



COVID-19 in North Macedonia - Update 61

In **North Macedonia**, from **Feb 26** to **23 June 2020, 22:00pm CEST**, there have been **5,311 confirmed cases** of COVID-19 with **251 deaths**.

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The world is in a new and dangerous phase. Many people are understandably fed up with being at home. Countries are understandably eager to open up their societies and economies. But the virus is still spreading fast, it's still deadly, and most people are still susceptible.

Over the last 4 days – Data as of 23 June 2020 20:00

- **Total tests performed (% positive)** : 1363 (8.7%), 665 (13.2%), 776 (13.0%) and 1364 (13.6%) on Tuesday, Monday, Sunday and Saturday, respectively.
- **Targeted screening tests (number positive)**: 77 (0)
- **New cases**: **492** (118, 88, 101 and 185 new cases registered on each day, respectively)
- **Recovered**: 185 COVID-19 patients
- **Fatalities**: 29 new COVID-19 deaths
- **Hospitalized**: 388 patients of which 53 severe on oxygen; (108 in CID and 127 in hospital 8 September)

Cumulative registered COVID-19 as of 20 June – **5106** (Incidence rate: 245.8/100,000) – [see daily curve](#)

- **Cases among health workers**: **464 (9.1%)**, of which 261 (56%) recovered, and one death case is registered.
- **Tests performed**: 51 220 SARS-CoV-2 tests. Daily testing capacity is from 800-1200 tests
- **Patients recovered**: 1927 COVID-19 patients.
- **Active cases**: 2940 COVID-19 positive cases in 29 cities
- **Fatalities**: **239** COVID-19 fatalities (CFR 4.7%) are registered.
- **Gender distribution**: More women are infected with coronavirus than men (2603 and 2503, respectively). However, **61% of all deaths are men**.
- **Comorbidity**: 80.8% of death cases
- **Age distribution**: **Median age at infection: 43.8 years**; largest number of cases is in >60-year: 21.5%; >60-year: 71% of all deaths; but the highest age specific incidence of 344.5/100,000 is registered in the age group of 50-59 years (958 patients); 0-9-year: 240 confirmed COVID-19 cases; 10-19-year: 250 confirmed COVID-19 cases.

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NORTH MACEDONIA COVID-19 EPI SITUATION

Figure 1. North Macedonia – Daily confirmed COVID-19 cases and deaths (n=5196) and deaths (n=247) by 23 June 2020

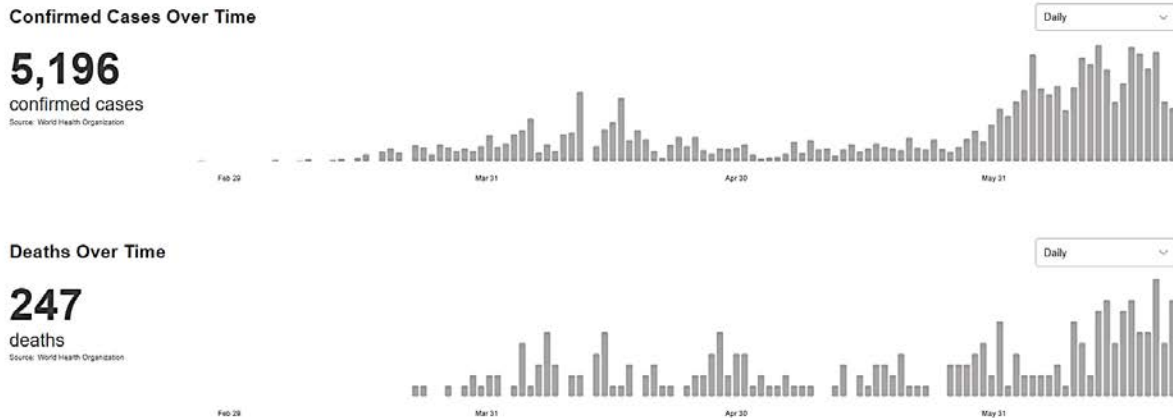
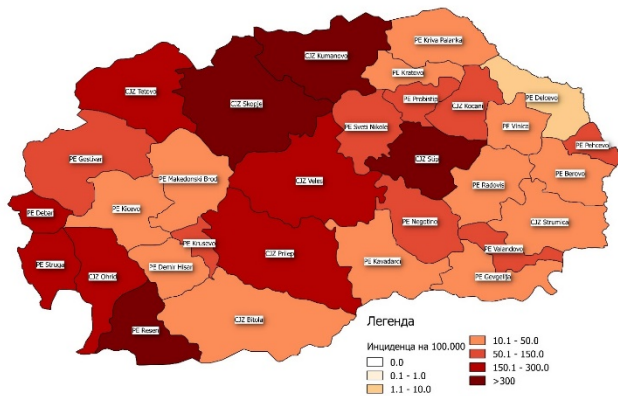


