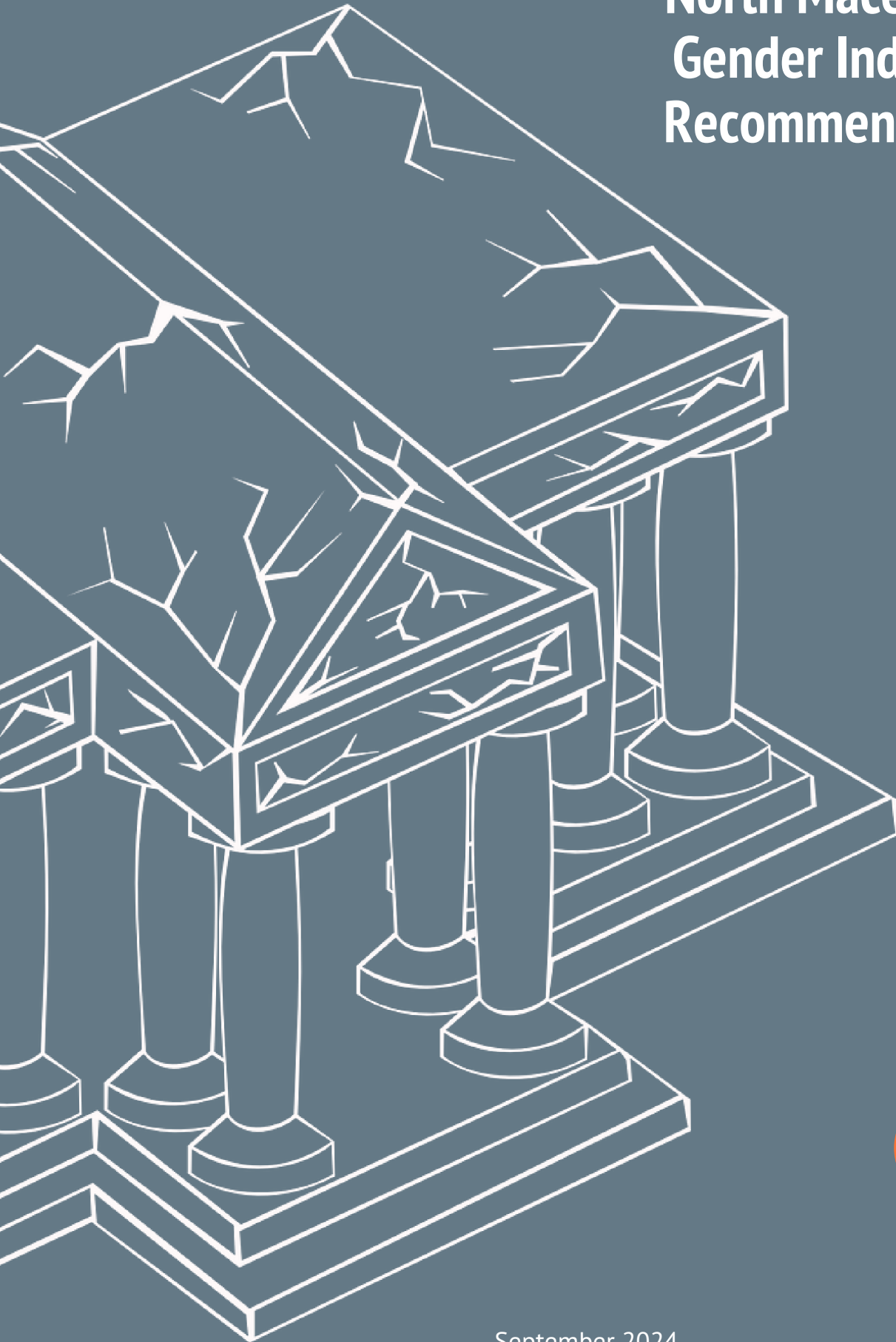


# National Integrity System Assessment North Macedonia: Gender Indicators Recommendations



Publisher: Transparency International - Macedonia

Expert assistance for gender recommendations: Penelopa Gjurchilova PhD

\* The analysis based on the gender indicators from the National Integrity System Assessment was done in 2023



**Funded by  
the European Union**



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

**Swiss Agency for Development  
and Cooperation SDC**

**This policy brief was prepared within the project: “EU4 Rule of Law: Citizen Engagement for Public Integrity (CEPI) in the Western Balkans and Turkey” financed by the European Union and the Government of Switzerland. Its contents are the sole responsibility of Transparency International – Macedonia and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union and the Government of Switzerland.**

## Contents

<b>1. Introduction.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Situation as per the NIS Report.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3. Improvement of the gender representation in the NIS in the Republic of North Macedonia: Developed recommendations.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3.1. Legislature.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3.2. Executive.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3.3. Judiciary.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>3.4. Public Prosecutor.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>3.5. Public sector.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>3.6. Law-enforcement agencies.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>3.7. Electoral Management Body.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>3.8. Ombudsperson.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>3.9. State Audit Institution.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>3.10. Anti-corruption agencies.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>3.11. Political Parties.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>3.12. Media.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>3.13. Civil society.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>3.14. Business.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>4. Conclusion.....</b>	<b>23</b>

## ▶ 1. Introduction

At the beginning of 2024, Transparency International – Macedonia published the report: “National Integrity System Assessment North Macedonia”, which contains an analysis of the situation of the 15 pillars of the national integrity system<sup>[1]</sup> in relation to corruption and the effectiveness of national efforts to deal with corruption.

The NIS Report was prepared during 2022 and 2023 within the project “EU4 Rule of Law: Citizen Engagement for Public Integrity (CEPI) in the Western Balkans and Turkey”, which was funded by the European Union and the Government of Switzerland. Transparency International developed the NIS as part of its holistic approach to combating corruption evaluating the legal basis and the actual performance of institutions relevant to the overall anti-corruption system.

Within this Report, for the first time, there is a gender sensitivity analysis with recommendations conducted for the 14 pillars<sup>[2]</sup> which are very relevant for the country’s integrity system. The analysis was conducted according to a methodology prepared by Transparency International. Gender sensitivity was one of the indicators to analyse the work of the 14 out of 15 pillars on which overall assessment was conducted.

## ▶ 2. Situation as per the NIS Report

The National Integrity System (NIS) encompass all main governance institutions in a country responsible for the fight against corruption. These governance institutions should be well- functioning to constitute a healthy and robust national integrity system, effective in combating corruption as part of the larger struggle against the abuse of power, misconduct and misappropriation in all its forms.<sup>[3]</sup> However, when these institutions are characterized by a lack of appropriate regulations and by unaccountable and unsanctioned behaviour, there is a room for different level of corruption, with adverse ripple effects on the societal goals of equitable growth, sustainable development and social cohesion. The NIS assessment has shown that there is a need to have strengthened integrity system to promote improved governance and just society for all.

The newly introduced gender indicators in the NIS assessment for the Republic of North Macedonia have highlighted that, despite decades long work on gender equality in all segments in the society coupled with a developed and improved legal framework for gender equality, there is still a long road to go to arrive at gender sensitive, non-discriminatory institutions and practices that benefit all citizens of the country.

---

[1] 1.Legislature, 2.Executive, 3.Judiciary, 4.Public Prosecutor, 5.Public Sector, 6.Law Enforcement Agencies, 7.Electoral Management Body, 8.Ombudsperson, 9.Supreme Audit Institution, 10.Anti-Corruption Agencies, 11.Political Parties, 12.Media, 13.Civil Society, 14.Business and 15.State Owned Enterprises.

[2] Pillar 15, State Owned Enterprises were not assessed on gender equality.

[3] NIS Report, NIS Assessment North Macedonia Report, 2024.

## ▶ 3. Improvement of the gender representation in the NIS in the Republic of North Macedonia: Developed recommendations

### ▶ 3.1. Legislature

Score: 75/100

For the parliamentary elections in 2024, the law mandates a minimum of 40 per cent representation of either gender on each candidate list. All registered candidate lists met the gender requirements. While women comprised 43 per cent of all parliamentary candidates, they were often placed in the lowest positions allowed by the law, and women candidates headed only 25 per cent of the lists. The political parties featured few women speakers at campaign events, and parties appeared to make little effort to engage women voters. Issues related to gender equality were largely absent from campaign discourse. One of the two candidates in the presidential run-off was a woman.<sup>[4]</sup>

In the composition of the Parliament for the period 2020-2024, 46 of the 123 representatives are women or 38.33 per cent. One of the three vice-presidents of the Assembly is a woman, while the general secretary is a woman.

