



Youth Wiki national description

Youth policies in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

2017

The Youth Wiki is Europe's online encyclopaedia in the area of national youth policies. The platform is a comprehensive database of national structures, policies and actions supporting young people. For the updated version of this national description, please visit

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Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

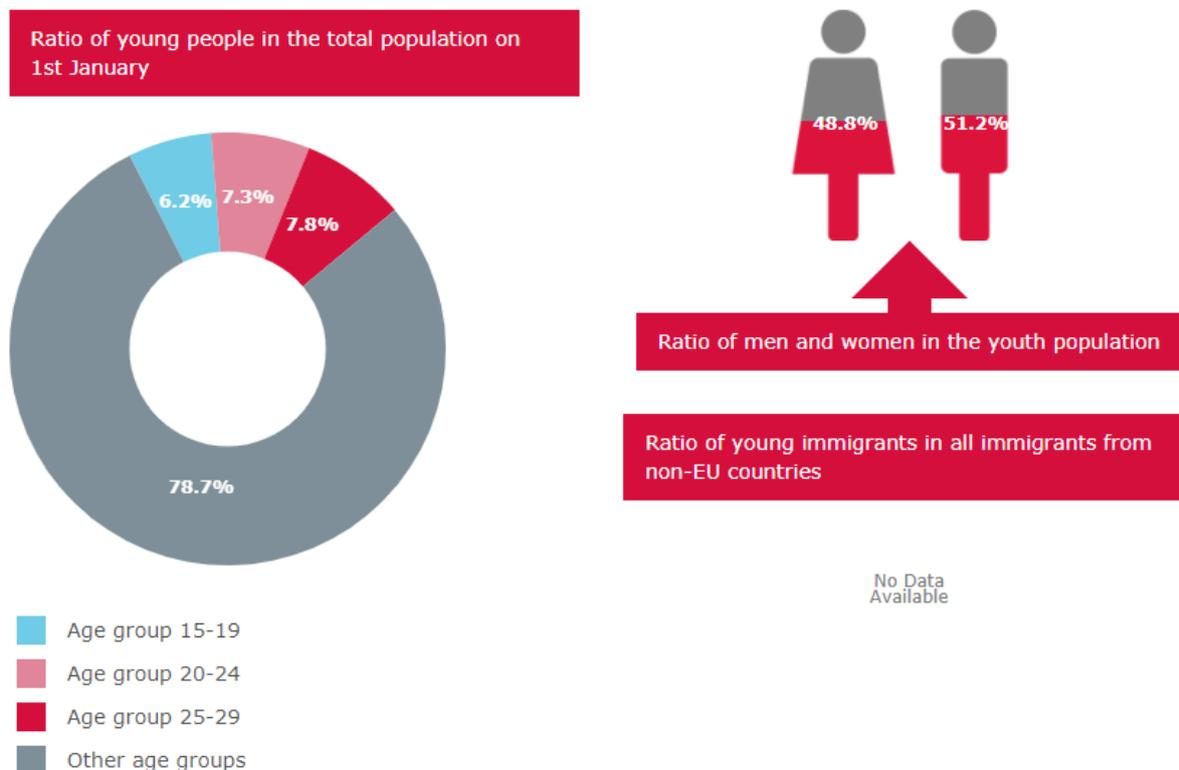
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Overview

Young People in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia



Total number of young people: 440 516

References:

Ratio (%) of young people in the total population (2016): Eurostat, yth_demo_020 [data extracted on 21/09/2017].

Absolute number of young people on 1 January for the age group 15-29 (2016): Eurostat, yth_demo_010 [data extracted on 21/09/2017].

Ratio (%) of men and women in the youth population (2016): Eurostat, yth_demo_020 [data extracted on 21/09/2017].

Young immigrants from non-EU countries (2015): Eurostat, yth_demo_070 [data extracted on 21/09/2017].

Youth Policy in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

The main decision – making processes regarding youth policy is being made by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia. The Agency of Youth and Sport (AYS) is a governmental entity designated to work on youth related issues. It is thus the leader of any youth policy process, and in charge of coordinating ministries' actions and inputs related to youth.

At local level, the Local Self-Government is responsible for decision making. The decision making is based on the existence of Local Youth Strategies (where adopted). 64 Local Self-Governments integrated Councils of Youth as youth participation mechanisms in the decision making.

Macedonia has National Youth Policy document, the National Youth Strategy (2016-2025) followed with Action and Monitoring Plan. The Agency for Youth and Sports is responsible for activities relating to young people in Macedonia, also is responsible for the implementation of the youth strategy.

The country currently is an Erasmus+ Programme Country and entitled to participate in all the actions of the programme.

1. Youth Policy Governance

The National Youth Strategy (2016-2025) followed with Action and Monitoring Plan is the main National Youth Policy document which sets out the basic principles and action guidelines for all actors in society.

In September 2017, the Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia has established Club for youth issues and policies, based on the trend of the European Parliament and countries' parliaments.

1.1 Target population of youth policy

According to the new National Youth Strategy (Национална Стратегија за Млади / NacionalnaStrategijazaMladi) 2016 – 2025, the term 'young people' (youth) refers to any person(s) between the age of 15 and 29. This is a category that holds huge potential as a key resource for social progress, but also a category that is highly vulnerable to social and economic changes in society. Thus, the following sub-groups will be addressed with the Strategy: young women, school dropouts, rural youth, ethnic groups, unemployed youth etc.)

1.2 National youth law

Existence of a National Youth Law

Currently there is no national Youth Law in Macedonia. In 2011, the Agency of youth and sports submitted initiative for developing Law on youth which addressed youth participation in decision making processes at local and national level and youth organizing. After approved by the Government, the Ministry of Justice formed working group and drafted text which was submitted to the Parliament. However, it was decided that the draft Law on Youth should be more widely consulted with the youth organizations throughout Macedonia, and therefore, the Government redraw the text to additional revision. More is described under 1.9.

Youth are targeted with other legal acts such as: Law on secondary education, Law on higher education, Law on student standard, Law on Sports in Macedonia, Law on child protection (includes age of 15-18), Law on Juvenile Justice, Law for Justice for Children, Law on Volunteerism.

Scope and contents

Not applicable.

Revisions/updates

Not applicable.

1.3 National youth strategy

Existence of a National Youth Strategy

The Government of the Republic of Macedonia, recently (February 2016) adopted the second [National Youth Strategy 2016 – 2025](#) (НационалнаСтратегијазаМлади 2016 – 2025). The process of creating of the National Youth Strategy was coordinated by the Agency of youth and sports in collaboration with the UNDP office in Macedonia. The adopted National Youth Strategy in English, Macedonian and Albanian language can be found on the following website:

<http://ams.gov.mk/component/content/article/2-uncategorised/969-strategija-za-mladi-2016>.

[2016-2017 Action Plan for implementation of the National Youth Strategy](#) was developed and adopted in April 2016. The action plan includes set of measures and activities from all priorities within a period of 2 years.

Scope and contents

The National Youth Strategy of the Republic of Macedonia 2016–2025 sets out the basic principles and action guidelines for all actors in society. These actions will lead to improvement in the social and economic situation of young people and the creation of an environment that will enable youth to fulfill their rights, needs and interests. The interventions proposed in this Strategy are divided into 9 key areas, as follows: **youth participation, youth information, local youth work, education, employment and pre-employment support, culture, sports, health and quality of life.**

The National Youth Strategy 2016 – 2025 outlines 4 strategic objectives:

1. Providing a better standard of living and equal opportunities for a decent life.
2. Creating conditions for effective observance and protection of fundamental rights and freedoms, and systematic integration and interaction of different categories of young people.
3. Creating opportunities for the involvement of young people in the monitoring and implementation of policies and decisions that affect them.
4. Equal access to quality education and other forms of personal and professional development.

As described above, the National Youth Strategy targets young people aged 15 – 29. Under this age group, the measures prescribed with the Strategy, will include high school students, university students, young unemployed people, youth with special needs (young offenders, youth neglected in terms of education and upbringing, “phantom children”, talented children, children with above-average IQ, hyperactive children, and children with dyslexia).

Responsible authority for the implementation of the Youth Strategy

The process of strategy implementation and performance monitoring is coordinated by the Agency of Youth and Sports (AYS), though data collection and reporting is carried out by all institutions that will implement activities from the Strategy within their programmes. The data are in certain planning processes that take place at national level. In order to standardize and facilitate the coordination process, as part of the Plan on Strategy Implementation and Performance Monitoring, the AYS prepared a set of tools/forms with which the institutions will present the collected data, as well as special reporting formats for reporting the achievement of planned results and objectives on a biannual or annual basis.

The National Youth Strategy is part of the overall national development and is in compliance with other strategic documents of interest adopted by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia. The Government as an institution with executive power in the development of the Republic of Macedonia has a primary role in providing opportunities for the implementation of the National Youth Strategy (NYS) by adopting and implementing cohesive and coordinated programmes associated with the measures envisaged in the NYS. The Government shall plan and carry out reforms that affect young people in proper coordination with the NYS. The AYS, as a body within the Government, in charge of implementing and coordinating youth policies on national level, monitors and reports on the implementation of the NYS on a regular basis. In the implementation of the NYS, the AYS and the Government will adhere to the principles and values of the NYS and will act with transparency and accountability aimed at timely reporting and planning of programmes and projects.

Revisions/updates

No revisions/ updates to date were made since its first introduction.

1.4 Youth policy decision-making

Structure of Decision-making

The main decision – making processes regarding youth policy is being made by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia. The Agency of Youth and Sport (AYS) is a governmental entity designated to work on youth related issues. It is thus the leader of any youth policy process, and in charge of coordinating ministries' actions and inputs related to youth. The AYS had the status of a ministry during a certain period of time (2000), however this status was later revoked. The agency is divided into two sections, one in charge of youth and the other sport. During 2008 the Agency of youth and sports established National Steering Committee which aimed at monitoring over the implementation of the 2009 Action Plan for National Youth Strategy. This committee, which represented co-management body, included 8 representatives of national institutions/ministries and 8 members of youth NGOs. However, this body did not fully reach its functionality.

At local level, the Local Self-Government is responsible for decision making. The decision making is based on the existence of Local Youth Strategies (where adopted). 64 Local Self-Governments integrated Councils of Youth as youth participation mechanisms in the decision making.

As main authority responsible for youth policy, the Agency for Youth and Sport has three departments: *The Department for Sports, Department for Normative, Legal and Economic Issues, and the Department for Youth*. Main tasks of the Youth Department are social development and social integration of youth via quality formal and non-formal education, economic prosperity of the youth via youth entrepreneurship, improving of quality of life, and active participation of the youth in public life and in decision making processes on local and national level. However, the main role of the Agency is to coordinate, monitor and evaluate the implementation of the National Youth Strategy.

The decision making process includes other institutions / ministries such as: Ministry of education and science, Ministry of labour and social policy, Agency of employment, Education Development Bureau, National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility, Local Self-Governments etc. These institutions communicate and coordinate with the AYS and exchange information relevant for monitoring and reporting, based on the responsibilities prescribed with the National Youth Strategy and its Action Plans.

Main Themes

The priorities set in the [National Youth Strategy](#) comply with the priorities defined with the EU Youth Strategy – Investing and Empowering. The following priorities are included in the National Youth Strategy: youth participation, youth information, local youth work, education, employment and pre-employment support, culture, sports, health and quality of life. The selection is based on the priorities included in the previous strategy and complying with the EU Youth Strategy. Specific country programmes are designed for employment and education.

Youth Unemployment is the highest priority at country level since more than 50% of the young people in Macedonia aged 15 – 24 are unemployed. Therefore, the main target group of the Youth Policy within employment area are the unemployed youth, NEET groups, youth with disabilities (Specific Action Plan 2016 – 2020 for Youth Employment is operationalized in Macedonia and includes specific measures for young people and various sub-groups). The [Youth Trends Research](#) (2014) included the youth unemployment as priority issue in order to identify the opinion of young people on how to improve the current unemployment situation. Furthermore, the country cooperates with

the International Labor Organization in developing youth employment policies. The ILO conducts regular surveys which are integrated into the youth employment actions plans.

Education is included as one of the highest themes on youth policy in the country. Currently the Ministry of education and science is in process of developing new National Programme on Integrated Education which is based on evaluation on the previous such programme. The Government mostly collaborates with the USAID office in Macedonia in applying integrated education in the primary and secondary schools throughout the country.

The National Agency for Youth

In Macedonia exists Agency on youth and sports established in 2000, after the decision to exclude the Ministry of youth and sports, which was the main institution for youth development, was adopted by the Parliament (official gazette).

The Agency of Youth and Sport (www.ams.gov.mk; www.mladi.ams.mk) is the main public authority at national level in charge of youth. It is governmental body with its own budget and responsibilities. Although it is not a ministry, it is an independent structure that is not under any other particular governmental ministry and responds directly to the Prime Minister. The Agency for Youth and Sport has three departments: the Department for Sports, the Department for Normative, Legal and Economic Issues, and the Department for Youth. Main tasks of the Youth Department are social development and social integration of youth via quality formal and non-formal education, economic prosperity of the youth via youth entrepreneurship, improving of quality of life, active participation of the youth in public life and in decision making processes on local and national level. Youth Department is divided into two sub-departments-International cooperation and Youth policy and training. On local level more than thirty municipalities established youth councils but there is a political will this process to continue and it should be regulated by the law in near future.

In terms of budget (www.finance.gov.mk):

- In 2015 the Agency of youth and sports had total budget (after rebalance) in amount of 368.528.000,00 MKD (app. 5.992.325,00 EUR), of which 4.300.000,00 (app. 69.918,00 EUR) were envisioned for youth (1,16% of the total budget).

- For 2016, the Agency has budget in amount of 527.256.000,00 (app. 8.573.268,00 EUR) and for youth (youth policy) 2.869.000,00 (app. 46.650,00 EUR) which is 0,5% of the total amount.

- In 2017, the Agency has budget in amount of 524.903.000,00 MKD (app. 8.535.008,00 EUR), of which 21.175.000,00 MKD (344.309,00 EUR) for department youth, which is 4% of the total amount (11.434.000,00 MKD are intended for implementation of the National youth strategy).

According to the numbers for 2015 and 2016, the total budget for the Agency for youth and sports for 2016 has bigger budget for almost 70% compared with the 2015 budget. However, the budget for youth for 2016 is lower than the one in 2015. This is mainly because the priority of the Government is the infrastructure of the sports objects which takes large part of the funds portion. Mostly the funds received for the Youth department refers for administrative costs and projects directly operated by the Agency of youth and sports. The preparation of the National Youth Strategy was supported by the UNDP office in Macedonia. Funds from AYS were used for printing of the National Youth Strategy.

Speaking of 2017, the total budget of the agency is lower than the one in 2016. However, the amount for youth is significantly increased. What is most important, the Government has approved 11.434.000,00 MKD for implementation of the National Youth Strategy which is more than 50% of the entire amount for youth. This amount is used for the implementation of the Action Plan for 2016 – 2017.

Policy monitoring and evaluation

During the period of September – December 2016, monitoring system was developed and accepted by the AYS with support from OSCE office in Macedonia which includes indicators and targets at annual level. This monitoring system will provide useful data that will enable reliable measuring of the outputs and outcomes of the implementation of the National Youth Strategy. The data are collected at annual level. The first complete report is expected in the beginning of 2018.

The monitoring system will be the basis for further revision of the National Youth Strategy should some elements are poorly planned or implemented. It is expected revision of the National Youth Strategy to occur in 2020 (after the first 5 years of the NYS).

1.5 Cross-sectoral approach with other ministries

Mechanisms and actors

The process of creation of the National Youth Strategy included in-depth cross-sectorial approach through matching ministries, agencies and other relevant institutions. Initially, all ministries and institutions under the Government of Macedonia were active in the formed working groups for the Youth Strategy. After the Strategy was drafted, the text was submitted to the responsible ministries for feedback and comments as final filter before submission.

Related to implementation, the institutions at horizontal levels are responsible for reporting the activities under their jurisdiction to the Youth Department within the AYS. Each institution has appointed one person responsible for data collection / monitoring based on the Monitoring System in accordance to Decision made by the Government of Macedonia. However, no Inter-ministerial group is formed to coordinate the implementation of the NYS.

In September 2017, the Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia has established Club for youth issues and policies, based on the trend of the European Parliament and countries' parliaments. The Club for youth issues and policies is informal body within the Parliament of Republic of Macedonia, composed of members of all parliament parties aiming to accomplish the interests of youth in the country, in collaboration with the youth organizations, informal youth groups and youth political wings.

No specific legal framework for youth-policy making is in place. The coordination, cross-sectorial practices and political commitment is based on the internal procedures in the Government related to development and implementation of National Strategies and Programmes.

1.6 Evidence-based youth policy

Political Commitment to Evidence-Based Youth Policy

Apart from the surveys conducted by NGOs, the Government commits to researches only when National Youth Strategy needs to be created. In 2014, the Government (AYS) engaged the Institute of Sociological, Political and Juridical Research to conduct research that will provide baseline findings aimed to point the critical points of intervention addressed with youth policy. This was also case during the creation of the first National Youth Strategy 2015 – 2015 (external experts were engaged to conduct Youth Trends Study 2003) being the basis for creation of the Strategy. During the implementation of the 2016-2025 Strategy, it is envisioned that revision should be made after the first 5 years on the basis of research (desk and field). However, as indicated such research engaged by the Governmental structures occur only before creation of National Youth Strategy (No specific definition of Evidence-based youth policy exists in the official policy documentation). Coalition of youth organizations SEGA (NGO) conducted Analysis of

youth trends in 2010 in collaboration with the AYS but no revision of the existing National Youth Strategy was made.

Cooperation between policy-making and research

No institutionalized mechanisms of cooperation with the research community exist in Macedonia. There is no specific Youth Research Center or Youth Institute funded by the State.

Ad-hoc cooperation with the scientific community occurs at several levels. Primarily, as described in the previous sections, the Government (AYS) cooperates with the research community prior preparation of new National Youth Strategies. Secondly, the AYS and the research community that deals with youth policy issues cooperate through joint conferences (on participative level) and joint consultative meetings aimed to discussing findings and recommendations. The analysis and surveys from various NGOs and scientific organizations were used as references in the planning process of the National Youth Strategy 2016-2025.

Youth Employment as high priority of the Government is a theme that requires specific scientific research aimed at developing tailored and relevant programmes and measures. The development of the Action Plan for youth employment 2016 – 2020 was based on specific evidence-based research supported by the International Labor Organization in collaboration with the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, using specific economic indicators ([Labour market transitions of young women and men in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia](#), June 2016).

No notes were taken related to emerging issues presented in the Youth Trends Survey or communicates by scientific organizations.

No evidence-based evaluation of youth policies was conducted to date. The monitoring system for the new National Youth Strategy enables relevant measuring of the implementation of the strategy based on the set indicators and targets.

National Statistics and available data sources

The State Statistical Office (SSO) is responsible for overall statistics for the country, including young people. According to the 2002 census, the population of Macedonia is 2022547 inhabitants. The population of young people aged 15 – 29 is 480828 inhabitants (which is almost 24% of the population).

<http://www.stat.gov.mk/PrikaziPoslednaPublikacija.aspx?id=54>.

The SSO collects data for youth for the following age groups: 15 – 18, 19 – 24, 25 – 29. At thematic level, the SSO collects data on education, labor market (employment), population, social welfare: http://www.stat.gov.mk/PrikaziPublikacija_1.aspx?rbr=552.

The following youth indicators are collected at national level: Unemployment rate; Working age population by economic activity; Labour force by educational attainment, Activity rates of the population aged 15 years and over, NEET, Immigrated and Emigrated citizens of the Republic of Macedonia.

No regular youth reports at national level, other data and analysis are produced.

Budgetary Allocations supporting research in the youth field

No budgetary allocations available for supporting research in the youth field. The Government has no specific line on funding aimed at evidence-based evaluation on its policies. However, the Government approved funds for the Agency of youth and sports for researching the actual situation analysis of young people as a baseline for the new National Youth Strategy 2016 – 2015. This analysis (Youth Trends Survey) was conducted by the Institute of Sociological, Political and Juridical Research in the period from September to December 2014.

1.7 Funding youth policy

How Youth policy is funded

Youth Policy does not have specific budget line in the Governmental Budget for 2016. However, all funds approved for the Department of youth are intended for activities within the National Youth Strategy. For 2016, the budget for youth policy is in amount 2.869.000,00 MKD (or close to 46.650,00 EUR) and the approved budget for 2017 is in amount of 11.434.000,00 MKD (or close to 185.918,00 EUR) which is big increase.

According to the National Youth Strategy, 9 priorities are defined and each includes set of measures. Specific ministry or institution is responsible to implement the measures under each priority. Thus, the budget for the measures falls under the budget for those specific institutions/ministries. No disaggregated data on budget for youth measures exists for the institutions except the Ministry of labour and social policy, responsible for youth employment.

According to The Action Plan for Youth Employment 2016 – 2020, total budget is in amount of 30.950.000,00 EUR.

According to the operational plans, the budget for 2015 (in accordance with the previous Action Plan for Youth Employment 2012 – 2015) was in amount of 142,103,798.00 MKD (close to 2.310.630,00 EUR).

The budget for 2016 for youth employment is in amount of 180.213.187,00 MKD (close to 2.930.295,00 EUR).

The budget for 2017 for youth employment measures is 344.632.013,00 MKD (app. 5.603.773,00 EUR) which is significant increase compared with 2015 and 2016.

What is funded?

At the level of National Youth Strategy, the 2016-2017 Action Plan for implementation of the National Youth Strategy is funded. The Action plan includes activities within all priorities.

At priority level, highest priority within youth policy in Macedonia holds youth unemployment – specific Action Plan for Youth Employment 2016 – 2020 is developed. This action plan is operationalized into annual plans with specific budget for young people aged 15 – 29, as described in the previous section.

Financial accountability

N/A

Use of EU Funds

According to the National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility, 4.861.562 EUR are spent in 2016, while 4.230.000,00 EUR in 2015. No other EU funds for youth policy were spent in 2015-2016.

By priority, IPA funds are used for the implementation of the Youth Employment measures, administered by the Ministry of labour and social policy. No other data on usage of EU funds are available.

1.8 Cross-border cooperation

Cooperation with European countries

RYCO (Regional Youth Cooperation Office): During the Western Balkans Summit in Vienna, the 27.8.2015, the Prime Ministers of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia have signed a "Joint Declaration on the establishment of the Regional Youth Cooperation Office of the Western Balkans", in which they declare that they have agreed to "create the Regional Youth Cooperation Office of the Western Balkans, as a regionally-owned structure that leads and coordinates youth cooperation in

our region”, aiming “to promote the spirit of reconciliation and cooperation between the youth in our region”. In order to establish this structure, the Prime Ministers declare that they have agreed to “task relevant institutions of the participants to develop, in close collaboration with the Working Group on regional youth cooperation concrete proposals for the mission, structure, activities and financing of the Regional Youth Cooperation Office, to be finalized by 1 March 2016.”, also stating that “the Franco-German Youth Office will provide the Working Group with technical assistance”.

The Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO - rycowesternbalkans.org) is an institutional mechanism for sustainable regional cooperation among young people, established by regional governments to promote reconciliation, mobility, participation, active citizenship and intercultural learning, in an European spirit and within the European integration process of the region. Macedonia is represented with 2 representatives (1 from Agency of youth and sports and 1 from youth NGO sector).

European Youth Forum: Macedonia is represented in the European Youth Forum with the NGO National Youth Council of Macedonia as organisation candidate member. The Agency of youth and sports is invited to delegate participants on the EYF Youth Conferences that focus on specific themes defined with the Structural Dialogue method.

International cooperation

The Agency of youth and sports as the responsible institution on youth policy has signed Memorandum of Understandings with the UNDP office in Macedonia on youth policy development. Particularly, the UNDP fully financially supported the creation of the new National Youth Strategy in 2015. Also, UNDP is one of the partners of the Ministry of labour and social policy related to youth employment measures.

The Agency of youth and sports also cooperates with the OSCE office in Macedonia. The cooperation includes the joint approach and coordination of the networking and capacity building of the local Councils of Youth throughout the country. OSCE also, previously supported initiative for developing Law on Youth Work, in coordination with the Agency of youth and sports as well.

Agency of youth and sports collaborates with COE. In 2010 Macedonia, represented by AYS signed Declaration on regional youth policy development.

AYS cooperates with ERYICA through participation in conferences related to youth information.

1.9 Current debates and reforms

Raised with the creation of the new National Youth Strategy, the issue on high school students organizing was subject to consultation facilitated by three youth NGOs (Coalition of youth organizations SEGA, Youth Educational Forum and the First Children’s Embassy in the world “Megjasi”). After wide consultation process these NGOs submitted Initiative for Law on changes and amendments of the Law on secondary education aimed to integrate the right to participation and organizing in the educational system. The draft Strategy for Education 2016 – 2020 included the initiative for high school organizing. In mid 2017, the abovementioned 3 organizations commenced process of developing draft text of Law on changes and amendments of the Law of secondary education, with support of the Ministry of education and science. The draft text includes the right to student organizing and participation in the decision-making processes at school, local and country level. The draft text was developed and consulted with involvement of students, school representatives and NGOs that work on youth issues. It is expected the law to be amended by the end of 2017.

The Agency of youth and sports is also supporting the Union for Youth Work that raised the issue of standardization of the youth work and its integration in the legal framework in Macedonia. By the end of 2016, 2 conferences on youth work were organized (by SEGA and Youth Cultural Center). Both conferences produced draft standards and

principles for youth work that were translated into an Initiative for recognition of the youth work, which was submitted to the Agency of youth and sport and the Adults Education Center. No further developments occurred to date.

The most recent debate on youth legislation was the draft Law on youth which was developed in 2011 by the Ministry of Justice, initiated by the Agency of youth and sports. The Law on youth included regulation of youth participation mechanisms (Councils of Youth) and Youth organizing (co-management body). However, due to the need of wider consultation process, the text is withdrawn for further revision. No updates on the text are available.

Recently, the Agency of youth and sport and the Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia raised the issue on the establishing local office within the RYCO process. Number of youth organizations requested more efforts of the Agency in establishing the office as soon as possible including the new selection of youth representative in the RYCO.

2. Voluntary Activities

Youth Volunteering in Republic of Macedonia is not strictly regulated and it takes in informal setting, within the [Национален Совет за Развој на Волонтерството](#) (National Council for Volunteerism Development) (1), 4/9 representatives are coming from the civil society sector.

Nationwide, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy is responsible for youth volunteering. The Ministry main tasks regarding volunteering, in general, are connected with monitoring and evaluating the overall Strategy for promotion and development of volunteering and following its legal bindings. However, all legal bindings connected with young people and volunteering are exclusive and provide greater focus on young people and their process of development.

2.1 General context

Historical developments

The Republic of Macedonia is a small Balkan country which became independent in 1991. As part of national legal reform, the [Law on Citizens' Associations and Foundations](#) (1998) was adopted to address the civil society sector. The number of registered organizations is roughly 6,000; however, not all of them are active. Although volunteering is not very developed, CSOs increasingly rely on volunteers.

The [National Youth Strategy of the Republic of Macedonia](#) (2005-2015) emphasizes that "the development and strengthening of the civil society, volunteering and civil association are vital step in the promotion of responsible citizenship and democracy guarantee". One of the measures of this Strategy is: the Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia to adopt a Law which will regulate the volunteer work. This is the first state official document that raises the question of regulating the volunteering in the country, and recognition of the volunteering on the other hand.

The Macedonian [Law on Volunteering](#) ^[1] was adopted in July 2007. Prior to its adoption, the legal system imposed several obstacles to volunteering and in some instances

(¹) Службен Весник на Република Македонија бр. 85/2007 [Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia Number 85/2007] , 2007. [Закон за волонтерство](#) [Law on volunteering].

Службен Весник на Република Македонија бр. 161/2008 [Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia 161/2008], 2008. [Закон за измени и дополнување на Законот за волонтерство](#) [Law for amendments of the Law on volunteering].

Службен Весник на Република Македонија бр. 161/2008[Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia 147/2015], 2015. [Закон за измени и дополнување на Законот за волонтерство](#) [Law for amendments of the Law on volunteering].

reflected a misunderstanding of the concept. For example, reimbursement of expenses incurred by volunteers was subject to taxation, the lack of volunteer status led to misapplication and misunderstanding of the concept, and the status of foreign volunteers was not regulated. The law remedied these problems.

The initiative for reforming the legal framework for volunteering dates from around 2003. Various initiatives emerged which aimed to address the need for action to promote the development of volunteering.

A notable one was led by a group of NGOs that drafted a Plan for Development of Volunteering in Macedonia – an analysis of the domestic situation which outlined a plan for action. The Plan also included a chapter on the challenges of the legal framework and recommendations for changes. The Plan was submitted to the Government, which incorporated it in its action plan and documents related to candidacy for EU membership. The Plan proposed drafting of a [National Strategy for Development of Volunteering](#) and a [Law on Volunteering](#)². Several CSO roundtable discussions were held in order to identify further needs and recommendations from the sector as to possible action in this field.

The law regulates organized volunteering, i.e., volunteer activities that take place between a volunteer and a host organization. The law states explicitly that it does not aim to limit other types of volunteering (such as informal, occasional, etc). It defines a **volunteer as a natural person who provides services, skills, or knowledge for the benefit of other people, bodies, organizations and institutions on a voluntary basis without financial or other personal gain**. The principle of free will embodied in this definition distinguishes volunteering from unpaid mandatory services such as military or apprenticeship.

Two amendments of the Law on volunteering were adopted. The first one in [2008](#), related to the reimbursement of the costs of the volunteers related to food and travel, and the second one in [2015](#), related to the penalty provisions. In 2013, the Ministry of labour and social policy proposed [amendments](#) to the Law on volunteering regarding the personal data protection of foreign volunteers. This proposal is still out of parliamentary procedure.

Research analysis indicates that low number of citizens participate in civil society sector and in other community activities in general. About 15% of the citizens volunteer in various activities and initiatives, and only 10% volunteer in civic organizations despite encouraging legal and fiscal framework for volunteering. Citizens do not have continuity in voluntary activities; a total of 10 volunteer hours a year on various unrelated objectives / activities. Therefore, it is important to continue to raise the awareness among citizens, especially young people about the opportunities and benefits that civil society provided in order to encourage their active participation, and the importance of monitoring and participation in policy and decision making.^[3³]

Civil society organizations have developed their own initiatives based on their program needs and priorities, such as establishing international and local volunteer centres, exchange services for volunteers, such as the European Voluntary Service, organizing local volunteer actions, capacity building, and development of manuals or guides, organizing promotional events, volunteer camps and so on.

With the adoption of the Law on volunteering and the Strategy for promotion and development of the volunteering the Government laid the foundation and framework for encouraging people to engage in social processes through the activities of public and private entities.

(²) Aleksovska, M., 2008. *Водич за примена на Законот за волонтерство* [Guide for Application of the Law on volunteering], Skopje: European Center for Non-for-Profit Law - ECNL

(³) Влада на Република Македонија [Government of the Republic of Macedonia], 2012. *Стратегија за соработка на Владата со граѓанскиот сектор 2012-2017* [Strategy for cooperation of the Government and the civil society 2012 - 2017].

The Strategy for promotion and development of volunteering (2010-2015) is outdated and it is expected the process of developing new Strategy to start after constitution of the new Government of the R. Macedonia.

Main concepts

Definition on volunteering

Volunteering (in terms of the Law on Volunteering, Official Gazette 85/2007, article 3) is understood as free will (voluntary) providing personal services, knowledge and skills and/or commitment of other activities in favour to other persons, bodies, organizations and other institution, without compensation. This Law does not limit the possibility to provide volunteer services that are inconsistent or accidental by nature voluntary, without compensation.

According to the Law on Labour (Official Gazette 54/13, article 61) if the volunteering experience is requirement for a professional exam or for independently performing activities in accordance with a special law should be carried out by signing a contract for volunteer service, between the employer and the volunteer. For the volunteer in these terms apply the provisions of this law regarding the duration and performance of the internship, limitation of working hours, daily breaks and leaves the responsibility for compensation, as well as ensuring safety at work, in accordance with the law. Contract for volunteer work must be concluded in writing and a copy of it within three days of signing, must be submitted to the labour inspection.

Definition on volunteer

A volunteer (in terms of the Law on Volunteering, Official Gazette 85/2007, article 4) is an individual who provides services, skills and knowledge for the benefit of other persons, bodies, organizations and other institutions on a voluntary basis and without financial or other personal gain.

2.2 Administration and governance of youth volunteering

Governance

Youth Volunteering in Republic of Macedonia is not strictly regulated and it takes in informal setting, within the [Национален Совет за Развој на Волонтерството](#) (National Council for Volunteerism Development) (1), 4/9 representatives are coming from the civil society sector. Three local municipalities from [Tetovo](#), [Bitola](#) and [Kavadarci](#), have adopted Local Strategies on Volunteerism in cooperation with the non-governmental sector that indicates the autonomy on local self-government and also non-governmental sector. The process of adopting of Local Strategies on Volunteerism, funded by International Foundations are aiming to provide sustainable development promotion and strengthening of volunteerism at local level, also provides analysis and detail action plan, adopts measures for all key stakeholders. However, does not delegate key staff on monitoring and evaluation of the implementation. Main responsibility for implementation of the Local Strategies remains on Local Self-Government. Volunteering as a subject in Republic in Macedonia has a general focus and the Government does not target young people with tailor-made approaches, thus all legal documents are based equal inclusive opportunities, regardless of gender, ethnicity, social status, age and does not target specifically young people. Therefore the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy is responsible for volunteerism in general, not the Agency of Youth and Sport. However, all legal bindings connected with young people and volunteering are exclusive and provide greater focus on young people and their process of development. Each organizer of voluntary work has the freedom to create, design and plan its voluntary program and its obliged to provide the version to the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy before signing the contracts with the volunteers.

Main actors

Nationwide, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy is responsible for youth volunteering. The Ministry main tasks regarding volunteering, in general, are connected with monitoring and evaluating the overall Strategy for promotion and development of volunteering and following its legal bindings. Currently Republic of Macedonia is between the process of evaluating the strategy and starting the process for the new strategy. National Council for Volunteerism Development works as body from the Ministry combined with NGO representatives is the main actor on volunteering in general.

Ministry for Education and Science initiated the opening of the National Agency for European Educational Programs and Mobility that has the leading role in providing international volunteering opportunities for Macedonian youngsters and volunteering assignments in Macedonia for young citizens from EU member states, with its sub programs adopted by European Commission. [The Law on establishing the National Agency for European Education Programmes and mobility](#) ^[4] was adopted in 2007.

Non-state Actors such as Non-governmental organizations and non-formal groups, mainly have the role of initiators and contributors towards implementing the measures set by the government. Furthermore they provide non-systematic support to young people that in general, are not regulated by the government. Non-state actors don't have the authority and delegation responsibility to have the key role in the implementation of state measures.

2.3 National strategy on youth volunteering

Existence of a National Strategy

The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy of Republic of Macedonia, have adopted "Стратеијата за промоција и развој на Волонтерството" - ["Strategy for promotion and development of volunteering \(2010 – 2015\) and Action Plan"](#), in September 2010 (*1). It is important to indicate that Republic of Macedonia hasn't adopted specific Strategy on Youth Volunteering and as a subject it is incorporated within the general strategy mentioned. Currently, there is no active strategic document, that regulates volunteerism on national level and the previous strategy is under revision. Within the strategy, greater focus is set on young people in comparison with all relevant target groups. In addition, the ["Strategy for cooperation of the government with the civil society with Action Plan \(2007 – 2011\)"](#) and ["Strategy for cooperation of the government with the civil society \(2012 - 2017\)"](#) are/were synergized with the "Strategy for promotion and development of volunteering (2010 – 2015) and Action Plan" and they main initiators for creating legal framework and strategic documents on volunteerism in general, with greater focus on youth volunteering in particular. Furthermore, Youth Volunteering to some extent, was incorporated within Национална Стратегија за Млади - [National Youth Strategy, 2005-2015](#) and within [National Youth Strategy 2016 – 2025](#). Youth Volunteering is not a main thematic area in National Youth Strategy 2016 – 2025, it can be found within the thematic areas Youth participation and Local youth work on a cross sectorial and transversal level of incorporation.

In 2015, Three Local strategies on Volunteerism (2015-2018) were created, by initiative of the Civil Sector with partnership with the [Municipality of Tetovo](#), [Municipality of Kavadarci](#) and [Municipality of Bitola](#).

(⁴) Службен Весник на Република Македонија бр. 113/2007, 24/2011, 24/2013, 41/2014 и 145/2015 [Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia Number 113/2007, 24/2011, 24/2013, 41/2014 и 145/2015], 2015. Консолидиран текст: [Закон за основање на Национална Агенција за Младински Образовни Програми и Мобилност](#) [Consolidated text: Law for constitution of National Agency for Youth Educational Programmes and Mobility].

Scope and contents

The main aim of the previous Strategy for promotion and development of volunteering (2010 – 2015) was to provide continuous development, promotion and strengthening of the volunteering engagement in R. Macedonia. With the Strategy, the Government stand to fulfill the following concrete strategic aims:

1. Promotion of volunteering at the broader public
2. Encouraging of the culture of volunteering within the educational system
3. Increasing the level of volunteering in the civil sector
4. Establishment of a system for institutional support of volunteering.

In direction of the fulfillment of the institutional support in the process of volunteering, the Strategy envisaged creation of a [National Council for volunteering development](#). In 2014, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy formed the National Council for volunteering development where 9 representatives were nominated from, The Ministry for labour and social policy, Ministry for education and science Agency for youth and sport, the General Secretariat – department for cooperation with non-governmental organizations, Association of Local Self – government and 4 representatives of the Civil sector.

Also, the following measures were predicted: following the implementation of the law regulations and the planned activities and their evaluation; providing financial support of projects and programmes for encouraging and development of volunteering; development of the capacities of the state institutions for work with the volunteers; and strengthening of the possibilities of volunteering of young people. Currently Republic of Macedonia haven't start a procedure for new strategy on volunteering. There is no official statement on starting evaluation process on the strategy.

The second aim of the Strategy, "Encouraging of the culture of volunteering within the educational system"; directly targeted children, young people and students that are part of the educational process, with introducing educational content and practical activities within the curriculum for elementary and secondary education and establishing mechanisms for encouraging voluntary engagement university students in Macedonia. Inclusive volunteering and specific youth target groups are mentioned within the adopted "Strategy for promotion and development of volunteering (2010 – 2015) and Action Plan".

The strategy itself has general focus, it is set in the spirit of equal rights on volunteering, and does not target inclusive volunteering and specific youth target groups.

Responsible authority

Within the previous Strategy for promotion and development of volunteering (2010 – 2015) responsible authorities are:

The Ministry for labour and social policy and the relevant institutions in the field of the social protection and health; Ministry for finances; Ministry for justice; Ministry for education and science; Agency for youth and sport; the General Secretariat – department for cooperation with non-governmental organizations; National Council for development of volunteering; Local Self – government, Civil organizations; Religious communities and religious groups; Educational institutions at all levels; Media.

The Ministry for labour and social policy had the key role in the implementation of the Strategy for promotion and development of volunteering, (2010 - 2015).

No other public information is available on the subject.

Revisions/ Updates

The government is in a process of revision of the previous "Strategy for promotion and development of volunteering (2010 – 2015)" and according to relevant lessons learned and evaluation reports will delegate the new process for creation of the Strategy for Volunteering in its new based content and dimension.

No other public information is available on the subject.

2.4 Laws and regulations on youth volunteering

Stand-alone law

The National Youth Strategy of the Republic of Macedonia (2005-2015) emphasizes that “the development and strengthening of the civil society, volunteering and civil association are vital step in the promotion of responsible citizenship and democracy guarantee”. One of the measures of this Strategy is: the Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia to adopt a Law which will regulate the volunteer work. This is the first state official document that raises the question of regulating the volunteering in the country, and recognition of the volunteering on the other hand.

