



The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia



Country profile

Capital: Skopje

Principal cities: Bitola, Ohrid, Strumica, Štip, Tetovo, Titov Veles

Official language(s): Macedonian¹, Albanian²

Other language(s): Turkish, Serbian, Romany

Population: 2.0 million (2004)

GDP per capita PPP: 6,610 int'l \$ (2004)

Currency: Macedonian denar (MKD)

Labour force activity rate (pop. aged 15-64): 60.6% (2005)

¹ Primary official language ² Prescribed by law

Higher Education in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

The education system is divided into 4 main areas: pre-school care and education (from the age of 6 months to 6 years), primary education (lasting 9 years), secondary education (lasting 2, 3 or 4 years), and tertiary education. Primary and secondary education is free. Higher education is partially financed by the state, but university students also contribute. The coverage of the basic education system is relatively low, although an increase has been witnessed in recent years. Secondary and tertiary enrolment rates vary considerably across income groups and regions.

Higher education is offered by 3 public and 2 private accredited institutions. Students are required to pass an entrance examination to obtain access to higher education. In the academic year 2004/2005, 61,555 students were enrolled for a total of 2,810 teaching staff. Although the number of students who enter university education is rising, the number of graduates is still very low. In addition, most students take longer than the prescribed time to complete their degree.

The main source of funding for higher education is the government, with a small portion of revenues coming from tuition fees. There are a number of tuition fee options: for full-time students within the state quota, for full-time students outside this quota (approximately 1:1), and for part-time students. Tuition fees also vary from faculty to faculty.

To support the Bologna process reforms and respond to national needs (including those required under the Ohrid Framework Agreement), higher education legislation was updated in 2003, and a law making changes and amendments to the law on higher education was adopted. The changes included an updated procedure for the recognition of degrees and competencies, and clarification of roles and responsibilities

in evaluation and accreditation bodies. The new legislation also addressed the issues of higher education funding, the establishment of a

higher education and financing council, the recruitment of young teachers and researchers, and the possible introduction of funding for study programmes in the languages of ethnic communities representing over 20% of the total population of the country.

Years of compulsory education: 11

Gross enrolment ratio (ISCED levels 5 & 6)¹: 28.0 (2004)

Number of higher education institutions: 4 public; 11 private
Bologna signatory country since: 2003

For further information, contact the National Tempus Office at tempus@mn.gov.mk

¹ The country's total enrolment in tertiary education (regardless of age), as a percentage of the population in the official age group corresponding to this level of education

TEMPUS in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Participation of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in Tempus

Linked with the Stabilisation and Association Agreement and the Ohrid Framework Agreement of 2001, decentralisation is part of the broader political agenda and a key policy challenge in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The Stabilisation and Association Agreement and the EHEA construction process have shaped Tempus cooperation since 2000, with the dynamics of both processes leading to a yearly update of priorities for cooperation.

Integration priorities include employment and social policy, small and medium enterprises, and higher education, with the government placing an emphasis on the empowerment of stakeholders at all levels, increased flexibility in the education system, and further support for policy development in the area of adult learning.

Since 2000, study programmes in the fields of education, European studies, languages, business, economics, tourism, music, multimedia, art, computer science, engineering, agriculture, environment, medicine, pharmacy, and veterinary science have been updated. Lifelong learning courses have been developed in the fields of justice, the fight against organised crime, environmental policies, European affairs, EU industrial property law, intellectual property rights, teacher training, geomagnetic measurements, quality standards, and agriculture. Tempus has also supported the development of information management systems, library management, international relations, institutional evaluations, quality assurance, the ECTS, links with industry, distance education, web-based learning, and Bologna initiatives.

Impact of Tempus in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Tempus, which represents the largest input of education projects (second only to the Ministry of Education) in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, has contributed to a harmonisation of higher education in terms of unifying curricula, with 70% of higher education institutions stating that over half their curricula are in line with the Bologna criteria as a result of Tempus.

Tempus has improved teaching methods and has worked enormously on capacity building. It has provided the opportunities to improve soft skills and to acquire knowledge on new or different processes, and has led to a gradual introduction of quality assurance in faculties. Most Tempus projects have led to partnership agreements, including joint degrees prepared with EU institutions as a follow-up to cooperation in Tempus.

Work has recently commenced on the development of student assessment methods. Students perceive very positively the work being done with the support of Tempus and have noted an improvement in teaching quality. Student success rates are improving, in particular within the prescribed study timeframe—which is crucial if faculties are to be

able to organise courses more effectively. Tempus has helped students improve their qualifications and there is evidence of a growing labour market interest in the recruitment of graduates.

Tempus has had an important impact on continuing education strategy development. Nearly all the new training courses are still running—most of them integrated into the regular curriculum—and new methods developed have begun to be used in other faculties. Many Tempus projects have pinpointed innovative 'soft' solutions for enhancing cooperation with employers in a depressed labour market.

Tempus has not only influenced cooperation with ministries and governance; it has also reinforced structural links within universities.

Participation in Tempus since: 1996

Number of JEPs: 94
Number of IMGs: 353
Number of SCMs: 27
Number of CMEs: 11

Total budget allocated:
€ 27 million (€ 6 million 1996-1999; € 21 million 2000-2006)

Total budget allocated to staff and student mobility in JEPs and SCMs:

€ 2.092 million (1996-1999)
€ 6.750 million (2000-2006)

- Unified curricula
- New teaching methods
- Continuous assessment
- Innovation
- Internationalisation