An analysis developed by the OSCE found continuous improvement of women's representation in the Assembly in the past 20 years.<sup>[5]</sup> A group of women parliamentarians was established in 2003 to promote the active participation of women in the decision-making process and in society in general.<sup>[6]</sup> The Assembly also has a Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men. The committee developed a draft proposal in 2020-2021 for enhancing the gender sensitivity of the Assembly.

It is recommended that the gender mainstreaming activities undertaken before, during and after elections are enhanced in order not only to abide by the legal provisions but to meaningfully engage women and young women in the political intercourse well before elections to be visible and their expertise and knowledge evident for the voters to make an informed choices enhancing the visibility of women candidates.

In addition, it is recommended that the placement of women on the election lists is improved and that more women are placed in the upper part of the election lists with more women heading the lists.

It is recommended that political parties increase women engagement at meaningful positions in the parties' bodies and make them visible in the media and on the social platforms to showcase their potential and experience and attract more voters.

It is recommended that the media is sensitized to portrait women politicians regularly in equal proportion (as much as possible) as men politicians and play an active role in empowering women consistently.

---

[4] Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions, ODIHR INTERNATIONAL ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSION Republic of North Macedonia – Parliamentary Elections and Presidential Election Second Round, 8 May 2024.

[5] OSCE, Gender equality is important, page 35, to be found at: <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/d/3/500995.pdf>

[6] Club of Women MPs: <https://www.sobranie.mk/detali-na-klub.nsp?groupId=c547f202-efee-4bd8-a01b-46e04c3849e0>

It is recommended that there is consistent and continuous capacity building for each new Parliament, for both women and men Members of Parliament, on gender equality, gender mainstreaming, analysing laws and policies from gender perspective as well as on gender responsive budgeting, media and online platforms presence and usage.

Considering the rising online violence against women politicians and the ones who are running or hold elected office (at legislative, executive and judicial levels), there should be continuous training and awareness raising campaigns for women on how to deal and overcome the online (and offline) threats that are being sent to them increasingly.

## ▶ 3.2. Executive

Legal provisions exist and in practice are routinely followed. A strategy to promote equal participation of women is in place and but only around one-third of the members of the executive are women.

Score: 75/100

The legal framework that guarantees gender equality in the RNM is regulated by the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men,<sup>[7]</sup> and gender equality is provided for in numerous other regulations such as the Law on Prevention and Protection from Discrimination, the Law on Labor Relations, the Law on Budgets, and national strategies for gender equality are adopted. In 2020, a new Law on Prevention and Protection from Discrimination was adopted.<sup>[8]</sup>

In 2022, according to the administrative servants from the government, out of a total of 272 employees, 168 (61.76 per cent) are women and 104 (38.24 per cent) are men.<sup>[9]</sup> In ministries, there are 2,214 women and 2,521 men. The government prepares an annual report on the activities undertaken and the progress achieved for the establishment of equal opportunities for women and men in the general secretariat.<sup>[10]</sup> However, in total, there are four women ministers, compared to 12 men who are ministers. In the government (2022), 19 per cent of ministers, 12 per cent of deputy ministers and 36 per cent of state secretaries are women.<sup>[11]</sup> In 2023, this was 25 per cent of ministers, 31 per cent of deputy ministers, and 29 per cent of state secretaries were women. Women held 15 per cent of the executive positions in different government bodies and agencies. Women represented 56.29 per cent of all public service employees, according to the register of public sector employees.<sup>[12]</sup>

---

[7] The first National Strategy for Gender Equality 2013-2020 Official V. of RM. no: 27/2013 of 22.02.2013. In 2022, the Assembly adopted the second national strategy for gender equality 2022-2027, Official Gazette of the RSM no. 170/2020, which defines the strategic priorities of the state in terms of gender equality and the establishment of equal opportunities. It is significant to mention that for the first time this strategy defines a strategic goal and activities related to gender equality and climate change in particular, with notes related to the environment and pollution as well as help and support to women from rural areas, especially women farmers.

[8] Law on Prevention and Protection from Discrimination, Official Gazette of RM No. 258/2020

[9] Report from the Register of Public Sector Employees for 2022,

[https://mioa.gov.mk/sites/default/files/pbl\\_files/documents/reports/finalen\\_izveshtaj\\_za\\_2022\\_godina\\_30.03.2022\\_godina.pdf](https://mioa.gov.mk/sites/default/files/pbl_files/documents/reports/finalen_izveshtaj_za_2022_godina_30.03.2022_godina.pdf), p.33.

[10] Annual report on activities undertaken and progress achieved for the establishment of equal opportunities for women and men in the general secretariat of the government for 2021. [https://vlada.mk/sites/default/files/dokumenti/godishen\\_izveshtaj\\_-\\_rodova\\_ednakvost\\_1.01.-31.12.2021\\_6.06.2022.pdf](https://vlada.mk/sites/default/files/dokumenti/godishen_izveshtaj_-_rodova_ednakvost_1.01.-31.12.2021_6.06.2022.pdf)

[11] Report on North Macedonia for 2022: [https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/document/download/48ba61f0-41ae-4cff-9517-29fac190f4bd\\_en?filename=North%20Macedonia%20Report%202022.pdf](https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/document/download/48ba61f0-41ae-4cff-9517-29fac190f4bd_en?filename=North%20Macedonia%20Report%202022.pdf), p.11

[12] EC. 2023. Report on North Macedonia for 2023, p.13 and p.17, [https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-11/SWD\\_2023\\_693%20North%20Macedonia%20report.pdf](https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-11/SWD_2023_693%20North%20Macedonia%20report.pdf)

The department for equal opportunities was established in 2007 under the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy,<sup>[13]</sup> and is responsible for initiating and implementing policies and activities related to gender equality and non-discrimination, as well as the implementation of the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men and promoting gender equality at the central and local levels. The role of the department is to ensure a full approach of the government in providing better economic and social benefits for women. Coordinators and deputy coordinators for equal opportunities for women and men have been appointed in all ministries and municipalities. They are civil servants, with obligations and responsibilities prescribed by the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, and in the Assembly, a commission for equal opportunities for women and men was formed, consisting of MPs.<sup>[14]</sup>

There is a discrepancy between the participation of women in Parliament compared to the executive branch which has grown since the quotas were first introduced and later increased. While the quotas have had the desired effect where they are applied, they have unfortunately not had the expected spill over effect in areas where quotas are not imposed.<sup>[15]</sup>

This is underlined by the new elected Government (23 June 2024) which consists of 24 ministerial positions including the Prime Minister with only three women ministers or 12.5 per cent.

To address this discrepancy, it is recommended that the prior relevant stakeholders' initiatives to expand the quota system to the executive positions by at least 40% of "lesser represented gender" and to change to a 50-50 % quota for elected members of Parliament and Local Councils is assisted.

In March 2023, the Commission for Gender Equality in the Parliament of North Macedonia concluded that there is a need for a change in the Electoral Code of North Macedonia, introducing a 50-50 quota for women and men, a 30% quota for "the lesser represented gender" when it comes to mayoral candidates, and a 40% quota for "the lesser represented gender" in ministerial positions.<sup>[16]</sup> It is recommended that these activities should be lobbied and assisted with all relevant stakeholders.<sup>[17]</sup>

There should be adequate analysis conducted when preparing strategic plans by the ministries and other bodies which should contain gender disaggregated data.

The Work Plan of the Government should define concrete activities in the process of implementation of gender equality in the country.

There should be a defined and continuous system established for gathering gender disaggregated data of the members of different working bodies, consultative and coordinative bodies, as well as members of the management boards of the public enterprises and organizations.

---

[13] Government website: [https://www.mtsp.gov.mk/WBStorage/Files/Sektor\\_za\\_Ednakvi\\_moznosti\\_MKD%5B1%5D.pdf](https://www.mtsp.gov.mk/WBStorage/Files/Sektor_za_Ednakvi_moznosti_MKD%5B1%5D.pdf)

[14] Information on the progress on gender issues in the last two decades in the Republic of North Macedonia, p.7, <https://www.sobranie.mk/detali-na-materijal.nsp?param=a12475a8-0574-4184-b8e8-019316766402>; <https://www.sobranie.mk/materijali-parlament.nsp>

[15] Reactor, Report: Women in Politics 2, 2023, to be found at: [https://reactor.org.mk/en/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2023/09/women\\_in\\_politics\\_2.pdf](https://reactor.org.mk/en/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2023/09/women_in_politics_2.pdf)

[16] Commission for Gender Equality in Parliament of North Macedonia, 2023, to be found at: <https://www.sobranie.mk/detali-na-materijal.nsp?param=a12475a8-0574-4184-b8e8-019316766402>. Last Accessed: July 15, 2024.