Figure 2. North Macedonia – COVID-19 incidence per 100,000 people, per city, as of 20 June 2020

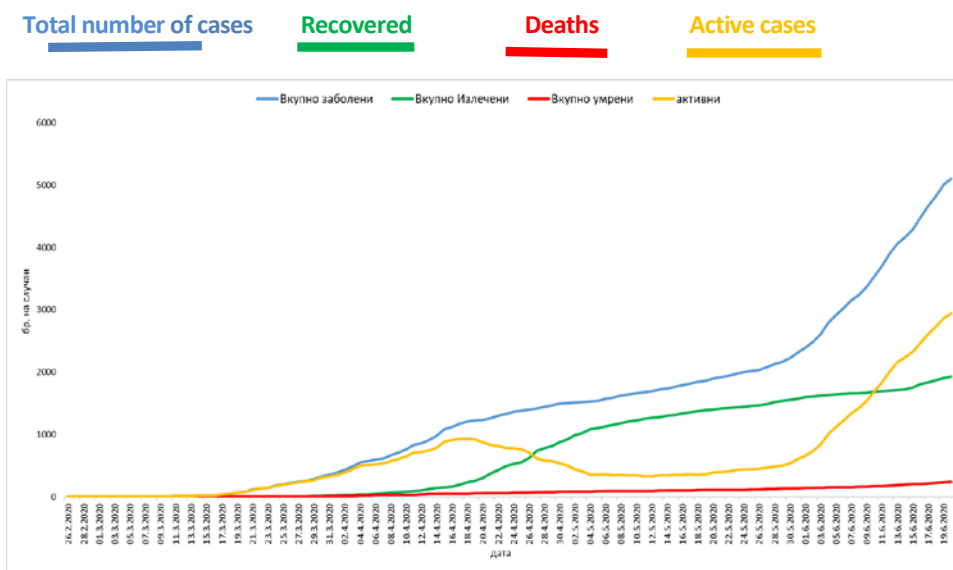


Geographic spread and deaths:
 COVID-19 cases are registered in **32 cities**. The most affected city is **Skopje with 2498 cases (49%)**.

The highest cumulative incidence per 100,000 inhabitants is registered in **Shtip (506.9 / 100,000)**, **Kumanovo (485.0 / 100,000)**, **Skopje (404.4 / 100,000)** and **Resen (360.8 / 100,000)**, while an incident rate with over 150 patients per 100,000 inhabitants was registered in **Debar, Tetovo, Struga, Veles, Prilep and Ohrid**. **66% of all deaths are registered in Skopje, Tetovo and Kumanovo**.

All data can be accessed at www.iph.mk

Figure 3. North Macedonia – COVID-19 statistics as of 20 June (n=5106)



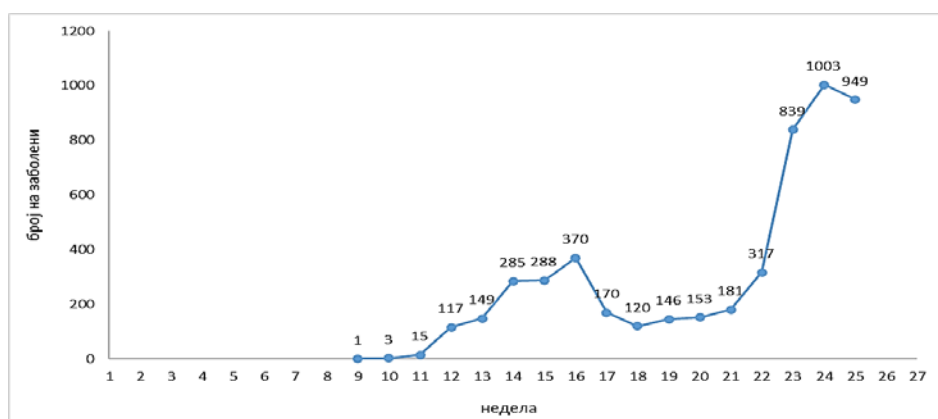
☹️ % Change of 14-day Cumulative Death Incidence is **▲112 %**

☹️ % Change of 14-day Cumulative COVID-19 Case Incidence is **▲77%**

☹️ Effective Reproduction Number - **1.1 (1 – 1.2)**
 Clusters phase

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Figure 4. Distribution of number of COVID-19 patients in North Macedonia by laboratory confirmation week, (n=5106)



New cases are registered continually since Week 11 in 2020.

