



HIGHLIGHTS

- Four COVID-19 fatalities were reported over the weekend and 41 and 19 new cases were reported on Saturday and Sunday, respectively. **The cumulative number of registered COVID-19 cases in the country is 1386 of which 227 of the COVID-19 cases among health professionals (16.4%).** COVID-19 cases are registered in 27 cities. **71% of the cases are reported from three cities Skopje, Kumanovo and Prilep** (471, 371, 141 cases, respectively). In the last 24 hours: A total of 335 SARS-CoV-2 tests were performed, 5.7% tested positive and 126 COVID-19 patients recovered.
- **66% of the deaths are in Kumanovo, Skopje and Struga (15, 13 and 12 deaths, respectively).** 21% of the confirmed COVID-19 cases and about 67% of the deaths are in people above 60 years old. 79% of death cases had comorbidities. 51 and 56 cases are registered among children ages 0-9 and 10-19, respectively.
- An amendment to the Law of Social Protection during the state of emergency was adopted. The Decree facilitates the right and access of materially unsecured **households to guaranteed minimum assistance** and enables monetary allowance to cover part of the costs for energy consumption in the household from April-September 2020.
- Although some governments have suggested that the detection of antibodies to SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, could serve as the basis for an “immunity passport” or “risk-free certificate,” there is currently **no evidence that people who have recovered from COVID-19 and have antibodies are protected** from a second infection. More information is available [here](#).
- The WHO Regional Director for Europe has emphasized the need to build **sustainable people-centered long-term care** in the wake of COVID-19. More information is available [here](#).
- The core protocol for therapeutics against COVID-19 has been published by the WHO R&D Blueprint Working Group. More information is available [here](#).

SITUATION IN NUMBERS

total (new) cases in the last 24 hours

North Macedonia

1386 confirmed (19)

61 deaths

500 recovered

227 health care workers

Globally

2 804 796 confirmed (84 900)

193 710 deaths (6006)

European Region

1 341 851 confirmed (27 185)

122 218 deaths (2756)

Regions of the Americas

1 094 846 confirmed (47 338)

56 063 deaths (2960)

Eastern Mediterranean Region

160 639 confirmed (5615)

6887 deaths (137)

Western Pacific Region

142 639 confirmed (1170)

5943 deaths (37)

South-East Asia Region

43 846 confirmed (2773)

1747 deaths (89)

African Region

20 316 confirmed (819)

839 deaths (27)

WHO RISK ASSESSMENT

Very high in all North Macedonia

Very High Globally

SURVEILLANCE

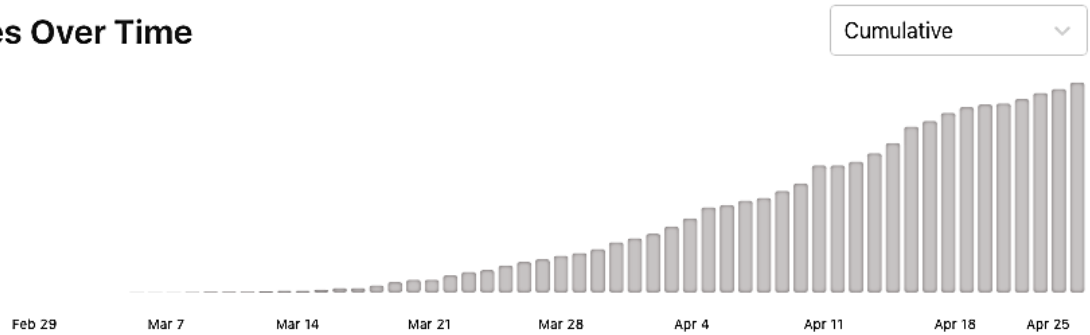
Figure 1. North Macedonia – Cumulative confirmed COVID-19 cases (n=1367) and deaths (n=59) by 26 April 2020 23:00

