



Information gathering template prepared for the Global Education Monitoring Report 2021 - Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia - Inclusion and education: All means all.

## Republic of North Macedonia

This profile has been commissioned by NEPC as an input for the 2021 regional report on inclusion and education in Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. This version is a working draft and will be subject to further copy-editing. Its content has not been edited nor verified by the GEM Report team. The views and opinions expressed in this paper, including anecdotal evidence from interviews, are those of the interviewees or researchers of this profile and should not be attributed to the Global Education Monitoring Report, to UNESCO or to NEPC. The information in this document was current in June 2020. The profile can be cited with the following reference: “Profile commissioned by NEPC for the Global Education Monitoring Report 2021 - Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia - Inclusion and education: All means all”. For further information, please contact [gemreport@unesco.org](mailto:gemreport@unesco.org).

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**2021**

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# 1. Introduction

The template for the Profiles was a survey designed to collect information from countries in order to collect structured information to be used as the basis for the GEM Regional Report analysis work.

The survey respondents were specifically requested to not focus exclusively on children with disabilities, but include information on all of the groups considered to be vulnerable to exclusion or at risk of being marginalised, stereotyped or subject to discrimination, including for reasons such as gender, location, poverty, ethnicity, language, beliefs and religion, migration or displacement status, sexual orientation or gender identity expression.

The overall goal for the Profile was that the information provided in relation to each country identifies:

1. challenges (barriers and hinderances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for the implementation of inclusion in education policies;
2. the ways in which countries monitor inclusion and exclusion in education (at individual and system levels);
3. challenges (barriers and hinderances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for supporting inclusion in education created by sectors other than education and arrangements needed to coordinate work among government sectors, tiers of government and with other stakeholders to overcome overlapping dimensions of exclusion;
4. key policy solutions that are being implemented and key drivers of policy change.

The Profile begins with background information on the people completing the template.

The next section provides a short descriptive overview of the country's system of inclusive education.

This is followed by main sections presenting quantitative and qualitative data linked to each of the seven themes for the report:

- 1.laws and policies;
- 2.governance and finance;
- 3.data;
- 4.curricula, learning materials and assessment;
- 5.teachers and support personnel;
- 6.schools;
- 7.communities, parents and students.

Each section begins with a key guiding question (marked in italic text) that frames the overall information provided. This is followed by the specific questions on the main issues for the topic that should be answered.

Sections 1 and 2 focus on information relating to legislation and policies.

Section 3 focuses upon available data and the aims and procedures for data collection.

Sections 4 to 7 focus on information relating to policies and policy implementation in practice.

The information provided focuses on compulsory education (i.e. potentially -pre-primary, primary and lower secondary, and possibly upper secondary education). Only specific issues related to inclusion in early childhood education and post-compulsory education were considered when necessary.

## 2. Survey and Respondents

Country: Republic of North Macedonia

Author / Institution: Macedonian Civic Education Center

Has the information in this profile been discussed with and validated by a government representative? Yes

If yes, who and what is their professional capacity, role?

- Biljana Trajkovska, State Advisor for Strategic Planning in the Ministry of Education and Science
- Mitko Cheshlarov, Head of Sector for Curriculum Development, Bureau for Development of Education

Which other people have been key informants? What is their professional role?

- Rozalija Davkova, Special educator in primary school
- Gorica Mickovska, Education consultant
- Loreta Georgieva, Macedonian Civic Education Center
- Nebojsa Mojsoski, Macedonian Civic Education Center
- Anica Aleksova, Macedonian Civic Education Center

What was the main challenge during the preparation of the profile? N/A

Please list the 5 most informative sources on inclusion in education (academic papers, policy reviews, evaluation studies etc.) for the country published since 2015 and provide links to the originals:

1. Follow-up Survey on Knowledge, Attitudes, Practices towards Inclusion of Children with Disabilities, UNICEF and European Union, 2017 <https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/reports/follow-survey-knowledge-attitudes-practices-towards-inclusion-children-disabilities>

2. Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Kindergartens, Ombudsman of the Republic of Macedonia, 2018 [https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/media/4386/file/MK\\_CWDInKindergarten\\_Report\\_MK.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/media/4386/file/MK_CWDInKindergarten_Report_MK.pdf)

3. Inclusion of Children and Youth with Disabilities in Secondary Mainstream Education: Research Report. Ombudsman's Office of the Republic of Macedonia and Open the Windows. [https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/media/4271/file/MK\\_CWDinSecondaryEducation\\_Report\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/media/4271/file/MK_CWDinSecondaryEducation_Report_ENG.pdf)

4. Towards Inclusive Education. Report of the conducted research regarding inclusion of children with disabilities in regular primary education. Ombudsman of the Republic of Macedonia, 2016

<http://ombudsman.mk/upload/Istrazuvanja/2016/Inkluzivno%20obrazovanie-UNICEF-Ang.pdf>

5. Baseline Assessment Report of the "Inclusive Education for marginalized children" programme", Aleksova, A., Mickovska G., Chonteva Z., 2015

[http://www.mcgo.org.mk/pub/lzvestaj\\_pocetna\\_sostojba\\_inkluzivno\\_obrazovanie\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.mcgo.org.mk/pub/lzvestaj_pocetna_sostojba_inkluzivno_obrazovanie_ENG.pdf)

If internal, non-public or working documents were used, please add a note here. N/A

### 3. Country system overview

(i) Provide a brief (maximum 1 page) narrative of the country's compulsory educational system. Specifically, provide information about:

a. the different types of schools, institutions and educational provision within the system and the age range / ISCED levels of learners they cater for

Primary education lasts for nine years and is compulsory and free for all pupils (6-14 old years). There are 347 public primary schools in the country (around 1,100 including satellite schools).

The secondary education is also compulsory and free. It is divided into four streams: general secondary education (gymnasium), secondary vocational education, art schools, and education for pupils with special educational needs. Secondary vocational education may be of 3-year or 4-year duration. At the end of 3-year vocational education, the students take final exam, without a right for university entrance. Graduates of the 4-year secondary education are allowed to choose between the final exams and state or school Matura depending on whether they wish to continue education, while the gymnasium graduates have to take state school Matura exams.

Higher Education is implemented at 3 levels: undergraduate, master and doctoral studies. There are 6 functional public universities, 1 private-public university, 9 private universities, and 2 high vocational schools.

b. the different authorities responsible for different types of provision etc.

The **Ministry of Education and Science** is the main organ which develops education policies. It is structured in Departments for each educational level, as well as a department for science.

The **Bureau for Development of Education (BDE)** is a body of the state administration subordinated to the MoES, assigned with performing expert tasks of significance to the development and promotion of upbringing and education in the country. BDE is responsible for monitoring, expert review, research, promotion and development of upbringing and educational activities in the field of pre-school education, primary education, secondary general and secondary art education, secondary vocational and postsecondary education, education of children with special educational needs, etc.

**National Examination Center (NEC)** is mainly responsible for organizing and providing different types of assessments of students (such as the external testing and state Matura exams) including international assessments (such as PISA and TIMSS). In addition, it provides training, assessment and certification of principals (candidates for principals) of educational institutions. NEC is an independent structure subordinated directly to the Government of NM but is funded through the BDE budget.

The **Vocational Education and Training Center (VETC)** is tasked with analysis and research in the system of VET, development of occupational standards, development of standards for vocational qualifications, and curricula, teachers training, counselling and mentoring, international cooperation and support to social partnership.

The **State Education Inspectorate (SEI)** is a legal entity under the MoES jurisdiction. Inspectors and advisors work in the SEI as persons responsible for supervision over the implementation of the education related legislation as well as quality control of the education and upbringing process at all educational levels and lifelong learning (LLL) universities.

c. any major external support programmes provided in the past 5 years e.g. bilateral - GIZ (German Society for International Cooperation) and USAID; or multi-lateral e.g. UNICEF, European Union, ADB (Asian Development Bank).

Roma Education Fund: Inclusion of Roma children in public kindergartens, Mentoring and Tutoring of Secondary School Roma Students

USAID: Application of assistive technology in the curriculum, Project on Youth Ethnic Integration in Education

Pestalozzi Children's Foundation: Inclusion of Out-of-school children in the education system

UNICEF: Programme for inclusive education for primary schools, Programme for inclusive education for vulnerable groups

(ii) Are there specific features of the compulsory education system that impact on inclusion that should be kept in mind when reading the country response?

Area	Yes/No	Description of the feature
Early tracking of learners into a particular educational pathway	No	There is no system of early tracking, but only career counselling at the end of primary and secondary school, typically conducted by the school psychologists
'Double-shift' patterns to the school day (i.e. learners attend for either a morning or afternoon session)	Yes	Many primary schools and most secondary schools work in shifts, mostly because of the lack of space to cater all students in one shift. Shifts are sometimes divided according to the language of instruction.
Grade retention	Yes	Up until Grade 5, the student cannot repeat the grade, but from Grade 6 onwards this practice can be used, although it is rarely practiced.
Multiple languages of instruction	Yes	Education system is organized around four languages of instruction in primary schools (Macedonian, Albanian, Turkish and Serbian) and three languages of instruction in secondary education (Macedonian, Albanian, and Turkish). Around 29% of primary schools and 34% of secondary schools are two/three language schools
Policies on access to compulsory education in local schools	Yes	Primary and secondary education are compulsory for all students, as regulated in Laws on Primary and Secondary Education. Primary schools should enroll children from their area.
<i>(others ...)</i>		

(iii) In the country's system which groups are considered to be vulnerable to exclusion from education? Who has identified these groups as being vulnerable to exclusion?

**The Ministry of Education and Science has identified the following groups as students with special educational needs (i.e. vulnerable students):**

- students with disabilities- students with permanent physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments, and when in interaction with various societal barriers, their full and effective participation in the society on an equal basis with others is impeded,
- students with behavioral disorders or emotional problems or with specific learning difficulties and
- students whose origin is from disadvantaged socio-economic, culturally and/or linguistically deprived environment.

(Law on Primary Education, Article 35)

(iv) Please provide a brief (maximum 1 page) narrative overview of the historical development of inclusion of vulnerable groups in education in the country.

Inclusive education in the Republic of North Macedonia is a process that started two decades ago and has continuously dispersed and progressed throughout the education system, intensifying in recent years.

In 2001, the Government adopted the National Strategy on Equalization on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which is based on a thorough comprehension and analysis of the need the Government to adopt adequate decisions for protection, education, rehabilitation, training and employment of disabled persons. The right to education for the

persons with disabilities is covered by Article 24 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which our country ratified in 2011.<sup>1</sup>

The previous Law on Primary Education (2002) implemented important principles and values directly related to the regulation of the issue of inclusion, including universality, and non-discrimination. Thus, Article 2 stated that "Every child has the right to primary education" and Article 3 stated that "the role of primary education is to include and care for the development of students with special educational needs. The law stipulated the right of the child with special educational needs to be accepted and treated equally with other children, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations."<sup>2</sup>

The National Program for the Development of Education in the Republic of Macedonia (2005-2015) represented a major step forward in improving the education system for all students. This strategy envisages faster elimination of physical barriers to education, reduction of discrimination in schools on all basis, increased care for children with special educational needs, etc.<sup>3</sup>

Moreover, the National Strategy for Deinstitutionalization in the System of Social Protection in the Republic of Macedonia (2008 - 2018) states the request to the Ministry of Education and Science for creation of conditions for inclusion or inclusion of children with special educational needs in regular schools.

The initial capacity building activities in the country were initially conducted in 1988 through the Project: Integration of Children with Special Needs in the Republic of Macedonia, implemented by the BDE. A decade later, in 1998, the Bureau for Development of Education, with the support of UNICEF, launched a five-year project "Inclusion of Children with Special Needs in Regular Schools in the Republic of Macedonia". Within the framework of this project, and according to modern scientific achievements, the term integration of children with special educational needs is replaced with the term inclusion of children with special educational needs, school inclusion teams were established in 54 primary schools and 13 public kindergartens and cooperation is established with special educators from special primary schools for developing an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

Since 2014, the Bureau for Development of Education has taken more active role in implementing state policies for the inclusion of marginalized groups of children. To that end, the Bureau for Development of Education, in cooperation with the Macedonian Civic Education Center and with the financial support of UNICEF, is involved in the "Inclusive Education for Primary Schools" Program, implemented with the support of UNICEF since 2009.<sup>4</sup>

The current Education Strategy for the period 2018-2025 and the latest Law on Primary Education incorporate a contemporary approach towards inclusion in education. They are elaborated throughout the following questions.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED568665.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> The current state of inclusion of children with special educational needs in primary education in the Republic of Macedonia, BDE (unpublished document)

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.



## 4. Section 1: Laws and Policies

What is the framework of legislation, policy and guidelines for supporting the development of an inclusive education system?

3.1 Have international/UN conventions/declarations to protect the rights of groups who are potentially vulnerable to discrimination and exclusion been integrated into national and/or regional law?

Convention/declaration on	Law	Comments
Child rights (UNCRC)	Law on Primary Education (2019)	Article 26. The School Statute regulates student's rights and obligations Part VI Rights and obligations of students (includes Protection of students' integrity (Art 65), Prevention of violence against students (Art 66), student organization and participation (Art 68)
Disability (UNCRPD)	Law on Primary Education (2019)	Article 18, Par. "The inclusion team for a student shall design the IEP and modified curriculum for a student with disability according to the individual potentials and needs."
Gender (Convention on discrimination against women CEDAW)	1. Law on Equal Opportunities of Women and Men 2. Law on Social Protection 3. Law on Prevention and Protection of Domestic Violence 4. Law on Protection against Harassment at the Workplace	1. CEDAW is the basis of the Law 2. protection of women who are victims of trafficking and sexual violence, in 2018 3. measures for the protection and redress of victims of domestic violence 4. prohibiting psychological and sexual harassment at the workplace and providing for redress mechanisms, in 2013
Ethnicity or language (UN Declaration on Rights of persons belonging to National, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities)	1. Law on Primary Education (2019) 2. Law on Secondary Education (last updated-2015) 3. Law to promote and protect the rights of communities that form less than 20% of the population of the country (2008) 4. Law on the use of Languages (2018)	1. Article 10: Use of languages of instruction: "For students who are members of the communities whose language of instruction is other than the Macedonian language and its Cyrillic alphabet, the educational work shall be conducted in the language and alphabet of the respective community." 2. Article 4: same as above 2. Article 42: The Public call for enrolment in secondary schools is published in the teaching languages that the school offers. 3. Article 3: Lists primary, secondary and higher education as areas where community rights apply. Article 5: Guarantees members of all communities the right to education in their own language at all levels in accordance with the law 4. Article 2: Mentions national education as an area where a minority language can be used and provides details of the use of languages at all levels of education

Other (e.g. Rights of indigenous people)	Not relevant for the country	
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3.2 Provide an overview of general education legislation impacting on the inclusion of learners from vulnerable groups:

Name and link	Year and status (enacted, under preparation etc.)	Description of key content
Law on Primary Education <a href="http://www.mon.gov.mk/images/Zakon_za_osnovno_obrazovanje_br._161_-_2019.pdf">http://www.mon.gov.mk/images/Zakon_za_osnovno_obrazovanje_br._161_-_2019.pdf</a>	Official Gazette of the RNM, No. 161 from 5.08.2019	The Law defines inclusive education as a process that takes into account the diverse individual needs for development of students, by ensuring equal opportunities for exercising the fundamental human rights to development and quality education. Inclusive education entail changes and adjustments to the content, structures and strategies of the teaching process for students with disabilities, along with a common vision and conviction that the state is under the obligation to provide education to all children.
Law on Secondary Education <a href="http://mon.gov.mk/images/documents/zakoni/zakon-za-sredno-2015.pdf">http://mon.gov.mk/images/documents/zakoni/zakon-za-sredno-2015.pdf</a>	Consolidated text (Official Gazette of RM no. 44/1995, 24/1996, 34/1996, 35/1997, 82/1999, 29/2002, 40/2003, 42/2003, 67/2004, 55/2005, 113/2005, 35/2006, 30/2007, 49/2007, 81/2008, 92/2008, 33/2010, 116/2010, 156/2010, 18/2011, 42/2011, 51/2011, 6/2012, 100/2012, 24/2013, 41/2014, 116/2014, 135/2014, 10/2015, 98/2015 and 145/2015)	Article 32 envisages that secondary education shall be organized based on plans and curricula designed to, inter alia, “ensure access to secondary education to students with special education needs” Students with special needs are not mentioned at all in any of the provisions governing enrolment of students in mainstream secondary schools. The law provisions existence of secondary schools for students with special needs, which are primarily technical and crafts vocational schools; free transport of students with special needs (and their assistance) regardless of the distance from the school. *New Law, in line with the Education Strategy, is expected to be developed and carried within 2020.
Law on Student Standard	Consolidated text (Official Gazette of RM No. 52/2005, 117/2008, 17/2011, 135/2011, 15/2013, 41/2014,146/2015,30/16, 64/2018 and 20/2019)	The Law refers on the roles of student dormitories, for students learning outside of their place of living. It provisions that the dormitories can form groups of students with special needs. The Law also determines the different type of scholarships students can receive based on their needs and socio-economic background, and with the aim of inclusion in education. (see Question 2.7)
Law on Child Protection <a href="http://www.mtsp.gov.mk/content/pdf/zakoni/2018/198%202018%20ZAKON%20ZA%20ZASTITA%20NA%20DECATA%20%20%20D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%BD%D1%81%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%B8%D0%B4%D0%B">http://www.mtsp.gov.mk/content/pdf/zakoni/2018/198%202018%20ZAKON%20ZA%20ZASTITA%20NA%20DECATA%20%20%20D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%BD%D1%81%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%B8%D0%B4%D0%B</a>		Art. 65: Kindergartens organize care and education of children with physical and mental disabilities, based on the type of disability. The number of children in a group is reduced if there is a child with special needs in the group. Art. 32: The law envisions a special allowance for a child with special needs, which has disabilities in the physical or mental development, or combined developmental disabilities, up until 26 years of age.

