K12 ACADEMICS — INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERIES

Studying in North Macedonia

A guide for international students & families — how North Macedonian higher education works, the student visa and residence permit, very affordable tuition, English programs, and work.

K12 ACADEMICS

Find Your Community

2026 EDITION

ABOUT K12 ACADEMICS

The world's largest education resource.

Online since 2004, K12 Academics has helped millions of families, students and educators **find the right school, college, camp, business and program in their community** — for every kind of learner.

VERY AFFORDABLE, ENGLISH-FRIENDLY BALKANS

North Macedonia is one of Europe's **most affordable study destinations**, with **very low tuition and living costs**, a growing set of **English-taught programs** (many accepting a Medium-of-Instruction letter instead of IELTS), and universities led by Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Skopje. It—s an EU candidate, not a member. Non-EU students need a **Visa D and a temporary residence permit**. This guide walks it in **ten steps**.

General guidance, not legal or immigration advice. North Macedonia is an EU candidate (not a member); degree recognition abroad varies, so verify it. Rules, tuition, and funds change. The details here are recent examples and **must be confirmed with the North Macedonian embassy, the Ministry of Interior (MVR), and your university**.

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STEP 01 OF 10

Understand Why Students Choose North Macedonia

WHAT TO KNOW

North Macedonia offers **very low tuition and living costs, a growing range of English-taught programs (often no IELTS needed), a welcoming multicultural setting, and a central Balkan location** — with degrees that are Bologna-aligned and widely recognized.

BY THE NUMBERS

Very affordable	English programs	Central Balkans
tuition & living	MOI, no IELTS	welcoming

HOW TO HELP

Weigh North Macedonia's **very low costs and easy English access** against its EU-candidate status (verify recognition) — for budget-focused students, it's among Europe's most accessible options.

GOOD TO KNOW

Many programs accept a **Medium-of-Instruction (MOI) letter instead of IELTS** — a real convenience for English-medium applicants.

2

STEP 02 OF 10

Understand the System

WHAT TO KNOW

North Macedonia has **five state universities** — led by **Ss. Cyril and Methodius University (Skopje)**, plus Bitola, Goce Delčev (Štip), Tetovo, and **South East European University (SEEU)** (multilingual: Macedonian, Albanian, English) — and private universities (e.g., International Balkan University, UACS). Degrees are Bologna-aligned.

BY THE NUMBERS

Ss. Cyril & Methodius	SEEU	Private
Skopje, largest	multilingual	IBU, UACS

HOW TO HELP

Choose among the **state universities** (Skopje, Bitola, Štip, Tetovo, SEEU) or a private one by field and language — SEEU is notably multilingual (incl. English).

WATCH OUT

Degrees are **Bologna-aligned and widely recognized**, but as an EU candidate (not member), **verify recognition** where you'll use the degree.

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STEP 03 OF 10

Get the Visa & Residence Permit

WHAT TO KNOW

Non-EU/EEA/Swiss students need a **long-term visa (Visa D)** from a North Macedonian embassy **before travelling** (processing ~45–60 days, with an in-person interview), then a **temporary residence permit** at the Ministry of Interior (MVR) after arrival, for stays over 3 months. EU students register within 90 days.

BY THE NUMBERS

Visa D	~45–60 days	Residence permit
before travel	+ interview	at MVR after arrival

HOW TO HELP

Apply for the **Visa D** at a North Macedonian embassy (allow 45–60 days and an interview), then apply for your **temporary residence permit at the MVR** after arrival.

WATCH OUT

The Visa D takes **45–60 days and an in-person interview** — apply early to make your start date.

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STEP 04 OF 10

Apply to Universities

WHAT TO KNOW

Apply **directly to universities**. Your prior qualification usually needs **nostrification (recognition)**, and documents must be **apostilled and translated by a court translator**. For English programs, an **MOI letter** often replaces IELTS. Enrollment requires proof of paid tuition.

BY THE NUMBERS

Apply directly	Nostrification	MOI letter
to universities	+ apostille/translation	often replaces IELTS

HOW TO HELP

Apply **directly to your university**, arrange **nostrification** and apostilled/translated documents, and check whether an **MOI letter** can replace IELTS for your English program.

GOOD TO KNOW

Nostrification (recognition of your prior degree) is usually required — start it early, with apostilled, court-translated documents.

5 STEP 05 OF 10

Plan for Tuition & Funding

WHAT TO KNOW

Tuition is **very affordable**: state universities charge roughly **€500–1,500/semester** (some programs free), while private universities charge more (**~€7,000–10,000/year**). Scholarships come from the government, universities, and Erasmus+.

BY THE NUMBERS

State	Private	Scholarships
~€500–1,500/sem	~€7k–10k/yr	govt & Erasmus+

HOW TO HELP

Budget the **very low state-university tuition** (or a private program's higher fees) plus among-the-lowest living costs, and pursue government and university scholarships.

