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Consideration of reports of States parties

Replies of North Macedonia to the list of issues in relation to its combined third to sixth periodic reports*

[Date received: 14 April 2022]

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



Reply to paragraph 2 (a) of the list of issues (CRC/C/MKD/Q/3-6)

1. The Government pursued adjustments in the healthcare provision amid COVID-19. The measures taken to respond to the pandemic led to the restriction of access to inpatient and outpatient health services, without interruptions in the provision of emergency medical services, health services for pregnant women and children, life-threatening and urgent conditions, and services for malignant diseases.¹
2. With respect to the provision of mental health care for children during the pandemic, the University Clinic of Psychiatry – Skopje organized psychological-support telephone lines for children, teenagers, and children with disabilities, which includes support for children when they show signs of stress or distress, advising ways to maintain family routines and social contact with peers.²
3. The Institute for Lung Disease for Children was set as COVID 19 Hospital for Children, and the University Clinic for Children Diseases was providing hospital health care for children with other diseases.
4. In accordance with the Plan for reduction of restrictive measures to prevent the spread of coronavirus (adopted by the Government in 2020), more than 80 protocols³ were prepared and adopted including protocols related to conditions and procedures to be implemented in pre-school institution, in primary and secondary schools, daily centres, students' dormitories etc.
5. The MLSP prepared a campaign for reporting domestic violence in a COVID-19 state of emergency, informative flyers, and an informative video with basic information for reporting domestic violence. A toll-free telephone number (075/230-530) was set up for assistance, support, and counselling of parents/guardians for raising children in a safe and caring family environment. For the purpose of supporting primary and secondary education pupils from socially disadvantaged families that have a limited or no access to technology or the internet, mobile internet cards were provided donated.
6. For the purpose of assisting disabled children, an online platform designed by the MLSP and UNICEF, in partnership with the NGO Open the Windows, is operational for supporting disabled children in studying and development.
7. The day-care centres for disabled persons/children and small group homes implement an adapted programme for psychosocial support and adapted individual educational programmes with day-care centre beneficiaries and their families.⁴

Reply to paragraph 2 (b) of the list of issues

8. The Law on Justice for Children governs the treatment of children at risk and children who have committed acts that are legally defined as crimes and misdemeanours, sets out conditions for undertaking measures of assistance, care and protection, educational and alternative measures and for punishing children and younger adults, the status, role and competence of the bodies involved in the treatment of children and the execution of educational and alternative measures and punishments, and lays down the measures for protecting child victims of acts that are legally defined as crimes and child witnesses and measure for preventing juvenile delinquency.

¹ Changes were made to the referrals and prescriptions in order to reduce contacts to a minimum, while ensuring the continuity of basic health care.

² In addition, training modules were developed to build the capacity of family doctors and nurses to provide basic psychosocial counselling for pregnant women, mothers, children, and their families, recognizing symptoms of common mental health disorders and referral to those in need of higher levels of health care.

³ <https://vlada.mk/protokoli-koronavirus>.

⁴ The activities are undertaken in a home environment, by using phone, internet, and video communication.

9. A new National Strategy for Justice for Children (2020–2026) and an Action Plan (2020–2023) are being prepared by the National Council for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency (NCPJD).

Reply to paragraph 2 (c) of the list of issues

10. For the first time under the Budget of the MES for 2021, a special item 26 Inclusive Education was set up, which provided financial means for salaries of 500 educational assistants (gross amount for one educational assistant MKD 36.056). As well as MKD 2.000.000 for funds for teaching aids/assistive technology to improve the teaching process of students with special education needs.

11. The proposal of the MES is the same item – Inclusive education in the Budget for 2022, to re-provide funds for salaries for 500 educational assistants, as well as to increase the funds for teaching aids (which may include assistive technology) from MKD 2.000.000 to MKD 3.000.000, even if MKD 7.000.000 are provided for equipment and capital investments of resource centres.

12. The MES sustainably provides funds under two financial programs for Roma education (Program 11 – Support of the National Roma Strategy and Program 32 – Support of Roma’s secondary education).⁵ Today the situation changed with the necessity for implementation and also employment of more measures (later introduced in public policies), and the overall budget for Roma education is over EUR 530.000 per year. These funds are provided by the Government only for education.

Reply to paragraph 3 (b) of the list of issues

13. In compliance with the amendments to the Law on the Ombudsman of October 2016, for the purpose of harmonising with the Paris Principles for National Institutions, special units have been established for following the situation with and protecting the rights of the child, of persons with disabilities and for following the situation with and protecting against discrimination and for equitable representation of persons belonging to communities.

Reply to paragraph 4 (a) of the list of issues

14. SWC when performing duties within their competence, follow the situation with vulnerable families and take measures for preventing child marriages through professional and methodological work with parents and minors and by pointing out the legal consequences in the event of child marriage.⁶

Reply to paragraph 4 (b) of the list of issues

15. Pursuant to the Law on the Prevention of and Protection against Discrimination (OG No. 258/2020), a Commission for the Prevention of and Protection against Discrimination was established as a professional, independent body for equality and non-discrimination in compliance with the Paris Principles and international standards aimed at protecting the rights of all citizens. The new composition of the Commission was elected on 25 January 2021.

16. The MLSP, in cooperation with the OSCE Mission and the MISA, is preparing two electronic study modules for implementation of the Law, which also cover stereotypes and prejudices that lead to discrimination on any ground.

17. A new equality and non-discrimination strategy for 2022–2026 is developed.

⁵ In 2008, the MES provided EUR 115.000.

⁶ As the only competent bodies for guardianship, they supervise parental rights and, in case of their abuse, take appropriate measures for protecting the personality, rights and interests of the child.

18. According to the ILGA-Europe index of 2021 on the progress of countries in the LGBTI rights area, the country has achieved improvement in the freedom of assembly, in accordance with the improved security at public events related to LGBTI rights.

Reply to paragraphs 4 (c) and (d) of the list of issues

19. The draft law amending the Law on Justice for Children aligns with: Directive (EU) 2016/800 of the European Parliament (EP) on procedural safeguards for children who are suspects or accused persons in criminal proceedings, Directive 2012/29/EU of the EP and of the Council of 25 October 2012 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime and replacing Council Framework Decision 2001/220/JHA and Directive (EU) 2016/343 of the EP and of the Council on the strengthening of certain aspects of the presumption of innocence and of the right to be present at the trial in criminal proceedings.

20. The implementation of the IPA project “Justice for Children,” financed by the EU, is in progress.⁷

21. According to the Law on Primary Education, within the schools there is a student organization and participation. For the organized realization of the interests of the students in primary schools, students are organized in a community of a class and a student parliament. The student parliament consists of the presidents of the class communities.⁸

Reply to paragraph 4 (e) of the list of issues

22. The MoI, in coordination with the Civil Registry at the MoJ and the MLSP, works actively and continuously on implementing the Law on Persons Unregistered in the Birth Registry (OG No. 42/2020) for the purpose of exercising the rights of children who have not been registered in the birth registry for various reasons. After being registered in the registry and obtaining their first birth certificate, upon application, the MoI issues an ID document proving their identity before relevant institutions and bodies for the purpose of exercising their rights pursuant to this Law.

23. By July 2021, the MoI received a total of 61 applications for issuing an ID document and issued 17 ID documents.

Reply to paragraph 5 (a) of the list of issues

24. In January 2020, the Government adopted the National Strategy (2020–2025) and Action Plan (2020–2022) for Prevention of and Protection of Children against Violence, which had been prepared by the National Coordination Body for Prevention of and Protection of Children against Abuse and Neglect.⁹

⁷ The project envisages support for revising the legal and policy frameworks governing the justice for children; strengthening the mechanisms for monitoring, responsibility, and coordination; procedures and practices of the justice system and related support services for treatment and protection of the rights of the child; identifying and removing barriers to access to justice and ensuring participation of children for the purpose of exercising their rights in the justice system.

⁸ The Student Parliament actively participates in advocating and promoting the rights and interests of students, in activities for providing peer support to students with special education needs, in the realization of teaching and extracurricular activities, in the preparation of the annual work program, through its representatives participates in the parents’ and the teachers’ councils, and organizes and participates in humanitarian activities, environmental activities and socially beneficial work.