<a href="#">8%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%BD%20%D1%82%D0%B5%D0%BA%D1%81%D1%82-converted.pdf</a>		<p>Article 168, paragraph 13, stipulates that kindergarten-based education for children with disabilities is carried out under the Early Learning and Developmental Program for Children with Disabilities based on the Early Learning Standards and Development, prepared by the Bureau for Development of Education and adopted by the Minister of Labor and Social Policy.</p>
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3.3 Provide an overview of education policy or guidelines impacting on inclusion of learners from vulnerable groups:

Name and link	Year and status (enacted, under preparation etc.)	Description of key content
<p>Quality Indicators for Schools (State Education Inspectorate)</p>	<p>2014 (latest update in 2019)</p>	<p>The Quality Indicators encompass 7 areas and set of indicators for each area. Each public primary and secondary school is being assessed on the basis of the indicators every three years.</p> <p>On the basis of the data collected, the Inspectorate develops an annual assessment of the quality of education and recommendations for improving education system and processes.</p> <p>Some examples of indicators, referring to inclusion, include:</p> <p>Area: Curricula I: Preparing Individual educational plans for students with special educational needs</p> <p>Area: Teaching and learning I: Identifying student’s educational needs I: Respecting different student needs</p> <p>Area: Support of students I: Support of students with developmental/physical disabilities I: Care of students with health issues I: Care of students with emotional difficulties</p> <p>Area: School climate Part: Equality and Just approach I: Knowing child rights I: Accepting and promoting multiculturalism I: Equal and just treatment of all students</p>
<p>Conception on Inclusive Education</p>	<p>The document is under preparation, supported by UNICEF’s office in NMK</p>	<p>No official information yet.</p>
<p>Professional Standards and Qualifications for Teachers and School Professional Staff</p>	<p>2020</p>	<p>The document on Professional competences of teachers includes a special aspect of: Social and educational inclusion, which incorporates competences such as: knowledge of different concepts and models of inclusive education; recognizing students which need additional support in the learning; prepares students to accept children from vulnerable groups and children with special needs, etc.</p>

Early Learning and Development Program	2014	It prescribes, inter alia, that pre-school education be based on the following principles: - equal opportunities and respect for the differences between children, multiculturalism, adaptation to age-related characteristics and individualization, It also stipulates that spatial conditions should fit each child's individual specificities, needs, interests and opportunities, as well as the developmental needs in the group.
Nine-Year Primary Education Concept	2007	According to the Concept, primary education is based on the following principles that are the basis for inclusive education: Principle of inclusiveness, democracy and choice, Understanding others and multiculturalism, Respect for individual differences among students, Inclusion of students with special educational needs in primary education - which requires these students to be included primarily in regular primary education. A special chapter is devoted to the education of students with special educational needs which includes guidance on grouping children with disabilities, engaging with other children, supporting staff to work with students with special educational needs, reducing the number of students with special educational needs. class and individualized work. The stated principles and guidelines have been taken into account in the preparation of the subject curricula.

3.4 Please describe any specific plans and strategies designed to support inclusion in education (e.g. national strategy on migrant learners):

Name and link	Year and status (approved, under preparation etc.)	Description of the focus
Education Strategy 2018-2025	2018	One of the priorities enlisted in the Strategy include: Increase Enrolment of Pupils, Improve Inclusiveness and Interethnic Integration of Primary Education, including the following measures: Adapt Primary schools' buildings for pupils with physical disabilities Improve conditions and schools' capacities for implementing inclusive education for children with special educational needs Establish a system of allocated use of block subsidies funds for inclusiveness by the municipality and the schools Introduce a mechanism for financial and other forms of support to schools for implementing interethnic integration activities Establish a sustainable model for continuing (completing) primary education by children in correctional facilities Introduce a sustainable model for identification of individuals obliged to complete their education, who are excluded from the primary education schools, and their monitoring until completion of mandatory education

		An action plan with specific targets has been developed to address this priority
Strategy for One Society and Inter-culturalism	2019	The Government of Republic of North Macedonia developed the Strategy in order to tackle the issue of division across ethnic lines, in different areas: education, culture, youth, media, local self-governance, etc. In the area of education, the Strategy envisions: joint curricular and extra-curricular activities among students learning in different languages of instruction, partnering among schools and learning the language of the "other".

3.5 Is there a definition of inclusion in education?

No  No information available  Yes

If yes, please provide the definition and give the official source:

Article 11, Par. 2 of the Law on Primary Education: Inclusive education is a process that takes into account the diverse individual needs for development of students, by ensuring equal opportunities for exercising the fundamental human rights to development and quality education

If no, please give further information:

3.6 Is there a definition of vulnerable groups?

No  No information available  Yes

If yes, please provide the definition and give the official source:

Not specifically vulnerable groups, but the term "students with special educational needs" is used.

Article 35 of the Law on Primary Education defines that students with special educational needs shall be deemed:

- students with disabilities- students with permanent physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments, and when in interaction with various societal barriers, their full and effective participation in the society on an equal basis with others is impeded,
- students with behavioral disorders or emotional problems or with specific learning difficulties and
- students whose origin is from disadvantaged socio-economic, culturally and/or linguistically deprived environment.

If no, please give further information: /

3.7 Is there a definition of special educational needs?

No  No information available  Yes

Yes, as stated in the previous question.

If yes, please provide the definition and give the official source:

If no, please give further information:

3.8 Please provide information on any future developments planned for inclusion in education.

The Education Strategy and Action Plan outline different priorities which relate to inclusion in education. In particular:

- Developing national standard for each educational cycle of primary education, with a special focus on inclusiveness and respect of differences;
- Analysis of textbooks with the aim of determining weaknesses from the aspect of: gender inequality, multiculturalism, respect of differences, etc.
- Adjusting primary school buildings for students with physical disabilities;
- Improving conditions and capacities of schools for inclusion of children with special educational needs;
- Establishing a system for appropriate use of the means from block transfers for inclusion goals, as well as a Rulebook and methodology for appropriate use of the allocations;
- Establishing a sustainable model for identifying out-of-school children and their monitoring until the completion of the compulsory schooling;
- Training teachers and school support staff for early detection and work with students with special needs;
- Preparing mechanisms for financial and other type of support of schools with instruction on two or more languages;
- Preparing and piloting an education model for the juvenile correctional facilities.

Some of these plans have been further elaborated in the new Law on Primary Education, which provisions complete inclusion of students with special needs in regular schools within few years, and transforming the current 'Special schools' into resource centers, which should provide professional support to students with disabilities, teaching staff, professional associates, parents i.e. guardians and the inclusion team of other primary schools.

Some students, with complex needs, will attend some of the classes in a primary school with a resource center, according to a recommendation given by the professional body for assessment and based on the International Classification of Functioning (hereinafter: ICF), adopted by the World Health Organization. (Article 16)

Article 18 provisions that the 'Director of a primary school with special classes shall establish a center for supported learning for students with disabilities (hereinafter: Support center).

The Support center shall use the material and human resources in the school and provide appropriate professional support to the students with disabilities, the teaching staff, professional associates, parents i.e. guardians and the inclusion team in other primary schools on the territory of a municipality.'

Article 19 outlines the different types of support such as the provision of: educational assistant, personal assistant, adequate professional support from the center for supported learning, inclusion team and assistive technology according to recommendation of a professional body for assessment and in compliance with the individual educational plan or the modified program.

3.9 Please provide information on any reports, evaluations and/or reviews of legislation and/or policy relating to inclusion in education, since 2015. This could include official and parallel reports on UNCRPD etc.

The reports stated in the first question are general, but most also include parts on legislation and/or policy.

Specifically:

1. Assessment of Capacity of Services provided by Health, Education and Social Sectors for Inclusion of Children with Disabilities. Judith Hollenweger and Andrea Martinuzzi, UNICEF Office Skopje, 2015

[https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/media/3496/file/MK\\_AssessmentServicesCWD\\_Report\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/media/3496/file/MK_AssessmentServicesCWD_Report_ENG.pdf)

Includes chapters on laws and policies, general observations on the capacities of the system, with regards to financial and legal obligations and actual practices.

2. Towards Inclusive Education. Report of the conducted research regarding inclusion of children with disabilities in regular primary education. Ombudsman of the Republic of Macedonia, 2016

Includes a separate chapter on legal provisions, although these are mainly outdated due to the new Primary Education Law.

3. Inclusion of Children and Youth with Disabilities in Secondary Mainstream Education: Research Report. Ombudsman's Office of the Republic of Macedonia and Open the Windows.

Includes a separate chapter on the national legal framework.

1.10 What are the perceived main challenges (barriers and hindrances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusion in education in relation to laws and policies in the country?

Challenges:

The Education Strategy for 2018-2025 outlines the following challenges for inclusion:

- In multi-language schools, pupils are separated along language lines (working in different shifts, buildings, floors, different administration etc.), and have insufficient opportunities to interact; multicultural/intercultural education is insufficiently reflected in curricular and extra-curricular activities and in some of the textbooks. Teachers themselves do not promote enough respect for diversity and equality (in terms of gender, ethnicity, social status, intellectual and physical capacities) and multiculturalism.
- Measures for overcoming divisions along ethnic lines in schools are not sufficient and segregation in schools impacts social cohesion and inter-ethnic integration.
- There is no mechanism that ensures ethnically segregated data on school age children who have not been included in the system on various grounds, with a usual explanation that the obstacle is in personal data protection, however legal regulations is not preventing data collection on ethnic grounds for the purposes of improving the state of the education system.
- A large number of Roma pupils are outside the education system. A large rate of drop out is also obvious and low degree of literacy of children with Roma ethnical background. The following are stated as the most frequent reasons for this state: insufficient knowledge of the Macedonian language, low degree of education of parents and poor socio-economic status.
- Children with special educational needs are not sufficiently included in regular primary education. Their inclusion in regular schools is not properly regulated and appropriate mechanisms have not been introduced. In addition, there are prejudices toward these children among parents, teachers and students. Teachers also do not possess enough competences to work with this category of learners.
- Juveniles from the correctional institutions and the homeless are excluded from the Primary education system and thus, their integration on the society is impeded. There is no effective system of education, coordination and monitoring of these categories of children.
- Didactic materials and didactic resources for realization of educational process in all instruction languages (including assistive technologies for pupils with special educational needs) are insufficient.

Opportunities:

The recently developed Law on primary education has provisions aimed to tackle some of these issues, especially the inclusion of all children in mainstream schools and inter-ethnic integration.

## 1. Section 2: Governance and Finance

How far are inclusive principles underpinning policies at national and local levels effectively supported by governance and financing mechanisms?

4.1 Is there formal collaboration across ministries on inclusion in education?

No  No information available  Yes

If yes, in which areas does this take place and who is involved?

Area	Yes/No	Description: what mechanism, who is involved and how
Policy development, implementation and coordination	Yes	<p>Cooperation between the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy (MLSP) and the Ministry of Health on inclusion in education is regulated in several laws.</p> <p>The new Law on Primary Education ("Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" No. 161/2019) was adopted on the basis of extensive consultation and after previously secured a favorable opinion from the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy and the Ministry of Health, especially in the area of inclusion to all students in the education system.</p> <p>The Law on Primary Education (proposed by the MoES) contains a clear (supplemented) provision for protection against discrimination on all grounds, in line with the provisions of the new Law on Prevention and Protection against Discrimination (proposed by the MLSP).</p> <p>The Law on Primary Education regulates the way in which expert bodies for the evaluation of additional educational, health and social support for children and youth based on the International Classification of Functioning (ICF), adopted by the World Health Organization, provide support for the inclusion of students with disabilities. (Articles 16 and 17).</p> <p>In 2019, Pilot Assessment Bodies, comprised of health professionals (funded by the Ministry of Health), social workers and special educators and rehabilitators (funded by the MLSP), commenced their work.</p> <p>At the moment, the Expert Bodies (one national and two regional) are functioning within the National Coordination Body for Implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, and there are ongoing activities to institutionalize them within the framework of public health and establishment and opening of 8 regional offices.</p> <p>The new Law on Primary Education (Article 151, paragraph 1) provides for exemption from the costs of recognition and equivalency of overseas certificates of returnees from other countries if the student's family is from socially vulnerable category and is a beneficiary of guaranteed minimum assistance, for which confirmation is provided by the Center for Social Work (MLSP). The implementation of this provision resulted from a joint coordination within a project implemented by the MoES, MLSP, MoI, Ministry of Justice and Civil Sector (MCEC and Pestalozzi Foundation).</p>



