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North Macedonia

Country Fact Sheet 2024

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For further information on voluntary return and reintegration, please visit the information portal www.ReturningfromGermany.de, or contact your local return and reintegration office.

© IOM December 2024 Information may be outdated due to dynamic developments in the country.

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1 Health Care

General information on health care

There are two different options for the patient to access health care. Firstly, there are services covered under the health insurance fund (HIF), while the alternative is, to pay the treatment by themselves. Through HIF coverage, general physicians are the first to be contacted in need. At this point, access to these services is free of charge. After primary examination, the General Physician refers the patient to higher levels of care, if necessary, specifying the type of treatment and the health care institution at which the treatment should be obtained. If additional examinations are needed, specialists can refer the patient further. Tertiary care depends on previous treatments and referral at the secondary level at general or other specialized hospitals. The role of the General Physician is central in the therapy management of the patient. There are two types of health insurance: compulsory and voluntary insurance for some forms of health care. The compulsory health insurance includes health care benefits at the Primary Health Care level, at the Specialist consultative Health Care level and Hospital services.

The following services are not covered by the compulsory health insurance and, if necessary, might be a subject to voluntary health insurance:

- aesthetic surgery, sanatorium treatment and medical rehabilitation of certain chronic non-communicable diseases (except for children up to 18 years of age)
- in-patient health services with higher standard of care/medicines

not included in the List of medicines determined by the HIF

- orthopedic facilities and instruments not included in the list prepared by the HIF or made of higher standard of materials
- accommodation in gerontology facilities.

A detailed list of medical services which are not covered by HIF is available at <https://fzo.org.mk/>

Availability of medical facilities and doctors

Primary ambulatory care is provided mainly by private primary care providers and by outpatient specialist-consultative providers in the 34 Health Centers and some private providers. Alongside the wide network of primary care providers, the system was designed to provide specialist services on an outpatient basis with wider outreach. The ambulatory specialist services are provided mainly through health care providers in the public domain. At tertiary level, services are provided by university clinics and institutes in the capital of Skopje. These 28 university clinics have been the first pillar of tertiary care in the country. Hospitals can be general (with at least internal medicine, general surgery, gynecology and obstetrics, and pediatric wards), specialized or clinical. The contact details of key hospitals can be found in the contact list contained within this document.

Admission to medical facilities

To be admitted into the compulsory health insurance, the applicant can register at the local office of the

1 Health Care

HIF. The applicant needs to present a valid ID, completed application for health insurance, document verifying the payment of the mandatory health insurance participation and medical legitimation. Since the outbreak of COVID-19 if symptoms occur (fever, tiredness, dry cough), 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 a health facility.

Availability and costs of medication

The insured persons and their family members have the obligation to participate to the costs of the health services provided on their own, but not more than 20% of the total cost of the treatment. A detailed list of available medication, as well as related costs is available at: <https://lekovi.zdravstvo.gov.mk/>

Medications from the list of available medications are issued on the insured person based on the prescription issued by the selected General Physician in electronic form signed with a qualified digital signature.

Access for returnees

Eligibility and requirements: The compulsory health insurance is available for all citizens of the Republic of North Macedonia, their families, foreigners who have temporary or permanent residence status, persons with a registered refugee status, or another recognized international protection status, as well as asylum seekers.

Registration procedure: The returnees and their families can register at the local office of the Health Insurance Fund.

Required documents: Valid ID, completed application for health insurance, document verifying the payment of the mandatory health insurance participation and medical legitimation.

2 Labour Market

General information on labour market

North Macedonia has primarily trade and service-oriented economy. Though traditionally based on agriculture, the share of employment in this sector has steadily declined in recent years. According to the data from 2023, 23% of the employees in North Macedonia are employed in the industrial sector, 20% are in the trade sector and 7% are employed in the agriculture sector. According to the data published by the State Statistical Office, as of April 2024 the unemployment rate has fallen to 12.9%. Nevertheless, youth unemployment and long-term unemployment remain high.

