

North Macedonia

Policy Framework

The full membership and full integration of the Republic of Macedonia into the European Union is one of the major strategic priorities of the country, resulting primarily from the broad support for this process by the citizens, as well as the strong and evident commitment to reforms essential for ensuring prosperity for the citizens of the Republic of Macedonia and which, at the same time, are complementary with the requirements and criteria for the Union membership.

General situation across all policy areas

Main challenges across all policy areas

Strategic priorities of the Government are the following:

- To increase economic growth and employment.
- To integrate the country into the EU and NATO;
- To fight corruption and crime and implement laws efficiently;
- To maintain good inter-ethnic relations based on the principles of mutual tolerance and respect and implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement;
- To invest in education, science and information technology for a knowledge-based society.

Main approaches to address challenges across all policy areas

- Programme of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia 2017-2020.
- Economic Reform Programme(ERP) 2016;
- ESRP – Employment and Social Reform Programme 2020;
- National Employment Strategy 2016-2020;
- Innovation Strategy of the Republic of Macedonia for 2012-2020;
- Annual National Programme of the Republic of Macedonia for NATO Membership 2014-2015 ;
- National Programme for Adoption of the Acquis (NPAA), Revision 2016-2018;
- EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI);
- Strategy on equitable representation of minority ethnic groups.

Social policy specific situation

Significant social trends	<p><u>Ageing of population</u></p> <p>The Republic of Macedonia exceeds the limit of 12% of old population and enters the group of countries which are demographically characterized as countries with old population. The average age of population notes continuous increase and in 2015 it amounted to 38.5 years (37.6 for men and 39.3 for women).</p> <p><u>Migration movements</u></p> <p>The Republic of Macedonia is characterized as a distinctive migration area with intensive internal population movements and continuous population emigration to other countries.</p> <p><u>Poverty and standard of living</u></p> <p>The rate of poor people calculated by Eurostat recommendations gradually decreased from 27.0% in 2010 to 21.5% in 2015 of people who live below the poverty line.</p>
Key challenges specific to social policy	<p>The labour market in the Republic of Macedonia is further characterized by a high unemployment rate, especially among the youth and the low-qualified, a low activity rate among women as well as long-term unemployment.</p> <p>Another important challenge that the labour market in the Republic of Macedonia is facing is high gender differences, reflected primarily in the significantly lower female activity and the lower employment of women.</p>
Main approaches to address social policy challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The National Employment Strategy of the Republic of Macedonia 2016-2020. • Action Plan on Youth Employment 2016-2020; • Operational Plans for Active Employment Programs and Measures (created on annual basis, starting from 2007); • Bilateral and multilateral cooperation.
Target groups	<p>The most vulnerable categories of persons, such as youth, long-term unemployed, persons with disabilities, inactive persons etc.</p>

Good practice

Name of the good practice	The project 'Macedonia employs'
Policy areas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Employment and labour market policy
Description of the practice	<p>The aim of the project 'Macedonia employs' is to help more groups of unemployed persons, who are less competitive on the labor market through exemption from income tax and exemption from paying social contributions to become more competitive, thereby to motivate private companies to creating new jobs.</p> <p>The project 'Macedonia employs 1' encompasses young people up to 29 years. Just in 2016 around 19,000 people got employed through this project.</p> <p>The project 'Macedonia employs 2' started at the end of June 2016. It includes five categories: people up to 35 years, people aged 35-50 years, people over 50 years, people over 58 years and parents of three and more children, single parents, children without parental care etc. It is expected to be hired around 20,000 people.</p>
Governance & funding	Government of the Republic of Macedonia, Ministry of labour and social policy, Employment Service Agency. The project is funded by the Government of the Republic of Macedonia.
Innovation	Subsidizing employment of persons in social risks by encouraging the employers to hire persons at social risks such as young person's up to 29, people up to 35, people aged 35-50 years, people over 50 years, people over 58 years and parents of three and more children, single parents, children without parental care etc..
Challenges of implementation	Encouraging the companies which have hired people belonging to one of the above-mentioned categories of people to retain its employees.
Outcome(s) and impact	Reducing unemployment through creating new jobs by covering more groups of unemployed persons, who are less competitive on the labor market. Just in 2016 around 19,000 people got employed through this project.
Main partner(s)/ stakeholders	Government of the Republic of Macedonia, Ministry of labour and social policy, Employment Service Agency.
Contact	Ministry of Labour & Social Policy of the Republic of North Macedonia