



COVID-19 - Coronavirus disease 2019

NORTH MACEDONIA

FLASH UPDATE 15

3 April 2020

Data as reported by authorities by 22:00, 3 April 2020

HIGHLIGHTS

- 46 new cases reported; 430 the total number of registered COVID-19 patients; 67 patients are currently hospitalized at CID – 10 have severe clinical manifestations. 2 patients have recovered and are discharged from CID in good health. Sadly, North Macedonia announced one COVID-19 fatality – 69-years-old patient from Tetovo. The total number of affected medical staff is 52, i.e. 12% of all reported cases, out of which 34 have acquired the infection while in their primary clinics.
- More movement restrictions hours in Kumanovo - Curfew hours during the weekend (21:00 on Friday-05:00 on Monday) and during the workdays from 16:00-05:00.
- IMF approved rapid financing in the amount of €175.2 million for economic measures for health and macroeconomic stabilization, and the balance of payments arising from the coronavirus pandemic.
- The Government adopted the Decree for procurement of emergency 200 ventilators. All treatment costs related to COVID-19 will be universally covered for all regardless of employment and health insurance status.
- Much-loved children's authors are joining an initiative to read extracts of their books to millions of children and young people currently living in isolation amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Read the World is a collaboration between the International Publishers Association (IPA), WHO and UNICEF.
<https://www.who.int/news-room/releases>
- WHO and UNICEF have partnered on pandemic response through COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund. <https://www.who.int/news-room/releases>
- WHO EURO and the European Observatory for Health systems formally launched yesterday the COVID-19 Health System Response Monitor (HSRM) <https://www.covid19healthsystem.org/mainpage.aspx>

SITUATION IN NUMBERS

total (new) cases in the last 24 hours

North Macedonia

430 confirmed (46)

12 deaths

19 recovered

Globally

972 640 confirmed (76 190)

50 325 deaths (4826)

Western Pacific Region

108 930 confirmed (1304)

3760 deaths (37)

European Region

542 145 confirmed (39 139)

37 106 deaths (3502)

South-East Asia Region

5881 confirmed (557)

245 deaths (29)

Eastern Mediterranean Region

62 236 confirmed (4068)

3439 deaths (160)

Regions of the Americas

247 473 confirmed (30 561)

5600 deaths (1061)

African Region

5263 confirmed (561)

164 deaths (37)

WHO RISK ASSESSMENT

Very high

- WHO Recently developed essential supplies forecasting tool ‘COVID-ESFT’ ; this tool helps member states, country offices, and partners to list and quantify the essential supply that would be required to support the emergency preparedness and response.
<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/technical-guidance/covid-19-critical-items>
- As of 2 April 2020, new Government web page for all official COVID-19 related information is available in MK and ENG www.koronavirus.gov.mk

SURVEILLANCE

Figure 1. North Macedonia – Cumulative confirmed COVID-19 cases (n=384) by 3 April 2020 18:00

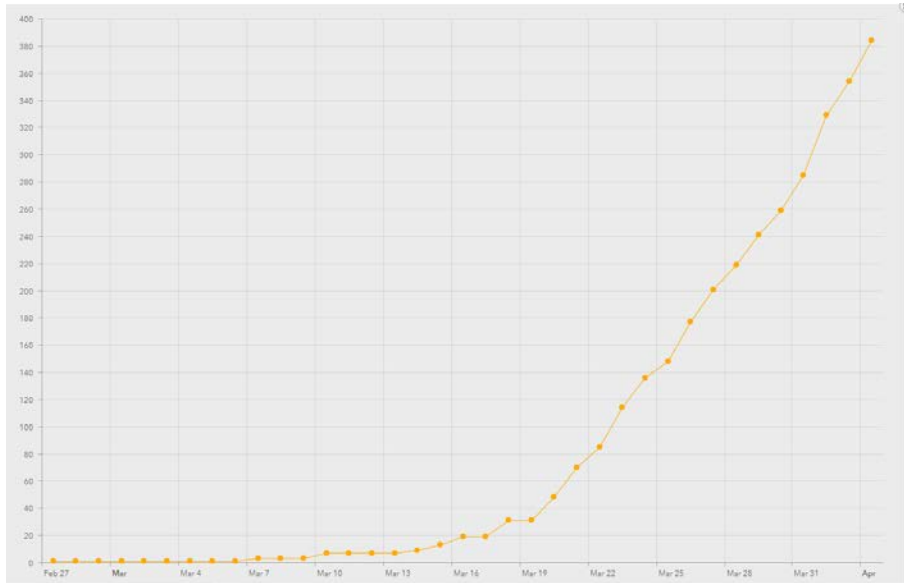
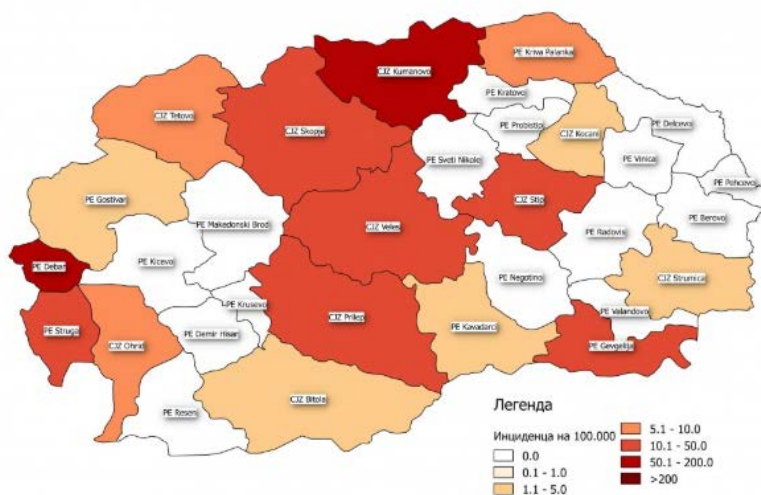