Confirmed Cases Over Time

1,367

confirmed cases

Source: World Health Organization



Deaths Over Time

59

deaths

Source: World Health Organization

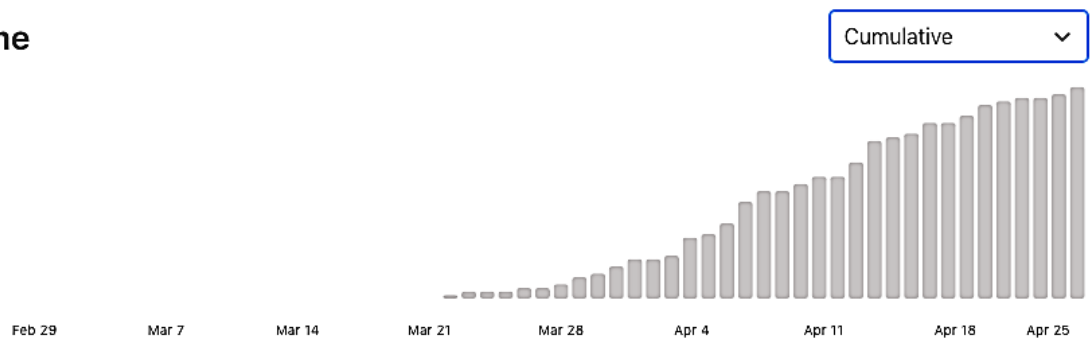
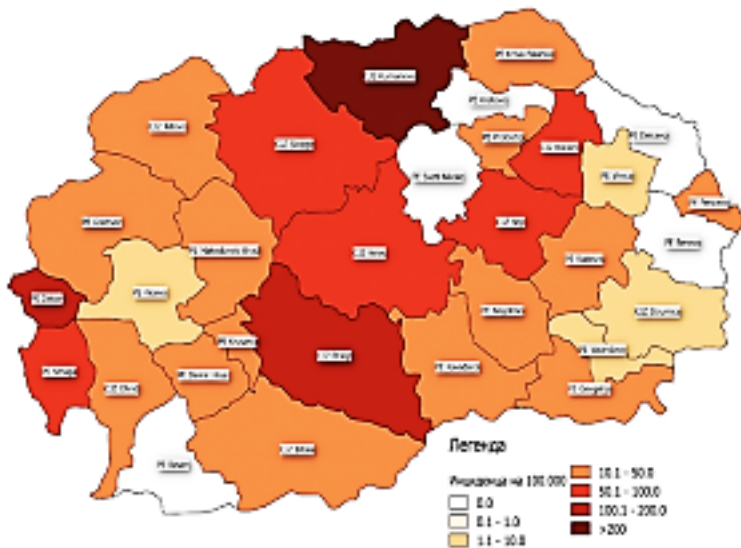


Figure 2. North Macedonia – COVID-19 incidence per 100,000 people, as of 26 April 2020



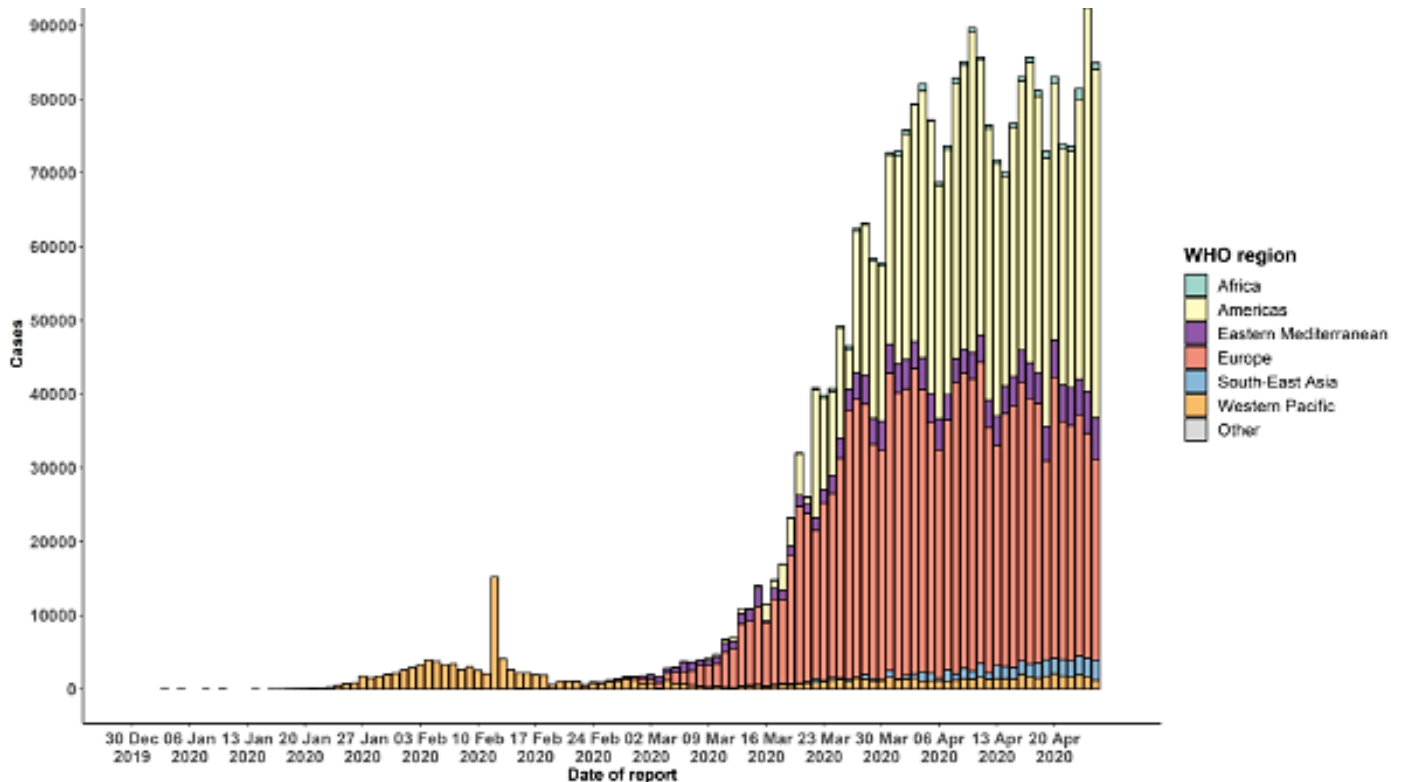
The highest cumulative incidence is in Kumanovo (260.0/100,000 people), followed by Debar (183.8/100,000 people) and Prilep (147.9/100,000 people). Five other cities have incidence above 50.0 cases per 100,000 people (Veles, Struga, Skopje, Shtip and Kochani).

