

# SITUATION REPORT #10

## COVID-19



UNITED NATIONS  
NORTH MACEDONIA

14 MAY 2020

# 1,723

confirmed COVID-19 cases in the country.

# 4

 months.

the age of the youngest patient.

# 1,235

fully recovered patients.

# 95

deaths associated with COVID-19.

## KEY GOVERNMENT MEASURES AND RESPONSE



### TRAVEL

- State of emergency is in force across the entire territory of the country until 15 May 2020.
- Movement is prohibited between 19:00 and 05:00hrs during weekdays, with further restrictions for elderly people and youth up to age 18.
- Mandatory use of masks, scarfs, shawls or similar piece of clothing to cover the mouth and nose in all enclosed public spaces such as markets, pharmacies or banks has been introduced on 22 April 2020. The same is applicable in crowded open areas.
- Gathering of groups of more than two people in public spaces is prohibited, excluding parents of children up to age 14.
- Restaurants and bars will open for business during next week, implementing strict measures to ensure safety.
- All public transport to and from Kumanovo and Tetovo has been stopped.
- International travel to and from country is limited due to imposed measures within North Macedonia and in other countries.
- Travelers returning from COVID-19 affected areas, regardless of their residence status, are subject to mandatory 21-day quarantine.



### HEALTH

- MoH has initiated systematic testing and set up COVID-19 screening and testing points countrywide with the support of the private doctors' association. Laboratory capacities for testing have been gradually increasing. Mobile testing teams, designated primarily for elderly and high-risk communities, remain deployed.
- The Health Insurance Fund introduced e-prescription for chronic conditions. From the beginning of May, people with chronic conditions can obtain or extend their prescriptions through a phone call and general practitioners are able to prescribe electronically.
- Ministry of Health (MoH) started mass screening of different groups of the population to see the percent of people exposed to COVID-19.
- Cancer patients are now able to receive therapy closer to their homes with the distribution of therapy to other health centres, rather than visiting the Oncology clinic in Skopje.
- 217 of the 243 health professionals infected with coronavirus recovered and most of them have returned to work.

For more information on the health response and epidemiological situation see WHO Flash Updates available at: <https://un.mk/reports/>



### ECONOMY

By 8 May, the Government:

- Amended a decree on subsidizing social contributions to most affected companies, to restrict the conditions under which eligible companies can lay-off workers, as well as to allow use of multiple types of assistance related to COVID-19;
- Adopted decrees on finalizing primary and secondary education, as well as enrolment into the tertiary education, in extraordinary circumstances related to COVID-19 pandemic;
- Adopted a misdemeanor procedure to sanction domestic and foreign citizens for failing to use personal protective equipment (PPE), as defined in the Decree for use of PPE;
- Adopted a procedure to donate funds in the COVID-19 Response Fund;
- Extended the deadlines of construction licenses that expired during the state of emergency for 60 days after the emergency period;
- Adopted a Donation Protocol between the Ministry of Defense of North Macedonia and the Kingdom of Norway and authorized the Minister of Defense to sign it. The Protocol includes the financing of the mobile army hospital ROLE 2 MTF and an additional €200,000 for medical material;
- Canceled the implementation of the project for free holiday and recreation of children from socially endangered families in the summer 2020;

The Government also instructed the Ministry of Interior (MoI) to investigate the context and potential responsibility of organizing an orthodox religious event on 7 May that put the citizens of Struga at an increased risk of infections; condemned the verbal attack against the journalist of TV Klan during the Police Day celebration and instructed MoI to investigate and sanction responsible actors.

The Government also accepted the Resignation of the Health Insurance Fund Director Den Doncev and appointed Mile Sugarev as the acting director of the Health Insurance Fund.