In this context, on the 02nd of July 2007 the Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia adopted [Law on volunteering](#) (the Law is announced in the Official Gazette 85/2007). Upon the adoption of the Law on Volunteering, Macedonia’s Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in consultation with CSOs adopted: (1) [regulations on foreign volunteers](#) (Official Gazette 128/2007), (2) [regulations on record keeping](#) (Official Gazette 128/2007), and (3) a [volunteer card](#) (Official Gazette 128/2007) to ensure that key provisions of the law are correctly implemented. To further support implementation, the Ministry worked with several CSOs to develop and publish a [Guide to the Application of the Law on Volunteering](#) (2008).

The Law is being prepared in wider partnership between the Ministry of labour and social policy, the Ministry of education and science, the Ministry of health, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of internal affairs, Ministry of finance, Department for cooperation with the civil society sector of the Secretary General of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia, Secretariat for European Affairs, Agency for Youth and Sports, European centre for non-profit legislation (ECNL) from Budapest, Center for Institutional Development (CIRa), Youth Cultural Center Bitola (MKC), Citizen association MOST, Association for emancipation, solidarity and equality of women in Macedonia (ESE) and other relevant organizations and foundations. The inclusion of different actors, on one hand enabled incorporation of provisions expressing the interests of all stakeholders, and secured its functionality on the other side.

The United Nations Volunteers Programme (UNV) report “[Laws and Policies Affecting Volunteerism since 2001](#)” marks the process of preparation of the Law on volunteering as consultative, including wide range of relevant stakeholders, relevant ministries in first place, and different civil society organizations in drafting the Law and later the National strategy on volunteering. ^[5]

The adoption of the Law on Volunteering provided legal regulation of the volunteering, appropriate implementation of other legislation, the obstacles were exceeded and preconditions for encouraging volunteerism were made. The most important is that the Law recognizes the volunteer work among persons willing to volunteer and to the public as well.

By adopting this Law, another benchmark of the pre-accession conditions and European integration of the country was fulfilled.

The [Law on Volunteering](#) regulates the organized forms of volunteering in first place. It is important to notice that the Law provides frame for regulation the relations between the volunteer and the organization / institution, still does not make volunteering activity a legal obligation. The Law is being prepared under the principle of equity, and does not exclude any group of citizens, nor gives advantage to a particular group of people. This is specifically reflected when it comes to young people. Young people are targeted with the Law on Volunteering, but not as a specific group, but in general like any other population

⁽⁵⁾ Aleksovska, M., 2008. *Водич за примена на Законот за волонтерство* [Guide for Application of the Law on volunteering], Skopje: European Center for Non-for-Profit Law - ECNL

group. Nevertheless, the interpretation of the Law among different institutions in preparation of their own specific programmes for volunteering, young people are in the focus. Volunteering, in regards to the programmes of the institutions, is considered as part of the capacity building of young people in different areas, thus enhancing their employability ^[6]

The Law itself, does not anticipate any restrictions in duration of the volunteering activity, it is up to the will of the volunteer and the organizer of the volunteering activity.

Other official documents containing guidelines on youth volunteering

Upon adoption of the Law on Volunteering, Macedonia's Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs developed after discussion with CSOs:

1. [Regulation of the form and contents of the volunteer card, issuing and registering of data](#) (Official Gazette 128/2007).
 - a. [Volunteer card](#) (Official Gazette 128/2007)
2. [Regulation of the manner, procedure and evidence for issuing of Consent for volunteering of foreign \(non-residential\) individual in the Republic of Macedonia](#) (Official Gazette 128/2007)
3. [Regulation for the manner of keeping records in evidence for the volunteering service](#) (Official Gazette 128/2007).
4. [Instructions for regulating the insurance during commitment of voluntary service](#) (2007).

Regulations on standards of quality

The standards of quality in volunteering are regulated through the Law on Volunteering. The standards are reflected through the regulation of rights and obligations, both for volunteer and organizer of the volunteering activity, mechanism for regulating specific volunteering activity (Agreement) and the records on volunteering activity, volunteer's card, as well the supervision and inspection mechanisms.

In specific, the Law contains the following rights for volunteers:

- disclosure of key terms of the volunteer arrangements, such as rights, obligations, and known dangers;
- to be introduced in the general provisions of the organizer of the services, in particular the parts related to volunteering services to be provided by the volunteer;
- work in a safe environment;
- right to training, if it is needed for providing the volunteering service as written in the agreement;
- leaves of absence, when there are reasonable excuse;
- working breaks;
- right to be consulted and informed in decision making for providing the services;
- compensation of the costs deriving of the volunteering (travel cost, food, training and business trips)
- retention of unemployment benefits;
- protection of private information.

In terms of the Law, the volunteer has obligation to:

- inform the organizer of the volunteering activity about health issues or other reasons that disables the providing of services;
- provide the services immediate and in person;
- participate in training, aiming to secure the quality of providing the service;
- keep classified information of the organizer of the volunteering service;

⁽⁶⁾ Example: Државно правобранителство на Република Македонија [State Attorney of the Republic of Macedonia], 2015. *Програма за волонтирање*[Volunteering Programme].

- inform the organizer of the organizer of the volunteering work about any harmful consequences that might appear upon the volunteer itself, the organizer or any other third party.

In terms of the Law, the organizer of the volunteering service has obligation to:

- secure terms and conditions for carrying the volunteer service according the Law and the Agreement for Volunteer Service;
- issue a volunteer card to the volunteer about the service containing data regulated in this Law;
- secure materials and assets for carrying the volunteer service;
- secure on time and duly payment of the agreed costs;
- secure the privacy of data and privacy protection;
- secure other conditions regulated with this Law or with the Agreement for volunteer service; and to
- provide insurance of professional sicknesses and injury during the service, according to the regulations of the pension, and social security, if agreed.

The organizer of the volunteer serves is obliged to sign written Agreement with the volunteer (for domestic volunteers the organizer is obliged to this if the volunteer service is more than 40 hours a month. For less than 40 working hours a month the organizer may but it is not obliged to sign a contract. For foreign volunteer the organizer is obliged to sign a contract for all volunteering services). The Agreement have to be consisted of the following elements: Contracting parties; Subject of Agreement; Place and duration of the service; Volunteer activities and services; Special rights and obligations; Insurance; Previously agreed expenses for the volunteering and the manner of compensating them; Termination of the Agreement; and Place and date of signing the Agreement.

The organizer of the volunteering service is obliged to keep records about the volunteering work for every volunteer. In addition, the organizer issues volunteer card, which is considered as public document. It contains information about the type and duration of the service, as well as for the type of training provided to the volunteer during the service.

The supervision / monitoring of the provisions of this Law is committed by the Ministry of labour and social policy. Whilst, the inspection is made by the State inspectorate on labour through the labour inspectors.

Target groups

The legislation on volunteering in Macedonia targets all citizens, domestic and foreign, who are willing to volunteer, and domestic institutions and organizations in the role of organizers of volunteering service. The law forbids discrimination upon race, skin colour, gender, age, health condition (disability), and religious, political or other believes, national or social origin, family status, property status, gender orientation or any other personal circumstances.

Any domestic or foreign individual may be a volunteer. Also the Law enables minors (15 - 18) to commit volunteer activity with parental / guardian written agreement.

As organizers of volunteering service might appear: civil society organization or foundation; religious community or group; public institution; state body; local self-government unit and the City of Skopje. The organizer is responsible for defining the need of volunteer engagement, type and procedures for committing the services according to volunteering programme.

2.5 Youth volunteering at national level

National Programme for Youth Volunteering

National Program on Youth Volunteering is still not adopted from the Government of Republic of Macedonia. Each individual organizer of voluntary work needs to conduct

Program on volunteering according to the Law on Volunteerism. Organizers of volunteering can be: Association of citizens and foundation; religious community or religious group; Public institution; State bodies; Units of local government and the City of Skopje. The organizer of volunteering determines the need of engagement of volunteers, types of services and manner of providing them, based on a program for volunteering. All above mentioned is determined within Article 6 in the Law on Volunteerism. There is internal document within the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Registry of Volunteers set within "[Regulations on form, content and methodology for the register on persons engaged with agreement on volunteering](#)", with data on active volunteers nationwide (volunteers that have signed the voluntary contract with organizer of voluntary work). Responsible for implementation of the Law on Volunteerism is the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.

Funding

Republic of Macedonia haven't adopted National Programme on Youth Volunteering until April 2016, therefore there are no funds provided for volunteering activities for volunteering activities and support. Each organizer of Volunteer Work provides its own funding from domestic sponsors, company/organizational budget, international funding organizations, programs and donors. Nevertheless, when Public institutions have the role as organizers of volunteer work, according to [Law for transformation into permanent employment](#), article 7; Institutions engage volunteers with contract for volunteering after obtaining consent from the Ministry of Finance, furthermore they need to provide certificate from the Registry of volunteers during the volunteering issued by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. Institutions that are second-line budget users (spending units, financed through the appropriate budget user) need to request consent submitted to the competent authority, i.e. first line budget user.

Characteristics of youth volunteering

Youth often (in quite large percentage) 72.8% are assisting in schoolwork to their peers or friends, 54.2%, are part of fundraising and community actions. 46.7% of the young people are volunteering in activities connected with assistance to elderly or disabled persons. While volunteering in NGOs is less common (24%). The data is according to the research from the University Cyril and Methodius, Institute for Sociological, Political and Juridical Research Skopje, Macedonia, [Youth Trends in Republic of Macedonia in 2014](#). The research shows the trends of participation in volunteering and the main fields of volunteering. In Republic of Macedonia there is no public accessible data that provides information on youth participation in decision making on volunteering. The organizers of volunteer work provide its own programs, promote and design the volunteer opportunities for young people. www.prv.mk is a dedicated website on internship employment and volunteering, funded and supported by Program for United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the Employment Agency of the Republic of Macedonia and the Faculty of Computer Science and Engineering (Computer Science and Engineering) within the Centre for Social Innovation. Volunteering in Public Institutions is established and the biggest number of volunteers using the measures of the government can be found there. To a smaller extent the non-governmental sector have volunteers, however they are using the measures of the government to a smaller extent.

Support to young volunteers

According to Law on Volunteerism, Organizers of Volunteer work in Republic of Macedonia are obliged to cover the compensation of the previously agreed expenses related to volunteering (cost of food, transportation costs 'to and from' the place of volunteering, expenses for official travels and training expenses). Furthermore, the reimbursement of expenses for food and transportation costs 'to and from' the place of volunteering is paid up to 15 % of the average monthly salary in the Republic, for the previous year and the cost of official travel and training costs are paid in the same amount as for employees of the organizer of volunteering. Volunteers stationed in

Republic of Macedonia regardless of citizenships, shall be entitled to, accommodation health insurance and travel reimbursement. Regarding the insurance, the Ministry of labour and social policy regulates the process with [Manual-Instruction for regulating the basis of insurance to perform volunteer work](#). The organizer of the volunteering, which will conclude a contract with a volunteer and that contract envisaged to provide insurance against occupational diseases and injury at work, they need to fill [Application M1 / M2](#) (application for establishment of employment) in the usual manner, but by completing the legal basis for admission insurance, and a specific code to the appropriate basis for insurance.

Quality Assurance (QA)

Monitoring of the implementation of the provisions of the law on volunteerism is responsibility of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. The inspection is performed by the State Labour Inspectorate. National registry of organisations offering volunteering opportunities is lacking. The organizer of volunteering is obliged to keep records for the volunteering of all volunteers if not; it will be forced on penalty fees according to the law on volunteerism. There is Registry on Volunteers, however it is an internal document.

Monthly reports, on-the-spot visits and direct interviews are the mechanisms used for collecting young volunteers' feedback on their volunteering experiences. Republic of Macedonia strives to improve the process of collecting quality and quantity data regarding volunteerism and the implementation of the legal framework due to its scarcity. Currently there is no publicly accessible, nationwide process that periodically evaluates the quality of volunteer work provided from organizers of volunteer work, or measuring the satisfactory level of the volunteers. There is only Registry of Volunteers in the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, internal document that collects all volunteers that have signed voluntary contract with organizer of voluntary work.

2.6 Cross-border mobility programmes

EU programmes

Erasmus + Programme

The main EU programme promoting youth mobility, and is available for Macedonia is the Erasmus + Programme. The decentralized actions of the programme are implemented by the National Agency for European Education Programmes and Mobility.

The Erasmus + Programme is built on the achievements of more than 25 years of European programmes in the fields of education, training and youth. Erasmus + is result of the integration of the following European programmes implemented by the Commission during the period of 2007 - 2013:

- The Lifelong Learning Programme
- The Youth in Action Programme
- The Erasmus Mundus Programme
- Tempus
- Alfa
- Edulink
- Programmes of cooperation with industrialized countries in the field of higher education

Macedonia is Programme Country of the Erasmus + Programme, and following actions are available in Macedonia:

- Key Action 1 - [Learning Mobility of Individuals](#)
- Key Action 2 - [Co-operation for Innovation and the Exchanges of Good Practices](#)
- Key Action 3 - [Support for Policy Reform](#)
- [Jean Monnet Activities](#)
- [Sport](#)

According to the Erasmus + Project Results webpage, by the moment (last checked on 27 April 2016) [1285](#) Erasmus + project involved Macedonian entities, either as coordinator / beneficiary either as partner, of which [1077](#) are in Erasmus + Key Action 1 - Youth Mobility. Only [one organization](#) from Macedonia was awarded Grant in the action Large Scale EVS.

European Voluntary Service

At the moment [46 organizations form Macedonia are accredited EVS organizations](#) (last checked on 27 April 2016). The process of Accreditation for EVS can be found in the [European Voluntary Service Accreditation Guidelines](#).

According to the records of the National agency for European educational programmes and Mobility of the Republic of Macedonia, in the period of 2014 - 2015, in total 574 EVS Volunteers were hosted in Macedonian organizations of which 280 in 2014, and 294 in 2015. The majority of the volunteers in 2014 were from: Poland (27), Estonia (26), Albania (25), Italy (23) and France (21), while in 2015 the majority of volunteers were from: Italy (35), Romania (32), Turkey (25), Slovakia (23) and Croatia (20). Regarding the topics covered the majority of the volunteers participated in projects covering EU Citizenship, EU awareness and democracy, youth participation, ITC technologies, entrepreneurial learning and youth unemployment.

Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) 2007 - 2013

In December 2005, Macedonia was granted candidate country status for EU membership. On 18 February 2008 the Council adopted the [Accession Partnership](#) for the country, thus updating the previous European Partnership of January 2006. The main objective of IPA is to assist the countries in their progressive alignment with the standards and policies of the European Union, including where appropriate the *acquis communautaire*, with a view to future membership.

Macedonia has been given the prospect of becoming an EU member state. On its way towards membership, the European Union provides continuous support and financial assistance in order to help the country with the necessary reforms.

The Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) is a key tool of the European Commission's (EC) pre-accession strategy. IPA is a result of the Commission's reform of the External Aid and Relations Regulatory Framework, thus creating a sole pre-accession instrument for the 2007 to 2013 period, and replacing the amalgam of previous individual aid programmes such as PHARE, ISPA, SAPARD, CARDS and the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance for Turkey. IPA was established with EC Council [Regulation No. 1085/2006 of 17 July 2006](#) (IPA Framework Regulation), while the IPA implementing rules were established with EC Commission [Regulation No. 718/2007 of 12 June 2007](#) (IPA Implementing Regulation).

The Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) came into effect at the start of 2007 ([Multi-Annual Indicative Financial Framework 2011-2013 COM \(2009\) 543 from 14.10.2009](#)) and is to provide nearly 11.5 billion euro to candidate and potential candidate countries in the period 2007-2013.

For the period 2007-2013, assistance provided in the Republic of Macedonia through IPA covers five components:

1. Institution Building - [Transition Assistance and Institution Building Component](#) (TAIB)
2. Cross-border Co-operation:
 - [IPA CBC Macedonia - Bulgaria](#)
 - [IPA CBC Macedonia - Greece](#)
 - [IPA CBC Macedonia - Kosovo](#)
 - [IPA CBC Macedonia - Albania](#)
3. Regional Development - [Regional Development](#) (RD)
4. Human Resource Development - [Human Resources Development](#) (HRD)
5. Rural Development - [Agricultural and Rural Development](#) (IPARD)

The IPA Programme Components does not specifically emphasize youth mobility and volunteering, nor excludes the possibility.

No relevant information for monitoring youth participation in IPA programme is available.

Other Programmes

At the moment, there are no Cross-Border Mobility and/or Volunteering programmes that are funded (in total or in part) by the State.

Legal framework applying to foreign volunteers

Foreign volunteers are subject of the Law on Volunteering as well. Thus, the Law determines the possibilities and conditions for volunteering of foreigner. A foreign individual may volunteer in Macedonia upon issued Consent for volunteering by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and regulated residence in the Republic of Macedonia (article 8, par. 2). After the Consent for volunteering is being issued, the organizer of the voluntary service has obligation to inform the Ministry of labour and social policy about the start of the volunteering activity, within 60 days. The procedures related to the issuing of Consent for volunteering are explained in the [Regulation of the manner, procedure and evidence for issuing of Consent for volunteering of foreign \(non-residential\) individual in the Republic of Macedonia](#).

Visas

Citizens of the following countries are [not required to have entry visa](#) for the Republic of Macedonia:

- [EU member countries and signatories of the Schengen Agreement](#) - have right to enter the Republic of Macedonia with a valid ID card.
- [Third countries with permanent stay in an EU member country or signatory country of the Schengen Agreement](#) - may stay in the Republic of Macedonia for up to 15 (fifteen) days upon every entry to the territory of the Republic of Macedonia, and the total amount of the subsequent stays in the Republic of Macedonia must not be longer than 3 (three) months within a six-months period, starting from the date of the first entry.
- [Third countries with multiple entry short stay Schengen visa type C valid at least 5 \(five\) days beyond the intended stay in the Republic of Macedonia](#)- may stay in the Republic of Macedonia for up to 15 (fifteen) days upon every entry to the territory of the Republic of Macedonia, and the total amount of the subsequent stays in the Republic of Macedonia must not be longer than 3 (three) months within a six-months period, starting from the date of the first entry.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic Macedonia has published [information about visa entry in the country](#) for the countries and unrecognized territories on its web site in alphabetical order.

A foreigner, with country of residence that requires visa entry in the Republic of Macedonia, might apply for two types of entry visas: [Short-Stay Visa](#) for the Republic of Macedonia, or [Long-Stay Visa](#) for the Republic of Macedonia.

Registration of Foreign Nationals

All foreign citizens, irrelevant whether a visa is necessary for their entry in the Republic of Macedonia or not, are obliged to register themselves in the nearest police station within 24 hours of their entry on Macedonian territory. For the foreign volunteers in Macedonia, the organizer of the voluntary service (the host) can assist the volunteer to register.

Customs Guide

The Republic of Macedonia, according to the legislation, has developed procedures for customs. The customs service of the Republic of Macedonia developed specific guides for

[travellers](#) as well as for [business community](#) containing useful customs information. For the foreign volunteers apply the customs rules for travellers.

2.7 Raising awareness about youth volunteering opportunities

Information providers

Information in present times is very important for young people. Information needs to be eligible, factual and reliable in order to provide opportunities that are open for them. In the last few years' big importance is given to the right for information, where NGO's are supported from the government and international foundations, to provide information for young people, including information on volunteering.

National public authorities

Agency of Youth and Sport:

Main governmental body that is in charge of youth in Republic of Macedonia is the [Agency of Youth and Sport](#) that is basically governmental body with its own budget and responsibilities. Although it is a not ministry, it is independent structure that is not under any other particular governmental ministry and responds directly to Prime Minister.

The Youth Department is divided into two sub-departments-International cooperation and Youth policy and training. This department lunched and web site will all useful information about youth opportunities including volunteering opportunities www.mladi.ams.gov.mk.

Other national public bodies

Other national bodies that are directly involved into dissemination of youth information are the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Social Care and the Ministry of Culture, which has activities, connected with youth. On regular basis the mentioned public bodies provide information for youth on their web pages in general, and information on volunteering in particular as part of their providing information.

National agency for European educational programmes and mobility

Important role in dissemination of youth information about youth opportunities and mobility also have [National agency for European educational programmes and mobility](#). This organization is in charge for the European Commission programs such as Erasmus+ (certainly most important for Youth) that are widely speeded among youth NGOs.

National Council for the development of volunteering

[National Council for the development of volunteering](#) (NCDV) was established by Government in order to ensure successful planning and implementation of objectives and measures of the Strategy for development of volunteering. The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy provide administrative - technical support for the work of NCDV. National Council for the development of volunteering is responsible for the promotion and development of volunteering as a socially useful activity, planning specific measures and monitor the development of volunteering.

Local public authorities with competencies in the youth field

In the Republic of Macedonia there are 85 municipalities and only few of them have serious focus on Youth and support youth activities mainly by supporting Youth information centers. Youth information and counseling centers as local tools for dissemination youth information (volunteering, education, trainings, youth mobility, EVS) are present in two municipalities in Prillep and Kavadarci. The municipality of Skopje, the capital, has a structure within city administration that provides support for NGOs including Youth NGOs and also Coordination Council of NGOs on city level is established.

There is also Association of Local Communities that was included in the process of adoption of the National Action Plan for implementation of the National Youth Strategy

(2016-2025) by nominating a member in the National Steering Committee for implementation of the National Youth Strategy (2016-2025).

Youth NGOs

Nowadays, the youth sector in the Republic of Macedonia is a combination of associations such as: youth organizations, organizations of different fields with youth target group, youth lead organizations, student associations and student unions, youth political wings, and cultural and artistic youth associations. Youth organizations have active role in dissemination on volunteering information for young people.

Specific contact point

EURODESK is an international nonprofit association. As support organisation to the Erasmus+ programme (2014-2020) Eurodesk is one of the most comprehensive and most accessible source of free youth information about international learning mobility opportunities.

As of today, Eurodesk is present in 34 countries and it is also present in Macedonia.

Macedonia have three EURODESK contact points: Youth information centers [INFO SEGA](#), [Center for Intercultural Dialogue](#) and [Mladiinfo](#). These organizations provide and disseminate information about volunteering and other youth related opportunities.

Youth information and counselling centres INFO SEGA in Prilep and Kavadarci are projects of the [Agency of youth and sports](#) and the [Coalition of youth organizations SEGA](#). This centres as EURODESK points are dedicated to inform and disseminate information about youth opportunities (volunteering, trainings, scholarships etc.).

Key initiatives

Republic of Macedonia is missing state-funded national or regional centers or agencies, that support volunteer organizations. The Agency of Youth and Sport supported the opening of two Informational and Counseling Youth Information centers in the cities of Prilep and Kavadarci that assist with young volunteers' placement and promote volunteering opportunities mainly abroad. Raising Awareness in Republic of Macedonia is not systematically organized and occasionally is an activity of the youth non-governmental organizations promoting their activities and volunteering opportunities. Agency for employment have created dedicated website www.prv.mk for employment, internship and volunteering with focus on young people. The National Agency for European Educational Programs and Mobility with the administration of the Erasmus+ program regularly performs info campaigns and events where it provides information for international volunteering opportunities.

In the past five years in Republic of Macedonia were taken several Campaigns on local and national level conducted mainly by youth organization. The most of them aimed to raise awareness among young people for the importance of volunteering, promoting volunteering and raising awareness about the special role of youth information.

2016 - National Campaign "The right of youth information - Information NOW!"

Youth Information and Counseling Centers INFO SEGA from Prilep and Kavadarci in cooperation with the Agency for Youth and Sports, Coalition of youth organizations SEGA and other NGOs on the first of December 2015 officially launched the national campaign "[The right of youth information - Information NOW!](#)" and will last till June 2016. The campaign aimed to bring closer the right of young people to ask questions and receive information from decision makers.

The campaign "The right of youth information - Information NOW!" Is supported by the program for decentralized cooperation between Macedonia and the region of Lower Normandy, France.

The campaign provides activities for young people and encouraged to participate in the process of providing easier access to information and sharing information.

The campaign has three goals:

1. Young people understand that they have the right information.
2. Promotion of Youth Information Centres in the country.
3. Raising awareness of decision makers to guarantee the right of information.

During the campaign were conducted a series of activities that involved more than 2000 young people on national level through workshops, creative events, visits Public Institution and others. The campaign joined 13 other youth organizations from Macedonia.

2013 - Local campaign to promote volunteering "Volunteering in NGOs - support for the community"

Youth Educational Forum and Youth Cultural Center - Bitola conducted a [local campaign to promote volunteering](#) as part of USAID's Civil Society in the period from September to December 2013.

This campaign aimed to create a voluntary system which will highlight the importance of volunteering. The campaign was create to allow young people easier access to voluntary positions and to gain more experience and skills. During the campaign actively involved 10 organizations from several towns and involve volunteers in their activities. Through this campaign organizations promoted their work and activities but also had the opportunity to increase their membership by promoting volunteerism and acquire knowledge about recruitment, management, retention and recognition of the engagement of volunteers

2012 – European campaign for youth information "Information Right Now!"

["Information Right Now!"](#) is a European campaign, launched on 17th April – December 2012 and implemented by the European Youth Information and Counselling Agency - ERYICA in partnership with the Council of Europe. Coalition of youth organizations SEGA (affiliated member of ERYICA) and its project the Youth Information center INFO SEGA in Prilep were leading this campaign od national level in Macedonia. The campaign aimed to raise awareness among young people, decision makers and media on the special role of youth information with regard to young people's access to rights and – eventually – on the access

The campaign objectives were:

- Young people to understand they have the right to information.
- Young people to understand they have a right to information and move them to find it in the Youth Information Centre.
- Together with young people, ask decision makers to guarantee their right to information.

On a decentralized level, the campaign consisted of numerous activities of different scope and scale in all Council of Europe member countries, organized by local Youth Information Centers and Youth Workers, and tailored to the respective target audiences. The activities listed above as well as the Facebook page, the photo competition and the website were coordinated centrally by ERYICA. Youth Ambassadors was act as European-wide testimonials of the campaign and should be actively involved. The 9th Conference of Ministers of the Council of Europe was a prominent occasion to present the activities from the pan-European action day through a travelling photo exhibition along with other campaign events.

2011 - National campaign by Youth Council Prilep

The [National campaign](#) was launched in May 2011 and lasted till November 2011. This campaign gathered more than 10 youth organizations across Macedonia. It was aiming to raise the awareness among young people about importance for volunteering and as a final product the brochure about "What volunteering is?" was speeded among young people in Macedonia.

2011 - National campaign to announcement the Year of Volunteering

In 2011 was marked the tenth anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers, known as the European Week of volunteerism which is also considered one of the most important years of the Red Cross.

As one of the leaders in volunteerism and its development, the [Red Cross in Macedonia launched a national campaign to mark the year of volunteering in 2011](#). The campaign aimed to demonstrate specific capabilities of Red Cross and community organizations to involve volunteers, promoting and moving spirit of volunteerism where it is most needed.

The campaign began in May 2011 and lasted until December 2011. The campaign was marked by a series of public activities and presentations on the work of the Red Cross in Macedonia.

2.8 Skills recognition

Policy Framework

Nationwide, the skills recognition is regulated with the [Закон за Волонтерство \(Law on volunteering\)](#) within the article 19“The organizer of volunteering is obliged to keep records for the volunteering of all the volunteers. The manner of keeping records referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article shall be prescribed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.” It contains information about the type and duration of the service, as well as for the type of training provided to the volunteer during the service.

Furthermore, within the non-formal setting, non-governmental organizations tend to use internal procedures and have the full autonomy in providing volunteering activities, thus if they decide to recognize the volunteer work they are obliged to implement volunteer programs that shall be available to the State Labour Inspectorate.

The Republic of Macedonia has undertaken all necessary measures that lead to signing of [Memorandum for understanding](#) for participation and implementation of the ERASMUS PLUS programme 2014 – 2020 with the European Union, thus has become a programme country in Erasmus plus programme since 2014. Designated institution for implementation of Erasmus plus programme in Macedonia is the National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility. The National Agency administrates the opportunity for Macedonian young people to volunteer abroad and young people from EU member’s states, to volunteer in Republic of Macedonia.

Concerning the validation and recognition of skills in Republic of Macedonia, the National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility is responsible for implementation of Europass as National Europass Centre regards the acquisition of skills in formal setting, as well Youthpass National Coordinator for implementation of Youthpass regarding the validation and recognition of non-formal learning.

Currently Youthpass does not have the same level of recognition in Republic of Macedonia as in EU member’s states.

Existing arrangements

In Republic of Macedonia, Skills recognition is recognized through [volunteer card](#). The form and content of the volunteer card, is regulated with [Regulation of the form and contents of the volunteer card, issuing and registering of data](#). The organizer issues volunteer card, which is considered as public document. It contains information about the type and duration of the service, as well as for the type of training provided to the volunteer during the service. The organizer of voluntary work is legally entitled to issue voluntary card. The main responsibility for monitoring the functioning of the system of skills recognition is on Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. The inspection is performed by the State Labor Inspectorate. In non-formal settings, non-governmental organization provides recognition documents according to their internal procedures and regulations, thus there are differences between the recognition documents provided from various

subjects and Republic of Macedonia is lacking of national standardized system for verification or recognition of volunteer assignments, except volunteer card. Currently in Republic of Macedonia there are no possibilities for young volunteers to obtain [ECTS](#) or [ECVET](#) credits through volunteering.

In the course of 2014-15 the NEC issued 563 Europass Mobility certificate and on central level have been downloaded and filled 36.618 Europass CVs. Since 2013, in Macedonia were registered 2701 [Youthpass](#) certificate issued. Both are available on Macedonian language for the beneficiaries. In regards to the availability and issuing on Europass documents NEC publish relevant and up-to-date information on dedicated Europass website www.europass.mk. Additionally, [46 Organizations](#) (until 2016) are accredited within the [European Voluntary Service](#) and can send, coordinate and host International volunteers coming from EU member states.

In Republic of Macedonia acquiring volunteer card represents formal recognition of volunteering period, and it is valuable asset in CV's during job seeking endeavors.

2.9 Current debates and reforms

During the past year, the National Council for Promotion of the Volunteering functions in gathering data on the actual situation and needs of its members from the civil society sector. Accordingly, there are internal activities within the National Council for defining further activities of the Council itself in advancing voluntarism.

The political situation in Macedonia, contributed to certain delay in specific aspects related to the youth volunteering. Thus, the proposed [Draft Law on amending the Law on Volunteering](#) by the Ministry of labour and social policy is still out of parliamentary procedures. This Law it is [expected](#) to regulate the secure personal data protection of foreign volunteers in possession of the Ministry of labour and social policy for a period of three years.

The [Strategy for promotion of the volunteering](#) is outdated (2010 – 2015). It is expected this strategic document to be put on the agenda of the decision makers after the constitution of the new Government.

3. Employment & Entrepreneurship

Macedonia's unemployment rate decreased to 22.1 percent in the third quarter of 2017 from 23.4 percent in the same period of the previous year, however the youth unemployment rate increased from 47.7 to 50.1 percent.

Recently, political attention has increasingly been focused on boosting the employment of young people in Macedonia through a combination of employment, education and social assistance policies.

3.1 General context

Labour market situation in the country

Labour Market and Youth Unemployment

The Macedonian labour market suffers from low activity, low employment rates, high unemployment and (vertical and horizontal) mismatch between supplied labour and demanded skills. Labour force participation rate remains low by international standards, reflecting the low employment coupled with high unemployment rate. Low participation is supported by the sizeable net inflows of remittances and free health insurance provided for the registered unemployed. Similar to other Western Balkan countries, the labour market in the Republic of Macedonia has been assessed as rather not inclusive in practice, despite existing employment and equal opportunity legislation. Inclusiveness for particular groups, such as very young and very old workers and ethnic minorities remains

a challenge for the country, having in mind the excessively large unemployment rates for these segments of the population.

Unemployment in the Republic of Macedonia was already high at the beginning of the transition in the early 90's, estimated at 20%, but further increased during transition. The rise in unemployment was due to employment losses as well as the modest rise in labour force participation rate. These developments suggest that the emergence and development of the new private sector was insufficient to absorb the decrease in employment caused by the restructuring of state-owned companies, notwithstanding the effect or pressure of rising working-age population. The unfavorable business climate during the transition has not only discouraged new business start-ups, but also promoted the blossoming of the informal economy. To discourage the sizeable shadow economy and spur the development of private, and particularly, small and medium-sized enterprise sector, the authorities substantially reduced the personal-income and corporate tax rates at the beginning of 2007 (Labour Market in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; A Study for The European Commission Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities; DG October 2009).

There are several possible reasons for the high and persistent unemployment in the Republic of Macedonia, namely: (i) specific regional economic and political factors influencing the country's transition; (ii) privatisation method based on substandard Managers-Employees-Buy-Outs; (iii) labour market flows dominated by low rates of job creation; (iv) high non-wage labour costs and diversion to informal economy and (v) demographic pressures from high pool of potential labour market entrants over the next years. Main factors influencing low participation of women are: the tradition and cultural habits in the country, low education and skills, ethnicity combined with the education, availability and cost of child care services and care for older family members, labour market discrimination against females, etc.

Youth unemployment and underemployment (workers who are highly skilled but working in low paying jobs, workers who are highly skilled but working in low skill jobs and part-time workers who would prefer to be full time) in the Republic of Macedonia represent a major cost to the country in economic, political and societal terms. One in every two young persons in the national labour force is unemployed. The unemployment rate, as participation of the number of unemployed in the total labour force, for 2015 is 26.1%, while the highest unemployment rate, 47.3%, was observed in the population aged 15-24 (49.7 for men and 43.3 for women). The high youth unemployment rate – among the highest in the world – means a loss of investment in education and training, a reduced tax base and higher social costs. At the same time, long periods of unemployment in the early stages of life affect the job prospects across the working-life span of young people. Young, rural and unskilled females are less likely to be active in the labour market. According to the [Labour Force Survey, 2015](#), the population in the Republic of Macedonia over 15 years of age was 1 676 659 persons, of which 57.0% were active and participating in the labour market, while 43.0% in 2015 were outside the active population, i.e. were inactive.

As a result, political attention has increasingly been focused on boosting the employment of young people in Macedonia through a combination of employment, education and social assistance policies. As the challenges are many and cut across several policy dimensions, measures focus on both supply and demand, and are curative as well as preventative.

Definitions and concepts

Macedonia follows the definition of International Labor Organization on the recommendations for definitions and concepts – therefore, employed are included persons of 15 years of age and more who:

- During the reporting week have worked for money (in cash or in kind) or for profit at least one hour;

- During the reporting week were temporarily absent from work (because of illness; leaves; studies; break in the activity of the business entity etc.), but were formally employed;
- Were helping on the family estate or in the family enterprise without pay

The classification of the employed according to the economic status is based upon the International Classification of Status in Employment and is worded as follows:

Employers - persons who run their own business entity or owners who work in their shops or owners of an agriculture estate, who employ other people;

Employees - persons who work in state institutions, business entities in public, mixed, collective and undefined ownership or for a private employer;

Self-employed - persons who work in their own business, professional practice or farm for the purpose of earning a profit and who do not employ any other person;

Unpaid family workers - persons who work without pay in a business entity or a farm (owned by a family member).

According to the EUROSTAT recommendations, as unemployed are considered the persons between 15-74 years of age who meet the following three conditions:

- During the reporting week they did not work (according to the above-mentioned criteria);
- Have searched actively for a job or have taken concrete activities to find a job;
- Were prepared to accept work in the next two weeks that followed the week of the report.

The persons that are not included in any of the two categories make up the group of those that are not in labor force.

The main indicators for monitoring the changes of the labor force are:

- Activity rate, as participation of the labour force in the working age population aged 15 years and over.
- Employment rate:
- Unemployment rate, as participation of the number of unemployed in the total labour force.

3.2 Administration and Governance

Governance

The process of planning, design and implementation of active labour market programs (ALMPs) in Macedonia has been streamlined from 2007 onwards. The planning and implementation of the programs is organized through annual Operational Plans for ALMPs (OPs) (the exception was the two-year OP for 2012-2013). OPs are following the objectives, principles and target groups set in the strategic documents, the National Employment Strategy and the National Action Plan for Employment. The OP sets the scope and financial allocation of ALMPs (the employment services are not directly treated as active programs). Youth Employment plan is integrated in the Employment Strategy for Macedonia and is there is strict coordination and delegation of responsibilities. The entire process is governed by the Minister of Labour and Social Policy, and coordinated by the national coordinator – the director of the Employment Service Agency (ESA). The ESA is the implementing body for the OPs.

In terms of entrepreneurship, the [Agency for promotion of Entrepreneurship in the Republic of Macedonia](#) is state institution established to conduct Governmental policies for small and medium enterprises as well as other programmes adopted by the Government for supporting the entrepreneurship, competitiveness and innovation. However, no specific coordination at national level exist for youth entrepreneurship.

Main actors

The main authority for youth employment and entrepreneurship is the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy. In particular, responsible body for coordination of all actions and measures in the Labour Market Unit within the Ministry. The role of the Labour Market Unit is:

- to ensure technical support, advices and directions to the partnering Ministries and agencies for all aspects within the implementation of the Action Plan.
- to prepare reports for the achieved progress and monitoring, and will assist in preparation of the evaluation reports
- to facilitate the exchange of information and good practices between the Governmental agencies, as well as the Government, social partners and civic society
- to regularly inform the expert group that developed the Action Plan for the implementation progress

The following public actors were involved in the policy making process on youth employment and entrepreneurship:

- Ministry of education and science
- Ministry of Information Society and Administration
- Ministry of finances
- Ministry of economy
- Employment Service Agency
- Center for Vocational Education and Training
- Center for Education of Adults
- Agency for Promotion of the Entrepreneurship of the Republic of Macedonia
- Centers for social work

The following non-public actors were also involved in the policy making process on youth employment and entrepreneurship:

- Confederation of Free Trade Unions (included in the creation of the Action Plan and members of the Youth Employment Advisory Group)
- Organization of Employers of Macedonia (included in the creation of the Action Plan and members of the Youth Employment Advisory Group)
- Federation of Trade Unions of Macedonia (included in the creation of the Action Plan and members of the Youth Employment Advisory Group)
- UNDP office in Macedonia (Governmental partner in employment programmes)
- USAID office in Macedonia (Governmental partner in employment programmes)
- International Labor Organization – office in Macedonia (Governmental partner in employment programmes)
- World Bank
- Business Confederation of Macedonia

Consultation of young people

No systematic consultation process with young people is conducted during the design of youth employment policies and measures.

Policy monitoring and evaluation

In 2015, ILO conducted Impact evaluation of 6 youth employment measures (Impact evaluation of active labour market programs in Macedonia: key findings - this study is conducted by domestic experts). In 2013, the MLSP (Labour Market Unit) prepared progress review on the Action Plan for Youth Employment 2012 – 2015. The final evaluation of the Action Plan was made in 2015 (used for planning of the new Action Plan for Youth Employment 2016 – 2020). No specific monitoring and evaluation measures on youth entrepreneurship are conducted.

Young people were included in the evaluation process of the youth employment measures by the International Labor Organizations, in accordance with the "Impact evaluation of active labour market programs in FYR Macedonia: key findings", 2015,

Nikica Mojsoska-Blazevski, Marjan Petreski, International Labor Organization through survey targeting beneficiaries from the measures (treatment group) and non-beneficiaries (control group). Although, not by public authorities, the findings from this evaluation were further used in the creation of the new Action Plan for Youth Employment 2016 – 2020.

The assessment of the effectiveness of active measures is regularly conducted through employment outcomes of different programs/interventions. Therefore, the process uses official data statistics on employment in general and youth employment, case studies on entrepreneurship developed by the State Statistical Office and the International Labour Organization.

The National Action Plan for youth employment 2012 – 2015 included mid-term evaluation in the middle of 2013 and final evaluation in mid-2015.

The mid-term evaluation in 2013 provided sound basis for restructuring of some of the indicators in the Action Plan, and therefore, the operative plans for 2014 and 2015 were developed in accordance with the evaluation recommendations. The final evaluation served as basis for the development of the new National Action Plan for Youth Employment 2016 – 2020.