	<p>Primary education is also organized and delivered in health institutions, penitentiary and correctional institutions, as well as in home conditions, in accordance with the Law on Primary Education (Article 15). This type of teaching is organized in cooperation with the competent authorities (Ministry of Labor and Social Policy and Ministry of Health).</p> <p>The Law on Primary Education also regulates the cooperation with the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Justice. Namely, in order to include all children in the educational system, especially children from vulnerable categories, the Law on Primary Education (Article 63) stipulates that the founder (local self-government units) submits a list of children from the primary school enrollment area receives from the relevant services in the local government unit that keep records of permanent and temporary residents. The list is provided by the local self-government units from the relevant authority for keeping registers of born and deceased children (Ministry of Justice - Registry Office), as well as from the authority for keeping records of the movement of citizens abroad (Ministry of Interior).</p> <p>The cooperation and coordination between the MoES and the MLSP is also regulated by the Law on Child Protection, which stipulates the right to an education allowance for families from socially vulnerable categories. Namely, the right to an education allowance is granted to a household with a child attending primary or secondary education in schools in the Republic of North Macedonia verified by the Ministry of Education and Science and listed in the Central Register of the Republic of North Macedonia and in the register of the Ministry of Education and science whose total average monthly earnings in the last three months before submitting an application and in exercising the right on all grounds of all household members are to the threshold of access to the right to an education allowance (Article 39-b). Education allowance is paid only if the student is a regular student, for which data is obtained from primary and secondary schools. The right to an education allowance is also granted to a person who until the age of 18 had the status of a child without parents and parental care, is a regular high school student or is enrolled as a full-time student at one of the public higher education universities in the Republic of North Macedonia, for each full year of study, up to the age of 26 at the latest.</p> <p>The Law on Child Protection also regulates preschool education, as well as the cooperation between the MoLSP and the MoES - Bureau for Development of Education. In the Republic of North Macedonia, the MoLSP, which is also a proponent of the Law on Child Protection, is responsible for childcare facilities (kindergartens, ECD centers etc.), while the MoES - Bureau for Development of Education is responsible for developing an Early Learning and Development Program based on Early Learning and Development Standards. The program applied in all public child care institutions is adopted by the Minister of Labor and Social Policy. The Early Learning and Development Program is in line with the developmental capacities of pre-school children, builds on the needs and interests of early learning and child development and is aimed at fully achieving the developmental potentials of each child, including children with special needs. Early Learning Needs in accordance with the Early Learning and Development Standards.</p>
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	<p>The Law on Social Protection (“Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia” No. 104/2019) regulates support for persons who up to the age of 18 had the status of a child without parents and without parental care, that is, after the termination of custody, and up to 26 years old. These persons are entitled to one-off interventional cash assistance provided after leaving the institution or foster family. To this end, the Center for Social Work together with the person makes a plan for the integration of the person into the social environment that inter alia applies and the provision of regular education on the basis of which the funds are paid. Article 68 of this law stipulates that measures of social prevention are implemented in cooperation between social protection institutions, preschools, educational institutions, health institutions, police stations, the unit of local self-government and other state bodies, legal and natural persons and associations.</p> <p>The Law on Primary Education regulates the manner and procedure of providing educational and personal assistants for students involved in primary education, while the Law on Social Protection regulates the manner of providing personal assistance to persons over 18 years of age, among other things.</p> <p>Article 295 of the Law on Social Protection stipulates that the manner of determining the type and degree of disability is prescribed by the Minister of Labor and Social Policy, in accordance with the Minister of Education and Science and the Minister of Health. The Rulebook regulates the professional profile of the members of the expert body that provides findings and opinions on the assessment of the type and degree of disability and the special needs of persons with disabilities, the first and second instance bodies, the manner and the assessment of special needs, the keeping of records for the special needs of these persons and institutions that form expert bodies that provide findings and opinions. The Rulebook is prescribed and adopted by the three Ministers.</p> <p>When it comes to the inclusion of students with disabilities, it is important to note the work of the National Coordination Body for the Implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities at the Government. The establishment of a National Coordination Body for the Implementation of the Convention is the obligation of the State in accordance with the ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia in 2011, and Article 33 thereof, as the basic mechanism for its implementation. .</p> <p>The National Coordination Body is composed of a total of 15 inclusive members. It comprises 2 representatives from the Office of the Prime Minister of the Republic of North Macedonia, 11 representatives from key ministries (Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Transport and Communications, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Information Society and Administration, Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning Ministry of Local Self Government), 1 representative from the National Council of Disability Organizations of North Macedonia and</p>
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		<p>1 representative from Parents of Children with Disabilities (Resource Center for Parents of Children with Disabilities).</p> <p>The National Coordination Body is fully involved in the creation of educational policies, especially for students with disabilities.</p>
Identification of needs / referral for services	Yes	<p>The expert body outlined above, based on the child's potentials and abilities, makes recommendations for inclusion of students with disabilities in education, in terms of whether the student should develop an individual education plan or a modified curriculum, whether educational and/or a personal assistant is needed, whether and what advisory expert support and assistive technology is required for the student (Article 19 of the Law on Primary Education).</p> <p>When enrolling a child with disability in the first grade, the parent or guardian is obliged to submit an opinion / functional profile from the Committee for evaluation of children and youth for additional educational, social and health support according to the ICF (Article 60, paragraph 3).</p> <p>If, when enrolling a student in a school, the school enrollment committee determines that the child has a developmental disability, and the parent or guardian does not submit an opinion / functional profile from the expert assessment body, it is in the child's best interest to have the committee refer the parent or guardian to the expert assessment body in order to determine the necessary measures to support learning (Article 61, paragraph 3).</p> <p>The Law on Primary Education also regulates the following cooperation between institutions (Article 48):</p> <p>"The school cooperates with health institutions for the purpose of providing health care for students, especially in performing medical examinations for children enrolled in first grade, conducting regular systematic medical examinations and vaccinations in accordance with the law" and</p> <p>"The school, in collaboration with the relevant institutions, cares for social protection, especially for students from vulnerable social groups."</p> <p>Article 278 of the Law on Social Protection provides that the case leader for the provision of social protection rights shall develop an individual plan on the basis of prior expert assessment, in co-operation with the individual or family, as well as other professionals from social, health, educational institutions and other state bodies and bodies, associations and other legal and physical entities.</p>
Data sharing	Yes	<p>The Law on Primary Education establishes the functioning of the so-called "Skills Observatory". The Skills Observatory is an information system with a web-based portal run and administered by the Ministry of Education and Science. This system provides data from several public institutions including the MLSP, and access to statistical reports and access to publicly available reports is provided to several institutions including the MLSP (Article 100 and Article 101 of the Act).</p> <p>The Law on Primary Education also stipulates the following provision, which refers to the protection of students from vulnerable categories, especially for Roma students: "In case of established reason for leaving the educational process of the student, especially in case when the student entered an extra-marital community, the</p>

		<p>school is obliged to notify the competent center for social affairs (functioning within the MoLSP), the State Education Inspectorate and the person in charge of education in the municipality, within three days of the day when the student has entered the extramarital community</p> <p>Article 108 of the Law on Social Protection stipulates that depending on the needs of the beneficiary, social protection services may be provided simultaneously and in combination with services provided by educational, health and other institutions, for which a protocol for inter-sectoral cooperation between the competent ministries and / or institutions is concluded.</p>
Monitoring and evaluation	Yes	<p>The Law on Child Protection stipulates that the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy shall supervise the professional work in the realization, foster care, upbringing, stay, care, nutrition, while the accomplishment of educational work is monitored by the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Health over the health care.</p> <p>In 2018, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia adopted a Comprehensive Education Strategy 2018-2025. Monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the Action Plan, which is an integral part of the Strategy, is an obligation of the Ministry of Education and Science in cooperation with the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, for which annual reports are prepared.</p>
Quality assurance and accountability	Partially	<p>In the area of preschool education, there is a shared competence with regard to the fostering component under the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy and the educational component under the Ministry of Education and Science - Bureau for Development of Education, as explained above (when adopting standards and programs).</p> <p>In the area of primary and secondary education, the competences are entirely with the Ministry of Education and Science and local government (the legislation does not regulate cooperation between the ministries in the area of quality assurance and accountability), except in the area of the right to complain about infringements and protection and prevention of discrimination.</p>

#### 4.2 Are there shared responsibilities between central and local governments on inclusion in education?

No  No information available  Yes

If yes, in which areas does this take place and who is involved?

Area	Yes/No	Description: who is involved and how
Policy development, implementation and coordination	Yes	<p>According to the education system in the country, the schools are the responsibility of the municipalities. The Ministry of Education and Science is the creator of educational policies and funds schools through grants awarded to municipalities.</p> <p>Pursuant to the Law on Primary Education and the Law on Secondary Education, there is a shared responsibility between central and local government in the area of inclusion in education. The MoES is responsible for creating inclusive education policies, but schools are responsible for implementing them (the school board also has a representative from the municipality as the founder of the school).</p> <p>As stated in area 2.1, a central body has been established by the Central Government for the evaluation of additional educational,</p>

		<p>health and social support for children and youth based on the International Classification of Functioning (ICF), which performs a functional analysis of the opportunities of students with disabilities. Based on the report and recommendations of the Expert body, it is then the responsibility of the school and the founder (local government) to form an inclusive student team, develop an individual education plan or modified program, procure assistive technology, seek an educational and / or personal assistant, provide appropriate expert support from a Learning Support Center or Resource Center School.</p> <p>As stated in the section on school funding, they are financed through grants provided by the MoES to the municipalities and distributed to the schools by formula. Municipalities can supplement their grants or own source funds, except for staff salaries. Specifically, municipalities can also supplement grants to provide inclusive education (procurement of assistive technology, adapting schools to students' needs, organizing extracurricular activities ...)</p> <p>Through the municipality, the school receives a list of children to enroll in first grade each year in the school district. Upon completion of enrolment, the primary school is obliged to notify the municipality's authorized education inspector of children not enrolled in first grade by June 20, and of students who do not attend the primary school unjustifiably for more than one month.</p> <p>The school is obliged to take activities to enroll the students who are not enrolled in primary school.</p> <p>In addition to the scholarships and benefits provided by the MoES for children with disabilities (children with disabilities from socially vulnerable categories ...), each municipality locally undertakes similar measures and activities.</p>
Identification of needs / referral for services	Yes	<p>If, when enrolling a student in school, the school enrolment committee finds that the child has a developmental disability, and the parent or guardian does not submit an opinion / functional profile from the Assessment Body, it is in the child's best interest to refer the parent or guardian to the assessment expert body in order to determine the necessary measures to support learning.</p> <p>The municipality receives the lists for enrolment of first grade children at the school level from the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Justice - Office for keeping records.</p> <p>Article 13 of the Law on Primary Education stipulates that the Ministry of Education and Science, in cooperation with the founder of the school and the country of origin of the student (child with foreign citizenship and child without citizenship), shall, as far as possible, provide support for the acquisition of knowledge of the mother tongue and culture of the country of origin of the student.</p>
Data sharing	Yes	<p>Schools, municipalities and MoES are interconnected with the EMIS system and e-diary in the area of data exchange (explained in more detail in section 2.4)</p> <p>In addition, schools and municipalities regularly submit reports to the Ministry, including data on inclusive education.</p>
Monitoring and evaluation	Yes	<p>Monitoring and evaluation responsibilities are divided between the central government (through the State Education Inspectorate) and the local government (municipal education inspectors).</p>

Quality assurance and accountability	Yes	<p>The appeal process for rights violations is in the first phase through the local government, and in the second stage through the central government</p> <p>The teaching standards are developed by the MES - Bureau for Development of Education and apply to all teachers in the country. Each municipality at local level can develop rules / guidelines for schools on its territory that are in line with general standards.</p> <p>The central government (Ministry of Education and Science and Local Government Units - through participation in a joint committee for promotion of titles) is also involved in the career development process of teachers and staff (promotion of mentor and advisor). In the process of promoting the title of teachers and support staff, the way in which inclusive education is implemented and promoted is largely taken into account.</p>
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#### 4.3 Are non-governmental organisations and/or associations involved in governance processes?

No  No information available  Yes

If yes, please describe their involvement:

1. Representatives from UNICEF, USAID, and the Macedonian Civic Education Center (MCEC) were involved in the process of drafting the new Law on Primary Education and the Law on Teachers and Associates in Primary and Secondary Education (and bylaws deriving from these laws). The new legislation provides for major changes in inclusive education for all vulnerable categories of students (listed above)
2. The concept of inclusive education in the Republic of North Macedonia is being prepared, with the participation of UNICEF, Pestalozzi Children's Foundation and NGO Open the Windows.
3. Work of expert bodies to assess additional educational, health and social support for children and youth based on the International Classification of Functioning (ICF), which perform functional analysis of the needs of children with disabilities within the education system, during 2019 and the first half of 2020 is funded with the support of UNICEF. It is expected to institutionalize these bodies (one central and eight regional) within the Public Health Facility in the second field of 2020.
4. Educational and Personal Assistants - UNDP. The recruitment of educational and / or personal assistants for students with disabilities is supported by UNDP as part of the Government's Operational Employment Plan. The recruitment process is ongoing with a request from the municipality to the UNDP Office, which supports the "Community Benefit" program under the Employment Operational Plan. With the adoption of the new Law on Primary Education, from the academic year 2020/2021, the hiring of educational and / or personal assistants will be carried out by municipal schools and primary schools with a resource center (with funds from the MoES budget)
5. Representative Trade Union for Education

The committees for checking the professional standards for the titles teacher-mentor and teacher-advisor and expert associate-mentor and expert associate-advisor, formed by the Minister, also have a representative from the representative trade union.

The standards for professional associations of teachers, in accordance with the Law on Teachers and Associates in Primary and Secondary Schools, are set by the representative trade union for education.
6. Program "Quality and inclusive education"

The program is implemented by UNICEF, MoES and the Bureau for Development of Education. Under this program UNICEF supports the Ministry of Education and Science to set national standards for teaching outcomes that are essential for reforming curricula. All reforms must be evidence based, which is why the creation of an analytical unit within the Ministry of Education and Science is supported, which will continuously analyze the performance data and work on evidence-based policy making. In addition, with the support of the OECD, a Country Assessment and

Evaluation System Report has been developed and an assessment system has been developed that recognizes the talents and interests of all students, encouraging them to be persistent.

Based on the models developed through the pilot schools program, inclusive education training has been introduced in all schools in the country. This is supported by the mandatory online training for inclusive education of all teachers. The program has developed resources, manuals and guidelines for inclusive education, which are used to improve the access and participation of all children in the teaching and learning process and improve their success.

4.4 Are there any accountability mechanisms to promote the inclusion of learners from vulnerable groups?

No  No information available  Yes

If yes, what is the focus of the mechanisms?

Area	Yes/No	Description of the focus/actors involved (e.g. state/non state)
Appeal process for rights violations	Yes	<p><u>At school level:</u> Pursuant to the Law on Primary Education and the Law on Secondary Education, the school board of the primary or secondary school decides upon complaints and appeals of students, parents and guardians of students. The school board must decide on complaints within 15 days of the day the complaint is filed.</p> <p><u>Ombudsman:</u> The procedure for protection of the constitutional and legal rights of the citizens before the Ombudsman is initiated by filing a complaint. Any person may file a complaint with the Ombudsman when he or she considers that his or her constitutional and legal rights have been violated or the principles of non-discrimination have been violated. The Ombudsman may also initiate proceedings on his own initiative if he considers that the constitutional and legal rights of the citizens have been violated. The Ombudsman shall initiate proceedings upon a complaint or on his own initiative if the allegations, evidence and facts appended to the complaint or the findings obtained otherwise indicate that the organs have violated the constitutional and legal rights of citizens or violated the principles of non-discrimination and adequate and equitable representation of members of communities.</p> <p><u>Commission for Prevention and Protection against Discrimination:</u> According to the Law on Prevention and Protection against Discrimination, the Commission acts upon complaints, opinions, recommendations and conclusions on specific cases of discrimination. Persons who believe that they have suffered discrimination may file a written or oral complaint with the Commission, with no obligation to pay fees or other remuneration.</p>
School inspection	Yes	Pursuant to the Law on Education Inspection ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" No. 52/05, 81/08, 148/09, 57/10, 51/11, 24/13, 137/13, 164/13, 41 / 14, 33/15, 145/15, 30/16 and 64/18), the educational inspection is

		<p>performed by the State Education Inspectorate and the authorized inspectors of the municipality.</p> <p>The performance of educational inspection oversees the oversight of the quality of the educational process and its effectiveness by evaluating the performance of educational institutions in primary and secondary education and overseeing the implementation of laws, other regulations, and general acts in the field of education, including all segments of inclusive education.</p> <p>Pursuant to Article 64 of the Law on Primary Education, the elementary school is obliged to notify the authorized education inspector of the municipality or the state education inspector in the municipalities where there is no authorized education inspector for the children who are not enrolled in the first grade until June 20.</p> <p>For students who are not enrolled in primary school in accordance with the legal deadlines, the school is obliged to undertake activities to enroll them in primary school.</p> <p>Activities undertaken by the school include: home visits to the families of students who are not enrolled or students who do not attend elementary school for more than a month, cooperation with civil society organizations working to reduce discrimination, segregation and isolation, parent education, guardians, open school day information.</p>
Other quality assurance processes (e.g. standards for teaching, support services etc)	Yes	<p>In the Republic of North Macedonia there is a separate Law on Teachers and Associates in Primary and Secondary Schools ("Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" No. 161/19). The Law defines the basic professional competences of teachers and support staff.</p> <p>The Rulebook on basic professional competences of teachers in primary and secondary schools has been prepared by the Bureau for Development of Education and the final phase is the adoption of all bylaws provided by this Law.</p> <p>In all of these bylaws, special attention is paid to the inclusive education of all categories of vulnerable students (inclusive practice is particularly taken into account in the career development of teachers and staff)</p> <p>Many of the standards are prescribed in both the Law on Primary Education and the Law on Secondary Education (forming an inclusive team, the way of enrollment, additional support, additional instruction, individual education plan, modified curriculum, tailored curricula, individual approach and differentiation .. .)</p> <p>There are special normatives:  Normative for expert associates in primary schools and  Normative for high school professional associates.</p> <p>The Bureau for Development of Education has prepared:  Manual for the School Inclusion Team (working with students with disabilities), Manual for inclusive education and  Practicum for the Manual for inclusive education.</p>
Monitoring and evaluation (e.g. data collection on attendance,	Yes	<p>The quality of school work (including indicators for inclusive education) is measured by self-evaluation, integral evaluation and external assessments of student</p>