[17] The conclusions from the session were sent to the Prime Minister of the Republic of North Macedonia and the President of Parliament and reveal a strong commitment on part of the cross-party commission to address inequalities when it comes to women's participation in politics.

It is also recommended to conduct analysis of the gender equality (where it is not already done) when preparing the regulation impact assessment (RIA) in the process of designing the draft-laws and proposing to conduct post legislative supervision.

The Government should continuously work on increasing the number of women in public offices to improve the gender equality in the country.

The Government should also work on intensifying the activities for full implementation of gender responsive budgeting across all state bodies.

It is recommended that there is consistent and continuous capacity building for each new Government members and their staff (both women and men) on gender equality, gender mainstreaming, analysing laws and policies from gender perspective as well as on gender responsive budgeting, media and online platforms presence and usage.

Considering the rising online violence against women politicians and the ones who are running or hold elected office (at legislative, executive and judicial levels), there should be continuous training and awareness raising campaigns for women on how to deal and overcome the online (and offline) threats that are being sent to them increasingly.

### ▶ 3.3. Judiciary

Judiciary mechanisms are not gender sensitive.

Score: 00/100

The Judicial Council produces gender-disaggregated data on gender equality within the judiciary on aspects such as the number of appointed judges and number of appointed presidents of the courts,<sup>[18]</sup> but not whether their mechanisms, such as complaints mechanisms, are gender-sensitive. There are, in fact, no gender-sensitive protocols and guidelines for complaints and investigation mechanisms where they have to include front-facing female staff or produce gender-disaggregated data on, for example, complaints filed by gender women or men, processing times of complaints filed by women or men, complaints solved or disregarded by women or men. There is also no training or awareness-raising material for officials and staff for the optimal implementation of gender-sensitive mechanisms.

In November 2022, the OSCE organised a study visit entitled Women in Justice in North Macedonia and Uzbekistan in Skopje to exchange experiences.<sup>[19]</sup>

It is recommended that each court produces gender-sensitive complaints mechanisms such as gender-sensitive protocols and guidelines for complaints and investigation mechanisms to include female staff and/or producing gender-disaggregated data on, for example, complaints filed by either women or men (gender), processing times of complaints filed by women and by men, complaints solved or disregarded which are filed by women or by men.

---

[18] Annual Report of the Judicial Council, [http://sud.mk/wps/wcm/connect/ssrm/41bd11f1-5893-48ed-b5b2-a46683a86f7c/Y2023-SDN-%28GD%290521\\_opt.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CACHEID=ROOTWORKSPACE.Z18\\_L8CC1J41L0B520APQFKICD0CR4-41bd11f1-5893-48ed-b5b2-a46683a86f7c-kZvrQCW](http://sud.mk/wps/wcm/connect/ssrm/41bd11f1-5893-48ed-b5b2-a46683a86f7c/Y2023-SDN-%28GD%290521_opt.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CACHEID=ROOTWORKSPACE.Z18_L8CC1J41L0B520APQFKICD0CR4-41bd11f1-5893-48ed-b5b2-a46683a86f7c-kZvrQCW), p.6

[19] Annual Report Academy for Judges and Prosecutors for 2022: <https://jpacademy.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/filtr/7336/Annual%20Report%20on%20Academy%20for%20Judges%20and%20Public%20Prosecutor%202022.pdf>, p.22



At the same time, a gender disaggregated data on judicial appointments, advances and trainings should be regularly kept and shared with all relevant institutions and with the public.

It is recommended that there is training conducted at regular intervals with awareness-raising documents produced for court officials and staff at all levels for the optimal implementation of gender-sensitive mechanisms in each court including the Judicial Council.

It is recommended that there is consistent and continuous capacity building for each new judge and staff, for both women and men, on gender equality, gender mainstreaming, analysing laws and policies from gender perspective as well as on gender responsive budgeting, media and online platforms presence and usage.

It is recommended that in the yearly reports of the courts and the Judicial Council, all data is disaggregated by gender including the data for children.

Considering the rising online violence against women politicians and the ones who are running or hold elected office (at legislative, executive and judicial levels), there should be continuous training and awareness raising campaigns for women on how to deal and overcome the online (and offline) threats that are being sent to them increasingly.

### ▶ 3.4. Public Prosecutor

Prosecution mechanisms are not gender-sensitive, but there is some training on gender sensitivity.

Score: 25/100

The prosecution service's complaint and investigation mechanisms have no explicit gender-sensitive protocols or guidelines. There is also no procedure for collecting gender-disaggregated data on complaints filed, processing times of complaints, complaints solved or disregarded, and so on.

The number of female prosecutors in the prosecutorial council is five of nine members, and the public prosecutor's office has only three women out of nine prosecutors.<sup>[20]</sup>

It is recommended that the Prosecutorial Council continues to respect the gender balance in its appointments and to continue to have regular gender equality and awareness raising trainings for both men and women prosecutors and staff around the country.

It is recommended that the prosecution service complaint and investigation mechanisms include gender-sensitive protocols and/or guidelines. At the same time, the procedure for collecting gender-disaggregated data on complaints filed, processing times of complaints, complaints solved or disregarded should be initiated and continuously used.

It is recommended that in the yearly reports of the State Public Prosecutorial Office, all data is disaggregated by gender including the data for children as perpetrators of crimes (which is not the case for example, in the last published report in July 2023).

---

[20] Public Prosecution of the Republic of North Macedonia, official website, <https://jorm.gov.mk/javni-obviniteli-na-republika-severna-makedonija/>

It is recommended that there is consistent and continuous capacity building for each new prosecutor and staff, both women and men, on gender equality, gender mainstreaming, analysing and using laws and policies from gender perspective as well as on gender responsive budgeting, media and online platforms presence and usage.

Considering the rising online violence against women politicians and the ones who are running or hold elected office (at legislative, executive and judicial levels), there should be continuous training and awareness raising campaigns for women on how to deal and overcome the online (and offline) threats that are being sent to them increasingly.

### ▶ 3.5. Public sector

Gender-sensitive protocols and guidelines exist in terms of gender-sensitive budgeting. However, there is a lack of gender-disaggregated data and a lack of information on the gender sensitivity of complaint mechanisms.

Score: 50/100

There is an obligation for public sector institutions to prepare an annual report on the progress of equal opportunities for men and women, and they usually have coordinators for equal opportunities with a database available divided by gender. The responsibilities of the coordinator and the deputy coordinator are determined in the regulation on systematisation. Coordinators also participated in gender training (according to data extracted from the annual reports of two ministries).

[21]

However, there is no regulation for gender-sensitive protocols and guidelines for the public sector's complaint mechanisms. Therefore, there is also no public information on such protocols or gender-disaggregated data on, for example, complaints filed by women or men. The Supreme Audit Institutions states in a 2022 performance audit report that there is a need to establish a system for the collection of gender-disaggregated data for the members of the working bodies, delegations, consultative and coordinating bodies as well as the members of the management boards of public enterprises and institutions. It is also necessary to take measures to increase the participation of women in public positions in the state, in order to improve gender equality.<sup>[22]</sup> But this refers to gender equality in terms of employment.

One of the objectives of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, established in the ministry's annual work plan for 2022, is the creation of gender-sensitive policies, programmes and budgets and the adoption and implementation of a new law

---

[21] General Secretariat of the Government. Annual report on actions taken and progress achieved to establish equal opportunities for women and men in 2022, <https://finance.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/20200601131005911.pdf>; The report contains the following data: basic information, activities carried out in accordance with the law, initiatives undertaken in the year subject to the report, cooperation with other institutions, database, activities carried out and results achieved in accordance with strategic documents in the field of gender equality, challenges, good practices and lessons learned, next steps in the field of gender equality, proposals and suggestions to the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy.

