

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19)

North Macedonia Flash Update – 47

Data as reported by national authorities by 23:00 CET, 18 May 2020

During the last 24 hours

- **Tests performed:** 286 SARS-CoV-2 tests and 8.7% tested positive. Of those, 124 tests are part of the targeted screening among employees in kindergartens – no cases are registered.
- **New cases:** 25 new cases were reported
- **Recovered:** 8 COVID-19 patients
- **Fatalities:** 3 new COVID-19 deaths

Cumulative registered COVID-19 as of 18 May – 1817 (Incidence=87.8/100.000) – [See Daily Curve](#)

- **Total number of health workers infected: 251 (13.8%)**
- **Tests performed:** 21 722 SARS-CoV-2 tests.
- **Patients recovered: 1301 COVID-19 patients recovered** so far.
- **Fatalities: 104 COVID-19 fatalities (CFR 5.7%)** are registered.
- **Geographic spread and deaths:** COVID-19 cases are registered in 30 cities. Majority of all cases 83% are from five cities Skopje (628), Kumanovo (416), Prilep (200), Tetovo (147) and Veles (121). **78% of all deaths are registered in Kumanovo, Skopje, Struga, Tetovo and Prilep.**
- **Gender distribution:** More women are infected with coronavirus than men (945 and 872 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: 64% of all deaths; 0-9-year: 65 confirmed COVID-19 cases; 10-19-year: 82 confirmed COVID-19 cases.

Yesterday was the first day of the virtual, [73rd World Health Assembly](#) - more than 110 countries have supported a draft resolution on the COVID-19 pandemic. The proceedings are available live [online](#). The DG called upon [all nations to invest in strengthening and implementing the many tools at their disposal](#) – especially: [The International Health Regulations](#). The pandemic illustrates why investing in health must be at the centre of development.

NEXT WEBINAR: NCD Hard Talks: Making Health Systems Deliver

Wednesday, 20 May 2020 at 13:00 (Geneva time) – registration and more information are available [below](#).

Webinar session on cross-learning to accelerate action on health system strengthening and NCDs as the reality of COVID-19 offers a stark reminder and call for collective action to fill the NCD gap and protect the most vulnerable.

HealthBuddy: a new chatbot to engage with communities in Europe and central Asia on COVID-19 is a multilingual interactive chatbot and the newest tool to be launched as a resource for countries in Europe and central Asia in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. More information can be accessed [here](#).

SURVEILLANCE – NORTH MACEDONIA

Figure 1. North Macedonia – Daily confirmed and deaths COVID-19 cases (n=1792) and deaths (n=101) by 18 May 2020

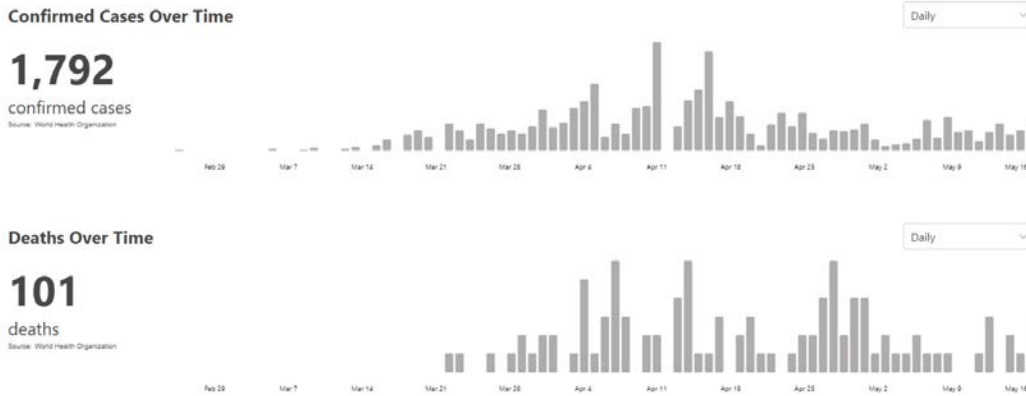
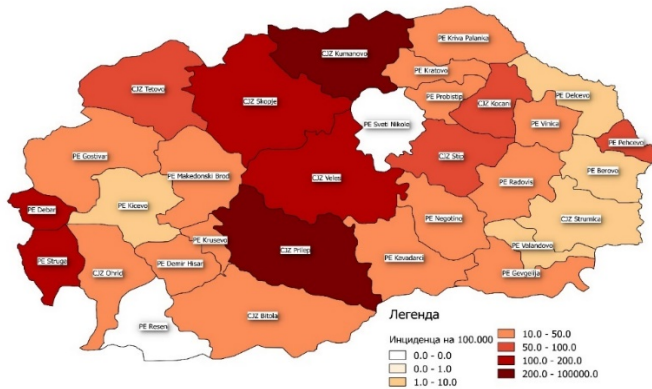


