



WELCOME TO NORTH MACEDONIA



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency



 **Bundesministerium
Inneres**

 **Црвен крст на Република Северна Македонија
Крст и Крст i Republikës së Maqedonisë së Veriut**

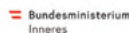
Map - Republic of North Macedonia



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.



This publication has been produced by the City Red Cross of Skopje in partnership with UNHCR North Macedonia. This project has been funded with support from the European Commission and the Austrian Ministry of Interior. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the European Commission, the Austrian Ministry of Interior, and UNHCR cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



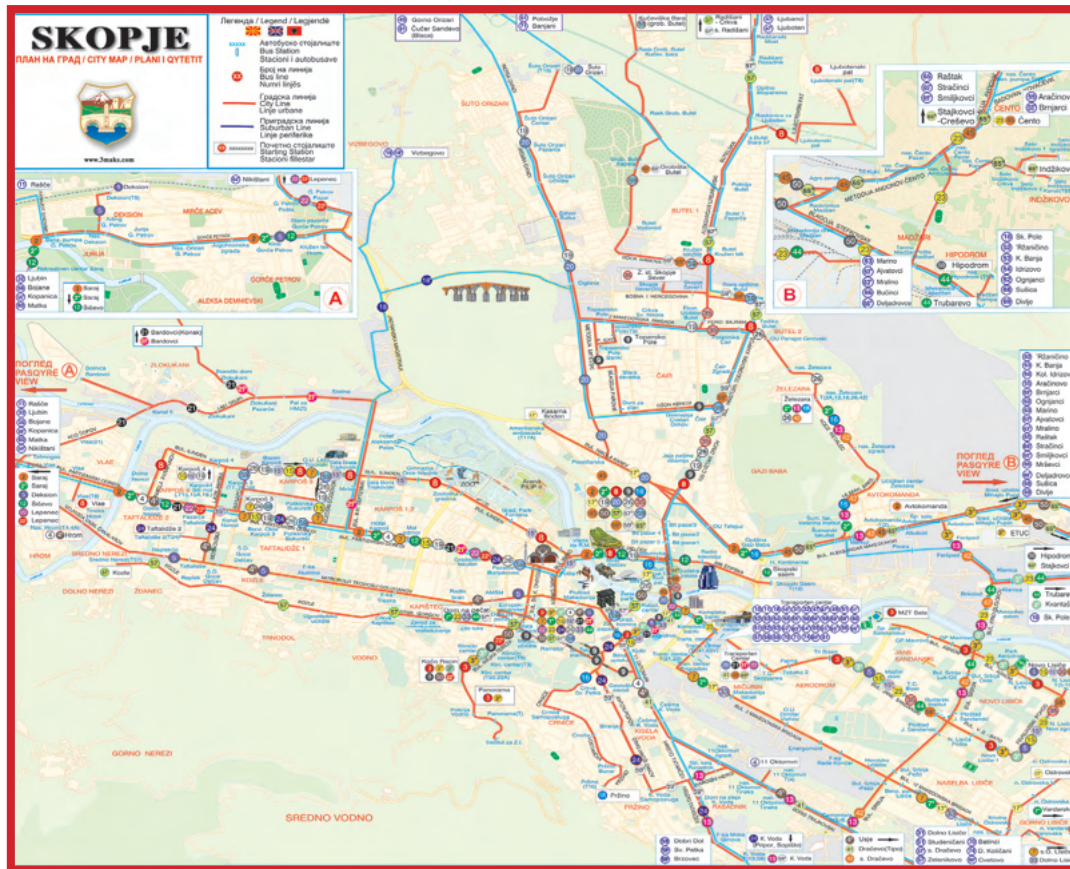
Welcome to North Macedonia

Part I – Practical information	4
Transport	5
Currency and its value	6
Mobile operators	7
Health care	7
Education	8
Work	9
Accommodation	9
Learn the Macedonian language	9
Get help in North Macedonia	10
Emergency telephone numbers	10
Part II – Country information	11
General demographic information about North Macedonia	11
North Macedonia throughout history	14
Traditional food and drinks	15

Transport

You can move through North Macedonia by several types of public transport: bus, train and car (taxi or private transport).