### EDUCATION

- All educational institutions remain closed.
- On 30 April, the Government adopted a set of regulations related to education that allow for online completion of the school year, including continuation of primary and secondary education online until 10 June; and postponement of enrolment for the school year 2020-2021 for first-graders until June, with results published by 15 July.
- In addition, the Ministry of Education will draft regulations to allow for exemption of students in the final year of secondary education from final state exams

## KEY GAPS IDENTIFIED AND EMERGING NEEDS

['matura'] and to allow enrolment in the tertiary education without the final exam; and to extend duration of expired study programmes;

- One parent of children under the age of ten and one parent of children with disabilities (regardless of age) can stay at home for childcare during the school closure
- Ministry of Education and Science promoting online learning opportunities and education programmes through the national broadcaster and other means.
- National Digital Platform, a one-stop-shop for sharing online lessons, continues to expand with new video lessons for all levels of education. Over 1,000 videos are available in both Macedonian and Albanian languages. Additional vocational education lessons will be made available.
- TV lessons conducted by pre-primary and primary teachers are also available on national television every weekday.
- Screening of employees in kindergartens started as part of the preparatory steps towards reopening.

## HEALTH

The gaps and needs related to the public health response for the period of three months, identified by the Government with the assistance of WHO and based on the rapid assessment of the relevant country mechanisms and response structures in early April, have been estimated at approximately \$31/€28.7 million.

### Technical needs:

- Conducting risk assessments for easing measures and enhance planning capacity for transition strategy;
- Assess the socio-economic impact on the health system, during and after the crisis;
- Determine the level of exposure to the virus and immunity among the population;
- Review of the testing algorithms in consideration of the strategy to increase testing;
- Increase the use of eHealth and telemedicine to improve and facilitate population preventive interventions;
- Strengthen epidemiological capacity.

### Critical needs:

- Supplies and materials: laboratory kits and reagents; personal protective equipment (PPE); mechanical ventilators;
- Intensifying risk communication;
- Socio-economic relief for vulnerable groups and employment protection;
- Maintaining essential health and social services;
- Protecting health care workers, whether those working in COVID-19 designated facilities or elsewhere countrywide, because of community transmission;
- Mental health support to health workers and the public, especially the most vulnerable.

### Challenges:

- Procurement: hampered access to local or international markets for supplies and equipment due to shortages and logistical constraints;
- Ensuring sustainability of health facilities and health care, during and after the crisis.
- Outreach and social support to the most vulnerable;
- Ensuring continuity of treatment and access to regular health care for all, including the vulnerable groups with other diseases and pathologies;
- Managing isolation and scaling up community engagement across all regions of the country;
- Compliance with instructions and self-isolation.

## SOCIO - ECONOMIC

The Spring 2020 European Economic Forecast issued by the European Commission in early May suggested a significantly worsened economic outlook for North Macedonia during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Commission estimates a decline of 3.9% in 2020, as result of the disrupted external and domestic demand. Unemployment is likely to increase in 2020, followed by a sharp drop in public revenues against sizable fiscal measures to mitigate the crisis, which will further increase deficit and debt levels in 2020. With gradual restrictions' easing and recovery of foreign demand, assessed by the Commission as a most likely scenario, recovery will start in the second half of the year, and continue to pick up in 2021. The growth is expected reach 4% in 2020, however with significant downside risks.

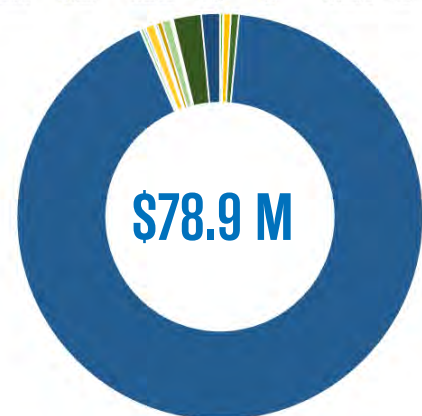
## INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR RESPONSE

To-date, international assistance to North Macedonia's COVID-19 response has reached \$79/€73.2 million in grant support, off which \$9/€8.3 million has been made available to finance the immediate health response and \$70/€64.8 million has been earmarked for socio-economic response, a significant share of which is expected to be operationalized in the coming months. The three biggest sources of support for the response (in terms of grants or in kind support) have been the European Union (EU, \$72.6/€67.2 million), the United Nations (UN, \$1.8/€1.7 million) and the United States (\$1.2/€1.1 million), followed by Norway, Switzerland, Czech Republic and China. Most of this funding has been redirected from existing or planned programmes for North Macedonia, with limited new COVID-19 specific funding being made available predominately for immediate health response.