Figure 2. North Macedonia – COVID-19 incidence per 100,000 people, as of 18 May 2020



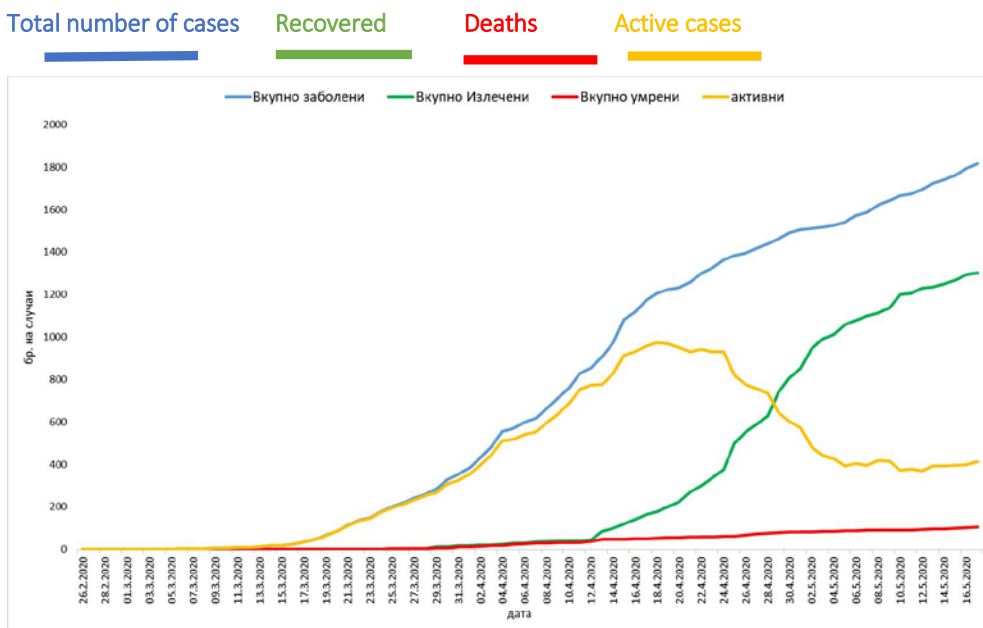
The highest cumulative incidence is in Kumanovo (291.5/100,000 people), followed by Prilep (209.8/100,000 people), Debar (183.8/100,000 people), Veles (182.6/100,000 people), Struga (103.2/100,000 people) and Skopje (101.7/100,000 people). Four other cities have incidence above 50.0 cases per 100,000 people (Tetovo, Shtip, Kochani and Pehchevo).

All data of the confirmed COVID-19 cases through 17 May 2020 which includes the cases reported on 18 May 2020 by MoH could be accessed at the

Fig www.iph.mk

lay

(n=1817)



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

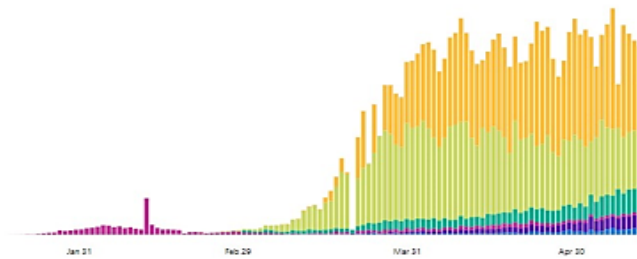
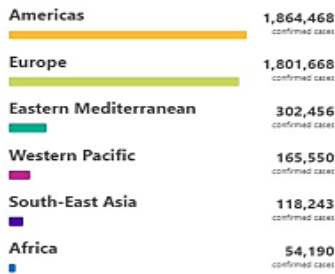
GLOBALLY	4 618 821 cases (93 324)	311 847 deaths (4 452)
Africa	61 163 cases (2 500)	1 748 deaths (38)
Americas	2 017 811 cases (50879)	121 609 deaths (2810)
Eastern	338 560 cases (11 992)	9 979 deaths (138)
Europe	1 890 467 cases (19922)	167 173 deaths (1222)
South-East Asia	141 593 cases (7062)	4 582 deaths (231)
Western Pacific	168 515 cases (969)	6 743 deaths (13)