Finding employment

The Employment Agency of the Republic of North Macedonia deals with all questions related to employment: <http://www.avrm.gov.mk>/Additionally, in the past few years many private employment agencies established themselves:

- www.vrabortuvanje.com.mk
- www.najdirabota.com.mk
- www.dekra.mk (branch of Dekra Arbeit GmbH from Germany, offers consulting in the area of human resources, temporary employment, etc.)
- www.kariera.mk

Unemployment assistance

The Employment Agency provides the following services for unemployed persons:

- Registering the unemployed person in the registry
- Obligation for regular visits by the unemployed person which can be on

a monthly basis for active employment seekers, or on a six-month basis for inactive employment seekers

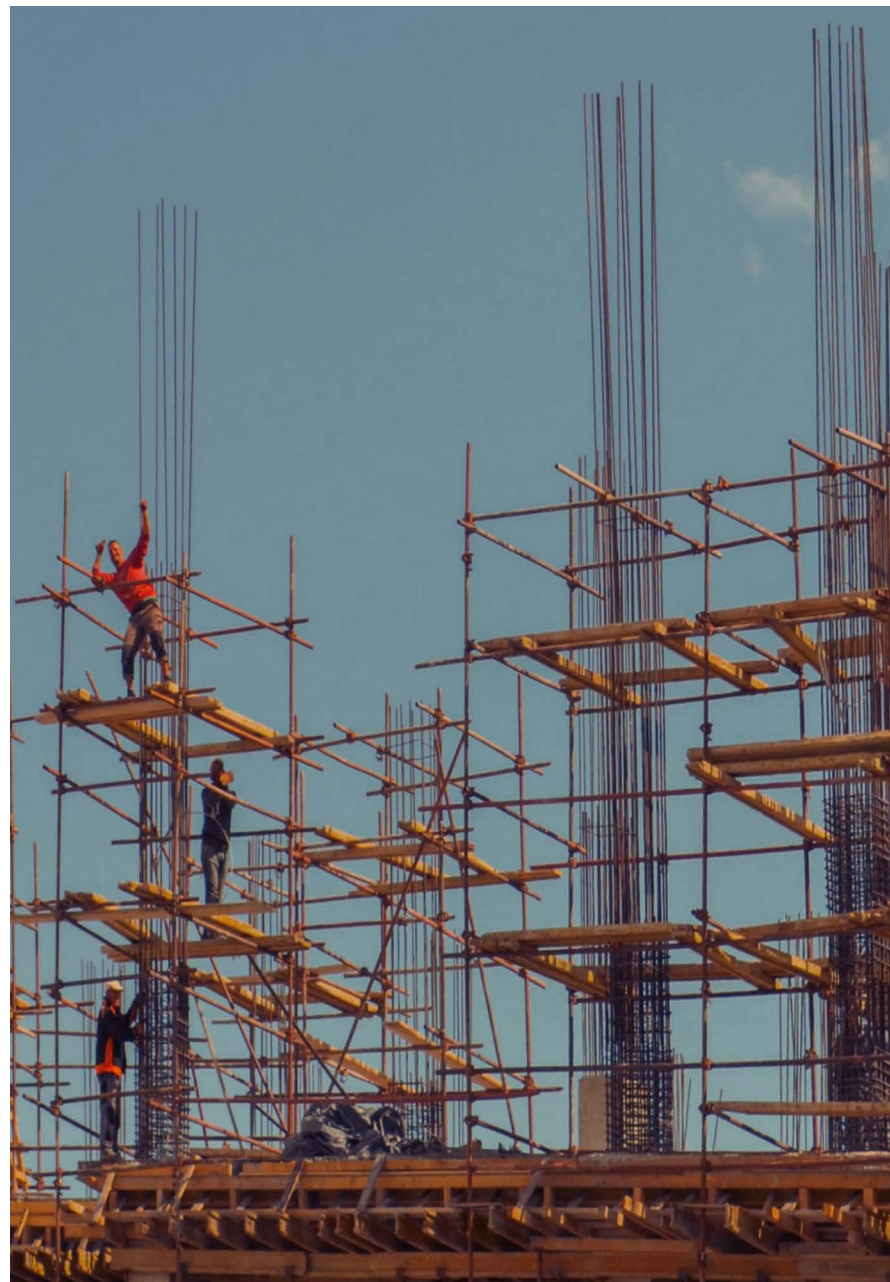
- Right to health protection
- An unemployed person who was employed for a minimum of 9 months continuously, or 12 months with discontinuity within the last 18 months, has the right to severance pay.
- After the unemployed person is registered in the registry, they are directed to their first interview with an official from the Employment Agency, where relevant information is gathered.