<p>participation, achievement, funding)</p>	<p>achievement, as well as evaluation of the work of teachers and principals, which are performed in accordance with the law.</p> <p>Every two years the school conducts self-evaluation of its own work and achievements.</p> <p>Integral evaluation is performed every three years by the State Education Inspectorate. If the State Education Inspectorate assesses that the educational process is significantly disrupted in the school, it conducts an extraordinary integral evaluation.</p> <p>Monitoring and evaluation of teachers' work is carried out in the school by the principal as well as by the Bureau for Development of Education.</p> <p>External measures of student achievement are made by the State Examination Center and / or participation in international assessments such as PISA, TIMS, PRLS.</p> <p>Each school is obliged to prepare an Annual Report on its work which it submits to the founder of the school.</p> <p>Each school is required to collect, process, store, send and use data contained in data collections in accordance with the regulations for the protection of personal data, for the needs of the integrated database maintained by the MoES (so-called EMIS and e-log systems). The school-level data collection contains data on students enrolled in the school and includes: citizen's unique identification number (CUIN), surname, student's father's and father's name, date and place of birth, gender, community background, mother tongue of student, address, place of residence, contact phone number and parent / guardian's e-mail address, disability, student status (regular student, student who left school early and the reason for leaving). Based on school data, the MoES e-database contains country-wide data (including regularity, student achievements ...).</p> <p>In 2010, the MoES established EMIS to support key MoES activities, implementing a complex and modern HR system by addressing MoES requirements, all its agencies and all primary and secondary schools in the country. EMIS involves collecting, checking, processing and publishing data on students and their achievements in public primary and secondary schools. EMIS mainly manages data on: maintenance of schools, students, teachers and other school staff, student results (excluding matriculation results), student absences ... The system also includes information on school staff. The system has more than 1,000 users - two in each school and three in each municipality.</p> <p>According to the new Law on Primary Education, the MoES prepares a report every four years on the state of primary education with recommendations for quality improvement, which is submitted to the Government and published on the Ministry's web site.</p> <p>The State Education Inspectorate prepares an Annual Report on the state of education on the basis of its findings and</p>
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		conducted integral evaluations and submits it to the Government and publishes it publicly on its website.
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4.5 Please describe the general mechanisms for funding schools. Give details on: which institutions provide funding; what they provide; how they provide it and to whom, which mechanisms they use to allocate resources; and their respective roles and responsibilities.

Funding mechanisms	Description of who, what, to whom and how
Transfers from the central government (MoES)	<p>Funds for financing the activity of primary education and public secondary education are provided from the Budget of the Republic of North Macedonia - Budget of the Ministry of Education and Science, in a manner and in accordance with the procedure established by the Law on Budgets of the Republic of North Macedonia, Law on Execution of the Budget of the Republic of North Macedonia and the Law on Financing Local Self-Government Units.</p> <p>The funds are allocated from the MoES to the municipalities through block grants (for municipalities in the second phase of decentralization) and earmarked grants (for municipalities in the first phase of decentralization, which is only the municipality of Plasnica) in accordance with the Regulation on Methodology for determining the criteria for allocation of block grants and the Decree on the methodology for allocation of capital and earmarked grants set out in the Law on Financing the Units of Local Self-Government.</p> <p>The municipality then distributes the funds to primary and secondary schools on its territory to ensure the realization of the educational process, in accordance with established standards and norms.</p> <p>The Decree on the methodology for determining the criteria for allocation of block grants and the Regulation on the methodology for allocation of capital and earmarked grants regulate the allocation of funds from the block grant and the earmarked grant based on a formula.</p> <p>The formula for allocation of funds in primary schools is derived primarily from the number of students in primary schools in their area. Other additional indicators may be influenced by the formula</p> <p>The formula for the allocation of funds in secondary schools is derived primarily from the number of secondary school students in their area. The following objective factors may be influenced by the formula: the age of the students, the plan and curricula implemented in the school, the type of school facility, the location of the school etc.</p> <p>Specifically, by formula, the criteria for allocation of block grants for primary education by municipality are: basic amount per municipality, number of students in the municipality, number of students in subject teaching, number of students with disabilities, density of population in the municipality. The distribution uses a threshold mechanism (lower and upper threshold) and a coefficient of adjustment. The allocation of block grant funds for primary education is as follows:</p> $BDO = O + PUo \times S \quad PUo = Uo + (Uo \times Kg + U \times K + U \times k)$ <p>BDO - Block grant for primary education for the municipality  A - Basic amount per municipality  PUo - Weighted students in the municipality  S - Standard (amount) per student  Uo - Total number of students in the municipality  Up - Number of students in subject teaching in the municipality  Upp - Number of students with disabilities in municipality Kp - weighting for subject instruction (0.2)  Kp-Weight (ponder) for students with special needs (1)</p>

	<p>Kg – Weight for population density of the municipality: up to 20 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup> - (0.6) from 20 to 50 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup> - (0.4) from 50 to 70 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup> - (0.2)</p> <p>Criteria for allocation of block grants for secondary education are: basic amount per municipality, number of secondary education students in the municipality, number of vocational education students in the municipality and number of students with disabilities. The allocation of funds from the block grant for secondary education is as follows:</p> $BDS_o = O + PU_o \times C \quad PU_o = U_o + K_s \times X + U \times U$ <p>BDS<sub>o</sub> - Block grant for secondary education for the municipality / City of Skopje  A - Basic amount per municipality  PU<sub>o</sub> - Weighted students in the municipality  C - Standard (amount) per student  U<sub>o</sub> - Total students in secondary education in the municipality  U<sub>s</sub> - Number of vocational education students in the municipality  K<sub>s</sub> - Weighted Vocational Education Coefficient (0.1)  U<sub>pp</sub> - Number of students with disabilities in secondary education in the municipality  K<sub>pp</sub> - Weighted coefficient for students with special needs in secondary education</p> <p>According to the Rulebook on the number of students with special educational needs in a class and the manner and conditions for enrollment of students with special educational needs in primary schools (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia 136/2017), the school year 2018/2019 for a student with disabilities included in the class, the number of other students in the class is reduced by three students (previously two students). Or more specifically in the formula for allocating funds from the Budget of the Republic of North Macedonia to municipalities, where the basic parameter is the number of students on the territory of the municipality, <b>one student with disabilities is considered as three pupils.</b></p>
Budget from Municipalities	<p>Municipal authorities may supplement central transfers / grants with their own funds. According to the Laws on Primary and Secondary Education, the municipality can supplement the received block grant, ie earmarked grant for education with own funds, except for the salaries of school employees. In practice, there is only a surcharge to the eventual higher spending. Namely, the education budget for the schools is composed of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Block grant for primary education, block grant for secondary education or earmarked grant for primary education for the municipality in the first phase of decentralization (explained above) and</li> <li>- funds from own sources from the Municipality and from other sources (legates, gifts, testimonials, etc.), and are used purposefully.</li> </ul>
Funds from other sources	<p>Public schools can also receive funding from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- participation of service users (for providing educational services to citizens who are not identified as being of particular interest to the State and for whom the State does not provide funds);</li> <li>- sale of products and services resulting from the performance of a core activity;</li> <li>- companies, public enterprises, institutions and bodies of state administration providing practical training for students</li> <li>- projects approved by the Minister</li> <li>- interest and dividends on pledged assets;</li> </ul> <p>According to the law, these funds can be used only for promotion, modernization and development of the activity in the public schools, which is</p>

	reported to the Ministry, ie to the competent body of the unit of local self-government.
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4.6 Do schools have flexibility to use funding allocations to support the inclusion of learners from vulnerable groups?

No  No information available **X Yes**

If yes, please describe the flexibility:

Schools have the flexibility to use the means to support the inclusion of students from vulnerable categories, through the acquisition of assistive technology, adaptation of school facilities and infrastructure, organizing extracurricular activities (outing, shows, sports activities...), workshops with parents, counselling for parents, projects for ethnic integration, implementation of various inclusion projects. Every year the schools prepare a Financial Plan and a report on the implementation of the financial plan that is submitted to the founder of the school (municipality).

If no, please give further information: *n/a*

4.7 Please describe the specific mechanisms for funding the inclusion of vulnerable learners and their families in education (e.g. benefits, cash transfers, scholarships). Give details on: which institutions provide funding; what they provide; how they provide it and to whom, which mechanisms they use to allocate resources; and their respective roles and responsibilities.

Funding mechanisms	Description of the who, what, to whom and how
Cost-free textbooks and transport to school	<p>Pursuant to the Law on Primary Education and the Law on Secondary Education, education in the Republic of North Macedonia (primary and secondary education) is compulsory and free of charge for students.</p> <p>According to the Law on Textbooks for Primary and Secondary Education ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" No. 98/08, 99/09, 83/10, 36/11, 135/11, 46/12, 24/13, 120 / 13, 29/14, 146/15, 217/15, 30/16 and 20/18), more precisely Article 6 of the Law "Textbooks for students in public primary and secondary schools are free of charge".</p> <p>The costs of developing, translating in all languages of instruction, printing and distributing all textbooks to schools are covered by the Ministry of Education and Science.</p> <p>Pursuant to the Law on Primary Education and the Law on Secondary Education, students are entitled to free transportation to and from school.</p> <p>In particular, according to Article 73 of the Law on Primary Education, the student is entitled to organized or free transportation if the place of residence is at least two kilometers from the nearest primary school. Students with disabilities and their dependents are entitled to free accessible transportation regardless of the distance and accessibility of their primary school residence.</p> <p>Pursuant to Article 41-a of the Law on Secondary Education, the student is entitled to free transportation if the place of residence is at least 2.5 km from the secondary school in which the student is enrolled. A student with a disability and the person accompanying him / her are entitled to free transportation regardless of the distance of their place of residence to the public high school in which the student is enrolled and attends classes.</p>
Scholarships for Roma students	<p>Scholarships for Roma students are regulated by the Law on Student Standards ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" No. 52/05, 117/08, 17/11, 135/11, 15/13, 41/14, 146). / 15, 30/16, 64/18 and 20/19) and are awarded by the Ministry of Education and Science.</p>

	<p>Student scholarships are awarded based on a competition announced by the Ministry, usually at the beginning of the school year. The competition contains the detailed conditions, number and amount of scholarships, as well as the deadlines for granting scholarships. The student must meet the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to be a citizen of the Republic of North Macedonia,</li> <li>- to be a regular student in secondary education,</li> <li>- to have achieved success in education,</li> </ul> <p>For the school year 2019/2020 a total of 880 scholarships have been awarded for Roma high school students. Of these 200 scholarships are for high-achieving students (from 4.5 to 5.00 GPA) in the amount of 2200 MKD per month; 320 scholarships are for students with an average achievement of 3.50 to 4.49 in the amount of 1500 MKD per month and 160 are for students with an average grade of 3.00 to 3.49 in the amount of 1000 MKD per month. 50 scholarships are for Roma students with disabilities who have a median success of 3.00 to 5.00 in the amount of 1000 MKD per month and 150 so-called motivational scholarships for Roma students with a median success of 2.00 to 2.99 in the amount of 600 MKD per month. The funds are paid out of the MoES Budget from a special item for these scholarships.</p>
<p>Scholarships for students with special needs (disability)</p>	<p>Scholarships for students with special needs (disability) are regulated by the Law on Students' Standard ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" No. 52/05, 117/08, 17/11, 135/11, 15/13, 41/14, 146/15, 30/16, 64/18 and 20/19) and are awarded by the Ministry of Education and Science. Student scholarships are awarded on the basis of a competition announced by the Ministry, usually at the beginning of the school year. The competition contains the detailed conditions, number and amount of scholarships, as well as the deadlines for granting scholarships. The student must meet the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to be a citizen of the Republic of North Macedonia,</li> <li>- to be a regular student in secondary education,</li> <li>- to have achieved success in education,</li> </ul> <p>For the academic year 2019/2020, a total of 100 scholarships for students with special needs (disability) were awarded in the amount of 2750 MKD per month. The funds are paid out of the MoES Budget from a special item for these scholarships.</p>
<p>Scholarships for children from socially-disadvantaged families</p>	<p>The student must meet the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to be a citizen of the Republic of North Macedonia,</li> <li>- to be a regular student in secondary education,</li> <li>- the material condition of the immediate family,</li> </ul> <p>For the academic year 2019/2020 a total of 400 scholarships for students from socially-disadvantaged families in the amount of 2200 MKD per month are awarded. The funds are paid out of the MoES Budget from a special item for these scholarships.</p>
<p>Scholarships for students-children without parents and parental care</p>	<p>Scholarships for students - orphans and without parental care are regulated by the Law on Student Standards ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" No. 52/05, 117/08, 17/11, 135/11, 15/13, 41/ 14, 146/15, 30/16, 64/18 and 20/19) and are awarded by the Ministry of Education and Science. Student scholarships are awarded on the basis of a competition announced by the ministry, usually at the beginning of the school year. The competition contains the detailed conditions, number and amount of scholarships, as well as the deadlines for granting scholarships.</p>

	<p>The student must meet the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- to be a citizen of the Republic of North Macedonia,</li> <li>- to be a regular student in secondary education</li> <li>- to have proof that s/he is a child without parents.</li> </ul> <p>For the academic year 2019/2020 a total of 50 scholarships for students without parental care were awarded in the amount of 2750 MKD per month. The funds are paid out of the MoES Budget from a special item for these scholarships.</p>
<p>Education allowance -cash transfers</p>	<p>Education allowances are regulated by the Law on Child Protection ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" No. 23/13, 12/14, 44/14, 144/14, 10/15, 25/15, 150/15, 192/15, 27/16, 163/17, 21/18 and 198/18 and "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" No. 104/19, 146/19 and 278/19) and it is hereby granted by the Centers for Social Work.</p> <p>Education allowances are provided to cover some of the household costs associated with the education of children.</p> <p>The right to an education allowance is granted to a household with a child attending primary or secondary education, verified by the Ministry of Education and Science and listed in the Central Register of the Republic of North Macedonia and in the register of the Ministry of Education and Science, whose family's total average monthly earnings in the last three months prior to the filing of the application and in the exercise of entitlement on all grounds of all household members are up to the right of access to cash transfer, which is set at MKD 6,800. The right to an education allowance is also granted to a household with a child attending primary or secondary education in schools verified by the Ministry of Education who has been entitled to guaranteed minimum assistance under the Social Protection Act.</p> <p>The beneficiary of the right to an education allowance should be a citizen of the Republic of North Macedonia with a permanent residence in the Republic of North Macedonia.</p> <p>The education allowance is paid to the mother, for whom the child / children are paid the education allowance for the current school year.</p> <p>If the mother cannot be paid the education allowance for justified reasons, the payment is made to the father for whose child / children the education allowance is paid</p> <p>The payment of the education allowance is also paid to the guardian who takes care of the child, as well as to a person entrusted with the decision by a competent social work center and living with the family.</p> <p>The amount of the education allowance is MKD 700 per month for a student in primary education and MKD 1,000 per month for a student in secondary education during the school year.</p> <p>The right to an education allowance is exercised if the child is enrolled as a regular student in primary or secondary school and if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- attends at least 85% of the total number of teaching hours completed and</li> <li>- did not use an education allowance for the same school year.</li> </ul>
<p>Education mediators for Roma students - benefits</p>	<p>The engagement of educational mediators for Roma students is regulated by the Law on Primary Education ("Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" No. 161/2019), and the funds for their engagement are provided from the budget of the Ministry of Education and Science.</p> <p>Article 37 of the Law stipulates that educational mediators may be hired for Roma students who come from socially disadvantaged families and / or have been outside the educational system for a long time.</p> <p>The Educational Mediator, undertakes activities to improve awareness of opportunities and access to schools, conducts regular meetings to sensitize the</p>

