

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19)

North Macedonia Flash Update – 42

Data as reported by national authorities by 23:00 CET, 12 May 2020

In the last 24 hours

- **Tests performed:** 189 SARS-CoV-2 tests and 5.3% tested positive
- **New cases:** 10 new cases were reported
- **Recovered:** 5 COVID-19 patients
- **Fatalities:** 1 new COVID-19 death

Cumulative registered COVID-19 as of 12 May – 1674 (Incidence=80.9/100.000) – [See Daily Curve](#)

- **Total number of health workers infected:** **243 (14.5%)**
- **Tests performed:** 19 430 SARS-CoV-2 tests.
- **Patients recovered:** **1205 COVID-19 patients recovered** so far.
- **Fatalities:** 92 COVID-19 fatalities (CFR 5.5%) are registered.
- **Geographic spread and deaths:** COVID-19 cases are registered in 30 cities. Majority of all cases 83% are from five cities Skopje (569), Kumanovo (410), Prilep (179), Tetovo (117) and Veles (108). **68% of all deaths are registered in Kumanovo, Skopje, Struga and Prilep.** 12 cities have no longer active cases: Debar, Kichevo, Ohrid, Makedonski Brod, Krushevo, Demir Hisar, Gevgelija, Strumica, Radovish, Vinica, Probiship and Delchevo.
- **Gender distribution:** More women are infected with coronavirus than men (875 and 799 respectively). However, almost 67% of all deaths are men.
- **Comorbidity:** 74% of death cases
- **Age distribution:** >60-year: 21.7% of all confirmed COVID-19 cases; >60-year: 65% of all deaths.; 0-9-year: 62 confirmed COVID-19 cases; 10-19-year: 73 confirmed COVID-19 cases.

- **Today 13 May – Co-hosted with UNICEF: public health and social measures in schools.** Register in advance for this webinar [Here](#).

- **Thank you to our nurses and midwives!** – we celebrated on 12 May the **International Nurses Day**. It goes without saying that, in the times of COVID-19, this is even more relevant, as nurses, midwives and all health workers are now on the frontline of our battle against the virus. Minister of Health thanked them for their dedication and their hard work and recognized all those who stand in the front lines of COVID-19. #InternationalNursesDay. See photos [HERE](#) and at the end of this document.

- **Subject in Focus:** Understanding the Ministry of Health transition strategy , [See here later in the text](#)

- **North Macedonia has achieved full approval of the solidarity trial.**

SURVEILLANCE

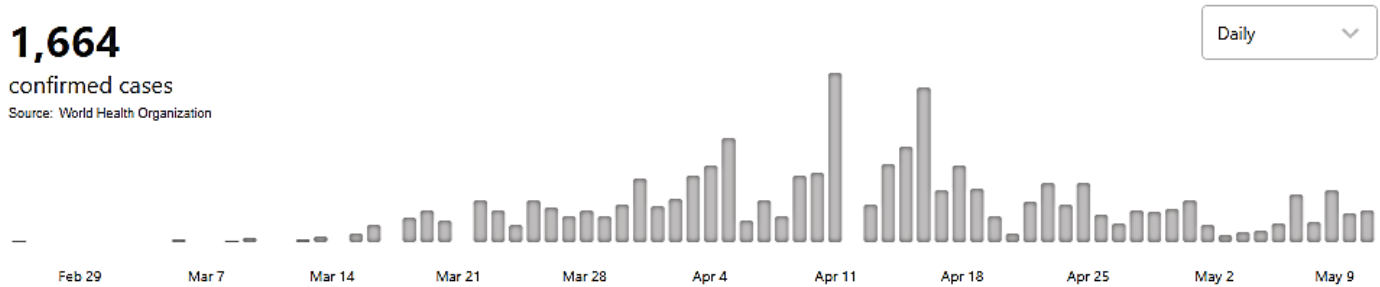
Figure 1. North Macedonia – Daily confirmed and deaths COVID-19 cases (n=1664) and deaths (n=91) by 12 May 2020