[22] State Audit Office. 2022. Final Performance Audit Report on the Effectiveness of the Measures of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia on Gender Equality and Corresponding Gender Budget Initiatives. The performance audit included the following entities: Government of RSM - General Secretariat of the Government of RSM; Assembly of RSM; Ministry of Labor and Social Policy; Ministry of Defence; Ministry of Finance; Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning; Ministry of Economy; Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management; and Agency for Youth and Sports. The performance audit was carried out in the period from 01 July 2021 to 30 December 2021, pp.26 and 67, [https://dzt.mk/sites/default/files/2022-07/RU\\_Efektivnost\\_merki\\_Vlada\\_rodova\\_ednakvost\\_0.pdf](https://dzt.mk/sites/default/files/2022-07/RU_Efektivnost_merki_Vlada_rodova_ednakvost_0.pdf)

on gender equality.<sup>[23]</sup> There is a methodology for gender responsible budgeting for state administration bodies at the central level, but special guides and protocols have not been adopted.<sup>[24]</sup> There is a special law for protection against discrimination, which regulates the prevention and prohibition of discrimination, the forms and types of discrimination, the procedures for protection against discrimination, as well as the composition and work of the Commission for Prevention and Protection from Discrimination. The commission acts on complaints, brings opinions, recommendations and conclusions on specific cases of discrimination.<sup>[25]</sup> Anyone who believes they have suffered discrimination can submit a complaint to the commission.<sup>[26]</sup> Anyone who believes they have been discriminated against can file a lawsuit before a competent civil court.<sup>[27]</sup>

The department for equal opportunities was established in 2007 under the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, which is responsible for initiating and implementing policies and activities related to gender equality and non-discrimination. Coordinators and deputy coordinators for equal opportunities for women and men have been appointed in all ministries and municipalities.<sup>[28]</sup>

In accordance with the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, various government and non-governmental entities, including government bodies, local government units, public institutions, educational institutions, and more, are required to collect and report statistical data categorised by gender to the state statistics office.<sup>[29]</sup> The annual report from the Public Sector Employees Register shows data on the number of employees by gender. The 2022 report states that out of 110,465 employees in public sector 62,178 are women, while 48,287 are men.<sup>[30]</sup> In terms of sectors, women are mostly employed in labour and social affairs (82.99 per cent), especially in social and child protection, health (72.72 per cent) and education (66.71 per cent). Men are most employed in the environment sector (89.29 per cent), transport (85.51 per cent) and communal works (83.74 per cent).<sup>[31]</sup>

The 2022-2027 National strategy for gender equality encompasses a situational analysis, measures to promote gender equality in various social aspects, including employment, social security, healthcare, education and public representation. It designates action plans to responsible parties, emphasises gender-specific data collection, sets up monitoring

---

[23] Ministry of Labor and Social Policy. 2022. Annual Work Plan of the for 2022, p.56,

[https://www.mtsp.gov.mk/content/word/2022\\_akti/strateski\\_dok/GODISEN%20PLAN%20ZA%202022.pdf](https://www.mtsp.gov.mk/content/word/2022_akti/strateski_dok/GODISEN%20PLAN%20ZA%202022.pdf)

[24] Methodology for Gender Responsible Budgeting for State Administration Bodies at the Central Level,

<https://www.mtsp.gov.mk/content/word/metodologija.doc>

[25] Article 21 Law on the Prevention and Protection against Discrimination, Official Gazette of RM, No. 258/2020

[26] Article 23 Law on the Prevention and Protection against Discrimination, Official Gazette of RM, No. 258/2020. Anyone who believes they have been discriminated against before the commission may be represented by an association, foundation or trade union with prior consent. Associations, foundations, unions or other civil society organisations and institutions, which have a justified interest in protecting the interests of a certain group or within the framework of their activity deal with protection against discrimination, can submit a petition, if they make it likely that the actions of a certain natural or legal person is discriminated against by a larger number of people. The commission initiates a procedure ex officio if, from the circumstances and facts, as well as from the knowledge obtained after a vote, it reasonably follows that discrimination has been carried out by the authorities in accordance with the discriminatory grounds.

[27] Article 32 Law on Prevention and Protection against Discrimination, Official Gazette of RM, No. 258/2020

[28] Information on progress on gender issues in the last two decades in the Republic of North Macedonia, p.7, <https://www.sobranie.mk/detali-na-materijal.nsp?param=a12475a8-0574-4184-b8e8-019316766402>

[29] Article 18, Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, Official Gazette of RM No. 6/12, 30/13, 166/14 and 150/15 and Official Gazette of RM No. 53/21

[30] MIOA. 2023. Annual Report from the Public Sector Employees Register:

[https://mioa.gov.mk/sites/default/files/pbl\\_files/documents/reports/finalen\\_izveshtaj\\_za\\_2022\\_godina\\_30.03.2022\\_godina.pdf](https://mioa.gov.mk/sites/default/files/pbl_files/documents/reports/finalen_izveshtaj_za_2022_godina_30.03.2022_godina.pdf), p.4

[31] Ibid, p.33

mechanisms, and outlines funding sources for implementation.<sup>[32]</sup> The Commission for Protection and Prevention from Discrimination stated that the number of submitted complaints against sexual or gender equality was 37, and most of them were submitted by men, not by women.<sup>[33]</sup>

Training on gender equality is held in Macedonia. For example, The Ministry of Labor and Social Policy established the Resource Centre for Gender Responsive Policy Making and Budgeting, within the project Promoting Gender Responsive Policies and Budgets: Towards Transparent, Inclusive and Accountable Governance in the Republic of North Macedonia, implemented by UN Women, with financial support from Switzerland and Sweden. The Centre for Change Management (CUP), which promotes gender equality, developed an online platform.<sup>[34]</sup>

It is recommended that there should be activities undertaken to assist in developing a regulation for gender-sensitive protocols and guidelines for the public sector's complaint mechanisms. At the same time, there should be gender disaggregated information collected at regular intervals on, for example, complaints filed by women or men.

There should be a defined and continuous system established for gathering gender disaggregated data of the members of different working bodies, consultative and coordinative bodies, as well as members of the management boards of the public enterprises and organizations. It is also necessary to take measures to increase the participation of women in public positions to improve gender equality.<sup>[35]</sup>

There should be collaboration by all state institutions with the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy (MLSP), Sector for Gender Equality which is the main responsible body to fully implement the Strategy for Gender Equality (SGE) 2022-2027 as well as the National Action Plan for the for the SGE 2022-2024 and the recommendations given by the State Audit Office in their Final Performance Audit Report on the Effectiveness of the Measures of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia on Gender Equality and Corresponding Gender Budget Initiatives conducted in 2021.

As underlined by the MLSP, there should be regular reports on the activities undertaken with the progress achieved on the improvement of equal opportunities for women and men in the public institutions and at the local self-government level, submitted to the MLSP with continuous awareness raising on the importance of gender equality in the country.

The MLSP together with all coordinators and deputy coordinators on equal opportunities in the public institutions should work on detailed analyses of the situation, questions and issues to be overcome, which concern the gender inequality in all segments of the society, with activity measures to improve the situation.

---

[32] National Strategy for Gender Equality 2022-2027: Official Gazette of RM, No. 170/2022; [https://www.mtsp.gov.mk/content/pdf/2022/strategija\\_/Стратегија\\_за\\_родова\\_еднаквост\\_2022\\_2027.pdf](https://www.mtsp.gov.mk/content/pdf/2022/strategija_/Стратегија_за_родова_еднаквост_2022_2027.pdf)

[33] Annual report of the Commission for Prevention and Protection against Discrimination (KSZD) in which all achievements and realised activities in 2021 are presented, <https://kszd.mk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Godisen-izvestaj-2021.pdf>

[34] MLSP, Resource Centre: <https://mtspresursencentar.mk/programme/basic-training-on-gender-gender-equality-and-introduction-of-the-gender-perspective-in-public-policy>; <https://www.sec.mk/obuka-za-rodova-ednakvost/>; [https://www.mtsp.gov.mk/maj-2022-ns\\_article-preku-obukite-vo-resursniot-centar-za-kreiranje-na-politiki-i-rodovo-odgovorno-budzetiranje-se-zajak.nsp](https://www.mtsp.gov.mk/maj-2022-ns_article-preku-obukite-vo-resursniot-centar-za-kreiranje-na-politiki-i-rodovo-odgovorno-budzetiranje-se-zajak.nsp)

[35] State Audit Office, Final Performance Audit Report on the Effectiveness of the Measures of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia on Gender Equality and Corresponding Gender Budget Initiatives, 2021, to be found at: [https://dzt.mk/sites/default/files/2022-07/RU\\_Efektivnost\\_merki\\_Vlada\\_rodova\\_ednakvost\\_0.pdf](https://dzt.mk/sites/default/files/2022-07/RU_Efektivnost_merki_Vlada_rodova_ednakvost_0.pdf)

It is recommended that there is consistent and continuous capacity building for the public institutions, for both women and men, on gender equality, gender mainstreaming, analysing and implementing laws and policies from gender perspective as well as on gender responsive budgeting, media and online platforms presence and usage.