Age of patients vary from 0-91 years (average age – 44.7 years old). However, the highest risk group is between 50-59 years old.

The disaggregated data of the confirmed COVID-19 cases through 25 April 2020 which includes the cases reported on 26 April 2020 by MoH could be accessed at the www.iph.mk

GLOBAL COVID19 SITUATION

Epidemic curve of confirmed COVID-19, by date of report and WHO region through 26 April 2020



CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19), WHO EUROPE REGION as of 26 April 2020 10:00 CET

- Almost **half of the global burden** of SARS-CoV2 cases are reported to date in WHO Europe Region.
- Globally, **USA carries the heaviest case load** (899 281), with **Spain and Italy** concluding top-3. In addition, five more countries from the European Region are in the top-10 worldwide (**Germany, United Kingdom, France, Turkey, and Russian Federation**).
- In Europe, **six countries reported 100 000 cases or more**, with Spain leading (219 764), followed by Italy (195 351), Germany (154 175), United Kingdom (148 381), France (122 875) and Turkey (107 773). **Besides, eleven more countries reported 10 000 cases or more**, listed in descending order (Russian Federation, Belgium, Netherlands, Switzerland, Portugal, Ireland, Sweden, Israel, Austria, Poland and Romania).
- Cumulatively, **two-thirds of the global burden of COVID-19 deaths** (193 710 deaths) have been reported in the European Region (122 218 deaths), with **Italy, France, Spain and United Kingdom** each reporting more than 10,000 deaths and **jointly accounting for 75% of all deaths in Europe**.
- Another six countries in the Region reported 1000 deaths or more – Belgium (6917), Germany (5640), Netherlands (4409), Turkey (2706), Sweden (2192), and Switzerland (1336).

WHAT IS NEW AT WHO? [New]

WHO DG Launched the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator, or the ACT Accelerator: A collaboration to accelerate the development, production and equitable distribution of vaccines, diagnostics, and therapeutics for COVID-19. Watch a recording of the live event [HERE](#). Additional information on the Accelerator, the **Commitment and the Call to Action** is available [HERE](#).

- **DG's Opening Remarks at the Launch** can be accessed in full [HERE](#). His key message - the ACT Accelerator brings together the combined power of several organizations to work with speed and scale with shared commitment is to ensure all people have access to all the tools to defeat COVID-19.

Emergency Public Health Measures: Consideration for Easing the lockdown

- **Strengthening and adjusting public health measures throughout the COVID-19 transition phases: policy considerations for the WHO European Region** and an **accompanying infographic**. This document provides key considerations for Member States, to support decision-making on the modulation of large-scale restrictive public health measures while at the same time strengthening core public health service capacities, personal protective measures and physical distancing. Modulation of restrictive measures, such as the easing of lockdowns and closures, must be undertaken cautiously and informed by the best available emerging evidence. Access the site [HERE](#)

COVID-19 – Cities and Urban Settings:

- A new **WHO webpage has been launched with specific resources and materials for cities and urban settings**. WHO European Healthy Cities Network and EURO partner organizations are also included as well as city case studies and experiences. Access the site [HERE](#).
Topics covered include: Urban preparedness; Risk communication, community engagement and social mobilization; Vulnerable and socially disadvantaged population groups; Mobility and transport; Physical activity; Mental health; Schools and education; Workplace; Water and sanitation; Food systems and nutrition; Preventing transmission; and Other resources

Infection Prevention and Control

- WHO has published an interim guidance '**COVID-19 and Food Safety: Guidance for competent authorities responsible for national food safety control systems**'. The guidance document provides advice and recommendations for national food safety authorities to optimize food control functions and prioritize critical services that preserve the integrity of food safety systems.
https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/331842/WHO-2019-nCoV-Food_Safety_authorities-2020.1-eng.pdf
- WHO has published an interim guidance '**Water, sanitation, hygiene, and waste management for the COVID-19 virus**'. This interim guidance is the second edition and supplements existing **infection prevention and control documents** by summarizing the latest evidence on COVID-19 in water supplies and sanitation. It highlights WHO guidance on water, sanitation, hand hygiene and health care waste which is relevant for viruses (including coronaviruses). https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/331846/WHO-2019-nCoV-IPC_WASH-2020.3-eng.pdf
- WHO's **Health Security Learning Platform** offers a number of online courses to help enhance knowledge on specific issues related to the implementation of the International Health Regulations (2005). A new course, "**Operational considerations for managing COVID-19 cases/outbreak in aviation**", is available.
<https://extranet.who.int/hslp/training/course/view.php?id=328>