- ▶ The most important highway is the international highway A1/E-75, crossing the country from Serbia to Greece
- ▶ By train, one can travel in the entire country; North Macedonia is connected with Greece and Serbia by train as well.
- ▶ There is intercity bus transport throughout the country
- ▶ There are international airports in Skopje and Ohrid
- ▶ Within the cities there are private taxi companies and in the city of Skopje there is also public bus transport (JSP)



**Train and bus station
(local and international)**



International airport



Taxi station



Important transport links:

- ▶ <https://zk.mk/intercity-bus-station-skopje?lang=en&choice=JA> - Intercity bus station Skopje
- ▶ <http://e-avtobuska.mk/>
- ▶ <http://skp.airports.com.mk/en-EN/>- Skopje Airport
- ▶ <http://ohd.airports.com.mk/en-EN/>- Ohrid Airport
- ▶ <http://www.jsp.com.mk/> - Public transport company (public city transport in the city of Skopje and the surrounding area)
- ▶ https://zk.mk/search/?what=taxi&lang=en&filter_city=15457 - Taxi companies in Skopje
- ▶ <https://mzt.mk/?lang=mk> - Macedonian Railways

Currency and its value

The Macedonian Denar is the official currency in North Macedonia. It was introduced on 26 April 1992. Currently in circulation are coins with a value of 1, 2, 5, 10 and 50 denars, as well as paper banknotes with denominations of 10, 50, 100, 200, 500, 1000 and 2000 denars.

The average value of the Denar compared to some other currencies is:

- ▶ 100 MKD is about 1,9 USD
- ▶ 100 MKD is about 1,6 Euro

* *Foreign Exchange rate list of the National Bank of the Republic of North Macedonia (November, 2021)*

https://www.nbrm.mk/kursna_lista-en.nspix

The exchange of foreign currency in MKD denars and vice versa is possible in all exchange offices, as well as at the bank in all branches of the existing banks in RSM, without commission, at the exchange rate of the private exchange office or the exchange rate of the bank.

Withdrawal of denars can be made through ATM terminals using most payment cards (including Visa, MasterCard and Diners Club). ATMs are widely available.

* *In order to make a money transfer and to exercise monetary rights, it is necessary for the person to have an open personal non-resident transaction account in one of the banks in the country. To open a bank account, the applicant must have a valid ID card for residence regulation where a unique ID number for a foreigner issued by the Ministry of Interior (Unique Master Citizen Number) is noted.*

1, 2, 5, 10 and 50 denars



10 denars

50 denars

100 denars

200 denars

500 denars

1000 denars

2000 denars



▶ The international calling number for Macedonia is +389.

Prepaid number (card) can be bought at several points of sale, and to activate the number it is necessary to enclose a personal ID number.

Postpaid number is obtained by signing a contract in the sales facilities of mobile operators, for which it is also necessary to enclose a personal ID number or passport number.



All citizens of the country have access to health care at all levels.

Health care can be provided in state-funded medical institutions or in private institutions that, if they have not concluded an agreement with the public health fund, are charged in full.

The public health system has three levels: primary, secondary and tertiary health care. The primary health care is free for all persons who are health insured. The

secondary and tertiary care is with a surcharge of co-payment at about 20% of the cost for all insured persons. If the person is not insured, all services are charged in full. Macedonian citizens, status holders and foreigners benefit from different types of state insurance.

Detailed information about the healthcare services can be obtained from the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy and Ministry of health.

Education

The elementary and secondary schools are under the authority of the municipalities, except for the secondary schools in Skopje as a capital that are under the authority of the City of Skopje. The Ministry of Education and Science manages the continuous development of the educational system and science.

Education is provided in four languages. In addition to the Macedonian language, pupils may select to study in Albanian, Turkish or Serbian.

The education is compulsory between the ages of six to 19 for the general elementary and secondary education.

