

North Macedonia

Information for applicants

North Macedonia

With a population of nearly 1.2 million and a total surface area of 25,713 km², North Macedonia is comparable in size to the German federal state of Brandenburg and is thus one of the smallest countries in Europe. North Macedonia is a mountainous country with beautiful lakes and valleys. At 2,764 m, the highest mountain is Golem Korab. Lake Ohrid is the largest lake in the country, the deepest lake on the Balkan peninsula and the oldest lake in Europe. Located in the north of the country, the capital Skopje is home to some 600,000 people, making it the largest city in the land as well as its political and cultural centre. Covering just a small area, North Macedonia offers an exquisitely beautiful and highly varied landscape.

Climate and sights

North Macedonia is somewhere between a Mediterranean and a continental climate. In the mountainous heart of the country, the climate is relatively harsh. It generally rains a lot in winter and the temperatures are cold. In contrast, there is hardly any precipitation during the warm summers. The seasons of autumn and spring are barely noticeable, as the summers and winters are relatively long.

One of the most attractive travel destinations in the entire Balkans is the area around Lake Ohrid, where the historical old town can be explored on foot. The main sights to see at Lake Ohrid are the quaint fishing villages, the picturesque cliffside and the Monastery of Sveti Naum. To the southeast of Lake Ohrid is Lake Prespa, which is ringed by high mountains. In summertime its flat banks and long beaches make it an

ideal destination for a lakeside holiday in North Macedonia.

Located close by, Galicica National Park offers extensive hiking opportunities for exploring its rugged beauty. Tourist guides to North Macedonia often overlook the small town of Prilep. But as the heart of tobacco cultivation, it certainly has its own charm.

Medical care

Medical care in North Macedonia is basically comparable with that of Central Europe. However, in many cases, it is not technically and/or hygienically up to the latest standard, especially outside the larger cities. Often there are no EU/EEA-trained German, English or French-speaking doctors. In some cases, there can be supply bottlenecks for medicines. Adequate, international health insurance and reliable repatriation cover are strongly recommended.

Accommodation and quality of life

In addition to hotels of all categories, North Macedonia also has numerous camp sites, especially at Lake Ohrid and Lake Prespa. Prices are generally higher in the months of July to September. In Skopje, high standard accommodation is relatively expensive. Apparently, prices have been driven up by the large number of UN personnel located in the area. Outside the capital, generally acceptable and above all favourably priced B&Bs and private accommodation (from 7 euros per person and night) can be found throughout the country. However, the level of comfort is not particularly high.

Food is also quite expensive. North Macedonia is of course still a low-expense country, but when coming from, say, Bulgaria, the high prices can come as a surprise.

Shopping and services

Shops are open Monday to Fridays between 8 am and 8 pm and on Saturdays from 8 am till 3 pm. However, some small supermarkets stay open all night. The prices charged for food and other products in the supermarkets are comparable with prices in Germany. Having said this, various weekly markets afford an opportunity to buy fresh foodstuffs and local produce at very low cost.

One of the most popular food items that can be purchased at the weekly markets is ajvar. Ajvar is a mashed pulp of roasted peppers and aubergines that are served cold as an appetizer with meat dishes or as a condiment and sandwich spread. Together with a special bean stew (tavče gravče), it counts as one of North Macedonia's national dishes.

Accompanying partners and children

According to North Macedonian law, foreigners are obliged to register at the nearest police station within 24 hours of their arrival in the country.

In North Macedonia, the field staff member's accompanying partner also has to register. The Foreign Ministry has issued regulations governing their stay. Accompanying partners (with the exception of North Macedonian nationals) are not allowed to be gainfully employed. Professional employment is only permitted if the accompanying partner has a work and residence permit based on the North Macedonian 'Law on Foreigners of the Republic Macedonia' (not required for EU nationals). The procedure is time consuming (between six months and a year) and involves a considerable amount of administrative red tape.

Find out more

<https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/aussenpolitik/laenderinformationen/mazedonien-node>

<https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/301.html>

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