Risk Communication

- University of Texas-Austin, in partnership with UNESCO and WHO and with financial support from the Knight Center for Journalism and UNDP, has launched a [massive open online course \(MOOC\) on "Journalism in a pandemic: Covering COVID-19 now and in the future."](https://journalismcourses.org/) The MOOC is available in English, French, Portuguese, and Spanish (Arabic and Chinese to come) and starts on 1 May 2020. It is an asynchronous course: participants can take the course at a time and place convenient to them. Use this link to access and join the course:
<https://journalismcourses.org/>

Vaccines and treatments:

- Researchers around the world are working hard on accelerating the development of vaccines and therapeutics for COVID-19. WHO has launched various [working groups](#) to accelerate various aspects of vaccine development. [A call was made by 130 scientists, funders and manufacturers](#) to help speed the availability of a vaccine against COVID-19.
 - Together with global health actors and partners, WHO launched the [Access To COVID-19 Tools \(ACT\) Accelerator](#), a global collaboration to accelerate the development, production and equitable access to new COVID-19 diagnostics, therapeutics and vaccines.
 - More than [80 vaccines are in development globally](#), including six in clinical evaluation, and several therapeutics are in clinical trials. WHO is committed to ensuring that as medicines and vaccines are developed, they are shared equitably with all countries and people.
 - WHO published [Target product profiles for COVID-19 vaccines](#) to describe the preferred and minimally acceptable profiles for human vaccines.

UPDATES FROM WHO OFFICE AT THE EUROPEAN UNION - COMPLETE REPORT 20-24 April 2020 ATTACHED

- **The EU join forces with global partners to kick-start the Coronavirus Global Response**

The European Commission announced it was joining forces with global partners to kick-start a pledging effort – the [Coronavirus Global Response](#) – starting on 4 May 2020. The WHO and global health organisations have launched a joint call for action to develop fast and equitable access to safe, quality, effective and affordable diagnostics, therapeutics and vaccines against coronavirus. The aim is to raise EUR 7.5 billion to ramp up work on prevention, diagnostics and treatment. The [Commission President](#) invited governments, business leaders, public figures philanthropists, artists and citizens to raise awareness about this global pledging effort.

- **COVID19 Health measures**

The EU Commissioner for Health and Food Safety laid out key requirements for a [coordinated approach for exit strategies](#) within the EU; The Commission published a new export authorisation [scheme for PPEs](#) reducing the list of products that require export authorisation, extends the geographical exception and requires Member States to swiftly grant authorisations for exports for humanitarian purposes; European Affairs Ministers underlined that the priority against COVID-19 is to help national health systems and urgently reach an agreement on the measures of support to the European economy; The EU has issued new guidance for a safe return to the workplace. The Commission has adopted a €3 billion macro-financial assistance package to ten enlargement and neighborhood partners to tackle the COVID-19 economic fallout. The proposal comes on top of the 'Team Europe' previous allocations.

- **West Balkans**

At a joint press conference following the EU Leaders' meeting, Council President announced that a videoconference will take place on 6 May 2020 with the Western Balkans countries to express the EU priorities for this region. See more [HERE](#)

WHAT WHO IS DOING FOR COVID19 IN NORTH MACEDONIA?

In line with the strategic Government's approach in fighting COVID19 whereby efforts are put on increasing testing, maintaining quality COVID19 care and essential care and protecting health care workers, WHO works closely with the government and national and global health partners to enable the response.

- **WHO donated PPE equipment to two specialized university clinics in Skopje.** See link [HERE](#)
- **WHO is supporting the country in assessing the situation in view of eventual relaxation of restrictive public health measures.** WHO guidance is available on "[Considerations in adjusting public health and social measures in the context of COVID-19](#)" - [Access the publication](#) . This document provides guiding principles for adapting measures (loosening/ tightening). This will be followed by:
 - Indicators (criteria) for when measures can be adapted
 - Practical advice on how to adapt measures in key settings such as schools, workplaces etc.WHO emphasizes that there should be gradual alleviation, close monitoring and constant calibration of measures. **As measures are loosened, surveillance should be tightened. Different surveillance approaches (identification, confirmation, isolation, and contact identification and quarantine, event-based surveillance, sentinel ILI/SARI surveillance etc.) should be applied.**
- WHO supports the country to raise awareness about maintaining essential health services and importance of immunization in preventing diseases and protecting life at the time of COVID19. Activities are held during the European Immunization Week 2020, from 20-26 April 2020. Click here : [European Immunization Week](#) .
- WHO is supporting North Macedonia for **Sero-epidemiological studies** investigating the extent of infection in the general population, as determined by seropositivity. A standardized WHO master protocol is available that is being now tailored to country needs in terms of public health, laboratory and clinical systems, capacity, availability of resources and cultural appropriateness. Using this standardized protocol allows for comparability of data across different countries and helps to determine important epidemiological parameters (e.g. the proportion of the population that remains susceptible to infection, proportion of asymptomatic infections etc.) which inform public health action. The protocol can be accessed here: <https://www.who.int/publications-detail/population-based-age-stratified-seroepidemiological-investigation-protocol-for-covid-19-virus-infection>
- WHO **donated 5000 COVID tests** to the Virology Lab of the Institute of Public Health on 8 April 2020.
- With WHO/USAID support, the **Epidemiological emergency operations venue at MOH** is now equipped and functional in its temporary premises, refurbished and with IT equipment.
- **WHO held a training meeting on Solidarity trial** to all those involved in the scheme from COVID19 treating hospitals.
- A Ceremony for **launching of the USAID / WHO joint support** to the country to help contain and mitigate the COVID19 virus spread <https://un.mk/ceremony-for-launching-of-the-usaid-who-support-to-the-country-to-help-mitigate-the-spread-of-covid19/> was organized on 7 April 2020. This act of solidarity is directed mainly to support the health staff at the frontline of this fight against the virus: to ensure they have the means and the skills to protect themselves and

