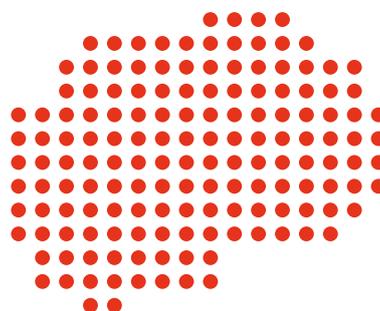


Social Rights Monitor

2021

Country Monitor: North Macedonia



Throughout 2020, North Macedonia continued its efforts to deliver concrete and sustainable improvements in the rule of law, the fight against corruption and organised crime, and public administration. However, the Covid-19 pandemic did not spare the Western Balkans region in general or North Macedonia in particular. Therefore, some of the advances made in the last decade were reversed due to the difficult socio-economic period resulting from the pandemic. **The crisis has left its mark on both the economic and social fabrics of the country, and positive trends in employment and income were reversed.** Despite the adoption of the 2019-2021 Transparency Strategy, corruption is still prevalent in many areas of public administration, and a more active approach is needed from public authorities.¹

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Since its application in 2004, North Macedonia has been on a path towards European Union membership. Negotiations with the EU are among the Macedonian government's priorities and feature² in "Action Plan 18: Building a State according to European Rules".³ The country is aiming to build independent institutions and to combat organised crime, corruption, and the violation of human rights and freedoms.⁴

¹ European Commission (2020) North Macedonia 2020 Report: https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/north_macedonia_report_2020.pdf

² Government of the Republic of Macedonia, Government Strategic Priorities: <https://vlada.mk/node/18029?ln=en-gb>

³ Government of the Republic of Macedonia, Action Plan 18: <https://vlada.mk/plan18>

⁴ Government of the Republic of Macedonia, Government Strategic Priority 6: <https://vlada.mk/node/18059>

	2018	2019	2020	EU-27 2020
GINI index⁵	31.9	30.7	/	30.1
Unemployment⁶	20.8%	17.3%	16.4%	6.3%
Gender Equality Index⁷	N/A	N/A	N/A	67.9 (2020)
In-work poverty⁸	8.7%	8.4%	/	9.2%
Housing Overcrowding⁹	46.4%	43.5%	/	15.6%
CIVICUS Civic Space Monitor¹⁰	NARROWED	NARROWED	NARROWED	N/A

Selected indicators on the state of social rights in Europe

Missing data for 2020 are not available at the time of publication of the Social Rights Monitor 2021.

Equal opportunities and access to the labour market

The government of North Macedonia recently adopted three packages of policy measures to cope with the negative consequences of Covid-19, which are likely to have a long-term impact on the country. The measures mainly aim to address four identified risks: the spread of infection; economic consequences such as income loss and deterioration in quality of life for the most vulnerable citizens; the risk of unfair access to services; and the deterioration of the learning process.¹¹

SOLIDAR's National Strategy Group (NSG) for North Macedonia reports that the government

devised two types of policy interventions to prevent income loss and maintain citizens' quality of life. The first aimed to protect jobs and liquidity at the most affected companies and included subsidizing private-sector wages and social contributions, the deferral of profit-tax prepayments, loans on favourable terms, loan guarantees, and some sector-specific support. The second aimed to maintain social stability for the most vulnerable citizens by increasing their access to services and relaxing their eligibility criteria for guaranteed minimum assistance (GMA) and for unemployment benefit. The relaxation of criteria for obtaining unemployment

5 Eurostat (2021). Gini coefficient of equivalised disposable income: http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?lang=en&dataset=ilc_di12

6 Eurostat (2021). Unemployment by sex and age: annual data: https://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=unert_a&lang=en

7 European Institute for Gender Equality (2021). Gender Equality Index: <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-equality-index/2020>

8 Eurostat (2021). In-work at-risk-of-poverty-rate : <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/tespm070/default/table?lang=en>