Confirmed Cases Over Time

1,664

confirmed cases

Source: World Health Organization



Deaths Over Time

91

deaths

Source: World Health Organization

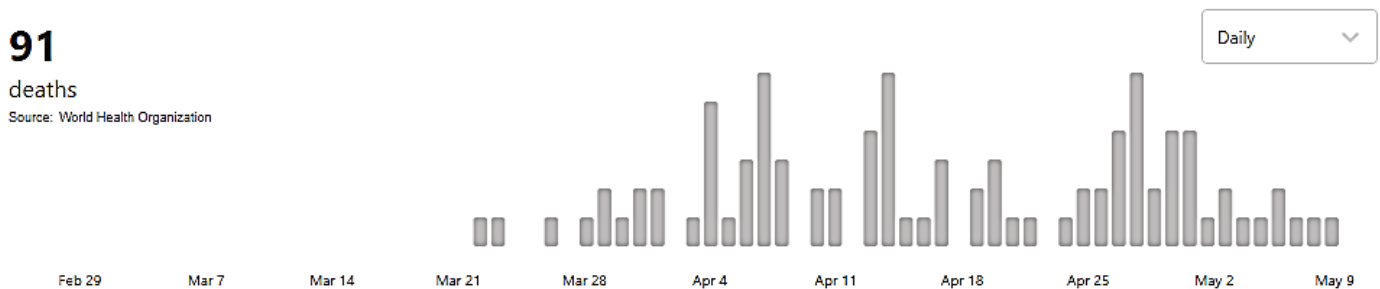
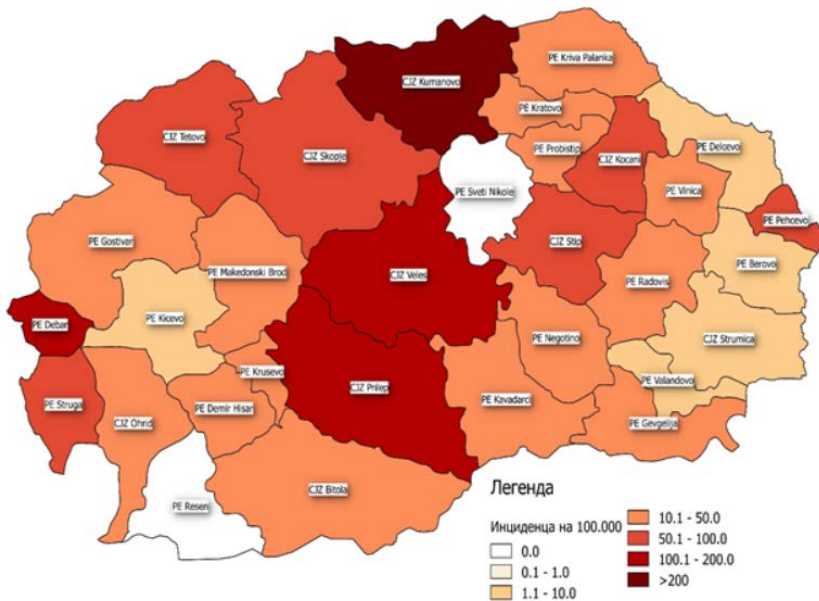


Figure 2. North Macedonia – COVID-19 incidence per 100,000 people, as of 12 May 2020



The highest cumulative incidence is in Kumanovo (287.3/100,000 people), followed by Prilep (187.8/100,000 people), Debar (183.8/100,000 people) and Veles (163.0/100,000 people). Six other cities have incidence above 50.0 cases per 100,000 people (Struga, Skopje, Shtip, Kochani, Tetovo and Pehchevo).

Age of patients vary from 0-94 years (average age – 45 years old). However, the highest risk group is between 50-59 years old.

The disaggregated data of the confirmed COVID-19 cases through 11 May 2020 which includes the cases reported on 12 May 2020 by MoH could be accessed at the www.iph.mk

Figure. 3 North Macedonia – COVID-19 statistics as of 12 May (n=1674)