3.3 Skills Forecasting

Forecasting system(s)

Currently, there are some ad hoc, fragmented attempts to collect data on the skills in current and future demand:

- Employment Service Agency (ESA) conducts skills demand survey;

The ESA has carried out an annual employers' survey called Skill Needs Analysis (SNA) from 2007 onwards with the primary goal to acquire information from the employers about short-term recruitments in the following 6-12 months, the need for skills and occupational shortages. The purpose of this survey is to detect short-term occupational shortages leading to an increase in the training of unemployed workers in those specific occupations.

- the Ministry of Education and Science (MES) in 2016 has undertaken initial steps by developing a skills forecasting model and establishing the Skills Observatory).

According to the data provided by [MES](#) the Skills Observatory should enable direct linkage of the labor market needs with the educational programmes, particularly in the secondary vocational schools towards their compatibility and competitiveness for employment. This tool includes connecting and elaboration of data from the educational institutions, ESA, Adults Education Center through computer software. No specific information whether the Skills Observatory is developed and into function.

The HERMAC model developed under the Twinning Project "Support to the National Employment Policy" MK2007/IB/SO/02 is composed of two main parts a demand side and an absorption side and is designed for long-term forecasting of labour market development and policy analysis. The model methodology is based on the original HERMIN model developed by Bradley (2000 and 2005) used mainly for analyzing macroeconomic impact of structural funds. The structure of the HERMIN allows its application also for countries with limited available data which was the case of Beneficiary Country.

While the original HERMIN is composed of four or five sectors, the HERMAC deals with 14 sectors according to the available data in Macedonia based on the NACE rev. 1.1 classification. For each sector are determined output, investment, wages, prices, employment (labour demand) and labour productivity.

The model has a detailed labour market sector which allows analyzing labour market mismatch according to ISCO and ISCED methodology. Labour demand is broken into

three education levels: primary, secondary and tertiary education. Furthermore, labour demand is also broken down into three different qualification levels: low, medium and high qualification.

Skills development

The information provided by the forecasting models are used by the ESA in developing the capacity building activities within the ALMPs. The ESA conducts mostly training courses on computer skills and language courses for the unemployed.

3.4 Career Guidance and Counselling

Career guidance and counselling services

Career guidance and counselling services are present in the education system and in the measures for youth employment in Macedonia.

Professional orientation / career guidance is conducted through application of techniques for assessment of the characteristics of the unemployed youth, individual and group counseling and career development planning, preparation of career plans etc. The professional orientation is related to the unemployed young people – active job seekers aged 18 – 29, assisted by the career advisors within the Employment Service agencies (ESA).

Starting in 2012, the Ministry of education and science in partnership with the Education Development Center established career centers for career guidance to the students in (to date) 53 high schools throughout Macedonia. The Career guidance programme is implemented by (so far) 180 trained career advisors, which are school teachers or support staff (psychologists/pedagogues). The career advisors organize individual sessions with high school students to provide further guidance based on the competences of the students.

In order to enhance the career guidance system in the public high schools, the Ministry of education and science in partnership with USAID developed web application BIPO (Battery Instruments for Professional Orientation - <http://www.bipo.mon.gov.mk/>) that measures the interests of students. This application is available in Macedonian and Albanian language only.

The existing career guidance services are provided by the [Employment Service Agencies](#) (Professional Orientation/career guidance), [Ministry of education and science](#) (career centers in high schools and BIPO application). Main partner of the Ministry / Government related to career guidance programmes is the USAID office in Macedonia (Project Youth Employment Skills – YES Network).

The current measures are made available only to active job seekers and high school students (age 15 – 18).

Funding

The existing career guidance services which are part of the measures from the Action Plan for Youth Employment are funded by the budget of the Ministry of labour and Social Policy. The establishment and functioning of the Career centers in the high schools is supported by the USAID office in Macedonia.

- Action Plan for youth employment 2012 – 2015: €2.667.000 for the Outcome 2.3 – Young people have access to career development services (which is 9,5% of the total budget for the Action Plan – 28.213.000 EUR)
- Operational Plan for labour market services and active programs and measures for employment for 2015: 2.197.440,00 MKD (around 35.730 EUR) which is 1,5% of the overall budget for youth employment for 2015.
- Action Plan for youth employment 2016 – 2020: 2.000.000 EUR for Outcome 1.3 (which is 6,5% of the total forecasted budget for the Action Plan – 30.950.000 EUR)

- Operational Plan for labour market services and active programs and measures for employment for 2016: 2.197.440,00 MKD (around 35.730 EUR) which is 1,2% of the overall budget for youth employment for 2016.

Quality assurance

No specific mechanisms to ensure the quality of services related to career guidance is in place. The main mechanism to monitor and ensure quality of service is the measuring of the numbers of users reached. Information is only available as Key Achievement, which is measured in numbers in the Action Plan for Youth Employment 2016 - 2020 ("Over 15,700 school students received career education services within the timeframe of the Action Plan, while approximately 50,000 youth received labour market information provided through the services of the ESA", page 20).

The following indicators were developed with the Action Plan 2012 – 2015:

- 10 per cent of secondary education students receiving career education services;
- 10 percentage points increase in the number of youth registered in the employment service receiving individualized career guidance and employment counselling;
- By 2015, at least 30,000 youth will have had access to labour market information (LMI)

The key achievements in this field are at quantitative level. According to the evaluation of the 2012 – 2015 Action Plan, over 15,700 school students received career education services within the timeframe of the Action Plan, while approximately 50,000 youth received labour market information provided through the services of the ESA.

No additional information on outcomes is available.

3.5 Traineeships and Apprenticeships

Official guidelines on traineeships and apprenticeships

Apprenticeship and traineeship is part of the national regulations and strategies. The Apprenticeship system is regulated in the [Labour Relations Law](#), in acts 56, 57, 58 and 59. These articles refer to the duration of the apprenticeship (maximum one year), performance and cancellation.

However, no legal framework on traineeship exists in Republic of Macedonia. Traineeship is included in the Employment strategies and programmes as a measure for increasing the employability of young people.

Participants in traineeships (within the active labour market measures) receive remuneration which includes personal tax income and sickness and workplace injury insurance. The participants in apprenticeship usually do not receive remuneration nor insurance or social security.

Traineeships and apprenticeships are included in the Higher Education Process and represent requirement as pre-condition for closing semester or specific subject.

There are no specific guidelines on cooperation among the social partners in the design, implementation and governance of traineeships and apprenticeships.

No specific target groups related traineeships and apprenticeships.

Promoting traineeships and apprenticeships

The ESA provides administrative and financial support only to the trainees. No other specific support is given to the providers.

Information regarding traineeship opportunities are available on the website of the [ESA](#) and in the local employment agencies. Also, specific information on traineeship opportunities is provided in the Operational Plan on active labour market programs and measures for [2015](#), [2016](#) and [2017](#).

Recognition of learning outcomes

The trainees provide reports to the ESA and the provider of traineeship. In terms of apprenticeship, the apprentice must pass an exam before the end of the apprenticeship. However, not all providers keep sound record books on traineeships or apprenticeship.

The formal educational institutions make arrangements with private or public institutions related to traineeships for students (during summer) which is linked to the ECTS and ECVET. Based on these arrangements, the students receive credits that are valid in the grading system and requirements in the higher education.

Funding

According to the active labour market programs and measures, the providers are not obliged to co-fund the trainee. The amount that the trainees receive is around 100 EUR (6.200,00 MKD), including personal tax income and sickness and workplace injury insurance (this amount is paid by the ESA).

The funding for traineeship is provided with the budget of the Ministry of labour and social policy, within the Action Plan for Youth Employment (and operational annual plans).

- 2015: According to the Operational Plan for active labor market programs and measures 2015, the amount of funding for traineeship was 18.600.000 MKD (around 300.000 EUR), which was 13% of the entire 2015 budget for youth employment (142,103,798.00 MKD or around 2.310.630 EUR).
- 2016: According to the Operational Plan for active labor market programs and measures 2016, the amount of funding for traineeship is 18.600.000 MKD (around 300.000 EUR), which is around 10% of the entire 2016 budget for youth employment (180,213,187.00 MKD or around 2.930.295 EUR).

Quality assurance

The ESA conducts monitoring to ensure the quality of the traineeship through field visits and interviews with the trainees and the providers. The ESA also has record of numbers of trainees and it serves as basis for projecting future feasible numbers of traineeships.

The 2015 main indicators at outcome level are the following:

- % of participants that gained increased (recognized) competences
- % of participants employed according occupation
- Average expense per employed participant

No specific qualitative outcomes are available. The numbers of participants are used to plan the further traineeship processes with the Action Plan for Youth Employment 2016 – 2020, where traineeship is included (Outcome 3.2, Output 3.2.5)

3.6 Integration of Young People in the Labour Market

Youth employment measures

With the Active Labour Market programmes and measures for 2016 (part of the Action Plan for youth employment 2016 – 2020), the following schemes for young people are applied in the Republic of Macedonia:

- Programme for Self-Employment: The aim of this programme is to support the unemployed youth to establish own company, formalizing already existing (informal) activity and in creation of additional employments
- Support of growth of SME for creation of new jobs: The companies receive grant in form of equipment and materials (in amount of 92.000 MKD or 1.500 EUR) that will enable support in creation in new full-time jobs. The subsidized employee must be employed at least 12 months without decrease of employees' number.
- Programme for conditioned remuneration for subsidized employment of young vulnerable people at risks of social exclusion – to support the companies to employ

young people in social risks. The ESA ensures subsidizes for 6 months including costs for training and materials. The condition is that the company needs to ensure salary for additional 6 months in the same amount without decrease in numbers of company employees.

- Subsidized employment for unemployed persons through release of social contributions / personal tax income (Project "Macedonia employs") – through this measure the company that employs young person is released for social security contributions for the first 12 months of employment. The employer is obliged to keep the employee additional 12 months with this measure.

The following specific target groups are identified with the youth employment measures:

- Long-term unemployed
- Low-skilled job seekers
- young people with primary education only
- NEETs
- Young people in social risk (social welfare beneficiaries, young people without parental care)
- Young people with disabilities

The measures and programmes for youth employment are promoted through:

- media – main partners in duly informing of the public. The TV show Labour Market will be realized on the state TV service.
- Thematic events at national and local level
- Production of printed, digital and electronic products (web-banners, online commercials, video-radio spots, social media)
- SMS and e-mail messages
- Through INFO-clubs (focal points) established on the University Ss. Cirilius and Methodius Skopje, State University Tetovo, University Goce Delcev Shtip, Ss. Kliment Ohridski Bitola the University students in final year of studies receive information on active labour market measures
- [Website of the ESA](#)
- Mobile application www.PR.V.mk

Youth Guarantee Scheme is not yet established in the Republic of Macedonia.

Flexicurity measures focusing on young people

The "flexicurity" concept of the Republic of Macedonia can be illustrated through the contents of several normative acts. The Law on labor relations is the primary source of labor law in Macedonia which regulates the individual and collective employment relations. Still, it is not the only law that covers all aspects of flexicurity. There are several special laws (lex specialis) that complete the doctrine of "flexicurity". The employment protection legislation index is comprised of three categories: standard employment relations, non standard employment relations and collective dismissals. Each of them includes several material and procedural criteria that are aimed at measuring the level of employment legislation protection.

In terms of global societal changes that imply modifications in the organization of work and the management of human resources, flexicurity becomes an integral part of the labor legislation and broader social protection. In Republic of Macedonia, there is an ongoing process of increasing the employment relations flexibility. The employment protection legislation index was the highest in the Law on labor relations of 1993. The trend of flexibilization, continued with the new Law on labor relations of 2005. The minimum period of notice when the employment contract is terminated by the employer can range from one to two months depending on the number of dismissed workers. The minimum severance payment ranges from one to six net pays depending on the years spent in employment with the same employer. The maximum duration of the fixed term employment contract amounts to five years, indicating an increased flexibility in terms of non-standard employment relations. The procedure for collective dismissals is carried out

within a period of ninety days, preceded by at least one-month prior notice. Regarding the last criterion, there is an evident increase in the employment security compared to the basic text of the Law. On the basis of the abovementioned indicators, the labor market in the Republic of Macedonia needs a medium level of flexicurity.

Reconciliation of private and working life for young people

No information is available.

Funding of existing schemes/initiatives

The source of funding for the Youth Employment measures and programmes is from the Government budget for Employment Agency Service (which is under the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy).

The amount of funding for the Youth Employment Action Plan for 2016 – 2020 is 30.950.000 EUR (out of which 16.900.000 EUR are already ensured, and 14.050.000 EUR needs to be ensured).

For the Operational Plan 2016, the total amount of funding is 180.213.187,00 MKD (2.930.295 EUR) which is 25% out of the overall Employment measures budget for 2016.

The implementation of the Action Plan for Youth Employment 2016 – 2020 includes projection of funds from the EU, through the IPA instrument. Therefore, the amount of funding contributed by the EU is EUR 3.500.000 (in Outcome 1.2 and Outcome 3.1 within the Action Plan).

For 2016, the EU has contributed 88.600.850,00 MKD (EUR 1.440.664) through the IPA instrument.

Quality assurance

The ESA is responsible for the monitoring of the implementation of the Youth Employment measures and programmes. The monitoring is performed on a quarterly basis, so the produced quarterly report is submitted to the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy. The responsible institutions regularly check the accuracy of the data, including field visits. Furthermore, in order to assess the quality and efficiency, regular surveys and polls are being conducted, including focus groups to gain information on the satisfaction from the services.

3.7 Cross-Border Mobility in Employment, Entrepreneurship and Vocational Opportunities

Programmes and schemes for cross-border mobility

No programmes and schemes available in Macedonia.

Legal framework

No programmes and schemes available in Macedonia.

3.8 Development of Entrepreneurship Competence

Policy Framework

In the Republic of Macedonia [Entrepreneurial Learning Strategy](#) of the Republic of Macedonia 2014-2020 exists. This Strategy was prepared by the Ministry of education and science with the assistance of the European Training Foundation, through 4 workshops and more than hundred direct contacts with different stakeholders.

The following framework of reference is used:

- Agenda for Entrepreneurship Education in Europe
- EU Entrepreneurship 2020 Action Plan
- Rethinking Education: Investing in skills for better socio-economic outcomes

- the EU Small Business Act
- South East Europe 2020: Jobs and prosperity in a European Perspective
- Charter for Entrepreneurial Learning (SEECCEL)

Main target groups of this strategy are:

- primary school students
- secondary school students (VET Schools and gymnasiums)
- University students (students' organizations)
- current and potential entrepreneurs

No information on the implementation process is available.

Formal learning

Entrepreneurship is included in the Macedonia's secondary education as compulsory separate subject. Curricula for 2 compulsory subjects are developed: "[Business and entrepreneurship](#)" for the fourth year in Gymnasium and secondary art education; and "Innovations and entrepreneurship" for first, second and third year. In the primary education, adaptations in 6 subjects are made aimed to integrate entrepreneurship in the curricula (the subject [Innovations](#) is included in the 9th grade).

Towards successful implementation of the curricula that involves entrepreneurship, the MoES concluded partnership with the following actors:

- Macedonian Chambers of Commerce
- Economic Chamber of North-West Macedonia
- Economic Chamber of Macedonia
- Association of Employers
- Business Confederation of Macedonia
- National Entrepreneurship Educators Network

Non-formal and informal learning

No top-level measures to encourage young people to develop entrepreneurial skills and attitudes through youth work and volunteering exist.

As explained above, in the Republic of Macedonia Entrepreneurial Learning Strategy of the Republic of Macedonia 2014-2020 exists, developed by the Ministry of education and science with the assistance of the European Training Foundation. One of the priorities in this strategy is informal and non-formal education.

The Ministry is entitled to issue accreditations for certification of institutions and organizations that provide training programme on entrepreneurship skills / learning.

The Adult Education Center is Governmental institution established in 2008, with the aim to promote system of functional non-formal learning and adults learning (according EU standards) which enables high quality learning for acquiring qualifications, increase of employment and development of entrepreneurship, addressing the labor market needs, contribution towards the economic, societal and personal development of individuals.

Educators support in entrepreneurship education

According to the Accreditation list issued by the Ministry of education and science, only one organization is accredited to provide certificates (accredited by the Government) in Entrepreneurship (Association for intellectual and educational services Virtual-M Kumanovo). However, number of organizations and companies provide trainings and issue certificate for participation.

Currently there are specific organizations which have resource websites serves as a support to potential and existing entrepreneurs on information and guidelines:

1. Youth Entrepreneurship Support Network (YES Network): YES works on strengthening the capacities for networking of youth related Civil Society

Organisations and influence policy and programs development for supporting youth entrepreneurship. Website of YES: <http://www.yes-network.org/>

2. PSM Foundation is recognized as one of the key actors in entrepreneurial eco-system in Macedonia. It provides support for start-up businesses through needs assessments to increase their competitiveness and business collaboration. PSM developed online tool to support entrepreneurship information and opportunities within the project "Integration of ethnic minorities in the labour market through encouraging their employment potential" supported by the EU.

Online tool/website: <http://pretpriemac.mk/>

As abovementioned, The Government established Agency for Promotion of Entrepreneurship of the Republic of Macedonia (APERM) for implementation of the Governmental SME policies and other related projects/programmes adopted by the Government for support of entrepreneurship, competitiveness and innovation. The website of the [APERM](#) also serves as resource for entrepreneurs.

UNDP in partnership with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy provides training and mentorship to potential entrepreneurs through trainings on preparation of business plans and mentorship during the business plan implementation.

Practitioners of entrepreneurial learning are:

- teachers (teachers receive training from the Bureau for Development of Education within the regular training for teachers on the curricula and teaching methods)
- trainers (non-formal education providers)
- NGO representatives.

3.9 Start-up Funding for Young Entrepreneurs

Access to information

The opportunities to create a start-up are constantly promoted in the media, as part of the Action Plan for Youth Employment 2016 – 2020 and OPs. This information is available on the website of the ESA.

Furthermore, information is shared through the local ESA that place visible information in the centers. The information is part of the Operational Plan for ALMPs 2016, which includes specific information on start-up funding for young entrepreneurs. ESA as main implementer of the Operational Plans, is responsible for assessments of business plans and start-up funding.

Number of organizations promote start-up opportunities and resource information through their websites and activities. As an example, [Startup Macedonia](#) is organization that supports innovation, development, and networking between startups and all the local stakeholders which are part of the eco-system in order to build a better startup community.

Another opportunity for promotion is the Startup Europe Week which is organized in February being opportunity to exchange experiences and to present good practices and success stories.

Access to capital

As explained above, the ESA includes financing grant for start-ups up to EUR 10.000, as part of the youth employment measures within the ALMPs. This programme focus on youth aged up to 29. In terms of scope, start-ups are supported for agriculture, fishery, manufacture industry, information and communication, accommodation objects and food services, social protection activities.

Another institution that provides capital is *the Fund for innovation and technology development* encourages and supports innovation activities in micro, small and medium-size enterprises (MSMEs) in order to achieve more dynamic technological development based on knowledge transfer, development research and on innovations that contribute

to job creation, and to economic growth and development, while simultaneously improving the business environment for the development of competitive capabilities of companies. The Fund provides funding opportunities for increasing the capacity of already commenced startups.

3.10 Promotion of Entrepreneurship Culture

Special events and activities

No specific youth business fairs are organized at top level by public funds. However, the Action Plan for Youth Employment 2016 – 2020 includes activities for promotion such as fairs, info-days, forums etc.

Starting in 2011, the Government continuously conducts campaigns through the public media (TV) service to encourage young people to undertake steps in entrepreneurship.

No specific activities to promote youth entrepreneurship in the field of social entrepreneurship are conducted with public funds. Promotion of the concept of social entrepreneurship is made by other non-public organizations and institutions that are active in the field.

Networks and partnerships

Currently 2 networks for promotion of the entrepreneurship culture exists:

- The [National Entrepreneurship and Competitiveness Council](#) (funded by USAID)
- [Youth Entrepreneurship Support Network](#) (operated by PSM Foundation, as project funded by EU)

The National Entrepreneurship and Competitiveness Council in partnership with the Ministry of labor and social policy and the Employment Service Agency implemented project – Forum with employers aimed to promote the active labour market programmes and measures. The project also included the local self-governments and the local employment agencies.

Youth Entrepreneurship Support Network (YES Network) is a European network of youth related civil society organisations (CSOs) working in the field of youth entrepreneurship. Network offers capacity building, networking and promotion of activities and initiatives for youth empowerment in order to increase the effectiveness of its members. They help their members fulfill their mission by increasing their capacities for effectively running their organisations. They also provide specialist consultancy services for the members involved in youth entrepreneurship, through development and change processes, which can involve strategy development and programme design.

No initiatives to support specific activities from partners such as national youth organizations and employers exist.

3.11 Current Debates and Reforms

Action Plan for Youth Employment

National Strategy for Employment 2016 – 2020 and Action Plan for Youth Employment 2016 – 2020 were adopted by the Government in 2015. Both documents are prepared with support from the International Labour Organization, UNDP and World Bank. The documents provide specific actions and measures presented with monitoring system and indicators of achievement at output and outcome level.

According to the National Action Plan for Youth Employment (2016 – 2020), the relevant district ministries and governmental institutions will be responsible for implementation of the policies and measures defined with the Action Plan. The Group of experts from the various district ministries and social partners, that developed the Action Plan, will act as **Youth Employment Advisory Group** to the Unit for Labor Market within the Ministry of labor and social policy. The Action Plan foresees mid-term evaluation in 2018 and final

evaluation in 2020. As described in the previous sections, the Labor Market Unit of MLSP is responsible for coordination of the mid-term and final evaluation.

The main criteria / indicators / standards used to assess the quality of employment schemes and projects to be used for 2016 – 2020 are the following:

- Increase of % of the number of young people aged 15-29 having jobs adequate to their qualifications
- Decrease of percentage points of the number of low-qualified young people
- Increase of % of the number of young unemployed people having access to quality services for employment in the local employment centers
- % of all young people that sign up as unemployed for the first time are provided with access to thematic services
- Increase in % of employment of young people

The periodical evaluation of the implementation of the Action Plan for Youth Employment serve as basis to refine the schemes and measures – this was case with the previous Action Plan 2012 – 2015. It is expected the Ops for 2019 and 2020 to be developed based on the recommendations given with the periodical evaluation conducted in 2018.

The Action Plan for Youth Employment 2016-2020 envisages skills forecasting system to be developed to inform both policy design and individuals' choices about education and work. The skills forecasting model will be based on demographic projections, employer and vacancies surveys, education data, employment projections and sectoral studies and should be jointly fed with data and used by the MLSP and the MES. The establishment of the forecasting system should lead to the achievement of two outcomes: (i) by 2020, at least 85 per cent of young workers (aged 15–29) will be employed in jobs aligned to their qualifications; and (ii) the occupational and skills mismatch in the Macedonian labour market will be no higher than 15 per cent. According to the Action Plan for Youth Employment 2016 – 2020, the creation of the Forecasting skills system will be based on fully developed forecasting model (software and methodology) and will include: labour market data, data from the Employment Observatory (that should be developed by the Ministry of education and science), forecasts derived from the sectorial surveys of the Labor Market Unit. According to the Action Plan, main product of the system will be Manual for perspective occupations.

With the Action Plan for Youth Employment 2016 – 2020, the Ministry of education and science in partnership with the State Labour Inspectorate will develop career guidance curricula which will be further integrated in the formal education process.

Entrepreneurial Learning Strategy of the Republic of Macedonia 2014-2020

According to the Entrepreneurial Learning Strategy of the Republic of Macedonia 2014-2020, one of the Medium-term goal is **Ensure strong network to support young entrepreneurs with the priority measure to** Create mechanism that will enable strong support of young entrepreneurs especially through networking and mentoring processes. It is expected this priority to be conducted by the end of 2018.

National Strategy for Education 2017 - 2020

At the moment, only active debate is related to the creation of the new Strategy for Education 2016 – 2020 which promotes entrepreneurial learning within the curricula in all levels of education. At the moment, the strategy is under finalization and it will be finalized by the end of 2017.

Law on Social Entrepreneurship

The draft text is submitted to the Parliament in July 2015, but the law is not yet adopted. The draft text emphasizes that one of the reasons for this law is the high youth unemployment. The Ministry of labor and social policy conducted regional debates with the civic society in order to improve the draft text. The law is not yet adopted.

Youth Guarantee

Currently, the Republic of Macedonia is in initial process for establishing the Youth Guarantee Scheme. It is expected young people to be consulted in the developing the scheme.

4. Social Inclusion

[Ministry of labor and social policy](#) is the main executive and coordination body of social inclusion policies and legislation in the country.

A Specific National Strategy on social inclusion of young people is not in place. However, the needs of young people in terms of their social inclusion are addressed in the 2010-2020 Strategy on poverty reduction and social exclusion.

4.1 General context

Main challenges to social inclusion

Ethnic Minorities

In the Macedonian legislation, there is no definition on the term social inclusion.^[7] First National document defining the social inclusion is the Strategy for Roma population in the R. Macedonia 2014 - 2020 ([Стратегија за Ромите во Република Македонија 2014-2020](#)).

The Republic of Macedonia is social, multiethnic and multi-confessional state. Signing of the [Ohrid Framework Agreement](#), by the President of Macedonia and the representatives of the main political parties in 2001, ended the war conflict in the country. This Agreement addressed lot of challenges and disputes, and promotes peaceful and harmonious development of civil society while respecting the ethnic identity and the interests of Macedonian citizens. The Framework provisioned amending and changing of the Constitution of the Country.

Major challenges in Macedonia regarding ethnic minorities, with particular accent to the Roma population, are to:

- improving the quality and access to public services in particular health and social services, housing and transportation;
- overcoming the high level of social exclusion and discrimination, especially of certain ethnic groups, as well as Roma, but also other risk groups such as people living in institutions and persons with disabilities;
- Strengthening policies that support family, social networks and the protection of children's rights.

Education

Speaking of social inclusion, the main challenge in Macedonia in the field of education is the development of programmes for continuous education, with focus on the risk groups, and reducing school dropout.

The main priorities in the reforms in the primary, secondary and higher education in the Republic of Macedonia are the quality, social inclusion and cohesion and decentralization.

(⁷) Only, Law on social protection, article 2, mentions the term social exclusion, without defining it. The strategy on social inclusion, social protection and reducing poverty of the Municipality of Berovo, and Radovish, (both of 2011) define social inclusion as “process that guarantees people at risk of poverty and social exclusion, to have equal opportunities and resources needed for their overall inclusion in the economic, social and cultural life, as well as providing them normal living standard and welfare in their communities. This will enable them greater participation in decision making that positive influence their lives, as well as to access their basic rights”

The educational concept promotes inclusion as inherent and key element in preparation of all strategic documents.

Involving the European training federation and General Directorate for enlargement of the social inclusion project 2008-2011 opened new perspectives and considerations in the by the Country, that inclusion is about diversity and equality, about tolerance and democracy, about stereotypes and prejudices, about the right of quality education for everybody.

In 2008, Macedonia introduced obligatory secondary education. The aim is to increase the education of the general population in the country, as well as to ensure wider inclusion of the most vulnerable groups in the education process.

Employment

Providing conditions for greater integration in the labour market of the long-term unemployed persons and different groups living in poverty and social exclusion as well as ensuring inclusive systems of social protection offering minimum assets for dissent life, but in the same time to debar demotivation of looking for job are the main challenges of the country when speaking of social inclusion in employment processes.

Young people (15–24) have low participation rates in the labor market, roughly half the national average. Although the youth participation rate in the labor market increased in the period 2005–07 (from 33 per cent to 36 per cent) it started to decline in 2009. In 2010 it amounted to 33.3 per cent. ^[8]

The low participation of youth is due to: i) shrinking employment opportunities and the difficulty associated with the transition from school to work, ii) the unwillingness of employers to bear the costs of on-the-job training for inexperienced youth as the pool of experienced jobseekers is high, and iii) the skills mismatch between employer's needs and the skills produced by the education system. Lower rates of participation can also be explained by increasing enrolments in higher education, following a government policy of extending public education facilities and reducing the cost of higher education.

Being unemployed, young people become potential users of social support benefits that the country offers.

Migration

Migration trend of the Macedonian population abroad, caused mainly because of economic reasons, reaches worrying proportions. Especially, due to the fact that significant number of highly educated persons follows this trend. This leads to decreasing of the active population ^[9] and brain-drain ^[10], mainly among young people.

Over qualification of young people become a major obstacle in finding suitable job position in Macedonia. Thus, a number of people decide to live the country, mainly to realize their professional ambitions. Social integration of young people that are migrating would be the main challenge here.

Social protection

Social protection in Macedonia is consisted of services and benefits of tax-financed system of social protection (social prevention – which according to the Law for social protection includes educative-counseling work, development of forms of self-aid, voluntary work etc., institutional protection, n-institutional protection and financial aid),

⁽⁸⁾ http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@europe/@ro-geneva/@sro-budapest/documents/publication/wcms_167032.pdf

⁽⁹⁾ Economically Active Population, people aged 18-74, according to EUROSTAT

⁽¹⁰⁾ Definition: the situation in which large numbers of educated and very skilled people leave their own country to live and work in another one where pay and conditions are better; Cambridge Dictionary <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/brain-drain>

as well as of a system of social insurance based on contributions (pension and disability insurance, health insurance and insurance in case of unemployment).

Definitions and concepts

The term **social exclusion** refers to the multi-dimensional and complex process which affects the weakening of the relations of the individual and the community ^[11].

Discrimination is every unjustified legal or factual, direct or indirect making difference or unequal behavior, that is exclusion, constraint, or giving advantage in relation to individuals and groups based on sex, race, skin color, gender, affiliation to a marginalized group, ethnical background, language, citizenship, social origin, religion, education, political background, personal or social status, mental and physical disability, age, family or marital status, property status, health condition or any other basis. ^[12]

Equality is principles according to all humans are equal, with equal obligations and rights.

Marginalized group is a group of individuals united by specific state in the society that is subject of prejudices, which have specific characteristics that makes them subject of violence, with less opportunities for achieving protection of their own rights or are exposed on increased possibility for further victimization.

4.2 Administration and Governance

Governance

The design of a modern concept of behaviour towards the socially excluded individuals required the establishment of a **new social model** which puts the individual and personality first, rather than the reasons for exclusion, the affiliation (ethnic or other), the diagnosis, disability or any other ground for the citizen's social exclusion.

It is important to note, that Macedonia choose general approach in defining social inclusion policies. Thus, for the moment, in Macedonia there is no specific legislation related to social inclusion of young people.

The Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia is the main body that adopts the overall legislation. The Government is the main executive body, and has the overall responsibility of planning and implementation of all policies related to social inclusion, as well as to propose legal documents and amendments to the Assembly.

Both the Assembly and the Government have established inter and cross-sectorial committees and bodies in terms of planning and coordination of the implementation of the legislation related to social inclusion.

The implementation of social inclusion policies and strategies is related to **coordinated and full cooperation** between the Government, the ministries and the institutions of the system, as well as the cooperation of the state institutions and local government.

Along this, the participation of **civil society organizations** is extremely crucial in the part of expressing the interests of individuals and groups at risks or facing social exclusion.

The major changes introduced with the Ohrid Framework Agreement, were establishment of decentralized government, and provisions for altering the official languages of the

⁽¹¹⁾ To make the difference between the terminology concept and the scope of social exclusion, please see *Social Exclusion*, John Hills, Jullian Legrand and David Pasho, 2009, Akademski pecat, Skopje.

⁽¹²⁾ Law on discrimination

country. Any language spoken by over 20% of the population becomes co-official with the Macedonian language on municipal level. ^[13]

Members of nationalities have a right freely to express, foster and develop their identity and national attributes. The Republic guarantees the protection of the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of the nationalities. Members of the nationalities have the right to establish institutions for culture and art, as well as scholarly and other associations for the expression, fostering and development of their identity. Members of the nationalities have the right to instruction in their language in primary and secondary education, as determined by law. In schools where education is carried out in the language of a nationality, the Macedonian language is also studied.

Main actors

Top-level authority

[Ministry of labor and social policy](#) is the main executive and coordination body of social inclusion policies and legislation in the country.

Main public actors involved in policy making on social inclusion

- [Ministry of health](#) – responsible for health protection and health insurance of young people and implementation of such programmes.
- [Ministry of education and science](#) – responsible of organization, financing, development and advancing of the education and science.
- [Ministry of economy](#) – governmental ministry responsible for overall policies related to economy.
- [Ministry of transport and communication](#) – national ministry responsible for overall policies related to transportation and infrastructure.
- [Ministry of finance](#) – responsible for overall finances and budget management of the Government;
- [Ministry of local-self government](#) – responsible for monitoring the development and implementation of the governmental programmes at local level;
- [Ministry of information technology society](#) – responsible for development and promotion of information technology;
- [Agency of youth and sports](#) – governmental agency responsible for planning, implementation and coordination of youth programme.
- [State Statistic Office](#) – state institution responsible for conducting statistical researches.
- [Employment Agency](#) – governmental agency responsible for implementation of the employment programmes.
- [Inter-municipal Social Care Centers](#) – state institutions working under the Ministry on labor and social policy responsible for implementation of the programmes of social protection and welfare.
- [Local-self governments](#) – local units of government
- [National Agency for European educational programmes and mobility](#) – national agency responsible for implementation of Erasmus + programme.
- Educational institutions
- Other stakeholders

Non-public actors

- [Delegation of EU in Macedonia](#)
- [UNDP office in Macedonia](#)
- [UNICEF office in Macedonia](#)
- [USAID office in Macedonia](#)
- [International Labor Organization – office in Macedonia](#)
- [World Bank](#)

⁽¹³⁾ Article 7, of the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia. <http://www.sobranie.mk/the-constitution-of-the-republic-of-macedonia.nspx>

- [International Monetary Fund](#)

According to the [Codex of Best Practices for civil society participation in the process of policy making](#), civil society representatives are invited in developing policies in the area of social inclusion. ^[14]

Consultation of young people

No systematic consultation process with young people is conducted during the design of social inclusion policies and measures.

Policy monitoring and evaluation

Social inclusion is a complex subject involving various stakeholders and covering different issues. Due to this fact, it is complicated to have an overall overview on the implementation of the social inclusion policies in the country.

Regarding the inclusion of young people in different social aspects it is even more complicated to draw conclusions. This is mainly because, young people are included in all the policies in general along with other groups in the terms of social inclusion, and there are no specific social inclusion policies directly and only targeting young people. The Government develops and implements general social policies, and there are no specific policies reflecting only on young people's social inclusion.

The Ministry of labor and social policy as a main actor in developing and implementation of social inclusion policies, is also responsible for coordination of the monitoring and evaluation of those policies. The Ministry has [Department for analysis, monitoring and evaluation](#) which is responsible for monitoring and evaluation of the current social policies.

The Department produces specific reports for specific aspects and specific programmes, but there is no general report available.

The ongoing monitoring and evaluation constantly contributes in improving the current policies. For instance, in 2013, one major [revision of the Strategy on poverty reduction and social exclusion](#) (2010-2020) was made. This revision came after evaluating the progress of the implementation with in the first two years.

Each adopted policy envisages monitoring and evaluation indicators and responsible body for the M&E. *Example: System of indicators for monitoring and evaluation of the Decade for inclusion of Roma population in the republic of Macedonia.*

4.3 Strategy for the Social Inclusion of Young People

Existence of a National Strategy on social inclusion

Inclusion is one of the principles in the creation of the Strategy for vocational education and training 2013-2020 ^[15], as well in changing and amending the Laws ^[16] for [primary](#), [secondary](#) and [higher](#) education.

A Specific National Strategy on social inclusion of young people is not in place. However, the needs of young people in terms of their social inclusion, are addressed in the 2010-2020 Strategy on poverty reduction and social exclusion which was adopted by the government.

^[14] Article 4, Official Gazette 99, 22 July 2011. [Codex of Best Practices for civil society participation in policy making](#)

^[15] Види поопширно Стратегија за стручното образование и обука во контекст на Доживотното учење 2013-2020 со Акциски План, Подобри вештини за подобро утре, МОН и ЕТФ, Скопје

^[16] Laws related to education <http://mon.gov.mk/index.php/2014-07-24-06-34-40/zakoni>

The Strategy on poverty reduction and social exclusion is a document which reflects the intention of the Republic of Macedonia for balancing the degree of inclusion and welfare in all social levels.

The main strategic objective for poverty reduction and social exclusion in the Republic of Macedonia is:

Reduce poverty and social exclusion in the Republic of Macedonia through a better use of disposable human and material resources, improve conditions for living, working and social conditions for all citizens, system and institutional co-activity in the function of accelerated development, higher standard and better quality life.

Scope and contents

The Strategy on poverty reduction and social exclusion, addresses young people's needs in the terms of social inclusion as a general public with certain specific measures only for young people.

Brief summary of the Strategy for poverty and social exclusion:

The structure of the Strategy is established based on the areas and fields in which poverty and social exclusion are observed:

- Employment
- Informal economy and strengthening entrepreneurship
- Labor market
- Poverty and social disadvantage
- Health protection
- Long-term care
- Education
- Social protection
- Transport
- Communications
- Housing
- Child protection
- Equal opportunities for men and women
- Develop public sensibility for social inclusion

In the **first and second part** the vision and objectives of the strategy are presented along with the principles upon which it will be implemented. In the **third part** the conditions, problems and system grounds existing in identified areas are presented. The **fourth part** includes proposing measures, activities and solutions to lead towards social inclusion and poverty reduction by area. The **fifth part** presents the strategy implementation, whereas the **sixth part** includes the assumptions and possible threats. The **seventh and eighth parts** include the proposed further steps and main conclusions.

Key political objectives in the field of social inclusion set by the Strategy

The main strategic objective for poverty reduction and social inclusion in the Republic of Macedonia is:

Reduce poverty and social exclusion in the Republic of Macedonia by a better utilization of the available human resources, improve conditions for life, work and social conditions for all citizens, system and institutional coordinated activity in the function of faster development, higher standard and better quality life.

The Vision of the Strategy is:

The Republic of Macedonia needs to be a society with reduces poverty and social exclusion of its citizens through:

- Providing everyone with access to resources, rights and services which are necessary for equal participation in the society and also take care of the protection and exclusion and combat all sorts of discrimination leading to exclusion.
- Provide active social inclusion of all through promoting equal participation on the labor market and combat against poverty and exclusion.
- Implement policy of social inclusion through well-coordinated programs and measures at all levels of government (central and local) and other relevant factors with efficient and effective public policies including economic, fiscal. Educational and training strategies and projects.

The *Mission of the Strategy* is to implement the following essential and basic processes:

- Promote and increase opportunities which provide that the citizens of the Republic of Macedonia participate in the educational, labor and general social activities;
- Cope with and reduce impediments for solving specific problems of social exclusion of special groups which face these impediments;
- Promote social inclusion with children and young people which will provide conditions for long-term opportunities for the future generation;
- Strengthen vulnerable communities for quality life and ability to overcome impediments in their wellbeing.

At the same time, this Strategy helps achieve the state's aspirations for Euro-Atlantic integration, i.e. move towards meeting the preconditions for beginning the process of signing the Joint Memoranda on Social Inclusion ^[17], and implementing the Millennium Development Goals ^[18].

Target groups

In line with the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia, this strategy is intended for the wellbeing of all citizens of the Republic of Macedonia regardless of their social origin.

Responsible authority

The Strategy on poverty reduction and social exclusion, addresses young people's needs in the terms of social inclusion as a general public with certain specific measures only for young people.

Due to the complex and multi-dimensional element of the problems previously elaborated, the highest management body, the **Government of the Republic of Macedonia** needs to be the main implementer and coordinator in implementing this strategy. Certainly, the ministries will need to be the implementers of the individual strategic goals and measures in line with their obligations.