	<p>population and primary school staff to the specifics and needs of vulnerable groups in the field of education, regularly collaborates with school support staff and teachers to improve student achievement, undertakes activities to reduce the dropout rate of students.</p> <p>The need to hire an educational mediator is at the request of the school where the student is enrolled or should be enrolled, which must be submitted to the Ministry of Education and Science by September 15 at the latest in the current school year.</p> <p>The educational mediators are engaged by means of a public call, which is published by the Ministry on the website, by October 1st of the current year at the latest.</p> <p>For the selection of educational mediators, the Minister sets up a commission consisting of five members, three of whom are Ministry staff, one representative from the Bureau for Development of Education and one representative from civil society organizations working to promote Roma rights.</p> <p>For the school year 2019/2020, 35 educational mediators for Roma students were hired in accordance with the requests submitted by the schools.</p>
<p>Exemption of expenses for recognition and equivalency certificate obtained abroad for children from vulnerable categories - benefits</p>	<p>Under Article 154 of the Law on Primary Education ("Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" No. 161/2019), beneficiaries of guaranteed minimum assistance are exempt from the costs of a recognition and equivalency certificate obtained abroad.</p>
<p>Adapted curricula-benefits</p>	<p>The Law on Primary Education (Article 14) stipulates that children who have not been included in the classes and who have exceeded the age limit for inclusion in the appropriate grade of primary education have the right to primary education under the same conditions as other children and they have tailor-made curricula to enable them to enter the appropriate elementary school.</p> <p>Checking their knowledge is done by the school prior to their involvement in the educational process, with instruments set out by the Bureau for Development of Education. After checking their knowledge, a certificate is issued which enrolls the child in the appropriate elementary school.</p> <p>Adapted curricula are prepared by the Bureau for Development of Education and approved by the Minister of Education and Science.</p>
<p>Scholarships for Roma higher education students</p>	<p>The scholarships for Roma higher education students are regulated by the Law on Student Standard ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" No. 15/13, 120/13, 41/14, 146/15, 30/16, 178/16, 64/18 and 20/19 and "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" No.124 / 19) and assigned by the Ministry of Education and Science.</p> <p>Student scholarships are awarded based on a competition announced by the ministry, usually at the beginning of the academic year.</p> <p>The competition contains the detailed conditions, number and amount of scholarships, as well as the deadlines for granting scholarships.</p> <p>On the basis of the announced competition, the student submits a request for a scholarship with the following documentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- certificate of full-time student in the current academic year,</li> <li>- copies of certificates of all four years of high school diploma notarized for first-year students, ie a copy of the index and certificate of passed exams for senior students,</li> <li>- report,</li> <li>- a statement that the student is a member of the Roma community,</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a statement that the student is not a recipient of a scholarship from another institution or firm</li> <li>- statement of personal data usage and</li> <li>- a copy of the transaction account on the student's behalf.</li> </ul> <p>For the school year 2019/2020, a competition has been announced for a total of 130 scholarships, totalling 5000 MKD per month. The funds are paid out of the MoES Budget from a special item for these scholarships.</p>
<p>Scholarships for primary school Roma students, in the frames of the project 'Inclusion of out-of-school children in the education system'</p>	<p>Since the school year 2018/2019, the project "Inclusion of out-of-school children in the educational system" has been implemented by MCEC, with the support of the MoES and funded by the Pestalozzi Children's Foundation. Target group of the project are children from 6 to 17 years old who do not go to school (children who did not enroll or dropped out of school early). A total of 822 scholarships, totaling 12,000 MKD have been awarded for the 2018/2019 academic year (6,000 MKD per semester). Within the project, local coordinators are also engaged for each municipality separately, with the task of communicating regularly with the families of the children - scholarship recipients and responding if a problem with attendance is detected. The local coordinators, once in half a year, organize joint meetings for the parents of the children - scholarship holders and their class leaders.</p>
<p>Scholarships for Roma students in primary education in the frames of the project 'Regular classes attendance'</p>	<p>The project "Regular Classes Attendance: Action for Inclusion of Roma in Primary Education" has started to be implemented in the school year 2019/2020. by the Foundation Open Society - Macedonia, the association "Dendo Vas Educational Support Center" and the Foundation for Educational and Cultural Initiatives "Step by Step" The project is supported by the Ministry of Education and Science and funded by the European Union, and will be implemented for the next 3 years (until October 2022). The project focuses on problems related to the number of Roma students enrolled in the first grade of primary education, irregular attendance at classes and poorer transition to the next grades. To this end, within the project, in the 2019/2020 school year, a total of 286 scholarships (to be paid over a three-year period) were awarded to Roma students enrolled in first grade in primary education, coming from families who are social beneficiaries. The amount of the scholarships is 400 euros per year, and it is conditioned by a regular attendance at classes. The project also employs 30 assistants in 10 municipalities with the largest representation of the Roma community, whose task is to help identify children outside the education system, to refer parents to existing procedures and requirements, and to assist them in completing school enrolment applications; cooperate closely with the families of a dozen first-graders, record their attendance at school and transition to the next grade; make 12 visits per year to the child's family / school; to participate in the implementation of an educational campaign in the Roma community and to organize 20 educational meetings with local institutions and parents. The fee depends on the number of children / families.</p>



4. 8 Please provide information (main conclusions, reference and a link if available) on any recent reports, evaluations and/or reviews, since 2015 of funding and resourcing relating to inclusive education.

1. OECD (2019), OECD Reviews of Evaluation and Assessment in Education: North Macedonia, OECD Reviews of Evaluation and Assessment in Education, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/079fe34c-en>.

Includes chapters on funding of education, in the country, in general (in Chapter 1). Information is not specifically related to inclusive education, but is relevant for this aspect as well.

2. Assessment of Capacity of Services provided by Health, Education and Social Sectors for Inclusion of Children with Disabilities. Judith Hollenweger and Andrea Martinuzzi, UNICEF Office Skopje, 2015

[https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/media/3496/file/MK\\_AssessmentServicesCWD\\_Report\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/media/3496/file/MK_AssessmentServicesCWD_Report_ENG.pdf)

Includes the aspect of funding and resourcing in the chapters on policies. One of the conclusions is that 'financing modalities promote exclusion'.

2.9 Overall, what are the perceived main challenges (barriers and hindrances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusion in education in relation to governance and finance issues in the country?

Barriers and hindrances:

Local governments (municipalities) have not yet fully taken on the role of supporting schools in the process of inclusive education by providing additional resources and / or resources for inclusive education, largely due to the limited budgets available to them.

The new Law on Primary Education introduces many new practices related to inclusive education, but they need to be implemented in the following period.

A new Law on Secondary Education needs to be drafted, which will be in line with the principles and attitudes of the Law on Primary Education in order to provide secondary school students with the same rights and support as in primary education.

Support and way forward:

A new Law on Primary Education (August 2019) was adopted, which significantly promotes inclusive education. The law prohibits all discrimination in education on all grounds, providing support to students from vulnerable categories (students with disabilities, Roma students, students from socially disadvantaged families, students over age who were not included in education ...) the law provides for a child support system that includes a number of institutions.

In 2020, a special budget line (program) has been opened for the first time in the Budget of the Ministry of Education and Science: Inclusive Education.

## 2. Section 3: Data

*What data on inclusion in education is available to understand if progress is being made towards equitable learning opportunities for all learners?*

5.1 Please indicate if the following frameworks are in place, provide a link and give a brief description of their aims and focus:

Framework	Yes / No	Description
For monitoring and evaluating the implementation of national-level inclusion in education policy	Yes	Explained under question 1.3. The State Education Inspection conducts Integral evaluation to each school, once every three years. The main document School Performance Quality Indicators (SPQI) encompass 7 areas and set of indicators for each area. Each public primary and secondary school is being assessed on the basis of the indicators every three years. On the basis of the data collected, the Inspectorate develops an annual assessment of the quality of education and recommendations for improving education system and processes.
For quality assurance across all levels of the system (national, regional, school)	Yes	On school level, schools also conduct self-assessment on the basis of the same criteria, as the ones outlined in the SPQI (above). This is conducted once every two years by a school committee composed of: teachers, professional staff, parents and students.
Providing guidance on the use of a range of different data sources for evaluation and self-review at different levels (national, regional, school)	No	

5.2 What data is collected on learners from vulnerable groups, how and why?

Each school is obliged to collect, process, store, send and use data contained in the data collections in accordance with the regulations for the protection of personal data, for the needs of the integrated database maintained by the MoES (so-called EMIS and e-log systems). The school-level data collection contains data on students enrolled in the school and includes: citizen's unique identification number (CUIN), surname, student's father's and father's name, date and place of birth, gender, community background, mother tongue of student, address, place of residence, contact phone number and parent / guardian's e-mail address, disability, student status (regular student, student who left school early and the reason for leaving). Based on school data, the MoES e-database contains country-wide data (including regularity, student achievements etc.).

In 2010, the MoES established EMIS to support key MoES activities, implementing a complex and modern HR system by addressing MoES requirements, all its agencies and all primary and secondary schools in the country. EMIS involves collecting, checking, processing and publishing data on students and their achievements in public primary and secondary schools. EMIS mainly manages data on: students, teachers and other school staff, student results (excluding matriculation results), student absences. The system also includes information on school staff. The system has more than 1,000 users - two in each school and three in each municipality.

However, criticism from the OECD refers to the fact that while the EMIS system has a big potential for analysis and policy making, it is rarely used as an in-depth analysis tool. Some of their recommendations refer to the possibilities for more efficient use of the system.

5.3 Please provide the available data relating to all learners in the compulsory education system and where they are enrolled for their education.

All questions can be answered using the country's own data sources as far as possible. Alternatively, the data can be provided from publicly available international sources e.g. UIS: <http://data.uis.unesco.org/index.aspx?queryid=216> or UOE: [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Main\\_Page](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Main_Page)

Please give a clear reference to the Source in the column provided.

In the Learners column, as far as possible:

- provide actual numbers as far as possible and not estimates.
- only use 0 when the data is zero.
- use M to indicate missing data.
- use NA to indicate the question is Not Applicable (i.e. the country does not have that type of provision).

All questions refer to ALL learners in the education system, not just those formally identified as belonging to a group that is vulnerable to exclusion.

Please provide notes to clarify any issues with the data and include a specific note on the calendar year and/or school year the data refers to.

Data on learner access to compulsory education	Learners	Notes	Source
(i) What is the <i>potential population</i> of learners for the compulsory education system in the country (i.e. how many children are in the country that should, by law, be in some form of compulsory education)?	<p><b>Primary education:</b> Total: 205.336 ( net enrolment rate Male: 106.003 Female: 99.333</p> <p><b>Secondary education:</b> Total: 96.517 Male: 49.833 Female: 46.684</p>	2017/2018	State Statistical Office
(ii) How many learners are enrolled in all forms of education (i.e. educational settings maintained by the ministry of education or by other authorities such as health, welfare or labour ministries)?	<p><b>Primary education:</b> Total: 190.903 Male: 98.496 Female: 92.407</p> <p><b>Secondary education:</b> Total: 67.204 Male: 35.150 Female: 32.054</p>	2017/2018	State Statistical Office
(iii) How many learners are out of any form of education (who by law should be in some form of education)?	<p><b>Primary education:</b> Total: 14.433 Male: 7.507 Female: 6.926</p> <p><b>Secondary education:</b> Total: 29.313 Male: 14.683</p>	2017/2018	State Statistical Office

	Female: 14.630		
(iv) How many learners are enrolled in mainstream schools (i.e. all learners, not just those with recognized needs or from vulnerable groups)?	<b>Primary education:</b> Total: 190.145 Male: 98.010 Female: 92.135 <b>Secondary education:</b> Total: 29.075 Male: 14.512 Female: 14.563	2017/2018	State Statistical Office
(v) How many learners are enrolled in mainstream schools and spend the majority of their time (i.e. at least 80% or 4 days of the week) in inclusive groups/classes with their peers?	<b>Primary education:</b> Total: 189.927 Male: 97.883 Female: 92.044	2017/2018	Ministry of Education and Science
(vi) How many learners are enrolled in mainstream schools and spend the majority of their time (i.e. at least 80% or 4 days of the week) in separate, special groups/classes, away from their peers?	<b>Primary education:</b> Total: 218 Male: 127 Female: 91	2017/2018	Ministry of Education and Science
(vii) How many learners are enrolled in totally separate, special units and/or schools, away from their peers?	<b>Primary education:</b> Total: 758 Male: 486 Female: 272 <b>Secondary education:</b> Total: 238 Male: 171 Female: 67	2017/2018	State Statistical Office

6.4 Please provide information (main conclusions, reference and a link if available) on any recent reports, evaluations and/or reviews, since 2015 of data collection and monitoring for inclusion in education.

1. Assessment of Capacity of Services provided by Health, Education and Social Sectors for Inclusion of Children with Disabilities. Judith Hollenweger and Andrea Martinuzzi, UNICEF Office Skopje, 2015  
[https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/media/3496/file/MK\\_AssessmentServicesCWD\\_Report\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/media/3496/file/MK_AssessmentServicesCWD_Report_ENG.pdf)  
Mentions the lack of data and data sharing and monitoring system, in several accounts, as one of the setbacks for efficient policy making.
2. OECD (2019), *OECD Reviews of Evaluation and Assessment in Education: North Macedonia*, OECD Reviews of Evaluation and Assessment in Education, OECD Publishing, Paris.  
<https://doi.org/10.1787/079fe34c-en>.  
Includes sections on the (lack of) availability of cross-sectional data on learners, in general, but not specifically on inclusion.
3. UNICEF "Analysis of the Situation of Women and Children in the Republic of North Macedonia", March 2020  
Concludes that most municipalities are unable to fund core responsibilities, and therefore services that are crucial for children, such as education, are underfunded. Simple and transparent methods are needed to calculate spending needs related to ingerencies such as education or more broadly for a specific population group such as children. In practice, a budget for children in each municipality is necessary based on a holistic assessment of the needs of children in each area.  
<https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/reports/%D0%B5xecutive-summary-analysis-situation-women-and-children>

6.5 Overall, what are the perceived main challenges (barriers and hindrances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusion in education in relation to data collection issues in the country?

Challenges:

While data on inclusion in education is being collected, it is mostly done unsystematically, mostly by CSOs, supported by donor organizations. The state institutions do not collect data through one unified system, but each institution has a separate collection and monitoring mechanism, which often makes the process of data collection and use inefficient and ineffective.

The UNICEF report (above) concludes that 'In order to strengthen monitoring systems, some thought needs to be given to the lack of information, to developing an integrated data collection scheme and extending current research activities. The statistical office, health, education and social sectors could agree on a minimal data set, linking identification with service provision to better understand gaps and shortcomings in the system. Also, a minimal set of indicators to measure positive outcomes could be developed.'

Opportunities:

OECD, in their report, propose expanding the use of the EMIS system as a general data-collection tool for education and proposes viable models for different purposes. Already, the system collects numerous data on learners, but it does not use them for analysis and data-driven policy making. In order for this to happen, more human resources need to be invested in managing the system, with clear assignments and accountability mechanisms in place. The research sector which is intended to be formed within that MoES is expected to make use of these data for developing annual reports on education.

### 3. Section 4: Curricula, learning materials and assessment

*To what extent are curricula, learning materials and different assessment processes and procedures adapted to the principles of inclusive education?*

#### 6.1 Curriculum

a. Does the curriculum content include and represent all learners?

No  No information available  **Partially**  Yes

If yes or partially, please provide a description and available links, including to underpinning values and principles.

If the "curriculum" is understood more broadly and includes all supporting documents that refer to the definition of education (and not just the curricula), then the laws referring to the definition of the education system (in particular The Law on Primary Education<sup>5</sup>), the Concept of Primary Education<sup>6</sup> and the related by-laws, include and apply to all children (based on the principle of non-discrimination, inclusion of every child, respect for each student's interest, inclusion it to children with disabilities, etc.).

The curricula so far, in the area of didactic recommendations, provide guidance for the teacher on how to work and involve all students (this is especially emphasized during teacher training for curriculum implementation).