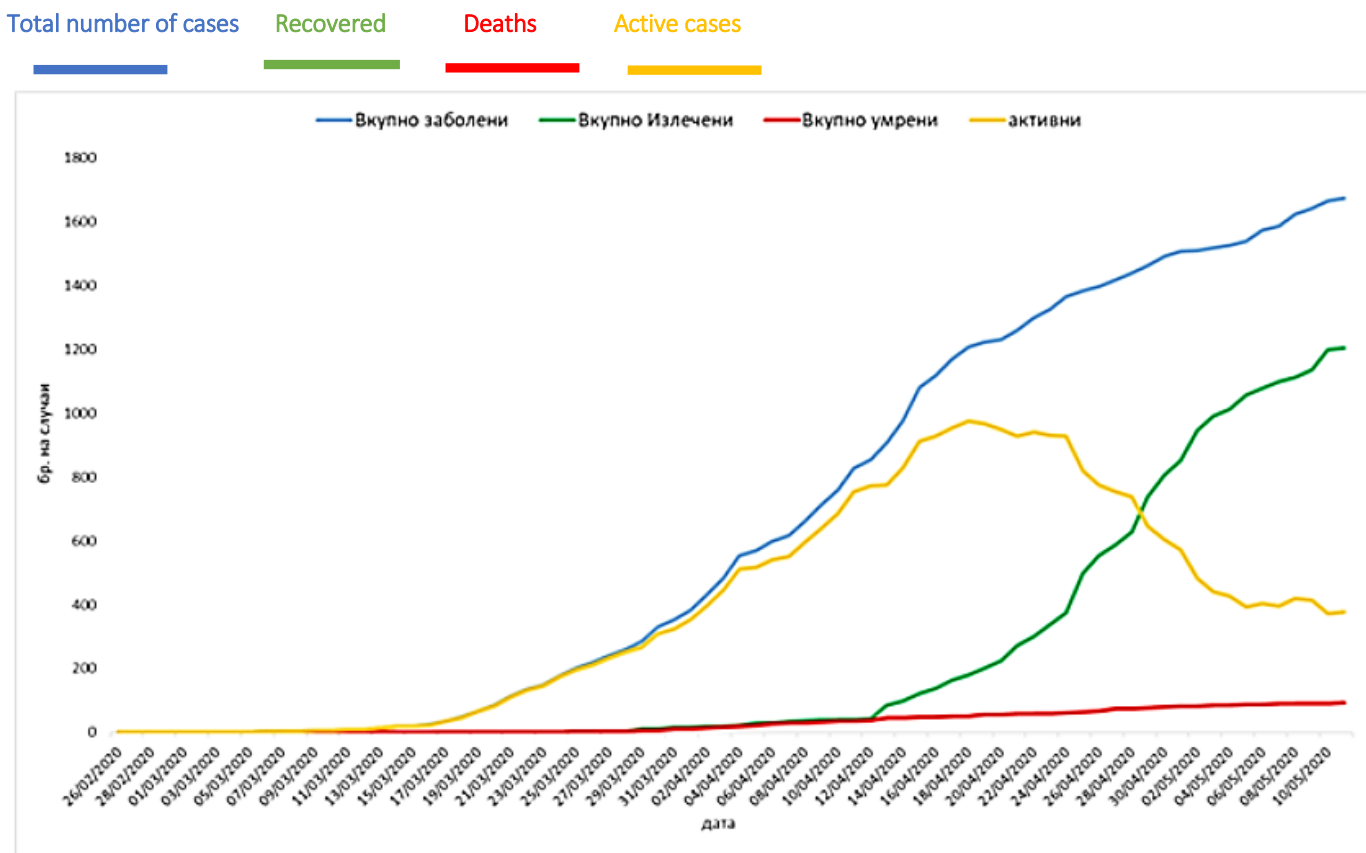


Figure 4 . Number of tested and confirmed cases per day in North Macedonia

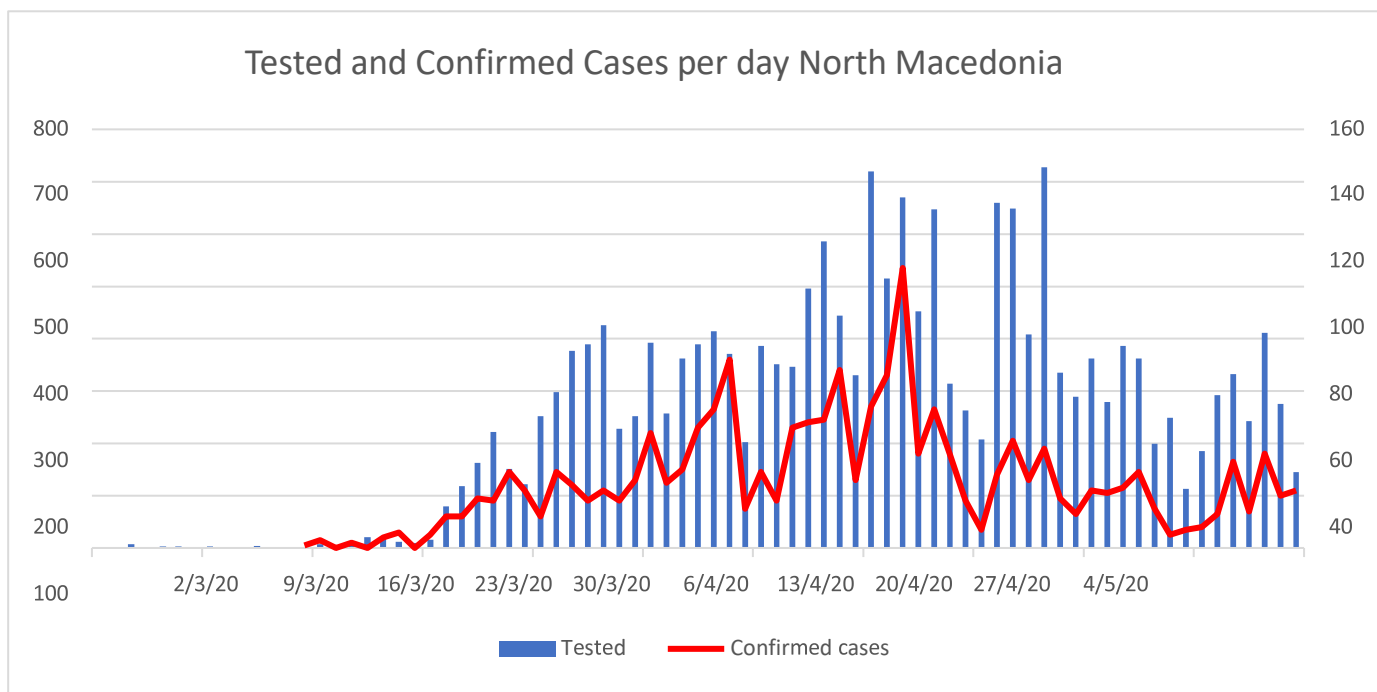
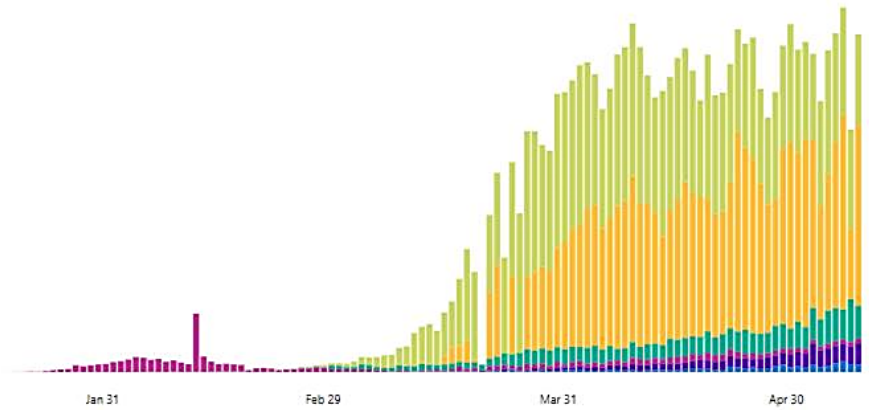
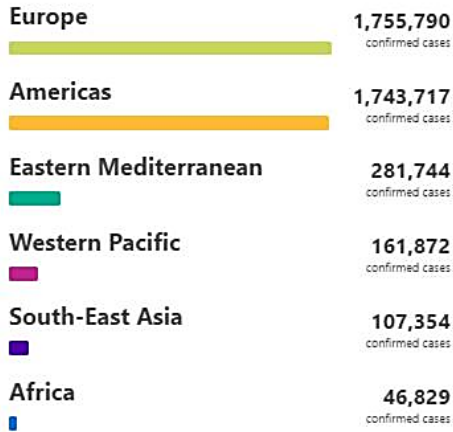