Global Trends

- Globally, there have been **4,589,526 confirmed cases** of COVID-19, including **310,391 deaths**, reported to WHO from 215 countries around the world.
- The most affected WHO regions remain EURO and PAHO.** EURO accounts for 42% of cases and 54.7% of deaths globally while the USA alone accounts for 31% of cases and 28% of deaths.
- The 10 countries with the most reported number of cases in past 24 hours: United States of America, Brazil, **Russian Federation**, India, Chile, Peru, **the United Kingdom**, Saudi Arabia, Mexico, Iran.

WHO Regions



COVID-19 situation in the WHO European Region

data as of: 18 May 2020, 10:00 (CET)

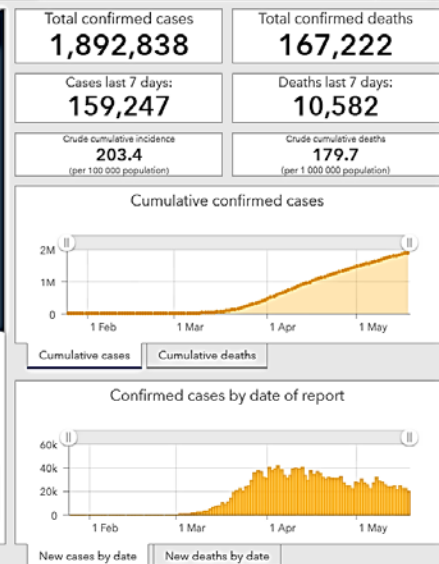
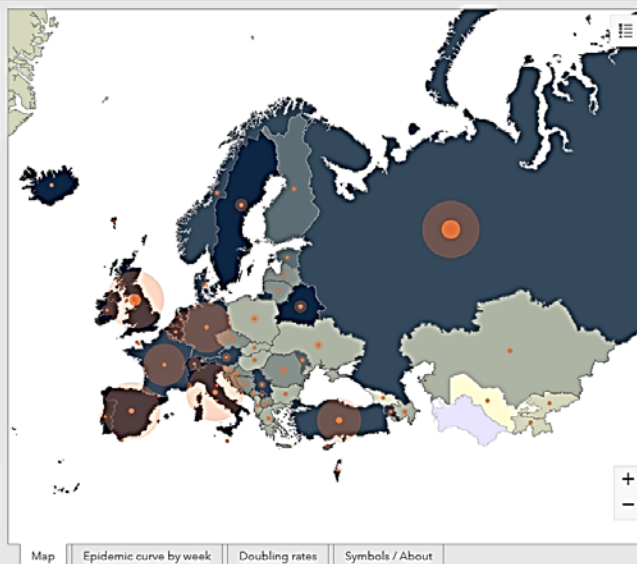
More information
WHO Global Situation Dashboard
WHO/Europe COVID-19 website



54	Countries (14 days)*	Total
	(145,410) ● 48%	290,678
	(57,096) ● -14%	243,695
	(23,390) ● -41%	149,435
	(13,884) ● -47%	231,350
	(14,718) ● -54%	225,435
	(12,161) ● 4%	29,650
	(11,522) ● -46%	174,697
	(7,826) ● -1%	30,143
	(11,124) ● -40%	142,411
	(6,285) ● -5%	18,616
	(4,836) ● 10%	18,529
	(5,374) ● -53%	55,280
	(3,708) ● -16%	16,871

Sort by 14 day total cases

7	Territories	Total
	(104) ● -67%	955
	(15) ● -35%	335
	(6) ● -87%	297



In less than five months, the pandemic has encircled the globe and as the world approaches 5 million COVID-19 cases reported to WHO, 300,000 people have now lost their lives to the virus.