Further education and training

All services are available free of charge. They include, offered by the Employment Agency:

- Professional orientation
- Facilitation in employment in the country and abroad
- Development of an individual employment plan
- Workers' Clubs – local employment centers provide trainings, workshops and individual counselling within workers' clubs
- A wide range of active employment measures (including self-employment, employment subsidies, training at well-known employees, IT trainings, etc.)

2 Labour Market



3 Housing

General information on housing

In North Macedonia, more than 2/3 of the population lives in urban areas (72%) with the highest concentration of population living or working in the city being in Skopje 20,5%. There are substantial differences in the pricing of accommodation units, by region, and by area, with most of the accommodation offers centered in and around Skopje. For returnees interested in constructing a house, the main precondition is that the land is privately owned and that the returnee acquires a building license. The costs for construction of 1m² vary depending on the location of the dwelling, the quality of the materials, and the communal taxes, with the minimum costs range from 400-500 EUR in the urban areas. The price of land for construction purposes varies depending on location. For example, in the city centre of Skopje and its immediate surroundings the price of land ranges from 1500 – 1800 EUR per m². In the more luxurious settlements such as Vodno, Przino and Crnice, the prices may reach 2000 per m². In the suburbs of Skopje the prices range from 150 - 250 per m². The main precondition for renting an accommodation in the Republic of North Macedonia is a rental contract, which is concluded between the landlord and the tenant. The rental contract must be in written form, signed by both parties, and certified by a notary. This obliges the landlord to pay a 10% income tax of the rented amount, and because of this, landlords usually are reluctant to follow the legal procedure. The costs for maintenance, such as bills for electricity, water, heating, as well as small repairs, are covered by the tenant. Usually, landlords prefer the

rental agreement to be concluded on an average of six months, and no less than three months. The cost of the rent varies significantly, mainly depending on the location and duration of the rental period. Thus, an apartment in the central part of Skopje is rented for 400 - 550 EUR per month for 60m².

Finding accommodation

There is a large number of real-estate agencies in North Macedonia which cover the whole territory of the country or operate in a certain town. Various information regarding opportunities of buying real estate can be found online <http://www.pazar3.mk/>; www.reklama5.mk; www.imoti247.com; www.metar2.mk. Detailed information as well as contacts for most famous real-estate agencies are included in the contact list.

Social grants for housing

Socially vulnerable groups can benefit from various policy measures, such as emergency shelter, financial support for social housing, social apartments and other support. Thus, socially vulnerable groups without place to stay are temporarily accommodated in a Reception Centre for a period of up to 60 days. The Reception Centre offers accommodation, food, proper hygienic and sanitary conditions, as well as free counselling and other social protection services. Returnees must apply in the relevant Center for Social Work (nearest to their residence address) to be accommodated in any reception facility which the Center manages.

3 Housing

After the initial short-term accommodation period and after all necessary personal documents are procured, returnees will be able to realize all their right to social housing. Returnees in socially vulnerable situation, especially those at risk of homelessness can apply for a social apartment. The decision for granting a social apartment is made by the municipal council (in the municipality where the social housing is located), and the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy.