⁹ The Strategy represents the vision, goals, strategic approach, and activities to be undertaken and promoted in preventing and protecting children against all types of violence. Standard Operating Procedures for Treatment of Victims of Trafficking, with a special procedure for treatment of children, were also prepared.

Reply to paragraph 5 (b) of the list of issues

25. In December 2018, a Law Amending the Criminal Code was adopted to promote the criminal justice protection of child victims of violence and victims of child trafficking.

26. Two new definitions were added in Article 122:

- Violence against a child, in addition to the violence defined in paragraph (21) of the Article, shall also mean psychological violence, violence through the internet, peer violence, as well as stocking and following the child; and
- Hate crime shall be considered a crime against a natural or legal person and related persons or property committed fully or partially due to a real or assumed (imagined, made-up) characteristic or relation of the person concerning race, colour of skin, nationality, ethnic origin, religion, or belief, mental or physical disability, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, or political belief.

27. A new crime was introduced, violence against a child, in Article 201-a, which incriminates acts of physical, psychological and any other type of violence towards a child, punishable by a fine or imprisonment of 6 months to 3 years.

28. Article 418-d: Child Trafficking was amended by a new paragraph 8, which reads: "A child victim of trafficking in human beings shall not be punished in cases when the law envisages punishment of a child if the perpetrator of the crime forced the child to commit a crime and if that act of the child is a direct consequence of the child's position of a victim."

29. The Law on Persons Unregistered in the Birth Registry (OG No. 42/2020) created legal grounds for solving the problem of approximately 700 persons in the country who do not have documents and personal identification. The goal is to register the unregistered persons in a special birth registry for the purpose of obtaining a certificate and an ID document in order to exercise the fundamental human rights: the right to education, health and social protection and employment with mandatory social insurance.

30. With the ID document issued by the MoI, persons registered in the special birth registry prove their identity before relevant bodies and institutions in order to exercise the previously mentioned rights, but not to gain nationality.

31. In the period October 2020–September 2021, 83 cases were closed, and 83 special birth certificates were issued. 62 decisions are prepared for 62 persons who have applied for registration in the special birth registry in Skopje.

32. In 2021, from 1 January until September 2021, questionnaires were completed for 6 persons for submitted applications.

33. A Protocol for Treatment of Street Children is prepared, the Protocol for Treatment in the Process of Prevention of and Protection of Children against Abuse and Neglect is revised and an electronic application against violence against children and adults that needs to be filled out by health professionals is prepared.

Reply to paragraph 5 (d) of the list of issues

34. Through organisational units of the MoI for prevention at the Public Security Bureau, continuous preventive activities are undertaken at primary and secondary schools for improving the overall and personal security at educational and instructional institutions, reducing all forms of violence among pupils, detecting children at risk, building confidence between pupils and the police and developing mutual cooperation, as well as activities for raising awareness among children and their parents about using the internet and social media safely.

35. According to the Law on Primary Education (OG No. 161/19 and 229/20) employees in primary schools are obliged to promote equality and fairness among all students and to actively oppose all forms of discrimination and violence.¹⁰

¹⁰ Every employee in the school is obliged to take care of the best interest of the student and to respect his/her dignity, as well as the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Physical, psychological, and

36. The new Law on Primary Education states that the school principal is, among other things, responsible for reporting any form of violence, abuse and neglect committed against a student with competent institutions established by law.

37. The secondary legislation, i.e., the Instruction for the procedure of reporting and protection of student-victims of any of the forms of violence, abuse and neglect, number 18-6570 / 1 was adopted on 06 July 2020 and every school is obliged to start applying it within a year (starting with 2021/2022 school year).

Reply to paragraph 5 (e) of the list of issues

38. The Law on Juvenile Justice adopted in 2009 established a system of justice for children based on international standards. The Law on Justice for Children of 2013 further promoted the rights of the child.

39. According to indicators for application of the law, analysed in the annual report of the NCPJD for 2019, measures of assistance and protection as a form of restorative justice are applied the most. In 2017, the percentage of children at risk to whom they were applied was 83 %, in 2018 it was 53 % and in 2019 it was 83 %.

40. A million MKD were earmarked for the Programme for Compensation of a Child Victim or Injured Party (Articles 151 and 152 of the foregoing Law) in 2020 and 2021. From 1 January to 30 June 2021, decisions on compensation were adopted and paid to 4 child victims totalling MKD 1,500,000 under the 2021 Programme (OG No. 32/21).

41. According to the 2019 Annual Report of the NCPJD:

- The number of children who were subject of institutional measures was reduced from 12 in 2018 to 4 children in 2019 (three of whom were placed in an educational-correctional facility, and one was placed in an educational institution);
- 3 children, all of whom were male, were ordered child prison sentences;
- The number of children subject of pre-trial detention orders was reduced from 6 in 2018 to 4 children in 2019, a decrease of 1.45 to 0.98 children in pre-trial detention per 100,000 children.

42. Programmes were adopted for training of all subjects in the child justice system and rulebooks for treatment of child victims of violence.

43. Two amendments to the Law were adopted in 2019. The first amendment (OG No. 152/19) aimed to strengthen the institutional capacities of municipalities for establishing municipal council for prevention of child delinquency. The second amendment (OG No. 275/2019) aimed to harmonise the Law with the Law on Free Legal Assistance (OG No. 101/19) and improve the system of free legal aid for children.

44. Parents/guardians of the child cover the legal fees. In cases when they are not able to pay them, they are paid in accordance with the provisions of the Law on Free Legal Assistance from the Budget of the MoJ.

45. The Law on Justice for Children stipulates that the SWC adopt a decision for approving free legal assistance if the conditions set out in this Law are met as soon as possible, within 30 days from the day of delivery of the information to the parents/guardians. For the purpose of payment, the defence lawyer delivers to the MoJ the Decision for Approval of Free Legal Assistance and the cost form for the legal assistance provided. In order to avoid protraction of the procedure, the draft Law on Justice for Children contains provisions that simplify this procedure.

Reply to paragraph 5 (f) of the list of issues

46. The National Coordination Body for the Prevention of and Protection of Children against Abuse and Neglect adopted the Protocol for Work of Interdepartmental Teams, under

sexual harassment and punishment of students and humiliating behaviour and treatment of students are prohibited.

which trainings and education are provided to strengthen capacities of professionals in sectors that work with children (SWCs, the police, PPO, health, and education). Trainings were provided in 8 cities.¹¹

Reply to paragraph 6 (a) of the list of issues

47. The reform of the social protection system enabled a guaranteed minimum pecuniary assistance for a single mother during pregnancy one month before birth and for a single parent until the start of the primary education of the child up to seven years of age, but for up to 3 children. Children receive education and child allowance to an amount defined by the Law for the Protection of Children.

48. For the purpose of preventing abandonment of children by parents, Centres for Support of Mothers and Children were opened at Centres for Support of Foster Families in Skopje and Bitola, which can accommodate single unemployed pregnant women one month before birth and single parents until their children turn three months.

Reply to paragraph 6 (b) of the list of issues

49. Children separated from the families are placed under protection of the state, i.e., a guardian is appointed, and they are accommodated in small group homes or foster families that are closest to the family environment.

Reply to paragraph 6 (c) of the list of issues

50. In accordance with the principle of best interest of the child and for the purpose of prevention and early intervention, policies are aimed at abandoning the practice of placing children in institutions and their further “institutionalisation.” During the process of transformation of institutions for children without parents and parental care, children were placed in small group homes (rented apartments and houses) as a transitional form until conditions are created for their placement in foster families (closest to the family environment).

Reply to paragraph 6 (d) of the list of issues

51. For the purpose of development and improvement of the service of placement in a foster family, efforts are made to expand the network, improve the quality of care in existent foster families and develop specialised foster families.

52. The Law on Social Protection envisages a Foster Family Support Centre, aimed at promoting the service of placement in a family, preparation, assessment and training of future foster parents, following and support to foster families.

53. In 2021, 3 Foster Family Support Centres (FFSCs), which have competences for foster families in certain planning regions and municipalities, were established, including:

- FFSC at the 11 October Orphanage in Skopje;
- FFSC at the Bitola Orphanage for infants and children; and
- FFSC at the SOS Children’s Village in Skopje.

54. In addition to the placement in a foster family as a non-family protection service, Article 93 of the new Law also envisages kinship care (in a family of a grandmother, grandfather, brother, sister, uncle, or aunt).