9 Eurostat (2021). Overcrowding rate by age, sex and poverty status – total population: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/ilc_lvho05a/default/table?lang=en

10 CIVICUS (2021). Civic Space Monitor: <https://monitor.civicus.org/country/macedonia/>

11 UNICEF (2020) North Macedonia Rapid Analysis and Policy Proposals: <https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/media/6816/file/Study:%20Social%20and%20Economic%20Effects%20of%20COVID-19.pdf>

benefit is seen positively by the NSG, because it expanded eligibility to all individuals who lost their jobs for any cause in March and April 2020, and it provided them with at least some sort of income.

EDUCATION AND YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

In 2018, the Macedonian Ministry of Education and Science introduced a Strategy for Education 2018-2025 and an Action Plan, aimed at improving different areas of education, training, and research in order to strengthen Macedonia's economy and society.¹² Despite its adoption, concrete results are not yet visible: the country continues to lag behind both the European and Western Balkans averages.¹³

Overall, the most pressing issue remains the large gap between students from different socio-economic backgrounds. This is evident from PISA indicators,¹⁴ which show that educational performance in North Macedonia is inequitable. Moreover, gender and socio-economic divides result in a decline in performance between educational and vocational programmes: male students are 1.4 times more likely to attend vocational education and training programmes than female, and students from a disadvantaged household are 2.3 times more likely to attend vocational education. The pandemic added pressure and stress to the whole education community, but young people were particularly affected by increasing insecurity and unclear protocols for completing their degrees. This resulted in

difficult transitions between educational levels¹⁵ and intensified psychosocial risks.

A report published by Eurofund confirms the downward trends in the education system in North Macedonia, reporting that its 5.3 quality rating for education is the lowest among all surveyed countries.¹⁶ Most worryingly, the International Labour Organization (ILO) reports that workers with a secondary education degree in North Macedonia are disproportionately represented among the unemployed, particularly the long-term unemployed.¹⁷ It points out important challenges lying ahead for the country's education system. The National Strategy Group therefore calls for the government to improve the quality of public secondary and vocational education and to address skills mismatches.

The Covid-19 pandemic steadily increased the vulnerability of young people. As the National Strategy Group reports, young people are normally employed under employment contracts that offer only weak protection and make them particularly vulnerable to precarious employment situations. Young people in education and training have to maintain their motivation for learning by overcoming the inequalities in the education system.

Youth employment has increased 30% since 2013,¹⁸ but this gain is mainly the result of the decreasing demographic trend in the young population, and of the high level of emigration of young workers to EU countries.¹⁹ One out of four people who lost their jobs during the pandemic is below 29 years old, according to official statistics. But the

12 Ministry of Education and Science (2018) Education Strategy and Action Plan 2018-2025: <https://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/sites/default/files/ressources/macedonia-education-strategy-for-2018-2025-and-action-plan-strategija-za-obrazovanie-eng-web-1.pdf> / in Macedonian: https://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/sites/default/files/ressources/macedonia-strategija-za-obrazovanie-2018-2025-mak-web_0.pdf / In Albanian: https://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/sites/default/files/ressources/strategija-za-obrazovanie-alb-web_0.pdf

13 Considering OECD PISA indicators.

14 OECD (2021) Education in North Macedonia: https://pisa.oecd.org/north_macedonia/#section-02

15 EAPN (2020), North Macedonia Poverty Watch 2020: <https://www.eapn.eu/poverty-watch-north-macedonia-poverty-watches-overview-2020/>

16 Eurofund, (2019) Living and Working in North Macedonia

17 ILO (2020), Rapid Assessment of the Employment Impacts and Policy Responses: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/-/europe/---ro-geneva/---sro-budapest/documents/publication/wcms_746124.pdf

18 Ibid.

19 Majhosev, A., (2019) Working Life in North Macedonia, University of Goce Delchev, Štip, North Macedonia

proportion is likely higher, since illegal workers were not counted, and the majority of them are very young. The pandemic increased the country's already-high youth unemployment rate to 35%, which is now one of the highest in Europe. According to the government, some of the funds received by the European Union to mitigate the consequences of the Covid-19 crisis will be used to tackle youth unemployment.