Until now, the existence of separate curricula for students with disabilities (curricula for students with hearing impairment, visual impairment, multi-disability, autism) has been a problem due to the existence of special schools and special classes for these students. The problem is that in these categories of students, every child, every student is at a different level, needs a different approach and direction, and the 'expectations', i.e. the results of a single curriculum, and cannot be defined.

The new Law on Primary Education provides for gradual but complete inclusion of these students in regular primary schools, thus encouraging the development of an individual education plan (program) for each student with "special educational needs" (not just for students with disabilities), so that the "curriculum" would become a framework and include all students.

Nevertheless, there are also special curricula for students with disabilities: autism, hearing impairment, visual impairment, mental retardation and multi-disability that were developed in 2008 and used in special schools for children with special needs. They are much more detailed than the other programs describe the characteristics of these children and provide more didactic recommendations.

Finally, in all grades of primary and secondary education, a Life Skills program<sup>7</sup> is being implemented in which one of the topics is Me and the Other: Social Relations in which knowledge and skills are acquired for knowledge and respect for human rights; respect for others (non-discrimination); mutual respect and cooperation

If no, please give further information:

b. Does the process of curriculum development involve the participation and contribution of different stakeholders?

No  No information available  **Yes**

If yes, please provide information on stakeholder involvement.

The development of concepts that form the basis of national curriculum development as well as school curriculum development usually involves several different stakeholders and the process is given a broader public discussion. They include: education policy-makers, BDE advisors, school-level practitioners, university professors and sometimes civil

<sup>5</sup> Law on Primary Education. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" No. 161/2019

<sup>6</sup> Concept of Nine-Year Primary Education. Ministry of Education and Science, 2007

<sup>7</sup> Life Skills Program. Bureau for Development of Education, 2008

society representatives. However, when it comes to preparation of the subject curricula, usually only experts in the field are involved in the preparation, such as BDE advisors for the specific subject and teachers of the subject.

If no, please give further information:

c. Is there guidance/procedures for schools to ensure that the curriculum content takes account of all learners (e.g. using flexibility to address differences due to gender, culture, religions, the ethnicities/nations living in the country, their history and culture, differences related to disability and socio-economic background, LGBT community).

No  No information available **X Yes**

If yes, please give a description and examples of this flexibility.

No separate document exists on this. However, the Nine-year education Concept, laws, and curricula are based on the stated principles, in particular respect for multiculturalism, gender equality, and inclusion.

In addition, there are several teacher handbooks that instruct teachers how to take account of all students in the implementation of the curriculum. Most have been developed through various projects focused on the inclusion of certain vulnerable groups of students such as students with disabilities, students from different ethnic / national groups. For example, guidance is given on how to adapt programs for students with special types of disabilities,

See more:

- Manual for Assisting Student with Learning difficulties, BDE, 2018. Available at:

[http://www.mcgo.org.mk/pub/Priracnik\\_za\\_poddrska\\_na\\_ucenici\\_so\\_poteskotii\\_vo\\_ucenjeto\\_MK.pdf](http://www.mcgo.org.mk/pub/Priracnik_za_poddrska_na_ucenici_so_poteskotii_vo_ucenjeto_MK.pdf)

- Teacher Manual: Activities for Supporting All Students in the school and in the classroom, Judith Holenveger, Edina Krompak. UNICEF Skopje, 2018. Available at:

[https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/media/4301/file/MK\\_ManualForLearners\\_Report\\_MK.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/media/4301/file/MK_ManualForLearners_Report_MK.pdf)

- Practicum Towards the Manual for Inclusive Education, Bureau for Development of Education. Available at:

[https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/media/3556/file/MK\\_PracticumInclusiveEducation\\_Report\\_MK.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/media/3556/file/MK_PracticumInclusiveEducation_Report_MK.pdf)

- Guide for work of the School Inclusive Team. Bureau for Development of Education, 2018. Available at:

[http://www.mcgo.org.mk/pub/Vodic\\_za\\_rabota\\_ucilisen\\_inkluziven\\_tim\\_MK.pdf](http://www.mcgo.org.mk/pub/Vodic_za_rabota_ucilisen_inkluziven_tim_MK.pdf)

If no, please give further information:

d. If individual education plans (IEPs) are used, please describe the procedure for developing (who is involved and how), what they focus on (specific curriculum areas; cross curricular competences; support strategies etc.) and how IEPs are implemented, used across the school?

The Law on Primary Education, in Article 16 provisions the establishing of Inclusion teams in each school.

“The school inclusion team has a term of three academic years and comprises of seven members: pedagogue, i.e. psychologist, i.e. social worker in the school, two teachers from among the staff in the school (one teacher for first-fourth grade and one teacher fifth-ninth grade), two parents i.e. guardians, special educator and rehabilitator and school director. The school inclusion team shall design and implement the activities in the entire school and ensure that the activities are reconciled and applied in the educational work.”

Paragraph 6 provisions that:

‘The inclusion team for a student shall design the IEP and modified curriculum for a student with disability according to the individual potentials and needs, within 30 days from the commencement of classes for the student in the school and shall implement the supported learning measures according to the recommendations issued by professional bodies for assessment of additional educational, health and social support for children and youth (hereinafter: professional bodies for assessment) as part of the National coordination body for implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities at the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia (hereinafter: Government). To design the IEP and the modified curriculum, the inclusion team for the student shall cooperate with other teachers and professional associates who participate in the student’s educational process.’

Based on the Primary Education Law's provisions, each school prepared internal procedures, processes and rule-books on the basis of which IEPs are developed. In the process, the schools use the tools which are prepared by relevant institutions, in order to facilitate the process.

Example of this is the Guide for the work of the school inclusion team (available in Macedonian and Albanian): [https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/media/3896/file/MK\\_GuideInclusiveTeams\\_Report\\_MK.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/media/3896/file/MK_GuideInclusiveTeams_Report_MK.pdf)

e. Are there different curricula or programmes for specific groups of learners at risk of exclusion (e.g. ethnic minorities or minority language groups)

No  No information available  Yes

If yes, please give a description of the main characteristics/organisation.

If no, please give further information:

For students from the largest ethnic communities (Albanian, Turkish, Serbian, Bosniak), primary education takes place in their mother tongue according to the same curriculum as for the Macedonian community, with some opportunities to adapt parts of national culture and history. For preschoolers and secondary school students, the curriculum is unique and is delivered in their mother tongue with some adjustments in sections related to national culture and history.

According to the Law on Primary Education, in the section Education of children who were not included in the education, Article 14 provisions:

(1) Children who have not been included in the education, and who have exceeded the age limit for inclusion in the appropriate primary school, are entitled to primary education under the same conditions as other children and attitudes.

(2) For the children referred to in paragraph (1) of this Article, adapted curricula shall be prepared that will enable inclusion in the appropriate elementary school education.

Also in the Law on Primary Education, in the section on Educational Mediators, it is provided by Article 37 paragraph 1 for Roma students who come from socially disadvantaged families and may be engaged outside the educational system for a long time by educational mediators.

## 6.2 Learning materials

a. Is there autonomy for schools and teachers to select learning material/textbooks etc.?

No  No information available  Yes

If yes, please give a description.

If no, please give further information:

The answer would be-partially.

Schools do not have autonomy in the choice of textbooks. According to the Law on textbooks<sup>8</sup>, only one textbook is approved per subject, except for teaching subjects that use adapted textbooks from abroad for which up to three textbooks can be approved (Article 5), and the textbook to be used is selected from the catalog of approved textbooks for which the decision is made by the school's Teaching council on the proposal of the professional activities in the primary or secondary schools and the representatives of the parents. (Article 23)

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<sup>8</sup> Law on Textbooks for Primary and Secondary Education. Official Gazette of R.Macedonia No. 98/2008 (Changes and amendments

No: 99/2009; 83/2010; 36/2011; 135/2011; 46/2012; 24/2013; 120/2013; 29/2014; 146/2015; 217/2015; 30/2016; 21/2018)



Namely, the textbooks, after a procedure, a public competition and an evaluation by the peer review committee, are determined by the Minister of Education and Science, so that the students learn from the same textbooks at the state level.

However, the curricula and didactic guidelines enable teachers to use other learning materials which they can prepare themselves, provide guidance to students, links, texts, anything they think can contribute to successful learning and achievement of learning goals.

The sale and distribution of materials (magazines, children's magazines) in the school (for the purpose of preventing corruption) is prohibited without the approval of the Ministry, after prior approval by the Bureau for Development of Education.

b. Are there policies to ensure the availability of textbooks/materials that promote the inclusion of learners from different vulnerable groups? (e.g. resources relevant to different ethnic groups etc.)

No  No information available **X Yes**

If yes, please give a description.

The textbooks are produced according to the Textbook Concept that requires that texts and images be non-discriminatory in terms of gender, religion, ethnicity and any other differences that may exist between people. Depending on the nature of the subject matter, the content and the way they are presented also contribute to promoting mutual respect and acceptance and to help integrate ethnic / cultural communities into Macedonian society. These requirements are outlined in the sections of the Concept that relate to the preparation of textbooks for individual subjects so that the textbooks in the mother tongue are required to develop an interest and respect for the culture and tradition of others living in the Republic of Macedonia; to have content that provides a basis for understanding others, rules of conduct and human rights, to develop an interest in and respect for culture and tradition, oneself and others, and if characters in textbooks are portrayed in gender stereotyped roles, tasks in the textbook to seek to point out their stereotypes, to analyze their roots and to point out their negative impact on gender / gender relations.

Regardless of these principles, numerous researchers and CSO activists have found stereotypes and discriminatory depictions on the basis of gender, ethnicity, social status etc. within the textbooks.<sup>9</sup> Institutions typically proceed with withdrawing the textbook, although their reactions are not always prompt and are not always followed by offering alternative materials.

Textbooks approved by the Ministry of Education and Science are distributed to all schools and are free for each student. Textbooks are available in the language of instruction. Thus, the textbooks in RS Macedonia are in Macedonian, Albanian, Turkish and Serbian. With the introduction of Bosnian language teaching (2018), they will also be translated into Bosnian.

Problems arise only in breaking the deadlines for translation, delays in certain textbooks, etc.

Requirements for all aspects of the textbook, including those described, are operationalized in the textbook evaluation criteria used in their approval. A new Textbook Concept and Textbook Valuation Methodology is in the process of being developed which also requires the textbook to promote equality and respect for diversity on all grounds.

If no, please give further information:

c. Is there guidance/procedures to help schools to make learning materials accessible for all learners? (e.g. Braille/large print for learners with visual impairment, materials in other languages).

No  No information available **X Yes**

If yes, please give a description.

As regards the availability of materials in all the languages of instruction, that this principle is fully practiced. Textbooks are translated into all languages in which instruction is provided, curricula are translated into you

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<sup>9</sup> ECRI Report on the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (fifth monitoring cycle).

Adopted on 18 March 2016, June 2016, Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/fifth-report-on-the-former-yugoslav-republic-of-macedonia-/16808b590b>

languages, teaching manuals are most often translated into Macedonian and Albanian (not always in Turkish and Serbian). The lack of professional staff in certain areas is the main obstacle why some materials are not translated into a specific language, and not the will of the educational authorities. In addition, there sometimes is criticism among teachers with regards to the quality of translations of materials on non-majority languages (e.g. Albanian, Turkish)

As for materials for students with disabilities, they are primarily available in special schools. In the coming period, with the introduction of inclusion, this will be the main challenge, how to provide materials for each school where students with disabilities are included.

d. Is ICT used to improve access to materials for vulnerable groups?

No  No information available  Yes

If yes, please give a description.

Partially. Special schools have materials tailored to students with disabilities (Braille textbooks, featured software, audio books), but this is largely provided through the participation of those schools in specific projects with NGOs (e.g. project on equipping schools with assistive technology). At the state level is not yet fully defined.

If no, please give further information:

e. Are there specific financial and practical resources available for textbooks/materials/ICT for different vulnerable groups?

No  No information available  Yes

To a certain extent. Textbooks are free for everyone. The problem is that there are no textbooks and materials for students with disabilities because every child is different, so it is difficult to make a general textbook.

Other ways of supporting either teachers or experts working on the preparation of specific materials should be considered.

If yes, please give a description.

If no, please give further information:

### 6.3 Assessment

a. Is there a national/local assessment framework that includes all learners?

No  No information available  Yes

If yes, please give a description.

There is no elaborated national assessment framework. Some of the curricula contain assessment standards that are an inventory of the knowledge, skills and skills that are expected to be achieved as a result of the curriculum. In addition, there are general guidelines for Bloom's taxonomy-based assessment criteria related to standards. They describe the extent and quality of knowledge for each of the 4 positive grades in the summative assessment.

All teachers in the country are trained in formative and summative assessment, as defined in the Law on Primary Education and assessment manuals have been developed for teachers.

The basic principles of formative assessment and gathering data on each student's achievements implies that each individual student's progress is monitored. However, the application of formative assessment by teachers is not always appropriate, according to BDE advisers' accounts.

If no, please give further information:

b. Is there guidance for teachers on how to use curriculum-based assessment to identify all learning needs in the classroom?

No  No information available  Yes

If yes, please give a description.

There are formative assessment guides that contain sections on diagnosing student achievement compared to expected learning outcomes and how these knowledge can be used to differentiate and individualize the curriculum (content and methods of work) for a particular student.

In addition, there is a Guide for work of the School Inclusive Team<sup>10</sup> and Manual for working with students with learning difficulties<sup>11</sup>, which contain aspects of assessment.

If no, please give further information:

c. Is there guidance/procedures on providing access to tests/examinations when learners need additional support/reasonable adjustments? (e.g. adapted materials, extra time etc.)

No  No information available  **Yes**

If yes, please give a description.

The Matura exam, which is currently the only external exam in the country, provides for adjustments to the tests and the manner in which the exam is regulated. The following adjustments can be made for candidates with special educational needs:

- extending the exam time and taking breaks during the exam;
- technical adjustment of the test material;
- taking the test with an assistant;
- use of special devices;
- instead of writing, taking an oral exam and vice versa;
- a customized examination using Braille and / or sign language;
- tailor-made preparation of the project task and its evaluation. (Articles 55 and 56)

If no, please give further information:

d. Are there specific arrangements and/or formal procedures to support the assessment of the specific needs of learners who need additional support in their learning? (e.g. those with disabilities)

**No**  No information available  Yes

If yes, please give a description, including clear information on the focus of needs identification procedures and who is involved in the procedures (learners, parents, professionals):

If no, please give further information:

There is no special procedure or guidance on a national level for this need. But in the assessment made by teachers, they can make all kinds of adjustments that will enable the student with special educational needs to demonstrate knowledge. When planning a student's Individual Education Plan, according to his or her individual abilities and needs, adjustments are also made that relate, among other things, to the tests, tasks, time needed to complete the tasks.

e. Is ICT used in the assessment of vulnerable groups?

**No**  No information available  Yes

If yes, please give a description.

If no, please give further information:

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<sup>10</sup> Guide for the School Inclusive Team. Bureau for Development of Education, 2018

[http://www.mcgo.org.mk/pub/Vodic\\_za\\_rabota\\_ucilisen\\_inkluziven\\_tim\\_MK.pdf](http://www.mcgo.org.mk/pub/Vodic_za_rabota_ucilisen_inkluziven_tim_MK.pdf) (in Macedonian)

<sup>11</sup> Manual for working with students with learning difficulties, Bureau for Development of Education

[http://www.mcgo.org.mk/pub/Priracnik\\_za\\_poddrska\\_na\\_ucenici\\_so\\_poteskotii\\_vo\\_ucenjetu\\_MK.pdf](http://www.mcgo.org.mk/pub/Priracnik_za_poddrska_na_ucenici_so_poteskotii_vo_ucenjetu_MK.pdf) (in Macedonian)

It is not used systematically, but may be used. One of the possible settings for taking the graduation exam is using a computer.

6.4. Please provide information (main conclusions, reference and a link if available) on any recent reports, studies, evaluations and/or reviews, since 2015 relating to issues around curricula, learning materials and assessment processes.