¹¹ The goal is to coordinate the treatment by institutions in the work with children in order to protect their interests and avoid their victimisation.

Reply to paragraph 6 (e) of the list of issues

55. According to the Law on Family, the SWC, which is the body competent for guardianship of children without parents and parental care, assigns a guardian who follows the placement of children in small group homes and foster families.¹²

Reply to paragraph 7 (a) of the list of issues

56. The needs assessment model for people with disabilities has been developed in accordance with the International Classification of Functioning (ICF).

57. The new model focuses on assessing what a person can achieve if they are working on developing their potential.¹³ Emphasis is placed on assessing two key aspects of functioning (bodily functions and participation) and overcoming identified constraints, such as inaccessible environment, prejudice, and negative attitudes.

58. The initial identification of a problem occurs in diverse ways and by different people, such as parents, a neighbour, health care worker, educator, or teacher. Anyone can encourage parents to start the assessment process, but the family doctor refers the case to the regional assessment body.

59. The main task of the regional expert bodies is to systematically gather available information about the child and his/her environment and to apply procedures for measuring the functioning and for assessing the basic health condition.¹⁴

60. Nine expert assessment bodies are established in: Skopje 2, Bitola, Gostivar, Stip, Strumica, Ohrid, Veles and Kumanovo.

61. The National Expert Body is composed of permanent (special educator and rehabilitator, a psychologist, and a social worker) and occasional members (a specialist paediatrician, and a specialist psychiatrist).¹⁵

62. The members of the regional and national expert body are an integral part of the newly established service for functional assessment at the PHI “Zdrastven Dom” – Skopje.

Reply to paragraph 7 (c) of the list of issues

63. According to the Law on Primary Education, special primary schools were transformed into primary schools with a resource centre, and most of the special classes (the rest are in procedure) into centres to support the learning of students with disabilities.

64. Pursuant to the Law on Primary Education, in the part that refers to Inclusive Education, the following pieces of secondary legislation were adopted:

- (a) Conception for inclusive education;
- (b) Guidelines on the manner of cooperation between primary schools with a resource centre, learning support centres and other primary schools;
- (c) Rulebook on the norm, the description of the competencies and the work tasks for educational and personal assistants;
- (d) Rulebook on the manner of requesting an educational/personal assistant and the manner of selection and selection of an educational/personal assistant;

¹² The guardian takes care for the personality, health, upbringing, education and preparation for independent life and work of the minor and submits a report to the SWC.

¹³ The development of potentials in combination with the removal of environmental constraints will enable active and full participation in society.

¹⁴ The regional expert body has permanent members (specialist paediatrician/specialist in family medicine or general practitioner, psychologist, social worker and special educator and rehabilitator, with a minimum of 5 years of work experience) and occasionally engaged members.

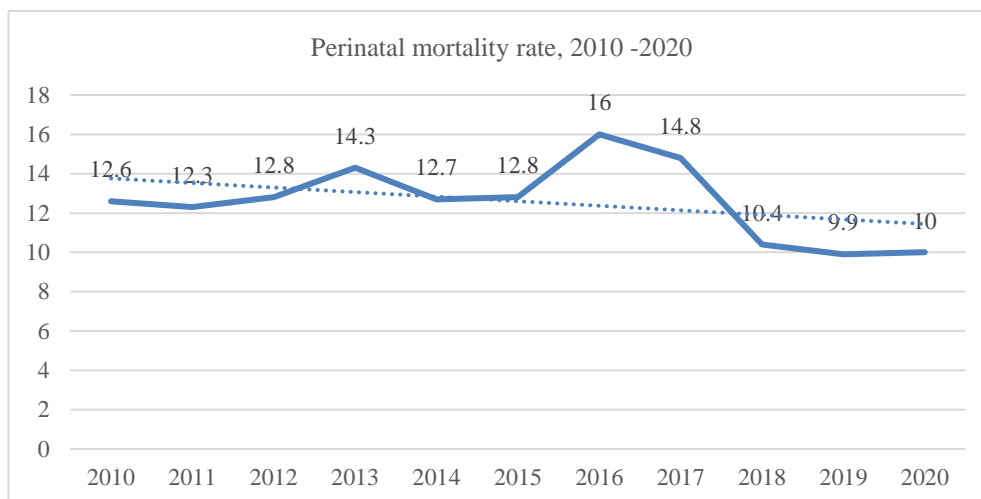
¹⁵ All members have at least 10 years of work experience in the assessment of children and youth with disabilities and have a license for trainers to apply the ICF in functional assessment.

- (e) Rulebook on the manner of assessment of students with disabilities;
- (f) Decision for regionalization for cooperation of municipal primary schools with primary schools with a resource centre and/or the centres for support of the learning of the students with disabilities.
65. The School Inclusive Teamwork Guide was also revised and posted on the MES website.
66. Resource Centre schools and Learning Support Centres will support the inclusion of children and students by facilitating access to education and training provide specialized community services, supported employment and independent living.
67. In order to provide quality inclusive education, in the 2020/2021 school year, 500 educational assistants were hired, directly financed under the Budget of the MES.
68. In 2021, the provision of accessibility became a mandatory condition that must be met to obtain funding for adaptation, renovation, or construction of a school with funds provided by the MES. In the 2020/2021 school year, one hundred scholarships were awarded to students with special needs.
69. Under the project “Be IN, Be INclusive, be Included”, a project of the Foundation “Step by Step”, funded by the EU, and in cooperation with the MES in the 2020/2021 school year provided scholarships to a total of 323 students with first and second grade disabilities included in regular primary education. The goal is to attend classes regularly and 322 of them have successfully completed the school year. From them: 104 girls and 218 boys, 148 attended I grade and 174 II grade, 246 attended regular schools ,25 special classes in regular schools and 51 special schools, the majority of scholarship recipients have disabilities in voice, speech and language (23%) or mental development, most often autism (24.5%) and combined disabilities (28%), 45 live in single-parent families, the majority come from financially vulnerable families- both parents of 84 scholarship holders were unemployed, 132 scholarship holders had one parent unemployed, while 160 families stated that they lived on a minimum income.
70. For the 2021/2022 school year, another 140 scholarships were awarded under the same project for students enrolled in the first grade.
71. Last school year, under the same project, sensory rooms were provided in 4 schools. Inclusive playgrounds were created in 4 schools. The construction of an additional one is in progress. They are equipped with a soft rubber pad and 5 items of equipment: swing and seesaw for students with disabilities, and equipment for rehabilitation and strengthening of the upper or lower extremities.
72. Assistive technology and specialized didactic aids are provided for two schools. An adapted toilet for students with impaired mobility is under construction in one school.
73. For the 2021/2022 school year, a public call was announced for equipping another 28 schools that will show interest.
74. The new Law on Textbooks envisages the accessibility and availability of teaching materials, i.e., for students in primary education the textbooks will be posted in audio format on the Internet platform, while for students with impaired vision (blind and visually impaired students) the MES will provide textbooks printed in Braille.
75. The MES is committed to ensuring access to the regular education system and the vision of an inclusive educator is to be provided to every child, regardless of age, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion or belief, abilities, socio-economic origin, opportunities for quality education together with all peers, within the regular educational system, from the earliest age and throughout life.

Reply to paragraph 8 (a) of the list of issues

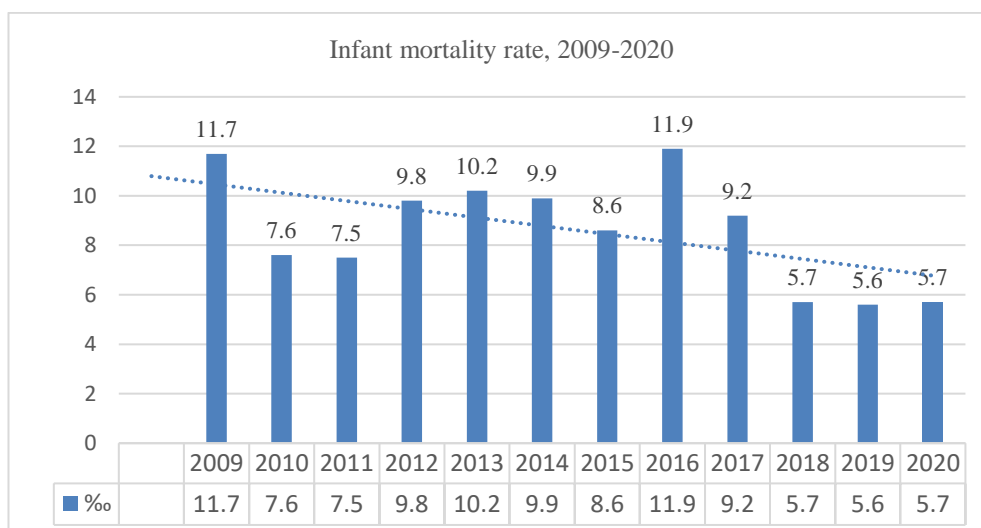
76. In 2020 the perinatal mortality rate was 10.0 per 1000 births. The level of perinatal mortality (10.0 %) is slightly increased compared to 2019, when it was 9.9 %.