WHO action in COVID-19 outbreak in North Macedonia aims at limiting the virus spread, protecting health and the health workers at the frontline, preserving the health care system capacity and its sustainability to respond and provide essential services to the population.

WHO is the lead UN agency for Health and main technical and health policy advisor to the government on COVID-19 containment and mitigation.

WHO works in coordination closely with other UN agencies as per the UN reform.

Western Balkan including North Macedonia is one of the priority countries for the WHO European Region.

Technical support, guidance and assistance are provided through the WHO Country Office from all levels of the Organization.

There is abundance of technical guidance WHO has developed in all areas of work: we are supporting the country to develop technical plans and implement priority interventions in the framework of a strong nation-wide strategic response.

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

- control the infection all health care settings not only in treatment centers. A large part of the grant will also help the Institute of Public Health to continue its remarkable work in tracing and testing and early identification of the cases.
- WHO also held on Friday 3 April 2020, a **Zoom training session in Macedonian language** open for **all Health Care workers dealing with COVID19** for the proper practices in Infection control and prevention of virus transmission in hospitals and clinical management of severe respiratory cases.
 - WHO developed a **risk assessment tool to be used by health care facilities with COVID-19 patients**. The tool is to be completed for all health workers who have been exposed to a confirmed COVID-19 patient in a health care facility. The tool will help determine the risk of COVID-19 virus infection of all HCWs who have been exposed to a COVID-19 patient and then provides recommendations for appropriate management of these HCWs, according to their infection risk.
 - WHO continuing the roll out of the **Partners Platform for the Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan (SPRP)**: Onboarding has taken place supporting North Macedonia to link with international support; the Country Preparedness and Response Plan has been uploaded for increasing capacity for 2000 COVID19 cases. The country is active on the platform <https://covid-19-response.org>
 - SPRP includes health systems continuity, the Platform will have a **9th Pillar** for assessment of priority actions to maintain essential health services.
 - **COVID-19 Health System Response Monitor (HSRM)** has been formally launched by WHO EURO and the European Observatory for Health systems. North Macedonia is participating. <https://www.covid19healthsystem.org/mainpage.aspx>

WHO continues to be actively engaged in:

- In risk communication targeted messages and developed many messages and infographics in national languages for display at MOH media channels and other. *WHO* [Facebook/Twitter](#) ; *MoH* [Facebook/Twitter](#); [WHO Europe website for COVID-19](#)
- Providing technical advice and support to many national and international partners for stepping up everyone's engagement in halting the virus spread and its impact on North Macedonia.
- Ensuring lab and testing tools are available for COVID19 related testing kits and PPE.
- Assisting the MOH in gaps and needs assessment and bridging those gaps for better health system coping and response.
- Establishing bilateral partnerships, resource mobilization, and joint plans to address gaps and needs of the MOH.
- Sustaining professional and technical knowledge of all health care workers in the country through the online WHO training course for COVID-19 for health care and infection control and protection (IPC) is now available in Macedonian Language on the WHO learning platform for Health workers. <https://openwho.org/>
- Generating Robust data needed to show which treatments are the most effective, by North Macedonia joining the WHO SOLIDARITY Trial which is a large, international therapeutic study that will allow also receiving free of charge medicines for COVID19 and latest evidence-based indications for changing treatment protocols when needed to reduce mortality, length of stay under mechanical respiration and reducing complications.
- Tracking the epidemiological spread of the virus, supports early warning system and keep communities and frontline responders informed with the latest technical guidance.
- Contributing to the UN in the country to make sure that timely procurement takes place and supporting the newly set UN coordination mechanism for the COVID19. [1UN MK@facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com/1UNMK)

NORTH MACEDONIA STRATEGIC RESPONSE AND ACTION

North Macedonia mobilized an all-of-government action to fight this new coronavirus, including scaling up emergency response mechanisms in all sectors. Actions and readjustments of measures are continuous and monitoring of the situation is ongoing on daily basis. The country is in declared national emergency Announced by the President of the Republic on 18 March 2020 and later renewed for another month.