Pre-school education

It is aimed for 9 month-babies to 6 year old children and it is provided in public and private kindergartens

School education

The elementary education lasts for nine years. It is free of charge and compulsory for all children aged 6 to 15.

The duration of the general secondary education (high-school education) is four years.



The secondary education is free of charge in the public secondary schools and it is provided by high schools, technical and other vocational schools and art secondary schools.

Higher Education

The higher education includes under-graduate, master and doctoral studies in the higher educational institutions and institutes that are autonomous and independent.

Adult Education

A special target in the educational priorities of the Republic of North Macedonia is the adult population, which education is regulated with the Law on Adult Education and Law on Vocational Education. The system of adult education is promoted by the Adult Education Centre, the institution established by the government for the purposes of the social and economic requirements of Macedonia intended for the advanced qualification of the adults to help them in the labor market and their personal development.

For additional information please visit the website of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of North Macedonia

<https://mon.gov.mk/en/>

Work

If you want to find a job in North Macedonia, you can visit the following websites and institutions:

- ▶ Employment Agency of the Republic of North Macedonia - <https://av.gov.mk/home.nspk>
- ▶ Kariera MK (web site) - <https://kariera.mk/>
- ▶ Vrabotuvanje (website) - <https://www.vrabotuvanje.com.mk/>
- ▶ Najdirabota (website) - <https://www.najdirabota.com.mk/vacancieslist.aspx>
- ▶ Vrabotise (website) - <https://vraboti.se/?lang=en>
- ▶ Fakulteti MK (web site) - <https://www.fakulteti.mk/job/vrabotuvanje>

* According to the Law on Employment and Work of Foreigners, these persons can realize their right after obtaining a work permit issued by the Employment Agency of the Republic of North Macedonia / local competent Employment Center

Accommodation



If you want to find accommodation in North Macedonia (for temporary residence or housing), you can visit the following websites:

- ▶ <https://apartmani.mk/>
- ▶ https://zk.mk/search/?what=real+estate+agencies&lang=en&filter_city=15457
- ▶ www.booking.com
- ▶ <https://www.airbnb.com/>

Learn the

Macedonian language

The Macedonian language is a South Slavic language and is part of the group of Slavic languages from the language family of Indo-European languages. Macedonian and its cyrillic alphabet is the official language on the whole territory of North Macedonia and its international relations. Another language that is spoken by at least 20 % of the citizens (Albanian language and its alphabet) is also an official language according to the Law on use of the languages. It is taught as a compulsory subject in the education system, and additionally if you want to learn Macedonian you can find private classes and schools.

The platform LEARN MACEDONIA provides free language courses:

<http://learnmacedonian.online/>

Аа Бб Вв Гг Дд Ѓѓ
Ее Жж Зз Сс Ии Јј
Кк Лл Љљ Мм Нн Њњ
Оо Пп Рр Сс Тт Ќќ
Уу Фф Хх Цц Чч Џџ
Шш

National Free Mobile SOS Line for Victims of Domestic Violence

Phone: + 389 70/75/77 141 700 (24/7)

UNHCR Helpline for refugees, asylum seekers and stateless persons (SMS, Viber, WhatsApp): **+389 70 229 001**

Free Legal Aid

Hotline for refugees, asylum seekers and stateless persons (SMS, Viber, WhatsApp), **+389 78 359 298** operated by the Macedonian Young Lawyers Association, with the support of UNHCR North Macedonia, or via e mail contact@myla.org.mk or on web page www.myla.org.mk (available in English)

Psychosocial assistance and social counseling

The City Red Cross of Skopje offers free assistance for refugees and asylum seekers. Services include support to access national services and programmes, social counselling, psychological support, educational and recreational activities.

SOS line for psychosocial support:
+389 70 414 756

If you have concerns regarding the legality and conditions of detention, you can contact the National Preventive Mechanism within the Office of the Ombudsman in the Republic of North Macedonia

Phone: **+ 389 2 3129 335**

Email: contactombudsman@ombudsman.mk; npm@ombudsman.mk

In the Republic of North Macedonia, the services for obtaining citizenship, birth certificate, marriage certificate, etc. can be obtained electronically through the portal:

<https://uvmk.gov.mk/en/home-english/>

** For unaccompanied children, the Center for Social Work is formally and legally responsible and appoints a professional guardian who takes care of the protection of his rights when undertaking official actions by state bodies, cooperates*



with the expert team of the CSW which conducts the risk assessment, needs and measures to be taken for the protection of the child.