### ▶ 3.6. Law-enforcement agencies

Law enforcement mechanisms are not gender-sensitive and do not produce gender-disaggregated data. However, gender equality training as well as mentoring programmes have been included in the strategic programme, but which still have to be implemented.

Score: 25/100

Official statistical data do not contain gender-disaggregated data (complaints filed by gender, processing times of complaints filed by women or men, complaints solved or disregarded, and so on). Similarly, complaint and investigation mechanisms do not contain explicit gender-sensitive protocols and guidelines, and there is no specific training module or awareness-raising material for optimal implementation of gender-sensitive mechanisms.

The practice for front-facing female staff is implemented only in the case of a specific need for a body search of a female perpetrator.

In 2020, the employees in MoI were 80.35 per cent men and 19.65 per cent women, of which 53.77 per cent of men and 7.37 per cent women are in uniform. Civilian or non-uniformed police officials are made up of 18.44 per cent men and 4.47 per cent women.<sup>[36]</sup> In 2021, the MoI employed 79.89 per cent men and 20.11 per cent women, of which 51.93 per cent of men and 7.40 per cent of women were in uniform. Civilian or non-uniformed police officials were 19.01 per cent men and 4.62 per cent women. The percentage of female employees has therefore slightly increased. Statistical data for 2022 has not been published yet.

A success indicator for the implementation of the strategic programme 1.11.1 on police development is the number of conducted training courses and police officers trained in gender equality.<sup>[37]</sup> In the 1.11.2 programme for the promotion of the common functions of the MoI, one of the priorities is the implementation of gender equality and ensuring equal treatment and opportunities through the inclusion of the mentoring programme for women.<sup>[38]</sup> However, the strategic plan still needs to be implemented.

It is recommended that Ministry of Interior (MoI) conducts gender equality training as well as mentoring programmes as indicated in its strategic programme.

There should be fulfilment of the adopted targets in the Second Action Plan on the UNSC resolution 1325 as well as preparation of reports for activities undertaken by the coordination, monitoring and evaluation body.

---

[36] The Strategic Plan 2022-2024, adopted in March 2022, p.17. Viewed on 10 August 2023  
[https://mvr.gov.mk/Upload/Editor\\_Upload/220310%20SP%20na%20MVR%202022-2024.pdf](https://mvr.gov.mk/Upload/Editor_Upload/220310%20SP%20na%20MVR%202022-2024.pdf)

[37] Ibid p.25;

Special investigative measures, their type and number are prescribed in Article 252 of the CPA,

[38] Ibid p.36

The Mol should continuously work on improving women intake in the Mol as well as on the promotion of capable women at higher leadership positions, and the implementation of gender equality ensuring equal treatment and opportunities through the inclusion of the mentoring programme for women.

There should be gender-disaggregated data collected on the complaints filed by gender, with information on the possible difference of the processing times of complaints filed by women and men, and how many complaints were solved or disregarded also by gender.

At the same time, there should be gender-sensitive protocols and guidelines for the complaint and investigation mechanisms developed with specific training modules and awareness-raising material for optimal implementation of gender-sensitive mechanisms.

### ▶ 3.7. Electoral Management Body

Legal provisions exist and are followed in practice. However, women were under-represented in the latest local elections.

Score: 75/100

The legal framework ensures that women have the right to vote and run for election. There are also provisions to ensure gender representation in election.<sup>[39]</sup> On each list, at least one candidate of each gender must be placed in every third place on the list, with an additional candidate of the lesser represented gender in every tenth place (40 per cent of the candidates have to be women).

The SEC has prepared and adopted an action plan for strengthening gender sensitivity at the SEC for the period from 2021 to 2024.<sup>[40]</sup>

In the 2020 parliamentary elections, a total of 12 political parties and 3 coalitions fielded 1,598 candidates on 78 lists. These included 675 women candidates (42 per cent), and women headed 19 of 78 lists.<sup>[41]</sup> The ODIHR report for the 2021 local elections notes that women were under-represented in the electoral process. The composition of election management bodies generally complied with the legal requirements for gender and ethnic representation, but only two of the seven SEC members are women. Women comprised some 45 per cent of all councillor candidates, in line with legal requirements for gender representation, and headed 111 lists, but only 8 per cent of mayoral candidates were women.<sup>[42]</sup>

While women were well-represented in lower-level election bodies, accounting for 49 per cent of Municipal Election Commissions (MECs) and the Election Commission of the City of Skopje (ECCS) members and presiding over 39 mid-level commissions, only 2 of the 7 SE members, including the vice president, are women, which falls short of the required

---

[39] Electoral Code, consolidated version, Official Gazette of RM, no. 40/06, 136/08, 148/08, 155/08, 163/08, 44/11, 51/11, 54/11, 142/12, 31/13, 34/13, 14/14, 30/14, 196/15, 35/16, 97/16, 99/16, 136/16, 142/16, 67/17, 125/17, 35/18, 99/18, 140/18, 208/18, 27/19, 98/19, 42/20, 74/21 и 215/21), Article 64 (5): [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Sa9L6emhxwI2VaV\\_8d7oK3Hj6r1usnuY/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Sa9L6emhxwI2VaV_8d7oK3Hj6r1usnuY/view)

[40] SEC. 2021. Action plan for enhancing of the gender sensitivity at SEC: [https://drive.google.com/file/d/16EGLPg8blzPnu0\\_0piYam7Cue0pj2Yws/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/16EGLPg8blzPnu0_0piYam7Cue0pj2Yws/view)

[41] ODIHR Special Election Assessment Mission. 2020. Final Report: Early Parliamentary Elections, 15 July 2020, p.2: [https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/b/e/465648\\_2.pdf](https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/b/e/465648_2.pdf)

[42] ODIHR Election Observation Mission. 2022. Final Report, Local elections, 17 and 31 October 2021, p.3: <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/9/3/514666.pdf>

quota. The SEC did not publish gender-disaggregated data on the composition of electoral bodies. In the first-round on election day, women presided over 55 per cent of the electoral bodies in the polling stations visited by ODIHR observers.

[43]

It is recommended that while respecting the legal framework including the quota (as temporary special measures - TSM) in most of activities, SEC should also respect it in the composition of the Commission. The next members of the Commission should reflect 50-50% both genders (as much as possible).

The existing Action Plan for Strengthening Gender Sensitivity in the SEC for the period 2021-2024 based on the SEC Strategic Plan of work (2021-2024) aims to initiate the gender aspects integration process in the internal and external work and activities of the SEC and to ensure equal access to the election process. It is recommended that an independent evaluation is carried out on the implementation of the Action Plan for the period 2021-2024 considering the AP's two main strategic aims:

1. Integrating the gender aspects in the internal functioning of the SEC and
2. Integrating the gender aspects in the external functioning of the SEC and their respective areas of work as detailed in the AP, with conclusions and recommendations for further action including for the next phase of the Action Plan to be developed in the near future.

In addition, the SEC should regularly publish gender-disaggregated data on the composition of electoral bodies and all other relevant data for each cycle of elections.

### ▶ 3.8. Ombudsperson

There are no explicit gender-sensitive protocols and guidelines, but there is a front-facing female staff member for the whistleblower channel.

Score: 25/100

The ombudsperson does not have specific protocols or guidelines that are gender sensitive. There is no gender-disaggregated data for the complaints that the ombudsperson receives (for example, complaints filed by gender women, processing times of complaints filed by women and men, complaints solved or disregarded by women and men). The ombudsperson has no practice of providing gender-sensitive material to staff and, based on an interview with the ombudsperson, there is a lack of resources, mainly budget, for staff training in general.<sup>[44]</sup> However, the person authorised to receive whistleblower reports is female.<sup>[45]</sup>

---

[43] Ibid, p.9

[44] Interview conducted with the ombudsperson, Mr. Naser Ziberi on 26 January 2023

[45] Transparency International-Macedonia, Web platform for protection of whistleblowers, Section with persons responsible for external disclosure:

<https://ukazuvac.mk/nadvoreshno-prijavuvanje/>

Even though the mechanisms of the ombudsperson are not gender-sensitive, there is a gender balance in the institution. Three out of five deputies to the ombudsperson are women.