The highest number of new cases in a single day (n=195) was reported on **12 June 2020**

The highest number of cases is registered in Week 24 (n=1003).

EUROPE COVID-19 SITUATION AS OF 19 JUNE 2020 IN LAST 7 DAYS; WWW.COVID19.WHO.INT

Globally, **almost 9 million confirmed cases of COVID-19 and more than 400,000 deaths** have been reported to WHO. Over the weekend, **the highest one-day increase in cases, >183,000, was recorded within 24 hours on 21 June.**

In the European Region, last week overall cases increased for the first time in over 6 weeks. Deaths continue to decline with lowest number of new deaths (281) recorded on 22 June since early March.

Across the Region, some countries that successfully suppressed transmission are now seeing an upswing in cases as they lift measures– 29 of 55 countries are showing more than a 10% increase in the number of new cases over the past two weeks. In addition, **30 countries have seen increases in new cumulative cases from weeks 24 to 25.**

Of the **11 small countries in the Region**, 6 continue to see stable trends with low levels of transmission maintained, indicating that the implementation of public health and social measures, as well as, the gradual adjustment of these measures has been effective. 5 of the 11 countries (**Slovenia, Malta, Luxembourg, Iceland, Montenegro**) have recently recorded slight increases in the number of new cases over the past two weeks however incidence remain slow.

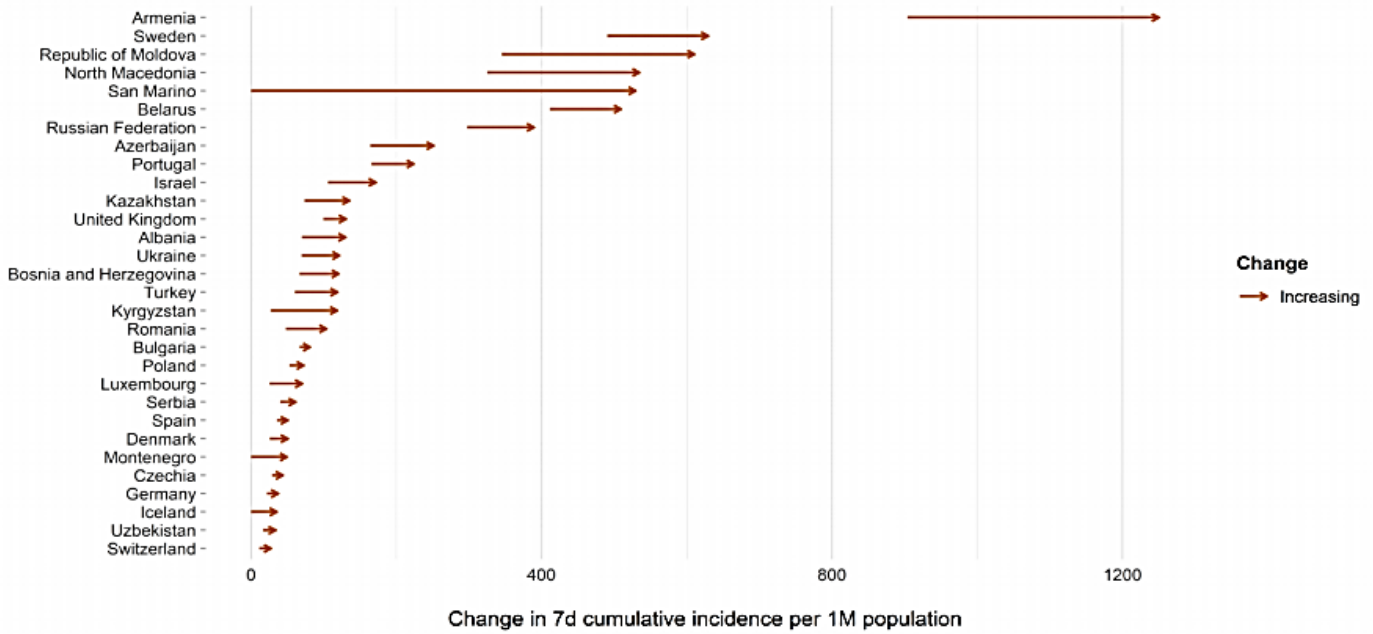
Over the past 14 days, cumulative cases across the Region increased **5.3% to 2,568,496 cases (from 2,438,733 cases on 16 June) and cumulative deaths increased by 2.7% to 193,866 deaths (from 188,842 deaths on 16 June).**

29 of 55 countries have shown an increase in the number of new cases greater than 10% in the past two weeks including:

- **>100%** - Croatia (2867%), Iceland (433%), Kosovo (304%), Israel (143%), Bulgaria (211%), Slovakia (205%), Bosnia and Herzegovina (176%), Kyrgyzstan (149%), Albania (143%), Slovenia, (125%);
- **40-99%** - Malta (84%), North Macedonia (77%), Uzbekistan (73%), Luxembourg (72%), Republic of Moldova (71%), Ukraine (63%), Romania (59%), Serbia (56%), Azerbaijan (48%), Switzerland (45%), Greece (43%), Jersey (40%);
- **<40%** - Czech Republic (25%), Kazakhstan (26%), Portugal (10%), Sweden (22%), Turkey (34%), Germany (14%), Armenia (17%).