Photo: Photo: Shalev Cohen / Unplash 2020

4 Social Welfare

Social welfare system

The main institutions where Macedonian citizens can initiate the procedure to protect and/or exercise their social rights are the Centers for Social Work, which can be found in most major municipalities. They decide on the rights related to social security, detects, and determines social issues and problems, provides social assistance for vulnerable cases (including VOTs), etc. Benefits: Macedonian citizens, including returnees, are eligible for institutional and non-institutional social protection. For a detailed overview of financial help for Macedonian citizens, please visit: <http://www.mtsp.gov.mk/uslugi-i-prava.nsp> The basic financial assistance amounts to 65 EUR and increases with each additional family member. Additional information on social policy, social welfare benefits and social protection can be obtained from the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy (www.mtsp.gov.mk) Beneficiaries must apply at the Center for Social Work to be able to enjoy the benefits of social welfare.

Pension system

The main structure of the national pension system in North Macedonia consists of a statutory pension scheme (first pillar); a statutory funded pension scheme (second pillar); and a supplementary pension scheme (third pillar). The statutory pension scheme is mandatory for all economically active people. The statutory funded pension scheme is mandatory for those who started to work from 1 January 2013 onwards.

Access for returnees

Eligibility and requirements: All citizens of the Republic of North Macedonia, including returnees, who have permanent residence in the Republic of North Macedonia, foreign citizens who have regulated their stay in the Republic of North Macedonia, asylum seekers, and persons with a recognized refugee, or any other status of international protection. Persons without a residence in the Republic of North Macedonia, or foreign citizens with a regulated temporary stay are also eligible for social protection.

Registration procedure: Returnees have to apply at the local office of the Center for Social Work, which is closest to the last known place of residence/address, as registered in their ID document.

Required documents: Copy of valid ID document, residence permit (for foreigners), copy of refugee/international protection ID card (for refugees and persons under international protection), as well as copies of other relevant documents in accordance with the basis on which the application is requested (such as, marriage certificate, birth certificate, tax claim, property ownership, etc.)

4 Social Welfare

Costs Contribution rates: The pension contribution rate from gross wages was reduced to 18% in 2010 and has since remained at that level. Due to deficits in the Pension and Disability Insurance Fund (PDIF), further planned reductions (to 17.6%) are ceased.

Benefits:

- Old-age benefits
- Disability benefits
- Survivor pension

For additional information related to the Macedonian pension system, please visit: [HYPERLINK "http://www.piom.com.mk/"](http://www.piom.com.mk/) www.piom.com.mk

Vulnerable groups

The assistance to vulnerable persons and groups falls within the scope of the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy. Together with the Centers for Social Work and other public institutions, they implement numerous programs dedicated to the especially vulnerable groups, such as: Elderly persons, persons with disabilities, victims of Trafficking (including children), children on the streets, victims of GBV, single parents, persons at risk of poverty, including homeless persons, refugees, asylum seekers, foreigners.

The access procedure to the numerous programs is equivalent as with the procedure for applying for social welfare. The person can apply at any of the Centers for Social Work, with a valid ID document, or passport. A detailed overview of all programs offered by the State is available at: www.mtsp.gov.mk In addition to the programs offered by the state, there is a wide range of NGOs who provide support

to vulnerable persons and groups, including free legal aid, shelter for VOTs, basic direct assistance, psycho-social counseling, basic free-of-charge medical service, etc. The contact details of most important NGOs are included in the contact list.



5 Education

General information on education

The education system of the Republic of North Macedonia consists of pre-school, primary, secondary and higher education. Primary education is mandatory and free for all students. There are approximately 1,100 primary schools in the country, and most are easily accessible. Free of charge books for the primary school pupils, as well as free of charge transportation for the pupils who live farther than 2km from the school are granted. Since 2007, secondary education is also compulsory and free of charge, and is divided into five types: general secondary school, art education, education for children with special needs, four-year or three-year vocational education and religious secondary schools.