Graph. Perinatal mortality rate per 1000 births (2010–2020)

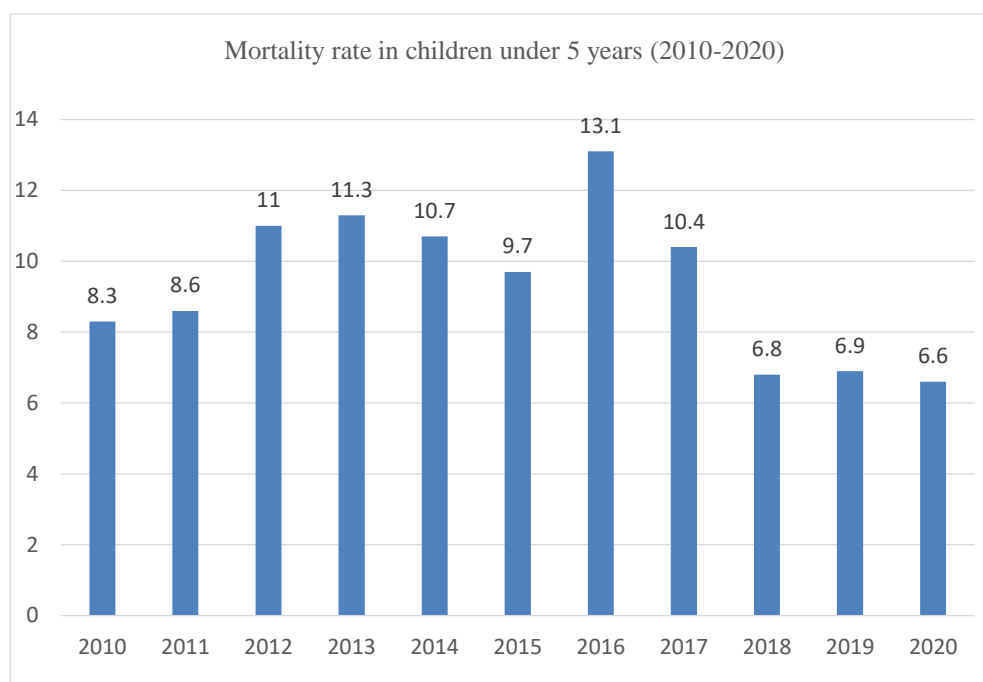


77. In the last decade, the infant mortality rate had an oscillating trend with a downward trend. In 2020, the infant mortality rate continued to have a stable downward trend and was 5.7 per 1000 live births (Chart 6). The total number of dead infants is 108 (112 in 2019, in 2018 it was 122 infants).

Graph. Infant mortality rate per 1000 live births 2009–2020



78. The mortality rate of children under 5 years in 2020 was 6.6 %. There was a downward trend in the last 10 years.

Graph. Mortality rate in children under 5 years (2010–2020) (‰)

79. A strategic priority for the next years is to strengthen the health system and to fast-track progress towards improving maternal and new-born health outcomes and to accelerate the path towards achieving ambitious targets of SDG. In 2020, the Perinatal Care Master Plan was prepared.¹⁶

80. In the previous period, a number of activities from the Master plan were implemented, such as: development and adoption of clinical guidelines; early detection of risk conditions in pregnancy, development of an Action Plan for urgent obstetric care, development of methodology and initiation of perinatal mortality audit.

81. Within the annual program of the MH for active care for mothers and children, an exemption of co-payments for pregnant women for health services related to pregnancy monitoring, including free childbirth for all pregnant women regardless of their insurance status was introduced, as well as supply of free folic acid for pregnant women, neonatal screening (for hypothyroidism, cystic fibrosis, metabolic disorders).

Reply to paragraph 8 (b) of the list of issues

82. Each year, the Government adopts a Program for participation in the use of health protection of certain diseases of citizens and health protection of mothers and infants.

83. With this program, funds are provided for participation in the use of health care: to mothers and infants until 1-year old age, persons who are health insured, progressive systemic sclerosis, cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, cystic fibrosis, epilepsy, pemphigus and lupus erythematosus, dyslexia, dysgraphia and dyslalia, aphonia, infectious diseases, examinations during pregnancy, health services for pregnant women related to pregnancy, at all levels of health care.

84. It also includes funds for participation for treatment of patients with malignant diseases with surgical treatment, radiation, application of chemotherapy (cytostatic), diagnostic procedures related to the disease and all control examinations related to the

¹⁶ It provides consolidated set of analysis of existing organization of perinatal care system across the full spectrum of service delivery and prospective recommendations on improving maternal and neonatal health outcomes through establishment of risk-appropriate care, rationalization, and optimization of maternal and new-born service provision with strong quality assurance system and respective health information support.

primary malignant disease, for providing insulin, for dialysis, and for providing growth hormone.

85. Program for compulsory health insurance for citizens who are not insured, provides funds for payment of the contribution for compulsory health insurance to citizens who do not have any basis of health insurance. These persons are provided regularly paid contribution and thus uninterrupted use of health services or health care.

Reply to paragraph 8 (c) of the list of issues

86. Mandatory immunization in 2020 was implemented with coverage for primo vaccination and revaccination below the recommended 95%, and for all vaccines it was below 90% nationally.

87. In order to increase vaccination coverage among children, and to provide vaccines to children that missed the regular vaccination, within the annual Program for immunization, the MH has introduced Catch-up immunization Calendar for all children aged 5–18. The immunization monitoring software was upgraded with a reminder for the term for regular vaccination for children according to the immunization calendar by sending SMS and e-mails to parents.

88. Personnel from the Vaccination services is continuously checking the vaccination status of children and children that are unvaccinated and incompletely vaccinated are called immediately and vaccinated according to the Immunization Calendar.

89. Within the process of continuous medical education of health professionals trainings are conducted regarding the benefits, significance, efficacy, and safety of vaccines.

Reply to paragraph 8 (d) of the list of issues

90. Comprehensive, child-centred nutrition programme has not been developed as single, comprehensive document. Several documents on meal standards are available as legally mandated rulebooks including Rulebook on norms and standards of work of kindergartens (of 2019, in which nutrition standards are included) and the Rulebook on meals and nutrition standards in primary schools (of 2020).

Reply to paragraph 8 (e) of the list of issues

91. Under the annual programme for active health care of mothers and children the following activities were introduced: free examinations and laboratory examinations during pregnancy, related to pregnancy, free childbirth for pregnant women, for persons without identification document; free examinations for women who have experienced sexual violence; medical abortion; procurement of modern contraceptives (oral contraceptives, IUDs, condoms) for women from socially vulnerable categories and women with repetitive abortions.

92. With respect to improving access to appropriate reproductive health services and education, following activities were implemented:

- (a) Training of health professionals for family planning;
- (b) Training of health workers and social workers for family planning of persons living with disabilities;
- (c) Preparation of Guidelines for safe abortion;
- (d) Preparation of a professional guide for family planning (2021);
- (e) Distribution of informative materials on family planning for patients;
- (f) Field education for family planning in regions where vulnerable groups live, primarily Roma women, social assistance beneficiaries and women from rural areas.

Reply to paragraph 8 (f) of the list of issues

93. Specific programs for treatment and rehabilitation of children who use drugs is prepared but is not yet adopted. Substitution treatment with Buprenorphine of children at age above 16 is provided in health institutions under the annual Programme for treatment of addiction.