Figure 5: Comparison Epi curve of confirmed COVID-19, by date of report and WHO region through 12 May 2020

Case Comparison

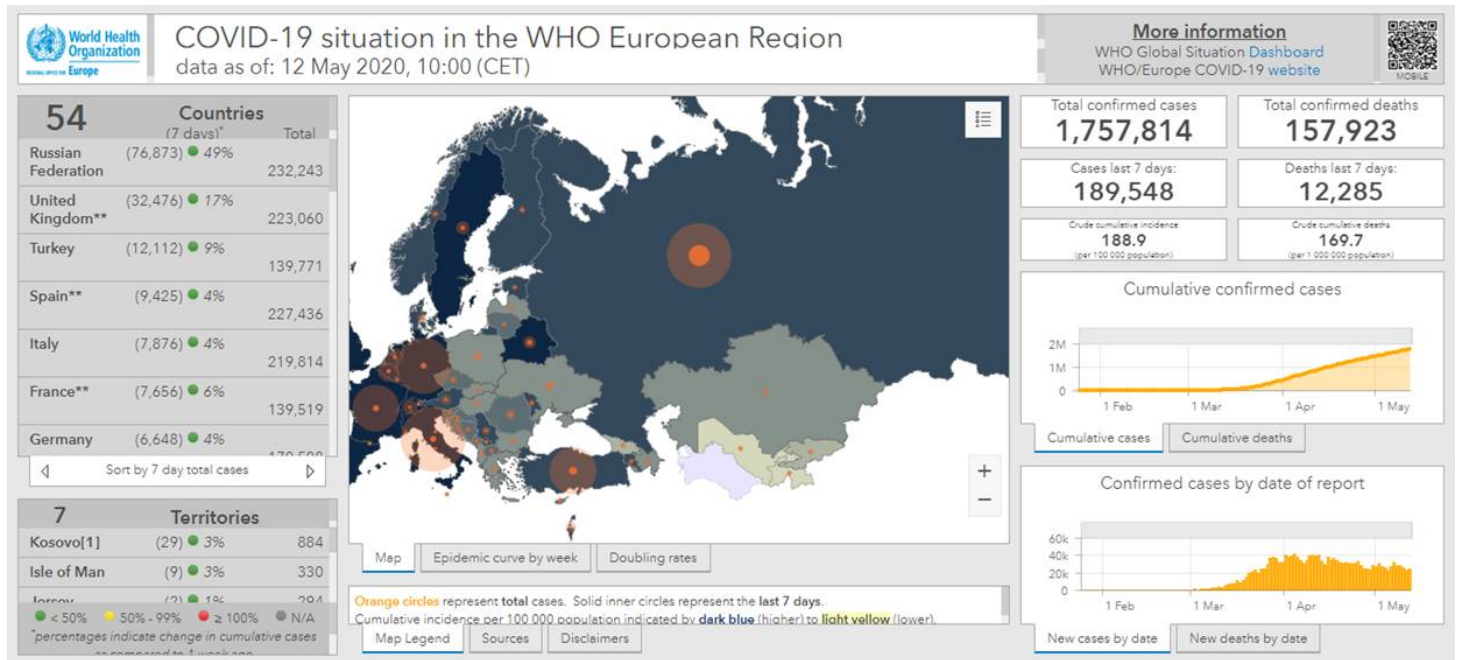
WHO Regions



Source: World Health Organization

SITUATION IN NUMBERS (BY WHO REGION) and TOTAL (NEW CASES IN LAST 24 HOURS)

 Globally	 4 088 848 cases (82 591)	 283 153 deaths (4 261)
 Africa	46 829 cases (2 296)	1 449 deaths (34)
 Americas	1 743 717 cases (41 266)	104 549 deaths (2 675)
 Eastern Mediterranean	274 027 cases (8 863)	9 138 deaths (125)
 Europe	1 755 790 cases (24 184)	157 880 deaths (1 277)
 South-East Asia	105 901 cases (5 020)	3 597 deaths (116)
 Western Pacific	161 872 cases (962)	6 527 deaths (34)