INCLUSION OF MIGRANTS

The majority of third-country nationals who apply for international protection in the EU arrive through the Western Balkan region, particularly from Turkey to Greece, from where many then go to North Macedonia. The southern border, particularly the area of Bogorodica, is a notable zone for arrivals,²⁰ due to its geostrategic position. North Macedonia is therefore both a transit and a destination country for migrant people, and its government needs to develop good policies and procedures to deal with the high influx and to ensure social inclusion for migrants and asylum seekers. Without adequate knowledge, skills, and practical tools for recognising the rights and needs of migrants and refugees, North Macedonia may not be able to ensure adequate social standards for its wider society.

Despite the importance of the topic for North Macedonia, **the Migrant Integration Policy Index's²¹ latest analysis reports that no legal changes or major improvements have occurred in North Macedonia's integration policy since 2015.** This stands in contrast to

the regional trend, in which integration policies have become more effective in neighbouring countries Albania, Croatia, and Serbia.²² There are still major obstacles in the labour market and to educational opportunities, access to healthcare and nationality, and political participation. Foreign citizens are not informed, consulted, or allowed to vote or join political parties. Immigrants therefore have basic rights but do not enjoy full and equal opportunities.²³

The inclusion of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers is not currently one of the Macedonian government's priorities,²⁴ nor is it expected to be soon. The National Strategy Group calls for a national ad-hoc strategy to be developed soon, in order to tackle and mitigate the negative consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic on the most vulnerable groups in society, such as migrants. According to the 2020 ILO assessment of the pandemic's impact on employment in the country, migrant workers are particularly exposed to job losses and income reductions. Without policies directly addressing migrants, the group is not only highly vulnerable, but also less visible.

WORKING CONDITIONS

In North Macedonia, the average net monthly salary corresponds to MKD 22,142 (€357.28 as of May 2019).²⁵ Among the candidate countries to join the EU, North Macedonia has a national minimum wage, of €343.28.²⁶ The minimum wage was introduced in 2017, with the object of reducing in-work poverty and inequality. A 2019 ILO assessment of the consequences of

20 European Commission (2020), Action Document (North Macedonia) on the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance II, 2014-2020: https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/default/files/annexes/2020_ad2_eu_for_improved_border_and_migration_management.pdf

21 MIPEX measures integration policies across all the European Member States and other countries, such as North Macedonia. Policy indicators have been chosen to create a picture of migrants' opportunities to participate in society. See MIPEX Website: <https://www.mipex.eu/>

22 MIPEX (2020), North Macedonia: <https://www.mipex.eu/macedonia-fyrom>

23 Ibid.

24 Government of the Republic of North Macedonia (2019) Strategic priorities 2019-2021: <https://vlada.mk/node/18029?ln=en-gb>

25 Eurofund (2020) Living and Working in North Macedonia: <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/nb/country/north-macedonia#pay>

26 Eurostat (2021) Monthly minimum wages – Bi-annual data: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/earn_mw_cur/default/table?lang=en

the minimum wage found overall positive effects on living standards. It mostly benefitted low-wage workers, therefore contributing to an “equalisation” of wages. Thanks to this reform, North Macedonia has lower wage inequality than the European average.²⁷

During the last decade, the Macedonian labour market has performed well, with growing participation rates, increasing employment, and decreasing unemployment. Nevertheless, **the Covid-19 pandemic dramatically hit the labour market, and the employment rate – which rose from 44% in 2011 to 54.7% in 2019 – fell by 6 percentage points to 47.1% in the first quarter of 2021.**²⁸

GENDER EQUALITY AND WORK-LIFE BALANCE

In North Macedonia, the protection of gender equality lies within the mandate of the government’s Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. In the parliament, the Commission on the Rights of Women and Men discusses and approves any proposal on gender equality. Gender equality was mentioned in the 1991 constitution as a fundamental value, and discrimination has been a criminal offence since 1996.²⁹ Moreover, the main legislation covering gender equality issues, which was adopted in 2012, is considered too weak.