In line with the determined measures and recommendations for the elaborated area, the **responsible ministries and bodies**, i.e. institutions for implementing the measures and activities proposed in this Strategy on Poverty Reduction and Social Inclusion are the following:

- [Ministry of Labour and Social Policy](#)
- [Ministry of Health](#)
- [Ministry of Education and Science](#)
- [Ministry of Economy](#)
- [Ministry of Transport and Communications](#)
- [Ministry of Finance](#)
- [Ministry of Local Self Government](#)
- [Ministry of Information Society](#)
- [Agency for Sport and Youth](#)
- [State Statistical Office](#)

⁽¹⁷⁾ JIM: Joint Memoranda on Social Inclusion (http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/soc-prot/soc-incl/jim_en.html)

⁽¹⁸⁾ <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/bkqd.shtml>

- [Employment Agency](#)

An **Operation Plan of Measures and Activities for Implementing the Strategy** is adopted each year, in the listed ministries, bodies and agencies in order to define the implementers of tasks, obligations and activities within certain time frameworks (short, medium and long-term)

Revisions/Updates

The Strategy on poverty reduction and social exclusion, addresses young people's needs in the terms of social inclusion as a general public with certain specific measures only for young people.

In 2013, one major [revision of the Strategy on poverty reduction and social exclusion \(2010-2020\)](#) was made.

With the implementation of the measures and activities, during the first two years, of the National Strategy on poverty reduction and social exclusion (2010-2020) certain base results are achieved. In specific this progress is reflected in: increasing employment, number of citizen using social welfare rights and protection, as well as in the area of child protection. Major achievements are made in the field of education by: introducing obligatory high school and dispersal higher education; as well as in the field of availability and usage of information technology. The revision is coming after adoption of new policies that influence on the Strategy itself.

The **main changes** of the Strategy are reflected to:

- amending the strategic goals (to fit to the EU Strategy on development and growth 2020)
- decreasing the number of focus areas from 14 (described in section [Scope and Contents](#)) to 7:
 1. Employment and strengthening of entrepreneurship
 2. Adjustment of education to fit to the labor market
 3. Social and child protection, and development of new **social model** [¹⁹]
 4. Advancing health protection and long-term care
 5. Transport, communication and housing
 6. Activation and strengthening of local authorities
 7. Support of vulnerable groups.

4.4 Inclusive Programmes for Young People

Programmes specific for vulnerable young people

Since, in Macedonian context, young people are not differentiated as a specific group and there is no clear definition of young people, it is challenging to recognise specific programmes targeting only young people. Hence, the Governmental efforts to address young peoples needs can be seen throughout different programmes which are specifically addressing people aged 15 – 29. Hereafter, are presented current governmental programmes available for young people only and for youth among others:

Housing programmes for vulnerable young people:

- Social buildings for socially vulnerable groups ([Социјални згради за социјално ранливи групи](#))
 - Responsible authority: Ministry of transport and communication in cooperation with the Inter-Municipal Social Care Centers
 - Target groups: children without parents and parental care by the age of 18 (living in
 - Socially excluded Roma population; single parents with minor children; blind person's active users of social benefits.

⁽¹⁹⁾ Oriented to an individual and his needs

- Target participation: built and awarded 1748 apartments in 33 buildings

Food programmes for homeless youth:

- Public kitchen ([Народна кујна](#))
 - Responsible authorities: Centers for Social Care and the Ministry on labor and social policy
 - Target groups: persons at social risks, users of social and permanent financial support including young people among others
 - No target participation

Health protection programmes:

- Programme for active protection of mothers and children ([Програма за активна заштита на мајки и деца](#))
 - Responsible authorities: Ministry of health, University Clinic for Genecology and Obstetrics – Skopje, University Clinic for Children Diseases – Skopje, University Clinic for Ear, Nose and Throat – Skopje, Center for health protection of mothers and children.
 - Target groups: mothers, women in reproductive period aged 15 – 49; young pregnant women aged 18 – 35; newborns and children aged 2 – 4.
 - Target result: decreasing the mortality rate of children for 2/3 and the mortality rate of mothers to 3/4
- Programme for protection of the HIV/AIDS population in Macedonia ([Програма за заштита на населението од ХИВ / СИДА во РМ](#))
 - Responsible authorities: Institute for public health of the Republic of Macedonia, Centers for public health, University Clinic for Infectious diseases and febrile diseases, Commission on HIV/AIDS, CSOs included in the Global Fund Programme.
 - Target groups: general population; youth; HIV infected persons; persons abusing drugs.
 - No target participation
- Project “Roma Health Mediators” ([Проект „Ромски Здравствени Медијатори”](#))
 - Responsible authorities: Ministry for health, CSOs
 - Target groups: Roma population
 - No target participation

Employment programmes:

- Subsidized workplaces for people with disabilities ([Субвенционирани работни места за лицата со инвалидност](#))
 - Responsible authorities: Ministry of labor and social policy, Employment Agency
 - Target groups: persons with disabilities (among which young people as well)
 - 317 unemployed persons with disabilities
- Training on workplace with subsidized employment ([Обука на работно место со субвенционирано вработување](#))
 - Responsible authorities: Employment Agency
 - Target groups: young people by the age of 29 with low level of education; users of social support; vulnerable categories of population facing difficulties in the labor market.
 - 476 unemployed young people
- Programme for municipal-useful work ([Програма Општинско-корисна работа](#))
 - Responsible authorities: Ministry of labor and social policy, Employment Agency, UNDP, local self-governments, local institutions.
 - Target groups: vulnerable categories of the population, including active users of social financial support (among which young people as well).
 - 300 unemployed people

Educational programmes:

- Programme for conditional financial support for high school education ([Програма за условен паричен надоместок за средно образование](#))
 - Responsible authorities: Ministry of labor and social policy, Social Care Centers, Ministry for education and science, high schools, and Ministry of finance.
 - Target groups: students coming from families that use social welfare services
 - No target participation
- Free school books for all students in the primary and high schools ([Бесплатни учебници за основно и средно образование](#))
 - Responsible authorities: Ministry of education and science, local self-governments, primary and high schools
 - Target groups: all students
- Scholarships for students with special needs in the public and private high schools in Macedonia ([Стипендии за ученици со посебни потреби од јавните и приватните средни училишта во Република Македонија](#))
 - Responsible authorities: Ministry of education and science
 - Target groups: students with special needs
 - 50 scholarship a year
- Scholarships for social support of students in the public and private high schools in Macedonia ([Стипендии за социјална поддршка на ученици од јавните и приватните средни училишта во Република Македонија](#))
 - Responsible authorities: Ministry of education and science
 - Target groups: students coming from families with minimal incomes, or users of social financial support, children of single parents.
 - 400 scholarships
- Scholarships for students – children without parents and parental care in the public and private high schools in Macedonia ([Стипендии за ученици – деца без родители од јавните и приватните средни училишта во Република Македонија](#))
 - Responsible authorities: Ministry of education and science
 - Target groups: high school students - children without parents and parental care
 - 80 scholarships
- Scholarships for Roma students in the public and private high schools in Macedonia ([Стипендии за ученици Роми запишани во прва, втора, трета и четврта година во јавните и приватните средни училишта во Република Македонија за учебната 2013/2014 година](#))
 - Responsible authorities: Ministry of education and science with financial support by the Roma education fund of Budapest
 - Target groups: Roma high school students

Child and Social Protection programmes:

- Right to special financial support ([Обезбедување на правото на посебен додаток](#))
 - Responsible authorities: Social Care Centers, Ministry of labor and social policy
 - Target groups: children and youth with disabilities by the age of 26
- Right to social welfare allowance ([Остварување на правото на социјална парична помош](#))
 - Responsible authorities: Social Care Centers
 - Target groups: financially unsecured young people, able to work
- Permanent financial assistance ([Постојана парична помош](#))
 - Responsible authorities: Social Care Centers
 - Target groups: financially unsecured young people, unable and incapable to work
- Right to financial support of a person which had a status of a child without parents and parental care by the age of 18 ([Остварување на правото на парична помош на лице кое до 18-тата година имало статус на дете без родители и без родителска грижа](#))

- Responsible authorities: Social Care Centers
- Target groups: person which had a status of a child without parents and parental care by the age of 18 without any incomes
- Financial support for university studies of a person which had a status of a child without parents and parental care by the age of 18 ([Парична помош за студирање на лицата кои до 18 годишна возраст имале статус на деца без родители и родителска грижа](#))
 - Responsible authorities: Ministry of labor and social policy, Social Care Centers
 - Target groups: person which had a status of a child without parents and parental care by the age of 18
- Right to financial support for housing of a person which had a status of a child without parents and parental care by the age of 18, or/and after termination of custody, maximum to the age of 26 ([Правото на парична помош за социјално домување за лице кое до 18-годишна возраст имало статус на дете без родители и родителска грижа, односно и по престанување на старателството, а најмногу до 26-годишна возраст](#))
 - Responsible authorities: Social Care Centers
 - Target groups: person which had a status of a child without parents and parental care by the age of 18, or/and after termination of custody, maximum to the age of 26

Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance

- [IPA Component IV: Human Resources Development \(HRD\)](#)
 - [Priority axis 3: Social Inclusion – Promoting an inclusive labor market](#)
 - Responsible authorities: Central Financing and Contracting Department (CFCD) within the Ministry of Finance, represented by the Head of CFCD, acting as Head of the Operating Structure; Relevant departments/units within the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and the Ministry of Education and Science.
 - Target groups: unemployed people particularly young unemployed people lacking working skills; Professionals working with vulnerable groups (both governmental and NGOs)

Funding

The Government of the Republic of Macedonia envisages social transfers on regular basis. The [Budget of the Republic of Macedonia for 2016](#) project social transfers in the total amount of 87,783 million MKD (1,427 million euros ^[20]). Just for comparison social transfers in 2015 are 83,093 million MKD (1,351 million Euros), that is increase of approximately 5.6% in 2016.

In 2016, 1.192 million MKD are planned for financial support in cases of unemployment for unemployed people (including young people). While 331 million MKD are projected to support active policies and measures for employment. 24.982 million MKD are projected for health protection.

The Government considers securing appropriate level of social protection of the most vulnerable categories of the population is of crucial importance in achieving sustainable economic development and higher level of social justice. Thus, the 2016 Budget envisages 7.768 million MKD for these transfers. Social financial support will be increased for 5% in the second half of 2016.

In the field of social and child protection the main priority is system reform in terms of improving the targeting of the potential users.

The Government secure the funds both from internal as from external sources. The Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA) is the most used EU funding in the field of social inclusion. For the implementation of IPA Component IV: Human Resources Development,

⁽²⁰⁾ 1 EUR = 61.5 MKD

Axis III Social Inclusion, the total budget for the period 2007 – 2011 is 8.894.126 EUR, of which 1.334.126 EUR is national public contribution. ^[21]

Other contributors to the budget are the IMF, Global Fund, World Bank and other foreign institutions and organizations.

Quality assurance

Due to the fact that in the implementation of these programmes and policies a number of entities are involved, each one develops indicators in their own area. Based on the findings and changes and the submitted reports by each of the responsible entity, changes and additions may be initiated in the direction of more efficient implementation of the concepts and measures of the general social policy.

4.5 Initiatives promoting social inclusion and raising awareness

Intercultural awareness

The Government of the Republic Macedonia invest in raising the intercultural awareness among the population. Macedonia is multicultural country, in which different nationalities live.

Current campaign of the Government is “[Multiethnic and multi-religious cohesion](#)”. It is consisted of 18 videos for encouraging cohesion and mutual understanding among people with different ethnic or religious background. All videos are broadcasted on National TV stations. The videos are published on the YouTube channel “[Кампањи на Владата на РМ](#)” (Campaigns of the Government of the RM) in specific [playlist](#).

Young people's rights

The main body responsible for promotion and encouraging of the youth rights is the [Agency of youth and sports](#) of the R. Macedonia. The Agency is the main responsible body for the implementation of the [National Youth Strategy 2015-2025](#).

The latest project is the establishment of the web site mladi.ams.mk. The portal disseminates information relevant to young people regarding:

- trainings, seminars, conferences
- employment and internship opportunities
- events
- youth and student organizations
- scholarships
- educational institutions (high schools, universities, student homes, libraries)
- discounts
- relevant documents
- and projects of the Agency of youth and sports

Moreover, the portal offers direct links to relevant institutions and other useful portals. Also, the Agency through this portal provides information on youth discounts for cultural events, and transportation.

Key initiatives to safeguard democracy and prevent radicalisation leading to violent extremism

There is no specific initiative in place for preventing radicalization among young people.

⁽²¹⁾ EC decision
http://cfcd.finance.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/COMM_NATIVE_C_2010_8305_1_EN_ANNEXE2.pdf

4.6 Access to Quality Services

Housing

Low standard of young people and the economic situation in the country makes young people dependent on their parents. Young adults continue to live with their parents, even after getting married.

The Government makes efforts in enabling and encouraging young people's independence when it comes to housing through lot of programmes and projects:

- Social buildings for socially vulnerable groups ([Социјални згради за социјално ранливи групи](#)) – this measure is available for young people users of social welfare. The state is building social flats, that are being awarded to people at social-economic risk through open call.
- Apartments and houses for homeless young couples ([Станови и куќи за станбено необезбедени лица](#)) – this measure is available for young couples that do not have their own house or apartment.
- Sale of real estate housing through positive public bidding ([Продажба на станбен простор по пат на усно позитивно јавно наддавање](#)) – measure is available for young people and for the general population as well.
- Project "Buy a house, Buy an Apartment" – with a model of "75% and/or 50% of the monthly loan installment" support by the Government for building/buying new house, apartment, in the first five years of mortgage payment ([Проект „КУПИ КУЌА, КУПИ СТАН“ Модел „75% односно 50% од ратата“ за изградба/купување на нова куќа, односно купување на нов стан за првите 5 години од отплатата на кредитот](#)) – the Government together with the Macedonian banks are implementing this project through special credit line. The Government is contributing in the monthly loan instalment for building or buying new house of apartment. The measure is available for the general population (including young people) with low income.
- Project "Buy a house, Buy an Apartment" – with a model of "75% and/or 50% of the participation" support by the Government for building/buying new house, apartment, in the first five years of mortgage payment ([Проект „КУПИ КУЌА, КУПИ СТАН“ Модел „75 % односно 50% од учеството“ за изградба/купување на нова куќа, односно за купување на нов стан](#)) – the Government together with the Macedonian banks are implementing this project through special credit line. The Government is contributing in the monthly loan instalment for building or buying new house of apartment. The measure is available for the general population (including young people) with low income.
- [Времено ослободување од обврска за плаќање надомест и закупнина за градежно земјиште во државна сопственост](#) (Temporary exemption from the obligation to pay compensation and lease of construction land in state ownership) – for support of small businesses

Social services

In 2012, the Government introduced a [Programme for subsidizing the electricity costs](#). The programme offers financial aid to the families, including young people and young couples, receiving social welfare support and constant social financial support, in paying electricity bills. Also, through the programme the financial debts upon electricity of this target groups will be deleted by simple request by the families.

In 2004, the Government introduced a [Programme for dealing with the problems of the socially excluded persons](#). This programme is focused on four target groups:

- Drug abusers and their families
- Children on the streets and their parents
- Victims of domestic violence
- Homeless people.

This programme will contribute in ceasing the trans-generation chain of exclusion. Moreover through the programme it is expected to strengthen and support the target groups in their active participation in the community, through application of new practices for social inclusion of the vulnerable groups.

Health care

Програма за активна заштита на мајки и деца (Programme for active protection of mothers and children)

- Responsible authorities: Ministry of health, University Clinic for Gynecology and Obstetrics – Skopje, University Clinic for Children Diseases – Skopje, University Clinic for Ear, Nose and Throat – Skopje, Center for health protection of mothers and children.
- Target groups: mothers, women in reproductive period aged 15 – 49; young pregnant women aged 18 – 35; newborns and children aged 2 – 4.
- Target result: decreasing the mortality rate of children for 2/3 and the mortality rate of mothers to 3/4

Програма за заштита на населението од ХИВ / СИДА во РМ (Programme for protection of the HIV/AIDS population in Macedonia)

- Responsible authorities: Institute for public health of the Republic of Macedonia, Centers for public health, University Clinic for Infectious diseases and febrile diseases, Commission on HIV/AIDS, CSOs included in the Global Fund Programme.
- Target groups: general population; youth; HIV infected persons; persons abusing drugs.
- No target participation

Проект „Ромски Здравствени Медијатори“ (Project “Roma Health Mediators”)

- Responsible authorities: Ministry for health, CSOs
- Target groups: Roma population
- No target participation

Financial services

The Government offers scholarships and student loans to young high school and university students. All possibilities are published on the web site <http://www.stipendii.mon.gov.mk>.

Social financial support to vulnerable groups is described under section 4.4. Inclusive Programmes for Young People, subtitle Programmes specific for vulnerable young people (**Child and Social Protection programmes**).

Quality assurance

No available information.

4.7 Youth Work to Foster Social Inclusion

Policy/legal framework

No available information.

Main inclusive Youth-Work programmes and target groups

Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance

- IPA Component IV: Human Resources Development (HRD)
 - Priority axis 3: Social Inclusion – Promoting an inclusive labor market
 - Responsible authorities: Central Financing and Contracting Department (CFCD) within the Ministry of Finance, represented by the Head of CFCD, acting as Head of the Operating Structure; Relevant departments/ units within the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and the Ministry of Education and Science.

- Target groups: unemployed people particularly young unemployed people lacking working skills; Professionals working with vulnerable groups (both governmental and NGOs)

Through the IPA Component IV: Human Resources development, Priority Axis 3: Social Inclusion – Promoting an inclusive labor market [26 civil society organizations](#) were awarded projects.

The Project **Technical Assistance in Project Management and Monitoring of the Grant Scheme “Fostering Social Inclusion”** is providing technical assistance (Trainings, Seminars, Online Helpdesk, On-the-Spot Visits, etc.) on topics related to implementation of EU grants (project management, PRAG, secondary procurement, visibility rules and communication strategy, narrative and financial reporting, etc.) specifically to the 26 projects that have been endorsed under the **Grant Scheme “Fostering Social Inclusion” EuropeAid/135012/M/ACT/MK**.

Youth work providers in the field of social inclusion for young people

Macedonian legislation does not define youth work as a professional orientation and profession in general.

Training and support for youth workers engaged in social inclusion programmes

Not applicable. Republic of Macedonia does not define youth work as a professional orientation and profession in general.

Financial support

The Government secure the funds both from internal as from external sources. The Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA) is the most used EU funding in the field of social inclusion. For the implementation of IPA Component IV: Human Resources Development, Axis III Social Inclusion, the total budget for the period 2007 – 2011 is 8.894.126 EUR, of which 1.334.126 EUR is national public contribution. ^[22]

Quality assurance

The [Central Financing and Contracting Department](#) of the Ministry of Finance is the core body responsible for implementation of the IPA Component IV: Human Resources development, Priority Axis 3: Social Inclusion – Promoting an inclusive labor market.

Operating Structure for IPA Human Resources Development Component in the Republic of Macedonia was established as a collection of bodies, responsible for managing and implementing the Operational Programme for Human Resources Development (OPHRD) in accordance with the principle of sound financial management, pursuant to point 6 of Annex A of the Framework Agreement (FwA) and Article 28 of IPA Implementing Regulation (IPA IR).

According to Article 16 of the Governmental Decree on Determining Mutual Relations between the Bodies and the Structures of Decentralised Management of the First Four Components under the EU Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (OGRM No 132/2008), the list of bodies comprising the Operating Structure for Human Resources Development Component consists of the following:

Central Financing and Contracting Department (CFCD) within the Ministry of Finance, represented by the Head of CFCD, acting as Head of the Operating Structure;

Relevant departments/ units within the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and the Ministry of Education and Science.

(²²) EC decision

http://cfcd.finance.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/COMM_NATIVE_C_2010_8305_1_EN_ANNEXE2.pdf

Central Financing and Contracting Department acts as a Lead Body of the Operating Structure for IPA Human Resources Development Component, headed by the Head of the Operating Structure (HOS), solely responsible for carrying out tendering procedures, contracting, and execution of payments to contractors/ grant beneficiaries, as well as the accounting of projects financed under IPA.

CFCD is also responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Programme/ projects concerned, as well as for supervision of the operation and functioning of the Operating Structure for Human Resources Development. CFCD will also act as Secretariat of the Sectoral Monitoring Committee for IPA Human Resources Development Component.

Part of the tasks of OS related to programming, technical implementation and monitoring of IPA funded projects, were delegated by the Head of Operating Structure to **Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and Ministry of Education and Science, represented by IPA Coordinators**, responsible for implementation of the tasks in timely, efficient and effective manner.

The Government of Republic of Macedonia has appointed the Deputy Prime Minister in charge of Economic Affairs to act as **Strategic Coordinator for Regional Development Component and Human Resources Development Component of IPA**. According to Article 23 of the IPA Implementing Regulation (EC) No 718/2007, the main responsibility of the Strategic Coordinator is coordination of the assistance granted under the Regional Development and Human Resources Development Components of IPA under the responsibility of the National IPA Coordinator, but with no direct involvement in the implementation of these Components.

4.8 Current Debates and Reforms

Several reforms are taking place at the moment:

Draft Law for amending the Law on volunteering

The aim of the proposal for amending the Law on volunteering is securing protection of personal data which are submitted to the Ministry on labor and social policy in the process of receiving consent for volunteering of foreign residents.

- [Draft text of the Proposal Law for amending the Law on volunteering](#)
- [Information for starting the process of preparation of draft Law](#)
- [Assessment report on the regulation influence](#)

Draft Law on changes and amendments of the Law on social protection

Proposed changes and amendments of the Law on social protection contains the following solutions: advancing the food standards in the institutions for institutional social protection; increasing of social financial support and constant social financial aid for 5%.

- [Information for starting the process for preparation of the Draft Law on changes and amendments of the Law on social protection](#)
- [Draft text of the Law on changes and amendments of the Law on social protection](#)

Draft Law on changing and amending of the Law for child protection

The proposed changes and amendments of this Law are aiming at enabling other legal subjects to provide services for childcare and education of children in preschool age, in nursery/center for early child development as organizational units. In terms of improving the healthy food in the children institutions, it is proposed to define Standards for food in the children institutions. It defines in detail the establishment of children institutions in order to ease the process of the establishment of such institutions, as well as shortening the procedures.

With introduction of online application for request for practicing the right of child allowance it will enable the applicants to submit the request online.

- [Information for the start of the process of preparation of the Draft Law on changes and amendments of the Law on child protection](#)
- [Draft text of the Law for changes and amendments of the Law on child protection](#)
- [Assessment report on the regulation influence](#)

Draft Law on changing and amending of the Law for child protection

The proposed changes and amendments of the Law on child protection aims at improving the standard of financially unsecured persons (users of social financial support and permanent social financial aid) who have children with disabilities and are using the right of special allowance, with increasing the allowance for 25% as well for enabling such support for all children with Down Syndrome.

- [Information for the start of the process for preparation of Draft Law on changes and amendments of the Law on child protection](#)
- [Draft text of the Law for changes and amendments of the Law on child protection](#)

Draft Law on social entrepreneurship

In the republic of Macedonia the concept of social entrepreneurship is not properly regulated in the legal framework, although the importance of the concept and advantages are recognized by the society. There is no legal framework which embrace the regulation of this matter, although several laws and polices contain provisions that contribute towards further development of social entrepreneurship.

This Law aims at regulating social entrepreneurship with adoption of specific regulation, which will correspond to the regulation in the EU countries and adjusted to the specific economic and social states in Macedonia.

- [Information for the start of the process for preparation of Draft Law on social entrepreneurship](#)
- [Draft text of the proposal Law on social entrepreneurship](#)

5. Participation

In Republic of Macedonia, there is National Youth Strategy (2016-2025), where one of the nine thematic areas is Youth Participation.

Young people usually participate in consultation processes on the level of defining key challenges they are facing and providing long-term objectives to address the problems. The consultation process specifically for creating of the National Youth Strategy (2016-2025) involved wide variety of youth representatives.

5.1 General context

Definitions and concepts

In the National Youth Strategy 2016-2025 is stated "Youth Participation is a process of creating opportunities for young people to play a significant part in the democratic processes and to influence the creation and implementation of policies that contribute towards the development of strategies and programmes. These opportunities are created by developing a wide range of formal and informal mechanisms for youth participation, from local youth councils to focus groups, from ongoing consultation on youth policies to projects run by young people" ^[23].

Institutions of representative democracy

Republic of Macedonia is a parliamentary representative democratic republic, where the Prime Minister is the head of the government in a multiparty system. Executive power is

⁽²³⁾ National Youth Strategy 2016-2025, page 13
(http://ams.gov.mk/images/dokumenti/mladi/National_Youth_Strategy_2016-2025_eng.pdf)

the Government; Legislative is in the hands of the government and parliament. Judiciary power is independent of the executive and the legislature. ^[24]

According to the Constitution, Article 115 "In units of local self-government, citizens directly and through representatives participate in decision-making on issues of local relevance particularly in the fields of urban planning, communal activities, culture, sport, social security and child care, preschool education, primary education, basic health care and other fields determined by law. The municipality is autonomous in the execution of its constitutionally and legally determined spheres of competence; supervision of the legality of its work is carried out by the Republic. The carrying out of specified matters can by law be entrusted to the municipality by the Republic."

Republic of Macedonia has 85 local self-governments organized in municipalities, including the city of Skopje that is particular unit of local self-government the organization of which is regulated by law. ^[25]

The citizens in Republic of Macedonia through non-compulsory and with guaranteed secrecy by law are electing The President, the Assembly, by proportional representation and the local self-government (Mayor and Municipality Councils).

5.2 Youth participation in representative democracy

Young people as voters

Young people in Macedonia can vote and be voted for representatives from the age of 18 by law; it also refers in instruments for direct democracy like referenda. Currently in Republic of Macedonia there are no plans on lowering the voting age limit. According to the Constitution every Citizen from the age of 18 has the right to vote. Young offenders sentenced to correctional facilities and young people completing their voluntary military service or are part of the military service, have the right to vote one day before official Election Day.

Young people as political representatives

In 2017, in the elected members of parliament (2016-2020) from 120 representatives there are 2 members of parliament that are 30 years old or lower. In Republic of Macedonia every young person over 18 can be a member of a political party. In the law for Political Parties ^[26] there is no specific article that regulates youth wings. The current director of Agency of Youth and Sport is below the age of 30.

There is no official and statistical data for Young people as candidates in National Elections and functions reserved for young people.

5.3 Youth representation bodies

Youth parliament

In Republic of Macedonia there is no official or formal Youth Parliament on local or national level.

Youth councils and/or youth advisory boards

Structure

The government of Republic of Macedonia within its program for Youth and Sport has implemented the project "Councils of Youth in the municipalities"(2014-2018) in order to

⁽²⁴⁾ The Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia (<http://www.sobranie.mk/the-constitution-of-the-republic-of-macedonia.nspix>)

⁽²⁵⁾ Municipalities in Macedonia, University of Cyril and Methodius http://feit.ukim.edu.mk/fajlovi_pocetna/Opstini_oznaki.pdf

⁽²⁶⁾ Консолидиран текст на Закон за Политички Партии.; Consolidated text on the law on Political Parties (<http://pravda.gov.mk/documents/zakon%20za%20politicki%20partii.pdf>)

increase the role and participation of youth in decision making processes.^[27] 63 out of 85 municipalities have changed the municipality statutes and included the Councils of Youth as their youth advisory bodies. There is no National Youth Council formally established and recognized by the government. Each Municipality Council and the commissions within have the power to nominate and denominate mandates on the Youth Councils.

Composition

The public call for nominees is for organizations and institutions related to youth and active on local level. The number of members differs from the inhabitants of the municipality and it is always an odd number. Each Youth Council has a mandate of 4 years without a chance of another mandate. Members should be aged from 15-29 years old. The council sessions are public at least one per month.

Role and responsibilities

Youth Council has the role of an advisory body of the Municipalities Councils, and its objective is to involve the young people in the public life of the municipality and to participate in the decision making processes related to youth. Youth Advisory bodies have the right to take part in discussions in the Municipality Councils but with no right to vote. Main responsibilities adopted within the statute of the Youth Councils are: proposing to the Municipal Council, Financial Plan for the Program of the Youth Council; Discuss issues of discussion at the meeting of the Municipal Council and are relevant to the work of youth; Propose to the Municipal Council to discuss issues that are important for improving the situation of young people and solve their problems; Gives Present opinions to the municipal council for concrete decisions to be adopted, and of interest to young people; Cooperate in the development and monitor the implementation of local bylaws for youth adopted by the municipality;

Funding

Youth Councils by the statute adopted from the Municipalities Councils receive public funding from the municipality councils and it depends of the Municipalities budgets and the financial plans of the Youth Councils respectfully. As a municipality body it is monitored and accountable to the municipality.

Higher education student union(s)

Structure

The student union is established the same way as the civil society organizations according to the law for CSOs, presentment in the official gazette. That means they are independent organization but they offices are in the universities or faculties therefore they are supervised by the faculty they are having an office. The main organs running the union can differ from union to union but most of them are having President, Vice-president and Secretary as well as committees for science, collaboration and communication, current activities and project, cultural, fun and sport activities. The student union of the third largest university "St. Clement of Ohrid" Bitola is consistent of the following bodies: Parliament assembly, Executive Board, Control Board, President, Sectors, Students' attorney. ^[28]

Composition

There is no public statistical information about how many student unions are in the country or even how many members they have. According to the biggest university "Cyril and Methodius" in Skopje, there are 23 unions, and almost every university and the

⁽²⁷⁾ Програма за Млади и Спорт; Program on Youth and Sport (2014-2018)
<http://vlada.mk/sites/default/files/programa/2014-2018/sport.pdf>

⁽²⁸⁾ <http://www.uklo.edu.mk/tabs/view/d226c9b967b7ecf07e728f016e445e63>

faculty, state or private, are having student union and in Republic of Macedonia there are 5 State and 11 private university as well as 8 Private Faculties/Higher vocational schools.

Members in University Student union can be: Members who present students' interest, needs and suggestions; Students' representatives of the students' parliaments of different faculties with a two years mandate; The number of students representatives of each faculty in the Students parliament is determinate proportionally to the number students of the faculty based on certain criteria previously determinate; The students union has its President selected on secret immediate election with two years mandate having no right for another election.

Role and responsibilities

The role of the student union is: Influence the legal regulation of the needs and demands of the students; Participate in the work of the National students' parliament of university as well as in the work of the faculties and the university; Introduce qualitative changes in the educational process and successful implementation of ECTS and the Bologna declaration; Improve the students' standard; Encourage and conduct mutual activities and manifestations; Develop the culture and satisfying the cultural-entertaining needs of the students as well as organize sports, recreational and educational activities and many other socially useful activities; Develop research and technical cooperation with many organizations in the country and abroad and maintain other forms of international cooperation; Function as a part of appropriate organizations and forums in the country and abroad.

Funding

The funding is public where the students of first year pay a certain amount (depends on the university) about the union, but this is not mandatory, only by will, furthermore it continue through the years on voluntary level.

School student union(s)

Currently in Republic of Macedonia there are two formal school student unions. High school Student Union of Macedonia and Youth Association of High School Vocational institutions founded according to the law on civil society organizations and foundations. ^[29]

In Republic of Macedonia there is no specific law or bylaw that regulates school organizing in Primary and Secondary Education. Each Educational Institution is following unstandardized guidance provided by initiatives from the Civil Society sector or practices established in previous systems that depended on individuals.

Other bodies

No official available information on this subject

5.4 Young people's participation in policy-making

Formal Mechanisms of Consultation

In Republic of Macedonia there are no policy guidelines for formal mechanism of Consultation, though, the whole process of development of the National Youth Strategy included a public call for participation in thematic working groups. Civil society organizations, informal groups and individuals had the opportunity to choose in which thematic area they would like to be actively involved, where representative from Public institutions and young people together worked on creation on the National Youth Strategy (2016-2025). Structural dialog was used as a methodology and working groups per priority were created during the process of drafting and each representative or individual had the right to select in which working group will want to contribute. One of

(²⁹) Law on associations and foundations
<http://pravda.gov.mk/resursi.asp?lang=mak&id=01>

the working groups was specifically working on Youth Participation as one of the priorities within the National Youth Strategy.

Formal mechanisms are still in development and require time to be adopted.

Actors

Youth Actors

On national level as main youth actors are the student unions and student initiatives, together with two national umbrella youth organizations Coalition of youth organization SEGA and the National Youth Council of Macedonia that is not formally recognized by the government, however it bears the name. Youth Councils on municipality level are still in development.

Specific target groups

No official public information is available

Public authorities

During consultation processes, the key public actors are: The Agency of Youth and Sport, Ministry of Education and Science; Ministry of Social policies and Labor; National Agency for European Educational Programs and Mobility; Local self-governments;

Additional stakeholders

As additional stakeholders involved in the consultation processes are: other government agencies; High Education Institutions; High School Institutions; Media representatives and non-governmental organizations.

Information on the extent of youth participation

No official public information is available

Outcomes

Main outcomes

Young people usually participate in consultation processes on the level of defining key challenges they are facing and providing long-term objectives to address the problems. The consultation process specifically for creating of the National Youth Strategy (2016-2025) involved wide variety of youth representatives.

The integration of young people into policy making is public and authorities are always sharing the outcomes that are adopted together with the young people using participatory mechanisms.

Large-scale initiatives for dialogue or debate between public institutions and young people

Youth organizations (Coalition SEGA) recognized on national level have implemented Structural Dialog ^[30], for the first time in Macedonia within the last two years. The first initiative was targeting youth unemployment as an issue and included large number of organizations, young people and public authorities. The second initiative Youth organizations implemented Structural dialog in order to initiate law changes within the Law on primary education ^[31] and Law on secondary education.^[32] The second initiative was targeting the lack of school organizing standards and students participations in schools.

⁽³⁰⁾ Structural Dialog http://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/implementation/dialogue_en.htm

⁽³¹⁾ Закон за Основно Образованич Law on primary education;
http://www.sonk.org.mk/documents/osnovnoto_obrazovanie_103_19082008.pdf

⁽³²⁾ Закон за Средно Образование; Law on Secondary Education;
http://www.sonk.org.mk/documents/Sredno_obrazovanie_95.pdf

Each structural dialog outcome was creating policy document with recommendations on law changes that had incorporated also the opinion and ideas of young people that took part in constructive and participatory process.

5.5 National strategy to increase youth participation

Existence of a national strategy to increase young people's political and civil society participation

In Republic of Macedonia, there is National Youth Strategy (2016-2025), where one of the nine thematic areas is Youth Participation. The document had wide consultation process authentic for South East Europe and provided inclusion of large number of young people. It was adopted in January, 2016 ^[33].

Scope and contents

The National Youth Strategy is targeting nine thematic areas: youth participation; youth information; local youth work; education; employment and pre-employment support; culture; sports; health; quality of life. The strategy aims with its interventions on national level and plans particular attention to vulnerable categories of young people (unemployed, NEET, low level of education, young people with geographical and financial obstacles).

As stated in the strategy the Vision is that in 2025; "Young people are independent, active, equal, informed and progressive participants in all areas of society and they fully develop their potential as responsible citizens who enjoy fundamental rights and freedoms. Young people have equal opportunities irrespective of their differences and they are largely involved in the decision-making process, thus developing their potentials and making active contribution towards the general development and wellbeing of the Republic of Macedonia."

Strategic Priorities

1. Providing a better standard of living and equal opportunities for a decent life;
2. Creating conditions for effective observance and protection of fundamental rights and freedoms, and systematic integration and interaction of different categories of young people;
3. Creating opportunities for the involvement of young people in the monitoring and implementation of policies and decisions that affect them;
4. Equal access to quality education and other forms of personal and professional development.

Each thematic area contains objectives that should be achieved with specific measures nationwide.

Responsible authority for the implementation of the strategy

As main responsible authority is the government as a whole and specifically the Agency of Youth and Sport. The main coordination is in the hands of the Agency of Youth and Sport, also responsible for monitoring of the implementation.

Monitoring and evaluation

The monitoring plan strives provide: Monitoring and assessment of the implementation of the planned activities and the initial outputs to which they contribute; Monitoring and assessing the effects of achieving the sets of results within the thematic areas; Assessment of the overall impact of the Strategy according to the established strategic priorities;

There are no monitoring reports publicly available currently, and it is in the 2nd year of implementation. The National Youth Strategy will have impact assessment after the 5

⁽³³⁾ Национална Младинска Стратегија; National Youth Strategy (2016-2015), January 2016 (http://ams.gov.mk/images/dokumenti/mladi/National_Youth_Strategy_2016-2025_eng.pdf)

years of implementation and final impact assessment within six months of the expiry in the 10 year period.

In October 2016, the Agency of Youth and Sport, conducted working sessions for creation of monitoring plan, regarding The National Youth Strategy 2016-2025 and the Youth Action Plan 2016-2017 ^[34]

Revisions/Updates

Taking in consideration that the National youth strategy is in the 2nd year of implementation, currently there are no revisions and updates on the document.

The current strategy was preceded by the National Youth Strategy (2005-2015). The main differences between past and current strategy are in the inclusion process and monitoring plan. The current strategy had wide consultation process and included young people in the national working groups per thematic area and also 130 young people on local debates. The monitoring plan envisaged within the new strategy reflects the previous experience and needs during the implementation of the previous one.

5.6 Supporting youth organisations

Legal/policy framework for the functioning and development of youth organisations

In Republic of Macedonia there is no specific legal policy or framework for the functioning and development of youth organizations.

Public financial support

Public financial support can be divided in domestic and international, where international is larger in scale and funds available. The government and its ministry departments have funds located for Civil Society organizations but not specifically for Youth Organizations. Each municipality has its own funds and public calls available for Civil Society organizations but not specifically for Youth Organizations. The procedure and funds available are not standardized nationwide, and differs between municipalities. European funds are available through National Agency for European Educational Programs and Mobility responsible for Erasmus plus program. As other international public financial support the embassies of other countries have its programs and support civil organizations from Macedonia in general on already set priorities within its programs.

Initiatives to increase the diversity of participants

Currently there is no publicly accessible information on this subject.

5.7 “Learning to participate” through formal, non-formal and informal learning

Policy Framework

In Republic of Macedonia there is no specific national strategy that applies on social and civic competences and their development.

Formal learning

Citizenship education is a separate subject that is teaching in 9th grade at the elementary schools with 1 class a week and 36 classes in total throughout the year; and in 4th year at the high schools with 2 classes a week and 66 classes in total throughout the year. The main learning objectives in the elementary schools are the following: the students to know what the government is and how to acquire it; to recognize the holders

(³⁴) News Article on Creation on monitoring plan for The National Youth Strategy 2016-2025 and the Youth Action Plan 2016-2017 <http://www.ams.gov.mk/odnosi-so-javnosta/soopstenija/1089-odrzhana-rabotilnica-za-monitoring-sistem-za-sledenje-na-nacionalnata-strategija-za-mladi-i-akciskiot-plan-za-mladi>

of power; the distinction between the legislative, executive and judiciary government; to know the forms of citizen participation; discover the reasons why the citizens should obey the laws; to encourage the tolerance for different views and attitudes; to understand the role of the constitution; to get to know with the human rights and the international laws; to form opinion about the value of the human life; explain the importance of mass media in modern society. The main learning objectives in the high schools are the following: the students to know who is having the power in the democracy; the characteristics of the democracy; to respect the democratically values; what are their rights and how to protect them; what is the role of the citizen in one democratic society; to involve themselves in the decision making process by the government; how to solve conflict in the democratic societies. ^[35]

Non-formal and informal learning

Participative structures within formal education settings are not practice in Republic of Macedonia, and there are no standards of High school student organizing adopted by law. Programs aimed at training school staff and pupils to enhance their skills to participate in decision-making structures, are most of the time on project based implemented by Civil Society Organizations and not official programs of the public authorities.

There is no official information available on measures to encourage student participation in the local community and wider society. Partnerships between formal education providers, youth organizations and youth work providers exists, however it is not standardized or promoted by the public authorities. The initiatives are coming most of the time from the youth organizations in order to work with the target group that most of their time is within the educational institutions. No official public information is available on supporting non-formal learning initiatives focusing on social and civic competences, that don't mean they are not existing.

Quality assurance/quality guidelines for non-formal learning

In Republic of Macedonia there is no quality assurance or quality guidelines reform or standard for non-formal learning adopted by the government.