On the health front, the country is working hard on now to ensure its COVID19 hospitalization surge capacity with the necessary personnel are in place with the influx of additional cases in recent days.

The Ministry of Health increased public health measures, such as rapid identification, diagnosis and management of the cases, identification and follow up of the contacts, infection prevention and control in health care settings, implementation of health measures for travelers, awareness-raising in the population and risk communication and counter misinformation as well as minimizing social and economic impact through multisectoral partnerships.

- **The number of recovered COVID-19 patients in the country has reached 500.** This is attributed by the Minsiter of Health to the health workers, patients and their families. MOH reminded the need of the support of all citizens to continue fighting the coronavirus successfully by: remaining vigilant, staying home, maintaining physical distance from others and wearing protective equipment.
- Commission for Infectious Diseases proposed to the Government today to begin to implement sanctions for failing to abide by the **mandatory protective equipment measures in public**. Officials have put forward this proposal after an abundance of photographic evidence showing people not abiding to the mandatory protective equipment measure surfaced on social media.
- About **1500 taxpayers decided to donate the tax rebate** that is due to be paid out in early May back to the budget. Several months ago, the Government introduced the rebate program that gives back 5% of the value added tax that is paid on all purchases. Hundreds of thousands of taxpayers are taking part in the MyVAT rebate program. North Macedonia is starting at a staggering budget deficit in 2020, expected to reach 700 million to 1.3 billion euro of the projected revenue that were projected at a little under 4 billion.
- The government has **annulled the procurement for 31 mechanical ventilators**, after the contracted companies notified that they cannot deliver the ventilators in the period of time required. The **contract is being rescinded** and a new attempt at procurement will be made. North Macedonia tried to purchase the respirators from Brazil, Turkey and Italy but all those attempts failed, given the global situation with respirators available and the EU exports ban.
- The **Humanitarian Relief Foundation** distributed food and hygiene packages to 300 families (elderly, ill, people with disabilities and families in need) in North Macedonia in Skopje, Veles and Vrapcishte.
- 71 people were caught breaking the curfew in the last 24 hours – 55 were detained and appropriate measures will be taken for the rest of them and no one has been caught ignoring the home-isolation orders during police controls.
- The Government decided to extend the validity of the already issued permits for movement of the employees – the employers will no longer need to issue new permits with each change in the duration of the curfew.
- Skopje-based Association for **Emancipation, Solidarity and Equality of Women – ESE** wrote to the government this month called for greater protection for victims of domestic violence, including a “crisis fund” to provide financial support.
- Six artists contributed on Sunday to live concerts in different locations around the city of Skopje, as part of the city’s “Culture in the Time of Corona” program: All performances are streamed live via the City of Skopje’s Facebook accessed [HERE](#) and it’s Youtube Channel accessed [HERE](#) . A number of exhibits, video-art presentations, DJ and classical music performances, as well as plays will take place in the following month as part of the “Culture in the Time of Corona” program, which aims to support unemployed artists, who will be paid a symbolic contribution.

UN, DONATIONS AND PARTNER COORDINATION- COVID-19

To provide a comprehensive and coordinated approach in identifying and repurposing the available bilateral assistance to the COVID-19 response, all public administration bodies receiving bilateral donor assistance will report promptly to the Secretariat for European Affairs (SEA) the amount of funds available for each project. The SEA will then submit a formal request to the bilateral donors for the reuse of funds in accordance with the identified priority needs for COVID19.

- **Hungary** supported North Macedonia by organizing the transport of the consigned protective masks and other supplies that arrived in Budapest from China. The consignment will be transported to **North Macedonia on road today.**
- **Google** is supporting the Government of North Macedonia in putting out information websites to ensure the public is properly informed in countering disinformation.
- **EU Delegation** reminded that the assistance EU provides to North Macedonia 66 million euros as well as the newest initiative for additional 160 million euros for macro-financial assistance for the state budget in form of loans so that Macedonia can deal with the economic consequences of the COVID-19 epidemic.
- **EU Ambassador** to Macedonia Samuel Zbogor informed via Twitter that North Macedonia will receive aid by the Mechanism for Civil protection of the European Union, which will include 5 energy generators, 25 tents, 200 mattresses and 1,000 blankets. In meantime, the European Commission (EC) has suggested establishment of a fund of 3 billion euros for the Western Balkan countries and several other countries as assistance to tackle the pandemic. With this decision, EC will provide 160 million euros in aid for Macedonia.



IMF and EC announced on 22 April adoption of three billion euro macro-financial assistance package to 10 enlargement and neighborhood partners to help them limit the economic fallout of the coronavirus pandemic. The macro-financial assistance funds will be made available for 12 months in the form of loans on highly favorable terms to help these countries cover their immediate, urgent financing needs such as enhancing macroeconomic stability and creating space to allow resources to be allocated towards protecting citizens and mitigating the coronavirus pandemic negative socio-economic consequences.