- While the **WHO European Region continues to account for over 40%** of the global burden of COVID-19 cases, an increasing number of confirmed cases in the Americas has resulted in PAHO surpassing EURO as the Region with the most confirmed cases (1,743,717).
- Globally, **USA carries the heaviest case load with 1 298 287 million cases**. In Europe, **the Russian Federation (232 243 cases)** surpassed Spain (227 436 cases) as the country with highest number of COVID-19 cases to date. In addition, five more countries from the European Region are in the **top-10 worldwide (United Kingdom, Italy, Germany, Turkey and France)**. These countries reported over 100 000 cases.
- Besides, **fourteen more countries reported 10 000 cases or more**, listed in descending order (Belgium, Netherlands, Switzerland, Portugal, Sweden, Belarus, Ireland, Israel, Poland, Ukraine, Austria, Romania, Denmark and Serbia).
- Cumulatively, **56% of the global burden of COVID-19 deaths (283 153 deaths) have been reported in the European Region (157 880 deaths)**, with United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, and France each reporting more than 20 000 deaths and jointly accounting for 74% of all deaths in Europe.
- Another **nine countries in the Region reported 1000 deaths or more** – Belgium (8707), Germany (7533) Netherlands (5456), Turkey (3841), Sweden (3256) Russian Federation (2116), Switzerland (1542), Ireland (1467), and Portugal (1144).
- The situation in countries with the highest cumulative case count in Western Europe seems to be stabilizing (e.g., Germany, Italy and Spain) with a consistent decline in 7-day cumulative incidence, while a continuing growth in case numbers is still observed in several countries (e.g., Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan).
- An ECDC report on COVID-19 infections among healthcare workers showed that of data available, a total of 124,796 reported cases had known healthcare worker (HCW) status. The overall percentage of HCW infections among COVID-19 cases was 23.2% with the case-fatality rate among HCW 0.3%.**
 - 54% of HCW cases had been in close contact with a case in a health care setting, i.e. their workplace.
 - 77% of COVID-19 cases among HCW were female and the highest proportion of cases among HCW was in those aged 50-59 year.
 - The Netherlands (58.7%), Sweden (51%) and Poland (31%) reported the highest number of HCW infections.

Socio/Political/Economic Update as of 12 May 2020

- Italy plans to reopen bars, restaurants, hairdressers, and beauty salons as of 18 May.
- Denmark announces a substantial expansion in testing strategy as part of the second phase of the transition.
- A total of 10 countries from the Region have **achieved full approval for the Solidarity trial**, including: Albania, Finland, Germany, Israel, Italy, **North Macedonia**, Norway, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland.
- A World Tourism Organization report shows that COVID-19 has caused a 22% fall in global international tourism during the first quarter of 2020 with Europe experiencing a 19% decrease compared to 2019. Globally the crisis threatens the livelihood of 120million people who rely on tourism for work – and millions more indirectly.

[New] WHAT IS NEW?

WHO Director-General's remarks on WHO's inaugural **"Health for All Film Festival"**

<https://www.who.int/dg/speeches/detail/who-director-general-s-remarks-on-film-festival>

Audio file of the awards ceremony: <https://who.canto.global/b/TILKH>

Films can be watched on WHO's YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL9S6xGsoqIBXoYkxWA-SZ96Y96pY_HdKz

- **PRIZE to short films about noncommunicable diseases:** "Living without limits", a film about living with diabetes Type 1 in Mexico, made by BBC StoryWorks for the Helmsley Charitable Trust.
- **STUDENT PRIZE out of the three categories:** "Antibiotic resistance" by Nitai Steinberg, a Biologist from Israel, who was a student when he made the film and now a graduate of Biomedical Communications at University of Toronto, Canada.
- **GRAND PRIX for nurses and midwives category:** "War & Grace" by Sonia Lowman from International Medical Corps, an NGO based in USA and UK.
- **GRAND PRIX for video reports category:** "A doctor's dream" produced by DNDi, The Drugs for the Neglected Diseases initiative with Scholars and Gentlemen, a production company from South Africa.
- **GRAND PRIX for animation films category:** "Limbo" by Saw Eh Doh Poe, Nann Win May Aye and Nwaye Zar Che Soe, from Myanmar who are students from Yangon Film School based in Germany and Myanmar.

Clinical management

- As part of **International Nurses' Day**, WHO/Europe has published a set of resources to support countries to invest in and strengthen their primary health-care nursing workforce:
 - Recent guidance has been published, **Competencies for nurses working in primary health care** (available [Here](#) and in [RUSSIAN](#)) provides guidance and inspiration for policy-makers, instructors, managers and clinicians to develop needed competencies in primary health care for nurses.
 - A **State of the world's nursing 2020** report (available [Here](#)) recommends the expansion of effective nurse-led models of care to improve access to primary health care, and explains why investing in strengthening nurses' competencies is essential.
 - **Case studies:** sharing good examples (available [Here](#))

Infection Prevention and Control

- **IPC Global Webinar Series: Triage of COVID-19 Patients: Operational Considerations and Practical Examples** Thursday 14 May 2020 at 2:00 pm CEST | 3:00 pm EEST
 - Audience: IPC professionals, Ministry of Health staff, partner organizations, and any interested healthcare workers are encouraged to participate. Simultaneous translation will be available in Spanish, French, Russian and Portuguese.
 - Please register [Here](#) and share within you networks.
- New **OpenWHO** online training about **Standard precautions: Waste management** (available [Here](#))

Health Systems

- An article on **The cost of inaction: COVID-19-related service disruptions could cause hundreds of thousands of extra deaths from HIV** has been published [Here](#). A modelling group convened by the WHO and UNAIDS has estimated that if efforts are not made to mitigate and overcome interruptions in health services and supplies

during the COVID-19 pandemic, a six-month disruption of antiretroviral therapy could lead to more than 500 000 extra deaths from AIDS-related illnesses.