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COVID-19: change in 7-day cumulative case incidence, select EURO countries*
 Week 24 (08 Jun - 14 Jun) to 25 (15 Jun - 21 Jun)



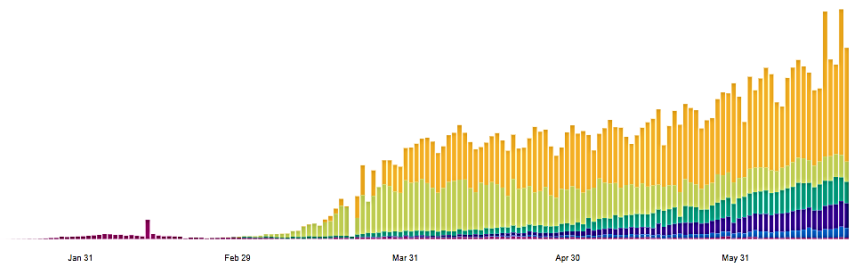
Source: COVID Intel Database

*For easier viewing, limited to countries with >10 cases in last 7d, and top 30 countries with highest change in incidence. If <30 countries had at least 10 cases in last 7 days, all shown.

Figure 5: Comparison Epi curve of confirmed COVID-19, by date of report and WHO region through 23 June 2020 for all WHO Regions

Case Comparison
 WHO Regions

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Americas | 4,437,946 confirmed cases |
| Europe | 2,562,642 confirmed cases |
| Eastern Mediterranean | 933,052 confirmed cases |
| South-East Asia | 620,115 confirmed cases |
| Africa | 232,215 confirmed cases |
| Western Pacific | 206,948 confirmed cases |



Source: World Health Organization

Situation in numbers (by WHO Region)

Total (new cases in last 24 hours)

| Region | Cases (24h) | Deaths (24h) |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Globally | 8 993 659 cases (133 326) | 469 587 deaths (3 847) |
| Africa | 232 215 cases (7 542) | 5 117 deaths (121) |
| Americas | 4 437 946 cases (67 425) | 224 207 deaths (2 436) |
| Eastern Mediterranean | 933 052 cases (18 534) | 20 997 deaths (466) |
| Europe | 2 562 642 cases (18 864) | 193 794 deaths (428) |
| South-East Asia | 620 115 cases (19 924) | 18 119 deaths (385) |
| Western Pacific | 206 948 cases (1 037) | 7 340 deaths (11) |

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*Remember to check the European Region Situation Dashboards available in both [ENGLISH](#) and [RUSSIAN](#) for the latest, verified information on the COVID-19 situation in the Region.

