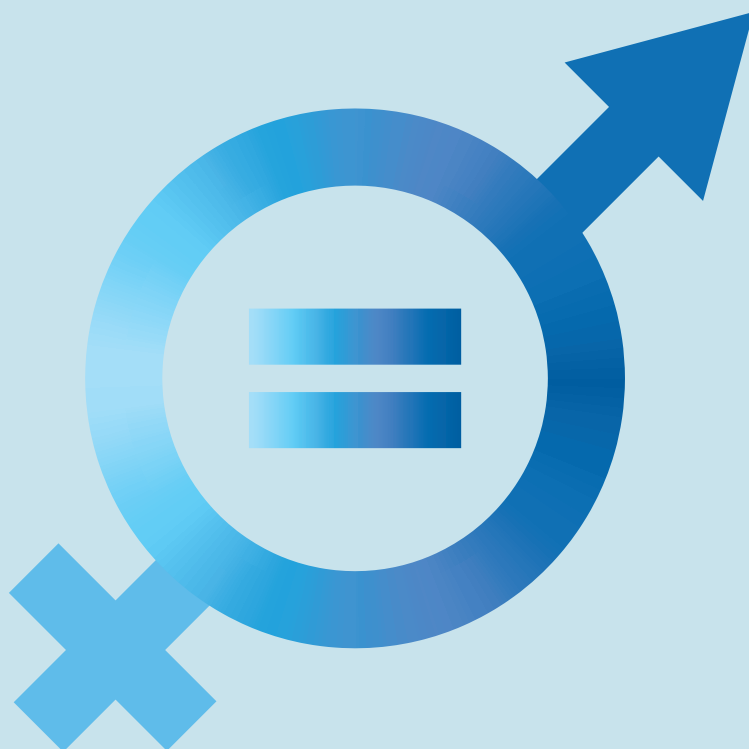


# GENDER EQUALITY IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA AND THE 2030 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

An Analysis of the Correlation between the Different National Strategic Documents on Gender Equality in Meeting the Sustainable Development Goals



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### List of Abbreviations

SDA – 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda  
NAP- 2013-2016 Gender Equality National Action Plan  
GBV – Gender-based Violence  
GES – 2013-2020 Gender Equality Strategy  
SRH – Sexual and Reproductive Health  
SDGs – Sustainable Development Goals

UNO – United Nations Organizations  
PHI – Public Health Institute  
IHMC – Institute for the Healthcare of Mothers and Children  
MLSP – Ministry of Labour and Social Policy  
Mol – Ministry of the Interior  
SSO – State Statistical Office  
ULSG – Units of Local Self-government

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# Summary

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Gender equality is an issue which is being attached a great deal of importance in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda (SDA). The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) treats gender issues in a sensitive manner while raising expectations that gender equality will be considered a priority within the new global sustainable development policy of countries. Within its national context, the Republic of Macedonia has been taking a strategic approach to ensuring gender equality by undertaking a series of significant measures to develop policies which are primarily outlined in the 2013-2020 Gender Equality Strategy (GES) and the 2013-2016 National Action Plan (NAP). The objective of this here research is to present an assessment of the correlation between the SDA and gender equality in the Republic of Macedonia by re-examining the approach taken at the national level and conducting an analysis of the national strategic documents, i.e. the GES and the NAP.

The analysis has demonstrated that the national strategic documents are narrowly correlated to the goals concerning gender equality, displaying, however, a limited degree of alignment with both the targets and indicators as outlined under the agenda. With a view to advancing policies and on-going processes relating to the SDA in the context of gender equality, the Republic of Macedonia should in general terms undertake a revision of its national strategic documents concerning this area and improve its data gathering systems which are necessary to monitor and gauge the progress that the country is making in this field.

To implement the gender-equality-related SDA in the Republic of Macedonia and with a view to advancing the status of women and girls and closing down gender gaps, the following four areas have been identified as being key to this analysis: sexual and reproductive health, economic and political empowerment of women and girls, and gender-based violence.