Public Health and Social Measures

- **EPI-WIN** will host two webinars this week to present the guidance, share experiences and answer questions. Pre-registration details are below.
 - **Co-hosted with UNICEF: public health and social measures in schools**
Wednesday 13 May 15h00 Geneva. Register in advance for this webinar [Here](#).
- **Public health and social measures in the workplace**
Friday 15 May 14h00 Geneva. Register in advance for this webinar [Here](#)

COVID-19 and Heat Health

- **Preparing for summer with COVID-19:** This year, weather services are expecting the coming summer to be warmer and drier than usual in the European Region. We need to be prepared for a long, hot summer, particularly this year due to the ongoing coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak compounding issues caused by extended periods of hot weather. The adverse health effects of hot weather are largely preventable through good public health practice, while also following the advice to protect yourself from COVID-19. We would therefore like to draw your attention to the WHO news story, social media campaign, and heat–health resources available online to support preparedness and response to heat-waves in the context of COVID-19. The following information is also available in Russian:
 - A news story on “[Preparing for a long, hot summer with COVID-19](#)” has now gone live. It is accompanied by a new information sheet “[Health advice for hot weather during the COVID-19 outbreak](#)” which is available in English, Russian, German and French.
 - **Information sheets** (collection of 16) with “Public health advice on preventing health effects of heat” for different audiences (available in EN & DE) [Here](#)
 - **Guidance** on warning-system development for heatwaves and health developed jointly by the WHO and WMO [Here](#)
 - **Website** on public health responses to heatwaves [Here](#)
 - **Questions and Answers** on “Extreme Heat and COVID-19” provided by the Global Heat Health Information Network (GHHIN): [Here](#)
 - **Meteoalarm** (available [Here](#)) for 34 Member States; for others you can find your **national weather service** here: [Here](#)
 - **Information tool** for medium-range (10-day) heatwave probability forecasts: [Here](#)
 - The **webinar** on “**Preparing for hot weather during the COVID-19 outbreak**” will take place on **Tuesday, 26 May 2020 at 11:00–12:30 CEST** (English only). Amongst others, topics that will be addressed in this webinar: our campaign on #Keepcool in the heat; the Q&A fact sheets on “Extreme Heat and COVID-19” that are being produced under the Global Heat Health Information Network (GHHIN); country case studies on adapting existing heat–health action plans within the context of COVID-19; **To register for the webinar session, go to: [Here](#), Registration password: 2605202011**

SUBJECT IN FOCUS: UNDERSTANDING THE MOH DRAFT TRANSITION STRATEGY

Lifting of public health and social measures (so called lockdowns), is key to stimulating economies, but it should be slow, steady, while also keeping a vigilant eye on the virus so that control measures can be quickly implemented if an upswing in cases is identified. The criteria are grouped into three relevant areas: epidemiology, health system, and public health surveillance: First, is the epidemic under control? Second, is the healthcare system able to cope with a resurgence of cases that may arise after relaxing certain measures? Third, is the public health surveillance system able to detect and manage the cases and their contacts, and identify a resurgence of cases? These three questions can help determine whether a lockdown can be released slowly or not.

However, even with three positive answers, releasing lockdowns is both complex and difficult.

Over the weekend we saw signs of the challenges that may lie ahead. In **the Republic of Korea**, bars and clubs were shut as a confirmed case led to many contacts being traced. In **Wuhan**, China, the first cluster of cases since their lockdown was lifted was identified. **Germany** has also reported an increase in cases since an easing of restrictions. Fortunately, all three countries have systems in place to detect and respond to a resurgence in cases.

Early serological studies reflect that a relatively low percentage of the population has antibodies to COVID-19, which means most of the population is still susceptible to the virus.

WHO is working closely with North Macedonia Ministry of Health to ensure that key public health measures remain in place to deal with the challenge of lifting lockdowns. Until there is a vaccine, the comprehensive package of measures is our most effective set of tools to tackle the virus.

In North Macedonia:

- o There are indications that the epidemic is brought under control.
- o The health system is able to deal with the recurrence of cases that may occur after adjusting some measures: increasing capacity for testing, tracing and treating; keeping measures on social distancing.

The draft Plan for Relaxation of the Restrictive Measures for Prevention of the Spread of Coronavirus developed by the Commission for Infectious Diseases envisages gradual lifting of the restrictive measures with continuous monitoring and evaluation of the situation after their withdrawal. The plan for relaxation of measures is a process that would be implemented in three phases according to the development of the epidemiological situation.

- 1) The first phase refers to the current operation of the economic activities during the declared state of emergency and the restricted movement of the population on the entire territory of the country with a gradual reduction of the period when movement is prohibited.
- 2) The second phase as a transitional phase refers to the initial establishment of work activities while complying with the recommended measures and strict work protocols in the conditions of implementing measures for prevention of the occurrence and spread of COVID-19.
- 3) The third phase envisages complete re-establishment of regular work process while complying with the basic preventive anti-epidemic measures for maintaining personal hygiene (frequent hand washing, good respiratory hygiene) and physical distancing.

WHAT WHO IS DOING FOR COVID19 IN NORTH MACEDONIA?

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>

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.

Risk Communication

- WHO held on 8 May a **Meeting online with all EUROPE Ministers** attended by North Macedonia– about COVID-19 response, **transition experience** and lessons learned. The Ministerial Roundtable included health ministers from countries that have eased restrictions to share their experiences and discuss lessons learned and the challenges that lie ahead.
- MOH and WHO launched on 5 May a media campaign for **Hand Hygiene and Nursing see below.**
- **Western Balkan ministerial WHO briefing on exit strategies** was held on 5 May 2020.
- Translation of **WHO guideline on Safe Ramadan** practices in the context of the COVID-19: in Macedonian, Albanian, Pashto, Dari, Turkish and Roma languages.
- **European immunization week:** WHO supported 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 MKD supported translation and adaptation of the following materials for social media:
 - EIW Poster adaptation
 - Video Adaptation - How do vaccine work?
 - Video Adaptation - Why should I get vaccinated

Risk perception and behavioral change

WHO initiated in partnership with National Institute of Public Health **COVID-19 behavioral survey** to gain an understanding of issues such as: trust in health authorities, recommendations and information; risk perceptions; acceptance of recommended behaviours; knowledge; barriers/drivers to recommended behaviours; misperceptions; and stigma. The results will be available to the policy makers to assess and modify risk communication strategies on aspects related to COVID19. The results will also inform post-pandemic actions, e.g. addressing possible family, mental health, or other adverse events as a result of the crisis. The final results are expected around mid-May 2020.