Reply to paragraph 10 (a) of the list of issues

94. In accordance with the Law on Primary Education and on the basis of a wide public consultation in March 2021, a new Concept on Primary Education was adopted, the implementation of which will be phased. From this school year, the new concept was introduced in the first and fourth grade; the next school year will cover the second and fifth grade.

95. The new concept recognizes the need for change based on new knowledge for the development of quality education, on global and European trends in education based on competencies and digitalization of education.¹⁷

96. The Concept note relies on inclusiveness, gender sensibility/equality and interculturalism as key principles and it is directly linked to National Standards on Primary Education providing guidelines to be followed by the entire organization and realization of the upbringing and educational process in primary schools.

97. The new curricula for first and fourth grade students in primary education are competence-based in accordance with the National Standards. These include competences arising from the area directly linked with the subject, as well as transversal competencies that need to be included in most curricula (such as *Digital literacy* and *techniques, technology, and entrepreneurship*) or in all curricula (such as *Personal and social development*).

98. All teachers from first and fourth grade received special training (divided in several modules) on the new Concept on primary education as well as on the new curricula.

Reply to paragraph 10 (b) of the list of issues

99. In order to resolve the differences in access to education and inclusion of Roma children at each level of education, the MES undertakes and implements the following measures:

100. Primary education: Since 2018, the MES has been implementing the measure “Roma educational mediators”, previously mentioned in the National Strategy for Roma. Since 2019, this measure has been adopted and defined within the Law for Primary education and since then 35 Roma educational mediators work on the subject of decreasing the dropout rate among Roma pupils and increase of the retention rate in primary education. Few years later, after the mediator’s engagement, the percentage of Roma children have increased for 6.14% and the dropout rate has declined by 3.83%.

101. Secondary education: In 2008, the MES introduced and started awarding scholarships for secondary school Roma children and a year later under the relevant law, secondary education was introduced as obligatory. The scholarship awarding for Roma was introduced as a measure under the National Strategy for Roma and later on it was defined and regulated by becoming a public policy with the amendments to the Law for Student Standard in August 2016. Since then, the numbers of awarded scholarships have increased as the general number of Roma children attending secondary education has increased from 67 to 92%.

¹⁷ It offers changes in several areas related to the integration of teaching and subjects, the selection of subjects of interest to student, learning through research and projects, reducing the excess of factual data in teaching materials, adapting the teaching to the needs of all students, the use of various teaching materials, the active participation of students in school life, etc.

Reply to paragraph 10 (d) of the list of issues

102. The New Concept on Primary Education has a special Provision of interculturality. Introduction of intercultural education is necessary to go beyond the passive coexistence between different ethnical and religious communities living in the country and to find a sustainable manner for joint living in our multicultural/multi-ethnic society. In order to achieve this goal, primary education includes activities and contents that promote respect for, cultural diversity and interaction among students belonging to different ethnic communities and whose teaching is implemented in the same or in different languages.

103. In September 2021, Guidelines for organizing joint teaching activities of students attending classes in different languages of instruction were adopted. The guide is primarily designed to encourage schools to implement joint classes and easier planning, organizing, and conducting, monitoring, support, but also to strengthen the processes of communication and mutual cooperation.

Reply to paragraph 11 (a) of the list of issues

104. As provided for under Article 159 of the Law on Foreigners, unaccompanied children and families with children are placed and detained in the Reception Centre for Foreigners in exceptional and extreme cases only and for the shortest possible time. In keeping with positive legislation, unaccompanied children are always accommodated by them previously having been appointed a guardian by the SWC of the City of Skopje.

105. Upon the assessment of the guardian, an unaccompanied foreign child may be placed in children's or small group homes.

Reply to paragraph 11 (b) of the list of issues

106. The Roma community achieves its education at all levels smoothly under equal conditions as all other communities.

107. According to the Concept for nine-year primary education, they learn their native language through the elective subject "Roma Language and Culture", from the third to the ninth grade. Roma pupils have the right to elective classes in their native language established by law, as well as the possibility to attend classes in the Albanian language.

108. The elective subject "Roma Language and Culture" is taught in five municipalities in the country (Suto Orizari, Cair, Stip, Kumanovo and Kicevo) in over 12 primary schools and these classes are attended by over 2,700 Roma students.

Reply to paragraph 12 (a) of the list of issues

109. In keeping with Article 90 of the Law on Justice for Children, ensuring defence of the child is mandatory at all stages of court proceedings. Defence lawyers are appointed by the court on an *ex officio* basis if the children themselves or their legal representatives fail to provide one. Should children or their parents/guardians be unable to pay the lawyer's fees, they are paid for by the court from the court budget. This is also the case when the total monthly income of parents/guardians is lower than the average net monthly salary in the country and is done by submitting a receipt for their total monthly income issued by a competent authority/organization no later than five working days from the date of receiving notice of such documentation being required. As set out under paragraph 3, under a decision of a judge for children, a child may be assigned a lawyer on an *ex officio* basis in misdemeanour procedures too. In keeping with Article 92, a child may be interviewed in the presence of a lawyer only.

110. In 2020, from the Budget of the MoJ, MKD 319,600.00 were paid, for free legal aid to children in accordance with the Law on Free Legal Assistance.

111. According to data from the Judicial Council, in 2021, 14 cases for provision of legal assistance to children were processed and MKD 336,386 were paid from the Budget.

112. Article 191 (paragraph 3) stipulates that the children’s court judge, the prosecutor, the lawyer, and the authorized officials of the MoI shall, for at least five days in the course of the year, attend a special training for child justice in the country or abroad.

113. Pursuant to Article 145 (paragraph 4 and 5), in police and criminal proceedings, the child victim of a crime has the right to:

- Legal assistance from a lawyer before making a statement;
- Compensation of pecuniary and non-pecuniary damage in accordance with the program referred to in Article 151 of the Law under the conditions and in the manner prescribed by Article 152 of the Law, if the compensation of damage cannot be provided by the convicted person; and
- Attorney-at-law when giving the first statement, as well as throughout the entire proceedings.

114. Legal assistance to a child victim is usually provided by a lawyer who has attended specialized training on children’s rights (lasting 5 days in the country or abroad).

115. The Law on Justice for Children (OG No. 148/2013) stipulates, that, in cases when the child for whom there are grounds for suspicion that has committed an act defined by law as a crime is summoned for an interview at a police station, the expenses for the lawyer shall be covered under the State Budget, in assistance, only in case the parents/guardians are not able to pay the fees.

116. In the 2020/2021 period, it was also proposed that, in cases when the parents are not able to reimburse the costs for a lawyer when the child is called for an interview at a police station, they should be at the expense of the institution that called the lawyer (MoI, MLSP, or PPO).

Reply to paragraph 12 (b) of the list of issues

117. In the period from January 2020 to July 2021, the Academy for Judges and Public Prosecutors organized trainings focusing on juvenile justice:

- Child friendly justice and children’s rights – online course (18 February 2021, organized in cooperation with the CoE – HELP program);
- Child abuse and rights violations – online training (22–26 March 2021, organized in cooperation with ICITAP);
- Rights of child victims of crimes with emphasis on measures for procedural protection of child victims – online training (9 April 2021);
- Refugee and migrant children – regional online event (25 May 2021, organized by the CoE Office in Sarajevo).

118. In 2018, under the project “Police treatment of victims of crime”, cascade trainings were delivered for 3,000 police officers from the uniformed and criminal police for dealing with victims of crime, with special emphasis on child victims, victims of domestic violence and trafficking in human beings, as well as victims of sexual offenses. Manuals for police officers were printed by the OSCE Mission.

119. In 2019, the French Embassy organized a training on “Treatment of abused minors”, while the US Embassy conducted a training on “Human trafficking and child exploitation”.

120. In 2020, two trainings were organized by the ICITAP on “Prevention of child exploitation and violation of rights” and “Investigations conducted pursuant to information published on the Internet related to cases of sexual abuse of children”.

Reply to paragraph 12 (c) of the list of issues

121. At the juvenile Ohrid Prison, a specialist doctor coordinates sedative therapy. In order to check the manner of its use by children who have been sentenced to child imprisonment or a certain educational measure – referral to an educational-correctional facility, on 30

October 2019, the Directorate for the Execution of Sanctions conducted an unannounced expert inspection of this facility.