Sexual and reproductive health (SRH) assumes an important place within the SDGs and its significance can directly be recognized as a factor in promoting gender equality. On the other hand, sexual and reproductive health is not adequately incorporated within the GES and the NAP. The absence of SRH as a specific goal within these documents creates difficulties in monitoring and meeting the targets as outlined in the SDA. At the same time, the lack of concrete and comprehensive measures downgrades the importance of SRH in planning to achieve gender equality at the national level. Moreover, disaggregated data is lacking to a certain level within the data-gathering forms that

healthcare institutions provide which, in turn, prevents having a better monitoring over the progress that the country has been making when it comes to SRH and the SDGs.

Economic empowerment of women is one of the priorities incorporated within the SDA and the national strategic documents on gender equality in the Republic of Macedonia are adequately addressing this issue. Nonetheless, the analysis has showcased merely a partial alignment in terms of both the approach taken and the limited contribution of the GES and the NAP within the context of the SDGs on economic empowerment of women and girls.

The analysis over the political participation of women and girls in decision making demonstrates that the goals as set under the Gender Equality Strategy and the NAP by and large correlate to the goals set out under the SDGs, particularly when it comes to ensuring a full and effective participation of women at all levels of decision making. The activities planned under the GES and the NAP to meet the SDGs are relevant and quantifiable via indicators that will demonstrate whether and to what degree has the participation of women in politics increased at both the local and national level. However, the strategy does not put forward research and analyses to point out the degree of citizen participation of either women or men, as well as the way in which citizens could become involved in decision making outside of regular political processes. In addition, the lack of data disaggregated by gender continues to provide a challenge in attempting to monitor the progress that the country has been making with regard to the SDGs, being a challenge which should be addressed in a more comprehensive manner when drafting the new NAP.

The goals as set out under the GES and the NAP in relation to gender-based violence are partially connected to the goals put forward under the SDA. The strategy puts outlines a definition of gender-based violence and perceives it to be grounded upon the inequality between men and women in society while also identifying different shapes of gender-based violence. The analysis points out that the main challenge in pursuing targets and monitoring indicators relating to the SDGs is the lack of implementation of measures and activities to counter all shapes of gender-based violence which is owed to the imprecise definition, non-identification and incrimination of all forms of gender-based violence across all strategic documents and relevant legislation.

# Introduction

The UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda represents a global plan for sustainable development and action which is a follow-up to the Millennium Development Goals and seeks to “eradicate poverty and hunger; to counter inequality in and between countries; to build equitable and inclusive societies; to protect human rights and promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls; and to ensure the long-term protection of the planet and its natural resources”<sup>1</sup> This agenda is based on the three pillars of sustainable development: economic development, social development and development of the environment while it incorporates 16 goals, 169 targets and 231 indicators. To monitor the implementation of the SDA, the UN Statistical Commission developed over a wide-ranging participative process a comprehensive set of indicators to monitor the progress that countries are making in relation to the goals and targets set under the SDGs. The SDA incorporates the principle of “no one being left out,” which in fact implies that the data necessary to monitor the progress and success that countries are having in this regard would be disaggregated on as many as possible grounds including sex, age, disability, income, ethnicity, migrant status and other relevant features which are characteristic to each separate country.

Gender equality is one of the central topics in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. The SDA emphasizes that “achieving gender equality and empowerment of women and girls will make an important contribution to all goals and targets”<sup>2</sup> and insists on systematically including gender perspective within the implementation of the SDGs as a whole. In spite of gender equality being treated as a horizontal issue that needs to be addressed in meeting the goals, the SDGs envisage a separate goal – Goal No. 5, which is specifically aimed at gender equality. This goal strives towards the empowerment of women and girls and meeting their full potential which inevitably implies eliminating all forms of discrimination on the grounds of sex and gender-based violence. In addition, Goal No. 5 seeks to ensure the advancement of sexual and reproductive health among women and girls, recognizing unpaid housework and equal access to resources, as well as equal participation with men in the political, economic and public life.