Figure 2. North Macedonia –COVID-19 incidence per 100,000 people, as of 3 April 2020



The highest cumulative incidence is in Debar 176,5 cases per 100,000 people, followed by 59,6 cases per 100,000 people in Kumanovo and 33,7 cases per 100,000 people in Skopje.

Age of patients vary from 2-91 years. However, the highest risk groups are between above 50 years old.

The disaggregated data of the confirmed COVID-19 cases through 02 April 2020 which includes the cases reported on 3 April 2020 by MoH could be accessed at the www.iph.mk

RISK ASSESSMENT OF COVID-19 IN NORTH MACEDONIA ACCORDING TO GEOGRAPHICAL SPREAD

According to the WHO risk categorization, Debar, Skopje and Kumanovo are in Phase 4 (widespread community transmission) and the rest of the Republic of Northern Macedonia is in phase 2 (sporadic cases).

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-2019), Europe

- Based on the WHO and ECDC data as of 3 April 2020 10:00 CET, the WHO European Region number of cases is representing **over 56% of the global burden** to date. Globally, USA carries the heaviest case load (213 600), with **Italy and Spain concluding top-3**. Overall, five more countries from the European Region are in top-10 (Germany, France, United Kingdom, Switzerland, and Turkey);
- In Europe, **Italy has the highest case count** (115 242 cases, 21%), followed by Spain (110 238 cases, 20%), Germany (79 696 cases, 15%), France (58 327 cases, 11%), and the United Kingdom (33 722 cases, 6%). Five other countries reported more than 10 000 cases (Switzerland, Turkey, Belgium, the Netherlands and Austria), while another 16 countries in the Region reported 1000 cases or more, listed in descending order (Portugal, Israel, Sweden, Norway, Czechia, Ireland, Russian Federation, Denmark, Poland, Romania, Luxembourg, Finland, Greece, Iceland, Serbia and Croatia);
- **74% of the global burden of COVID-19 deaths have been reported in the European Region**, with Italy and Spain (13 917 and 10 003 COVID-19 deaths, respectively) accounting for roughly 65% of all deaths in Europe, followed by France, United Kingdom, Netherlands, Germany and Belgium.

WHAT WHO IS DOING FOR COVID19 IN NORTH MACEDONIA?

In line with the strategic shift of the 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 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 North Macedonia, WHO is:

- Engaging actively 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.
- Providing and 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. [@facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com/1UNMKD)
- 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 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.
- 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.

VISIT OUR PARTNERS WEBSITES

- USAID www.usaid.gov
- EU https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/republic-north-macedonia_en
- Macedonian Red Cross: www.ckrm.org.mk
- Helvetas North Macedonia www.helvetas.org/en/eastern-europe/north-macedonia
- OSCE in North Macedonia www.osce.org/mission-to-skopje

HEADS UP on WHO FRONT

- WHO is preparing the **2nd Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan**: The plan will build on the first SPRP to incorporate what we know now and the evolving global context. The strategies for preparedness and response remain the same.
- WHO is preparing to **scale up laboratory diagnostic capacity: GeneXpert**: A test for the COVID-19 coronavirus developed by Cepheid for their GeneXpert instrument has received an Emergency Use Authorization by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on 22 March 2020. WHO is currently working to negotiate access to this test.
- Rapid communication on the role of the GeneXpert® platform for rapid molecular testing for SARS-CoV-2 in the WHO European Region [link](#)

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 for one month.

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

Several measures are taken to interrupt human-to-human transmission including reducing secondary infections among close contacts and health care workers, preventing transmission amplification events, and preventing further spread.

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.

Today:

- The Government adopted the recommendation of the Commission for Infectious Diseases and recommend all health professionals from Kumanovo who are currently working in other cities to be at disposal of the General Hospital in Kumanovo. Infectious diseases specialists from Kriva Palanka and Kratovo will be identified to work in the Center for Public Health in Kumanovo.