Educators' support

In the period of December 2012 and June 2016, the Ministry of Education and Science alongside with the Macedonian Civic Education Center, implemented a project about Teacher professional and career development where the main goal is to upgrade and improve the teacher professional and career development system, contributing in turn to higher quality instructions in the schools and higher student achievements in the Republic of Macedonia, through several activities like: preparing a catalogue of professional competencies and teachers, establishing procedures for evaluating the teachers, developing a draft-model of the system for career development of teachers and school support staff; Inform teachers and school support staff about the professional and career development opportunities. ^[36]

(³⁵) Citizenship Education http://www.bro.gov.mk/docs/gragjansko_obrazovanie.pdf
<http://www.bro.gov.mk/docs/srednostrucno/nastavni-programi/IV-godina/Nastavna%20programa-Gragjansko%20obrazovaie-IV-ekonomsko-pravna%20struka.pdf>
<http://www.bro.gov.mk/docs/srednostrucno/nastavni-programi/IV-godina/Natavna%20programa-Gragjansko%20obrazovanie-IV-site%20struki.pdf>

(³⁶) Teachers career and professional development
<http://www.mon.gov.mk/index.php/dokumenti/2014-07-30-12-00-34/mcgohttp://www.mcgo.org.mk/usaaid-teacher-professional-and-career-development-project/>
<http://bro.gov.mk/?q=mk/node/157>

5.8 Raising political awareness among young people

Information providers / counselling structures

The only public authorities that are responsible for disseminating information about the democratic rights for young people and every citizen of Republic of Macedonia are the Ministry of Justice ^[37] and the State Election Commission. Everyone can access a different type of information such as the democratic rights for voting on the website of Ministry of Justice where the laws are accessible to everyone. Also The Ministry of Information Society and Administration of Republic of Macedonia ^[38] is implementing a project called E-Democracy, which will be a portal for accessing the laws, strategic documents and having discussions with other people, governmental and non-governmental organizations.

There is not relevant information about existing of the youth information and counseling structures by the public authorities. However in Republic of Macedonia the local self-governments already supported two information and counseling youth centers in Prilep and Kavadarci, that are managed by Civil Society organizations.

Youth-targeted information campaigns about democratic rights and democratic values

The State Election Commission is the only public authority that is having a campaign for the election right by creating a video material on how the election process is implementing and how the citizens of Republic of Macedonia should use their right to vote. Beside that there is no other relevant information about this topic, and also the NGOs are making most of the campaigns for democratic rights and democratic values in Republic of Macedonia. ^[39]

Promoting the intercultural dialogue among young people

Starting from July 2015 The Ministry of Information Society and Administration of Republic of Macedonia created and published 18 video public campaigns about Interethnic and Interreligious Coexistence where the main target were citizens of the Macedonian, Albanian, Roma, Serbian, Bosnian, Turkish and Aromanian ethnicity. In the campaign where included celebrities and young people promoting intercultural values in the areas of sport, education, celebration and everyday life which was also the main objective and outcome of the campaign. ^[40]

Another project that promotes the intercultural dialogue among young people is "Building Bridges Fund" by the Ministry of Education and Science, the Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands, the Governments of Switzerland and Ireland and the Mission of OBSCE in Skopje. The project is implemented in 2014 and it's still ongoing and the main goal is to increase the interaction, understanding and integration in the schools. The project is fund where the schools in which they teach and learn on one language can apply and make an activities with other schools in which they teach and learn from the other 6 different languages. ^[41]

Promoting transparent and youth-tailored public communication

We can mention that The Agency of Youth and Sport have published the website www.mladi.ams.mk that provides opportunities for young people to actively participate in personal and community development activities. The website is also support by a mobile application for Google Play and App store.

⁽³⁷⁾ <http://pravda.gov.mk/default.asp?lang=mak>

⁽³⁸⁾ <http://www.mio.gov.mk/?q=node/2672>

⁽³⁹⁾ State Election Commission education videos <http://www.sec.mk/edukacija/>

⁽⁴⁰⁾ Public campaigns on Intercultural dialog <http://www.mio.gov.mk/?q=node/4011>

⁽⁴¹⁾ Building Bridges Project <http://www.mon.gov.mk/index.php/dokumenti/2014-07-30-12-00-34/gradime-mostovi>

There is no other publicly available information on this topic.

5.9 E-participation

According to the national body for statistics for the information about the internet in the last 3 months, the results for the people on age 15-24 (young people) is next:

- 95.1% are using the Internet every day
- Activities on the internet in the last 3 months
- Sending or receiving e-mail: 60.4%
- Telephoning/conference calls through internet: 78.6%
- Participation on social medias: 95.9%
- Uploading personal content: 50%
- Reading/downloading news: 71.6%
- Searching for health information: 48.2%
- Searching for products information: 39.9%
- Searching for educational information: 54%
- Consulting with online encyclopedias: 45.9%
- Studying for online courses: 16.4%
- Using online material for studying: 27.5%
- Downloading software: 21.6%
- Searching for a job: 24.1%
- Participating in professional networks: 4.1%
- Using travel and accommodation services: 19.9%
- E-Selling through auctions: 9.1%
- E-Banking: 4.6%
- Using cloud services: 47.9% ^[42]

The Ministry of Information Society and Administration of Republic of Macedonia is having on-going projects in their strategic plans for increasing the e-services in our country. Of the project is E-Inclusion which refers to the access of the e-services in our country, and the ministry is expecting results such as: Decreasing the digital barrier between the citizen of RM; Increasing the usage of computer and internet in our country; Increasing the productivity, decreasing the unemployment rate and improving the economic state of citizens that are "left out" of the social and economic life in RM. ^[43]

Other project that the ministry is implementing is E-Contents, where the ministry alongside with Intel provided 513 educational contents in 2009 that will be used for the school subjects and the students can freely access all the published contents on the portal: www.skool.mk. The contents consist of: learning objects which, apart from the interactive presentation, also have text for self-testing; simulations, where students can get new information and knowledge without direct experiments; and learning notes translated in both Macedonian and Albanian language. ^[44]

Another project by the ministry is the E-Democracy Web Portal, and it's a response to the need for introducing a new modern method of public hearing. This portal solution should allow citizens of the Republic of Macedonia to present their views on draft documents of the Government in a simple and easy accessible way and be actively involved in decision making process. The portal will provide: Legislation in preparation; review of the Strategic documents; Forum (Thematic debates); Blog for articles, posts and comments; Administrative barrier elimination – where any citizen can make comments, views and suggestions for more efficient functioning of the public administration; Plug in – where

⁽⁴²⁾ Statistical Office Young People using the internet
http://www.stat.gov.mk/PrikaziSoopstenie_en.aspx?rbrtxt=77 EN

⁽⁴³⁾ E-Inclusion Project <http://www.mio.gov.mk/?q=node/1997>

⁽⁴⁴⁾ E – Contents <http://www.mio.gov.mk/?q=node/2635>

physical and legal subjects can register on the portal and have two-way communication between them; Provide an idea – where the citizens can submit ideas.^[45]

5.10 Current debates and reforms

Currently there is a debate on changing the law on Secondary education regarding the school organizing and the participation in decision making within the secondary educational institutions first and insert the lessons learned and practices in Primary Education later on. In 2016, National Youth Organizations (Coalition SEGA) have delivered policy document with recommendations and provided measures and standards in order to improve the situation.

Coalition of youth organizations SEGA in partnership with Youth Organizations and relevant stakeholders, have submitted draft changes in Law on Secondary Education that was result of wide consultative process. The law changes were delivered to the Ministry of Education and Science in September 2017, and will regulate the right for participation in decision making within the High School institutions, by standardizing the field of work, scope, forming and provided support to High School Students organizations.

The Ministry of Education and Science is preparing changes within the Law on High Education, however they are not envisaging changes on right of participation or student organizing.

In addition the public authority's initiative on forming youth advisory bodies on municipality level is up and running with the support of The Agency of Youth and Sport on national level, and Municipalities on local level, to a lower extent.

6. Education and Training

The education system of Republic of Macedonia consists of preschool, elementary education (6-14 years), secondary education (15-17/18 years) and higher education.

The Ministry of Education and Science is the main government authority responsible for education and training, mandated with the realization of education. The strategies and programs of the national institutions foresee cross sector cooperation in implementation of various measures and activities.

6.1 General context

Main trends in young people's participation in education and training

Republic of Macedonia is a country with high level of unemployment. Although that level has decreased from 32.3% in 2009 to 28% in 2014 it is still very high. The young population is particularly affected with 23.5% of unemployed young people registered in 2016 in the Employment Agency ^[46]. In 2014, 25.2% of the population aged 15-24 were not part of the education system nor employed and 40% of young people in Macedonia find jobs 1-3 years after leaving the education system.^[47] The consequence of that is the high number of young people migrating abroad, a trend that shows no signs of decline. The highest number of migrants have secondary education, followed by persons with only elementary education. The five most popular countries among young people for studying abroad (2013) are Bulgaria, Italy, Germany, Austria and Turkey.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ E-Democracy Web Portal Project <http://www.mio.gov.mk/?q=node/2672>

⁽⁴⁶⁾ Employment Agency Annual Report for 2016

⁽⁴⁷⁾ Integral Strategy for Education and Action Plan for 2016-2020
(<http://mon.gov.mk/images/PRVA-Rabotna-Verzija-na-Strategija-za-obrazovanie-MK.pdf>)

According to the Research on Youth Trends in Macedonia conducted for the needs of the Agency for Youth and Sport, the key findings of the young people's attitude towards education and educational system are ^[48]:

- Young people in the research agree that the education is the most important thing in life;
- Majority of young people (45%) have positive attitude towards the education. The most positive attitude have young people aged 15 – 19 years, then follows the age group 25 – 29 and the last is age group 20 – 24;
- Majority of the respondents in the research (41%) think that the education system is good but needs solid reforms;
- The high schools students agree with the statement that what they learn in high school will be very useful further in their life;
- Majority of high school students (39.6%) have extremely positive perception about the secondary education, and almost 32% have positive attitude;
- In the secondary education chapter of the research, the respondents provide highest average grade of 3.3 for the teachers, and lowest average grade for the discipline (measurement scale from 1- 5 where 1 is the lowest). The textbooks and lectures are evaluated with average grade of 3;
- The most often selected reason for entering tertiary education are getting diploma and increase of the intellectual capacity;
- The majority of the students (40%) have extremely positive attitude towards the tertiary education;
- Almost all aspects of the tertiary education are assessed with grade 8 and 7, the grades 9 and 10 are provided for the safety on the faculties and the Bologna system implemented in the Republic of Macedonia. The grades 5 and 6 are provided for the books and freedom of speech of the students (measurement scale from 5 – 10 where 5 is the lowest), and
- The most often reason for termination the education after the secondary school, are the limited finances.

Organisation of the education and training system

With the latest amendments of the Law on Secondary Education ^[49], from 2008, for the first time in Macedonia the secondary education becomes compulsory for every citizen. That amendment also means an extension of the age the compulsory education ends, from 14 years of age previously, to 18 years of age with the amendment. That provision is relevant for general secondary education, while for vocational education and training (VET) it is 16, 17 or 18 years of age.

The education system of Republic of Macedonia consists of preschool, elementary education (6-14 years), secondary education (15-17/18 years) and higher education.

The main organization of formal education for the youth covers the following stages:

- Secondary education (ISCED 3): general secondary education (Gymnasium) and art education in duration of four years and vocational education (Vocational Schools) in duration of two (vocational education of two years), three (vocational education for professions) or four years (vocational technical education). The secondary education is compulsory and comprises all children in the age cohort 15 to 18 years for the general secondary education, and for the age cohort 15 to 16, 17 or 18 in the VET depending on the selected track. The tasks and activities of the secondary education are defined and regulated with the Law on Secondary Education and the Law for

⁽⁴⁸⁾ Study "Youth Trends in the Republic of Macedonia", Institute for Sociological, Political and Juridical Research, 2014

⁽⁴⁹⁾ http://www.mon.gov.mk/images/%D0%97%D0%B0%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%BD_%D0%B7%D0%B0_%D1%81%D1%80%D0%B5%D0%B4%D0%BD%D0%BE%D1%82%D0%BE_%D0%BE%D0%B1%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%B7%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%B8%D0%B507.pdf

Vocational Education and Training. The secondary education is free of charge in the public secondary schools. There are three teaching languages, Macedonian, Albanian and Turkish. The pupils also have the legal option to enroll into the private secondary schools which are officially recognized by the Macedonian educational system;

- Higher education (ISCED 5, 6 and 7): implements under-graduate, master and doctoral studies in the higher educational institutions and institutes which are autonomous and independent. The activities are defined and regulated by the Law on the Higher Education that includes provisions on harmonizing the state's higher education with the Bologna process and European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), as well as insuring legal basis for expending teaching personnel and student's mobility. In accordance to the national policy for provision of equal access to the higher education, social cohesion and lifelong learning, the state introduced the Project 35/45, which promotes enrolment of the students from the age cohort 35 to 45 years;
- Adult education is part of the education system of Republic of Macedonia that enables education, specialization, qualification and learning of adults. A student of adult education can be any person that participates in the educational adult programs and has previously fulfilled the conditions regarding prior compulsory education and other persons that bind without a student status. The adult education encompasses formal, non-formal and informal education. The activities of the adult education are regulated with the Law on Adult Education and Law for Vocational Education.

Main concepts

Main concepts regarding education are described in appropriate chapters.

6.2 Administration and governance

Cross-sectorial cooperation

Republic of Macedonia is decentralized country with the process of decentralization still ongoing. The governance in the education sector is divided among the Parliament and the Government through the Ministry of Education and Science and the Local Self Government through the municipalities.

The management of the primary and secondary schools is under responsibility of the municipalities, except for the secondary schools in the capital Skopje which are under responsibility of City of Skopje. The State provides financial resources for the education in the municipalities in a form of Block Grants. Those municipalities that are still in the first phase of the decentralization, receive Block Grants for financing the maintenance of the infrastructure, whereas the salaries of the employees in the schools are still centrally distributed. The municipalities that are in the second phase of decentralization receive Block Grants for both, infrastructure and salaries of the school employees. The councils of the municipalities are fully responsible for the internal distribution of the financial resources from the Block Grants among the schools that fall under their responsibility. The management of all schools for pupils with special needs is under direct responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Science. ^[50]

The most common mechanisms for cross sector cooperation in the education are Committees and Working groups for development, implementation and evaluation of the strategies and programs. Also, the Ministries, Departments and Agencies cooperate on joint projects by establishing mixed project teams.

⁽⁵⁰⁾ https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/former_Yugoslav_Republic_of_Macedonia:Redirect

Governance

Main public actors and their responsibilities

Ministry of Education and Science – The Ministry of Education and Science is the main government authority responsible for education and training, mandated with the realization of education. It is responsible for structuring and financing of education, founding of public institutions, preparation of the legislation governing education and science, implementation of laws, bylaws and other regulations, adoption of syllabi and curricula, approval of textbooks, development of science and research, enrolment policies, and control over the work of education institutions and quality of education. Supervision over the adherence to the laws by higher education institutions is carried out by the Ministry, whilst quality assurance and external evaluation of higher education institutions is the responsibility of the Higher Education Accreditation and Evaluation Board. ^[51]

Municipalities – With the adoption of the Law on Local Self-Government the municipalities gained authority for founding pre-school institutions, primary and secondary schools, their funding and administration (in collaboration with the central authorities) and also for the organization of transportation, nutrition and accommodation of students in student dormitories. ^[52]

Bureau for Education Development – The Bureau is integral part of the Ministry of Education and Science as a legal entity and conducts expert work of importance for the development and promotion of education in the Republic of Macedonia.

The Bureau is responsible for monitoring, research, promotion and development of education in the area of pre-school, primary, secondary education, art education, general education subjects in vocational education, specialized education and education of adults, education of children with special education needs, education activities in the dormitories and education of children of the citizens of Republic of Macedonia living abroad learning their mother tongue and culture.

Adult Education Center - Adult Education Center is a public institution for adult education in the Republic of Macedonia, as a separate legal entity established by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia. Main task of the Center is harmonization and integration of public interests and the interests of social partners in adult education in Macedonia. It also coordinates the cooperation with international institutions and organizations in the field of adult education. In addition, the role of the center is to provide a quality education system for adults in accordance with European standards and practices through the establishment of standards and criteria that will provide formal and informal adult education and creating high quality and competitive workforce in the labor market with support of social partnership. ^[53]

Centre for Vocational Education and Training (VET Center) – The VET Center is established as a public institution that should harmonize and integrate public interests and the interests of the social partners in the vocational education and training and to coordinate the cooperation with the international institutions and organizations in the area of vocational education and training. The VET Center conducts expert work in the area of monitoring, evaluation, examination, promotion, exploration and development of the vocal education and training. ^[54]

⁽⁵¹⁾ https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/former_Yugoslav_Republic_of_Macedonia:Administration_and_Governance_at_Central_and/or_Regional_Level

⁽⁵²⁾ Law on Local Self-government
(http://aa.mk/WBStorage/Files/Zakon_lokalnata_samouprava.pdf)

⁽⁵³⁾ <http://cov.gov.mk/en/introduction/>

⁽⁵⁴⁾ http://www.csoo.edu.mk/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogcategory&id=21&Itemid=119

National Examinations Centre – The National Examinations Centre is an independent institution with the following responsibilities: to support the process of external examination of the achievements of students and teachers in primary and secondary education; to prepare a national program for external evaluation of primary and secondary education in accordance with the European standards; to collect, process and analyze the results of the testing for verifying the achievements of students in primary and secondary education; to prepare rank-order of teachers from primary and secondary schools in accordance with the results of the external examination, self-evaluation and integral evaluation; to prepare rank-order of professional associates from primary and secondary schools in accordance with the results from the professional records, to develop and sustain the information system for evaluating the achievements of students in primary and secondary education; to participate in the preparations of the concept for graduation and final exams in secondary education; to prepare texts for external examination; to conduct training for the members of state subject graduation commissions and school commissions for external evaluation of the achievements of students in primary and secondary education; to secure protection of secrecy of preparation, printing, distribution and storing of the examination materials; to conduct training for the candidates for principals of primary and secondary schools and to conduct the exam and issue certificates for the candidates with passed exam. ^[55]

National Agency for European Educational Programs and Mobility - The National Agency for European Educational Programs and Mobility is a public institution with an aim to promote and implement the European educational programs in Republic of Macedonia.

By implementing the programs, the agency contributes to development of knowledge-based society, with sustainable economic development, more and better jobs and bigger social cohesion, at the same time providing environmental protection and especially exchange, collaboration and mobility into the areas of education and training.

Program beneficiaries are: learners, students, teachers, professors, educators and other personnel engaged in any stage of educational process, enterprises and other legal bodies including commercial entities, chambers of commerce and other associations of legal bodies in the field of industry, research centers and bodies, as well as citizen associations and foundations. ^[56]

State Education Inspectorate - The State Education Inspectorate is responsible for oversight of the following areas:

- Existing conditions for conducting the activities in pedagogic-education, higher education and scientific institutions, pupil's and student's dormitories;
- Implementation of pedagogic-education process in preschool, elementary and secondary education;
- Special conditions for selection of teachers, special associates and pedagogues;
- Vocational and pedagogical specialization of teachers, special associates and pedagogues and passing the specialist exam;
- The use of textbooks in elementary and secondary schools;
- Procedure for election of titles for lecturer, lecturer-scientist and scientist and associate ;
- Management and administration of pedagogic-education institutions for secondary education founded by the state and private secondary schools;
- Implementation of the curricula and other standards and norms regulating pedagogic-education activity;
- Implementation of extracurricular activities;
- Implementation of experimental programs in the pedagogic-education institutions;

⁽⁵⁵⁾ <http://dic.edu.mk/%d0%bd%d0%b0%d0%b4%d0%bb%d0%b5%d0%b6%d0%bd%d0%be%d1%81%d1%82%d0%b8-2/>

⁽⁵⁶⁾ <http://www.na.org.mk/index.php/en/en-national-agency.html>

- Conducting the Open Call for enrolment of pupils and students and for accommodating pupils and students in pupil's and student's dormitories;
- Management of pedagogic records and documentation, as well as, their issuing and use in preschool, elementary, secondary and higher education and pupil's and student's dormitories;
- Application of norms regarding the number of necessary teachers and associates and the size of the group of regular students in higher education institutions;
- Procedure for selection of study programs in higher education;
- Monitoring of the pedagogic-education process during a strike in preschool, elementary and secondary education;
- Control of funds acquired from own sources of the institutions for secondary education founded by the state, and
- Application of the Laws in higher education and scientific institutions

The Inspectorate conducts the oversight with the following:

- Integral evaluation of the pedagogic-education institutions;
- Regular inspection oversight;
- Ad hoc inspection oversight and
- Control oversight

Administration for Development and Promotion of Education in Languages of Members of Communities – The Administration operates as part of the Ministry for Education and Science. There are two departments in the Administration:

- Department for Albanian, Serbian, Roma, Vlach and Bosnian language and
- Department for peace and children's rights of all communities

Non-public actors

Independent Syndicate for Education, Science and Culture – The syndicate is an autonomous, democratic, independent organization of workers where they participate on voluntarily basis for advocating, implementing, protection and promotion of their economic, social, legal, professional, educational, cultural and other individual and collective interests. The aim of which this union exists is: raising the socio-economic status of the members; protection of their working rights; social dialogue in accordance with international standards; collective negotiating and contracting branch and employer collective contracts; participation in creating the educational, scientific and cultural policy in the process of promulgation of laws; continued improvement of work conditions; higher rights for social, health, pension and invalid insurance, higher rights of daily, weekly and annual leave; more efficient preventive health protection; realization of international syndical cooperation ^[57]

NGO sector – There is quite a big number of NGO's in Macedonia that are specialized in youth and education, either as an exclusive area of their expertise or as one of the areas that they cover with their activities. The youth NGO sector includes: youth organizations, organizations of different fields with youth target group, youth lead organizations, student associations and student unions and cultural and artistic youth associations.

6.3 Preventing early leaving from education and training (ELET)

National strategy

Republic of Macedonia has no comprehensive Strategy for preventing early leaving from education and training. Separate policies and measures about ELET can be found in many different strategic documents.

⁽⁵⁷⁾ <http://www.sonk.org.mk/documents/statut%20na%20sonk-preraboten.pdf>

Formal education: main policy measures on ELET

Strategy for Vocational Education and Training in a Lifelong Learning Context 2013-2020 and Action Plan ^[58], in the Chapter 4.1. VET in the function of strengthening social cohesion and social inclusion, recognizes that decreasing the number of early school leavers is an important measure for enhancing the skills of the population, increasing the employment rate and promoting social inclusion. It is noted that there has been a decrease in early leaving from 2002 with a rate of 30.1% down to 16.6% in 2011. But the decrease is not due to some specific measures or strategy undertaken to tackle early leaving but as an added value of the changes in the education system, the extension of the duration of compulsory primary and introduction to compulsory secondary education.

The Strategy foresees the following goals and measures to be implemented to prevent ELET:

A1: Strengthening the monitoring of secondary VET early leavers

- By 2015 introduce a system for monitoring VET students;
- By 2015 establishing school-based mechanisms and practices for detection of students under risk of leaving school early.

A3: Preventing early leaving

- By 2015 link social welfare to the obligation for regular attendance and completion of compulsory education;
- By 2014 strengthen scholarships to students from socially vulnerable groups;
- By 2015 introduce educational mediators as additional assistance in primary education to ensure Roma students stay at school and graduate and transition into secondary education;
- By 2015 introduce educational mediators as additional assistance in secondary VET to ensure Roma students stay at school and graduate and transition into higher education or the labor market.

In the *Strategy for the Roma in Republic of Macedonia 2014-2020*, under the strategic orientation – Increasing the level of education of the Roma community, there are a number of planned activities and projects to be undertaken by the Ministry of Education and Science that directly impact the early leaving from education of Roma students.

Secondary education:

Reduced criteria for enrolment of Roma students in public high schools

In the Open call for enrolment in public high schools, students of the Roma ethnic community may enrol in certain public high school if they have up to 10% less points than the number of points provided in the Open call in accordance with the relevant curricula and if they meet additional criteria for the knowledge exam and skills in the appropriate school.

Project for scholarships, mentoring and tutoring of Roma students

The Administration for Development and Promotion of Education in Languages of Members of Communities, for five years continuously is carrying out the project for scholarships, mentoring and tutoring of Roma students. The project takes place in three stages: i.e. scholarships, mentoring and tutoring.

Free books, transportation and accommodation in dormitories

The Government through the Ministry of Education and Science for several years is implementing the project for free books which is also followed with free transportation and accommodation in dormitories. This is ideal for Roma students to continue their education and to achieve solid results.

⁽⁵⁸⁾ http://www.seecel.hr/UserDocsImages/Documents/VET%20STRATEGY%20AND%20ACTION%20PLAN_EN.pdf

University education:

Quotas for enrolment of Roma students in the institutions of university education

This practice functions for years as an affirmative measure for easier access of the Roma students in the institutions of university education.

The *National strategy on alleviation of poverty and social exclusion in the Republic of Macedonia 2010-2020* ^[59] covers a section of education that encompasses a number of goals and measures regarding ELET. Although its' definition does not mention ELET specifically, the following measures impact ELET:

Strategic goal:

Provide overall scope of pupils in elementary education, provide overall scope of students in secondary education, raise literacy level of the population, raise educational level of the population and adapt the educational system to the labor market needs.

Result 2: All students enter secondary school immediately after finishing elementary school and finish secondary school

General measures:

- Extend and restructure the network of secondary schools in a way to make it adjusted to the needs at local level, which will offer the students a better possibilities for selecting secondary school which will be closer to their place of living;
- Provide mechanism to monitor the number of children who entered secondary school after finishing elementary school;
- Provide compatible curricula and programs from among the various types of secondary school in order to provide for the horizontal mobility of the students.

Special measures for children from vulnerable categories:

- Award cash benefits to socially endangered families under the condition that they meet certain criteria related to their children's education (conditional cash transfer);
- Provide additional financial and staff benefits for secondary school with a large number of Roma children;
- Introduce compulsory additional instructions during the whole school year for all students who have problems learning the instruction material;
- Involve the non-government organizations in the coordination of their activities for raising the need of the Roma, Albanian and Turkish parents to educate their children.

Result 3: Reduced percent of illiterate population and increase real literacy by training students to read and write with comprehension

General measures:

- Larger scope and reduced rate of early school leave by girls, particularly in rural areas and certain ethnic communities;

Result 4: Increased percent of finished secondary school children who enter university and acquire a university degree

General measures:

- Undertake all previously elaborated measures to increase the number of enrolled children in secondary education;
- Provide financial support (scholarships, free-of-charge accommodation in student's dormitories etc.) for graduated secondary school students from socially endangered families who have achieved high results and want to continue to university.

⁽⁵⁹⁾ <http://mtsp.gov.mk/WBStorage/Files/strategy.pdf>

Addressing ELET through non-formal and informal learning and quality youth work

The *Law on adult education* ^[60] is another principle document that addresses ELET in the way that allows students who have already left education to finish it as adults. In article 4 of the Law, the goals and tasks of adult education are explained as follows:

The aim of adult education is to insure a possibility for acquiring an adequate education level for everyone and all age groups and to enable them to acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes in accordance with the requirements of the society and labor market.

Tasks of adult education:

- Finishing at least mandatory education;
- Qualification for employment of adults who did not finished first level of education;
- Prequalification and finishing qualification and training of employed and unemployed individuals;
- Enabling education and acquiring knowledge and skills that fit the personal abilities and age of the individuals, and

Acquiring basic skills and competencies as basics for lifelong learning.

Cross-sector coordination and monitoring of ELET interventions

The strategies and programs of the national institutions foresee cross sector cooperation in implementation of various measures and activities.

6.4 Validation of non-formal and informal learning

Arrangements for the validation of non-formal and informal learning

Although Republic of Macedonia currently does not have a developed system for validation of non-formal and informal learning, the need of such system is recognized. A number of official documents include provisions outlining the importance of its existence and planned activates for its development. Unlike VNFL, there is no provision in any official document for the recognition of prior learning or achievement in assessments for qualifications of the formal education system and the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

The document produced by the Ministry of Education and Science and Adult Education Centre – *Roadmap for implementing a system for validation of non-formal and informal learning in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, from 2016* ^[61], states the following: *It is increasingly widely recognized in the country that the validation of learning outcomes - knowledge, skills and competences - acquired through non-formal and informal learning can play an important role in enhancing employability and mobility, as well as increasing motivation for lifelong learning.*

The Roadmap sets out a pathway for the country to develop and implement VNFIL policy and approaches that enable achievements in non-formal education and informal learning to be recognized, valued by users and certificated within the context of the NQF. It also provides a description of the concrete steps that the country will make towards meeting the 2018 target.

A specific Law on Adult Education was enacted in 2008 with the aim of providing for the first time a more comprehensive legal framework to support lifelong learning. Under the provisions of the Law, a Council for Adult Education was established to provide overall strategic direction for development of adult education and a specialized institution, the Adult Education Centre – began its work in 2008. The Center is expected to play a key role in developing and implementing the country's VNFIL system.

^[60] http://www.mon.gov.mk/images/documents/zakoni/zakon_za_obrazovanie_na_vozrasni-26-02-2016.pdf

^[61] http://mrk.mk/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/VNFIL-Roadmap_angl-1.pdf

The leading roles of the Ministry of Education and Science, responsible for the overall education system (general, vocational and higher education) and of the Adult Education Centre, established as a catalyst for development and quality assurance of adult education and training in the country, should be noted. These are the institutions that should lead, manage and support VNFIL development and implementation. The Ministry of Education and Science should have overall policy responsibility for VNFIL whilst the Adult Education Center will provide overall management of the development and implementation of the VNFIL system. VNFIL Steering Committee, through a special sub-group should steer the wider stakeholder involvement in developing and implementing VNFIL.

VNFIL processes and procedures will involve four stages:

- Identification of the individual's competences (i.e. learning outcomes) acquired through non-formal and informal learning;
- Documentation of the individual's learning outcomes from non-formal and informal learning together with supporting evidence;
- Assessment of the individual's learning outcomes through an evaluation of the evidence presented, and
- Certification confirming the individual's achievement of the learning outcomes in question.

Different institutions will need to be involved at each stage of the process.

The integrity of the VNFIL system will depend on the rigor of the quality assurance arrangements that underpin it. Without rigorous quality assurance the certificates issued will have limited value and acceptability. In general the normal quality assurance arrangements for the assessment and awarding of qualifications should apply.

The main phases in the VNFIL development path will include:

- Initial development of VNFIL procedures (including add-ons to existing verification procedures, credit system, implementation and assessment guidelines), to be implemented through appropriate partners institutions and monitored by the VNFIL Steering Committee supported by the Adult Education Center;
- Pilot projects focused on introducing it first in selected priority areas. The initially identified priority areas for the first phase of introduction are:
 - a. Requalification for the long-term unemployed (i.e. VNFIL towards selected vocational qualifications);
 - b. Qualifications for those with uncompleted basic education (i.e. VNFIL towards primary education qualifications and/or basic skills qualifications);
 - c. Continuing professional development in selected areas.
- Phased implementation. This will include:
 - a. Finalization and revision of the VNFIL procedures and arrangements based on conclusions of the evaluation of the pilot projects, followed by national consultation of the proposed arrangements;
 - b. System-wide roll-out supported by large-scale capacity building, implementation of guidance and support networks and a nationwide publicity and marketing campaign, and
 - c. Monitoring, progress review and continued improvement over time.

Provisions on the development of VNFIL can be found in the current policy and legal framework formulated in different laws and strategies. The main legal and strategic documents containing references to VNFIL are presented in the List below, showing that the country has opened-up to the concept of VNFIL and its specificities.

Overview of the legal and strategic documents containing references to VNFIL

Law on Adult Education (2008)

The Law arranges the organization, structure, financing and management of the adult education system as a part of a unified educational system of the Republic of Macedonia.

Article 23 of the Law states that adults can demonstrate the knowledge, skills and abilities they have acquired, regardless of the way this acquisition is done, by passing exams. The exams are organized and delivered by the adult education provider which delivers the program for gaining knowledge, skills and abilities, except the State Matura exam, School Matura exam and the Final exam in the secondary education.

Law on National Qualifications Framework (NQF) (2013)

Article 3 of the Law on NQF states that one of the principles of the NQF is building a system for validation of non-formal and informal learning. Among the goals of the NQF, the Law stipulates: "To indicate the transfer and progression (horizontally and vertically) through and within all types of education and training (formal, non-formal and informal)".

Adult Education Strategy (2010)

One of the activities for realization of the strategic goals of the Strategy is development of system for recognition of knowledge, skills and competences.

Strategy for Development of Vocational Education and Training in a Lifelong Learning Context 2013-2020 (2013)

The VET strategy is structured in 4 key priorities, in which development of VNFIL finds a visible place.

- Under the first priority (VET in the function of strengthening social cohesion and social inclusion): objective A7 focuses on "Establishing a system for VNFIL". Key milestones: by 2015 (feasibility and options of a VNFIL system); by 2018 (key mechanisms and procedures in place) and by 2020 (generalization of implementation).
- Under the second priority (Attractive VET), the Strategy emphasizes the importance of VNFIL, in particular in objective B2: "Building diversified and flexible pathways for learning and professional guidance".

Information and guidance

Quality assurance

6.5 Cross-border learning mobility

Policy framework

Single public institution responsible for cross-border learning mobility in Republic of Macedonia is the *National Agency for European Educational Programs and Mobility*, established by Law adopted by the Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia in 2007.

The aim of the National Agency for European Educational Programs and Mobility is to promote and implement the European educational programs into the Republic of Macedonia.

Program beneficiaries are: learners, students, teachers, professors, educators and other personnel engaged in any stage of educational process, enterprises and other legal bodies including commercial entities, chambers of commerce and other associations of legal bodies in the field of industry, research centers and bodies, as well as citizen associations and foundations. ^[62]

⁽⁶²⁾ <http://www.na.org.mk/index.php/en/en-national-agency.html>

The Law for establishing the National Agency for European Educational Programs and Mobility ^[63] (2007) states the importance of the programs in the way of contributing to developing a community based on knowledge, creating better jobs and improving social cohesion, promotes lifelong learning, improves creativity, competency and the rise of an enterprising spirit, promotes language diversity, contributes in acquiring new skills, qualifications and knowledge in young people through informal learning etc.

The Law also describes the Programs implemented by the National Agency:

Program for Lifelong learning 2007-2013 – This program consists of the following sub-programs:

- Comenius – responds to the needs for teaching and learning of preschools, primary and secondary education and connected institutions;
- Erasmus - responds to the needs for teaching and learning of higher education and vocational education and trainings on tertiary level, irrespective of their duration, doctoral studies and institutions implementing them;
- Leonardo De Vinci - responds to the needs for teaching and learning of vocational education and training in some other level other than tertiary and connected institutions;
- Grundtvig - responds to the needs for teaching and learning for adult education and institutions implementing it, and
- Jean Monnet – allocation of grants for support of certain institutions dealing with questions of European integration as well as other European institutions and associations in the area of education and training

Program Youth in action 2007-2013 ^[64] – activity for developing cooperation amongst youth

The European programs described in the Law, “Lifelong learning” and “Youth in action” were implemented in the period 2008-2013. Since 2014 the activities of this programs are transferred in the new Program – Erasmus+ that unites all EU programs for education, training, youth and sport for the period 2014-2020.

Strategy for Adult education 2010-2015 is another official document that recognizes the importance of learners mobility. The first two strategic goals outlined in the strategy directly refer to education mobility:

- Strengthening the system of adult education through development of informational-statistic system for monitoring education mobility of adults, and
- Creating conditions for lifelong learning and mobility to become reality

Main cross-border mobility programmes for students in formal education

Erasmus+ program encompasses European educational programs in Macedonia, implemented by the National Agency for European Educational Programs and Mobility. Under the key action 1, Erasmus+ Program supports mobility of individuals:

- *Mobility of learners and staff*: opportunities for students, trainees, young people and volunteers, as well as for professors, teachers, trainers, youth workers, staff of education institutions and civil society organizations to undertake a learning and/or professional experience in another country;
- *Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees*: high-level integrated international study programs delivered by consortia of higher education institutions that award full degree scholarships to the best master students worldwide;

Mobility projects in the field of education, training and youth

The following types of mobility projects are supported under Key Action 1 of the Erasmus+ Program:

⁽⁶³⁾ <http://www.mon.gov.mk/images/documents/zakoni/zakon-za-osnovanje-nacionalna-2015.pdf>

⁽⁶⁴⁾ <http://www.mon.gov.mk/images/documents/zakoni/zakon-za-osnovanje-nacionalna-2015.pdf>

In the field of Education and Training:

Mobility project for higher education students and staff:

Student mobility:

- A study period abroad at a partner higher education institution (HEI);
- A traineeship (work placement) abroad in an enterprise or any other relevant workplace;
- Duration of project:
 - a. mobility between Program Countries: 16 or 24 months;
 - b. mobility between Program and Partner Countries: 16 or 26 months.
- Eligible participants:
 - a. students registered in a HEI and enrolled in studies leading to a recognized degree or another recognized tertiary level qualification (up to and including the level of doctorate). In case of mobility for studies, the student must be enrolled at least in the second year of higher education studies. For traineeships, this condition does not apply.
 - b. Recent higher education graduates may participate in a traineeship. Recent graduates must be selected by their HEI during their last year of study, and must carry out and complete their traineeship abroad within one year of obtaining their graduation.

Mobility project for VET learners and staff:

Learners' mobility:

- A VET traineeship abroad for up to 12 months;
- Duration of project: 1 to 2 years. The applicant must choose the duration at application stage, based on the objective of the project and on the type of activities planned
- Eligible participants:
 - a. Apprentices or VET students (whose studies typically include work-based learning) resident in the country of the sending organization. Persons accompanying VET learners abroad, and
 - b. Recent graduates of a VET school or company (i.e. former apprentices) may also participate in the activity. Recent graduates must undertake their training placement abroad within one year of their graduation.

Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees (EMJMD) ^[65]

The Erasmus Mundus program is intended for students at master level, offering them full degree scholarships for their participation in one of this EMJMD programs. It is a high level integrated international study program of 60, 90 or 120 ECTS credits. The student scholarship is awarded exclusively for a full-time enrolment in one of the Master courses and will cover the entire duration of the EMJMD study program. Eligible participants are students at Master level who have obtained a first higher education degree or demonstrate a recognized equivalent level of learning according to national legislation and practices in the degree awarding countries. The EMJMD student scholarships will include student participation costs (including the tuition fees, full insurance coverage and any other mandatory costs related to student participation in the course), a contribution to student travel and installation cost and a subsistence allowance for the entire duration of the EMJMD study program.

CEEPUSIII- Central European Exchange Program for University Studies ^[66]

Republic of Macedonia is a signatory of the Agreement for promotion and cooperation in higher education through CEEPUSIII. The Program enables high education institutions to

⁽⁶⁵⁾ [\[1\]http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/sites/erasmusplus/files/files/resources/erasmus-plus-programme-guide_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/sites/erasmusplus/files/files/resources/erasmus-plus-programme-guide_en.pdf)

⁽⁶⁶⁾ <http://www.mon.gov.mk/index.php/konkursi/1999-ceepus-2>

participate as partners in 36 networks of different fields. In the frames of these networks, students from first, second and third degree, as well as professors, have the possibility to apply for scholarships for study stay abroad.

Fulbright educational exchange program ^[67]

Fulbright educational exchange program is a joint program of the U.S. Department of State and the Government of Macedonia. Grants are awarded for a period of one or two semesters (5 or 9 months) for post-doctoral applicants and include limited accident and sickness insurance and maintenance grants provided by the Department of State.

Promoting mobility in the context of non-formal learning, and of youth work

The Erasmus+ program entails a component in the field of youth, specifically designed for young people and youth workers. ^[68]

Mobility project for young people and youth workers:

Two types of projects can be supported under this Action:

- Mobility projects for young people and youth workers that can include Youth Exchanges, European Voluntary Service and/or Youth Workers activities, and
- Mobility projects for young people focusing on European Voluntary Service activities for experienced EVS Coordinating Organizations.