Taking into consideration that, being a member state of the UN, the Republic of Macedonia has

1 United Nations (2015) Resolution adopted by the General Assembly, Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development available at [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E)

2 United Nations (2015) Resolution adopted by the General Assembly, Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development available at [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1&Lang=E)

assumed the commitment to implement the SDA, the aim of this analysis is to determine the type of connection that exists between the national strategic documents on gender equality and the SDGs, but also the contribution that the country is making in implementing the SDA. Hence, it takes into consideration the 2013-2020 Gender Equality Strategy and the 2013-2016 National Action Plan as the primary national strategic documents in the area of gender equality. In this context, it is important to underline that the Gender Equality Strategy recognizes that “As a member state of the United Nations (UN), in planning its policies, the Republic of Macedonia has assumed an obligation to be guided by the fundamental human rights conventions it has ratified and the Millennium Development Goals, while taking into account the documents adopted at UN conferences aimed at achieving the globally defined social objectives.”<sup>3</sup>

By making an overview of and comparing the national strategic documents on gender equality with the goals and targets under the SDA, this document provides an assessment of the level of their alignment and correlation with the SDA. This, in turn, allows for analyzing the potentials for the GES and the NAP to contribute in meeting the SDGs, while examining the functionality of existing data gathering systems relevant to gender equality and gauging the degree to which the SDGs are being met. Finally, the objective of this analysis is to contribute to identifying challenges and opportunities for successfully implementing the SDA in Macedonia and, hence, put forward guidelines on the way in which the primary strategic documents on gender equality could be advanced with a view to aligning them further with the UN’s priorities.

The analysis is mainly focused on the following four areas which are incorporated in both the SDGs and the GES which can be considered as priorities when it comes to advancing the status of women and girls: healthcare, or more precisely SRH, economic empowerment, political inclusion and gender-based violence. The arguments for selecting these four areas are supported by the statement issued at the Inter-Departmental Advisory and Consulting Group on Equality between Women and Men (September 2015) which supported the proposal of the UN General Assembly to introduce a special goal on gender, i.e. Goal No.5, but also by the pledges made at the national level for “eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls, advancing the economic status of women and improving

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3 Government of the Republic of Macedonia (2013). 2013-2020 Gender Equality Strategy. Available at <http://www.mtsp.gov.mk/dokumenti.nspix>

sexual and reproductive health through the legislation, policies and budgets drafting process, as well as by undertaking actions and measures.”<sup>4</sup> Hence, the document is separated into four specific segments dedicated to the priority areas respectively. Each segment incorporates an analysis of the connection between the GES and the NAP in implementing the SDA, a part reflecting on the data-gathering processes and the accessibility of data relevant to monitor the degree to which the SDGs have been implemented, as well as a part outlining recommendations on the way in which the primary strategic documents on gender equality could be improved in order to increase their contribution towards the SDGs.

## SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Gender equality and the independence of women and girls cannot be achieved without advancing SRH and exercising reproductive rights. As opposed to men, women and girls are more vulnerable in regard to their reproductive health and it can have a negative impact on their general health and well-being. The lack of healthcare services relating to SRH can increase the workload on women in providing care within their families and, hence, it disrupts them in making decisions on whether, when and how many children are they going to have. Therefore, in order for women and girls to have a healthy life and full freedom to participate in social, economic and political life, it is necessary for them to have an all-encompassing access to education, services and products relating to SRH, but also a legal framework that will allow them to exercise their reproductive rights.

Both SDGs Goal No. 3, which relates to health, and Goal No. 5, which concerns gender equality and the empowerment of women, directly recognize the importance of SRH to promoting gender equality. They are also relevant to the issue of gender equality in Macedonia and are a subject of this analysis. There are other goals in the SDGs incorporating elements concerning SRH (Goals No. 4, 6, 8, 10 and 16), but they will not be analyzed in this document owing to their indirect input in gender equality or the irrelevance of some of these goals to what the country needs in terms of SRH. In Goal No. 3, we identify two targets relating to SRH which have an impact on gender equality, i.e. Target 3.1 which concerns the issue of reducing mortality among mothers and Target 3.7 which, on the other hand, relates to the issue of ensuring a universal access to SRH services, including family planning.