- The adjusted restriction of movement hours is not applicable to the police, army and health professionals (in public and private health sector including the family doctors). The pharmacies will also be operational. For agricultural activities, movement within the territory of the villages is permitted exclusively for working purposes.
- The Government adopted a Decree on financial support of independent artists during the state of emergency, which regulates the financial support of independent artists for April and May 2020 in the amount of 14.500 mkd.
- Inspectors continue with intensive field surveillance in order to ensure full compliance with the Government's measures and recommendations related to COVID-19 – a total of 5 213 inspections were carried out and the general conclusion is that most entities respect the Government's measures for prevention of coronavirus.

COVID-19 UN AND PARTNER COORDINATION

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.

- North Macedonia to receive urgent medical equipment with 4 million euros from EU for procurement through UNOPS.
- USAID to support both WHO and WHO with 1.1. million USD in their efforts to fight the epidemic in North Macedonia
- Germany offered support to the Ministry of Health with an amount of USD 2 million in PPE
- OSCE is proposing donation of essential PPE for the COVID19 Center of Infectious Diseases for 30,000 Euros.
- Packages with food and hygiene assets in the amount of 100.000 USD will be allocated to most jeopardized Roma 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 above is not a comprehensive list.

GAPS/NEEDS AND CHALLENGES

The most important priority at this point and in the next 3 months is to ensure that the health system can cope with increasing numbers of cases needing intensive management and also protecting the health care workers.

➤ **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

➤ **Challenges:**

- Procurement : Access to local or international supplies and mainly respirators for the critical needs identified because of international shortages.
- Shortage in health workforce if the situation progresses
- Ensuring sustainability of the health facilities and health care during and after the crisis.
- outreach activities for 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 community engagement
- Compliance of the citizens to instructions of the government and self-isolation.

WHO ISSUED NEW GUIDANCE TO SUPPORT OPERATIONS

Operational considerations for surveillance of COVID-19 using GISRS [New]	https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/technical-guidance/surveillance-and-case-definitions
COVID-19: Operational guidance for maintaining essential health services during an outbreak [New]	https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/technical-guidance/maintaining-essential-health-services-and-systems
Guiding principles for immunization activities during the COVID-19 pandemic [New]	https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/331590/WHO-2019-nCoV-immunization_services-2020.1-eng.pdf
Dead Body Management [New]	https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/331538/WHO-COVID-19-IPC-DBMgmt-2020.1-eng.pdf
Laboratory testing recommendations for COVID-19 [New]	https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/331509/WHO-COVID-19-lab_testing-2020.1-eng.pdf
COVID-19 IPC in prisons & other places of detection [New]	http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/health-determinants/prisons-and-health/publications/2020/preparedness,-prevention-and-control-of-covid-19-in-prisons-and-other-places-of-detention-2020
Severe Acute Respiratory Infections Treatment Centre [New]	https://www.who.int/publications-detail/severe-acute-respiratory-infections-treatment-centre

Scientific Brief: Modes of transmission of virus causing COVID-19: implications for IPC precaution recommendations
[New]

<https://www.who.int/news-room/commentaries/detail/modes-of-transmission-of-virus-causing-covid-19-implications-for-ipc-precaution-recommendations>

IMPORTANT CONTACTS NORTH MACEDONIA: Call Center 0800 002 03; "Alo Doctor" 02 15 123

Useful Links

WHO [Facebook](#)/[Twitter](#)

MoH [Facebook](#)/[Twitter](#)

[WHO Europe website for COVID-19](#)

Government's web page for all official COVID-19 related information ([MKD](#)/[EN](#)).

[MoH COVID-19 information](#)

NATO's Next-Generation Incidence Command System ([NICS](#))

[How to stay physically active during COVID-19 self-quarantine](#)

[Q&A on COVID-19, pregnancy, childbirth and breastfeeding](#)

New WHO Global Campaign – "[Pass the message: Five steps to kicking out coronavirus](#)" with FIFA

For symptoms related to COVID-19

CPH Bitola 071 261 330
CPH Veles 071 219 278
CPH Gevgelija 071 219 278
CPH Kochani 071 373 913
CPH Kumanovo 070 215 851
CPH Ohrid 070 723 029
CPH Prilep 076 475 747
CPH Skopje 071 289 614
CPH Strumica 072 235 543
CPH Tetovo 075 240 464
RU Gostivar 076 365 161
CPH Shtip 078 365 613
IPH Skopje 078 387 194

Psychological support

-Self-isolated adults
072 919 009
-Citizens of municipalities Debar and Center Zhupa
070 241 807
-adolescents and their parents
078 378 728
-parents of children with disabilities
070291574
-Parents of preschool and school children 072 912 676

Red Cross mobile teams for elderly support

Red Cross Center 070 297 166
Red Cross Kisela Voda 071 349 225
Red Cross Chair 070 208 383
Red Cross Karpos 071 349 230
Red Cross Gazi Baba
Team for support of homeless people

Foreign Affairs

Regular line 075 446 647
Regular line, Viber and WhatsApp:
070 282 078

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