In addition, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and EU have provided the country with sizable favourable conditions loans of over \$521/€483 million. These loans offer easily accessible credit financing to support the liquidity of the budget and help reduce risks and cost to the country associated with borrowing on the currently uncertain international markets.

### International grant/in kind support for response

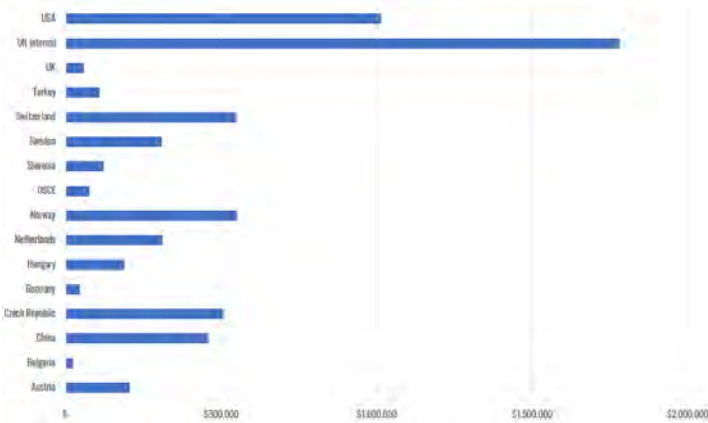
• Austria • Bulgaria • China • Czech Republic • EU • Germany • Hungary • Netherlands • Norway  
• OSCE • Slovenia • Sweden • Switzerland • Turkey • UN/Interim • USA



Financial data in US Dollars, based on triangulation of data compiled by the UN in North Macedonia, information made available by the Secretariat for European Affairs (Government of North Macedonia) and estimated value of in-kind donations based on average market prices of items in cases when only item description was provided. Data includes secured funding and announced funding that may be pending final approval.

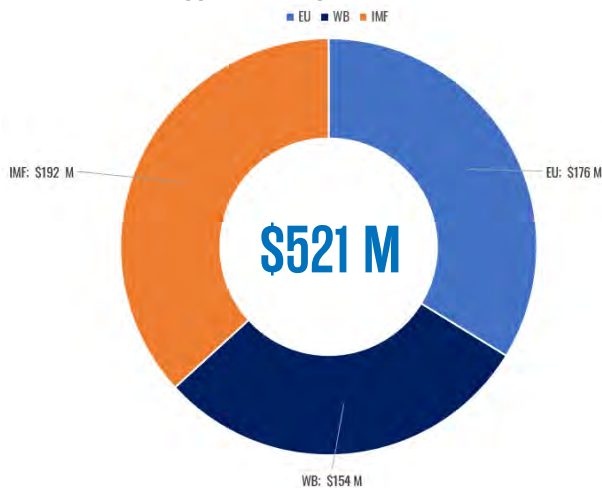
## INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR RESPONSE

### Non EU grant/in kind support for response



Financial data in US Dollars, based on triangulation of data compiled by the UN in North Macedonia, information made available by the Secretariat for European Affairs (Government of North Macedonia) and estimated value of in-kind donations based on average market prices of items in cases when only item description was provided. Data includes secured funding and announced funding that may be pending final approval.

### International loan support for response



Financial data in US Dollars. Source: UN North Macedonia and SEP

## UN SUPPORT FOR RESPONSE

United Nations in North Macedonia has collectively supported the Government and international partners with the overview of needs and procurement of urgent medical and protective supplies, and equipment for immediate response, as well as conducting the analysis and framing the broader response to the socio-economic impact of the crisis.

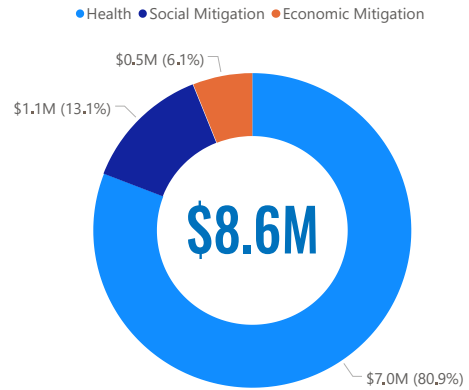
The UN agencies, funds and programmes in North Macedonia are – in close coordination with its Government counterparts – have reported the following activities since the issuance of the previous Situation Report #9 (6 May):

The **World Health Organization (WHO)** organized a training for scaling up national laboratory capacities, which will include national laboratories engaged in COVID-19 testing.