**Access a Mobile Friendly Version of the European Region COVID-19 Situation Dashboard [HERE](#)

Indicators for Countries of Interest

| Country | Cases | Deaths | Transmission scenario | Effective R | Overall Trend | Cumulative Cases per 100,000 population | 14-day Cumulative Cases per 100,000 population | % Change in 14-day Cumulative Incidence |
|--------------------|--------|--------|-----------------------|-----------------|---------------|---|--|---|
| Russian Federation | 592280 | 8206 | Clusters | 1 (1 – 1) | Stable | 406.03 | 79.26 | -6.18 |
| United Kingdom | 304331 | 42632 | Community | 1 (0.9 – 1) | Stable | 450.66 | 26.86 | -31.90 |
| Spain | 246272 | 28323 | Community | 1.1 (1 – 1.1) | Stable | 526.93 | 10.10 | -18.28 |
| Germany | 190359 | 8885 | Clusters | 1.2 (1.1 – 1.3) | Increasing | 227.93 | 7.38 | 9.66 |
| Turkey | 187685 | 4950 | Community | 1.1 (1.1 – 1.2) | Increasing | 224.96 | 21.04 | 31.91 |
| France | 160377 | 29640 | Community | 1.1 (1 – 1.1) | Stable | 246.24 | 9.83 | -29.28 |
| Belarus | 58505 | 346 | Community | 1 (0.9 – 1) | Stable | 618.94 | 104.47 | -20.57 |
| Sweden | 56043 | 5053 | Community | 0.9 (0.9 – 1) | Stable | 558.40 | 112.72 | 0.37 |
| Ukraine | 37241 | 1012 | Community | 1.2 (1.1 – 1.3) | Increasing | 84.65 | 22.23 | 57.32 |
| Poland | 31931 | 1356 | Community | 1 (0.9 – 1.1) | Stable | 84.28 | 14.17 | 2.53 |
| Israel | 20652 | 306 | Pending | 1.2 (1.1 – 1.3) | Increasing | 242.41 | 33.68 | 167.94 |
| Armenia | 20588 | 360 | Community | 1.1 (1 – 1.1) | Stable | 696.07 | 245.56 | 16.92 |
| Kazakhstan | 17732 | 120 | Clusters | 1.2 (1.1 – 1.3) | Increasing | 95.58 | 26.27 | 12.60 |
| Azerbaijan | 12729 | 154 | Clusters | 1.1 (1 – 1.2) | Stable | 126.69 | 51.51 | 50.83 |
| Uzbekistan | 6358 | 19 | Clusters | 1.1 (1 – 1.3) | Stable | 19.28 | 6.08 | 71.27 |
| Tajikistan | 5457 | 52 | Pending | 0.9 (0.8 – 1.1) | Stable | 58.55 | 9.96 | -41.99 |
| North Macedonia | 5106 | 238 | Clusters | 1.1 (1 – 1.2) | Stable | 245.07 | 99.74 | 97.90 |
| Albania | 1995 | 44 | Clusters | 1.2 (1 – 1.4) | Stable | 69.25 | 25.41 | 146.46 |

Key Public Health and Social Measures (PHSM) Situation Overview, as of 17 June 2020

As the local epidemiology of the disease changes, countries are adjusting public health and social measures accordingly;

- 10 countries in EURO are currently implementing partial or full domestic movement restrictions;
- 8 countries are currently in a state of national emergency due to COVID-19. In 23 countries, the state of emergency has ended/been lifted;
- All countries in the region have adjusted some of the national PHSM measures with most countries implementing a phased approach. Most common measures that are eased first are the opening of non-essential businesses and relaxation of domestic movement restrictions often followed by school openings and the reopening of cultural sport and/or religious establishments;
- In the past weeks **several countries in the Region** (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Denmark Germany, Israel, Kazakhstan, Montenegro, Spain, Ukraine) **have re-introduced measures at local, regional or national level again due to localized outbreaks.**

Countries in the Region are increasingly implementing requirements and/or **recommendations for the wearing of masks in public**, each adopting different approaches;

- 11 countries have introduced a mandatory requirement or issued recommendations for the universal wearing of face masks for asymptomatic individuals in public;

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- 37 countries have introduced similar requirements or recommendations but only applying to certain public settings according to a risk-based approach;
- Only 5 countries currently do not have a mask policy in place or have not issued recommendations for to wear face masks in public. (Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Turkmenistan)

Countries implementing international travel measures: 43 countries are currently implementing a mandatory quarantine for travelers (foreigners and/or citizens) arriving from abroad. 6 countries have fully lifted mandatory quarantine measures that were previously in place.

NORTH MACEDONIA COVID-19 HEALTH RESPONSE – in past 4 days

Test, Trace and Isolate

- **One health worker at the Clinical Hospital in Shtip** is currently infected with SARS-CoV-2 and total of 5 health workers working in the Department of neonatology, obstetrics and gynecology have been tested and the results are pending and in isolation. Seven mothers and their newborns from Shtip, Radovish, Pehchevo and Makedonska Kamenica are in isolation.
- The Army of North Macedonia currently has 29 active COVID-19 cases. Three of the patients are hospitalized, and the others are in isolation and undergoing home treatment. Most of the patients are from the units in Skopje and Kumanovo.
- **COVID-19 returns to Debar:** The first cases of people infected with the SARS-CoV-2 in Debar were confirmed on February 26 this year. It was a married couple from Centar Zupa, who returned from Italy and after that 11 people were registered on March 13, a month of state of emergency was declared. In the first phase, 51 people were registered, of which 47 recovered and four died. **Fifty days later**, on 5 June a COVID-19 case, a woman from the village of Dolno Kosovrasti, has been registered. Since then, 31 cases were registered, 18 of which were registered two days ago. That is the largest number of registered cases in one day since the beginning of the pandemic.