In 2019, the European Institute for Gender Equality published its latest report on North Macedonia, which said that gender inequality is still significant. This is particularly the case regarding equal pay and time dedicated to the care of young, elderly, and disabled people and to housekeeping activities. The report highlighted women’s weak position, in particular when it comes to accessing financial resources.³⁰

The biggest improvement was achieved through the Macedonian Action Plan for Gender Equality 2018-2020,³¹ which introduced training to include gender-sensitive indicators in all the programmes developed by the government. This training was compulsory for all civil servants responsible for strategic planning in ministries. However, **the European Commission’s 2021 report on non-discrimination in North Macedonia said the country’s main legislation³² on gender equality was too weak³³ in its enforcement procedures. Moreover, one of the main concerns in the report was that the terms “gender” and “sex” are not used in an inclusive way in the law.** This de facto diminished transgender people’s visibility and excluded transgender women from protection against discrimination, especially at work.

A new law on gender-based violence was adopted on 29 January 2021,³⁴ entering into force in May 2021. The law is a positive step in the

27 ILO (2019), Assessment of the economic impacts of the 2017 increase in the minimum wage in North Macedonia: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---europe/---ro-geneva/---sro-budapest/documents/publication/wcms_714892.pdf

28 Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, (2021), Active Population: https://www.stat.gov.mk/PrikaziSoopstenie_en.aspx?rbrtxt=98

29 Constitution of the Republic of North Macedonia / Устав на Република Северна Македонија www.sobranie.mk/the-constitution-of-the-republic-of-macedonia.nsp.

30 EIGE (2019) North Macedonia country report: <https://eige.europa.eu/north-macedonia>

31 Government of the Republic of North Macedonia (2018) Periodic Report on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/MKD/INT_CEDAW_STA_MKD_32920_E.pdf

32 Gender Equality Law, (2012), Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, 6/2012, 30/2013, 166/2014, 150/2015.

33 European Commission, DG JUST D.2 Gender Equality (2021) Country report on gender equality – North Macedonia 2021: https://epi.org.mk/wp-content/uploads/2021-MK-GE-country-report_final-for-web.pdf

34 Law on prevention and protection from violence against women and domestic violence / Закон за спречување и заштита од насилство врз жените и семејното насилство. Official Gazette, No. 24/2021. <https://ldbis.pravda.gov.mk/PregledNaZakon.aspx?id=54941>

implementation of the Istanbul Convention, particularly for its introduction of free legal aid (Article 97), reparations, and support for mediation in court proceedings and for female victims of gender-based violence. Nevertheless, while the law takes some good steps forward, it also strictly defines sex as the “physical characteristics of an individual, according to which

sex is therefore assigned at birth, due to physical reproductive organs.” This definition de facto excludes transgender women from protection and support. It is the main point that the country report on gender equality – which was issued by the European network of legal experts in gender equality and non-discrimination – advises should be changed.³⁵

Social protection and inclusion

Due to the pandemic, the North Macedonian unemployment rate and public debt are likely to increase for the months to come. This is likely to have a strong impact on long-term social protection and security schemes of the country. During the most difficult months of 2020, the government tried to put in place public policies to protect key and vulnerable groups that were severely hit by the pandemic and its containment measures.