Students who complete the four-year vocational education can choose between the final exam and state exam, depending on whether they want to continue their education or not, while for students from general high schools, the state exam is obligatory. Among the existing 135 high schools, more than 100 are public and others are private, special and religious. Approximately 14% of secondary schools are gymnasiums, 34.5% are vocational, while 29% offer gymnasium and vocational education; 4 schools are for children with special educational needs and 2 are religious schools. Higher education is realized at three levels: undergraduate, master and doctoral studies. There are 5 state universities functioning in the country (one in Albanian) and more than 6 private universities and additional faculties. The education system is organized around four languages in primary schools

(Macedonian, Albanian, Turkish and

Serbian/Bosniak) and three languages in secondary schools (Macedonian, Albanian and Turkish). About 29% of primary schools and 34% of secondary schools are bilingual / trilingual. The bulk of them are schools with Macedonian and Albanian language. There is also a Center for Adult Education, which was established in June 2009, and is the primary institution related to adult education in the country. At the moment, more than 50 providers of informal training are currently accredited and they are allowed to issue certificates recognized by the state.

Cost, loans, and stipends

Private primary and secondary schools are based on the principle of self-financing. The average fees for one school year are from EUR 2000 to EUR 5000. For public universities, if students enter the state quota, part of the tuition fees are covered by the state. Those students have to pay 200 EUR per year, while for dispersed studies students have to pay 100 EUR per year. Students who are not in the state quote need to pay 400 EUR per year. Private universities need to be financed by oneself, the approximate fee for one academic year is 2000 EUR. Any additional information regarding the educational system in North Macedonia can be acquired at: www.mon.gov.mk

Photo: Oladimeji Ajegbile/Unsplash 2019

5 Education

Approval and verification of foreign diplomas

Macedonian citizens who have completed their education abroad can request to have their diplomas recognized and accredited in North Macedonia. The institutions responsible for the recognition and accreditation of foreign diplomas is the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Education and Science. For Macedonian citizens who are receiving social welfare support, the nostrification of foreign diplomas or certificates is provided free of charge. The procedure for application is identical for the primary and secondary education. In addition to the request for recognition, the applicant must submit the original diploma issued by the accredited foreign primary school and translation of the diploma in three samples. The translation must be provided by an authorized translator. Additional documents may be required by the relevant ministries.

Access for returnees

Eligibility and requirements: There are no access restrictions, or additional requirements for returnees to enroll in the educational system in North Macedonia. The enrolment in primary education takes place in May and the school year begins in September. The following enrolment documents should be submitted to the primary school: Birth Certificate, Vaccination certificate. Children with foreign citizenship or without citizenship residing in North Macedonia are entitled to primary education under the same conditions as the Macedonian children, and they are offered additional support for learning the Macedonian language, and/or other subjects. The candidates that completed elementary education abroad can enroll in the secondary education upon the recognition of the elementary education diploma.

Enrolment documents needed for secondary education: Application form (available at the secondary school), Original primary education certificates for V to IX grade, Birth Certificate.

For the enrollment in university education, only students who have passed the state exam are eligible to apply. The University has the autonomy to define the procedures for selection of students interested to enroll in the first year of university education. The documents required to enroll in the university education are as follows: Application form (available at the university), Diploma for passed state exam, Birth certificate, Citizenship and Confirmation for payment of administrative fees.