Mobility of young people:

- Youth Exchanges:

Youth Exchanges allow groups of young people from at least two different countries to meet and live together for up to 21 days. During a Youth Exchange, participants, supported by group leaders, jointly carry out a work program designed and prepared by them before the Exchange. The learning process in Youth Exchanges is triggered by methods of non-formal education.

- European Voluntary Service:

This activity allows young people aged 17-30 to express their personal commitment through unpaid and full-time voluntary service for up to 12 months in another country within or outside the European Union. Young people with fewer opportunities can receive additional support to enable their participation and would also be allowed to go on EVS for a shorter duration of time (from 2 weeks and up).

Quality assurance

The National Agency for European Educational Programs and Mobility has an ISO certificate ^[69] and Quality Assurance Policy issued in 2017. The certificate states that the Agency strives to ensure high and consistent quality in promoting and implementing European programs in the areas of education, training, youth and sport in Republic of Macedonia.

6.6 Social inclusion through education and training

Educational support

Education in Republic of Macedonia is a right to every child. The Law on elementary education stipulates:

Article 2

⁽⁶⁷⁾ <http://www.mon.gov.mk/index.php/konkursi/1981-2018-2021>

⁽⁶⁸⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/sites/erasmusplus/files/files/resources/erasmus-plus-programme-guide_en.pdf

⁽⁶⁹⁾ <http://www.na.org.mk/index.php/mk/politika-za-kvalitet.html>

Every child has a right of elementary education. Prohibited are discrimination on the basis of gender, race, skin color, national, social, political, religious, wealth and social status in exercising the rights of elementary education, appointed with this law.

The legislation in the Republic of Macedonia sets good ground for improving the social inclusion through education. Numerous processes have been started which are supposed to build strategies and establish mechanism for using the educational system in this direction.

The *National Strategy on Alleviation of Poverty and Social Exclusion in the Republic of Macedonia 2010-2020* ^[70] is a document which reflects the intention of the country for balancing the degree of inclusion and welfare in all social levels. One of the 14 areas included in the Strategy is education.

Some of the strategic goals, results and measures in the education area are the following:

Strategic goal:

Provide overall scope of pupils in elementary education, provide overall scope of students in secondary education, raise literacy level of the population, raise educational level of the population and adapt the educational system to the labor market needs.

Results:

- All students of relevant age are enrolled in elementary school and finish elementary school;
- Curricula and textbooks are adjusted to the needs of the children with specific needs;
- All students enter secondary school immediately after finishing elementary school and finish secondary school;
- Reduced percent of illiterate population and increase real literacy by training students to read and write with comprehension;
- Increased percent of finished secondary school children who enter university and acquire a university degree;
- Provided conditions for relating secondary education and adult education to the labor market, and
- Provided rights for all ethnic communities in an integrated education system in order to support the development of a coherent society.

Measures:

Special measures for children with impaired development

- Register the number of children with impaired development in the population census;
- Register children with impaired development by providing cooperation among municipalities, health and social institutions;
- Provide functional classification of children with impaired development (what they can do), rather than focus only on their abilities (what "impairment" they have), in order to be able to determine adequately the possibility for their inclusion in the regular instructions;
- Include children with impaired development in specialized classes and schools only when this is of the best interest of the child (and necessary for his/her overall development);
- Adapt infrastructure in regular elementary schools to the needs of the children with corporal disability, which include both internal and external interventions, and not only building accession ramps;
- Provide additional financial and staffing benefits for regular elementary school which enroll children with impaired development, and

⁽⁷⁰⁾ <http://mtsp.gov.mk/WBStorage/Files/strategy.pdf>

- Prepare special programs for elementary education of children age 11-12 who have not been included in elementary schools so that they do not wait until age 15 to be able to join adult education

Special measures for Roma children

- Provide financial resources for compulsory inclusion of Roma children and children of other socially endangered families in public pre-school institutions;
- Award cash assistance to socially endangered families under the condition that they meet certain criteria related to the education of their children (conditional cash transfers);
- Provide additional financial and staff benefits for elementary schools with a large number of Roma children;
- Increase enrolment quotas and provide university scholarships for Roma children for the teacher training college, particularly those who train into becoming elementary school teachers and instructors;
- Introduce compulsory additional instructions during the whole school year for all students encountering problems in learning the teaching material;
- Include non-government sector in activities for encouraging Roma parents to educate their children, with particular focus on Roma girls;
- Adjust methodology of teaching in the language for the needs of the Roma children whose mother tongue is Roma:
 - a. Provide multi-cultural approach in the textbooks and instruction materials by including contents of history, culture and tradition of the Roma which depict them in positive light;
- Provide the presence of pictures and people with development impediments in the textbooks and instruction materials;
- Train existing and future teachers to be able to adjust instruction to the needs of the children with impaired development (particularly special educational needs), of various social origin and diverse cultural affiliation and to be able to recognize prejudice manifested towards children with impaired development and Roma children in the school environment and fight against them;
- Provide continuous training for the teaching staff in order to raise awareness on gender and ethnic equality and eliminate gender and ethnic stereotypes and prejudices from the teaching process;
- Establish a resource center composed of professionals (at community level) to work with the children with impaired development who will cooperate with the teachers who work with children with specific educational needs in the regular classes;
- Introduce the system of mentor – teachers and pall- tutors in the work with the children with specific educational needs;
- Develop a monitoring system for the performance of the teachers in order to achieve improvement in the achievements of the children with specific educational needs but also prevent the possibility for expressing any prejudice by children who may be prone to it;
- Provide advantage in employment for Roma teachers in schools in which a high percent of the students are from the Roma community.

Special measures for children from vulnerable categories

- Adjust infrastructure in regular secondary schools to the needs of the children with corporal impairment which includes internal interventions, rather than only building an accession ramp;
- Extend the number of occupations offered in the special secondary schools for children with impaired development;
- Provide advantages in employment for children with impaired development after they finish secondary school;
- Award cash benefits to socially endangered families under the condition that they meet certain criteria related to their children's education (conditional cash transfer);

- Provide additional financial and staff benefits for secondary school with a large number of Roma children;
- Introduce compulsory additional instructions during the whole school year for all students who have problems learning the instruction material;
- Involve the non-government organizations in the coordination of their activities for raising the need of the Roma, Albanian and Turkish parents to educate their children.
- Eliminate gender and ethnic stereotypes in textbooks and instruction materials for elementary and secondary education and introduce contents for gender and ethnic equality;
- Provide financial support (scholarships, free-of-charge accommodation in students' dormitories etc.) for graduated secondary school students from socially endangered families who have achieved high results and want to continue to university;
- Adjust infrastructure at universities to meet the needs of the young people with corporal impairment;
- Adjust legislation in the areas of education with the provisions in the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Ministry of Environment;
- Undertake activities for reducing divisions on ethnic grounds at all levels of education including administration structures;
- Organize supplementary activities for the students for better understanding and learning about the language, culture, customs and raise awareness that the integrated education system is a key element in a coherent multi-ethnic society.

Another area included in the Strategy that deals with the question of social inclusion and equal rights through education is the area of equal opportunities for man and women. The strategy in this area outlines the following goals directly related to equal opportunities in education:

- Prevent gender based discrimination and violence in secondary education of the female population, rather typical for the rural areas and other smaller communities and among ethnic groups, and
- Insight into the conditions: preserve the legislation on collecting gender individual data, but also analyze the conditions for secondary education of the woman

Measure:

- Incorporate the gender concept in the education system and the child care system.

The Integral Strategy for Education and Action Plan for 2016-2020 ^[71] mentions the following inclusion policies implemented by the Ministry for Education and Science, for students with special needs:

- Produced individual curricula for children with special needs;
- Forming inclusive teams in secondary schools;
- Equipping the specializing personnel with pedagogues, psychologies and defectologists;
- Use of assistive technology tools and built accession ramps in schools

There are also newly produced curricula and programs adapted for students with damaged eyesight and hearing. With this measure the students with lighter disabilities are enabled to take adjusted "State Matura" testing after finishing fourth year of secondary education and continue to higher education in the country or abroad.

The *Law on Secondary Education* ^[72] includes a number of provisions regarding education for children with special needs. Provisions include: the existence of special curricula, formation of inclusive teams (consisting of pedagogue or schools' psychologist,

⁽⁷¹⁾ <http://mon.gov.mk/images/PRVA-Rabotna-Verzija-na-Strategija-za-obrazovanie-MK.pdf>

⁽⁷²⁾ http://www.mon.gov.mk/images/%D0%97%D0%B0%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%BD_%D0%B7%D0%B0_%D1%81%D1%80%D0%B5%D0%B4%D0%BD%D0%BE%D1%82%D0%BE_%D0%BE%D0%B1%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%B7%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%B8%D0%B507.pdf

teacher, parent or guardian of the student for developing individual education plans) and arranging, free of charge, everyday transport to school and back, as well as, for breaks and weekends (for students residing in dormitories). The age limit for enrollment in first year of secondary education, for students with special needs is extended to 25 years of age (for regular students it is 17).

The *National Youth Strategy 2016-2025* ^[73], in the section: Social integration of disadvantaged groups through education and by developing working and learning conditions, under objective 9: to achieve significant inclusion and integration in the education system of children and youth with special needs, foresees the following measures:

- Train existing teaching staff and professional departments and hiring additional staff where necessary;
- Cross-institutional cooperation and coordination and cooperation with CSOs;
- Analysing the current situation concerning the availability and application of assistive technologies;
- Needs analysis;
- Cooperation between institutions and CSOs in the implementation of projects;
- Staff training in the use of assistive technologies.

Objective 12, of the Strategy: to improve the availability of non-formal education for specific groups of children and youth, foresees the following measures regarding non-formal education:

- Establishing cooperation between CSOs and institutions;
- Needs analysis;
- Developing and implementing programmes;
- Opening education centres;
- Hiring appropriate staff

Roma population is one of the groups targeted with policies for social inclusion. Therefore there are a number of policies for social inclusion for Roma students through education and training included in official documents regarding Roma people.

Ministry of Labor and Social Policy in collaboration with the National Coordinator of the Decade and Strategy of Roma have developed – *Strategy for the Roma in Republic of Macedonia 2014-2020*.

This strategy focuses on several areas and the purpose of this Strategy is to improve the standard and quality of life of the Roma population in Macedonia. The education as an important segment and as a condition to achieve the objective of this strategy occupies a significant place in the same document.

A number of policies are introduced in the education sector to improve social inclusion of Roma children in education.

The Ministry of Education and Science in accordance with the National Strategy for Roma in the Open call for enrolment in public high schools, prescribed that students of the Roma ethnic community may enrol in certain public high school if they have up to 10% less points than the number of points provided in the Open call in accordance with the relevant curricula and if they meet additional criteria for the knowledge exam and skills in the appropriate school.

The Administration for Development of Education of the Languages of the Communities, for five years continuously is carrying out the project for scholarships, mentoring and tutoring of Roma students. The general goal of this project is through positive interventions to increase the success of Roma students from first, second, third and fourth year of all public and private high schools in the country. With this project, the

⁽⁷³⁾ http://www.ams.gov.mk/images/dokumenti/mladi/National_Youth_Strategy_2016-2025_eng.pdf

students' scholarships cover about 84 schools and 28 municipalities throughout Macedonia. The project takes place in three stages: i.e. scholarships, mentoring and tutoring

Quotas for enrolment of Roma students in the institutions for university education. This practice functions for years as an affirmative measure for easier access of the Roma students in the institutions of university education. During the academic year of 2010, for the first time the subject Romani language and culture is introduced as an elective subject at the Faculty of Philology in Skopje.

The specific strategic objectives and expected results in the area of education outlined in the Strategy are:

Secondary education

Specific strategic objective 6: To increase the transition from primary education to secondary education, to improve the performance and to significantly reduce the withdrawal of Roma students by 2020.

Expected results:

- All of the Roma students to enroll in high school immediately after finishing elementary school and to complete secondary education;
- Improved transition of Roma students in secondary education from one school year to another;
- Increasing the average success of the Roma high school students for at least one index point (score) by the end of the academic year 2019/2020, compared with the achievements of the 2012/13 academic year;
- Decrease of the withdrawal of Roma high school students by 10% by the end of the academic year 2019/2020, compared with the data from the 2012/13 academic year;
- By the end of the academic year 2019/2020, Roma parents to be involved in the councils of parents and/or school boards in at least 10 municipalities where a significant percentage of Roma population lives.

University education

Specific strategic objective 7: To increase the number of Roma university graduates by 2020.

Expected results:

- Increased enrolment of Roma students at the institutions of university education each academic year compared to the previous to a minimum of 40% in 2020, compared to the data of the academic year 2013/2014;
- Increased number of Roma students who graduate on time at the higher education institutions in the Republic Macedonia by 2020, to 50%, compared to the data of the academic year 2013/2014.

Specific strategic goal 8: To increase the number of Roma students enrolled at pedagogical faculties and other faculties that produce teaching staff.

Expected results:

- Increased number of Roma students enrolled at pedagogical faculties and other faculties that produce teaching staff for 50% in comparison to the situation in 2012/2013 academic year by the end of 2020.

Education for adults

Specific strategic objective 9: Completion of primary and secondary education by Roma adults that because of various reasons did not finish in time, in order to gain the opportunity for subsistence, personal development and other needs.

Expected results:

- At least 25% of the adult Roma population who for various reasons have not finished on time, to complete their education by the end of 2020.

Education for children with special needs

Specific strategic objective 10: Decreased number of Roma pupils enrolled in schools for children with special needs by 20% by 2020 year.

Expected results:

- The number of Roma pupils enrolled in schools for children with special needs decreased by at least 20% by the end of the academic year 2019/2020, compared with the data from the 2012/13 school year.

Social cohesion and equal opportunities

The *Law on prevention and protection against discrimination* [74] includes education in every provision regarding grounds for discrimination, application of the Law and definition of discrimination.

The *Law on equal opportunities for women and men* [75] also includes the area of education in provisions regarding the establishment of equal opportunities for women and men regulated by the Law and application of the Law (Article 3, (3) Discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment on the grounds of gender shall be prohibited in the public and private sector in the spheres of employment and labor, education, science and sports, social security, including the social protection, pension and disability insurance, health insurance)

The *Integral Strategy for Education and Action Plan for 2016-2020* [76] also sets a special priority for increasing the number of students and improving the inclusivity and interethnic integration in secondary education by expecting the following results:

- Physical conditions established for inclusion of children with physical disability;
- Administrative and informative base for ensuring inclusive education established, and
- Interaction among students of different teaching language groups improved

Regarding social cohesion and diminishing ethnic prejudice, as well as, getting to know the culture of the students from different ethnic groups, in some schools, joint activities are conducted with students from groups with different teaching languages.

The Administration for Development of Education of the Languages of the Communities in collaboration with the NGO National Roma Centrum from Kumanovo and other departments in the Ministry of Education and Science, in 2010 developed a *Handbook for protection and prevention from discrimination in the educational system Republic of Macedonia*. In general or the overall objective of this manual is to achieve cooperation and coordination between all institutions and individuals involved in the educational system in order to provide equal conditions and opportunities for quality education for all children regardless of religious, ethnic or any other basis and to establish a monitoring system that will allow uninterrupted and quality education for all children, through the cooperation and involvement of all stakeholders.

The *National Youth Strategy 2016-2025* [77], in the section: Social integration of disadvantaged groups through education and by developing working and learning conditions, under objective 10: to improve the support of children and youth who are neglected in terms of education and upbringing, foresees the following measures:

(74) https://www.ecoi.net/file_upload/1226_1317212111_fyrom-law-on-protection...

(75) <http://www.mtsp.gov.mk/WBStorage/Files/ZEM.pdf>

(76) <http://mon.gov.mk/images/PRVA-Rabotna-Verzija-na-Strategija-za-obrazovanie-MK.pdf>

(77) http://www.ams.gov.mk/images/dokumenti/mladi/National_Youth_Strategy_2016-2025_eng.pdf

- Analysing the current situation;
- Developing and implementing a programme for socially excluded children and youth;
- Monitoring and evaluating the programme for socially excluded children and youth;
- Analysing the current situation of children and youth whose age does not correspond with the patterns of the existing education system;
- Establishing inter-institutional cooperation;
- Developing and implementing a programme for so-called 'phantom' children;
- Monitoring and evaluating the programme for 'phantom' children

6.7 Skills for innovation

Innovation in formal education

Ministry of Education and Science with the support of World Bank in 2016 started implementing Skills Development and Innovation Support Project (SDISP). SDISP objective is to support innovation capacity in Macedonia, improve transparency of resource allocation and promote accountability in higher education and enhance the relevance of secondary technical vocational education.

The Project supports interventions which foster education and skills relevant to the job market, and enhance the innovation capacity and activity of firms in Macedonia. It also addresses key missing elements of the Macedonian innovation system and ailing aspects of the research sector that are likely to be vital for improving the competitiveness of the enterprise sector and Macedonia's longer term economic growth prospects. It will also help improve absorption of EU funds earmarked for innovation activities.

The Project's direct beneficiaries include students, teaching and management staff from technical vocational education and training institutions who would receive a new curriculum and practical training facilities, as well as training on management, planning, and process improvement capacity; students and staff of universities, research institutions and enterprises will benefit from:

- Implementation of quality assurance mechanisms and financing reform in higher education;
- Grants promoting R&D and innovation; and
- Technology commercialization, global know-how absorption, and industry - university collaboration

The Ministry for Education and Science marked the implementation of SDISP by implementing a simulative activity for connecting high schools with business community. It is a grant program for non-refundable funds awarded for financing projects of vocational high schools in Macedonia, in partnership with business companies.

The objective of the grant program is to improve practical skills and knowledge of students and create a quality personnel, ready for the labor market right after finishing high school or further education with solid vocational base.

The projects objectives are strengthening the cooperation between high schools and companies while improving the vocational education and skills for employability of the students. The project activities should include practical education in schools, organizing camps for technical training during summer breaks, courses for practical training in schools, practical trainings in the companies – right on the post, establishing school companies etc.

The Bureau for Education Development in the curriculum for Gymnasium secondary education, as part of the project activities includes three different subjects for first, second and third year called – Innovation and Entrepreneurship. The Innovation and Entrepreneurship subject (activity) is the only one from the list of proposed project activities for Gymnasium that is compulsory for students of the first three years. All of the other subjects (activities) are optional.

The teachers who teach Innovation and Entrepreneurship attend trainings organized by the Bureau in cooperation with non-public associations and organizations.

Fostering innovation through non-formal and informal learning and youth work

The Strategy and Action Plan for vocational education and training in the context of lifelong learning (2013-2020) [78]

The strategy and action plan for vocational education and training in the context of lifelong learning (2013-2020) includes the need of improving skills for innovation as a basis for further reforms.

The Strategy foresees a number of measures for reaching strategic goals that refer to developing and strengthening skills for innovation.

Goal B1 - Raising public awareness on the attractiveness and opportunities offered by VET

Measures:

- By 2016 conclude agreements for increasing the attractiveness of research and innovation through systematic and structured collaboration between university laboratories, new laboratories in VET schools and industry research centers;
- Between 2014 and 2020 continuously organize regional/national innovation competitions for VET students by occupational area.

Goal C2 - New skills through new pedagogy

Measures:

- From 2013 to 2020 continuously enhance innovativeness and entrepreneurial spirit through training of VET teachers on learning through research.

Corresponding to the abovementioned strategic goals the Action Plan includes the following activities:

- Increasing the attractiveness of research and innovation through agreements for systematic and structured collaboration between university laboratories, new laboratories in VET schools and industry research centers;
- Organization of regional/national innovation competitions for VET by occupational area;
- Enhancement of innovativeness and entrepreneurial spirit through training of VET teachers on learning through research.

6.8 Media literacy and safe use of new media

National strategy

Republic of Macedonia has no Strategy for Media literacy and safe use of new media at this time.

The Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services is responsible for development and promotion of media literacy and safe use of new media. In that direction in 2015, the Agency developed a document – *Program for Promoting Media Literacy in the Republic of Macedonia*. The document aims to provide directions for the development and promotion of media literacy in the Republic of Macedonia.

Media literacy entered media policy during the process of harmonization of media-related laws with the Audiovisual Media Services Directive. The Law on Audio and Audiovisual Media Services, which entered into force in early 2014, vested the Agency with a direct obligation to promote media literacy, cooperating with all the relevant stakeholders, and

⁽⁷⁸⁾ http://www.seecel.hr/UserDocsImages/Documents/VET%20STRATEGY%20AND%20ACTION%20PLAN_EN.pdf

to report on its activities in the annual work reports it submits to the Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia (Article 26).

The Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services first tackled the issue of media literacy while working on the current *Strategy for the Development of Broadcasting Activity, 2013-2017*. The *Strategy* contains a short assessment of scarce evidence of the characteristics of the context for media literacy development in the Republic of Macedonia. Namely, until that moment, the most active factor was civil society as most of the projects were conducted by citizen organizations and referred to the fields of education and safe usage of the Internet and the social networks. As for media-related education – there were certain efforts to introduce media literacy in the curricula through the mother tongue lessons in the primary schools and, partly, in the secondary schools.

The Program also mentions the education sector in the expected outputs part, under awareness-raising plan, expecting the following output:

- Collaboration with the educational sector in terms of providing materials for the lessons in media education

Concerning the safe use of new media, one of the Agency's responsibilities is protection of minors and that is all related to young people and safe use of new media.

The NGO sector in Macedonia is much more active in the area of media literacy. A number of researches have been conducted by citizen's organizations concerning media literacy. They all result in the conclusion that media literacy in Republic of Macedonia is relatively unknown category. Very little is done for its promotion and implementation despite all recommendations and resolutions from EU and Council of Europe. In 2013 the first modest steps were made in the media sector with the promulgation of the Law on audio and audiovisual services where for the first time the term media literacy is institutionally noted but without defining it.

In the education sector, there isn't a single document – Law, Strategy or Programme for development of education that incorporates media literacy.

Aside from research, NGO sector is also active in this area by organizing trainings for different target groups, producing handbooks for teachers on the subject, conducting promotional activities etc. The best approach to improve the media literacy in Macedonia should be a preparation of a comprehensive Strategy for Media Literacy as a systematic approach with continuous and coordinated activities and clear allocation of competences among institutions.

Media literacy and online safety through formal education

Promoting media literacy and online safety through non-formal and informal learning

Raising awareness about the risks posed by new media

6.9 Awareness-raising about non-formal and informal learning and quality youth work

Information providers / counselling structures

As part of the awareness-raising about non-formal and informal learning the Center for Lifelong learning organizes the manifestation "Days of lifelong learning" on regular basis since 2002. The manifestation encompasses activities like public debates, trainings, conferences and cultural events, with the aim to promote the concept of lifelong learning and raise the awareness of the citizens about its importance. "Days of lifelong learning" is also a national education campaign that aims at fostering the realization of the idea for lifelong learning.

In 2016 and 2017 the Agency for Youth and Sport partnered with the Coalition of Youth Organizations SEGA and the Youth Cultural Center from Bitola on two projects for

recognizing the youth work as a profession and developing standards for youth work as first step towards recognition of the youth work. During the projects time frame the organizations implemented various activities for promotion of youth work and series of research activities about the capacities of youth organizations and youth workers to deliver youth work. The projects involved youth workers, youth NGOs and state institutions such as the VET Center and the Center for Adult Education in joint discussions and debates for recognition of youth work. As final outcome, the Agency for Youth and Sport submitted an initiative for developing standards for the youth worker profession to the VET center.

Awareness raising initiatives

6.10 Current debates and reforms

With the election of the new Government in the Republic of Macedonia the education sector entered the reforms. External examination has been terminated as well as dispersed studies. In addition, the Cambridge program for high schools was postponed since there were not sufficient conditions to start the program in this school year.

Currently there is an ongoing process for reforming the Law on Secondary Education and the Law on Higher Education. Within the reforms in secondary education changes are expected in decreasing the number of classes and administrative obligation of the teachers. In addition there is a ready text for amending the Law in the field of students' organizing and participation in the decision making processes in the schools. In regard to the higher education, working groups are established who will develop amendments to the Law.

In regard to the children with special educational needs the Ministry adopted two new bylaws regulating the rights of this group of students.

7. Health and Well-Being

The two central institutions in the health care system are the Ministry of Health and the Health Insurance Fund. The Ministry of Health is responsible for health policymaking, organization of the health care system and the enforcement of health legislation, and the HIF is responsible for purchasing services from both public and private providers on behalf of users.

The Health Strategy of the Republic of Macedonia 2020 is the overarching strategy for improvement of health status of the population, including mental health, and sets out the vision for improvement of the health and of the health care system, which will be responsive to the needs of the population.

7.1 General context

Main trends in the health conditions of young people

If evidence points towards changes since the early 2000s in the health conditions (physical, emotional, mental and social well-being, including substance abuse and physical activity) of young people in the reporting country, authors should briefly outline the main trends. If there are regular national surveys assessing the state of health of young people, these and their main results should be mentioned here. International survey results can be mentioned also if they show a trend that is particularly striking and relevant for the reporting country.

Since the independence in 1991, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has made important progress during its transition from a socialist system to a market-based system, particularly in reforming the organization, financing and delivery of health care and establishing a mix of private and public providers. Although total health care

expenditure has risen in absolute terms in recent decades, it has consistently fallen as share of GDP, and high levels of private health expenditure remain. Despite this, the health of the population has improved over the last decades, with life expectancy and mortality rates for both adults and children reaching similar levels to those in ex-communist EU countries, though death rates caused by unhealthy behavior remain high.

However, general health indicators have shown an improving trend since 2005 – in particular mortality due to non-communicable diseases, which has caught up with the EU13 level [\(ii\)](#) in addition to improvement in life expectancy and infant mortality rates, reflecting continuous policy efforts. Although the country has averted the mortality crisis that many central and Eastern European countries experienced in the early 1990s [\(iii\)](#) with continuously decreasing mortality rates since 1995 for both sexes, it still lags behind EU averages on all health indicators, and prevalence of risk factors such as smoking and unhealthy diet is particularly high. This calls for better monitoring as well as health promotion and prevention. Inequalities in health status also remain with regard to marginalized groups, in particular the Roma population.

Data on health conditions of young people is not systematically collected, particularly on behavior related variables. National statistics is available by age groups in the Annual reports of National Public Health Institute, but aggregates data into 5 main conditions only. Data is not collected, monitored or analyzed – on the quality of life and on the expected lifespan in good health and the country do not report on indicators such as healthy life-years, health-adjusted life expectancy or disability-adjusted life expectancy to WHO or other relevant databases.

However, there are numerous studies done in the past that can provide an insight into health status of youth in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The latest behavioral study done in 2008 [\(iii\)](#) showed that students in Macedonia face a number of health problems related to behaviors, e.g. dietary behavior, tobacco use, use of alcohol, sexual behavior, violence and injury risk behavior. The survey also showed that such behaviors are not simply the actions of individuals, but take place in a social context, such as lack of education about prevention in schools. The survey highlights health issues that were known but insufficiently studied and acted upon, but has also brought other problems to light, such as mental health problems of adolescents requiring urgent attention, more prevention and more support efforts.

Several surveys in primary and secondary schools in RM have demonstrated alarming indications related to bad habits, especially alcohol and its overuse and daily use. Global Youth Tobacco Survey [\(iv\)](#) done in 2002, showed that the prevalence of smoking was 8.2% for the youths aged 13-15, 20% having started smoking before the age of 10. Other survey on 420 examined persons aged 13-16 in the Skopje region, showed that 21.2% of the examined had tried tobacco, 15.9% were still using it and only 5.2% of examined smokers consider they might quit smoking [\(v\)](#). In 2006, Global Health Professional Survey conducted among students enrolled in the last three years of the medical studies at the University in Skopje showed 40% smokers.

Similarly, Health Behavior in School-Aged Children (HBSC) Study conducted in 2002 on the sample of 4800 children aged 11, 13 and 15 nationwide shows 4.1%, 8.6% and 37.4% of boys aged 11, 13 and 15, respectively reported they had been smoking, while the figures for girls were 2.3%, 7.3% and 34.3% [\(vi\)](#)

The same study revealed alcohol use in 7.8%, 8.8% and 26.2% of boys aged 11, 13 and 15, respectively on a weekly basis and 37.4% of boys and 3.6% of girls aged 15 reported having sexual intercourse Tozija F, Kosevska E, Gjorgev D et al. Health of the nation of Republic of Macedonia. RIHP; 2008). A survey for HIV/AIDS prevalence and risk-behavior among vulnerable groups, conducted in 2005 [\(vii\)](#). included the youths aged 15-24 and examined their knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and practices related to HIV/AIDS and history to other risk behavior such as injecting illicit drugs.

The strategic assessment of policy, quality and access to contraception and abortion in Macedonia has revealed that the majority of young participants in the focus groups most

frequently used condom as a means of contraception while they were less knowledgeable and educated about the use of hormonal contraception with very poor knowledge about the usage of urgent contraception[viii]. In a study about the traffic injuries in children and youth it was shown that 49.4% of all injured pedestrians were children and youth aged 0-24, while mortality rate of traffic injuries was 3.1 in 2000[ix]. The standardized mortality rate of suicides in youths in Macedonia is among the lowest in Europe (4.34/10000), and it is even lower than in the neighboring countries[x].

Data from HBSC study has also described dietary behaviors of students, showing that 14% are at risk for becoming overweight and 1.5% actually overweight; male students (18%) are significantly more likely than female students (9.4%) to be at risk for becoming overweight. As for overall hygiene, 4% of students never or rarely used soap when washing their hands during the past 30 days. 31.3% of students said they had been seriously injured one or more times during the past 12 months, more male (37.3%) compared to female (24.9%). 10% students were bullied on one and more days during the past 30 days, the share being the same for male and female students.

8.6% of students seriously considered attempting suicide during the past 12 months, less male (6.8%) than female (10.5%). The prevalence of lifetime drug use (using drugs, such as marijuana, one or more times during their life) is 3.0%, significantly higher in male (3.9%) than female (2.0%); interesting is that none of the students had tried drugs before the age of 14.

HBSC study has explored physical activity of students, showing that 15.7% were physically active all 7 days during the past 7 days for a total of at least 60 minutes per day. Male students (18.3%) were significantly more physically active than female students (12.9%).

Regarding dental health, caries is one of the most widespread diseases among school children. There is a system for monitoring and registration of dental caries, but statistics are not harmonized with those of the EU and WHO, and so no official data exist. However, a cross-sectional study conducted in 2007 showed that decayed/missed/filled teeth among children at 12 years of age is 5.94, which is rather high compared with WHO recommendations for oral health (decayed/missed/filled teeth)[xi]. Based on the findings and similar studies, the country has enacted the National Strategy for prevention of oral health disease in children from 0 to 14 years for the period 2008-2018.

[i] Health in Transition, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, 2016. Available from http://www.euro.who.int/data/assets/pdf_file/0006/338955/Macedonia-HiT-web.pdf?ua=1, last accessed September 15

[ii] Nolte, McKee & Gilmore, 2004. Aging and health in the transition countries of Europe. Available from http://www.un.org/esa/population/meetings/Proceedings_EGM_Mex_2005/darozci.pdf, last accessed September 10, 2017

[iii] Global School Based Student Survey, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Available at http://www.who.int/chp/gshs/Macedonia_GSHS_2007_Report_English.pdf?ua=1, last accessed September 09, 2017

[iv] Report of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Macedonia, 2003)

[v] Malinska P. Socio-medical aspects of tobacco usage in adolescents. Doctoral thesis, Faculty of Medicine, Skopje

[vi] Spasovski M, Donev D, Arnikov A, Karadzinski J. Tobacco Control and Health Promotion Activities. In: Donev D, Pavlekovic G, Zaletel Kragelj L, editors. Health Promotion and Disease Prevention. PH-SEE-A Handbook for Teachers, Researching, Health Professionals and Decision Makers. Skopje; 2007. pp.596-606

[vii] Reports for monitoring of HIV prevalence and risk behavior in vulnerable groups in Republic of Macedonia. National Public Health Institute; 2006, 2007

[viii] Tozija F, editor. Strategic assessment of current policies, the quality and access to contraception and abortion in the Republic of Macedonia. Skopje: Ministry of Health, Republic Institute for Health Protection; 2008

[ix] Tozija F. Social-medical aspects of traffic accident traumatism in children and youth in the Republic of Macedonia. Skopje: Medical Faculty; 2002

[x] Tozija F, Gjorgjev D, Cicevalieva S. Report on violence and health in Macedonia and prevention guideline. Skopje: Ministry of Health; 2006

[xi] Report of the Ministry of Health, 2010

Main concepts

Health is defined in accordance with World Health Organisation definition as a “state of complete physical and mental wellbeing and not merely absence of disease or infirmity. It is considered to be influenced by many external factors such as environmental, social and economic factors, and by factors related to lifestyles and to other sectors in the society.

A **health system** definition fully complies with the World Health Organisation definition, as including all the actors and activities the primary purpose of which is to promote, improve or maintain the health of the citizens. It includes organised health services, i.e. the health care system, as only one of the many factors for maintaining good health, recovering from ill health, or making the life with chronic illness easier.

7.2 Administration and governance

Governance

The most important actors in the establishment, governance and operationalization of the health care system in the country are the Parliament, the Government, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Finance, the Health Insurance Fund, the Institute of Public Health, the State Sanitary and Health Inspectorate and the Agency for Medicines and Medical Devices. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia inherited a well-established health care system with good geographic distribution of resources and provision as well as financial accessibility. The long experience of health insurance coverage for nearly the whole population has paved the way for the development of a social health insurance (SHI) system after the collapse of the former Yugoslavia. Under the Law on Health Care, first adopted in 1991, the organization and operations of the health care system were re-established, based on the principles of solidarity, mutuality and citizens’ participation. It also sought to retain the positive features of the previous Yugoslav health system, including control of communicable diseases, strong preventive service delivery and access to free health services at the point of delivery.

The two central institutions in the health care system are the Ministry of Health and the HIF. The Ministry of Health is responsible for health policymaking, organization of the health care system and the enforcement of health legislation, although all policies go through a process of consultation and agreement with the relevant ministries and agencies within regulated legal procedures. The HIF is responsible for purchasing services from both public and private providers on behalf of users. Relations between the HIF and various providers at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels are regulated through performance-based contracts negotiated and signed for a predefined period of time.

The Agency of Youth and Sport is the main public authority at national level in charge of youths. It is governmental body with its own budget and responsibilities. Although it is not a ministry, it is an independent structure that is not under any other particular governmental ministry and responds directly to the Prime Minister. The Agency for Youth and Sport has three departments: the Department for Sports, the Department for Normative, Legal and Economic Issues, and the Department for Youth. Main tasks of the Youth Department are social development and social integration of youth via quality formal and non-formal education, economic prosperity of the youth via youth entrepreneurship, improving of quality of life, active participation of the youth in public life and in decision making processes on local and national level. Youth Department is divided into two sub-departments-International cooperation and Youth policy and

training. On local level only three municipalities established youth councils but there is a political will this process to continue and it should be regulated by the law in near future.

Cross-sectorial cooperation

Today, the Ministry of Health assumes the main coordinating role with other government agencies in committees where intersectoral consultation and policies affecting youth are needed. In July 2013, the Committee for Health and Environment was established, led by the Prime Minister and co-chaired by the Minister of Health, in addition to development of regulations and policies through intersectoral consultations and public hearings, as prescribed by law. Inclusive participatory processes were used in the development of strategic health documents, but are still not part of regular procedures, an example being the establishment of the Committee for Advancement of the Health System in 2009. The Ministry of Health led this participatory process, which resulted in the development of the Green book in health, which serves today as a roadmap for health sector reforms (health care system management, administering health care, financing, pharmaceutical care and patients' rights protection). The process is based on consensual agreement and acceptance among most stakeholders involved in the process, including citizens, professional associations, academia, civil society and private sector stakeholders

However, the whole of society approach that engages multiple stakeholders in public health policies across contexts is still not a regular practice, although highly recognized as an approach to provide a fair process in policy development and better results in policy implementation. Other initiatives for intersectorality are driven by international actors, such as WHO and the Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria discussion on the institutionalization of a National Health Account to provide the Ministry of Health with clear tracking of funds in specific health areas.

The Health2020 WHO European Policy Framework for Health and Wellbeing inspired a wide intersectoral process for developing a new National Health Policy 2020 and localizing the 2030 Agenda, involving both national level and community-level actors across sectors, local self-government and civil society.

The 10 regional Centres of Public Health have similar functions as the Institute of Public Health, but at the regional level, with the exception of research, education and policy advising roles. The Centre of Public Health's role is disease prevention and health promotion, based on earmarked funding from the state budget-funded programmes of the Ministry of Health. In addition, the law provides legal grounds for establishment of Public Health Councils at the local level, which have the mandate to address issues of public health importance for the local communities. Local Public Health Councils can be established by one or several municipalities. The law requires that one member of the Council is a representative from the Centre of Public Health in the area.

7.3 Sport, youth fitness and physical activity

National strategy(ies)

National Youth Strategy developed and endorsed in 2016 for the period 2016-2025 is based on the fundamental values of the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia, The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the European Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the European Convention on the Protection of Fundamental Human Freedoms and Rights, the European Social Charter, the European Cultural Convention, the UN, European Union and Council of Europe policies in the sphere of youth-related issues[i], It is complemented by biannual action plans, the latest being for the period 2016-2017 and includes activities for realization of the Strategy[ii].

In the thematic area sport, it envisages investigation of the existing conditions in which young people can practice sports and access to objects, with foreseen inclusion of 70% youth. Measures include preparation and analysis of the use of facilities for sport in the ownership of RM and ownership of local self-government, analysis of the program of the

national sports federations for realization of mass sports activities and a survey of students in secondary schools in relation to their attitudes, interests and need for sports. A program has been prepared for sport-recreational activities of young categories 13-18 (middle school students), 19-23 (embedded in high education and who did not continue) and 24-29 (young, unemployed and employed).

Aimed at comprehensive cooperation among all institutions in the country that contribute to sports and promotion of "Sport for All", necessary regulatory documents have been prepared for cooperation at the local level, with defined set of indicators for preparation of programs for inclusion and examination of needs through public debates, meetings of municipal councils and regional cooperation for capacity building.

Development of creative annual programs designed for young people 15-22 for regular sport support is also included in the strategy and include activities such as pilot program for work in the secondary school based on "every month-month of sport" principle, analysis of the possibility of recording the excess weight and bulimia in young people and introduction of a program for the detection of body weight in secondary school. To explore the possibility of interventions in higher education, a proposal for a change to the legal framework was prepared, in order to increase number of youth participating in sport federation activities. (as per the European sport charter)[iii]

However, as it is a case with many other strategies, absence of defined indicators and monitoring and evaluation process makes it impossible to track implementation of activities and measure progress[iv].

[i] National Youth Strategy 2015-2022. Available from http://www.youthpolicy.org/national/Macedonia_2005_National_Youth_Strategy.pdf. Accessed on September 19, 2017

[ii] Action plan for implementation of youth strategy 2016-2017, Available from http://ams.gov.mk/images/dokumenti/mladi/Akciski_plan_za_mladi_2016_2017.pdf. Accessed on September 10, 2017

[iii] The European Sport Charter. Available from http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/epas/resources/charter_en.asp. Accessed on September 10, 2017

[iv] Reviews of youth policies in Southern and Eastern Europe and Caucasus. Available from http://www.youthpolicy.org/national/Macedonia_2011_Youth_Policy_Review.pdf. Accessed September 10, 2017

Promoting and supporting sport and physical activity among young people

There are several actions to promote physical activity and fitness in young people, such as:

The day of the sport under the sponsorship of the Agency for Youth and Sports in cooperation with sports federations to promote their own activities in which they will have the opportunity to become their members;

School sport federations through the organization of the Olympics for primary and secondary schools. Macedonian school sport federation organizes the zoning, regional and state championships in the school districts organize more activities, manifestations of mass character within the framework of the school, such as: mountaineering, camping, cycling, walking to some interesting places near the city and the like. That's all part of the activities that can be realized with the participation of a larger number of students;

There are organized and ad hoc forms of physical activity. Many sport fields and facilities can be used in leisure time by all that are interested in practicing some sport activity, even in the evening (fitness clubs, sport clubs, clubs for motoric skills development, clubs for martial arts etc);

The role of sport as an activity supporting teamwork, intercultural learning, fair play and responsibility;

Equal access to sport and physical activity for everyone;

The right to participate in sport activity is available to each citizen, regardless of the gender, age, socio-economic status, religion or physical abilities. The right to sport activities is granted to all categories, including persons with physical or mental disability;

Grassroot sport activities are one of the most important segments for successful development of an individual, regardless if it is individual or team activity. The best example is OPEN FUN Football SCHOOLS that allows children to get involved and be trained to play football, available in the country, as well as other post-conflict regions as a tool for non-violent communication in the society.