122. It was concluded that the distribution of therapy is administered depending on the determined health condition during the performed specialist exams and exams conducted by the doctor in the facility. The only recorded deviation is in the distribution of medications that are dangerous if used in overdose context (psychopharmacotherapy – sedatives, neuroleptics, hypnotics, and other medications), which should be taken under the supervision of medical staff and each dose individually; due to inconsistent presence of the doctor, it was received under the supervision of a prison police officer.¹⁸

123. Sedative therapy for children who serve the referral measure in the Tetovo Educational and Correctional Facility, is prescribed by a specialist doctor/neuropsychiatrist from the Tetovo Clinical Hospital, and it is administered by a medical officer/nurse, employed in the Tetovo Health Centre, being present every day.

Use of force and solitary confinement

124. Pursuant to Article 366, paragraph 1, of the Law on the Execution of Sanctions, in case of children, it is prohibited to apply a special measure for maintaining order and discipline – solitary confinement. According to paragraph 2, for serious violations of the order and discipline, as well as house rules, children may be separated into separate rooms for children, lasting 5 to 7 days, during which period the professional team undertakes special corrective activities.

125. According to the legal provisions, in the Ohrid Prison, male children serve their prison sentences. For serious disciplinary offenses, a measure is imposed: Referral to a separate room lasting 5 to 7 days. The number of this measure in the past three years was: 23 punishments imposed in 2019, 15 in 2020 and 9 in 2021 as of 22 September 2021, of which 4 for physical attack on an officer or another convicted person, 4 for non-fulfilment of an order by an officer and one for disturbing the order and repetition of inflicting minor injuries.

126. After the relocation of the children from the Ohrid Prison in 2020, to the newly built educational-correctional facility in the village of Volkovija, municipality of Brvenica, no use of excessive force on children, serving the educational measure of Referral to educational-correctional facility, has been recorded or ascertained.

127. In the period from 1 January to 21 September 2021, in the Tetovo Educational and Correctional Facility, a total of 16 disciplinary measures were imposed: Referral to a separate room for 5 to 7 days. 13 disciplinary measures were taken: 2 for causing greater material damage intentionally or through extreme negligence; 2 for non-fulfilment of an order by an officer; 4 for physical assault on a child; 1 for abuse of granted benefits; 1 for import/manufacture of alcoholic beverages and narcotics, their enjoyment or distribution; 1 for having failed to return from a granted leave; 1 for self-harm; 1 for attempted escape.

Reply to paragraph 12 (d) of the list of issues

128. Six juveniles completed primary education level 1 in the prison in Ohrid. With the transfer from the Prison in Ohrid to the educational-correctional Home in Volkovija, classes started in cooperation with the primary school “Goce Delchev” in the municipality of Brvenica, i.e., 5 juveniles and 7 new juveniles continued with 2 levels, after determining the level of their previous education.

129. According to the new Law on Primary Education, a Rulebook on the manner of selecting a primary school, the closer criteria, and the manner of organizing teaching in health

¹⁸ During the additional unannounced inspection by a professional specialist in psychiatry, in accordance with Article 133, paragraph 3, of the Law on the Execution of Sanctions (OG No. 99/2019), the governor was given the following recommendations: distribution of medications should be carried out in accordance with the Guidelines on access to a doctor by convicted persons in prisons, distribution of medications, medical examination outside the prison (Archive No. 02-63/5, dated 26 February 2013), while the list for distribution of therapy should contain a precise time interval of admission in accordance with the determined method of dosing of prescribed therapy.

care institutions, penitentiary, and educational-correctional institutions, as well as in home conditions was adopted in 2020, while it was published on the website of the MES.

Reply to paragraph 13 (a) of the list of issues

130. In accordance with the Law on Justice for Children, concerning children at risk up to and above 14 years of age, measures of assistance and protection are applied, in the best interest for the child and his/her upbringing and development, i.e., measures determined by law in the areas of education, health, social, family, and other forms of protection.

131. In 2018, the MoI and the MLSP signed a Memorandum of Understanding. Mobile teams were set up to identify vulnerable categories, including victims of trafficking.¹⁹

132. The Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and Illegal Migration prepared the National Strategy and the National Action Plan for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and Illegal Migration for 2021–2025. The Strategy reflects the current situation in this area and also offers a vision for continuous improvement of coordination activities, improvement of the legislative framework, increased implementation, and preventive action.

133. In 2021, within the framework of the EU Horizontal Facility and the Council of Europe for the Western Balkans and Turkey “Prevention and fight against human trafficking”, the following activities were implemented:

- Seminar on the needs of child victims of trafficking (their resocialization and reintegration);
- Workshop on gender mainstreaming in the context of trafficking in human beings; and
- Thematic discussion on proactive identification and referral of child victims of trafficking.

134. At the Centre for Victims of Human Trafficking, in 2021, 2 children were admitted and accommodated, of which one was a potential victim of human trafficking for sexual exploitation, and one was a potential victim of forced marriage. The average length of stay is from a week to 10 months, with provided clothing, food, hygiene items, psychosocial counselling, medical examinations. In 2021, 3 persons infected with COVID 19, were provided with the necessary treatment, by medical personnel for providing care, and were also administered the necessary therapy prescribed by family doctors. Upon leaving, the victims were relocated in appropriate locations following an assessment by the competent SWC.

Reply to paragraph 15 (a) of the list of issues

135. In 2019, a new Law on Social Protection was adopted, with a reformed system introduced. Guaranteed minimum assistance was introduced for persons/households who are financially insecure, the base of which has been increased to MKD 4,000, compared to the right to social financial assistance of MKD 2,871. Existing long-term beneficiaries of social financial assistance, who receive a reduced amount of 50% of the base, will receive the full amount of guaranteed minimum assistance.

136. According to a new method of professional work through “case management”, professionals at the SWC will plan to work with beneficiaries to overcome social risks and inclusion in society, by acquiring and improving working skills/knowledge, according to their capabilities and needs on the labour market.

¹⁹ Their activity in 2020 and in 2021 due to the crisis situation with Covid - 19 was reduced to cases when social workers/representatives of the National Unit for Suppression of Migrant Smuggling and Human Trafficking in identifying potential victims of human trafficking, needed NGO representatives, who volunteered according to their work program.

137. For the first time, beneficiaries of the guaranteed minimum assistance will receive child allowance and allowance for primary and secondary education for their children.

138. In 2019, the Law Amending the Law on Child Protection was adopted in order to reform the rights to child protection aimed at increasing access to rights, and especially at:

- Increasing access to the right to child allowance for children from low-income households/families and recipients of guaranteed minimum assistance, by determining the amount of entitlement depending on the age of the children (school age in the amount of MKD 1,000 for one child, and for two and more MKD 1,600 denars; preschool age in the amount of MKD 1,200 denars, and for two and more children MKD 1,900, for children of preschool and school age in the same family MKD 1,600);
- Introduction of a new right – education allowance for school-age children (primary and secondary education) from low-income families and for children of beneficiaries of guaranteed minimum assistance (provided they are full-time pupils), in the amount of MKD 700 for pupils in primary education and MKD 1,000 for secondary education pupils;
- Exercising the right to parental allowance for a third child depending on the financial situation, primarily for mothers from low-income households. According to the provisions of the current Law on Child Protection, the right to parental allowance for a third child will be exercised in a period of 10 months after the entry into force of the amendments;
- Exercising the right to one-time financial assistance for a new-born is also proposed for a second child with a progressive increase of the amount (in the amount of MKD 20,000);
- Participation in costs for care and education of children of single parents beneficiaries of guaranteed minimum income, who place their children for care in public institutions for children – kindergartens; and
- Facilitation of the administrative procedure for acquiring rights for protection of children.

139. The new Law on Primary Education that began to be implemented from the 2019/2020 school year, provides a basis for inclusive and quality education for all.

140. In order to improve access to education for children who were not included in the teaching process, the following documents were adopted, which have been in force since 2020:

- Concept on Inclusive Education;
- Instruments for the examination of the knowledge of the children who were not included in the teaching process and are above the age limit for enrolment in the respective grade in primary education;
- Rulebook on the manner of enrolment of children who were not included in the teaching process and are above the age limit for enrolment;
- Adjusted curricula;
- Rulebook on the format and content of the templates for recognition, i.e., equivalence of diplomas and exemption from payments of costs in the recognition procedure;
- Program for tutors for primary school pupils;
- Rulebook on the format and content of the certificate issued after the examination of the knowledge of the children who were not included in the teaching process and are above the age limit for enrolment in the respective grade in primary education.