The government introduced price controls for basic and necessary goods during the pandemic: the maximum prices of food, medicines, and sanitising products were fixed by public authorities.³⁶ Moreover, in April 2020, a new³⁷ unemployment insurance system was introduced to cover workers who lost their jobs due to the pandemic. The monthly allowance provided was not always enough to cover basic needs, as it corresponded to half of the average monthly wage over the last two years. But a significant improvement came with the

adoption of the Decree Implementing the Law on Employment and Unemployment Insurance during a State of Emergency.³⁸ It extended the eligibility criteria for the insurance to all workers who had lost their jobs due to Covid-19 between March to May 2020, regardless of their length of service. On the other hand, and despite a growing unemployment rate, the measure was not prolonged, leaving many unemployed people in a difficult socio-economic situation.³⁹ The number of beneficiaries of unemployment compensation increased by 76% in May 2020, but they decreased at the end of June 2020, due to⁴⁰ the reintroduction of rigid criteria. A research group led by the University of Skopje and the European Social Policy Network has identified rigid criteria as the most explicit gap in North Macedonia’s social protection system. Self-employed people are excluded from the unemployment allowance, as are workers whose contract was terminated as a result of a mutual agreement with the employer.

35 European Commission, DG JUST D.2 Gender Equality (2021) Country report on gender equality – North Macedonia 2021: https://epi.org.mk/wp-content/uploads/2021-MK-GE-country-report_final-for-web.pdf

36 OECD (2020) The Covid-19 Crisis in North Macedonia: <https://www.oecd.org/south-east-europe/COVID-19-Crisis-in-North-Macedonia-archive.pdf>

37 ILO (2020), Rapid Assessment of the Employment Impacts and Policy Responses: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/-/europe/---ro-geneva/---sro-budapest/documents/publication/wcms_746124.pdf

38 Official Gazette No. 136 from 27.05.2020

39 Gerovska Mitev, M. R. (2021). North Macedonia: Unemployment insurance in response to COVID-19, ESPN Flash Report 2021/20, European Social Policy Network (ESPN), Brussels: European Commission: <https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=23904&langId=en>

40 Petreski, M., Petreski, B., TomovskaMisoška, A., Gerovska Mitev, M., Parnardzieva-Zmejškova, M., Dimkovski, V. and Morgan, N. (2020). COVID-19’s effects on children in North Macedonia: Rapid analysis and policy proposals, Skopje: UNICEF

GOOD PRACTICE

Local Heroes

The Community Development Institute (CDI) and the Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund (ASB) have organised volunteers called “local heroes” to provide fundamental services to people in need. First, a collection of food and hygiene items was organised. This was soon followed by the distribution of electrical devices, face masks, and visors during the most difficult phases of the pandemic.⁴¹ Moreover, volunteers helped to support people with disabilities and to disinfect the public areas of residential neighbourhoods. They also donated meals for hospitalised patients. The organisations gathered workers and volunteers in North Macedonia that could help with the collection and distribution of emergency materials to families in need. In particular, they helped people who were unemployed due to the pandemic or could not go outside because of Covid-19 restrictions and quarantines.

JUST TRANSITION TO A GREEN ECONOMY

To achieve a just transition, the country has been focusing on harmonisation with European standards, but in the last decade improvements in environmental policy consisted only of amendments to existing Macedonian legislation. North Macedonia holds reserves of coal, and in February 2021 the European Commission launched a new initiative to support the green transition in the Western Balkans,⁴²

which will support North Macedonia’s decision to reduce and progressively abandon coal-based energy production by 2028. As identified in the Social Rights Monitor 2020, one of the main challenges remains the design of implementation strategies. The Commission’s initiative will rely on the exchange of practices and a region-wide dialogue. Moreover, through a so-called “coal academy”, it will provide training in implementation strategies and governance.

According to the National Strategy Group, a lot remains yet to be done, and there is still a lack of concrete action towards a just transition.

HEALTHCARE

Aside from the challenges posed by the pandemic, North Macedonia faced other major issues related to access to healthcare in 2020, and these will likely continue. **According to the World Health Organisation, every fourth person in the country will be over 65 in 20 years’ time.**⁴³ That means the government needs to quickly organise integrated services for older people and to prepare social- and health-related policies to avoid pressure on the country’s social protection system and on the younger generation. Another major issue faced by North Macedonia is the severe lack of healthcare personnel: just one out of three physicians are primary-care practitioners, and many are leaving the country every day, especially for other European countries.