Physical education in schools

In primary schools, the time for physical and medical education is three-hour time-lag (progress in relation to the previous two hours). Each program and plan is based on expressed needs and interests of the students. There is a possibility for establishment of sports clubs within the school itself.

In secondary schools, physical and health education is represented by 2 + 1 (2 hours of physical + 1 hour sports activity). In the part of the secondary school there are also fitness clubs that students can use, including compulsory elective programs for music and fine arts. Sports and sports activities are defined in curricula with elective character. Sports and sports activities are aimed to allow students to express their skills and competences in the field of fitness, swimming, hiking, skiing, cycling, table tennis, sports day etc.[\[i\]](#).

In the four-year secondary vocational education, sports education and sports activities are mandatory elective subject aimed to satisfy the needs of the students for securing and applying the acquired psychomotor knowledge of basic education in the field of sports in the function of maintaining and improving health, physical and working abilities[\[ii\]](#).

The purpose of sport and sports activities in the second year is to acquire habits for regular sports. The volleyball is listed as a dominant discipline, to be in the function of an active holiday. The other disciplines are athletics, gymnastics, fitness, basketball, tennis, dancing, sports games, swimming and hiking activities[\[iii\]](#).

Sports and sports activities as a mandatory elective subject for secondary vocational education are represented in the third year (number of hours - 2 hours per week, 72 hours per year). Disciplines include are athletics, gymnastics, dancing, sports games, swimming, hiking activities, winter sports and martial arts[\[iv\]](#). From the activities in the fourth year, secondary vocational education is represented with athletics, gymnastics, aerobics, fitness, rhythmic sports gymnastics, acrobatics, corrective-compensatory exercises, sports games, swim sports and activities, rowing, mountain activities, dancing, winter sports[\[v\]](#),

In the curricula of the sports gymnasium, physical activity is represented by 4 sports: football, basketball, handball and tennis. In the first year, it includes development of psychomotorical skills, the theoretical basis of all sports and training of various sports (the goal of all trainings is to improve the physical abilities, acquire new meanings and skills from the various sports for the purpose of achieving high sports results.

The recommended time and its recent trends (in case there have been changes relatively recently). Authors may wish to express the recommended minimum compulsory taught time in weekly teaching hours, and as a proportion of the total taught time;

Programs for physical and health education for nine-year elementary education are represented as 3 times a week or 108 hours a year.

In gymnasium education sport and sports activities for the third and the fourth year are 3 hours per week, and for the first and second 2 classes and 1 for project tasks.

In vocational schools, sports education and sports activities as mandatory elective subject are 2 hours per week and 72 hours per year

In the sport gymnasium, the first year include development of psychomotoric skills with 72 classes and theoretical basics of different sports with 28 classes. Practical training-include 650 classes per year. General and specific physical preparation includes 150 classes, development of technical-tactical skills in attack – 250 classes, development of technical-tactical assault in defense – 250 classes and 34 classes for psychological preparation.

Pedagogical tools and support provided to teachers responsible for physical education, including specific training programmes, web tools, etc.

Planning and preparation of the fund of teaching hours. She is acquainted with the pupils, she is acquainted with their motives for dealing with sports activities (often with e-proclams for sports project activity and they want to achieve),

Top-level guidelines, recommendations or large-scale initiatives on the inclusion of physical activities outside the curriculum but within the school day (e.g. in school breaks);

Top-level guidelines, recommendations or large-scale initiatives on extracurricular sports activities in schools.

[i] Bureau for Development of Education. Available from <http://bro.gov.mk/docs/gimnazisko/Proektni%20aktivnosti/Sportski%20proektni%20aktivnosti.pdf> Accessed on September 10, 2017

[ii] Bureau for development of Education. http://bro.gov.mk/docs/srednostrucno/nastavni-programi/I-godina/SPORT_I_SPORTSKI_AKTIVNOSTI_1.pdf. Accessed September 10, 2017

[iii] Bureau for Development of Education. Available from http://bro.gov.mk/docs/srednostrucno/nastavni-programi/II-godina/sport_i_sportski_aktivnosti.pdf . Accessed September 10, 2017

[iv] Bureau for Development of Education. Available from http://bro.gov.mk/docs/srednostrucno/nastavni-programi/III-godina/sport_i_sportski_aktivnosti-III.pdf. Accessed Spetmber 10, 2017

[v] Bureau for development of education. Available from http://bro.gov.mk/docs/srednostrucno/nastavni-programi/IV-godina/sport_i_sportski_aktivnosti-IV.pdf. Accessed September 10, 2017

Collaboration and partnerships

The main stakeholders supporting the collaboration and formation of partnerships between schools are line ministries of health and education and science, within their mandates to regulate health and educational sectors. Relevant entities in sport include: Agency of youth and sport, Faculty of physical education, sport and health, Institute of Sport, Sport Federations, Units of local self-government, Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, Bureau for Development of Education, Institute of Public Health, primary and secondary schools, Federation for School Sport and non-governmental organizations.

Financial support is secured through the Agency for Youth and Sport annual budget, through block-donations to state institutions and a competitive process of publishing open calls for proposals for NGO sector.

7.4 Healthy lifestyles and healthy nutrition

National strategy(ies)

There is no separate strategy related to nutrition and healthy lifestyles, but the 2 issues are incorporated in Health Strategy 2020. The strategy defines special attention to be paid to the health education for school children, to contribute to better health for young people (target 4), considered as especially important for the adoption of healthy lifestyles, such as proper nutrition, sufficient physical exercise, prevention of addiction to tobacco, alcohol and psychoactive substances (target 12), and prevention of sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS and mental health problems. However, although the strategy also defines development of intersectoral cooperation between health and educational institutions, local authorities, media etc., no increased health promotion activities has been reported in the past. The latest Food and nutrition plan for the country is from year 2004^[i].

Based on previous research and behavioral studies, the Ministry of Health initiated preparation of the National Strategy on Sexual and Reproductive Health that was enacted in 2009 for the period 2010–2020. With financial support from the United Nations Children’s Emergency Fund and United Nations Population Fund, the Strategy was developed by an interdisciplinary team of representatives of the Ministry of Health and civil society organizations, and with contribution from other line ministries and agencies, including Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Local Self-Government, Agency for Youth and Sports, and the Health Insurance Fund. With regard to the low prevalence of HIV/AIDS in the country, the Ministry of Health initiated a process of building a coordinated national response to prevent a major HIV/AIDS epidemic in 2003. Through multistakeholder cooperation, the country received funding through the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis, amounting to nearly US\$ 21 million since 2003. This funding has been used to successfully contain any major outbreak of HIV/AIDS epidemics.

^[i] Ministry of Health. Food and nutrition action plan of the Republic of Macedonia. Skopje, April 2004

Encouraging healthy lifestyles and healthy nutrition for young people

Policy measures reported here should include wider actions than just providing information on healthy lifestyles (e.g. distribution of fruits in schools). Policies/programmes/projects/initiatives focusing solely on counselling and information campaigns should not be reported here, but under the sub-heading "Raising awareness on healthy lifestyles and on factors affecting the health and well-being of young people".

Health education and healthy lifestyles education in schools

In line with the Laws for primary, secondary and higher education^[i], health promotion is carried out in each educational institution, within close collaboration among Ministry of Education and Science and Ministry of Health. Health promotion is included in the teaching curricula, but there is no separate National Strategy for health promoting schools. National Bureau for Educational Development (BDE) is an entity under MES and is responsible for designing the school education curricula, monitoring and evaluation.

Health promotion and health education are the main priorities within the Ministry of Health policy, as one of the important subjects in the frame of the National "Health 2020 Strategy". National Institute for Public Health (IPH) with 10 Centers for Public Health (CPH) are the main institutions involved in planning, implementation, coordination and monitoring of health prevention programs for the whole population, including children and young people, in collaboration with the BDE’s regional offices and with the municipalities and schools.

School programs include variety of activities, such as:

- “Life skills” as a new subject, introduced in the primary schools with lectures for healthy lifestyle, prevention of HIV, STIs and drug addiction, reproductive health/pregnancy, smoking prevention, physical activity and healthy diet, violence in schools, oral health and hygiene etc.;
- Increased number of classes for the subject “Physical education”;
- Comprehensive health promotion materials distributed regularly among students;
- Active involvement of students in preparation of projects for health and
- Organization of workshops for teachers in terms of better promotion of health and health behavior;
- Training courses for teachers for implementation of the new educational curricula prepared in collaboration with Cambridge International Examinations
- Involvement of schools in governmental and international projects and campaigns for improvement of the relationship among pupils from different ethnical groups, etc
- Improvement the physical capacities of schools (new and renovated schools with new gyms, new equipment, new laboratories, ecological school yards, etc)

Main challenges for the nearest future are development of “Strategy for health promoting schools” with WHO and SHE support, increase of public financing for healthy lifestyle programs for adolescents and youth and development of a manual for the implementation of the whole school approach as it is developed in the Netherlands (for example).

[1] Ministry of Education and Science. Law on primary, secondary and higher education.

Peer-to-peer education approaches

Peer-to-peer education is not usual method used in education and is mainly implemented by NGOs when establishing activities at school. One example is NGO HERA who has trained a network of educators in sexual and reproductive health that now serve as peer educators in school. Peer education was also promoted by the HIV/AIDS prevention project funded by Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria with 20 peer educators trained in prevention, but there is no system for regular monitoring of activities beyond project closure.

Funding of such activities is largely donor based, making their monitoring and long-term evaluation almost impossible when the projects end.

The government directly funds public health activities from the annual central state budget allocation to the Ministry of Health. Although the number and structure of these programmes varies from year to year, they are intended to address various aspects of public health, prevention and health promotion benefiting the general population and targeting specific population groups. Being funded directly from the central budget, these programmes are intended for services provided to all citizens, regardless of their health insurance status, so contributing towards narrowing inequality gaps among various population groups. The programmes are prepared in November for the next calendar year, adopted by the government and proposed for adoption by the parliament together with the adoption of the central budget. Programmes are published in the Official Gazette and are publicly available to all citizens. However, the programmes’ financing typically is in the first line of budget cuts during central budget rebalancing, which jeopardizes the fulfilment of the full scope of planned activities and achievement of goals. In 2014, 21 national public health programmes were adopted with total planned funding of €66 million:

- Two of these programmes are the pillars of the public health system – the National Public Health programme and the “Health for All” programme. Both focus on health promotion and related activities such as environmental health risk assessment, occupational health and safety, surveillance of specific communicable diseases, health promotion and education.
- Four programmes focused on addressing mother, child and

adolescent health: immunization programme, programme for active health protection of mother and child health, programme for preventive systematic checkups of pupils and students, programme for subsidizing co-insurance for the services provided to mothers and infants up to 1 year of age. • Non-communicable diseases are the main focus of five programmes, specifically designed to address the major non-communicable diseases in the country: prevention of cardiovascular diseases, prevention and early detection of malignant diseases, diabetes prevention and control, mental health conditions and dialysis costs, and haemophilia therapy. • Communicable diseases are the focus of three programmes for prevention and control of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and brucellosis. Because of the low prevalence of all three diseases, these programmes are mainly focused on preventive activities and health education, with only a small part of the funding allocated to diagnosis and treatment costs. • Several programmes address the needs of population groups with special health conditions or experiencing financial deprivation. These programmes provide coverage of treatment costs for rare diseases not covered by their health insurance, health insurance costs for uninsured persons, and co-insurance costs for retired persons with incomes below the national average. In addition, one of the programmes provides funding for support services for persons with addictions. The implementation of these public health programmes has demonstrated very positive results in some areas. With regards to the improvement of mother and child health, significant progress has been achieved in relation to the main health indicators: infant mortality has been reduced to record low 7.5 per 1000 live births in 2011 compared with 31.6 per 1000 live births in 1990, although it has again increased to 10.2 per 1000 live births in 2013 (State Statistical Office, 2014; WHO Regional Office for Europe, 2016a).

Collaboration and partnerships

Raising awareness on healthy lifestyles and on factors affecting the health and well-being of young people

This section covers counselling as well as information campaigns in the strict sense. Wider policy measures involving actions other than just providing information (e.g. distribution of fruits in schools) should be reported under the sub-heading "Encouraging healthy lifestyles and healthy nutrition for young people". In case of overlaps, the appropriate cross-references should be provided.

In an absence of National health promotion strategy, there is no systematic way of counselling and information campaigns related to raising awareness on healthy lifestyles and factors affecting the health and well-being of young people. Awareness raising campaigns are organized usually on the designated day, mainly by NGO sector, in collaboration with line ministries (World Food Day, world AIDS day, etc.). Funding for such events comes from international donors mainly and organization largely depends on availability of funds that defines the scope and timeframe.

7.5 Mental health

National strategy(ies)

The Health Strategy of the Republic of Macedonia 2020 is the overarching strategy for improvement of health status of the population, including mental health, and sets out the vision for improvement of the health and of the health care system, which will be responsive to the needs of the population^[i]. The strategy is based on the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia which guarantees the right of every citizen to health care, the World Health Organisation's "Health for all in the 21st century" strategy for the European region, the Millennium Declaration of the United Nations, the public health policy of the EU, as well as on finished policies and strategies in various fields of health and health care (HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, mental health, alcohol, tobacco, drugs, food safety and nutrition, pharmaceuticals etc.). Mental health of the population is targeted in Target 6 - People's psychosocial well-being should be improved and better comprehensive services should be available to and accessible by people with mental health problems.

The National Mental Health Committee and National Coordinator for Mental Health, both appointed by the Minister of Health decree, provide advice to the Government on mental health policy, legislation and other regulatory documents and activities. Mental health policy developed in 2005^[ii] is based on 11 pillars and include activities for developing community mental health services, downsizing large mental health hospitals, developing mental health services in primary health care, capacity building for human resources, involvement of users and their families, advocacy and health promotion, human rights protection, equity in access to services, financing, quality improvement and establishment of monitoring system^[iii].

The Law on Mental Health developed and enacted in 2006 and amended in 2015 regulates the basic principles of mental health protection and promotion, in addition to the rights and responsibilities of persons with mental health conditions. Improvement of mental health of the general population, as well as improvement of services for persons with mental health problems are included in the Strategic plan of the Ministry of Health developed in 2012^[iv], while prevention and control of mental health problems are defined within National Strategy for prevention and control of non-communicable diseases (MoH, 2009). All these documents do not specifically address youth, but mental health of the general population. Specifically, mental health of youth is addressed only in the Program for active health care of mother and children, adopted in 2014, aimed at continuous improvement of the health status of children and women in reproductive period.

In terms of support for child and adolescent mental health, only 44% of all primary and secondary schools have either a part-time or full-time mental health professional (usually a psychologist). In addition, few primary and secondary schools have school-based activities to promote mental health and prevent mental disorders.

In all strategic documents, determination in social protection is for deinstitutionalization, towards community-oriented service delivery in line with the EU strategy and the recently adopted WHO European Mental Health Action Plan^[v]. Activities are being pursued accordingly; in cooperation with WHO and the Council of Europe, aimed at development of socially oriented psychiatry and setting up more mental health centers in the community, as per identified local needs. A World Bank loan was used to perform reconstruction works on the psychiatric hospitals in Skopje and Negorci.

Health care for persons with mental health problems is provided at 3 levels of health care, the primary health care physician being the first point of entry that recognizes the problem and refers patients to higher levels of care. Secondary health care is provided through neuropsychiatry specialist-consultative outpatients services in Health Centers, in addition to Institutes for Children and Youth located in the cities of Skopje and Bitola. Inpatient secondary care is provided by neuropsychiatry departments within General Hospitals, while most severe cases are treated at tertiary level in psychiatric hospitals. Additional tertiary care is provided by University Clinic of Psychiatry.

Monitoring of implementation of Law on Mental Health and Strategic plan are responsibility of National Mental Health Committee and National Coordinator for Mental Health, both appointed by Minister of Health. Monitoring is done through a set of defined indicators, however, not completely and on regular basis. Certain improvements can be expected from the introduction of National electronic recording and reporting system "Moj termin" ("My Appointment") in 2016, but its long-term effects are to be seen in the following years.

The Law on Mental Health enacted in 2006 stipulates the importance of mental health in the community and provides legal grounds for establishing a Committee for Mental Health in each unit of local self-government, enabling close monitoring of the implementation and protection of the rights of the persons with mental conditions. However, only few municipalities have established such committees and their work is not publicized or widely disseminated to the public. For many years, the country has had an annual public health programme for mental health that mainly comprises providing

education to the population, and adolescents in particular, as well as counselling persons with severe mental health conditions including suicidal intentions among the young.

Data in the “Mental health atlas – country profile 2014”^[vi] shows that availability and status of mental health reporting in the country is weak, indicating that mental health data is compiled only in the general health statistics. Data for some core mental health indicators is available, including those related to implementation of Law on Mental Health and workforce availability. However, there is considerably lower quality or complete absence of indicators, such as spending on mental health, social support for persons with mental conditions, service coverage and continuity of care for persons with severe mental health disorders. The number of NGOs in the country with operations in individual assistance activities such as counselling, housing or support groups is also unknown.

[i] Health Strategy of the Republic of Macedonia, 2020 - Safe, efficient and just health care system. Available from

http://www.nationalplanningcycles.org/sites/default/files/planning_cycle_repository/the_former_yugoslav_republic_of_macedonia/health_strategy_2020_eng.pdf. Accessed September 10, 2017

[ii] Mental Health Law. Official Gazette of RM 71/2006, Official Gazette of RM 150/2015

[iii] World Health Organisation (WHO) & Ministry of Health (2009). WHO-AIMS report of mental health system in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Copenhagen: WHO. Accessed from http://www.who.int/mental_health/macedonia_who_aims_report.pdf

[iv] Ministry of Health (2012). Strategic plan of the Ministry of Health. Skopje: Ministry of Health. Available from: http://mz.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads2013/01/strateski_plan2012-14.pdf

[v] WHO the European mental health action plan. Available from <http://www.euro.who.int/en/publications/abstracts/european-mental-health-action-plan-20132020-the>. Accessed September 10, 2017

[vi] Mental Health Atlas. Available from http://www.who.int/mental_health/evidence/atlas/mental_health_atlas_2014/en/, accessed September 10, 2017

Improving the mental health of young people

Mental health of young people is embedded in existing strategic documents of Ministry of Health (Health Strategy 2020, Mental health policy, 2005 and Law on Mental health, 2006). However, programs for mental health of youth are scarce, in addition to being neither sufficient, nor comprehensive. Community health services for children and youth are still underdeveloped, there is a lack of professional staff particularly in schools, as well as lack of child and adolescent psychiatrists, child and adolescent psychologists and social workers. The most important challenge at present is introduction of mental health preventive programs for youth in schools, as an opportunity to support young people prior to onset or at the early stage of mental health problems. This requires involving youth in all stages of designing such programs (design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation) and has specific advantage over programs with individual focus. Mental health prevention in schools is of particular importance, facilitating the process of further professional orientation and psychological adaptation of the student to the workplace activities.

7.6 Mechanisms of early detection and signposting of young people facing health risks

Policy framework

Signposting of young people at risk is envisaged in all strategic documents listed in previous sections (Health strategy 2020, Mental health policy, 2005 and Law on Mental health, 2006). However, in practice the institutional treatment is prevailing in the mental health system. In recent years, five community centres for mental health have been established in Skopje, Prilep, Tetovo, Gevgelija and Strumica, which provide day

treatment, ambulatory care, home care and psychosocial rehabilitation in the community. The most commonly treated patients are those that have been on a long-term psychiatric treatment in an institution, as well as those that need services in the area of mental health.

Primary health care services are at the moment not well prepared to cope with patients with mental health problems. There isn't any sufficiently developed network of services for counselling and treatment of children and adolescents with such problems either.

Many documents, including Health Strategy 2020, recognize that health systems system performs well in some areas (immunisation and antenatal care) and less well in others (for example non-rational prescribing, high referral rates, lack of co-ordination between various treatments, and prevailing medicamentous treatment of the patients with mental health problems without paying sufficient attention to the psychosocial dimensions of the treatment). Too many patients are being seen by emergency care services or by secondary and even tertiary level physicians that could have been treated well at primary care level if the conditions there would have been better, or if gate keeping had been respected better.

Prospects are seen in the Health strategy 2020 that envisage paying special attention to the health education for school children, expected to contribute to better health for young people (target 4). This is especially important for the adoption of healthy lifestyles, such as proper nutrition, sufficient physical exercise, prevention of addiction to tobacco, alcohol and psychoactive substances (target 12), and prevention of sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS and mental health problems. To this end, intersectoral cooperation between health and educational institutions, local authorities, media etc. are still underdeveloped, with scarce health promotion activities. Non-institutional forms of health care for people with mental health problems are still absent and the process of deinstitutionalisation of the treatment of these persons does not offer promised new possibilities for treating them - community mental health centres.

Stakeholders

The main stakeholders for designating young people at risk are Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and Science, Agency for Youth and Sport and established bodies within the institutions, such as National Mental Health Committee and National coordinator for mental health and health institutions dealing with youth mental health problems.

Ministry of Health is the principle entity responsible for monitoring of implementation of Law on Mental Health, Strategy 2020 and Mental health strategy, through oversight of activities implementation. Ministry of education and Science oversees activities that are performed in primary and secondary school and implementation of designed programs.

There are no bodies established at local level, although such structures are defined in Health Strategy 2020 and should be main focus in the future, to allow for proper addressing of youth mental health issues through prevention and health promotion programs.

Guidance to stakeholders

Specific programs for sensitization of stakeholders are not in place, except work of some non-governmental organizations working on substance abuse (Healthy Options Project Skopje), sexual and reproductive health (Health, Education and Research Association – HERA, in collaboration with the institutions).

Target groups

Specific target group within the youth identified by the policy framework include Roma youth, identified as at risk due to the specifics of this population. There are no other at risk groups defined.

Funding

Financing of health in general, including mental health services has seen contrasting trends. Total health care expenditure has increased in absolute numbers (as measured as health expenditure per capita in US\$ purchasing power parity), but it has consistently fallen as a percentage of GDP since the late 1990s, from nearly 9% to 6.5% (which is slightly below the EU13 average of 6.8%). In addition to Ministry of Health as policy and decision maker, the main funding comes from Health Insurance Fund (HIF), an entity responsible for purchasing health services, including mental health. The main sources of funding for health insurance are contributions from salaries and transfers from other agencies for specific population groups (e.g. unemployed, retired persons, persons receiving social assistance), constituting 90% of total HIF revenues.

Financing of health institutions dealing with mental health comes from HIF, based on the type of the institution. Since 2009, hospitals have been paid using a combination of DRGs and conditional budgets (since 2011). Ambulatory services are reimbursed using global budgets and a capped fee-for-service payment system. Primary care providers are paid based on a mix of capitation and achievement of preventive health targets. However, there is no data on specific activities dedicated to mental health of youth.

Funding for NGO activities is donor based, making programs largely dependent on external funding and therefore lack of sustainability of established activities and their continuity and upgrade.

7.7 Making health facilities more youth friendly

Although stipulated in strategic documents, there are only few activities to make health facilities youth friendly. Partnerships have been developed within the country to tackle issues in adolescent sexual and reproductive health (SRH). No specialized services existed prior to this for young people; service orientation was exclusively biomedical, and the policy and legislative framework for young people's health was fragmented and inconsistent. Sexual and reproductive health clinic especially for young people was opened by the Ministry of Health and the NGO Health Education and Research Association (HERA) in partnership with international organizations in 2005, followed by a second in 2006. These are based on the "I want to know" model originally used with Roma youth. The centres offer free and confidential sexual health services to young people, and have had a high uptake. They are not, however, part of government funding mechanisms and lack political support, and current trends towards privatization of the health care system in the country are discouraging of attempts to create youth-focused services in primary care settings.

The "I want to know" youth centres are special because they provide a wide range of free and anonymous sexual and reproductive health services and counselling that are segregated from other health services at the clinics, enabling young people to feel welcome and safe. Young peer educators are involved inside and outside the clinics, organizing promotional and entertainment events and being involved in evaluation of services to ensure young people are equal partners in service delivery and the promotion of sexual and reproductive health.

However, the "I want to know" youth clinics are still not fully covered within the government health programme and budget. There appears to be a lack of political will to effectively implement adopted policies that acknowledge sexual and reproductive health issues among young people. Ongoing reforms and privatization of primary health care services are not seen to be in favor of introducing and/or integrating specific youth clinics in primary health care settings. New approaches are needed at central and local government levels to better address the sexual and reproductive health needs of young people and to ensure that the new reforms do not negatively influence accessibility to services through decreases in financial support and quality of care.

7.8 Current debates and reforms

Health Strategy 2020 was developed in the light of the new global paradigm of creating resilient communities and partnerships for health and wellbeing, through an open consultative process with all relevant stakeholders, including youth. The main aim of this participatory process was to involve every sector and segment of society through the use of off-line technical meetings and online exchange of ideas, to gather the expertise and evidence-based experience that largely informs policy-makers and decision-makers on the current health state and needs of the population as well as the steps necessary to reduce health inequities. By the end of 2015, this process yielded several strategic documents, including the overarching National Health 2020 Strategy, and its action plans for Public Health, Environment and Health, and Non-communicable diseases, all developed in alignment with the European Policy Framework for Health and Wellbeing Health 2020 of WHO and the national commitments towards the Sustainable Development Goals within the Agenda 2030.

However, although adopted in December 2016, many challenges need to be addressed to achieve better population health outcomes. This concerns, in particular, the full implementation of the new Law on Health Care of 2012 including the establishment and operationalization of the Health Network, which constitutes the most important recent development in the health system that will provide for a more efficient use of existing health resources and a registry of health facilities.

Moreover, the national electronic recording and reporting system MyAppointment provides an ample opportunity for improvement that can further enhance data and information exchange, in addition to research opportunities. Currently, MyAppointment collects diverse health data that can be used not only to assess health status but also conduct cost-effectiveness analysis of health resource use in terms of health gains. There is an ongoing debate to expand the system to gather data on lifestyles and social determinants of health, as well as on biological and environmental risk factors of major noncommunicable diseases at individual and community levels. This would, among other effects, strengthen the country's response for prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases.

An important area that requires further reform is the collection of reliable data and assessment mechanisms to evaluate and monitor the performance of the health system and enable evidence-based decision-making. First and foremost the population census of 2002 as the central reference tool for all types of health care analysis urgently requires an update. There are a number of other areas where data collection is not sufficiently developed. There is a lack of population-level and individual-level data (e.g. health outcomes by regions, age, economic status and ethnicity) as well as of household, consumption and health surveys, which could, for example, assess satisfaction or financial protection. Also, systems to obtain quality data on the management system with reliable indicators are not in place. These could, for example, allow estimation of indicators such as avoidable mortality and evaluation of health service quality. Furthermore, there is an important lack of data that assesses health system efficiency, such as data on health workforce by regions, institutions and professions and detailed data on provider costs and resource utilization. Lastly, there are no reliable data on the shares of health care-related funding by sources of finance outside the HIF (out-of-pocket spending, other government agencies' expenditure etc.).

Ongoing reforms and privatization of primary health care services are not seen to be in favor of introducing and/or integrating specific youth clinics in primary health care settings. New approaches are needed at central and local government levels to better address the sexual and reproductive health needs of young people and to ensure that the new reforms do not negatively influence accessibility to services through decreases in financial support and quality of care. Youth center "Sakam da znam" established by NGO HERA should be a guiding point and an example for establishment of similar centers in the future, to address the needs and health issues of youth in the country.

8. Creativity and Culture

The National Strategy for development of culture is a strategic document that determines the mid-term objectives and priorities for development of culture in Republic of Macedonia.

Fostering equality is one of the main aims of National Strategy for development of culture 2013-2017. The Strategy underlines the guaranteed right to esthetic, artistic and cultural diversity that should be implemented with the inclusion of marginalized groups and people with special needs in order to avoid social discrimination in culture.

8.1 General context

Main trends in young people's creativity and cultural participation

[National Strategy for development of culture 2013-2017](#) of Republic of Macedonia defines the culture as factor that supports development of the civilizations, enhances the social cohesion and represents the image of one country on international level. The cultural participation involves series of cultural activities available for young people in different cultural fields such as music, theatre, film, literature, art, sculpture, modern dance etc.

There is very few data available concerning the trends in young's people's cultural participation. Most of the available information on the question of cultural participation of young people is presented in the publication: [Youth Trends in Republic of Macedonia](#) (Младински трендови во Република Македонија). The research was produced in 2014 by the Institute for Sociological, Political and Juridical Research Skopje and upon agreement with the Agency for youth and sport.

The research shows that the young people are mostly interested in attending concerts and multi-media events and they show least interest in poetry festival. Around 25% of the young people are not attending any cultural events. Most of the events are organized in the capital or some bigger towns and therefore, the youth population from rural areas has more obstacles (financial and geographical obstacles) to attend.

38% of the young population is not visiting any cultural institutions. The most visited cultural institution is the cinema while only 1% of the young people are visiting the opera. One quarter of the youth population is not reading books at all. Most of the young people are interested in watching TV. Women are mainly interested in TV serials and men are mostly interested in sport channels. All young people watch a lot of films; most of them (58%) comedies and only 17% watch history movies.

44% of youngsters are listening to pop music, which makes pop music takes the most important place in the youth culture. 24% of the young people are listening to "turbo-folk" music which is a popular folk music in the region of the Balkans. The musical preferences of the young people depend on the age, level of education and ethnical groups.

Related to the cultural needs of the young people, most of them have expressed their willingness for more amusement parks, open-air festivals and concerts (55%). Only 29% consider that theatre plays are more needed. The cultural needs of the young people depend mainly on the place of living. Namely, young people living in smaller towns expressed more the need for cinema compared to the youngsters from the capital.

According to the National Youth Strategy, the key challenges identified in this area have been identified as follows:

- lack of regular cultural events for young people (concerts, multimedia events) in venues outside Skopje;
- lack of interest among young people in attending cultural events and cultural institutions;
- lack of interest amongst youth in creative artistic work in organised forms; and

- new media culture that is becoming ever more popular among young people at the expense of literature, but about which there is a lack of media literacy, with many young people unable to recognise the influence of media culture, including the manipulations that engender negative attitudes to foreign cultures.

Main concepts

In Republic of Macedonia, the culture is determined as fundamental value for the society, on the basis of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. As stated in the [National Strategy for development of culture 2013-2017](#), the concept of human rights needs to be implemented in the field of culture. The Constitution of Republic of Macedonia states that the cultural rights are one of the fundamental human rights and freedoms of the citizens. Therefore, it guarantees the freedom of any kind of cultural, scientific and intellectual creation.

The constitution of Republic of Macedonia also guarantees the protection and affirmation of cultural heritage as well as the contemporary cultural heritage of all people living in Macedonia. The Constitution also gives right and freedom of all communities living in Macedonia to express and develop their cultural identity, create cultural institutions or other forms of associations.

Since the culture is created on the basis of equality of all people, the National strategy for development of culture aims to make culture accessible to all. Therefore, each citizen of Republic of Macedonia, no matter of his/her gender, ethnic, religious or political beliefs has equal right to access cultural benefits.

8.2 Administration and governance

Governance

In Republic of Macedonia, the culture is an important question that is present in different national regulations. The young people are one of the most important target groups in many National and local strategies. Therefore, the governance of culture and young people is a complex question. Many stakeholders on national and local level participate in the policy-making and implementation of programs for culture and young people.

State actors

The Ministry of culture of the Republic of Macedonia is responsible governmental body for all questions related to culture on national level. The Ministry proposes laws for development of cultural policies in Macedonia. It is in charge of the implementation of the National programmes for culture following the National Strategy for development of culture. This Ministry ensures the links between the institutions, local authorities and other stakeholders concerning the question of culture.

The Agency for youth and sport is a governmental executive agency in charge to implement the programs for youth and sport in Republic of Macedonia. It is responsible for the implementation of the National Youth Strategy 2016-2025.

Different public cultural institutions are implementing the cultural policies in Macedonia such as museums, theatres, libraries, cultural centers, opera etc. They are public bodies working on national or local level. They provide cultural offer for the citizens in different forms. Their activities are mainly funded by the state budget upon presentation of yearly program of cultural activities.

The municipalities in Macedonia are important stakeholders in the field of culture and youth. Since the decentralization reform in 2005, the local authorities have the culture and youth among their competences. One part of the municipal budget is dedicated to programs for young people and cultural activities. Several municipalities have also adopted Youth strategies on local level.

Non-state actors

The non-state actors have very important role in the creation of cultural offer in Republic of Macedonia. There are associations/NGOs that are organising festivals and other cultural events of any kind. They are often funded by the state budget or international programs. Moreover, the youth organizations are one of the most important stakeholders that work for implementation of youth policies and creation of possibilities for young people.

The private sector also plays an important role in the development of the cultural scene in Macedonia. For example, most of the concerts and festivals are organised by private companies, some of the cinemas are private investments, big companies are sponsors of some cultural events etc. Some of these initiatives are also supported by state budget. The independent artists are also proposing cultural offers, sometimes organized in independent cultural groups: theatre and dance companies, music bands etc.

Cross-sectorial cooperation

There is no information on existence of standardized mechanism for cross-sectorial cooperation between the stakeholders involved in policy-making in the field of culture and young people.

The latest policy documents were created in a participatory manner and through wide consultation with different stakeholders. For example, during the creation of the National Youth Strategy 2016-2025, the Ministry of culture participated in the process with its own comments and contributions to the text. Moreover, many youth associations participated in the preparation phase of the Strategy.

The implementation of the National Youth Strategy 2016-2025 foresees that different Ministries and state bodies will be in charge of following certain chapters of the Strategy. The Agency of youth and sport will have the coordination role. Different stakeholders including youth associations will have the possibility to implement projects in line with this Strategy.

The process of the creation of the National Strategy for development of culture 2013-2017 was also participatory and involved different stakeholders, namely cultural institutions and artists. The cultural institutions, private companies in the field of culture, cultural associations and independent artists have right to apply for state funding from Ministry of culture to implement the cultural policies of Macedonia.

8.3 National strategy on creativity and culture for young people

Existence of a national strategy

In Republic of Macedonia there is one single National strategy on creativity and culture for young people. The question of creativity and culture for young people is a cross-cutting issue that is related to two national strategies:

[National Strategy for development of culture 2013-2017](#) - adopted in 2013. It covers the period 2013-2017. It is also followed by the [Action plan for the implementation of the National Strategy for development of culture 2013-2017](#).

[National Youth Strategy 2016-2025](#) - adopted in January 2016. It covers the period between 2016 and 2025. It is completed by the [Action plan for the implementation of the National Youth Strategy](#) for the period 2016-2017.

Scope and contents

National Strategy for development of culture 2013-2017

The National Strategy for development of culture is a strategic document that determines the mid-term objectives and priorities for development of culture in Republic of Macedonia. The Strategy makes reference to the young people several times. The

cultural education of citizens and new generations is one of the main objectives of the Strategy. It aims:

- Increase of art subjects in the formal educational system;
- Propose new forms of cultural education in the cultural institutions;
- Develop new programs for young people in the public institutions or encourage young people to create cultural content;
- Create conditions for young people to develop critical opinion toward culture and develop their innovation and creativity;
- Invest in development of creative potential of young people in culture.

In the Action plan for the implementation of the National strategy for development of culture, the young people are mentioned two times. The objectives related to young people are:

- Creation and implementation of cultural programs in the educational system;
- Development of habits for cultural perception for the young people.

National Youth Strategy 2016-2025

The National Youth Strategy of the Republic of Macedonia is the key policy document for youth development in Macedonia. Its aims to improve the social and economic situation of young people as well as to create an environment that will enable youth to fulfill their rights, needs and interests. The Strategy is divided in 9 key areas:

- Youth participation
- Youth information
- Local youth work
- Education
- Employment and pre-employment support
- Culture
- Sports
- Health
- Quality of life.

Culture is one of the key areas in the National Youth Strategy. In view of the key challenges identified in the area of culture, this Strategy provides appropriate long-term objectives and specific measures for addressing the respective problems:

- An improved and sustainable system of creative and cultural practices among young people
- Improved quality of cultural life and entertainment of young people
- Equal access for young people to quality cultural events and opportunities for cultural cooperation
- Young people are involved in drafting and implementing cultural policies

Responsible authority for the implementation of the strategy

National Strategy for development of culture 2013-2017

The Ministry of culture is responsible for its implementation of the Strategy. Other bodies responsible for the measures related to youth are: National cultural institutions, Bureau for development of education.

National Youth Strategy 2016-2025

The Agency for youth and sport is the institution in charge of the implementation, coordination and monitoring of the National Youth Strategy. The bodies responsible for the measures in the area of culture are: the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, educational institutions, cultural institutions on local level, local self-government units, media, the Macedonian Radio Television, the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services, the Ministry of Information Society and Administration, and the business sector.

Revisions/updates

National Strategy for development of culture

The National programme for culture 2004-2008 preceded the National Strategy for development of culture 2013-2017. This strategic document was adopted in 2004. It also makes reference to the young people, with focus for the cultural needs of young population. One of the objectives of the National programme for culture 2004-2008 was to encourage contemporary creation of art, focused on young people. The Document proposes renewal of staff working in the public institutions mainly from young experts in the cultural fields.

National Youth Strategy

In 2015 was adopted the first [National Youth Strategy of the Republic of Macedonia for the period 2005-2015](#). Culture was one of the 9 main subjects of the National Youth Strategy. The long term goal in the field of culture and youth was: Active participation of youth in the cultural life through expression of their creative potential. The objectives related to culture were:

- Encourage young people to participate in artistic activities, presentations of projects, as part of their education, profession and leisure time;
- Encourage youth creative capabilities in the field of culture;
- Learning about the cultural values of the other ethnic communities in Macedonia; and
- Expand possibilities for personal understanding, advanced learning about and appreciation of Macedonian, European and world cultural heritage.

The [Action plan for implementation of the National Youth Strategy of the Republic of Macedonia \(2005-2015\)](#) is a detailed document adopted in 2009. On the topic of culture, the Action plan makes reference to the following objectives:

- Active provided support of culture projects created by young people;
- Active support of young talents who create in the field of culture;
- Enhanced culture of tolerance among young people;
- The cultural life in rural areas has been improved;
- Provided adequate representation of young people in cultural institutions.

There is no substantial difference in the two National Youth Strategies concerning the question of culture. They both identify culture as one of the main topics of interest for young people. They identify the need to invest in young talents and to improve cultural participation in rural areas. One of the differences in the documents is the fact that in the National Youth Strategy from 2005-2015 the cultural tolerance is one of the priority objectives.

8.4 Promoting culture and cultural participation

Reducing obstacles to young people's access to culture

Access to culture is one of the priorities of the [National Strategy for development of culture 2013-2017](#), related to the question of equal cultural rights for all citizens of Republic of Macedonia. As stated in the [National Youth Strategy 2016-2025](#), the challenges of young people for access to culture are lack of cultural offer outside of the capital as well as geographical and financial obstacles for rural youth to be part of cultural events.

In order to enrich cultural offer in different parts outside of Skopje, in 2008 the Ministry of culture introduced the programme "Hot summer wave" (Топол културен бран). Each year, the Ministry offers financial support to municipalities for development of cultural programme during the summer period. The aim of the programme is to provide possibilities for cultural events for the citizens in order to raise their cultural awareness and values. The municipalities organize festivals and other cultural events of any kind, for example concerts, theatre plays, exhibitions, debates etc.