Official Statements

- **“More rigorous implementation of the measures will yield results.** Many events took place in the past period, after which neither control nor sanctions have been implemented, and new cases have emerged from these events. We are witnessing every day that events that are banned are being organized. I think that the control must be more rigorous,” declared the Minister of Health.
- **“The claim that North Macedonia has the highest mortality rate in the region as a result of the COVID-19 virus is inaccurate,** as North Macedonia is among the countries most transparent in publishing figures and statistics,” stated the World Health Organization's representative in North Macedonia. It is necessary to be careful when making comparisons between countries.
- **“The increased number of cases in the country and in many other countries is a huge warning. Responsible behavior as a collective begins with our individual actions** by maintaining the recommended physical distance, wearing protective masks and frequent hand washing or disinfection. It is imperative that we continue to be cautious and accept that in the coming months there is a great threat to our lives and societies,” stated the United Nations Resident Coordinator in North Macedonia.

Public Health Measures

- **The 8-day state of emergency declared on 15 June 2020 by the President expired on 22 June 2020.**
- The election campaign will be launched on Wednesday – June 24. **Heads of the MP candidates** signed the Code for fair and democratic election and **stressed their commitment to abide by COVID-19 protective measures to ensure public health safety. According to the elections timetable, COVID-19 patients, people in isolation and self-isolation will vote on 13 July, while the homebound, infirm and aged on 14 July. 15 July is Election Day, starting at 7 am and ending at 9 pm.**
- As of 26 June, the hospitality facilities will be able to work inside the facilities through an appropriate protocol for operation, the work of the gyms will be allowed and the malls would be able to work on Sunday.

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- The Infectious Diseases Commission is to meet with the **mayors of the municipalities in Skopje to discuss the engagement of the local self-governments in the response to COVID-19.**
- The **Islamic Religious Community will not organize pilgrimage this year** after announcements that Saudi Arabia will receive limited number of believers and as result of the COVID-19 risk.
- During 21-22 June, the Ministry of Interior (Mol) issued 7 isolation orders while 178 people signed self-isolation statements. Two people were caught in non-compliance with the measure of isolation and self-isolation and 707 people were caught without mandatory personal protection.
- During 20-21 June the Ministry of Interior (Mol) issued 213 isolation orders, while 299 people signed self-isolation statements. Moreover, eight people were caught ignoring stay-at-home orders during police controls. According to Mol, 805 people were caught without mandatory protective equipment, i.e. face masks. During 19-20 June, the Ministry of Interior (Mol) issued 366 isolation orders, while 216 people signed self-isolation statements. Moreover, four people were caught ignoring stay-at-home orders during police controls. According to Mol, 659 people were caught without mandatory protective equipment, i.e. face masks.
- In the period from 12-22 June, **13 people are in state quarantine on their own expense**, following the introduction of the Decree for mandatory state quarantine for people non-complying with the isolation measures, among which is one police office.
- **Elections:** The State Election Commission teams are currently in the field checking and documenting the actual situation in the pooling stations and finding appropriate solutions that would meet the safety and health protocols and measures for protection of voters and electoral bodied on the day of the early parliamentary elections. Checks are made at pooling stations on the entire territory of the country.

Physical Infrastructure

- **The Institute of Respiratory Diseases in Children-Kozle is admitting adult COVID-19 patients.** The hospital has about 60 beds to treat adult COVID-19 patients and 15 beds for children with suspected or confirmed COVID-19. Patients with mild and moderate infection are to be admitted. Internist and infectious disease teams, doctors, and nurses from both the Clinic for Infectious Diseases and other hospitals in the country will be engaged in the hospital. Since the start of pandemic in the country, the Institute of Respiratory Diseases in Children-Kozle has been designated to treat children with suspected or confirmed COVID-19.
- **The laboratory in the Hospital in Bitola** is making its final preparations to engage in testing of the hospitalized patients in the hospital but also in the region which will contribute to decreasing the burden of the laboratory of the Institute of Public Health.
- The increasing number of diagnosed and hospitalized COVID-19 patients has delayed the return to normal functioning of the public health facilities, however, only the chronic interventions are delayed while the emergency interventions are conducted.
- **COVID-19 Hospital Admissions:** Over the past 24 hours, 9 patients are admitted to the Clinic for Infectious Diseases where a total of 109 patients are hospitalized – of which 46 are on oxygen support and no patients are on ventilator. 13 patients are hospitalized in the installed hospital and one adult and 2 children patients in the Kozle Hospital. In the 8 September Hospital, 13 patients are admitted and a total of 127 patients are hospitalized there – of which 7 patients are on respirator. 31 patients are hospitalized in the Clinical Hospital in Bitola and 20 patients in Shtip. 85 confirmed and suspect patients are hospitalized in the hospitals in Tetovo, Ohrid, Veles, Kumanovo and Prilep. Additional patients could be potentially hospitalized in Bitola (5 beds and potentially more floors could be designated for COVID-19 patients), Ohrid (9 beds), Kumanovo (9 beds), Gostivar (9 beds), Shtip (12 beds).