The ombudsperson produces gender-disaggregated data on gender equality within the institution, such as the number of employees by gender, number of appointed persons, number of managerial positions lead by women: 64 per cent of the employees are women.<sup>[46]</sup> In the reports, it emphasizes the rights of women from different nationalities (Roma).<sup>[47]</sup> The ombudsperson is ex officio the national rapporteur for trafficking in human beings, and in the report for 2021, it refers to the victims of human trafficking and illegal migration, indicating the number and origin of trafficked women.<sup>[48]</sup>

It is recommended that the ombudsperson office introduces gender sensitive protocols and/or guidelines, and that the office collects on regular basis gender-disaggregated data for the received complaints (ex., complaints filed by men and by women, including for children, processing times of complaints filed by women and men, complaints solved or disregarded by women and men) in its annual report in the statistical data section.

It is recommended that the Ombudsperson collaborates with all relevant institutions and international donors on fundraising to carry out regular trainings and capacity building of the staff on all issues within the scope of its work including on gender equality, gender mainstreaming, women empowerment, disability and social inclusion.

### ▶ 3.9. State Audit Institution

Gender-sensitive protocols and guidelines exist and are actively implemented, and there is significant training.

Score: 100/100

There are two appointed staff members for internal disclosure in accordance with the Law on the Protection of Whistleblowers, one of whom is a woman. Also, a woman is responsible for receiving reports and complaints.<sup>[49]</sup>

In June 2021, the State Audit Office signed a memorandum of understanding with UN Women that provides a framework for strengthening the capacities of the SAO on gender-responsive policymaking and budgeting. According to the UN Women Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia, by 2022 “90 auditors have attended informative sessions on the basic concepts of gender equality and GRB [gender-responsive budgeting] and 35 state auditors and the auditor general have completed in-depth training on how to mainstream gender into auditing processes and the methods and tools for conducting gender impact assessments of policies and regulations”.<sup>[50]</sup>

---

[46] Annual report on the work of the ombudsperson for 2021, p.171:

<https://ombudsman.mk/CMS/Upload/NarodenPravobranitel/upload/Godisni%20izvestai/GI-2021/GI%20-2021.pdf>

[47] Ibid p.83

[48] Ibid, p.138

[49] Authorised persons for internal disclosure and complaints: <https://dzt.mk/mk/kontakt-informacii>

[50] ECA UN Women, Transformative financing for gender equality in the Western Balkan, p.18, [https://eca.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-03/GRBMagazine\\_Issue1Winter2022-1.pdf](https://eca.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-03/GRBMagazine_Issue1Winter2022-1.pdf)



In 2021, the SAO conducted its first performance audit on the effectiveness of government measures for gender equality and appropriate gender budgeting initiatives.<sup>[51]</sup>

Regarding the structure of human resources of SAO, it has 116 employees of whom 72 are women and 44 are men. There are 23 head of audit teams of which 16 are women and 7 are men.<sup>[52]</sup>

From April until November 2022, the SAO, with support from UN Women, prepared a guide for auditing gender equality.<sup>[53]</sup> This was the first time this type of type of guidance had been prepared and provides basic guidance on the key issues to be included during the selection, implementation and reporting of audits related to areas of gender equality and when integrating gender aspects in the general topics of an audit.

It is recommended that State Audit Office (SAO) continues the work and activities in continuous capacity building on gender responsive budgeting (GRB) and gender mainstreaming of its staff and revisors respecting the gender balance in their appointments.

At the same time SAO should follow and actively work in line with their performance audit(s) and report the progress made in the following ones.

During its work and activities, SAO should use the Guide on auditing gender equality produced in 2022 and regularly report on the key issues included during the selection, implementation and reporting of audits related to areas of gender equality and when integrating gender aspects in the general topics of an audit.

### ▶ 3.10. Anti-corruption agencies

No explicit gender-sensitive protocols and guidelines or gender-disaggregated data on complaints exist. However, there is front-facing female staff for the SCPS's whistleblower mechanism.

Score: 50/100

The president of the SCPC is a woman and 3 out of 7 members of the SCP are women. Out of 14 senior managerial positions, 13 are led by women.<sup>[54]</sup> The general secretary of the SCPC and the authorised person for the external and internal disclosure of whistleblowers, is also a woman.<sup>[55]</sup> However, the SCPC does not have specific gender-sensitive policies and protocols.

---

[51] Ibid

[52] SAO. 2023. Annual report on performed audits and operation of SAO for 2022:

[https://dzt.mk/sites/default/files/2023-07/DZR\\_Godisen%20izvestaj\\_2022\\_ANG\\_za\\_web\\_compressed\\_c.pdf](https://dzt.mk/sites/default/files/2023-07/DZR_Godisen%20izvestaj_2022_ANG_za_web_compressed_c.pdf), p.56 and 57

[53] SAO. 2023. Guide for auditing gender equality: [https://dzt.mk/sites/default/files/2022-12/SAO\\_Upatstvo-za-Revizija\\_MK-web.pdf](https://dzt.mk/sites/default/files/2022-12/SAO_Upatstvo-za-Revizija_MK-web.pdf)

[54] SCPC. 2023. SCPC annual report for 2022, p.7: <https://dksk.mk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/GI-2022-konечен.pdf>

[55] SCPC, Protection on whistleblowers protection: <https://dksk.mk/mk/zastita-na-ukazuвачите/>

The commission has data on the number of men and women employees. But the SCPC does not produce other gender-disaggregated data. The data available in their reports includes the total number of received reports, in which sector and what number of reports were resolved.<sup>[56]</sup>

The State Commission for the Prevention of Corruption (SCPC) should implement gender-sensitive protocols and guidelines for internal and external complaints mechanisms and produce gender-disaggregated data on such complaints.

It is recommended that the SCPC initiates continuous capacity building of its members as well as the staff on gender mainstreaming.

At the same time, the SCPC should continue to respect gender balance in their appointments of its members and staff.

### ▶ 3.11. Political Parties

Legal provisions exist and in practice political parties routinely follow them, supplemented by additional measures to enable and promote equal participation. There is a balance in the participation and conditions for women and men across the parties. However, leadership positions of parties are in the hands of men.

Score: 50/100

The gender balance in politics is regulated by the electoral code. At least 40 per cent of the candidates from the submitted list of candidates for members of parliament and members of council municipalities and the City of Skopje have to be of the under-represented sex. At least one out of every three places have to be reserved for the under-represented sex, with at least one additional place out of every ten places.<sup>[57]</sup> There are no legal provisions to ensure political parties face non-symbolic consequences for failing to implement parity mechanisms.

Each of the parties have a union of women, which is the main body that ensures gender balance within the party.<sup>[58]</sup> Party membership is not restricted based on gender; however, the party statutes do not have specific provisions for gender balance protected by quotas or similar measures.<sup>[59]</sup> The high-level positions in the parties usually belong to men.

A 2020 OIDHR report for the early parliamentary elections mentions efforts by the SDSM and the VMRO-DPMNE to increase the prominence of women in their campaigns. The SDSM campaign focused on the top two candidates in each

---

[56] SCPC. 2022. SCPC annual report for 2021, p.6: <https://dsk.mk/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/%D0%93%D0%98-2021-final.pdf>

[57] Electoral code, Official Gazette of RM, number 40/06, 136/08, 148/08, 155/08, 163/08, 44/11, 51/11, 54/11, 142/12, 31/13, 34/13, 14/14, 30/14, 196/15, 35/16, 97/16, 99/16, 136/16, 142/16, 67/17, 125/17, 35/18, 99/18, 140/18, 208/18, 27/19 and number 98/19, 42/20, 74/21 и 215/21, Article 64

[58] SDSM Women Union: <https://sdsm.org.mk/organizacija/forum-na-zheni>; Levica: <https://levica.mk/organi-na-partijata/afz/>; VMRO-DPMNE: <https://vmro-dpmne.org.mk/унија-на-жени-на-вмро-дпне>

[59] Every two years, political parties should adopt a plan for equal opportunities, which should clearly define the measures for the promotion of equal participation of women and men in the bodies of the parties, the candidate lists for elections of local self-government units, the Assembly and for the election of the President. Such plans should be submitted to the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy for their opinion. <https://reactor.org.mk/publication-all/родов-информатор-за-политичарки/>

electoral district, a man and a woman in each case. Women headed the VMRO-DPMNE list in two out of six electoral districts.<sup>[60]</sup>

Two smaller political parties have woman leader: the Liberal Democratic Party<sup>[61]</sup> and Democratic Renewal of Macedonia.<sup>[62]</sup>

The existing legal provisions should be improved to ensure political parties continuously implement parity mechanisms.