6 children

General situation of children and infants

The legal framework for the protection of children in the country consists of the national legal framework and international legislation which has been adopted by the Government. The primary national instrument which covers this area is the Law on Child Protection, which stipulates the organization and the system for protection of children. The Law outlines the types of protection, including education and fostering of pre-school aged children, rest and leisure for children, and other forms of protection, as well as the legal rights such as financial remuneration, special financial support, new-born support, parental support and other forms of participation. Moreover, the Law stipulates the protection against any form of direct or indirect discrimination of the child, all forms of abuse, physical and mental violence and all forms of exploitation of children. Other aspects of the legal protection of children are covered by additional laws and is further enhanced by an international framework starting from the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Convention on prevention and elimination of the worst kinds of children labor, Convention for the protection of children against sexual exploitation and abuse, and others. Finally, the first international children embassy Megjashi has been established in Skopje, in 1992 and regularly follows the situation with the protection of children in the country.

Despite this, cultural and social factors still play a large role in allowing children the access to various quality services. In education, the majority of children attend pre-schools, which include nursery groups for children under the age of 3. A small number of children aged 3-6 attend

centers for early child development. Centre-based provision can be public or private. Public provision predominates, with 95% of children enrolled in public pre-schools. The enrolment rate of children aged 3 to 6 in 2019 was 40%, which is far from the EU desired level of 95%. Participation in pre-school is different among the ethnic groups, namely, over half of Macedonian children attended pre-school education, compared to less than one in five Albanian children. Only 2.6% of four-year-olds from Roma communities attend pre-school education.

The situation is similar across other levels of education as well. Approximately, 10% of children from Roma communities do not regularly attend primary school. Furthermore, Roma are 2.2 per cent of the total population but represent only 0.5 per cent of secondary school students and 0.1 per cent of university students.

In health, access to quality services is available to all, though again cultural and social barriers hinder the adequate participation in health services. The average immunization rate for children decreased from 94.2 per cent in 2010 to 90.7 per cent in 2017, and infant and under-5 mortality rates increased to 12 and 13.7/1000 live births, respectively, in 2017, compared with 9.2 and 10.4 in 2010. The health status of the Roma population is worse than the general population with significantly shorter life expectancy. The causes of their poor health are multiple and need to be addressed through the joint efforts of health and non-health sectors, including education, employment and housing. Finally, almost a third of the children in the country are at risk of poverty.

6 children

Considering that children are over-represented among the poor, this presents an additional challenge to their access to relevant services.

(Non-) governmental actors dealing with children's well-being and rights

The primary organization which deals with children's rights is UNICEF which works across numerous areas related to the protection of children, namely health and nutrition, child protection, education, social protection, child rights monitoring, etc. Additionally, there are other organizations which work specifically in the area of protection of children, such as SOS Detsko Selo, which provides support to children and their families so that they can improve their living conditions and cope with the main risks which endanger their welfare, Red Cross which provides emergency support, as well as direct assistance to children at risk, Macedonian Young Lawyers Association (MYLA) working and advocating for improvement of child rights protection system, and others. The relevant contact details are included in the contacts section below.

Access for returnees

Eligibility and requirements: There are no specific entry requirements for children to be enrolled in the various services in the country. For specific services see sections above. For returnee children, an international birth certificate with apostille is needed to be able to issue a national birth certificate.

Required documents: Apply for national birth certificate, register the children in social protection schemes, enroll the children in schooling, contact primary health care provider..

7 Contacts

International Organization for Migration *UN Organization*

Oslo 6, 1000 Skopje
Tel.: 00389 2 30 95 477
Email: iomskopje@iom.int
Internet: <https://north-macedonia.iom.int/>

Red Cross *NGO*

11 Oktomvri 42a, 1000 Skopje
Tel.: 00389 2 3139 578
Email: skopje@redcross.org.mk
Internet: <https://ckgs.org.mk/>

HERA *NGO*

Franklin Ruzvelt 51a/26, 1000 Skopje
Tel.: 00389 2 3290 395
Email: hera@hera.org.mk
Internet: www.hera.org.mk

Helsinki Committee for Human Rights of the Republic of North Macedonia *NGO*

Naum Naumovski Borce 83, 1000 Skopje
Tel.: 00389 2 3119 073
Email: helkom@mhc.org.mk
Internet: www.mhc.org.mk