- A **Chinese donation** consisting of 5 016 COVID-19 tests, 5 000 protective suits, 30 000 medical masks, 20 000 pairs of gloves, 10 000 pieces of shoe protection in the amount of 400 000 dollars arrived in Skopje on 19 April 2020 and 30 000 eur financial support to MoH
- **Bulgaria donated** 100 protective suits and masks to the Ministry of Defense as a sign of solidarity in the fight against coronavirus and additionally this week is expected to arrive:
 - 500 suits for multiple use and 500 protective glasses and face shields
 - 2.000 masks, 200 glasses and 200 protection suits for the Delcevo and Strumica hospitals
- **US**
 - 1,1 million dollars for soft measures to be implemented by WHO and UNICEF including capacity building for addressing the pandemic. Also the US delivered packages for the most vulnerable groups via Red Cross – 2,350

packages of hygiene products for families of social risks for protection from the spreading of the coronavirus. Of these, 1,000 packages will be donated to families in Suto Orizari, Skopje, 500 in Trizla, Prilep, 500 in Bajro, Bitola, 250 in Keramidnica, Gostivar and 100 in Crnik, Delcevo.

- 600.000 dollars through WHO – preparation of laboratory systems for large-scale testing of COVID-19; enhance case-finding and event-based surveillance for COVID-19, prevent and control infections in health-care facilities; help implement emergency plans to screen people arriving at countries' various points of entry, such as airports and land-border crossings; strengthen clinical care while minimizing the risk of onwards transmission to others and further support communication mechanisms to provide the public with reliable, verifiable information to keep everyone informed about how to protect themselves and each other
 - 30,000 dollars from the Embassy contingencies for supply of equipment for the Public Health Institute.
 - U.S. companies like Coca Cola, Microsoft and other are also offering assistance to North Macedonia in the COVID-19 crisis management, as announced by Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Western Balkans, Matthew Palmer.
- **Netherlands** – ongoing supply of two PCRs and 4.000 tests for the Public Health Institute and Veterinary Institute
 - **Czech Republic** donation of 1 million masks arrived Skopje by a military plane from Prague.
 - **Japan** - consultations are **ongoing for 4 projects applications submitted on 2019** from 4 different health institutions as a request for supply of equipment in total amount of 223.486 EUR, to be financed through GGP grants.
 - **Slovenia** donation of protection equipment in the amount of 110.000 EUR via the EU Civil Protection mechanism distributed to the Kumanovo Hospital including 100,000 surgical masks and 100,000 protective masks.
 - **Norway** has donated medical supplies to North Macedonia (worth 200 000 Euro) which will be shipped from the NATO Support and Procurement Agency (NSPA). North Macedonia is currently using a field hospital donated by Norway, allowing it to double the capacity at the Infectious Disease Clinic and the delivery of 20 respirators is expected.
 - **Switzerland** supported the temporary prefabricated modular units for emergency hospital and donated non-medical equipment amounting to a total of 245,000 Euro
 - Sixteen applications have been picked out of more than 500 sent for the **CREATON public** call to tackle COVID-19 challenges, issued by the Fund for Innovations and Technology Development. The public call was supported by the Embassy of Switzerland to North Macedonia, USAID, UNDP, UNICEF, and the Chamber of Commerce for Information and Communication Technologies – MASIT. Nearly 158 applications were shortlisted. Of those that made the cut, there are solutions involving medicine, digital tools as support to micro, small and medium-sized enterprises to weather the crisis, education digital tools, culture and leisure tools. The total budget is 10 million denars and each proposal can receive up to EUR 10,000 in local currency. The call is the first in a series of the Fund's initiatives to tackle with the COVID-19 consequences.
 - The **Hungarian government** donated 100,000 protective masks and 5,000 protective suits to the general hospital 8th September
 - **Turkey** delivered a donation to North Macedonia to deal with the coronavirus on 8 April 2020. The Turkish donation consists of 50,000 protective medical masks, 1,000 protective suits, 1,000 diagnostic tests and other medical supplies.
 - **Germany** offered support to the Ministry of Health with an amount of USD 2 million in PPE and provided equipment in amount of 40,000 EUR for the Clinic of infectious deceases, KARIL and Neurosurgery Clinic
 - **British Embassy** Donated Equipment to Defence Ministry: The Embassy of the United Kingdom to Macedonia handed over to the Defence Ministry a donation consisting of protective equipment for better handling of the coronavirus situation in the amount of 2.500 pounds
 - **EU support**
 - **EUR 4 million** of urgent assistance implemented via UNOPS
 - **EUR 50 million Performance Award**, it will officially be reallocated for socio-economic recovery. Currently under discussion with DEU in terms of pre-conditions and criteria for the final beneficiaries. Still, the Government has decided to use 40ME to inject support in three areas: 1. part of the funds to be allocated as revolving funds for

supporting micro and small enterprises for fast restructuring to enable income generation and saving jobs, esp. in export oriented companies, but also the agricultural and textile sector; 2. to support the informal economy especially persons who will be laid off due to the crisis and provide measures for their subsequent entry in the labor market; 3. to extend the ongoing active labor measures. The proposed projects in all three areas have to ensure sustainable growth and value-added impact. Other 10ME will be divided, 5 ME will be reallocated to EUIF and 5 ME will be programmed from MoH as recovery of this sector after COVID crisis.