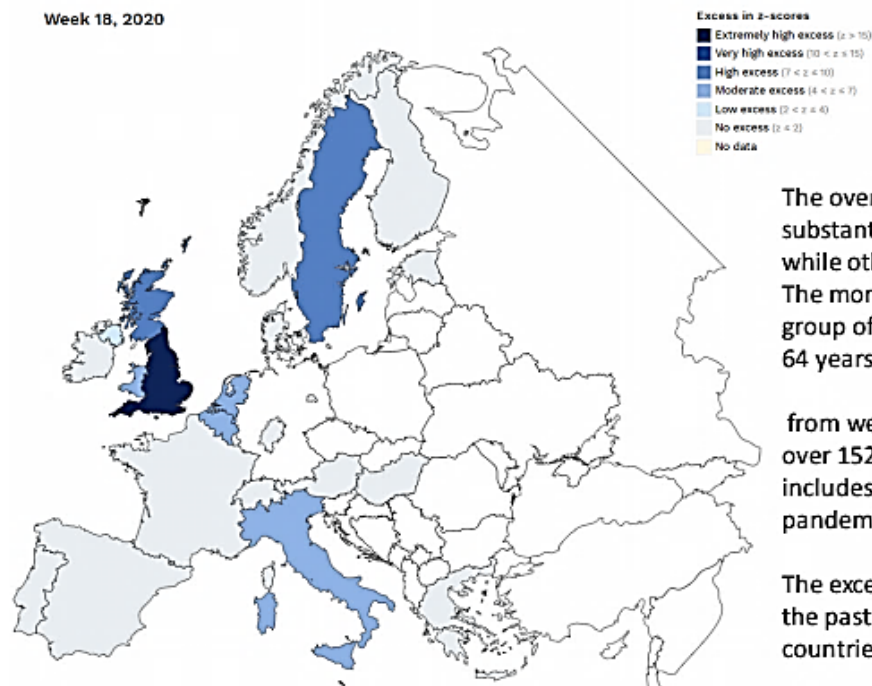
EURO accounts for 41% of cases and 54% of deaths globally while the USA alone accounts for 31% of cases and 28% of deaths. The epicenter in Europe remains in the Russian Federation.

- The situation in the Region continues to stabilize with an overall decreasing trend over the past two weeks as 37 countries show at least a 10% decrease in new cases over the past 14 days, compared to the previous two weeks. While 10 countries have shown an increase in number of new cases greater than 10%.
- Countries in the **eastern part of the Region continue to be of concern**, particularly as several countries have begun to ease measures despite continued, increasing trends in cases and deaths.
- Countries in **central and western Europe must also continue to vigilantly monitor the situation and be ready to take additional measures as necessary** – e.g. France has identified 70 new COVID-19 cases linked to the re-opening of schools.

Socio/Economic/Political Update as of 18 May 2020

- 70% of Spain is now in phase one of the government’s planned three-phase lifting of the national lockdown. The state of emergency will however be extended until late June.
- The French-German Initiative for the European Recovery from the Coronavirus Crisis was proposed on 18 May, this will include joint plan and fund to spur recovery support to the most affected countries in Europe.