Borders and Travel

- The Government, based on proposal by the Commission on Infectious Diseases, on 23 June adopted the following decisions related to movement/traffic of people/passengers through land state borders and airports:
 - As of Friday, June 26, 2020, all land border crossings will be fully open for unimpeded movement of passengers and vehicles without attaching PCR tests and without reference to domestic isolation or

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mandatory state quarantine. Until then, to enter North Macedonia it is mandatory to submit a valid negative PCR test, not older than 72 hours as well as 14 days home self-isolation or state quarantine (if travelers do not have valid PCR test).

- Until the full liberalization of the conditions for entry and exit from the country on Friday, 26 June 2020, foreign nationals will be able only to transit through North Macedonia by using all border crossings within a maximum of 5 hours.
- Skopje International Airport and Ohrid Airport "St. Apostle Paul" are still closed for passengers as of 18 March and will be re-open for commercial flights on July 01, 2020.
- The Government introduced measures to decrease the risk of those travelling with private vehicles by imposing a maximum of three passengers being allowed within a single automobile, including the driver. All three are obliged to wear protective masks and gloves.
- If symptoms occur (fever, tiredness, dry cough), Travelers should contact health care provider or the designated epidemiological contact telephones service and inform about their travel history and symptoms; they should not visit a health facility.

NORTH MACEDONIA COVID-19 SOCIOECONOMIC IMPACT AND RESPONSE

- **Both deposits and crediting are on the rise.** Total deposits are up by 7.8 % on an annual basis, largely due to the increase in household deposits, while corporate loans registered a monthly growth of 3.3 %. According to National Bank, total deposits have continued to rise on monthly level. Total loans have also continued to rise on monthly level. On an annual basis, the credit growth rate is 5.9 % and is largely driven by the growth of loans granted to the household sector. Annual deposits in the corporate and household sectors have risen by 9.8 and 8.2 % respectively. Annual crediting in the corporate and household sectors is up 3.3 and 8.6 % respectively.
- **The average monthly net salary in April** amounted to 25 830 denars and compared to the net salary in April increased by 4.2%.
- The prices of oil derivatives are increased by one denar from midnight.
- **Purchasing power:** The average citizen of North Macedonia spends 43% of what EU citizens spend on average. This means that the purchasing power of the citizens of North Macedonia is 57 percent lower than the purchasing power of EU citizens. Among Romanians, consumption averages almost twice as much as in North Macedonia, at 79 percent of the EU average. In Slovenia, personal consumption is 81% of the EU average, and in Croatia it is 66%. Residents of Greece have a purchasing power of 77% of the European average, and Bulgaria has a purchasing power of 59% of the EU average. In Turkey, consumption is 68% of average EU consumption, Montenegro – 60%, Serbia – 49%, Albania – 40%, Bosnia and Herzegovina – 42% of European purchasing power. Ukraine, Moldova and Kosovo are not included in the statistics.

SUPPORT TO NORTH MACEDONIA COVID-19 EMERGENCY

- Through emergency non-refundable aid, **Japan provided the drug Favipiravir (Avigan)** to countries affected by COVID-19 in partnership with United Nations Project Services Office (UNOPS). It is an antiviral therapy used in Japan for treatment of influenza in 2014. **North Macedonia received treatment for 100 patients.**
- The company HTL Macedonia, a member of the NOVOMATIK Group donated disinfectants in the amount of 20 000 euros to the 8 September Hospital following the previous donation of hospital beds to the hospital in the amount of 20 000 euros.

HIGHLIGHTS OF WHO NORTH MACEDONIA ACTION IN COVID-19 TIMES

WHO/Europe deploys expert to North Macedonia for support with new COVID-19 surge

- As the COVID-19 pandemic keeps a firm grip on the world, several countries in the WHO European Region continue to face an increase in new cases, while others are seeing a resurgence in infections. In the past week, North Macedonia alone has reported over 1,000 positive cases and 50 deaths.
- Dr Fabio Scano, Senior Advisor at WHO/Europe, arrived to Skopje on the request of the North Macedonian

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Ministry of Health to work together with national authorities to enhance understanding of the evolving COVID-19 surge and the impact of ongoing measures.

Dr Scano will meet with the President Stevo Pendarovski, health officials at the Commission for Infectious Diseases, the COVID-19 Emergency Operation Center, the Institute for Public Health, Public Health Centers, COVID-19 laboratories and other health institutions which are dealing with the outbreak. He will also visit most affected municipalities and will speak with mayors and the country's religious leaders as well as UN agencies. A meeting with the local press is planned on Thursday 25 June.

The COVID-19 response WHO mission takes place in the framework of long-term cooperation between the WHO Country Office in North Macedonia and the Government.