The municipalities in Macedonia have important role in the development of cultural offer in Macedonia. Each municipality is devoting one part of the municipal budget for organization of cultural events on local level. These cultural events offered vary from concerts to food or film festivals. They are organized by the municipalities themselves, civil society organizations or private companies. The aim of these events is to offer leisure activities and entertainment for the local population, provide possibilities for social cohesion and well as to support the local development.

In order to reduce financial obstacles for young people to participate in the cultural events, in 2014 the Government of Republic of Macedonia has introduced a possibility for reduced price for national public transport. Namely, young people under 29, have 50% discount for traveling by train. Also, the orphans, the young people from social families and the students can travel for free each Thursday of the month.

Disseminating information on cultural opportunities

There is no information about the existence of national wide program to provide information about culture to young people.

The information about organization of one event is usually shared by the organizers through their means of communication such as website, social media etc. The public cultural institutions are publishing the information for events and offers on their communication channels: websites and social media. The Ministry of culture is often publishing information concerning projects financed by the Ministry.

There are private initiatives for information about cultural offer, mostly through internet. Namely, there are several websites that regroup the information for cultural offer such as: www.time.mk/nastani; www.eventi.mk; www.skopjeinfo.mk. These websites provide possibilities to identify all events taking place. Most of the information provided is for the capital city.

Knowledge of cultural heritage amongst young people

The promotion of the cultural identity is one of the priorities in the [National programme for development of education in Republic of Macedonia 2005-2015](#) (Национална програма за развој на образованието во Република Македонија 2005-2015). The Ministry of education is creating educational system focused on the personal development of the individuals, taking into consideration the multicultural environment and the global context of living. Important aspect of the education should be the personal development through building awareness and respect for other countries and cultures.

There is no information about the existence of specific national wide programme for discovery and appreciation of the cultural and artistic heritage of European countries among the young people.

8.5 Developing cultural and creative competences

Acquiring cultural and creative competences through education and training

Cultural classes are part of the formal educational system of Republic of Macedonia. The educational programs for primary schools (age from 6 to 14) include obligatory art classes: plastic arts and music each year. These classes are also part of the first year of educational programmes in high schools (age from 15 to 18). The schools are often proposing extra-curriculum activities in art and culture: orchestra, choir, dance and plastic arts.

Moreover, the educational system offers possibilities for attending musical primary school (age from 6 to 14). This school is optional and complementary to the formal primary school. The musical primary schools exist only in the capital and some bigger towns in Macedonia. One dance primary school (age from 6 to 14) also exist in the capital.

Macedonia also offers formal high-schools in the field of culture (age from 15 to 18). Music, dance and plastic art high-schools are offering four-year education in the related

fields. The dance and plastic art high-school only exist in Skopje and there are several music high-schools in some bigger towns in Macedonia (for example Tetovo, Bitola, Stip).

The highest level of art education can be represented in the art academies. There are several art academies in Macedonia on the level of higher education: music, dance, theatre and plastic art. After attending 4 year program, the successful students are awarded with faculty degree.

Specialised training for professionals in the education, culture and youth fields

There is no information for the existence of any public national wide specialized training for development of cultural and creative skills for relevant professionals such as teachers, educators and youth workers.

However, a lot of individual initiatives for cultural education are created by civil society organizations, cultural institutions or youth associations. There are programs for capacity development of professionals in cultural sector offered by cultural foundations and international donors. Most of the European countries have bilateral cooperation with Macedonia in the field of culture and support programs for cultural workers and artists. Many of the youth associations are organizing activities related to cultural education. Some of them are supported by EU programs such as Erasmus plus.

Providing quality access to creative environments

The Ministry of culture is offering financial support for young artists in the framework of their National programme for support of culture. Each year, through public call, the Ministry of culture gives financial support to the young cultural artists to attend education in the field of music, dance, plastic art, architecture and cultural heritage. From 2008 until today, more than 400 scholarships are awarded to young artists.

Young authors have the possibility to apply for funding for realization of cultural projects of national interest (for example in music, art, theatre, literature etc.). Each year the Ministry of culture launches a public call for cultural projects of national interest. In the call from 2016 the youth cultural projects were one of the main priorities.

In 2015 in Skopje was opened the first multi-functional art space "[Public house](#)" (Јавна соба). Public house is open for companies, organizations, artistes and individuals as place for exhibitions, concerts, art workshop. It represents place for commercial bazaars, free co-working space for freelancers, concept store, bar etc. it is considered as a space for cultural expression and is often visited by local artists.

8.6 Developing entrepreneurial skills through culture

Developing entrepreneurial skills through cultural activities

The concept of entrepreneurship is becoming very important in the Macedonian educational system. In 2014 the Ministry of education adopted the [Entrepreneurial learning Strategy of Macedonia 2014-2020](#). The goal of the strategy is to transform Macedonia in country with highly developed entrepreneurial culture and spirit that inspires everyone. The Strategy aims to introduce the entrepreneurship learning in formal and non-formal education. Even though young people are not explicitly stated as beneficiary, they are clearly the main target group for the implementation of the Strategy.

The Strategy does not make a clear reference to the field of culture. The Strategy recognizes the importance of entrepreneurial learning for development of creativity among young people. One of the objectives of the Strategy is to facilitate the development of free, open-minded, independent and proactive young generations that can explore and express their entrepreneurial potential. The Strategy acknowledges that entrepreneurial skills can support young people in the field of creative industries.

There is no information on national programme or projects that support the development of entrepreneurial skills by participating in cultural and creative opportunities.

Support young entrepreneurs in the cultural and creative sectors

The main policy document that concerns cultural and creative sectors is the [Strategy for development of creative industries in Republic of Macedonia](#). It was adopted in 2008 and the Ministry of culture is the institution responsible for its implementation. The Strategy was done on the basis of the research [Creative industries mapping in the Republic of Macedonia](#). The research was produced in 2008 by the British council in cooperation with the Ministry of culture. The Strategy recognizes the potential of creative industries in the cultural and economic development in Macedonia. The Strategy does not make any reference to young people.

One of the most important events in the field of creative industries is the festival [Skopje KREATIVA](#). Skopje KREATIVA is a festival that centers the development of creative industries in Macedonia. Since 2012 the festival is organized each year in Skopje and gathers artists, cultural workers, designers from Macedonia, the Balkan Region and EU etc. The festival involves exhibitions, workshops, trainings, activities for children and high-school students, design workshops and concerts. The festival is financially supported by the City of Skopje.

There is no information on specific programme or project on national level to support businesses in the cultural field for young people. Cultural projects initiated by young people could be financially supported by the Ministry of culture through the National programme for culture. However, the National programme does not specifically make reference to creative industries and young people.

8.7 Fostering the creative use of new technologies

New technologies in support of creativity and innovation

There is no information on a specific policy or national programme for using new technologies to empower young people's creativity and capacity for innovation.

One of the key Strategies is the [The National Strategy for development of e-content](#). It was created by the Ministry of Information Society and Administration and adopted in 2015 for the period 2010-2015.

One of the key projects of this Strategy is "Computer for Every Child" (Компјутер за секое дете), launched in 2006 and implemented in all primary and secondary public schools in the country. The project foresees purchase, installation and maintenance of technological equipment, as well as development of an environment fruitful for creating and using e-content.

Facilitating access to culture through new technologies

There is no information on a specific policy or national programme attracting young interest in culture, the arts and science through the use of new technologies.

There are some projects that tackle the question of new technologies and cultural heritage.

For exemple, "Cultural Information Zones" (Културни информативни зони) is a project that foresees installation of information zones at cultural monuments and historic places. The aim of the project is to use modern technology to promote the rich cultural heritage of Macedonia. The project is launched in 2016 and it is phase of implementation. A website is in phase of development.

Another project is "Makedonika", an Android application for reading e-books in Macedonian language. The application includes free online picture books, which makes it unique in the world.

Also in the field of innovation and culture: “Halo festival” is a hologram musical festival realized for the first time in 2017 in Skopje. It combines advanced technology (holograms) and music, thus uniting citizens interested in music and local festivals, as well as IT- companies.

8.8 Synergies and partnerships

Synergies between public policies and programmes

The questions of creativity and culture are cross-cutting in several Strategies on national level:

- [National Youth Strategy 2016-2025](#)
- [National Strategy for development of culture 2013-2017](#)
- [National programme for development of education in Republic of Macedonia 2005-2015](#)
- [Entrepreneurial learning Strategy of Macedonia 2014-2020](#)
- [Strategy for development of creative industries in Republic of Macedonia](#)

There is no information on existence of clear mechanism for cooperation in order to ensure synergies in the different policies.

The National Youth Strategy 2016-2025 is a comprehensive Strategy including different national policies that concern young people in one single document. The process for the creation of the Strategy was highly participative and involved the Ministries and other governmental agencies concerned.

The synergy between the national and local policies on youth questions is very important.

Many municipalities created local youth policies in order to improve youth development in their community. The creation of these local youth policies takes into consideration the youth strategy on national level while taking into account the local context. Most of these local youth strategies identify the culture as one of the main priorities for youth development.

The [Strategy for youth of City of Skopje 2014-2018](#) (Стратегија за млади на град Скопје 2014-2018) is one example of Strategy on local level where culture is identified as one of the eight priorities. The process for the creation of the Strategy was highly participative, with involvement of different stakeholders: national authorities, educational and cultural institutions and youth organizations. The process included online consultations of key documents, forums, debates and workshops. The process was facilitated by the [Coalition of youth organisations SEGA](#).

Pelagonija Region is the only example for creation of [Regional Strategy of culture in Pelagonija region 2013-2016](#) (Стратегија за културен развој на Пелагонискиот плански регион 2013-2016). The process for creation included all cultural institutions, municipalities, associations and independent artists from the Region of Pelagonija. The document makes the link between the culture, cultural heritage and tourism. Young people are not explicitly tackled. The creation of Strategy was initiated by the Pelagonija Region and facilitated by the organization [Lokomotiva - Centre for New Initiative in Arts and Culture](#). The process was financially supported by the [Programme for decentralized cooperation Normandy – Macedonia](#).

Partnerships between the culture and creative sectors, youth organisations and youth workers

There is no information on specific partnership between stakeholders of the cultural sectors and youth organisations. Youth organisations sometimes implement projects related to culture. The cultural institutions also establish cooperation with civil society organisations and youth groups for implementation of some projects. However, these partnerships depend on the good will of the partners and their ideas for mutual work.

8.9 Enhancing social inclusion through culture

Fostering equality and young people involvement through cultural activities

Fostering equality is one of the main aims of [National Strategy for development of culture 2013-2017](#). The Strategy underlines the guaranteed right to esthetic, artistic and cultural diversity that should be implemented with the inclusion of marginalized groups and people with special needs in order to avoid social discrimination in culture.

In order for this right to be realized, it's important to develop technical and programming conditions for equal inclusion of all people in the cultural life. Public, national and specialized institutions are encouraged to employ people with special needs. The country will develop mechanisms for providing access to cultural content for all citizens, no matter their social status.

Social integration of youth through cultural activities is promoted via other programmes, projects and initiatives. For example, in 2015, the project "[Inclusive and creative](#)" (Инклузивни и креативни) was created with the aim to create better conditions for development of socially inclusive entrepreneurship and creativity through active participation of users of Centers for the physically and mentally disabled. The project is financed by the Ministry for culture and Ministry for labor and social policy.

Another important project is the creation of audiobooks. [The National and University Library "Sv. Kliment Ohridski"](#) in Skopje includes a book center with audiobooks that offers people with visual impairments the access to international and national literature. The book center has published special editions of magazines written in Braille, as well as an audio magazine and audiobooks.

Every year is being organized "The Ball of Diversities" (Бал на различности) a manifestation for promotion of social inclusion through culture. It consists of several cultural events that promote inclusion of people with special needs and parents of children with special needs.

"Games Without Masks" (Игри без маски) theatre festival is organized for people with mental or physical disability to build their skills of self-confidence and to be active participants in culture events. The festival is one of its kind on the Balkans and has the aim to offer people with special needs a way to express creatively.

The International day of people with autism every year is celebrated with art exhibition in the [National gallery of Republic of Macedonia](#). The exhibition includes artworks made from children with autism.

Combating discrimination and poverty through cultural activities

In 2010 Macedonia has adopted [The National strategy for elevation of poverty and social exclusion in Republic of Macedonia 2010-2020](#). The Ministry of labor and social policy is the institution in charge of its implementation. The Strategy foresees a creation of quality approach towards the possibilities provided by the institutions, including cultural opportunities. It also foresees adaptation of school curriculum for the children with special educational needs.

Macedonia is multiethnic country and its Constitution guarantees the rights of all communities living in the country. In 2001 was concluded [The Ohrid Framework Agreement](#) foresees complete respect of the principle of non-discrimination and equal treatment in front of the law of all people. In terms of culture, it suggests further development of media to increase programmes for ethnic minorities.

In 2014 was adopted the [The Strategy for Roma people in Macedonia 2014-2020](#). It foresees actions for development and promotion of Roma culture, language and tradition. It suggests measures for preservation and development of Roma culture through cultural events and initiatives.

8.10 Current debates and reforms

In 2017 the Ministry of culture started the process of creation of the new National Strategy for development of culture for the period 2018-2022. The Ministry announced the process will be with “bottom-up” approach and inclusion of different stakeholders in the consultation: civil society organizations, cultural institutions, municipalities, cultural workers, artists etc.

9. Youth and the World

In general, the activities regarding global issues are initiated and implemented by Civil Society Organizations that are targeting youth beside other target groups.

Currently Republic of Macedonia is part of the Berlin process and the establishing of the Regional Youth Cooperation Office in Tirana in the upcoming period. RYCO will be aiming to promote the spirit of reconciliation and cooperation between the youth in the region through exchange opportunities and sharing experiences.

9.1 General context

Main concepts

Young people understand global issues as processes, situations and events, that are influencing the world in general, and all countries in the world in particular. Global issues according to young people should be taken into account in order to improve the general living conditions, peace and prosperity in the World.

Macedonia, as country in development has focus on NATO and EU Integrations, and Macedonia is not focused on global issues from the prism of young people, and does not take concrete actions initiated by the national authorities regarding young people and global issues.

Green volunteering, production and consumptions as subject are still not well promoted among young people, and when they are promoted they have wider audience as target groups, not just young people.

Youth from Macedonia participate and contribute on global issues mostly on international events with their representatives, and very rare on local or national level events that are implemented by national or local authorities.

In general, the activities regarding global issues are initiated and implemented by Civil Society Organizations that are targeting youth beside other target groups. National Authorities are providing direct political support towards the initiatives in most of the times, however very rare with financial support.

Youth interest in global issues

Young people in Macedonia are encountering challenges among other field of interests - also on Global Issues. The latest research on youth trends, “Младински Трендови во Република Македонија”- “Youth Trends in Republic of Macedonia”, (published in 2014 for a second time after 2010) is showing young people’s interests and attitudes towards social and political processes in Macedonia.

Young people in general have positive attitude towards education (45%), however 27% are neutral towards education in general. Young people are most of the time concerned for their first employment as 66.6% are concerned that can’t find proper job after finishing their education.

Regarding global issues, we can mention that young people are most concerned for their Employability status (41.5%), Poverty (40.7%), Incurable diseases (35.9%) and War and Terroristic Attacks (31.1%).

Regarding discussing social and political issues, 20% of young people in Macedonia are often discussing them with their friends and peers, 61.5% of the young people have never discussed social and political issues in public, and 49.4% are discussing them with their parents.

Regarding active participation in Human Rights organization, only 11.7% of the young people have been active in the field of human rights and most of them are in the Capital City of Skopje, which it shows the low level of participation regarding Human Rights issues in Macedonia.^[79]

No other information is publicly available regarding youth interest on global issues.

We can mention that, the biannual World Youth Reports ^[80] from United Nations are relevant towards the situation with Youth in Macedonia.

9.2 Administration and governance

Governance

Agency of Youth and Sport ^[81] together with National Agency for European Educational Programs and Mobility ^[82] are main actors that are responsible for youth's contribution to global processes of policy making, implementation and follow up, including cooperation on global level. AYS and NA Macedonia are responsible for nominating youth representatives that are taking part on international events related to global issues with focus on youth.

Not enough public information available on non-public institutions that are involved. However, we can mention that, there are several global youth organizations or International organizations active with their national antennas in promoting youth contribution to global processes like, AIESEC ^[83], ALDA ^[84], MLADIINFO ^[85], JEF ^[86], COSV ^[87] and European Youth Forum ^[88], implementing the programs of their responsible international offices and their local programs.

Cross-sectorial cooperation

There are no publicly available information regarding mechanisms of cross-sectorial cooperation between Ministries, Departments, Agencies involved in defining policies and measures regarding youth's contribution to global processes.

⁽⁷⁹⁾ [„Младински Трендови во Република Македонија“, Универзитет „СВ. Кирил и Методиј“ Декември 2014 – “Youth Trends in Republic of Macedonia”, University “SV. Kiril and Metodij” December 2014](#)

⁽⁸⁰⁾ [World Youth Report \(WYR\), United Nations](#)

⁽⁸¹⁾ [Агенција за Млади и Спорт – Agency of Youth and Sport](#)

⁽⁸²⁾ [Национална Агенција за Европски Образовни Програми и Мобилност –National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility](#)

⁽⁸³⁾ [AIESEC Macedonia](#)

⁽⁸⁴⁾ [ALDA – European Association for local democracy](#)

⁽⁸⁵⁾ [MLADIINFO International](#)

⁽⁸⁶⁾ [JEF](#)

⁽⁸⁷⁾ [COSV](#)

⁽⁸⁸⁾ [European Youth Forum](#)

9.3 Exchanges between young people and policy-makers on global issues

Global issues exchanges with policy-makers at the domestic level

In Republic of Macedonia, Coalition of youth organization SEGA ^[89] from 2014 and onwards, for the first time have implemented Structural Dialog Processes, as an European practice for consultation of young people together with decision makers and promoting youth participation ^[90]. However the consultation processes were implemented on subjects that are not focusing on Global Issues, except the National workshop on “Creating Effective Youth Employment Possibilities” ^[91], targeting unemployment that included local and national authorities and young people. The process of structural dialog was held in Struga, Macedonia as funded project from Erasmus plus program under KA3 Action, Structural Dialog ^[92]. The outcome of the process of exchange of views with policy makers was a policy document with recommendation to national authorities in order to solve the unemployment issue among young people in Macedonia.

No other public information is available, on young people taking part in processes of exchanging views at domestic level regarding global issues. The other activities as information are not structured and they represent initiatives of Civil Society organizations that in general, are donor-driven.

Global issues exchanges with policy-makers at the international level

Young people from Macedonia have exchanged views on international level in a formal framework within the Berlin Process ^[93] framework of activities. Youth Representatives were nominated and took part in 2014 Conference of Western Balkan States, Berlin, 2015 Western Balkans Summit, Vienna, 2016 Western Balkans Summit, Paris, 2017 Western Balkans Summit, Trieste, and had the opportunity to exchange views beside the Accession in EU of Macedonia, but also on the subjects that were targeting global issues.

Young people with its representatives have been part of the process of Structural Dialog: The mechanism that European Youth Ministers created for consultation, that allows them to stay in a continuous dialogue with young people covering the policies affecting them in particular, and among them, Global issues.

Young people from Macedonia have taken part of the consultation processes with its own nominated youth representatives at EU Youth Conference Riga, Latvia ^[94], (March 2015), EU Youth Conference Luxembourg ^[95], (September 2015), Western Balkans Youth Conference Paris ^[96] (July 2016), EU Youth Conference Košice, Slovakia ^[97] (October 2016) and EU Youth Conference Malta ^[98], (March 2017).

During the process of Structural Dialog among other subjects, the focus was also given to solving Global Issues, as a main goal of the process was to ensure that youth policy at European, national and local level is developed with, not for, young people.

⁽⁸⁹⁾ [Coalition of youth organizations SEGA](#)

⁽⁹⁰⁾ [“Youth Participation in decision making”](#)

⁽⁹¹⁾ [“Creating Effective Youth Employment Possibilities”](#)

⁽⁹²⁾ [Structural Dialog](#)

⁽⁹³⁾ [Berlin Process](#)

⁽⁹⁴⁾ [EU Youth Conference 2015](#)

⁽⁹⁵⁾ [EU Youth Conference 2015](#)

⁽⁹⁶⁾ [Western Balkans Youth Conference 2016](#)

⁽⁹⁷⁾ [EU Youth Conference 2016](#)

⁽⁹⁸⁾ [EU Youth Conference 2017](#)

9.4 Raising awareness about global issues

Formal, non-formal and informal learning

Curricula Structure in Secondary Education in Republic of Macedonia:

- High school education(Gymnasium)
- Secondary vocational education
- Education for children with special needs
- Student homes

In the context of formal learning global issues are not covered as a separate subject. The ministry of environment is implementing the project GLOBE within primary and secondary educational institutions. Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment is a worldwide science and education program that coordinates the work of students, teachers and scientists in order to study and understand the global environment. Main goals of the program are. To increase the environmental awareness of individuals around the world: To contribute to the scientific understanding of the Earth; To help students everywhere to achieve higher standards in science and mathematics. GLOBE is an international partnership that involves countries around the world. The program is managed by the US Government through partnerships with other countries. So far, more than 100 countries with over 10,000 schools have been included in the program. ^[99]

Global Issues as Climate Changes and Climate Influence are covered within the subject Geography in High school education (Gymnasium) curriculum within natural-mathematical area of studies. Climate elements, Climate changes, Air and Water Pollution are covered within the mentioned curriculum. ^[100] Globalization and its challenges and social changes are covered within the subject Sociology within II year of high school education curriculum as an obligatory subject. ^[101]

Within Secondary vocational education curricula, there is no focus on global issues as the learning process is focused on acquiring skills and knowledge on specific vocation and training. Geography and Sociology can be found in specific vocational areas, however the number of vocational areas that are including these subjects is not significant.

Within "Project activities" as a special area in the Curriculum for high school education, whose function is to meet the individual interests and wishes of students in certain areas. According to the student's choice and due to their specificity, they differ from the teaching subjects and one of the subjects is Culture for protection, peace and tolerance. The program is realized within the annual fund of total 70 classes from I to IV year on Culture for protection, peace and tolerance. "Project Activities" are more in context of non-formal learning within the High School Education curriculum. ^[102]

There are other noticeable and observed initiatives from Civil Society Organizations on global issues, however most of them are donor driven and receive only political support from public authorities. Any initiative of program, that provides non-formal learning process for youth on global issues, doesn't contain any strategic approach and financial support from local or national authorities.

No other public information available in the context of non-formal learning on global issues, beside local initiatives and project activities from Civil Society Organizations, mostly funded by international authorities.

Educators' support

⁽⁹⁹⁾ [GLOBE - Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment](#)

⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ [Наставна Програма по Географија, Гимназиско образование Curricula for Geography in Secondary Education](#)

⁽¹⁰¹⁾ [Наставна Програма по Социологија за 2 година \(задолжителен предмет\) – Curricula for Sociology 2nd year \(Obligatory Subject\)](#)

⁽¹⁰²⁾ [Project Activities, General Secondary Education Curricula, website](#)

In Republic of Macedonia there are available several programs and manuals for supporting educators in global issues, targeting young people.

“Guidelines for Global education” ^[103] was translated on Macedonian Language by ADI Macedonia .The paper contains concepts and methodologies for global education for teachers and policy creators developed from the week of global education in coordination with the North-South Centre ^[104] of the Council of Europe published in Lisbon 2008.

“Curriculum for Global Education and Adult Learning” ^[105], published by German Institute for Adult Education - Leibnitz Center for Lifelong Learning (DIE) and the Institute for International Cooperation of the German Union of National Universities, available on Macedonian language. Main goals of the project are: to enhance the professionalization of teachers in adult education with providing a common reference framework; to support adult education providers in the design and implementation of

Training-trainer programs, and to encourage the exchange of knowledge and mutual understanding between teachers in adult education around the world. The curriculum and its publications are primarily intended for individuals who are involved in the planning process and organization of qualification programs for teachers in Adult Education. The Publication is funded by Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development ^[106], Germany.

Manual - Saving energy and resources through recycling of batteries (internal reference to **Green production and consumption**)

GLOBE, Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment - Internal reference to **Formal, non-formal and informal learning**,

Youth-targeted information campaigns on global issues

During 2016, in Republic of Macedonia it was implemented Human Rights campaign regarding current refugee crisis. “Refugee Now – Human forever” ^[107] was implemented in largest cities in Macedonia, and targeted unemployed youth and high school education students on the issues of human rights, discrimination and refugee rights.

However, “Refugee Now – Human Forever” campaign was not funded by national authorities but it was UNHCR funded campaign that, besides targeting citizens of Macedonia, had focused activities on youth with specific activities.

There is no other publicly available information regarding youth-targeted information campaigns on global issues funded by national authorities.

Information providers

Regarding disseminating information on global issues among young people, there is no specific delegated public institution that provides information on global issues. The process of providing information doesn't have focus on youth or specific subjects; each public institution provides information from their field of work on general communication channels.

Key initiatives

In general, in Macedonia, key initiatives in disseminating information on global issues are conducted by Civil Society Sector and media institutions. The information has general focus and does not target young people as a specific target group.

Initiative on Green Volunteering (internal reference to Green production section)

⁽¹⁰³⁾ [Упатсва за Глобално Образование – Guidelines for Global Education](#)

⁽¹⁰⁴⁾ [North South Centre of the Council of Europe](#)

⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ [Наставна Програма за Глобално Образование и Учење на возрасни – Curriculum for Global Education and Adult Learning](#)

⁽¹⁰⁶⁾ [Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Germany](#)

⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ [„Бегалец Сера – Човек Секогаш” – “Refugee now – Human Forever”](#)

9.5 Green volunteering, production and consumption

Green volunteering

Since 2007, “The day of the Tree” ^[108] campaign is implemented by the Government of Republic of Macedonia, supported by “Macedonian Forests” and “Association of the units of local self-government of the Republic of Macedonia”. In the 17 re-forestation actions so far, about 50 million trees have been planted, across 3000 hectares, according to “Macedonian forests”, about 60 percent of them are successfully growing.

Within the re-forestation actions, the government involved children and youth from primary and secondary education institutions as volunteers across the country. “The day of the Tree” is a non-working day in Macedonia and in re-forestation are also included citizens, employed in the Public Administration.

Green production and consumption

If we mention activities led by Civil Society Organizations, there are several campaigns on Green production and consumption regarding recycling batteries within the primary and secondary Educational Institutions. “Go Clean”, project started in 2011 in partnership with the embassies of Sweden and Norway, the Ministry of Environment, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, the City of Skopje and the municipalities responsible for the implementation. The project contained activities with establishing batteries depots in Primary and Secondary schools and publishing Manual – “Saving energy and resources through recycling of batteries” ^[109]

Two companies “Skopski Pazari” (Skopje Markets) and Nula Otpad (Zero Waste), company with the role as collective handler for dealing with waste batteries and accumulators, established centers for gathering batteries for recycling in their vending locations. The general focus as target group is on citizens of Skopje, not just young people. The programme is privately funded by the partner companies.

Additionally, regarding green production and consumption, there is no other public information available how the government is directly supporting young people. Mainly the programs are directed to the goal of green production and consumption and they are not focused on youth as a target group.

9.6 Intercontinental youth work and development cooperation

Intercontinental youth work cooperation

The National Agency for European Programmes and Mobility promotes intercontinental youth work cooperation with the administration of the Erasmus+ Program actions like European Volunteer Service that provides opportunities for young people and youth staff to experience learning processes in intercontinental dimension. Erasmus plus programme is funded by the EU and provides opportunities for young people and youth workers, Republic of Macedonia is a Programme Country within Erasmus plus, and have the equal status as other EU countries as a beneficiaries.

US Peace Corps ^[110] provides opportunities for US citizens that contribute towards intercontinental youth work cooperation. US Peace Corps Mission is still active in Macedonia.

The program provides service opportunity for motivated change makers to immerse themselves in a community abroad, working side by side with local leaders to tackle the most pressing challenges of our generation. Target groups are general and support Civil

⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ [Денот на Дрвото – Day of the Tree](#)

⁽¹⁰⁹⁾ [Прирачник – „Заштеда на енергија и ресурси преку рециклирање батерии“ - Manual – “Saving energy and resources through recycling of batteries”](#)

⁽¹¹⁰⁾ [US Peace Corps](#)

Society Organizations and Educational Institutions. One of the focuses is youth. Main objectives of the programme are:

1. To help the people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women.
2. To help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served.
3. To help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans.

The program is funded by US government.

AIESEC International ^[111] provides opportunities for young people all over the world to be part of intercontinental activities through their national antennas. AIESEC is a global platform for young people to explore and develop their leadership potential. Its members are interested in world issues, leadership and management. Main target group of AIESEC are young students willing to explore the world and acquire leadership skills and intercultural competences. AIESEC national antennas are mainly funded by private business sector.

Development cooperation activities

The President of Republic of Macedonia traditionally organizes the “School for young leaders” ^[112].

Over the past seven years, 280 young people and over 160 renowned lecturers, including former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, participated in the school for young leaders.

Besides opportunities provided by Civil Society organizations and opportunities from Political Parties for its youth wings, there is no public information available regarding development cooperation activities provided from public authorities regarding the subject.

9.7 Current debates and reforms

Currently in Republic of Macedonia there is major public consultation processes for Youth Participation in School Communities, as a reform within the national legislative framework. The process is initiated by Coalition of youth organization SEGA in partnership with civil society organization supported by the Ministry of education and science and financially supported by Pestalozzi Children Foundation.

In the upcoming period as a follow up to the consultation process, it will be initiated legislative changes within the Law on Secondary education based on the article 12 and article 15 from the Convention on the Rights of the Child ^[113] and the recommendations for Macedonia from the United Nations Human Rights Commission in Geneva ^[114].

Currently Republic of Macedonia is part of the Berlin process ^[115] and the establishing of the Regional Youth Cooperation Office in Tirana in the upcoming period. RYCO ^[116] will be aiming to promote the spirit of reconciliation and cooperation between the youth in the region through exchange opportunities and sharing experiences.

There are other current debates and initiated legislative changes, however they are not focused to young people in particular and they are targeting all citizens in Republic of Macedonia. One of them is the draft „Стратегија за интеграција за Бегалци и странци

⁽¹¹¹⁾ [AIESEC International](#)

⁽¹¹²⁾ [“Школа за Млади Лидери” – “School for Young Leaders”](#)

⁽¹¹³⁾ [Convention on the rights of the Child](#)

⁽¹¹⁴⁾ [United Nations Office in Geneva](#)

⁽¹¹⁵⁾ [Berlin Process](#)

⁽¹¹⁶⁾ [Regional Youth Cooperation Office](#)

во Република Македонија”, 2017-2027 - “Strategy for integration of refugees and foreigners In the Republic of Macedonia 2017-2027 ^[117]”.

Glossary

Youth According to Macedonian society former historical, social, political and ethical practice, and in the absence of internationally recognized definition, the term youth as used in the country signifies a separate socio-ethical category of population aged between 15 and 24 that is particularly vulnerable to socio-economic changes in the society and which represents, due to its critical thought and the urge for changes and future progress of the society, a basic development resource. In light of the consequences of the socio-economic crisis, which has been thwarting the process of development of active and responsible individuals (prolonged time of education, inability to find job, inability to found a family, economic dependence on parents or absence of economic and thus personal independence), any serious youth action or program should take into account also the persons aged 24 to 30, with the aim of mitigating or eliminating the obstacles to their development as individuals and responsible citizens of the Macedonian society.

Health is defined in accordance with World Health Organisation definition as a “state of complete physical and mental wellbeing and not merely absence of disease or infirmity. It is considered to be influenced by many external factors such as environmental, social and economic factors, and by factors related to lifestyles and to other sectors in the society.

A **health system** definition fully complies with the World Health Organisation definition, as including all the actors and activities the primary purpose of which is to promote, improve or maintain the health of the citizens. It includes organised health services, i.e. the health care system, as only one of the many factors for maintaining good health, recovering from ill health, or making the life with chronic illness easier.

Action plan for the implementation of the National Strategy for development of culture 2013-2017: Detailed plan for implementation of the National strategy for development of culture 2013-2017

Adult education: educational programs or courses for adults who are out of school or college

Agency for Promotion of the Entrepreneurship: The Agency was established in accordance with the Law in December 2003, under the Ministry of Economy, and represents a central state institution for support of the entrepreneurship and development of small business in the Republic of Macedonia.

ALMPs: Active Labor Market Policies

AYS: Agency of Youth and Sport - Institution that is dedicated to the development and support of programmes, projects and initiatives for youth and culture.

Block Grants: a grant from a central government that a local authority can allocate to a wide range of services.

Brain Drain: The situation in which large numbers of educated and very skilled people leave their own country to live and work in another one where pay and conditions are better.

⁽¹¹⁷⁾ [“Стратегија за интеграција на бегалци и странци во Република Македонија” Министерство за Труд и Социјална Политика, 2017 - “Strategy for integration of refugees and foreigners In the Republic of Macedonia”](#)

Center for Education of Adults: is a public institution for adult education in the Republic of Macedonia, which as a separate legal entity was established by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia in November 2008.

Center for Vocational Education and Training: is a professional public institution that provides support and development of vocational education and all subjects interested in vocational education in the Republic of Macedonia.

Coalition of youth organisations SEGA: National platform of youth organizations working on development and implementation of youth policies in Macedonia.

CSO: Civil Society Organization

Cultural Information Zones: Project that foresees installation of information zones at cultural monuments and historic places

Curricula: The aggregate of courses of study given in a school, college, university, etc.

Donor-driven: Implementing activities not under the Organizational Programme and Mission, but under donor priorities in an excessive manner.

E-Democracy: it can broadly be described as the use of new Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) to increase and enhance citizens' engagement in democratic processes.

Entrepreneurial learning Strategy of Macedonia 2014-2020: Strategic document that addresses the challenges with learning and unemployment. It also proposes actions for prosperity and sustainable economic development of the country.

ELET: Abbreviation of Early leaving from education and training

ESA: Employment Service Agency within the Ministry of Labor and Social Policies responsible on local level within municipalities.

EuropeAid: The Commission's Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development (DG DEVCO) is responsible for designing European international cooperation and development policy and delivering aid throughout the world.

DG DEVCO is in charge of development cooperation policy in a wider framework of international cooperation, adapting to the evolving needs of partner countries. This encompasses cooperation with developing countries at different stages of development, including with countries graduated from bilateral development assistance to cover the specific needs of these countries during the transition period between low income countries and upper middle income countries.

European Credit Transfer and accumulation System (ECTS): ECTS is a credit system designed to make it easier for students to move between different countries. Since they are based on the learning achievements and workload of a course, a student can transfer their ECTS credits from one university to another so they are added up to contribute to an individual's degree programme or training.

ECTS helps to make learning more student-centred. It is a central tool in the Bologna Process, which aims to make national systems more compatible. ECTS also helps with the planning, delivery and evaluation of study programmes, and makes them more transparent.

European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET): System that make it easier for people to get validation and recognition of work-related skills and knowledge acquired in different systems and countries – so that they can count towards vocational qualifications; make it more attractive to move between different countries and learning environments; increase the compatibility between the different vocational education and training (VET) systems in place across Europe, and the qualifications they offer; increase the employability of VET graduates and the confidence of employers that each VET qualification requires specific skills and knowledge.

EUROSTAT: Eurostat is the statistical office of the European Union situated in Luxembourg. Its mission is to provide high quality statistics for Europe. While fulfilling its mission, Eurostat promotes the following values: respect and trust, fostering excellence, promoting innovation, service orientation, and professional independence.

Games Without Masks: Theatre festival that aims to encourage people with special needs to be active participants in cultural events.

ILO: International Labor Organization

Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance: is the means by which the EU supports reforms in the 'enlargement countries' with financial and technical help. The IPA funds build up the capacities of the countries throughout the accession process, resulting in progressive, positive developments in the region. For the period 2007-2013 IPA had a budget of some € 11.5 billion; its successor, IPA II, will build on the results already achieved by dedicating € 11.7 billion for the period 2014-2020.

Inclusive and creative : Project that aims to create conditions for development of socially inclusive entrepreneurship and creativity through active inclusion of users of Centers for Mentally and Physically Disabled People.

Inter-Municipal Social Care Centers: Social Care centers in Republic of Macedonia are organized as Centers with inter-municipal responsibilities, responsible for two or more municipalities with established local branches.

Integral Evaluation: An act or instance of primary assessment of judgment about the amount, number, or value of processes, events etc.

Lokomotiva - Centre for New Initiative in Arts and Culture: Non-profit organization that acts as a platform for education, reflection, discussions, creative projects and critical thinking.

Ministry of culture: Ministry within the Government of the Republic of Macedonia dealing with promoting and developing culture in the country.

MLSP: Ministry of Labor and Social Policy.

Mortality rate of Children: Or Child mortality, also known as under-5 mortality or child death, refers to the death of infants and children under the age of five or between the age of one month to four years. The first is an age-specific mortality rate for children less than 5 years of age. It is calculated: or number of deaths per 1000 per year or number of deaths per 1000 per month.

Mortality Rate of Mothers: Or maternal death, is the death of a woman while pregnant or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy, irrespective of the duration and site of the pregnancy, from any cause related to or aggravated by the pregnancy or its management but not from accidental or incidental causes. The maternal mortality ratio can be calculated by dividing recorded (or estimated) number of maternal deaths by total recorded (or estimated) number of live births in the same period and multiplying by 100,000.

NA: National Agency, most of the time it refers to National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility

National gallery of Republic of Macedonia: Art gallery that collects, protects and preserves the country's art heritage and provides support and information sources and services to students and researchers.

National programme for development of education in Republic of Macedonia 2005-2015: Documents that sets the rules for development and advancement of knowledge, as well as the culture of living of the citizens.

National Strategy for development of culture 2013-2017: Strategic document used to define the objectives and priorities for the development of culture in the given period, as well as the organizational, financial and administrative measures for its realization.

National Strategy for development of e-content: Strategic document that aims to ensure a realization of the purposes of the programme "Computer for every child" and other initiatives for technological development.

National Qualifications Framework (NQF): is a formal system describing qualifications. 47 countries participating in the Bologna Process are committed to producing a national qualifications framework. Other countries not part of this process also have national qualifications frameworks.

NEET: Young people neither in employment nor in education or training.

NYS: National Youth Strategy - Strategic document used to define the strategic priorities and key challenges that youth faces, as well as the long-term aims presented through thematic areas.

OP: Operational Plan.

Public house: Centre for companies, organizations and individuals that offers a place for co-working and organizing events.

Public kitchen: Social Service Public venue for homeless people and people in need under the Inter-Municipal Social Care Centers that provides warm meals on daily basis.

Re-forestation: The process of replanting an area with trees.

SME: Small and Medium Enterprises

Strategy for development of creative industries in Republic of Macedonia: Strategic document which defines the challenges and opportunities for development of creative industries in the country.

Strategy for youth of City of Skopje 2014-2018: Strategic document created to identify the challenges and priorities of youth and to propose new measures for overcoming the challenges.

Subsidized: Financial Support to activities, organizations or individuals

The Ball of Diversities: Event that aims to include people with special needs in cultural initiatives and to raise awareness about social inclusion.

The National and University Library "Sv. Kliment Ohridski: Institution that collects, processes, protects and preserves the country's cultural heritage and provides support and information sources and services to students and researchers.

The Ohrid Framework Agreement: Document that consists of agreed framework for securing the future of Macedonia's democracy and permitting the development of closer and more integrated relations between the Republic of Macedonia and the Euro-Atlantic community. It promotes the peaceful and harmonious development of civil society while respecting the ethnic identity and the interests of all Macedonian citizens.

The Strategy for Roma people in Macedonia 2014-2020: Strategic document that identifies the existing policies for social inclusion and integration of all ethnic groups and proposes measures for further work on social inclusion of Roma people.

UNDP: United Nations Development Program.

Unit for Labor Market: Department of Labor Market within the Ministry of Labor and Social Policies.

VET: Abbreviation Vocation Education and Training.

VNFIL: Abbreviation of Validation of non-formal and informal learning.

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