Excess all-cause mortality: EuroMoMo

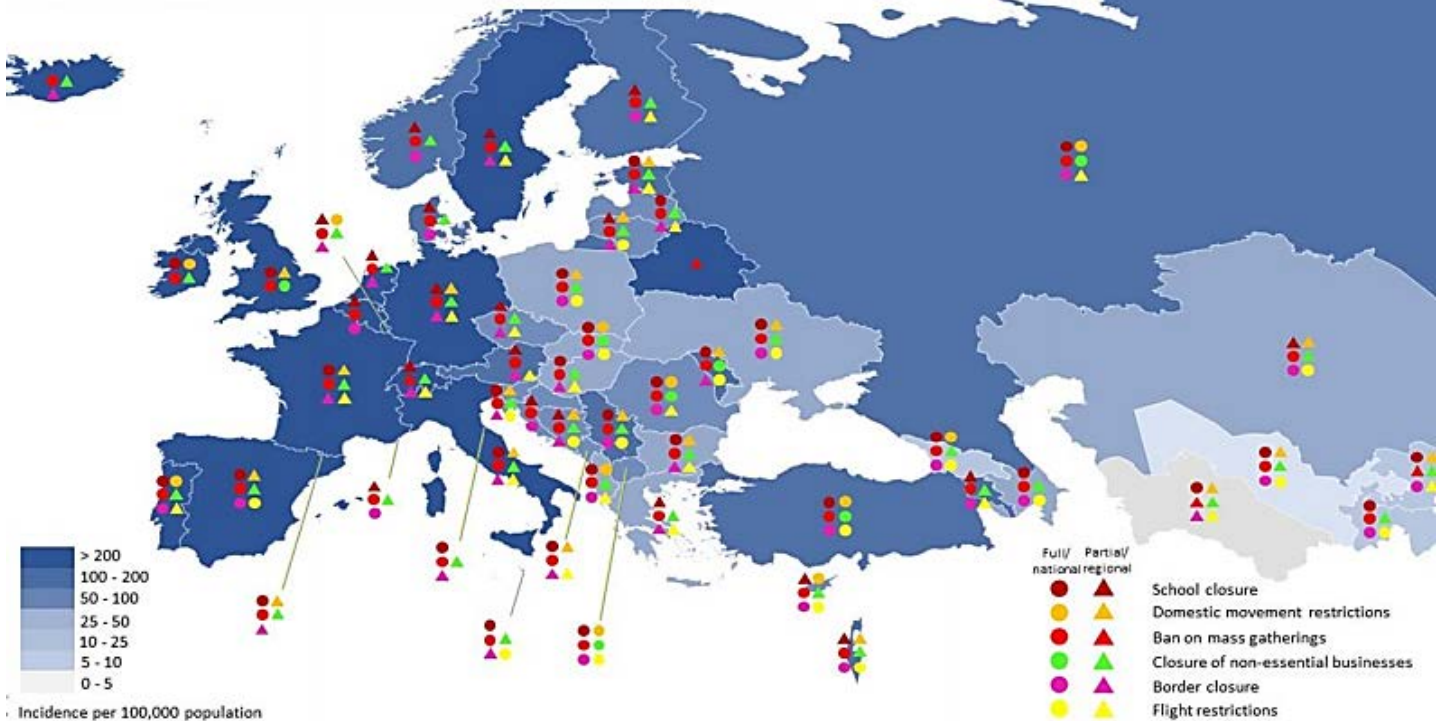


The overall excess mortality is driven by a very substantial excess mortality in some countries, while other countries have had no excess mortality. The mortality excess is primarily seen in the age group of ≥ 65 years, but also in the age group of 15-64 years.

from week 10, 2020 and as of week 19, there were over 152,000 excess deaths estimated. This period includes part of the flu season as well as the pandemic.

The excess mortality estimated by EuroMOMO over the past weeks appears to have peaked in all countries by now.

Public Health and Social Measures implemented in the WHO European Region
 [data shown as of 18 May 2020]



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the World Health Organization concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. Dotted and dashed lines on maps represent approximate border lines for which there may not yet be full agreement.



		Ban on mass gatherings	All schools closed	Closure of non-essential businesses	Restriction of non-essential domestic movement	Full closure of land borders	State of Emergency declared	Date of first easing of restrictions	Date of first death
	Armenia	17 Mar	2 Mar	24 Mar	25 Mar	17 Mar	16 Mar	23 Apr	27 Mar
	Belarus								1 Apr
	Belgium	13 Mar	13 Mar	18 Mar	18 Mar	20 Mar		4 May	12 Mar
	France	5 Mar	16 Mar	15 Mar	17 Mar		22 Mar	11 May	29 Jan
	Germany	8 Mar	16 Mar	22 Mar	22 Mar	16 Mar		20 Apr	10 Mar
	Italy	9 Mar	4 Mar	12 Mar	15 Mar		31 Jan	14 Apr	24 Feb
	Kazakhstan	16 Mar		16 Mar		16 Mar	15 Mar	4 May	28 Mar
	Netherlands	12 Mar	16 Mar					29 Apr	7 Mar
	Portugal	15 Mar	16 Mar	18 Mar	1 Apr	16 Mar	18 Mar	25 Apr	18 Mar
	Russian Federation	10 Mar	21 Mar	28 Mar	30 Mar	18 Mar		24 Apr	26 Mar
	Spain	15 Mar	15 Mar	15 Mar	15 Mar	17 Mar	15 Mar	13 Apr	5 Mar
	Tajikistan	25 Apr	4 May			10 Apr			5 May
	Turkey	5 Apr	16 Mar	22 Mar	27 Mar	31 Mar		4 May	19 Mar