Zenska Akcija *NGO*

Tel.: 00389 72 274 018
Email: zenska.akcija@gmail.com
Internet: www.zenskaakcija-radovis.mk

Caritas Macedonia *NGO*

Petar Pop Arsov 47, 1000 Skopje
Tel.: +389 2 322 41 90
Email: makedonski.karitas@gmail.com
Internet: <https://www.caritas.eu/caritas-macedonia/>

UNHCR

UN Organization
Uros Djudovic 2a, 1000 Skopje
Tel.: 00389 2 3118 641
Email: mcdsk@unhcr.org
Internet: www.unhcr.org

La Strada *NGO*

Bahar Mois, 1000 Skopje
Tel.: 00389 2 2700 107
Email: lastrada@lastrada.org.mk
Internet: www.lastrada.org.mk

HOPS *NGO*

Zelezничка 46/8, 1000 Skopje
Tel.: 00389 2 3246 205
Email: hops@hops.org.mk
Internet: www.hops.org.mk

Association for the democratic development of Roma – Sonce *NGO*

Ivo Lola Ribar 381, 1200 Tetovo
Tel.: 00389 44 352 390
Email: info@sonce.org.mk
Internet: www.sonce.org.mk

National Roma Centrum *NGO*

Done Bozinov 11/5, 1300 Kumanovo
Tel.: 00389 31 427 558
Email: info@nationalromacentrum.org
Internet: <http://www.nationalromacentrum.org/en/>

Center for Social Initiatives – Nadez *NGO*

Gvadalajara 20, 1000 Skopje
Tel.: 00389 2 2650 644
Email: admin@csinadez.mk
Internet: www.csinadez.mk

UNICEF

UN Organization
Orce Nikolov 74, 1000 Skopje
Tel.: 02 323 1150
Email: skopje@unicef.org
Internet: <https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/>

City General Hospital 8-mi Septemvri *Medical Facility*

Pariska bb, 1000 Skopje
Tel.: 00389 2 3087 400
Email: office@bolnica.org.mk

General Hospital Kumanovo *Medical Facility*

11-ti Oktomvri bb, 1300 Kumanovo
Tel.: 00389 31 425 460
Email: opstabolnica_ku@yahoo.com

7 Contacts

General Hospital Kumanovo *Medical Facility*

11-ti Oktomvri bb, 1300 Kumanovo
Tel.: 00389 31 425 460
Email: opstabolnica_ku@yahoo.com

Employment Service Agency of the Republic of North Macedonia *Local authority*

Vasil Gjorgov 43, 1000 Skopje
Tel.: 00389 2 3111 856
Email: info@avrm.gov.mk Internet: www.avrm.gov.mk

Health Insurance Fund of North Macedonia *Local authority*

Leningradska 98, 1000 Skopje
Tel.: 00389 2 3118 566
Email: zorandp@fzo.org.mk
Internet: www.fzo.org.mk

Pension and Disability Insurance Fund of the Republic of North Macedonia *Local authority*

Vladimir Komarov bb, 1000 Skopje
Tel.: 00389 2 3250 100
Email: info@piom.com.mk
Internet: www.piom.com.mk

Center for Social Work *Local authority*

Nikola Vapcarov 11, 1000 Skopje
Tel.: 00389 2 3297 700
Email: jumcsrskopje@mtsp.gov.mk
Internet: www.jumcsrskopje.gov.mk

DEKRA

Jobs, Housing
Crvena Voda 10-22, 1000 Skopje
Tel.: 00389 2 3230 952
Email: info@dekra.mk Internet: www.dekra.mk

Najdirabota *Jobs, Housing*

Ohridska 76, 7000 Bitola
Tel.: 0038977 922 080
Email: contact@najdirabota.com.mk Internet: www.najdirabota.com.mk