The survey is available here in Macedonian language:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdee7yN3qmmTNMSH0zHIO2F5ks-UE46QUrukSHdtqxSCF8rA/viewform>

And in Albanian:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdoo6OBWeowgiNq_Wdc3GrXuH5WmXoOVVsFBzrPbBoOOaoCCQ/viewform

Identification, virus testing and contact tracing

- **WHO organized on 8 May 2020 Virtual laboratory training for scaling up national laboratory capacities addressed to Macedonian professionals.** The national laboratories in North Macedonia engaged in COVID-19 testing to take part in it. The objective of the conference is to:
 - Update on tests available for COVID-19 testing
 - Verification and validation processes
 - Recommendations to ensure procurement during scaling up national laboratory capacities for COVID-19
 - Recommendations and discussion on training possibilities for scaling up
- WHO **donated 5000 COVID tests** to the Virology Lab of the Institute of Public Health on 8 April 2020.
- With WHO/USAID support, the health **emergency operations venue at MOH** is now equipped and functional in its temporary premises, refurbished and with IT equipment.
- WHO is supporting North Macedonia as part of the **Unity Study 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: **[HERE](#)**

Infection control and prevention in health care settings

- WHO organized a **Virtual training on Core Components of IPC programmes and Hospital Readiness COVID-19 tools** on 6 May 2020 for hospital-based health workers and those caring for COVID-19 patients
- As part of the USAID grant to WHO preparatory activities for undertaking of rapid infection prevention and control assessment (IPC assessment) with accent to COVID – 19 for EMS, primary, secondary and tertiary care facilities including long term care for the elderly, palliative care, home-based patronage services, nursing homes and outpatient clinics have been initiated. The assessment will be undertaken in collaboration with the Macedonian Association for Control of Intra - hospital Infection <https://www.mzkihi.mk/index-en>. The assessment will be undertaken by using the WHO IPC assessment tools listed below which **have been translated in Macedonian language**:
 - WHO Infection Prevention and Control Assessment Framework: Health care facility level <https://www.who.int/infection-prevention/tools/core-components/IPCAF-facility.PDF?ua=1>
 - Hospital readiness checklist for COVID-19 http://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/430210/Hospital-Readiness-Checklist.pdf?ua=1
 - National IPC assessment tool, Supporting core components for infection prevention and control programmes <https://www.who.int/infection-prevention/tools/core-components/en/>
- **Support to the World Hand Hygiene Day "Save Lives: Clean your Hands Campaign"** on 5 May. The slogan of the campaign is "**Nurses and Midwives, clean care is in your hands**". The objective is not only to promote good hand hygiene and infection prevention and control practices (COVID-19), but also to recognize the key role of nurses and midwives in preventing avoidable infections. WHO MKD translated 2-pager about Hand Hygiene & COVID-19 to be distributed to relevant facilities and through social media channels. The WHO campaign materials have been shared with the Ministry of Health. WHO encourages engaging of Minister of Health and health authorities to participate.
- **WHO donated PPE equipment** to two specialized university clinics in Skopje.
- 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 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 Webinar series on IPC & COVID 19** was promoted shared with relevant national professionals:
 - **21 April:** A model hospital for IPC and management of COVID-19 patients [Didier Pittet, University of Geneva Hospitals, Geneva, Switzerland]
 - **28 April:** The SARS-CoV-2 virus modes of transmission and related IPC measures [John Conly, University of Calgary and Alberta Health Services, Calgary, Canada]
 - **5 May:** Celebrating nurses and midwives for clean care at the age of COVID-19 [Benedetta Allegranzi, IPC Hub, WHO HQ Didier Pittet, University of Geneva Hospitals, Geneva, Switzerland]
 - **12 May:** Corona virus infections among health care workers: what we know about COVID-19 and what we have learned from other outbreaks [April Baller, WHO Health Emergencies, Geneva, Switzerland Seto Wing Hong, University of Hong Kong Shenzhen Hospital, Hong Kong, China]

The webinar **details:** Time 2pm central European time (CET); Duration 1 hour; Recordings Slides and audio recordings will be made available [HERE](#) after the webinar ; To register for each webinar please go to the campaign page [at SAVE LIVES: Clean Your Hands](#)

Please promote this webinar series as widely as possible within your networks. Thank you

Health Professionals

COVID -19 courses for health professionals: Translation and adaptation of the following WHO on-line COVID – 19 courses for Health Professionals has been initiated:

- Clinical Care Training for Respiratory Infections (SARI) in Macedonian language; <https://openwho.org/courses/severe-acute-respiratory-infection>
- ePROTECT Respiratory Infections in Macedonian and Albanian languages; <https://openwho.org/courses/eprotect-acute-respiratory-infections>
- How to put on and remove PPE in Macedonian and Albanian languages; <https://openwho.org/courses/IPC-PPE-EN>

Case management

- WHO organized a **Clinical management briefing on 7 May 2020** for clinicians and 36 participants from all COVID-19 designated clinics and hospitals attended.
- **Solidarity Trial:** Generating Robust data needed to show which treatments are the most effective, by North Macedonia joining the WHO SOLIDARITY Trial. This will allow also receiving WHO donation of medicines **Ramdesivir and Fapinavir** for COVID19 severe patients. **WHO held a training meeting on Solidarity trial** to all those involved in the scheme from COVID19 treating hospitals.