[New] WHAT IS NEW?

DG's Opening remarks at 73rd session of the World Health Assembly - 18 MAY 2020 can be accessed in full [Here](#) .Dr. Tedros' key messages focused on:

- The health impacts of the pandemic and the disruption to health systems which threatens to unwind decades of progress against maternal and child mortality, HIV, malaria, tuberculosis, noncommunicable diseases, mental health, polio and many other of the most urgent health threats.
- The DG urges countries to proceed with caution in the transition phase, for those that move too fast, without putting in place the public health architecture to detect and suppress transmission, run a real risk of handicapping their own recovery.
- There are common components that must be part of every national strategy:
 - A whole-of-government and whole-of-society response that engages and empowers people and communities to keep themselves and others safe;
 - The commitment and capacity to find, isolate, test and care for every case, and trace and quarantine every contact;
 - And special attention to vulnerable groups like people living in nursing homes, refugee camps, prisons and detention centres.
 - COVID-19 is not just a global health emergency, it is a vivid demonstration of the fact that there is no health security without resilient health systems, or without addressing the social, economic, commercial and environmental determinants of health.

Yesterday marked the start of the **73rd session of the World Health Assembly. Please find access to the Live Virtual World Health Assembly session [Here](#).

Public Health and Social measures

- The **ICAO Handbook for CAAs on the Management of Aviation Safety Risks related to COVID-19** was published (available [Here](#))
- The ICAO published guidance on **Implementing a Public Health Corridor to Protect Flight Crew During the COVID-19 Pandemic** (Cargo Operations), available [Here](#).

Clinical Management

- A Scientific Brief was just published on **Multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children and adolescents with COVID-19** (available [Here](#)).
- **Frequently Asked Question on Immunization in the context of COVID-19 pandemic** was published (available [Here](#) and in [RUSSIAN](#)).

Infection Prevention and Control

- **New**- Interim Guidance on **Cleaning and disinfection of environmental surfaces in the context of COVID-19** was just published (available [Here](#)). This guidance is intended for health care professionals, public health professionals and health authorities that are developing and implementing policies and standard operating procedures (SOP) on the cleaning and disinfection of environmental surfaces in the context of COVID-19.
- A **Q&A: Considerations for the cleaning and disinfection of environmental surfaces in the context of COVID-19 in non-health care settings** was released and is available [Here](#).

Infection control and prevention webinars this week:

- **WHO Webinar The special setting of long-term care facilities and the risk for COVID-19 spread: Tuesday, 19 May 2020, 14:00 CEST** ; Registration [Here](#). What are the perspectives on prevention and control from WHO and the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); Speakers: Zee Han, Aging and Health, WHO HQ and Amber Vasquez, International Infection Control Program, CDC, USA

- **CDC & WHO Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Global Webinar Series: Practical IPC Considerations in the Fight Against COVID-19. IPC Monitoring and Facility Readiness for COVID-19 ; Thursday, 21 May 2020, 14.00 CEST;** Registration [Here](#); Speakers: Denise Cardo, U.S. CDC, Paul Malpiedi, U.S. CDC, Benedetta Allegranzi, WHO HQ, C S Pramesh, Tata Memorial Hospital, India.

