
VICTIMS OF SKOPJE FLOODS CONFIRMED AT 21, 100 INJURED

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Missing people have been found after the floods caused by torrential rains in Macedonia's capital Skopje, local media report.

Twenty-one people have lost their lives since the disaster struck Skopje and its surroundings over the weekend. The country's Interior Ministry has identified the victims, the youngest one being two years old and the oldest born in 1933.

The number of injured people has been rising over the last day, with 100 reported by institutions. Of these, 12 were in hospital as of Tuesday morning. None of them is reported to be critically injured.

Six people were reported missing in the first 24 hours after the rainstorm.

Most of the victims reportedly died in their cars while waiting for the storm to pass, according to a Bulgarian fire brigade official speaking for private NOVA TV station.

Firefighters and emergency equipment has been sent on the field from neighboring countries. State news agency MIA says almost all countries in the region, which includes Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo, Serbia, and Turkey, have sent assistance.

Bulgaria in particular sent a fire brigade team, while Serbia offered police assistance. Albania on Monday announced it would allocate EUR 100 000 for Macedonian authorities to deal with the aftermath.

Bulgaria also announced it would deliver 20 tons of mineral water for the region of Skopje, with authorities there warning people against drinking water that is not bottled.

The EU on Monday evening showed readiness to help and activated its Civil Protection Mechanism.

The total value of damages brought to infrastructure and housing is yet to be estimated.

The government's response to the disaster, as well as the causes for it, have been subject to criticism from some media outlets in Macedonia.

While some have pointed out the disaster was extremely rare, with an unseen amount of rain falling in the region, others have blamed the lack of properly maintained drainage infrastructure.

Photo: Novinite.com (Damaged vehicles swept into a field in the village of Stajkovci, Skopje, Macedonia on August 07, 2016. EPA/BGNES)

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