The women unions in the political parties should be functional and work to ensure that there is gender balance in the parties' bodies and committees up to the leadership levels and that there is continuous capacity building for women (and men) members of the parties at all levels.

The parties' bodies and the women unions should lobby to introduce temporary special measure - TSMs (as agreed) to ensure that women have equal rights and opportunities to climb the leadership ladder and be appointed to leadership position(s) in the parties as men.

### ▶ 3.12. Media

Only some news portals feature women's voices and perspectives and cover issues such as sextortion, female unemployment, reproductive rights, family and political violence on women.

Score: 50/100

The Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men obliges broadcasters to promote programmes that raise awareness to equal opportunities and participation of women and men in the creation of the programme concepts and content.<sup>[63]</sup>

Moreover, in November 2021, the agency adopted the guidelines of the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services on monitoring the reporting standards in cases of gender-based violence in the media. The guidelines aim to provide the media and all stakeholders with information on reporting gender-based violence; an outline of the most important relevant international documents and domestic legislation; and the good practices to be followed in reporting. Further monitoring is required to determine whether these guidelines are followed by the media, and the agency will publish reports on this.<sup>[64]</sup>

---

[60] OIDHR. 2020. OIDHR special report on the early parliamentary elections held on 15 July 2020, [https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/b/e/465648\\_2.pdf](https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/b/e/465648_2.pdf), p.13

[61] LDP, Structure of the party: <https://ldp.mk/struktura/pretsedatel/>

[62] DOM party: <https://dom.org.mk/>

[63] Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, Article 17, Official Gazette of the RM, No. 6 2012, Law Amending the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, Official Gazette of the RM, No. 166, 2014 <https://bit.ly/3pIRFJ7>

[64] Prof. Dr. Katharine Sarikakis, Council of Europe. Guidelines of the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services on monitoring the reporting standards in cases of gender-based violence in the media, Horizontal Facility for Western Balkans and Turkey 2019-2022, <https://bit.ly/3dxhcw>

The biggest national TV broadcaster Telma has investigative documentary KOD (Code) exposing corrupt schemes<sup>[65]</sup> and run by the journalist Snezana Lupevska; the programme is also shared on the YouTube channel KOD Lupevska.<sup>[66]</sup>

Also, Kanal 5, which is one of the five biggest national broadcasters, has a show called Samo Vistina (Only Truth), which includes interviews with politicians and other relevant actors on current, trending and important relevant to the public. The show is run by six journalists, out of which five are women.<sup>[67]</sup> Moreover, another national TV channel, Alsat-M, has a political talk show Patot kon... (The path towards...)<sup>[68]</sup> run by a female journalist.

However, there is a need for more stories that focus on raising awareness about the problems women face in society. In the recent years, many areas were covered and questions asked about sextortion, female unemployment, reproductive rights, family and political violence on women, among others.<sup>[69]</sup> In the future, these issues need to be more represented in the media in order to open space for finding solutions and improving situations which stigmatise women.

All media outlets should implement the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men which obliges them to promote programmes that raise awareness to equal opportunities and participation of women and men in the creation of the programme concepts and content to the extent possible.

The Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services should improve its activities on monitoring the reporting standards of journalism and broadcasting on gender equality in all segments of the society including women portraits and media time at local and national levels and showcasing them as positive role models that girls and young women could/would follow.

The media outlets should pay special attention to make the issues women and girls face visible and to focus on awareness raising as well as in showcasing / finding possible solutions to the problems women and girls face in the society.

The issues that are identified by the society and stated in the media outlets but are not sufficiently addressed, should be increasingly highlighted and discussed to open more media space for finding solutions and improving situations which stigmatise or downplay women.

### ▶ 3.13. Civil society

Primarily, CSO programmes funded by international donors take into account gender as part of the requirements for such funds. Also, CSOs focused on women's rights collect gender-disaggregated data.

---

[65] Investigative Documentary KOD, <https://arhiva.telma.com.mk/kategorija/kod/>

[66] Snezana Lupevska Sozen. KOD Lupevska, investigative documentary, <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJWqgAOqcALotVoMwraB7bA/featured>

[67] Samo Vistina (Only Truth), Talk show, Kanal 5 TV, <https://kanal5.com.mk/-samo-vistina/a362230>

[68] Alsat M TV. Patot kon... (The path towards), Talk show, <https://alsat.mk/mk/category/tv-alsat-2/emisii/patot-kon/>

[69] Media developing stories on gender issues: <https://www.slobodnaevropa.mk/a/semajno-nasilstvo-se-prijavuva-koga-modrinkite-kje-izlezat-na-videlina/32550539.html>; <https://www.slobodnaevropa.mk/a/semajno-nasilstvo/32550443.html>; <https://www.slobodnaevropa.mk/a/semajno-nasilstvo-pandemija/31354155.html>; <https://telma.com.mk/2023/09/29/top-tema-zhenite-zhrtvi-na-semajno-nasilstvo-nema-kade-da-pobaraat-pomosh-osven-da-prijavat-vo-policija/>; <https://mk.voanews.com/a/voa-zeni-zemjodelki-bez-porodilno-otsustvo/6435904.html>; <https://www.slobodnaevropa.mk/a/na-niva-so-deteto-vo-koличка-zatoa-što-za-zemjodelkite-nema-porodilno/32292061.html>

Score: 50/100

According to a 2020 MCIC report, only 21 per cent of CSOs have a written gender equality and diversity policy.<sup>[70]</sup>

Overall, gender sensitivity in programme implementation has been highlighted in funding calls from international donors. In this regard, CSOs have started to include gender cross-cutting objectives in the implementation of their programmes even when their project was not focused on gender issues.

CSOs that mostly gather gender-related data are organisations whose primary field of work is gender and women's rights programmes. For instance, UN Women gathers gender-disaggregated data in their reports such as Gender Equality in Sport in North Macedonia,<sup>[71]</sup> Municipal Initiatives on Women's Economic Empowerment: Strengthening the employability, entrepreneurship and digital skills of women in local communities<sup>[72]</sup> and Women and Men in North Macedonia: A statistical portrait of trends in gender equality.<sup>[73]</sup>

There are two notable organisations in this area: Hera, promoting LGBTQ rights, sexual education and prevention of discrimination on the basis of gender, ethnic group, nationality or sexual orientation, with recent research on the employability of Roma women in the public institutions;<sup>[74]</sup> and the Coalition Margini, which publishes quarterly reports about human rights violation cases, with the most recent report being for the period September 2022-January 2023.<sup>[75]</sup>

As a general recommendation, the CSOs should include gender as cross-cutting issue within the objectives of their programmes/projects even when their programme(s)/project(s) are not specifically focused on gender issues and/or women empowerment, to the extent possible.

The International Organizations (IOs) and donors should increase the funding for gender issues considering the need to improve the situation in this area in all sectors of the society.

The national and local CSOs should work with the IOs and other donors as well as with the national and local institutions to develop needs assessments and projects to be able to increase their funding opportunities for gender equality and women empowerment work and activities across the country, but also regionally and internationally.

---

[70] Macedonian Centre for International Cooperation. 2020. Report on the Governance Practices, Transparency and Accountability of Civil Society Organizations, p. 20-21, <https://www.otcetnigo.mk/izveshtaj-za-upravuvachkite-praktiki-za-transparentnost-i-otchetnost-na-graganskite-organizatsii/>

[71] UN Women North Macedonia. 2022. Gender Equality in Sport in North Macedonia, <https://eca.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/11/gender-equality-in-sport-in-north-macedonia>

[72] Foundation CEED Macedonia/Ad Verbum Skopje. 2023. Municipal initiatives on women's economic empowerment: strengthening the employability, entrepreneurship and digital skills of women in local communities, <https://eca.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2023/04/municipal-initiatives-on-womens-economic-empowerment-strengthening-the-employability-entrepreneurship-and-digital-skills-of-women-in-local-communities>

[73] UN Women North Macedonia. 2022. Women and Men in North Macedonia: A Statistical Portrait of Trends in Gender Equality, <https://eca.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/10/women-and-men-in-north-macedonia-a-statistical-portrait-of-trends-in-gender-equality>

[74] HERA. 2022. Monitoring of the Employability of Roma Women in Public Institutions in 2020. <https://hera.org.mk/monitoring-na-vrabortuvanjeto-romki-2020-multimedija/>

[75] Report for Human Right Violation Cases Documented in Coalition Margini, September 2022–January 2023, [http://coalition.org.mk/archives/portfolio\\_page/kvartalen\\_izvestaj\\_sep\\_jan](http://coalition.org.mk/archives/portfolio_page/kvartalen_izvestaj_sep_jan)

## ▶ 3.14. Business

The legislation in general is favourable to measures for supporting gender representation in business. The government is providing state support for female entrepreneurs. However, there is no official statistic on women and female leadership in the business sector.