1. Inclusion of Children and Youth with Disabilities in Secondary Mainstream Education: Research Report. Ombudsman's Office of the Republic of Macedonia and Open the Windows.  
[https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/media/4271/file/MK\\_CWDinSecondaryEducation\\_Report\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/media/4271/file/MK_CWDinSecondaryEducation_Report_ENG.pdf)

The conducted survey for the aims of the report identified that only thirteen percent of the schools have reported that they have adjusted didactic resources available. Most often, these were schools with an on staff school special educator who is tasked to prepare some specially designed materials for individual work with the students, or schools equipped with career centers supplied with assistive information technology. Moreover, half of surveyed schools noted they need providing accessible pedagogical and didactical aids, manipulatives and assistive IT technology (assistive IT devices and assistive educational software).

Furthermore, no accessible didactic resources and manipulatives are being used, and there are no textbooks and other materials available in Braille, audio format or any other resources meeting any of the web accessibility standards.

The authors recommend that textbooks and other learning materials need to be available in Braille, audio format and/or the standards for web accessibility. There should be law and bylaws set in place prescribing that authors need to supply all materials to the MoES in electronic form, pursuant to the international standards of web accessibility.

2. Baseline Assessment Report of the "Inclusive Education for marginalized children" programme“, Aleksovska, A., Mickovska G., Chonteva Z., 2015  
[http://www.mcgo.org.mk/pub/lzvestaj\\_pocetna\\_sostojba\\_inkluzivno\\_obrazovanie\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.mcgo.org.mk/pub/lzvestaj_pocetna_sostojba_inkluzivno_obrazovanie_ENG.pdf)

The report notes that formative assessment should be improved, particularly of students with special educational needs. The grade teachers should be trained in formative assessment.

The research conducted for the aims of the study concludes that there are no adapted sources of learning. The teachers themselves are trying to adapt the tasks and activities so they can be adequate to the students' abilities and prior knowledge; though these materials are not shared with the other teachers.

The research showed that practicing formative assessment had the biggest influence on improving the successfulness of the students with learning difficulties, many teachers in first grade - 40%, and about 20% of the teachers in the third/fourth and in sixth/seventh grade have not attended such trainings.

Almost all trainings that the subject teachers have attended are related to descriptive assessment. Those trainings only somewhat cover the contents on using assessment for supporting the students with SEN.

6.5 Overall, what are the perceived main challenges (barriers and hindrances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusion in education in relation to curricula, learning materials and assessment processes in the country?

#### Challenges:

Insufficient didactic materials and resources for instruction in all languages (including assistive technologies for SEN children).

Numerous manuals and guidelines have been developed to assist the school staff in adapting to different students and their needs. However, they are not being systematically used by schools and there aren't enough communities of practice

Schools neither have the adequate funds and materials for inclusive education, nor adequately trained educational staff at their disposal.

Opportunities:

Using the experiences of more successful schools and creating communities of practice for developing teaching and learning materials for different contents and types of students. Moreover, a system of collecting good practices can be implemented and managed by BDE in order to systematize good examples and offer them as models to teachers.

Formative assessment trainings have been developed and there is sufficient number of practitioners which have the skills to continue their engagement as teacher trainers and improve the capacities of teachers which have not attended the training. In addition, more frequent and more efficient mentoring on behalf of BDE advisors with regards to formative assessment standards and principles is required.

## 8. Section 5: Teachers and support personnel

How are staff in schools prepared to accommodate students of all abilities and backgrounds, in terms of their initial training, continuing professional development and their attitudes to inclusion?

7.1 Please list type of staff, their numbers and required level of education for the position in different type of educational institutions

Type of staff	Number	Required education	Comment
<b>Mainstream schools</b>			
Professional staff (psychologists, pedagogues, social pedagogues, speech and other types of therapists)	932 in primary schools and 382 in secondary schools	Minimum: BA in Psychology BA in Pedagogy or BA in Sociology	Data for school year 2017/2018 The roles are not always very clear, and professional staff is sometimes used as administrative staff in schools. This is expected to change with the newly adopted Standards and Criteria.
Teacher Assistants (specify role and add rows as required)	No such position		
<i>Others (please specify and add rows as required)</i> Personal/Educational Assistants for students with special needs	271	Not specified	Data for school year 2019/2020 (UNDP) The engagement of personal assistants is supported through a UNDP project, in cooperation with municipalities. This has been done for three years in a row. Personal assistants help the student with his/her basic needs (movement, dressing, feeding and communicating with others in the school) Educational assistants provide direct individual support in the learning process based on the teacher's instructions and on the student's individual needs.
<b>Special schools</b>			
Teachers	284 in primary 81 in secondary schools	Minimum: BA in the specific subject area and additional special needs education	Data for school year 2017/2018
Professional staff (psychologists, pedagogues, social pedagogues, speech and other types of therapists)	No data	Minimum BA in Special Education, Psychology, Pedagogy, Sociology	

Teacher Assistants (specify role and add rows as required)	No data		
Others (please specify and add rows as required)			
<b>Other institutions offering education if they exist (i.e. children's homes, young offenders institutions etc).</b>			
Teachers	43  7	Minimum BA from the teacher-education universities	Primary education for adults which did not complete primary education  Young offenders institutions (1 institution)
Professional staff (psychologists, pedagogues, social pedagogues, speech and other types of therapists)	2	Minimum BA in Special Education, Psychology, Pedagogy, Sociology	Primary education for adults which did not complete primary education
Teacher Assistants (specify role and add rows as required)	/		
Others (please specify and add rows as required)			

\*During 2018 and 2019, complete of deinstitutionalization was conducted and the large institutions for children without parental care were transformed into so-called small group homes<sup>12</sup>. However, all children without parents or parental care go to regular schools and attend regular classes.

7.2 Please indicate if education/training on inclusion in education is available for the following groups of professionals.

Type of staff	Yes	No	No information	If yes please state if pre- or in-service, mandatory or optional, who provides education/training and summary of content
Head teachers/School directors	x			In-service trainings provided by BDE and UNICEF
Teachers	x			<i>NB: For pre-service education, please cross reference your answer to question 5.4 as necessary</i> Pre-service: Optional subject for inclusive education (at the Teaching Faculties). In-service: E-training by the Bureau (developed with UNICEF support) Seminars for inclusive education at each school level (up to 100 schools so far)
Teacher Assistants				No such position in the system
Professional Staff	x			Pre-service: mandatory and elective subjects for psychologists and pedagogues In-service: Included in the trainings with teachers (conducted by BDE and UNICEF)
Inspectors	x			In-service: Trainings provided by UNICEF

<sup>12</sup> Small group homes are alternative for children without parental care, which cannot live in a family. They are housing facilities with 4-5 children and a care-giver.

Teacher Trainers	x			The Bureau, in collaboration with UNICEF, has trained about 60 trainers who, together with a team of advisors and special educators, disseminate training across schools.
Others (please list add rows as required) Personal/Educational Assistants				They are being trained for the work once they are selected for the position. The training includes getting to know their tasks as well as working with students with different levels of disability.

a. If you answered no to any of the above, please provide further information:

7.3 Is education and training of teachers aligned with national policy goals on inclusive education?

No  No information available **X Yes**

If yes, please give a description.

The specific answer would be partially. The pre-service teacher education is not completely aligned with the national goals, which are currently set very high-aiming towards complete inclusion in regular schools of all children. Specifically, while pre-school grade teachers have only elective classes on educational inclusion, subject teachers do not have classes related to educational inclusion, except for the aspect of multicultural education (included as part of the pedagogical exams every potential subject teacher should take before being eligible to teach).

However, the in-service policy is in correlation with the Education Strategy and the Law on Primary Education and every teacher and professional staff member is planned to go through a training on inclusive education, conducted by the Bureau for Development of Education. The Strategy notes that by 2018, 100 teachers and professional support staff have been trained as teacher trainers, and 70% of professional staff and 30% of teachers have been trained in early identification and work with SEN students, by accredited service providers.

In addition, teachers can also receive training from the CSO sector on working with students with different types of disability (e.g. dyslexia and dyscalculia) and students from socially vulnerable categories (such as Roma children). However, these are not systemic and are typically ad-hoc capacity building events.

If no, please give further information:

7.4 With respect to the main initial teacher education programmes, describe how inclusion in education is addressed in it (i.e. requirement for number of academic credits under European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), subjects and topics covered, focus etc).

The teacher training faculties offer optional courses that students (future teachers in lower primary education) can take to be trained on how to work with students with special educational needs, but very small number of students selects these courses. The elective courses include: Multicultural education (3 ECTS), Psychology of intelligence and intellectual abilities (3 ECTS), Psychology of gender relations (3 ECTS)<sup>13</sup>

The Institute of special education and rehabilitation prepares “special” teachers (special educator - defectologist) to work with special education needs’ students.

Subject teachers do not have neither mandatory nor elective courses related to inclusive education during their regular education. However, if they want to qualify for teachers (after passing the exams for their main subject), they need to pass a set of courses for pedagogical qualification. While there isn’t a course in Inclusive education, there is a course in Multicultural and Intercultural education.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Subjects available at the Faculty of Pedagogy, University SS. Cyril and Methodius-Skopje)

<sup>14</sup> Offered at the Faculties of Education/Pedagogy in Skopje (St. Clement Ohridski), Shtip (Goce Delcev) and the Education Faculty in Tetovo.



Teachers working in primary and secondary special schools need to take one year courses which include subjects of: special education, professional orientation of persons with disabilities, psychology of persons with disabilities and didactics with special didactics.

7.5 Please provide information (main conclusions, reference and a link if available) on any recent reports, evaluations and/or reviews, since 2015 relating to initial teacher education and/or professional development issues.

1. Towards Inclusive Education. Report of the conducted research regarding inclusion of children with disabilities in regular primary education. Ombudsman of the Republic of Macedonia, 2016

<http://ombudsman.mk/upload/Istrazuvanja/2016/Inkluzivno%20obrazovanie-UNICEF-Ang.pdf>

The main findings and recommendations of this report, with regards to teacher professional development are: Providing greater access to education for children with disabilities by employing the necessary and quality staff in cooperation with the local government and adapting primary schools for the purpose of greater inclusion of children with disabilities; Competent authorities (MoES, BDE, local government, schools) to plan continuous and appropriate trainings in order to sensitize the entire educational staff to work with children with special needs through the prism and concept of children's rights and in this way educate teachers.

2. Baseline Assessment Report of the "Inclusive Education for marginalized children" programme", Aleksova, A., Mickovska G., Chonteva Z., 2015

[http://www.mcgo.org.mk/pub/lzvestaj\\_pocetna\\_sostojba\\_inkluzivno\\_obrazovanie\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.mcgo.org.mk/pub/lzvestaj_pocetna_sostojba_inkluzivno_obrazovanie_ENG.pdf)

'According to the opinions of the support staff, there are problems with the preparedness of the teaching staff to work with the students with special educational needs, and this refers particularly to the teachers in the subject teaching. The teachers' understanding of abilities as something that is given and which cannot be developed leads them to unintentionally or maybe instinctively, build and adopt a system of values, views and habits related to these students as students who "cannot" advance and therefore it is better for them to be transferred to special schools. This process, which as a hidden (implicit) curriculum is being developed in the schools, becomes particularly relevant in the sixth grade, when the subject teaching begins.'

The report also concludes that teachers do not have equal understanding of the students with SEN and do not recognize all groups of students with SEN.

3. "The current state of inclusion of children with special educational needs in primary education in the Republic of Macedonia", Bureau for Development of Education, 2018

The research has summarized the most important data regarding various domains of inclusive education:

Teachers need more training to work with students with special educational needs for the purpose of developing and following an Individualized Education Plan, applying differentiation, adapting the conditions, methods and activities of students with disabilities, monitoring their achievements, assisting and supporting pedagogues.

The report also emphasizes the important role of the support staff (pedagogue, psychologist and special educator) in assisting the support of teachers and students with special educational needs in all segments of inclusive education, preparation and monitoring of the implementation of the Individual education plan, the period of support provided, the types of support the students need, types of cooperation pedagogical and personal assistant.

1. Assessment of Capacity of Services provided by Health, Education and Social Sectors for Inclusion of Children with Disabilities. Judith Hollenweger and Andrea Martinuzzi, UNICEF Office Skopje, 2015

[https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/media/3496/file/MK\\_AssessmentServicesCWD\\_Report\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/media/3496/file/MK_AssessmentServicesCWD_Report_ENG.pdf)

The report notes that 'teachers and schools lack the conceptual tools and guidelines to support inclusive education. For example, the curriculum is very much focused on teacher activities (teaching plan) rather than student learning. Information provided by the commission on the difficulties of individual children does not inform their planning and teaching as knowledge on disability is still very medically oriented.' The authors conclude that 'regular schools

generally lack the capacity to adequately assess children to inform instruction and support learning. Promoting the learning of children with disabilities is still seen as the responsibility of a specialist.'

2. Inclusion of Children and Youth with Disabilities in Secondary Mainstream Education: Research Report. Ombudsman's Office of the Republic of Macedonia and Open the Windows.  
[https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/media/4271/file/MK\\_CWDinSecondaryEducation\\_Report\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/media/4271/file/MK_CWDinSecondaryEducation_Report_ENG.pdf)

Authors conclude that teachers need to go through continuous training on inclusive education and individual teaching/learning. In that context, Faculties of Pedagogy need to consider the possibility of amending curricula and introduction of different teaching and learning methodologies to strengthen inclusive education and teaching. Moreover, teachers involved in education need to be trained, especially in respect of drafting and employing Individual Educational Plans (IEPs) and grading students following IEPs.

7.6 Overall, what are the perceived main challenges (barriers and hinderances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusion in education in relation to teachers and support personnel in the country?

#### Challenges:

In general, teachers are not prepared for identification of special needs, although part of them have received basic training to use International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF). There is some general commitment for inclusive education, but moderate motivation with lot of concerns because the teachers and school leaders don't feel ready enough.

Professional staff is also not always equipped with all needed types of staff, although many more psychologists, pedagogues and special educators have been employed during the previous years. However, much of their time is spent on administrative assignments, unrelated to their profile and are not able to dedicate sufficient time to students.

#### Opportunities:

The enacting of the standards and criteria for teachers and professional staff are expected to address these issues to a certain extent, although, more in-depth capacity building is needed.

The engagement of Personal/Teaching Assistants for SEN children and the initialization of this practice in future is expected to remove some of the burden which teachers felt when having a SEN student(s) in the classroom, and improve the individualization of teaching.

As the requirement for capacity building in inclusive education is expanded to include all school actors and a whole-school approach is promoted and expected, the joint understanding and efforts of the school staff have the potential to improve the situation.

## 9. Section 6: Schools

*How does the work of schools, school management and leadership impact on access, participation and provision of equitable opportunities for all learners?*

### 8.1 Who is excluded from attending any form of school?

Please give reasons for this group being excluded from attending school and describe any form of alternative provision made for them?

The latest report<sup>15</sup> on this topic identified 663 children (most of them aged 6-8 y.a.) which did not attend school and schools have no data on them. The majority of them live in communities with Roma population, in a disadvantaged social environment, have very poor domestic conditions, their parents are without education or with completed less than four grades, unemployed and without regular sources of income.

### 8.2 Are there issues around the over- and under-representation of different vulnerable groups in different school settings?

No  No information available  Yes

If yes, please give a description and provide any data/evidence that is available

There are cases of over-representation of Roma children in special schools for mentally disabled children, documented in several reports.<sup>16</sup> These children are typically assessed as socially deprived and do not have the skills required to be enrolled in first grade. In some cases this is due to the lack of knowledge of the language in which they are being tested.

In addition, there is under-representation of non-Roma children in some Roma-majority schools, due to social stigma and prejudice, although the schools are in the nearest proximity of the non-Roma children.

If no, please give further information:

### 8.3 Please give details on the main admissions criteria for schools.

#### a. Highlight any issues with the national policies.

The Law on Primary Education provisions that:

To enrol a child with disability in the first grade, the parent i.e. guardian shall be obligated to also submit the opinion/functioning profile issued by the Commission for assessment of children and youth for additional educational, social and health support according to ICF.

The child's enrolment in school is conducted by a three-member commission comprised of pedagogue or psychologist or special educator and rehabilitator and teacher from among the 1-4th grade teachers. The school director shall establish the commission.