Vrbotuvanje.com *Employment*

Vasil Gorgov 24/1-5, 1000 Skopje
Tel.: 00389 71 302 652
e-mail: kontakt@vrbotuvanje.com.mk
Internet: www.vrbotuvanje.com.mk

Ministry of Health *Health*

50-ta Divizija, 1000 Skopje
Tel.: 00389 2 311 2500
Email: contact@zdravstvo.gov.mk
Internet: www.zdravstvo.gov.mk

Acibadem Sistina *Medical Facility*

Skupi 5A, 1000 Skopje
Tel.: 00389 2 3099 500
Email: callcenter@acibademsistina.mk
Internet: www.acibademsistina.mk

Re-Medika *Medical Facility*

16-ta Makedonska Brigada 18, 1000 Skopje
Tel.: 00389 2 2603 100
Email: contact@remedika.com.mk Internet: www.remedika.com.mk

General Hospital Tetovo *Medical Facility*

29 Noemvri 16, 1200 Tetovo
Tel.: 00389 44 330 002
Email: bolnicate@t-home.mk

General Hospital Prilep Trajko *Medical Facility*

Tarcan bb, 7500 Prilep
Tel.: 00389 48 422 430
Email: bolnicapp@yahoo.com

General Hospital Stip *Medical Facility*

Ljuben Ivanov 25, 2000 Stip
Tel.: 00389 32 605 001
Email: kbstip@zdravstvo.gov.mk

General Hospital/Clinical Center Majka Tereza *Medical Facility*

Vodnjanska 18, 1000 Skopje
Tel.: 00389 2 3147 147

8 At a glance

Measures to be undertaken before return

- *Documents:* Make sure that he/she has a valid travel document. If the returnee does not have a valid passport or other travel document, he/she should contact the Embassy/Consulate of North Macedonia for the issuance of a Laissez Passer. Make sure to collect all relevant documents (diplomas, birth certificates, residence/work permits, medical reports, etc.) from authorities in host country.
- *Movement:* Inform the Diplomatic/Consular Office of the Republic of North Macedonia in host country about the return. Acquire all the necessary information concerning arrival details and onward transportation to the final destination.
- *Accommodation:* Make sure that all necessary arrangements regarding permanent or temporary accommodation upon return are established.

Measures to be undertaken immediately upon arrival

- *Documents:* Upon arrival the passport is stamped by the border authority indicating the date of entry. The validity of the passport or other travel document has to be a minimum of three months. If the returnee does not have a valid ID document, he/she needs to apply in person for the issuance of a new ID card, immediately upon return. The telephone number for scheduling an appointment at the relevant authority is: 0800 192 92 and 072 929 292 (can only be called via landline). Having a valid ID document is mandatory for any type of service, including opening a bank account. If the returnee has been abroad for longer than 3 months, one is obliged to register their return within 3 days at the nearest police station to their residence. If the returnee has minor children, they are also obliged to register their return.
- *Health:* Apply for health insurance. If symptoms of COVID-19 occur (fever, tiredness, dry cough), individuals should contact health care provider or the designated epidemiological contact telephone service and inform about their travel history and symptoms; they should not visit a health facility.
- *Employment:* Register at the National Employment Agency as an active job-seeker and request information about the programmes offered by the Agency, for example possibly receiving additional education or training.
- *Social Welfare:* If applicable, apply for social welfare support.

9 Virtual Counselling

Migrant assistance in North Macedonia

The Virtual Counselling project is implemented by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Germany. Migrants living in Germany who are considering a return are offered return and reintegration counselling by IOM staff in North Macedonia. Local IOM staff can be contacted in English, Macedonian and Albanian through online messengers.

This service aims to empower migrants to return in dignity by informing them about various return and reintegration options and assistance programmes.



Contact Aleksander or Ivana at IOM North Macedonia

WhatsApp or Viber: +389 71 788 154

Counselling hours: Monday - Thursday 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Friday 9:00 a.m. - 14:00 p.m. (CET)