- ▶ **112** - General emergency
- ▶ **192** - Police
- ▶ **193** - Fire Service
- ▶ **194** - Ambulance
- ▶ **195** - Crisis Management Center
- ▶ **196** - AMSM roadside assistance

General demographic information about North Macedonia



The Republic of North Macedonia is located on the Balkan Peninsula. North Macedonia declared its independence from former Yugoslavia in 1991. The country borders Serbia (and Kosovo) to the north, Bulgaria to the east, Greece to the south and Albania to the west.

North Macedonia is a sovereign, independent, democratic and social state. As an administrative division, there are 80 municipalities in the country and 10 of them are on the territory of the City of Skopje, which as a separate unit of local self-government is the capital of the country.

There are also eight planning regions, which serve for statistical, economic and administrative purposes: Skopje, East, Southeast, Northeast, Pelagonia, Vardar, Southwest and Polog. Larger cities are Tetovo, Gostivar, Kichevo, Ohrid, Bitola, Prilep, Veles, Shtip, Strumica, Kochani and Kavadarci.

The country has a total population of around two million people (2002), the majority of whom are Macedonians, then Albanians, Turks, Roma, Bosniaks, Vlachs, Serbs and other ethnic communities.

Macedonian and its cyrillic alphabet is the official language on the whole territory of North Macedonia and its international relations. Another language that is spoken by at least 20 % of the citizens (Albanian language and its alphabet) is also an official language according to the Law on use of the languages.

The majority of the population in North Macedonia is Christian Orthodox, followed by Muslim, Catholic, Protestant and other religions.

- ▶ The largest river on the territory of North Macedonia is the Vardar River which is 301 km long in North Macedonia (out of a total of 388 km)



- ▶ The largest lakes are Lake Ohrid, Lake Prespa and Lake Dojran.
- ▶ The landform is mostly mountainous and the highest peak is Korab mountain at 2764 meters.
- ▶ There are three national parks: Mavrovo, Pelister and Galichica. A fourth national park, Shar Planina, is being formed.
- ▶ North Macedonia is rich in biodiversity and endemic species of plants and animals. Some of them are legally protected, like brown bear, roe deer, Ohrid trout, griffon vulture and from the fauna molika, Alshar violet, Macedonian oak and wild foja.



- ▶ Within North Macedonia the Mediterranean and continental climate zones meet, causing dry and hot summers and cold and wet winters.

Skopje, the capital of North Macedonia

The City of Skopje is the capital of North Macedonia and is the administrative, political, economic, cultural and educational-scientific center. It is located in the northern part of the country, on the banks of the Vardar river. Skopje has more than 800 000 inhabitants and 10 municipalities: Aerodrom, Butel, Gazi Baba, Gjorche Petrov, Karposh, Kisela Voda, Saraj, Centar, Chair and Shuto Orizari.



The city's ancient name is Skupi. Skopje is located in the Skopje valley and is surrounded by mountains.

The city has several bridges and rivers, including the Vardar river and the Stone Bridge, Treska, Lepenec, Pchinja, Kadina Reka, Markova Reka and Patishka Reka. On the Treska river, in the Matka canyon, there is a hydropower plant and the oldest artificial lake Matka, which as a monument of nature is one of the main tourist destinations in Skopje.

Skopje has long, dry and hot summers, and cold and foggy winters.

Skopje is also a city of humanity and solidarity that after the catastrophic earthquake in 1963, with domestic and international aid, was redeveloped into a modern city.

Some places you should visit in Skopje:

- ▶ The Stone Bridge on the Vardar river, a symbol of Skopje.
- ▶ Kale Fortress
- ▶ The Old Skopje Bazaar
- ▶ The feudal tower near the Army Hall.