Score: 75/100

The Law on the Prevention and Protection from Discrimination bans any discrimination, including discrimination on the basis of gender.<sup>[76]</sup> The Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men regulates the establishment of equal opportunities and the equal treatment of women and men.<sup>[77]</sup> Equal opportunities determined by this and other laws cover the area of economy and ownership.<sup>[78]</sup> The government has prepared a draft law for gender equality, which defines expanding full equality as equal rights, opportunities, conditions and treatment in all spheres of public and private life and the absence of cultural, social, economic and political conditions that produce unequal power relations and unfair distributions of social benefits between women, men and people of diverse gender identities.<sup>[79]</sup> This law has still not been adopted in parliament. The 2022 EU progress report also noted that adoption of the draft law for gender equality is still pending.<sup>[80]</sup>

The 2019- 2023 strategy for development of women's entrepreneurship was adopted by the government in 2018.<sup>[81]</sup> This strategy and its action plan determine a set of measures for supporting women in business, such as support for starting a business, co-financing the expenses for participation in business exhibitions and fairs, co-financing procurement equipment and other tools. This strategy designs additional criteria of ranking in favour of woman entrepreneurs in government announcements for state aid in the form of subsidies, grants and incentives. The Ministry of Economy has published two calls, one for financial support of €35,000 to women entrepreneurship for the digitalisation of business processes<sup>[82]</sup> and €35,000 for financial support for women entrepreneurship in tourism.<sup>[83]</sup> Also, the 2023 government programme for supporting rural development contains financial grants for women in rural areas.<sup>[84]</sup>

---

[76] Law on the Prevention and Protection from Discrimination, Official Gazette of RSM, No. 258/2020, Articles 1, 2 and 5.

[77] Law on Equal Opportunities of Women and Men. Official Gazette of RM, No.166/2011, Article 1, Paragraph 1.

[78] Ibid. Article 1, Paragraph 2 and Article 5, Paragraph 1.

[79] Draft Law for Gender Equality, Article 4, Paragraph 1. [https://ener.gov.mk/files/propisi\\_files/ria1/11\\_1043522045Нацрт\\_закон\\_Предлог\\_закон\\_за\\_родова\\_еднаквост\\_1.pdf](https://ener.gov.mk/files/propisi_files/ria1/11_1043522045Нацрт_закон_Предлог_закон_за_родова_еднаквост_1.pdf)

[80] European Commission. Staff Working Document, North Macedonia 2022, Report Accompanying the Document, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, 2022 Communication on EU Enlargement Policy. p.32, <https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-10/North%20Macedonia%20Report%202022> [Accessed on 17.08. 2023].

[81] Government of North Republic of Macedonia, Strategy for Development of Women's Entrepreneurship in The Republic of Macedonia 2019-2023, [https://economy.gov.mk/Upload/Documents/Акциски\\_план\\_за\\_имплементација\\_на\\_стратегија\\_за\\_развој\\_на\\_женско\\_претприемништво\\_во\\_Република\\_Македонија\\_2019-2023.pdf](https://economy.gov.mk/Upload/Documents/Акциски_план_за_имплементација_на_стратегија_за_развој_на_женско_претприемништво_во_Република_Македонија_2019-2023.pdf) [accessed on 17 January 2023].

[82] Ministry of Economy, Public call for subsidizing women's entrepreneurship for digitization of business processes: <https://economy.gov.mk/mk-MK/news/javen-povik-za-subvencionirane-na-zensko-pretpriemnisvo-za-digitalizacija-na-delovni-procesi.nspх> [ accessed on 10.04.2023].

[83] Ministry of Economy, Public call for financial support for female entrepreneurship in tourism: <https://economy.gov.mk/mk-MK/news/javen-povik-za-finansiska-poddrska-za-zensko-pretpriemnistvo.nspх> [ accessed on 10.04.2023].

[84] Government of RM, MAFWS: The program for financial support of rural development for 2023 worth 1.3 billion denars was adopted <https://vlada.mk/node/32167?ln=mk> <https://www.mzsv.gov.mk/CMS/Upload/programi2023/>

ПРОГРАМА%20ЗА%20ФИНАНСИСКА%20ПОДДРШКА%20ВО%20ЗЕМЈОДЕЛСТВОТО%20ЗА%202023%20ГОДИНА%20сл.весник%2030.p

The new corporate governance code recommends that it has at least 30 per cent of supervisory and management boards be women by 2025.<sup>[85]</sup>

The deputy president, Fatmir Bitici, stated that the government is working on specific measures to support women in business, including the introduction of criteria that favour women in the evaluation of projects submitted for state support.<sup>[86]</sup> There is however no wider statistic about this support to women.

According to the State Statistical Office, women's participation in economic activities is 38.3 per cent,<sup>[87]</sup> but there are no wider statistics about the participation in leadership positions in the business. According to Gabriela Kulebanova, former vice president of Macedonian chambers of commerce, one-third of company owners are women, but that there is no relevant data for a complete analysis.<sup>[88]</sup> A female business entrepreneur, interviewed for this report, notes that although it is on the rise, the potential of women entrepreneurs is still not at a satisfactory level and there is a need for further improvement.<sup>[89]</sup>

The 2022 World Bank's Women, Business and the Law report, presents an index covering 190 economies related to the participation of women in the business sector. According to this, North Macedonia scores 85 out of 100 points.<sup>[90]</sup>

The (draft) Law on Gender Equality should be adopted by the Parliament and the work of the Government should continue in assisting the institutions, the private sector and the CSOs in their activities towards gender equal society.

Since there is no administrative gender disaggregated data and statistics and there is no coordination and standardization between different institutions which produce data in the public administration system, there is a need that the institutions work together on regular and all-encompassing manner gathering gender disaggregated data from all sectors including the business sector.

There is a need that the business sector, when presenting gender disaggregated data, uses an intersectoral approach (the same as all other institutions) which should contain information on age, disability, regional divisions, marital status, position in the private/public company etc.

The 2019-2023 Strategy for development of women's entrepreneurship should be evaluated and updated for the next phase as soon as possible. The lessons learned for the last five years of the implementation of the Strategy should be incorporated into the new or updated Strategy.

---

[85] Macedonian Stock Exchange. 2021. New Corporate Governance Code:

<https://www.mse.mk/Repository/%D0%9A%D0%BE%D0%B4%D0%B5%D0%BA%D1%81/KKU%20na%20anglisi%20final.pdf>.14

[86] Deputy President of Government Fatmir Bitiki. One of specific measures is the introduction of incentives for women in business during the evaluation process of submitted application projects related to state support. Further, he added that in co-financed grants for technological development, from 686 companies about 42% are the companies that are managed or owned by women, <https://vlada.mk/node/27016> [accessed on 14 January 2023].

[87] State Statistical Office, Women and Men in North Macedonia 2022, p.56 [https://www.stat.gov.mk/publikacii/2023/ZeniteMazite\\_2023.pdf](https://www.stat.gov.mk/publikacii/2023/ZeniteMazite_2023.pdf), [accessed on 10 June.2023].

[88] Akademik, "One third of the companies are founded by women, but they are in management positions only on paper", <https://akademik.mk/edna-tretina-od-kompaniite-se-osnovani-od-zheni-no-tie-se-na-rakovodna-pozitsija-samo-na-hartija/> [accessed on 12 April.2023].

[89] InStore, "Opinions and comments: Women in business": <https://instore.mk/record/34/7047/mistenja-i-komentari-zhenite-vo-biznisot> [accessed on 15 January 2023].

[90] The World Bank, Women, Business and the Law, 2022, p.1 <https://wbl.worldbank.org/content/dam/documents/wbl/2022/snapshots/North-macedonia.pdf>, [accessed on 15 January 2023].





[www.transparency.mk](http://www.transparency.mk)

[www.facebook.com/TransparencyMK](https://www.facebook.com/TransparencyMK)

[www.linkedin.com/company/ti-macedonia](https://www.linkedin.com/company/ti-macedonia)

[www.twitter.com/TI\\_Macedonia](https://www.twitter.com/TI_Macedonia)

[www.instagram.com/timacedonia](https://www.instagram.com/timacedonia)