141. A new draft Law on Justice for Children is drafted. Its purpose is: defining the principle of the best interest of the child and upgrading the legal framework for child justice; transposition of EU directives on the procedural protection of children suspected or accused under criminal proceedings and on setting minimum standards for the rights, support and protection of victims of crime; harmonization of the system of legal assistance for children,

strengthening the protection of child victims and witnesses in criminal proceedings; introduction of procedural provisions on the course of the court proceedings against a child and the main hearing; strengthening mechanisms for prevention of juvenile delinquency at local and central level, as well as institutional, material and functional strengthening of the NCPJD.

142. As part of the activities for harmonization of the criminal legislation with the Istanbul Convention, amendments to the Criminal Code were prepared in order to prevent girls become victims of violence.

Reply to paragraph 15 (c) of the list of issues

143. A National Action Plan for Combating Child Trafficking 2021–2025 was adopted, according to which in June 2021, the Subgroup on Combating Child Trafficking coordinated the process of preparation of the Operational Plan for Combating Child Trafficking 2021–2022 and submitted it to the National Commission for Combating Human Trafficking and Illegal Migration. In the operational plan, the activities are aimed at capacity building of institutions, as well as raising public awareness.

Reply to paragraph 15 (d) of the list of issues

144. The Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) was ratified.

Reply to paragraph 16 of the list of issues

145. Pursuant to the Law on Justice for Children (Article 151), the Budget of the MoJ through the Program for compensation of a child who is a victim or damaged by an action defined by law as a crime of violence – provides funds.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Amount in denars</i>
2018	500 000.00
2019	1 000 000.00
2020	1 000 000.00

146. Pursuant to Article 152, for compensation of a child, the MoJ paid:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Amount in denars</i>
2018	651 010.00
2019	4 321 894.00
2020	1 119 600.00

147. Pursuant to Article 157, the MoJ approved and disbursed the following funds:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Amount in denars</i>
2018	2 400 000.00
2019	2 400 000.00
2020	2 400 000.00

Reply to paragraph 17 (a) of the list of issues**Data from the Public Institution Social Affairs Institute, on child victims of neglect, abuse, and violence, including victims of sexual abuse**

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Male	125	118	136	189	115	89
Female	245	234	123	185	126	109
Total	370	352	259	374	241	198

Overview of child victims of child trafficking and sexual exploitation of children

	2018		2019		2020	
	Children	Adults	Children	Adults	Children	Adults
Domestic	5	3	3	/	6	1
Foreign	1	/	1	2	/	/
Total	6	3	4	2	6	1
Total number of victims	9		6		7	
Potential victims	124		124		6	

148. In 2018, under Article 193 a, there was 1 indicted and 1 person sentenced to 3 to 5 years in prison, while in 2019 there was 1 indicted person and 1 person sentenced to 6 months to 1 year in prison.

149. In 2019, under Article 418 d, there were 4 indicted persons, 3 persons sentenced to 10 to 15 years in prison and one ancillary order- expulsion of a foreign national from the country. In 2020, there were 6 indicted persons, 4 persons sentenced to 5 to 10 years in prison and 2 persons sentenced to 3 to 5 years in prison.

Reply to paragraph 17 (c) of the list of issues

150. Data about children living in poverty can be found on the EUROSTAT website, i.e. on the following link: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/income-and-living-conditions/data/database>.

Reply to paragraphs 17 (f) and (g) of the list of issues**Data on children who are begging and children in street situations**

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Total	187	176	59	55	249	224	147

Reply to paragraph 18 (b) of the list of issues

151. The process of transforming the 11 Oktomvri Orphanage was completed in 2020. Children were moved to 4 rented residential units (housing 4 to 5 children) at various locations in the capital. The transformation of the Bitola Orphanage for infants and children was completed in 2020, with the opening of 5 rented residential units (housing 5 to 7 children). The process of transformation of the Public Institution for Care of Children having educational-social problems and problematic conduct started in July 2018, by forming 5 units (housing 5 to 7 children), while in October 2019 another 2 units were opened for children with problematic conduct (6 children placed in these units in total).

Reply to paragraph 18 (c) of the list of issues

Children placed in foster families

		2018	2019	2020	2021
Total		302	317	332	353
Gender	Female	146	143	159	180
	Male	156	174	173	173
Age	Up to 6 years of age	75	77	101	104
	At the age from 7 to 10 years	82	84	82	88
	At the age from 11 to 14 years	85	89	82	86
	At the age from 15 to 18 years	60	67	67	68
	Older than 18 years of age	/	/	/	7
Health situation	Healthy	264	278	291	232
	Children with disabilities	38	39	41	91
Nationality	Macedonian	135	138	145	133
	Albanian	13	14	16	18
	Turkish	3	6	10	5
	Roma	143	151	152	135
	Other	8	8	9	62

Children in kinship care (Public Institution Social Affairs Institute)

		2020	2021
Total		104	78
Gender	Female	57	35
	Male	47	43
Age	Up to 6 years of age	9	8
	At the age from 7 to 10 years	29	22
	At the age from 11 to 14 years	30	19
	At the age from 15 to 18 years	36	28
	Older than 18 years of age		1
Health situation	Healthy	98	62
	Children with disabilities	6	6
Nationality	Macedonian	51	39
	Albanian	24	5
	Turkish	1	11
	Roma	27	22
	Other	1	1

152. Kinship care as a form of foster care was established under the 2019 Law on Social Protection.

Reply to paragraph 19 (c) of the list of issues

2021/2022 school year

153. Total number of students with disabilities enrolled in regular schools: 1,800 of whom 274 with autism, 827 with intellectual disability, 67 with visual impairment, 74 with hearing

impairment, 5 with speech impairments, 66 with mobility impairments, 487 with multiple impairments.

Reply to paragraph 19 (d) of the list of issues

154. Nationwide, 653 students attend classes in special schools and special classes. Of these, 381 attend special schools (6 schools in total), and 272 attend special classes, within 23 regular primary schools. Data on special primary schools, classes, students, and teachers segregated according to working hours, gender, and school year can be found at the following link:

http://makstat.stat.gov.mk/PXWeb/pxweb/mk/MakStat/MakStat__ObrazovanieNauka__Os_novnoObrazovanie__PocetokUcebna/650_osnucil_mk_pocT20_ml.px/?rxid=8a5252c9-c306-47cd-990e-0881b9021d31.

155. The overview of students having completed special primary schools, desegregated according to the language of instruction can be found at the following link:

http://makstat.stat.gov.mk/PXWeb/pxweb/mk/MakStat/MakStat__ObrazovanieNauka__Os_novnoObrazovanie__KrajUcebna/650_osnucil_mk_krajT23_ml.px/?rxid=8b36cfd1-2064-4703-acbe-68bd63b3eede.

156. Data on students enrolled in special secondary schools desegregated according to school year, age and gender can be found at the following link:

http://makstat.stat.gov.mk/PXWeb/pxweb/mk/MakStat/MakStat__ObrazovanieNauka__SrednoObrazovanie__PocetokUcebna/625_sreducil_rsm_poc_t19_ml.px/?rxid=d5e7649c-8b51-4163-a64c-1d5451f321d.

Reply to paragraph 19 (e) of the list of issues

157. Total number of students with disabilities enrolled in vocational education: 263

158. The overview of students having completed special secondary schools, according to vocation, year of completion, gender, and school year can be found at the following link:

http://makstat.stat.gov.mk/PXWeb/pxweb/mk/MakStat/MakStat__ObrazovanieNauka__SrednoObrazovanie__KrajUcebna/475_sredniucilista_rsm_t16_ml.px/?rxid=674f4d0d-eeeb-4931-a391-b9e426d79274.

Reply to paragraph 20 of the list of issues

159. Annual Reports of the NCPJD are published on the Council's website: <http://dspdp.com.mk>.

160. As of 2014, the Council has been applying 32 indicators to monitor the implementation of the Law on Justice for Children and to follow the situation with juvenile delinquency. Data collected from 78 institutions gathered under the justice for children system are published as annual reports.

161. Data gathered under specific indicators are processed in a quantitative–qualitative analysis, which contains 29 tables and 15 graphs. Data are compared per unit of 100,000 child population in the country, this being the universal international unit for purposes of comparison with other countries.