WHO is also supporting the authorities in assessing the situation in the process of relaxation of restrictive public health measures.

**United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF)** is procuring 1,000 testing kits for n-CoV-2 that will be available by May 17. In partnership with the Red Cross, UNICEF

### Grant assistance channeled through the UN entities in North Macedonia



Financial data in US Dollars, includes secured funding and announced funding pending approval. Source: UN North Macedonia

delivered some 2,350 hygiene and WASH supply packages to vulnerable households living in Roma communities throughout the country received (1,000 HHs in the capital Skopje, 500 in the city of Prilep, 500 in the city of Bitola, 250 in the city of Gostivar, and 100 in the city of Delcevo).

UNICEF commissioned a group of national experts and a Think Tank institute to conduct a rapid, child- and gender-sensitive socio-economic assessment of the medium- and long-term impact of Covid-19 over child well-being in North Macedonia. The assessment will focus on three complementary domains: (i) impact on specific child-related sectors (social and child protection, education, and health); (ii) impact on monetary and non-monetary poverty; and (iii) impact on public finance, in particular the capacity of the Government to respond and mitigate the impact of the crisis through public investments in key child related sectors. The findings and recommendations of this assessment will be ready by the end of June 2020.

On April 30, 2020, the **World Bank** approved 98.5/€90 million of financing to support North Macedonia's efforts to prevent, detect and respond to the threat posed by COVID-19, strengthen national systems for public health preparedness, and help mitigate some of the social consequences of the pandemic. More information about the project can be found [here](#).

In addition to this emergency project, on Government's request, the World Bank activated €50 million from an emergency funding mechanism that is embedded in the recently approved Local Roads Connectivity Project. This mechanism provides fast-disbursing funds that will be used to support viable micro, small and medium enterprises impacted by both the public health measures limiting commercial activities and by depressed demand locally and internationally.

With EU support, the **International Organization for Migration (IOM)** delivered the following Personal Protective Equipment to the Border Police: 3,000 pieces of protective surgical masks, 3,000 pieces of protective gloves, 3,000 pieces of hand disinfectant gel, 100 liters of disinfectant concentrate and 20 large disinfectant sprayers (pumps) for disinfectant solutions.

**United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)** has procured and distributed 25,000 protective masks, 4,000 sets of different disinfectants and 3,650 medical tubes, filters and catheter to the Ministry of Health and the Infectious Diseases Clinic on 7 and 11 May 2020 as part of the "EU Assistance to COVID-19 Response of the Government of North Macedonia" project.

**United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)** initiated the procedure to provide COVID-19 protective equipment to the law enforcement officers of the international airport in Skopje, as part of a UNODC initiative on promoting the rule

## UN SUPPORT FOR RESPONSE

of law and good governance through targeted border control measures at ports and airports in the region, funded by the European Union.

At this time of increased use of the internet for use as a 'digital office', shopping online, joining online forums and webinars, UNODC sought to support the Government through offering assistance in addressing cybercrime as the significantly increased risk of cyber criminality becomes well documented and the risk of exposure to such crime grows correspondingly.

UNODC support to law enforcement agencies in the region has increased further with the offer of free access to UN e-Learning modules for operational staff in the area of human trafficking and migrant smuggling. These efforts are ongoing. As part of its prevention programme, UNODC has disseminated information on parenting during COVID-19 to support the families of the region in coping with the situation. For better outreach, the materials were translated in the local languages and are available [here](#).

**United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)** continues to inform the persons under its mandate on all the vital information regarding COVID-19 through their [Help Page](#) and the [Hotline](#) +389(0)70229001, which is administered by professional UNHCR staff.

