Welcome drink

16th September

- 9.00-17.00 – The Struve Arc Coordinating Committee meeting Day I
- 20.00 – Dinner

17th September

- 9.00-14.00 – The Struve Arc Coordinating Committee meeting Day II
- 15.00-21.00 – Sightseeing tour to the Struve Arc point MESKONYS, Geographical Centre of Europe, historical capitals of Lithuania: Kernavė and Trakai.

Registration

Please register by fax +370 5 2391331 or [email vitalijai@zum.lt](mailto:email_vitalijai@zum.lt) to the Struve Arc Coordinating Committee Meeting not later than 15th July 2010.

Sightseeing tour to Geographical Centre of Europe

After a re-estimation of the boundaries of the continent of Europe in 1989, Jean-George Affholder, a scientist at the Institut Géographique National (French National Geographic Institute) determined that the Geographic Centre of Europe is located at 54° 54' N 25° 19' E. The method used for calculating this point was that of the centre of gravity of the geometrical figure of Europe. This point is located in Lithuania, specifically 26 kilometres north of its capital city, Vilnius. A monument, composed by the sculptor Gediminas Jokūbonis and consisting of a column of white granite surmounted by a crown of stars, was erected at the location in 2004. An area of woods and fields surrounding the geographic centre point and including Lake Giriija, Bernotai Hill, and an old burial ground, was set aside as a reserve in 1992. The State Tourism Department at the Ministry of Economy of Lithuania has classified the Geographic Centre monument and its reserve as a tourist attraction. This location is the only one listed in the Guinness Book of World Records as the geographical centre of Europe.

Sightseeing tour " Historical capitals of Lithuania "

Trakai

The historical capital of Lithuania is Trakai which is otherwise known as the 'town of lakes'. Trakai town owns a unique castle which is the only one of its type in the entire Eastern Europe. The castle is surrounded by waters on all four sides and is called the Trakai Island Castle. Though constructed in 1410 just after the famous Battle of Grünwald as a defense fortress, it was turned into a residence of Grand Dukes of Lithuania Vytautas and Kęstutis. Later on, the Trakai Island Castle was used as a prison. At these times, however, it was almost completely neglected.

Trakai Island Castle is an incredible architectural example of Gothic style. The castle has a high and well-constructed strong wall all around it and also a forecastle which was built for the purpose of protection.

According to historical sources, the Trakai Island Castle was also equipped with a mechanism for forced-air heating and had many lovely wooden galleries, paintings of stained glass, murals, secret passages... Visitors now can come and visit the Trakai Island Castle museum which reflects the former beauty and takes everyone many centuries back in time.

<http://www.trakai.lt/>

Kernave

Kernave is a cradle of Lithuania. It is an ancient capital of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, situated on the banks of the river Neris. Picturesque hills of Kernave are considered to be a visit card of the Lithuanian tourism.

Kernave was firstly mentioned in chronicles in the 13th century but nevertheless it is a unique place, a cradle of the Lithuanian people. Archaeological research, which was held and is still held in Kernave showed that people lived in this place 10000 years before it was mentioned in chronicles. The hills in Kernave and the artifacts found there are the main part of the reservation, which was founded by the Lithuanian authorities to preserve the unique place. Nowadays Kernave reservation has the territory of more than 200 hectares. It is the first centre of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and it is mentioned in the list of the world cultural heritage by UNESCO.

<http://www.kernave.org/>

Events in Vilnius

Please browse Vilnius tourist information centre's site for exact information about the coming events in Vilnius.

<http://www.vilnius-events.lt/en>

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