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<sup>15</sup> [http://www.mcgo.org.mk/pub/Izvestaj\\_od\\_istrazivanje\\_za\\_inkluzija\\_na\\_decata\\_vo\\_obrazovniot\\_sistem\\_MK.pdf](http://www.mcgo.org.mk/pub/Izvestaj_od_istrazivanje_za_inkluzija_na_decata_vo_obrazovniot_sistem_MK.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> [https://www.ihr.org.mk/uploads/publications\\_pdf/diskriminacijaromi.pdf](https://www.ihr.org.mk/uploads/publications_pdf/diskriminacijaromi.pdf);

<https://mhc.org.mk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/%D0%90%D0%BD%D0%B0%D0%BB%D0%B8%D0%B7%D0%B0-%D0%BD%D0%B0-%D1%98%D0%B0%D0%B2%D0%BD%D0%B8%D1%82%D0%B5-%D0%BF%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%B8%D1%82%D0%B8%D0%BA%D0%B8-%D0%B7%D0%B0-%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%B2%D0%B0%D1%82%D0%B0-%D0%BD%D0%B0-%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%BC%D0%B8%D1%82%D0%B5-%D0%B2%D0%BE-%D0%A0%D0%B5%D0%BF%D1%83%D0%B1%D0%BB%D0%B8%D0%BA%D0%B0-%D0%9C%D0%B0%D0%BA%D0%B5%D0%B4%D0%BE%D0%BD%D0%B8%D1%98%D0%B0.pdf>

If the commission ascertains that an enrolled student has certain developmental disability, and the parent i.e guardian failed to submit opinion/functioning profile from a professional assessment body, it shall be in the best interest of the commission to refer the parent i.e. guardian to the professional assessment body in order to specify the required measures for supported learning.

b. Where schools set their own admissions criteria, please outline any impact on inclusion.

The schools do not have own admissions criteria, but are guided by the Law on Primary Education.

8.4 Please provide information on the different forms of support that are available to learners in schools.

a. Inclusive pedagogy, personalized learning and universal design approaches

No  No information available X Yes

If yes, please give a description.

Schools prepare Individual education plan for each SEN student, by the School Inclusive Team. (elaborated above)

In addition, additional classes can be organized for high achieving students, and remedial classes for low achieving students, though in practice these are rarely continually practiced.

If no, please give further information:

b. counselling and mentoring possibilities

No  No information available X Yes

If yes, please give a description.

The school psychologist typically engages in counselling with regards to improving teaching, learning, motivation and behavior. The counselling can be aimed at students, teachers and parents. The mentoring is typically done by teachers, but in some schools peer-to-peer mentoring is also used.

If no, please give further information:

c. input from specialist teachers/therapists

No  No information available X Yes

If yes, please give a description.

Small number of schools have special educator and rehabilitator which provide professional support to students and teachers.

If no, please give further information:

d. input from learning support assistants

No  No information available X Yes

If yes, please give a description.

If no, please give further information:

Some schools have included personal education assistants for SEN students. They are responsible for assisting the student with the basic everyday needs, communication and learning. While up until recently, their engagement depended on the possibility of the parents to engage an assistant, since 2018, UNDP partners with municipalities to engage and compensate the teaching assistants, through the programme 'Personal assistants for children with disabilities included in mainstream schools'.

e. availability of ICT / assistive technology

No  No information available X Yes

Partially. Within the USAIDs Project on e-approachable education, about 30 schools have been equipped with assistive technology and the staff was trained to use them. In addition softer solutions have been developed to be used by all schools.

If yes, please give a description.

If no, please give further information:

f. Please describe any other forms of support available.

8.5 Please give a description of the strategies in place for practically supporting mainstream school staff teams to increase their capacity to be inclusive and to improve access, participation and achievement for all learners

Strategy	Description of the focus
Counselling by BDE advisors	BDE has special education advisor whose assignments refer to assisting and mentoring special educators in schools. In addition, other subject-specific advisors are also trained to conduct in-class observations using indicators for inclusion, and provide feedback to teachers.
Organizing and conducting trainings on inclusion	The Education Strategy envisions training all teachers and professional staff for early detection and work with SEN students. This process begun as a project funded by UNICEF, but is now part of the system and is underway, guided by the Bureau for Development of Education.
Availability of tools which can assist the inclusion progress (Guide for the School Inclusion Team, Manual for assisting SEN students, for school professional staff, Manual for pre-school staff on improving inclusive practices)	There are several tools which have been prepared in the frames of the programme Inclusive education in primary schools, supported by UNICEF. The Guide for SIT consists of a set of protocols which guide the work of the team and instruments which facilitate and enable documenting of the work done. They are divided into areas which follow the phases of activities of the team and are in line with the areas of developmental planning of the school. The Manual for professional staff aims to help the staff in finding ways of providing individualized support of students with learning difficulties and students belonging to marginalized groups. The manual outlines approaches, interventions, as well as materials for working with students. The Guide for pre-school staff aims at assisting in identification of children with developmental difficulties, developing functional profiles, identification of priority needs for early learning, basic principles of communication with parents of children with developmental difficulties.
Expert bodies for assessment according to ICF	Eight expert bodies for assessment of functional abilities of students with SEN have been formed, based on the International Classification of Functionality (ICF). Their aim is to provide an overall picture of the children's abilities which should facilitate the process of planning individualized activities.

8.6 Please provide information regarding school buildings and infrastructure.

a. Are there schools that face infrastructure issues that are barriers to inclusion?

No  No information available **X Yes**

Most schools do not have elevators, entrance ramps, elevators and toilets for students with special needs. This has been recognized in the reports of the Education Inspection and is planned to be partially tackled with the Education Strategy.

If yes, please give a description and provide information on what barriers, how they are monitored and any data/evidence that is available.

If no, please give further information:

b. Are there strategies and/or initiatives to improve school buildings and infrastructure?

No  No information available  Yes

If yes, please describe the strategies, their aim and focus.

Strategy	Description of the focus
Education Strategy 2018-2025	Adapt Primary schools' buildings for pupils with physical disabilities: Buildings of at least 10 primary schools fully adapted for inclusion of pupils with physical disabilities
Education Strategy 2018-2025	Organize adaptation of 20 pre-school institutions' buildings for inclusion of children with physical disabilities: Buildings of at least 20 pre-school institutions adapted for inclusion of children with physical disabilities according to (inter)national standards
Education Strategy 2018-2025	Improve conditions of secondary schools for equal access for all pupils: At least 5 secondary schools fully adapted for inclusion of pupils with physical disabilities
Education Strategy 2018-2025	Adapt the buildings of Universities (faculties) for inclusion of students with physical disabilities: All buildings of public universities (faculties) adapted for inclusion of students with physical disabilities

If no, please give further information:

8.7 Please provide information (main conclusions, reference and a link if available) from any recent reports, systematic evaluations and/or reviews, since 2015 of the school system, potentially drawing on information from school inspections and / or school self-review work.

#### **National report**

Report on the quality of the education process in the schools in Republic of Macedonia in 2017/2018, State Education Inspection, 2018

The report states that schools have formed School Inclusive Teams, but parents are not always included in their work. Also, inspectors have found that only a small number of school objects is approachable for persons with physical disability. Moreover, teachers need more support for a better approach towards students with disability.

#### **Schools self-assessment of inclusive practices**

The summative report on the self-assessment of 20 schools included in the Programme for inclusive education (internal document) found that: schools need more resources for inclusive education, inclusion of parents needs to improve, planning and use of differential materials needs to improve, etc.

6.9 Overall, what are the perceived main challenges (barriers and hinderances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusion in education in relation to schools in the country?

Schools' self-assessments indicate that while they assess the capacity of the staff for inclusive education as high, especially for analysis and sharing good practices, they need more resources in order to improve the situation in schools. Moreover, they assess that the level of cooperation between the staff is very good and there is a good atmosphere for inclusion.

With regards to the curricula, there is a need for a wider source of teaching and learning materials, using and monitoring the use of ILPs, adapting curricula and school activities to the needs of students as well as developing ILPs which contain models of including SEN children in extracurricular activities.

However, schools are able to detect good examples and exchange experiences among each other through peer learning. There is a motivation among school staff for inclusion and adaptation.



## 10. Section 7: Communities, parents and students

*How far does the wider school community support learners to access and benefit from education opportunities?*

9.1 Have there been any campaigns to raise awareness of inclusion in education at national or local level?

No  No information available **X Yes**

If yes, please give a description.

UNICEF conducted a very successful awareness raising campaign:

'Be Fair-For Childhood without Obstacles' aimed to mobilize the public and support the inclusion of children with disabilities in the society. The campaign videos featured models of people with disabilities, but focused on their ability.

<https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/mk/%D0%B1%D0%B8%D0%B4%D0%B8-%D1%84%D0%B5%D1%80-%D0%B7%D0%B0-%D0%B4%D0%B5%D1%82%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B2%D0%BE-%D0%B1%D0%B5%D0%B7-%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%B5%D1%87%D0%BA%D0%B8>

The follow-up research on the effects of the campaign found that about two thirds of the general public has been exposed to the campaign and 'people who have seen or heard the campaign find all the relations with children with disabilities more acceptable than those who stated they have not been exposed to it in any way, either on spontaneous or prompted level'.<sup>17</sup>

If no, please give further information:

9.2 Does legislation/policy support parental involvement in schools?

No  No information available **X Yes**

If yes, please give a description.

Yes, parents constitute the Parent Council and also have representatives in the School Board. Parents are also part of the School Inclusive Team, which develops and delivers the inclusion activities at the level of school and makes sure they are adjusted to and applied in the teaching and learning practice. Parents are also part of the Student inclusive team, which focuses on specific students and preparing their Individual Education Plans.

If no, please give further information:

9.3 Does legislation/policy support collaboration between schools and stakeholders in their local communities (e.g. services/employers)?

No  No information available **X Yes**

If yes, please give a description.

Yes, the legislation stipulates regular cooperation of schools with the local environment (health facilities in the municipality, centers for social work at the municipal level, CSOs and NGOs, associations and organizations, cooperation with the business sector and employers, chambers ..). Collaboration can be in the form of realization of joint projects and activities, donation of resources to the school etc.

Collaboration with the local community is also foreseen in professional standards for teachers and support staff, and is a criterion that is also taken into account in their career development.

Nevertheless, the practice indicates that while cooperation with the public institutions and CSOs is more frequently practiced and more successful, the cooperation with the business sector is less practiced by schools.

If no, please give further information:

<sup>17</sup> [https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/media/3181/file/MK\\_2018\\_DisabilityKapReport\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/media/3181/file/MK_2018_DisabilityKapReport_ENG.pdf)



9.4 Does legislation/policy support the development of learning communities in local/regional areas e.g. support for schools to work together; involvement with universities, support services to provide research evidence and development of innovative practice?

No  No information available **X Yes**

If yes, please give a description.

According to the legislation, the school's expert bodies are the primary school teacher council, the class teachers' council, the subject teachers' council, and the teachers' professional bodies. At the municipal level, the professional staff of schools is usually cooperating.

Regarding the education of students with disabilities, the Law on Primary Education regulates the cooperation of the so-called regular schools with the state primary schools with a resource center. Article 17 of the Law on Primary Education stipulates that "Resource Center School uses its material and human resources and provides appropriate expert support to students with disabilities, teachers, support staff, parents or guardian and the inclusion team of other elementary students". Article 18 of the Law provides that the "Support Center uses the material and human resources of the school and provides adequate expert support to students with disabilities, teachers, support staff, parents or guardians and the inclusion team in other primary schools in the territory of the municipality".

The law also stipulates that the school may carry out an experimental program and a research and development project in order to improve the educational process. In practice, these programs and projects are often implemented in collaboration with universities and higher education institutions, or research centers and institutions.

If no, please give further information:

9.5 Does legislation/policy set out a role for NGOs, DPOs, or other organisations representing vulnerable groups?

No  No information available **X Yes**

If yes, please describe the role. Specify which non-governmental actors are particularly active in inclusion in education and how they operate.

The Law on Primary Education (Article 37) stipulates for the Minister to establish a five-member commission for the selection of educational mediators for Roma students who come from socially disadvantaged families and / or have been outside the education system for a long time. It is consisted of the Ministry staff, one representative from the Bureau and one representative from civil society organizations working to promote Roma rights.

Most of the schools cooperate with NGOs and civil society in support of education of Roma students such as: Macedonian Civic Education Center, Open Society Foundation Macedonia, Pestalozzi Children's Foundation, Roma Education Fund, Roma Resource Center. These organizations cooperate with the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy and the Bureau for Development of Education in support of policy making, concepts, laws, teacher training and professional development, assistants in schools, providing additional support for students (education mediators, tutors, scholarships ..), organizing meetings with parents and implementing field activities for enrollment of students in education

In the area of students with disabilities, most of the schools cooperate with NGOs and the civil sector such as: NGO Open the Windows, Macedonian Civic Education Center, Pestalozzi Children's Foundation. Their support is primarily in providing training for teachers and assistants, providing assistive technology etc. These organizations also support the MoES, MLSP and the Bureau for Development of Education in developing policies, laws, concepts for inclusive education.

If no, please give further information:

9.6 Please provide information (main conclusions, reference and a link if available) from any recent reports, systematic evaluations and/or reviews, since 2015 of parental and wider community involvement in the work of schools.

There are no separate reports on the involvement of parents and the wider community in school work in inclusive education. Below are reports of inclusive education that mention the role of parents:

1. Report “Inclusion of children outside the education system” prepared by the Macedonian Civic Education Center (2017)

The report looks at the role of parents in the education of children, especially children outside the educational system, their attitudes and the correlation between the level of education of parents and the inclusion of children in the educational system.

[http://www.mcgo.org.mk/pub/Izvestaj\\_od\\_istrazivanje\\_za\\_inkluzija\\_na\\_decata\\_vo\\_obrazovniot\\_sistem\\_MK.pdf](http://www.mcgo.org.mk/pub/Izvestaj_od_istrazivanje_za_inkluzija_na_decata_vo_obrazovniot_sistem_MK.pdf)

2. Ombudsman's Report Towards Inclusive Education (2016)

Concerning the involvement of parents in the education process, this Report states that greater involvement of parents in activities with children with disabilities is needed. The report also states that “A small number of schools are organizing meetings with other students' parents in order to discuss the issues of greater inclusion or non-discrimination of children with disabilities. Most schools do not show specific examples of these meetings and the topics discussed during those meetings”.

[https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/media/3751/file/MK\\_OmbudsmanSitAnCWD\\_2016\\_Report\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/media/3751/file/MK_OmbudsmanSitAnCWD_2016_Report_ENG.pdf)

3. Towards Inclusive Education: Follow-up report, UNICEF, 2017

Some of the important findings in this report, which compares the data between 2014 and 2017, are: Increasing numbers of people believe that children with disabilities should be included in regular education and attend regular classes with other children. Greater understanding of the benefits of inclusive education for both children with disabilities and those without, but concerns remain about the capacity of teachers to meet the needs of each child.

<https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/reports/follow-survey-knowledge-attitudes-practices-towards-inclusion-children-disabilities>

7.7 Overall, what are the perceived main challenges (barriers and hinderances) and opportunities (support and ways forward) for inclusion in education in relation to communities, parents and students in the country?

Main challenges (barriers and hinderances):

Although parents are involved in the governing bodies of the school (school board) and the Parent Council, they still lack sufficient knowledge of their role in influencing and assisting in the process of inclusive education.

While a 2017 UNICEF survey found that there is a significantly increased awareness among the population on the importance of inclusive education, there is still work to be done to raise public awareness that inclusive education is raising the quality of education in general.

Opportunities (support and ways forward):

Parents are formally included in the development of school-level education policies through different bodies, whose functioning can be targeted for better efficiency and higher accountability.

Parents, or guardians, participate in the work of the School Board, with their representatives, on the proposal of the Parent Council. The school board is responsible for adopting the school's development program and annual work program.

The Parent Council at school level is actively involved in the educational process by providing feedback on the developmental program and the annual program, discussing the school performance report, participating in self-evaluation of the work, proposing measures to improve teaching.

Moreover, the school has a school inclusion team that takes care of inclusive policies and practices at the school level and an inclusive student team that works on an individual education plan or modified curriculum. The school inclusion team also includes two parents / guardians. The school inclusion team designs and implements activities at the