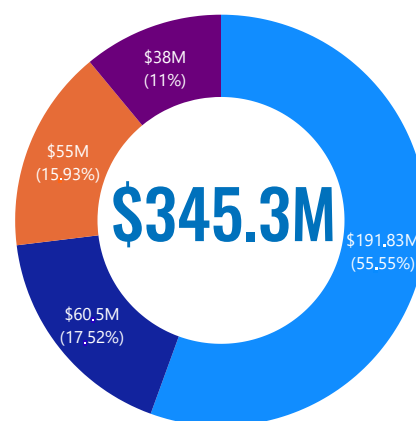
UNHCR printed the UN guidance on parenting and the storybook "My hero is you" on different languages. These materials were distributed with the persons under the UNHCR mandate. Additionally, a list with online activities and events published by the Ministry of Health was translated and shared with the communities.

The **United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UN Women)** will support the distribution of 33 emergency packages with long lasting food, vitamin supplements, hygiene products and protective equipment to persons with disabilities, former users of the Public Institution Banja BANSKO, and to their personal assistants and caregivers. This initiative is realized by CSO HERA in partnership with DPO Polio Plus, in the frames of the Joint Project Working Bottom up – Building a local model on deinstitutionalization, implemented by UN Women, UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF in North Macedonia, and funded by UNPRPD. UN Women supported the publication of information material with practical advices on how to protect mental health and manage anxiety in times of pandemic for the representatives of the Army of North Macedonia.

**Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO)** continuously monitors the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on agrifood chains and food markets. The fourth weekly Rapid Survey of Food Supply Chains was completed on 11 May, with evidence collected directly from farmers and market actors through 471 questionnaires in 14 countries in Europe and Central Asia (ECA). The survey informed the issuance of FAO's first [Regional food market situation](#) and policy bulletin in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which reviews the ECA region and covers North Macedonia as well. It provides an overview of the export policies of major regional food exporters, the national policy responses aimed at mitigating the pandemic's impact on food markets, domestic supplies and food market stability and encourages governments to take corrective action limiting long-standing consequences and gives specific recommendations for that. By collection information from countries, FAO started the preparation of the second issue of the Regional food market situation and policy bulletin in response to COVID-19.

Loan assistance secured through the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, per category

● General ● Social Mitigation ● Economic Mitigation ● Health



Financial data in US Dollars, includes secured funding and announced funding pending approval. Source: UN North Macedonia

A draft Country Preparedness and Response Plan (CPRP) has been developed through collaboration between the United Nations, the Government of North Macedonia and international partners, looking into health and socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 crisis. The provided a brief assessment of the situation, including risks to the most vulnerable, and resource gaps, and it outlined the UN Country Team's COVID-19 programmatic portfolio, with gaps as needed to inform the use of relevant funding instruments; and the UN's non-programmatic support in terms of analysis, policy advice, communication and messaging.

A detailed analysis of the socio-economic impact of the situation is currently ongoing and will be incorporated in the COVID-19 Response Framework (CRF) in the coming weeks. The CRF will offer analytical and resource mobilization framework to guide international support in response to COVID-19 in North Macedonia.

## MAIN LINKS

### Government

<https://koronavirus.gov.mk/>

### Institute of public health

[www.iph.mk](http://www.iph.mk)

### Ministry of health

<http://zdravstvo.gov.mk/korona-virus/>  
<https://www.facebook.com/zdravstvomk/>

### WHO North Macedonia

<https://www.facebook.com/WHOMKD>  
<https://twitter.com/WHOMKD>

## IMPORTANT NUMBERS

If symptoms (fever, tiredness, dry cough) occur, individuals should contact health care provider or the designated epidemiological contact telephones service and inform about their travel history and symptoms; they should not visit the health facility unless told to do so.

### In case of symptoms and asymptomatic travelers

CPH Bitola	071 261 330	CPH Skopje	071 289 614
CPH Veles	071 219 278	CPH Strumica	072 235 543
CPH Gevgelija	078 545 444	CPH Tetovo	075 240 464
CPH Kochani	071 373 913	RU Gostivar	076 365 161
CPH Kumanovo	070 215 851	CPH Shtip	078 365 613
CPH Ohrid	070 723 029	IPH Skopje	078 387 194
CPH Prilep	076 475 747		

### Psychological support

Parents of (pre)school children	072 912 676
Self-isolated adults	072 919 009
Citizens of Debar and Center Zhupa	070 241 807

### General information

"Alo Doctor" Call Center	02 15 123
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