- **EUR 9 million** for direct support of SMEs via grant scheme
- **EUR 3 million** for sector budget support for Youth and Employment
- Requested support via **RescEU** for procurement of emergency medical supplies and equipment under EU CPM.
- North Macedonia has joined the **Joint Procurement Agreement (JPA)** to procure medical countermeasures
- Preparatory activities for use of **European Solidarity Fund**
- **WHO** medical support consisting of PPE, tests and laboratory kits for IPH in the amount of 96 023 USD and non-medical support consisting of COVID-19 related videos in Macedonian and Albanian language, development of training courses in MKD language for health workers, design and printing of promotional materials, office and IT equipment of IPH in the amount of 26 378 USD.
- **World Bank** - Emergency COVID-19 Project prepared by WB Country Team in cooperation with the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Labor and Social Policy and the Ministry of Health to curb the spread of COVID-19 pandemic and strengthen the health system to detect and treat cases, and mitigate some of the social consequences of the pandemic. Estimated value 100 Million USD, pending approval from Board of Directors.
- **IMF** - Emergency financing under the Rapid Financing Instrument. Secured. Budget: 175,2 Million USD
- **OSCE** protection equipment for the police in amount of 12.500 dollars, protection equipment for the Clinic of Infective diseases in the amount of 30.000 dollars, terrain vehicle for the Red cross families in Macedonia that are socially and economically hit by the health crisis, announced the **Foundation Open Society – Macedonia** which donated the funds.
- **Macedonian Red Cross** supports the elderly and the disabled in shopping and basic needs for hygiene, protection and their livelihood.
- **The Steiermärkische Sparkasse Group**, through the two local banks Ohridska Banka and Sparkasse Bank Macedonia, jointly donated funds to support various segments of the health system in the total amount of 110,000 Euros. Ohridska Banka expressed their solidarity with the help of 1,500 socially disadvantaged families in cooperation with the Red Cross of the City of Skopje. For the needs of the University Clinic for Infectious and Febrile Diseases in Skopje, they donated 54,000 Euros for the purchase of protective masks and suits, and for the maintenance and repair of existing medical equipment - two mobile X-ray machines and the purchase of a vertical laminar chamber. As part of this donation, the Group has allocated funds to support the two general hospitals in Kumanovo and Ohrid, and provided fuel for 32 vehicles available for emergency medical care
- Disabled and elderly persons will receive aid during the coronavirus crisis. This activity is accomplished with the **UNDP** and in cooperation with the **Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation**.
- Government authorized the Minister of Health Venko Filipce to sign the Donation Agreement between the **Information Technology Company Nextsen DOO** as a Donor and the Ministry of Health as a recipient of the donation.
- **MOH Solidarity fund is established:** Companies, individuals, organizations, institutions, embassies donated 59.3 million denars on the account of the Ministry of Health including donations of medical devices, protective equipment and other materials.

GAPS/NEEDS AND CHALLENGES

➤ **Technical needs at the health front:**

- Risk assessment for easing the curfews.
- Assess the socioeconomic impact on Health system during the crisis and after the crisis
- Determine the level of immunity to the virus in the population

- Review of the testing algorithms in consideration of the strategy to increase testing.
 - Increase use of eHealth and telemedicine to improve and facilitate population preventive interventions
 - Strengthen epidemiological capacity
 - Enhance planning capacity for transition strategy after lockdown.
- **Critical needs:**
- Laboratory Kits and reagents; Personal Protective Equipment (PPE); Mechanical Ventilators/Respirators (respirators from operating rooms are not adapted to need of respiratory diseases and cannot be used for the ICU) ;
 - intensifying risk communication;
 - socioeconomic relief for vulnerable groups and employment protection.
 - Maintaining Essential health and social services
 - Protecting health care workers whether those working in the COVID-19 designated facilities or elsewhere countrywide because of the community transmission.
 - Mental Health Support to health workers and the public especially the vulnerable ones.
- **Challenges:**
- Procurement : Access to local or international supplies and mainly respirators for the critical needs identified because of international shortages.
 - Shortage in health workforce as the situation progresses
 - Ensuring sustainability of the health facilities and health care during and after the crisis.
 - Outreach and social support to the vulnerable
 - Ensuring continuity of treatment and access to regular health care for all citizens including the vulnerable groups with other diseases and pathologies.
 - Fighting Isolation and scaling up community engagement in the regions
 - Compliance of the citizens to instructions of the government and self-isolation