Planning, monitoring and evaluation of the COVID19 Response

- **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 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>
- 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 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 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/>
- 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.

IN THE PAST 24 HOURS:

COVID-19 transition phases

- The government has drafted the Transition Strategy, that is shared with the WHO for feedback before it is adopted by the government.
- The criteria are grouped into three relevant areas: epidemiology, health system, and public health surveillance:
 - There are indications that the epidemic is brought under control.
 - The health system is able to deal with the recurrence of cases that may occur after adjusting some measures.
- The draft Plan for Relaxation of the Restrictive Measures for Prevention of the Spread of Coronavirus developed by the Commission for Infectious Diseases envisages gradual lifting of the restrictive measures with continuous monitoring and evaluation of the situation after their withdrawal. The plan for relaxation of measures is a process that would be implemented in three phases according to the development of the epidemiological situation.
 - The first phase refers to the current operation of the economic activities during the declared state of emergency and the restricted movement of the population on the entire territory of the country with a gradual reduction of the period of time when movement is prohibited.
 - The second phase as a transitional phase refers to the initial establishment of work activities while complying with the recommended measures and strict work protocols in the conditions of implementing measures for prevention of the occurrence and spread of COVID-19.
 - The third phase envisages complete re-establishment of regular work process while complying with the basic preventive anti-epidemic measures for maintaining personal hygiene (frequent hand washing, good respiratory hygiene) and physical distancing.

- Bars and restaurants will not be allowed, and the authorities will present a plan next week.
- Starting today, new work protocols will be introduced in education and training centers, outdoor exercise of individual sports, betting houses and close shopping malls.
- Selected Government officials will be allowed to take business trips abroad but will be required to adhere to social distancing measures and boards managing public companies can begin holding meetings. All businesses that include holding meetings and conferences can do so for at most six hours and will have to take mandatory breaks and have all participants wear masks and other protective equipment.

Monitoring and Surveillance

- Today begins the screening people at high risk – 2 000 employees in kindergartens will be tested, as the protocols for operation of the kindergartens is in its final phase.

Socioeconomic Impact

- The Government approved the use of EU Solidarity Fund to help the country tackle the financial impact of COVID-19
- The Energy Regulatory Committee (ERC) revealed on Monday the new prices of gasoline, which are increased by 3.5 denars, or by 8.51 % compared to the previous changes. The new prices are: 54 denars per litre of Eurosuper BS-95, 56 denars per litre of Eurosuper BS-98, 45.5 denars per litre of Eurodiesel, 33.5 denars per litre of extra-light household oil and 18.2 denars per kilogram of petroleum jelly.
- According to the State Statistical Office data, in March 2020, the Industrial producer prices, total, decreased by 1.4 % at the monthly level, while at the annual level the prices increased by 0.3 %. In March 2020, in comparison with in February 2020, the Industrial producer prices, total, decreased in the section Mining and quarrying by 5.3 %, in the section Manufacturing by 1 % and in the section Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply by 1.3 %. In March 2020, in comparison with March 2019, the Industrial producer prices, total, decreased in the section Mining and quarrying by 12 % and in the section Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply by 6.8 %, while in the section Manufacturing the prices increased by 1.8 %.
- Indices of import prices from the division Manufacture of coke and refined petroleum products (19) are intended for reviewing or monitoring costs incurred by a construction company in the execution of the construction process. The main users of indices of import prices from the division Manufacture of coke and refined petroleum products (19) are construction companies, which refer to the movement of construction costs in calculations when entering a construction contract. According to the State Statistical Office data, in March 2020, the import prices from the division Manufacture of coke and refined petroleum products (19) decreased by 25.3 % at the monthly level and by 33.7 % at the annual level.
- The number of foreign tourists who visited North Macedonia in March plunged 70% to 11,128 according to the State statistical office. Domestic tourists in the country numbered 6,815 in March, down 60.5% on an annual comparison basis. The total number of tourists staying in the country fell 67% to 17,943 in March. The number of overnights spent by tourists in North Macedonia in the review period decreased by 63% to 41,948. Out of the total number of foreign tourists who visited North Macedonia in March, 15% came from Greece, 9.9% from Serbia and 9.2% from Bulgaria.

UN, DONATIONS AND PARTNER COORDINATION- COVID-19*

*[in the past 24 hours – earlier info available in previous WHO Flash Updates]

- The companies Makprogres and Donia have donated 300,000 denars to the Public Healthcare Centre in Bitola for dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic.

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:
- Maintaining Essential health and social services
 - intensifying risk communication;
 - socioeconomic relief for vulnerable groups and employment protection.
 - 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.
 - Laboratory Kits and reagents; Personal Protective Equipment (PPE); Mechanical Ventilators/Respirators
- 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 and community compliance with measures
 - 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





Примарна нега



Медицинските сестри имаат значајна улога во примарната нега и негата на ниво на заедница, вклучувајќи ги тука и итните кризи состојби како КОВИД-19.



#EUPHW