Indicator 2: Children – victims of crimes

162. This Indicator helps measure the number of children – victims of crimes based on records of justice for children system institutions (SCW, MoI, courts, and the PPO).

163. In 2019, the PPO identified 403 children – victims of crimes, i.e., 98.25 victims per 100,000 children. In 2018, this number was 401 victims, being thus by 60% higher than the number of victims in 2017, when their number was 250. 60% were male and 40% were female in total, which is the same ratio as in 2018.

164. In 2019, courts with expanded jurisdiction recorded 84 victims of crimes, or 20.5 victims per 100,000 children of whom 86% were male and 14% were female.

165. In 2018, there were 295 children –victims of crimes, i.e., 71 children- victims per 100,000 children.

Indicator 3: Children in conflict with the law

166. This Indicator helps measure the number of children who have been summoned to a police station out of the total children population for purposes of providing information, and for whom there are reasonable grounds for suspicion that they have committed activities, which amount to crimes, according to law.

Reply to paragraph 20 (a) of the list of issues

Number of children summoned for police interview

<i>Year</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
2018	1 076	188	1 264
2019	1 126	241	1 367
2020	745	130	875

167. In 2018, out of the total number of children summoned, 952 children were reported, i.e., 230 per 100,000 children. In 2017, there were 293 reported per 100,000 children. In 2019, out of the total number of children summoned, 1,039 were reported, i.e., 253 children per 100,000 children.

Indicator 6: Children in police custody

168. This Indicator helps measure the percentage of children held at police stations, vis-à-vis the total number of summoned children.

Reply to paragraph 20 (b) of the list of issues

Total number of children in police custody

<i>Year</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
2018	90	8	98
2019	55	1	56
2020	56	6	62

169. In 2018, there were 10% more children in police custody compared to their number in 2017, when there were 89 children in police custody, which on its part is by 38% lower than the number of children in police custody in 2016, when their number was 158. In 2019, 56 or 4% of summoned children were kept in police custody. As regards their gender, 98% of children held in police custody were male and 2% were female.

Indicator 20: Children in pre-trial detention

170. This Indicator helps measure the number of children who have been ordered to be placed in pre-trial detention. The number of children subject to the measure of pre-trial detention was reduced as follows: from 6 children in 2018 to 4 children in 2019, i.e., drop from 1.45 to 0.98 children in pre-trial detention per 100,000 children.

Indicator 1: Prison sentence

171. This Indicator helps measure the number of children who have been ordered to serve a prison sentence. In 2019, 3 children (all male) were sentenced to prison, in 2018, 4 children were sentenced to prison and in 2017, 1 child was ordered to serve a prison sentence.

Application of restorative justice- deterrence measures

Indicator 7: Children at risk – beneficiaries of assistance and protection measures provided by SWC

172. This Indicator helps measure the percentage of children at risk, who have received services at SWC, i.e., who have been provided with assistance and protection, compared with the total number of children at risk referred to SWC. Data have been collected from all 30 SWC.

173. In 2019, out of 2,035 children at risk in total, according to official records of SWC 1,648 were beneficiaries of assistance and protection measures, which represents 81% of children at risk (80% of whom male and 20% female).

174. Compared with previous years, the percentage of children at risk- beneficiaries of assistance and protection measures in 2019 was by 30% higher than their percentage in 2018 (53%) and was equal to their percentage in 2017 (83%). In 2019, a total number of 6,291 measures were implemented for a total number of 2,035 children at risk, or 3.09 measures per child, which is a reduction compared with 2018 and 2017, when 3.82 or 3.38 measures per child were implemented, respectively.

Indicator 10: Children at risk involved in mediation procedures at SWC

175. This Indicator helps measure the percentage of children at risk for whom SWC have instituted mediation procedures vis-à-vis the total number of children at risk referred to SWC.

176. In 2019, there were mediation procedures involving 34 children, or 2% of the total number of children at risk (i.e., 2,035 children), which were successful for 91% of children involved in such procedures.

177. In 2018, there were mediation procedures for 3% of children at risk, which were successful for 83% of children involved in such procedures. In 2017, such procedures were applied for 5% of children at risk, being successful for 82% of children involved in such procedures.

Indicator 12: Applying mediation

178. This Indicator measures the number of children who have been referred to mediation procedures.

179. In 2019, a total number of 4 children were referred to mediation, while in 2018 and in 2017 no children were referred to mediation. In 2019, the PPO referred 11 children to mediation (successfully settled cases for 7), while in 2018, 3 children were referred for mediation (successfully settled case for 1) and in 2017, no children were referred to mediation.

Indicator 14: Application of deterrence measures

180. This Indicator helps measure the number of all children for whom the PPO has applied deterrence measures, in out-of-court proceedings. In 2019, such measures were applied for 52 children, of whom 47 male and 5 female, while in 2018, such measures were applied for 83 children, and in 2017, for 39 children.

Indicator 15: Application of the procedure for admission of responsibility and bargaining about the duration of the sentence

181. This Indicator helps measure the number of children for whom the PPO applied the procedure for admission of responsibility and for bargaining about the duration of the sentence, applying thus an intervention/diversion measure in court proceedings.

182. In 2019, this procedure was applied for 1 child (male), while in 2018 and in 2017, this procedure was not applied.

Indicator 13: Children for whom execution of sanctions has been proposed

183. This Indicator helps measure the number of children for whom the PPO has submitted a motion for execution of sanctions of the indicted.

184. In 2019, such proposals were submitted for 466 children, which makes for 43% of the total number of 1,078 children versus whom criminal charges were filed with the PPO. In 2018, this percentage was 35%, and in 2017, it was 46%.

Indicator 16: Children subject of a disciplinary measure

185. This Indicator helps measure the number of children who have been ordered disciplinary measures.

186. Out of the total number of 466 children for whom the PPO filed a motion for execution of sanctions, disciplinary measures were ordered for 127 children, i.e., 27% of the children, of whom 115 were male and 12 were female.

187. The measure of reprimand was issued for 125 children, while for 2 children the measure of referral to children's centres was ordered.

188. In 2018, disciplinary measures were ordered for 22% of the children, while in 2017 such measures were ordered for 18% of the children for whom there was a motion for execution of sanctions.

Indicator 17: Children subject of the measure of enhanced supervision

189. This Indicator helps measure the number of children for whom the measure of enhanced supervision has been ordered.

190. The measure of enhanced supervision was ordered for a total number of 330 children, which makes 71% of the children for whom the PPO filed a motion for execution of sanctions.

191. The measure of enhanced supervision by a parent /guardian was ordered for 175 children, then 154 children were subject of the measure of enhanced supervision by a SWC, while 1 child was ordered enhanced supervision by the foster family.

192. Out of the total number of children subject to these measures, 318 children (96%) were male, and 12 (4%) were female.

Indicator 18: Children subject of the measure of referral to a juvenile educational-correctional facility

193. This Indicator helps measure the number of children who have been ordered to stay at a juvenile educational-correctional facility. The number of children subject of this measure was reduced from 12 in 2018 to 4 children in 2019.

Indicator 22: Application of alternative measures

194. This Indicator measures the number of children for whom alternative measures have been ordered.

195. In 2019, alternative measures of suspended sentence, accompanied with protective supervision were ordered for 4 children, while the measures of suspended stay of proceedings and community work were not ordered.

196. In 2018, alternative measures were ordered for 8 children, while in 2017 no such measures were ordered.

Indicator 11: Assistance to children provided by SWC

197. This Indicator helps measure the number of children for whom the measure of referral to juvenile educational – correctional facility has been suspended and the number of children whose prison sentence has been stayed and who having left such facilities have received structured assistance and care provided by SWC, which in this context apply various assistance and protection measures.

198. In 2019, the measure of referral to a juvenile educational – correctional facility/prison sentence was suspended for 15 children. SWC provided care for 15 children.

199. In 2018, the measure of referral to a juvenile education – correctional facility/ prison sentence was suspended for 16 children. SWC provided care for 17 children. In 2017, 6

children completed their measure of referral to a juvenile educational- correctional facility / prison sentence, while SWC provided care for 12 children.

Reply to paragraph 20 (c) of the list of issues

Children under re-referral programs based on written notification by the MoI to SWC

200. Number of written notifications filed by the MoI to SWC

<i>Year</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
2018	708	173	881
2019	721	164	885
2020	433	111	544