Moreover, health literacy and preventive public services are reported to be under resourced, while tobacco consumption, obesity, and air pollution are prevailing risks for diseases including cancer.⁴⁴

41 CDI, ASB (2020) Local Hero initiative: Food https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UfH4_1RDo2w&list=PLWxlixz7euws9WteF0LWlcMkcpxFVYZsA, Computers: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hqZno9i2PgY&list=PLWxlixz7euws9WteF0LWlcMkcpxFVYZsA&index=2>

42 European Commission (2021) Initiative for coal regions in transition in the Western Balkans and Ukraine. https://ec.europa.eu/energy/topics/oil-gas-and-coal/coal-regions-in-the-western-balkans-and-ukraine/initiative-coal-regions-transition-western-balkans-and-ukraine_en

43 WHO (2021) Older people and access to health care in North Macedonia. <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/339644/9789289055420-eng.pdf>

44 Ibid.

Civic space

According to the CIVICUS monitor, civic space in North Macedonia has not improved and remains “narrowed”. Nevertheless, positive steps for the active involvement of civil society organisations were introduced by the 2018-2020 Action Plan for the Cooperation between the Government and Civil Society. The National Strategy Group welcomes the initiatives but points out that civil society and its representatives demand consultations that are more meaningful and timely.

FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION

The Macedonian National Strategy Group reports that the legal framework for the freedom of association is defined by the Law on Citizen Associations and Foundations, passed in 1998. According to this, an association of citizens can be established by five adult citizens of the Republic of Macedonia. A foundation can be established by one or more founders. Recently, the registration procedure was simplified after the law was harmonized with the European Law on One-Stop-Shop System.⁴⁵ The procedure for registering a CSO was transferred from the courts to the Central Register Office, making it simpler and quicker: it can now be done within five days of completion of the required documentation.⁴⁶

The NSG reports that the constitutional guarantees of freedom of assembly are generally well protected and respected. However, protests are typically monitored by riot police. In June 2018, a protest in Skopje against the Prespa Agreement turned violent

when police fired tear gas and flash grenades into a crowd to disperse a demonstration. However, the situation can be encouraging, as in June 2019, when North Macedonia hosted its first Pride parade in the capital Skopje. While conservative religious and nationalist groups opposed the event, it took place peacefully and exceeded attendance expectations. Some representatives of parliament and the government joined the Pride parade, raising hopes for the public agenda of LGBTQI+ demands and priorities.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

The country’s constitution protects the freedom of expression for all citizens. **The government has made progress in respecting media freedom and freedom of expression, but problems remain, including weak media independence and violence against and intimidation of journalists.** CIVICUS Monitor reported violence and physical attacks on an LGBTQI+ activist in 2020, as well as rape and death threats against a female activist on social media. Moreover, the National Network against Hate Speech in Media was launched in January 2021, led by the Media Ethics Council and supported by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). The network comprises 17 entities, including media and journalistic associations, civil society organisations, government representatives, and other relevant stakeholders. The network will undertake awareness-raising activities and events to increase knowledge of the topic and its visibility.

45 The “one-stop-shop” principle, together with the consistency mechanism, is one of the central pillars of the proposed General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