Surveillance

- **Webinar EPI-WIN Contact tracing in the context of COVID-19** will host webinar this week where experts from the World Health Organization will share guidance on why and how to establish contact tracing capacity. Participants will then be able to hear about the development of contact tracing apps in Switzerland and Austria. **Tuesday 19 May 14h00 Geneva.** Register in advance for this webinar [HERE](#)
- The weekly **Laboratory Workshop Call** was launched on 18 May at 12:00 Copenhagen time. The Laboratory Workshop depends on interest, so please get ready to ask your laboratory-related questions; this is a workshop to discuss and answer questions. The meeting can be accessed [Here](#).

WEBINAR: NCD Hard Talks: Making Health Systems Deliver

Wednesday, 20 May 2020 at 13:00 (Geneva time) [Join WebEx meeting](#) ; Meeting number (access code): 840 445 177 ; Meeting password: Isd2020

Country experiences have shed light on effective solutions, critical bottlenecks, and practical lessons for strengthening health systems for Noncommunicable Diseases (NCD) impact. More so, the reality of COVID-19 offers a stark reminder and call for collective action to fill the NCD gap and protect the most vulnerable. WHO initiatives provide key insights on:

- What practical solutions best catalyze systemic change?
- How to move from pilot to robust scale-up of NCD services?
- Does multisectoralism hinder health system strengthening?

WHO NCD/Integrated Service Delivery unit invites you to join regular webinar sessions for cross-learning to accelerate action on HSS for NCD.

Virtual Meeting: Achieving sustainable WASH-safe health care facilities in the 2020s

Thursday, 21 May 2020 at 13:00 CET ; Register now for this virtual meeting at <https://link.medics.academy/WaSH>

WHO and UNICEF, in collaboration with WaterAid and supported by a number of partner organizations including the International Council of Nurses and the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council, are hosting a two-hour virtual meeting during the week of this year's World Health Assembly (WHA). The meeting marks the one-year anniversary of the resolution approved at WHA72 on water, sanitation and hygiene in health care facilities.

Event Objectives:

- To consider how WASH in health care facilities can be hard wired into the COVID-19 response and recovery efforts moving forward;
- To share country progress and discuss successes and bottlenecks regarding implementation of the 2019 WHA Resolution. This will include a focus on empowering the health workforce, particularly nurses and midwives and how action to improve WASH in health-care facilities is supporting COVID-19 efforts;
- To engage WASH and health partner organizations and investment banks in strategizing on how to meet global targets for WASH in health-care facilities, using COVID-19 as an opportunity to sustainably improve WASH services;
- To spark further commitments, investment and increased accountability in achieving universal access to WASH in HCF aligned with the COVID-19 response and recovery funding.

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.

Infection control and prevention in health care settings

- **WHO organized the Laboratory Workshop kick-off on 18 May 2020 – a weekly online meeting to discuss open questions and concerns around COVID-19 virus testing. The workshop is intended for health professionals working in a laboratory involved in COVID-19 virus testing/diagnostic. This week topic was Saliva as sample for testing and North Macedonia is participating as well.**
- 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 COVID19 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]

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/1FAIpQLSdoo6OBWeowgiNg_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](#)

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

Health Professionals

WHO COVID -19 courses for health professionals: The following WHO on-line COVID – 19 courses for Health Professionals are currently live in Local languages :

- Clinical Care Training for Respiratory Infections (SARI) in Macedonian language; <https://openwho.org/courses/severe-acute-respiratory-infection-MK>
- How to put on and remove PPE in Macedonian language; <https://openwho.org/courses/IPC-PPE-MK>. The course is currently being finalized in Albanian and will be available soon.
- ePROTECT Respiratory Infections in Macedonian and Albanian languages (initiated); <https://openwho.org/courses/eprotect-acute-respiratory-infections>

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** 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 measures

- The national Protocols developed as part of the Transition plan on easing the restrictive measures are available [HERE](#).

Trade and Travel

- The Ministry of Interior extended all permit and visas for foreign citizens in the country until the end of August 2020.

Public Health

- 77 are caught breaking the curfew – 58 of them are detained. 37 violations of the measure for mandatory protective equipment are registered. 11 people have been issued isolation decision and 27 people have signed statement for self-isolation. Non-compliance with the isolation and self-isolation decision is not registered.

Socioeconomic Measures and Impact

- The Government to provide additional financial support to health professionals who worked with COVID-19 patients in the amount of 20% of their wages for the period of two months.

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