- This country mission follows 2 days, WHO /MOH technical review conducted online on 18-19 June 2020, to discuss and identify gaps in the COVID-19 country response so far in all areas including: case management, tracing contacts, testing, risk communication, infection control and surveillance.

WHAT IS [NEW]?

DG's Statements – WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the media briefing on COVID-19 – 22 June can be accessed in full [Here](#). **Dr. Tedros'** key messages focused on:

- WHO Director-General Dr Tedros, in his regular media briefing, urged countries to double down on the fundamental public health measures, while facing the delicate balance between protecting their people and minimizing the social and economic damage caused by the pandemic. "It's not a choice between lives and livelihoods. Countries can do both."
- Guided by solidarity, countries must work together to ensure supplies are prioritized for countries where there are large numbers of critically ill patients, and that supplies remain available to treat other diseases for which it is needed.
- **It is also important to check that suppliers can guarantee quality, as there is a high risk of substandard or falsified products entering the market.**
- **Of the 82 countries that have responded to a survey on essential services, more than half have limited or suspended at least one service delivery platform, such as outpatient or inpatient services, or community-based care.**
- **Around two-thirds of countries reported disruptions to routine immunization, diagnosis and treatment for noncommunicable diseases and family planning and contraception.**
- Countries are using a variety of strategies to deal with these disruptions, including triage, telemedicine and redirecting patients to alternative health facilities.
- **On 27 June**, WHO Director-General Dr Tedros will join other global leaders and artists in [the Global Goal: Unite for Our Future campaign](#), concert and summit, being organised by Global Citizen in support of the global COVID-19 response. The event will provide governments, corporate leaders and philanthropists with a platform to make their commitments towards the fair distribution of tools and treatments for COVID-19. [WHO's Regional Office for the Americas has been chosen as a regional implementing partner.](#)

Public Health and social measures

- An article on [an analysis of International Health Regulations Emergency Committees and Public Health Emergency of International Concern Designations](#) was recently published and is available [Here](#). Nine events have been assessed for potential declaration of a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC). A PHEIC is defined as an extraordinary event that constitutes a public health risk to other states through international spread and requires a coordinated international response. The WHO Director-General convenes Emergency Committees (ECs) to provide their advice on whether an event constitutes a PHEIC. This first comprehensive analysis of EC rationale provides recommendations to increase clarity of EC decisions which will strengthen the IHR and WHO's legitimacy in future outbreaks.

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Vulnerable populations

- A scientific Brief on **Breastfeeding and COVID-19** was recently published (available [Here](#)). This scientific brief examines the evidence to date on the risks of transmission of COVID-19 from an infected mother to her baby through breastfeeding as well as evidence on the risks to child health from not breastfeeding.
- A UNICEF report on **How COVID-19 threatens the futures of 600 million South Asian children** was recently published (available [Here](#)). The lives and futures of children across South Asia are being torn apart by the Covid-19 crisis. While they may be less susceptible to the virus itself, children are being profoundly affected by the fallout, including the economic and social consequences of the lockdown and other measures taken to counter the pandemic.
- An IOM policy paper on **CROSS-BORDER HUMAN MOBILITY AMID AND AFTER COVID-19** was recently published [Here](#). The COVID-19 pandemic is a public health, socioeconomic, political, human rights and mobility crisis that has resulted in over two million cases and the death of over a hundred thousand people (till date) and has severely impacted national economies worldwide. The summary can be accessed [Here](#).
- The first factsheet on **Addressing the mental health needs of vulnerable populations in the COVID-19 response in the WHO European Region** was recently published [Here](#) and in [Russian](#). While many uncertainties remain about how the pandemic will progress, the impact on the mental and psychosocial well-being of those most affected and their communities will be large and enduring.

Case management

- WHO updated its [Q&A page](#) to include information on dexamethasone and COVID-19.

Other WHO News

- A WHO news story on the **IOC joining forces with WHO and the United Nations to fight COVID-19** was recently published [Here](#). On Olympic Day, 23 June 2020, the International Olympic Committee and WHO together with the United Nations launch a partnership to encourage individuals and communities around the world to be #HEALTHYtogether. The three partners and Olympic athletes will spotlight the global collaboration needed to stay healthy and reduce the spread and impact of COVID-19.

WEBEX SESSIONS FOR THIS WEEK

The WHO Regional Office for Europe and ECDC is **holding an online meeting on COVID-19 sero-epidemiological studies**, on **Wednesday 24 June at 13:00 CEST**. These calls are planned for every two weeks on Wednesdays at 13:00 CEST. There are simultaneous interpretations into Russian during the meeting. Attached you will find the (translated) slides and notes from the meeting on 10 June.