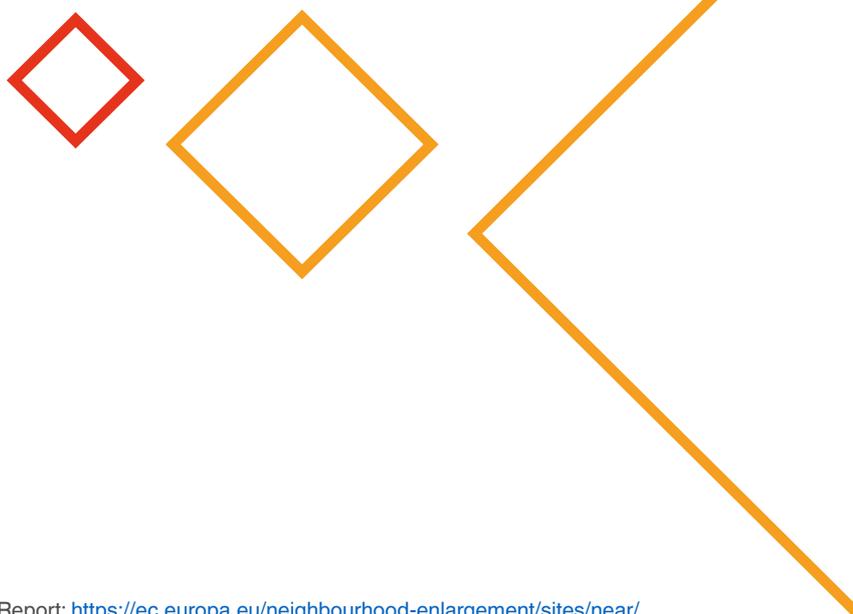
46 Balkans Civil Society Development Network – Legal framework law on freedom of association: <https://www.balkancsd.net/civil-dialogue/macedonia/legal-framework-law-on-freedom-of-association-incl-foundations-and-its-regulation/>

SOCIAL AND CIVIL DIALOGUE

Social dialogue in North Macedonia remains weak, and limited progress was made in 2020. Despite tripartite consultation structures established in 12 Municipalities,⁴⁷ raising awareness of social dialogue, the utilisation of the Local Economic and Social Councils (ESC) is not yet effective⁴⁸ and requires further support. Indeed, the Macedonian social dialogue bodies were established in 1996 (and confirmed in 2010)⁴⁹ and can therefore be considered as young compared to those in some EU member states. The exchange of experiences and good practices with social partners from other countries would therefore benefit their effectiveness and Macedonian society more broadly. At the

same time, trade unions need to enhance and promote their visibility, membership, relevance, and capacity to act at local and national level.

In one of its latest publications on social dialogue in North Macedonia, the ILO expresses its concerns that out of the six working bodies of the national ESC, only one is working regularly – the Tripartite Commission for Licensing of Conciliators and Arbitrators.⁵⁰ The other working groups – on labour relations and wages, on social protection, on occupational health and safety, and on employment policies – are not meeting or delivering concrete results. However, these groups are needed for the country to achieve better employment and working conditions.



47 European Commission, (2020) North Macedonia 2020 Report: https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/north_macedonia_report_2020.pdf

48 ILO (2021) Strengthening social dialogue in North Macedonia, description of the project: https://www.ilo.org/budapest/what-we-do/projects/WCMS_679543/lang--en/index.htm

49 The first tripartite agreement of 1996 was signed by trade unions, the government, and the economic chambers. It was only in 2010 that the Organisation of Employers of Macedonia ORM entered the agreement, together with the two trade unions federations SSM and KSS, and established the Economic and Social Councils as they are known today.

50 ILO (2020) Towards effective and functional social dialogue in North Macedonia: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---europe/---ro-geneva/---sro-budapest/documents/publication/wcms_744279.pdf

SOLIDAR's Social Rights Monitor 2021 has been developed in the framework of the **Together for Social Europe** programme co-funded by the EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI). It provides an insight into the state of social rights in 16 European countries. The Monitor assesses the state of social Europe in terms of equality of opportunities, fair working conditions, social protection, inclusion and civic space based on the observations of Civil Society Organisations working on the ground in combination with statistical data and scientific findings. This information is provided by National Strategy Groups that are set up in each of the 16 countries by a SOLIDAR member or partner. The 2021 Monitor also analyses to which extent civil society and social partners have been involved in the design of the national Recovery and Resilience Plans, integrated in the 2021 European Semester cycle.

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