GOOD TO KNOW

North Macedonia has **some of the lowest total costs in Europe** — both tuition and living are very affordable.

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STEP 06 OF 10

Meet the Financial Requirement

WHAT TO KNOW

For the visa/permit you must prove **sufficient funds** — commonly around **€5,000** — plus **health insurance** (roughly €300–500/year) and proof of accommodation. Confirm the exact current amount with your embassy.

BY THE NUMBERS

Funds	Insurance	Accommodation
~€5,000	~€300–500/yr	proof required

HOW TO HELP

Prepare **proof of funds** (~€5,000), **health insurance**, and accommodation proof — all required for the visa and residence permit.

GOOD TO KNOW

Confirm the exact funds figure with your embassy — it varies, and clear financial proof avoids delays.

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STEP 07 OF 10

Meet Language Requirements

WHAT TO KNOW

Programs are taught in **Macedonian, Albanian, or English** (SEEU is notably multilingual). For English programs, an **MOI letter often replaces IELTS**. Some local language helps daily life, but you can study fully in English at the right institution.

BY THE NUMBERS

Macedonian/Albanian/English	MOI letter	Some local language
by program	often no IELTS	helps daily life

HOW TO HELP

Confirm your program's language, use an **MOI letter where IELTS is waived**, and pick up some Macedonian or Albanian for daily life.

GOOD TO KNOW

You can study **fully in English** at institutions like SEEU, often **without IELTS** (via MOI) — check each program.

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STEP 08 OF 10

Prepare for the Move

WHAT TO KNOW

After arriving, apply for your **temporary residence permit at the MVR, confirm health insurance, and set up banking**. Living costs are among Europe's lowest (€300–500/month), and student cities like **Skopje, Tetovo, Bitola, and Štip** are welcoming and affordable.

BY THE NUMBERS

Residence permit	Very low costs	Cities
at the MVR	€300–500/mo	Skopje, Tetovo, Bitola

HOW TO HELP

Handle arrival admin — **MVR residence permit, insurance, banking** — and enjoy some of the lowest living costs in Europe in welcoming student cities.

GOOD TO KNOW

Living costs are **among the lowest in Europe** — a major advantage of studying here.

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STEP 09 OF 10

Understand Work Rules

WHAT TO KNOW

International students may work **part-time (up to 20 hours/week) during term**, subject to university and visa terms, and full-time during university holidays — useful for experience and to supplement income.

BY THE NUMBERS

Work	Full-time	Studies first
up to 20 hrs/week	in holidays	the priority

HOW TO HELP

You may work **up to 20 hours/week** during term (full-time in holidays), subject to the rules — useful for experience, with studies as the priority.

GOOD TO KNOW

Confirm the **current student work rules** with your university — they depend on visa/permit terms.

10 STEP 10 OF 10

Thrive & Work After Study

WHAT TO KNOW

Foreign graduates who study and work in North Macedonia for a certain period may apply for **permanent residency** (and later citizenship). As an EU candidate, and holding a Bologna-aligned degree, graduates can also pursue work or further study elsewhere in Europe.

BY THE NUMBERS

PR	EU candidate	Bologna degree
after study + work	+ regional access	portable

HOW TO HELP

Plan your longer-term path: **permanent residency after study + work**, and use your Bologna-aligned degree for opportunities in the region and the wider EU — confirming current conditions.

GOOD TO KNOW

North Macedonia offers a **route to permanent residency** for graduates who stay and work — confirm current conditions, which can change.

QUICK REFERENCE

Studying in North Macedonia: The Essentials

A snapshot — North Macedonia is an EU candidate (not member); verify degree recognition, and confirm details with the embassy, MVR, and your university.

The system

Five state universities (Ss. Cyril and Methodius/Skopje, Bitola, Goce Delčev/Štip, Tetovo, SEEU) plus private universities (IBU, UACS); Bologna-aligned; SEEU is multilingual (incl. English).

Visa & permit

Non-EU students need a Visa D (before travel; ~45–60 days and an interview), then a temporary residence permit at the Ministry of Interior (MVR) for stays over 3 months.

Tuition

Very affordable: state universities ~€500–1,500/semester (some free); private universities ~€7,000–10,000/year; government, university, and Erasmus+ scholarships.

Money & language

Prove ~€5,000 plus health insurance (~€300–500/year) and accommodation; Macedonian/Albanian/English programs, with an MOI letter often replacing IELTS for English study.

Work & after

Work up to 20 hrs/week in term (full-time in holidays); foreign graduates may pursue permanent residency after study and work.

YOUR NORTH MACEDONIAN JOURNEY STARTS HERE

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