- ▶ The Old Railway Station and the Museum of the City of Skopje.
- ▶ Museum of Contemporary Art
- ▶ Museum of the Macedonian Struggle
- ▶ Holocaust Memorial Center for the Jews of Macedonia
- ▶ The Millennium Cross
- ▶ Mother Teresa Memorial House
- ▶ Macedonia Street

More information's you can find at <https://skopje.mk/>



What to visit in North Macedonia?

North Macedonia has many natural, cultural and historical sites that are worth visiting in order to get acquainted with the culture and tradition of the country. Some of them are:

- ▶ Matka Canyon, near Skopje – a protected area, a place for relaxation and enjoyment of nature
- ▶ Ohrid and Lake Ohrid - a UNESCO World Heritage site
- ▶ National Parks of Galichica, Mavrovo and Pelister
- ▶ The ski centers and the mountain peaks of the Shar Mountain
- ▶ Kokino Megalithic Observatory
- ▶ Vevchani and the Vevchani Carnival
- ▶ Waterfalls (Smolarski, Babuna, etc.)
- ▶ Vrelo Cave

North Macedonia throughout history

North Macedonia is a treasure trove of culture and archeology, as evidenced by a number of archeological sites on its territory: Stobi, Heraclea, Kale Fortress, Samoil Fortress, Markovi Kuli, Skupi and Makedonium in Krushevo.

Starting from the Neolithic period and primitive agriculture, Bronze and Iron Age, antique until the Ottoman Empire, all these periods played a significant role in the formation of present North Macedonia.



As significant periods, events can be singled out:

- ▶ Migration of the Slavs in the Balkans and in Macedonia (end of 6th century)
- ▶ The educational mission of St. Cyril and St. Methodius (9th century)
- ▶ The creation of the Slavic alphabet – Glagolica (9th century)
- ▶ The creation of the Cyrillic alphabet – Kirilica (end of 9th century)
- ▶ Samuel's Kingdom (end of the 10th century)
- ▶ Ottoman rule from the mid-14th century up to 20th century (1912)
- ▶ The Ilinden Uprising against the Ottomans and the formation of the Krushevo Republic (2 August 1903)
- ▶ World War I and the Macedonian (Thessaloniki) Front (1914-1918)
- ▶ 11 October 1941, the armed resistance against the Nazi German occupation during World War II
- ▶ 8 September 1991, Day of Independence

Traditional food

The food in North Macedonia is influenced by the cuisines from the region such as Mediterranean (Turkish, Greek, Italian) or Middle East. Due to the geographical location and the convenience of growing vegetables and fruits, they have a dominant presence in the Macedonian cuisine and recipes.

As a mountainous country and due to the presence of sheep breeding, a large number of dairy products can also be found.

In the Republic North Macedonia there are many green markets that offer a wide selection of fruits and vegetables, mostly from this region.



Some traditional foods:

- ▶ Baked beans, prepared from cooked beans, with the addition of onions, peppers, tomatoes and other spices.
- ▶ Turlitava, a common traditional dish, made of mix of vegetables and meat baked in an oven in a traditional pottery dish.
- ▶ Burek, filo pastry filled with a blend of ingredients and oven baked.
- ▶ Simit pogacha (a dish or pastry made of dough in the form of a sandwich consisting of bread (muffin) and fat (empty) pie without zaire - filling (chees, meat or similar), which resembles a burek)
- ▶ Zelnik, a traditional pastry from the Balkans composed of thin layers

of phyllo pastry filled with various combinations of cheese, eggs, sorrel, browned meat, leek and rice.

- ▶ Kachamak or bakrdan, a corn flour specialty cooked with water and oil, usually served with yogurt and cheese.
- ▶ Pastrmajlija, a bread pie made from dough and meat.
- ▶ Ajvar, a spread of roasted red peppers and eggplants that are specific to the region.

All restaurants in North Macedonia have a certificate for food preparation according to the HACCP standard and Halal. When buying a meal, you can ask to get information whether the food is prepared according to these systems.





www.pixabay.com/admin/versilias

TARO MAKO