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Inter-departmental Advisory and Consultative group on Equality between Women and Men, Gender Equality Platform, H.E.R.A. (2015) Gender Issues, Sexual and Reproductive Health in the 2016-2030 Development Framework, available at [http://hera.org.mk/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/POST\\_2015\\_MK.pdf](http://hera.org.mk/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/POST_2015_MK.pdf)



In addition, there is a direct correlation between SRH and gender equality in Goal No. 5 as can be deduced from Target 5.6 which concerns ensuring universal access to SRH and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Program of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development<sup>5</sup> and the Beijing Platform for Action.<sup>6</sup>

To monitor SRH targets of relevance to promoting gender equality, the UN Statistical Commission<sup>7</sup> recommends the following indicators (Table 1) to gauge the progress that countries are making while upholding the principle of “no-one being left out.”

**TABLE 1:** Sexual and Reproductive Health in the Sustainable Development Goals

Targets	Indicators
<p><b>3.1</b> By 2030, reduce the global maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births</p>	<p><b>3.1.1</b> Mother mortality rate per 100,000 births  <b>3.1.2</b> Percentage of births performed by professional health workers</p>
<p><b>3.7</b> By 2030, ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes</p>	<p><b>3.7.1</b> Percentage of women in their reproductive period (15-49) whose needs for family planning have been answered by modern contraception  <b>3.7.2</b> Adolescent (10-14 and 15-19) birth rate per 100 women belonging to the same age group</p>
<p><b>5.6</b> Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences</p>	<p><b>5.6.1</b> Percentage of women at the age of 15 to 49 making their own informed decisions with regard to sexual intercourse, the use of contraception and their reproductive health  <b>5.6.2</b> Number of laws and regulations that guarantee all women at the age of 15 to 49 access to SRH care, education and information</p>

<sup>5</sup> (1994) Cairo, reproductive rights of individuals recognized for the first time ever and goals set to advance SRH

<sup>6</sup> (1995) Beijing, confirmation of reproductive rights of women and personal freedom in making decisions on sexuality

<sup>7</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Council (2016) Report of the Inter-Agency Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators available at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/47th-session/documents/2016-2-IAEG-SDGSs-Rev1-E.pdf>

## Sexual and Reproductive Health in the 2013-202 Gender Equality Strategy and the 2013-2016 National Action Plan and their Contribution to Sustainable Development Goals

SRH has not been singled out as a special priority in the Gender Equality Strategy. Aspects of SRH are integrated within the Specific Strategic Goal 2.4 - Healthcare<sup>8</sup> through several activities, but they have not been separated as specific results. The larger part of activities which directly concern SRH are only incorporated in Result 29, whereas there is a lack of direct correlation with SRH in Result 1,<sup>10</sup> although it could indirectly lead to improving the data gathering and reporting system in the context of advancing gender equality, but only should the measures planned be implemented.

All indicators listed under Result 1 of the NAP (1) new forms drafted to report on the use of healthcare services, (2) software prepared to monitor diseases, and (3) trainings conducted on the use of the new forms in primary healthcare, could be strongly connected to the SRH indicators as listed in Targets 3.1 and 3.7 and provide an input to the SDGs. However, this necessitates that specific indicators of interest to SRH be incorporated in the next NAP and SRH data to be integrated into the new reporting forms and data- processing software. Additionally, SRH data should be disaggregated on several different grounds (sex, age, disability, income, ethnicity, migrant/refugee status), whereas the trainings on using the new forms should be expanded to health workers in secondary and tertiary healthcare.

On the other hand, several indicators under Result 1 of the NAP are in direct correlation with Targets 3.1 and 3.7, although they could only have an inconsiderable impact on Targets 3.1, 3.7 and 5.6 of the SDGs:

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8 Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (2013) 2013-2016 National Plan on Gender Equality, available at <http://www.mtsp.gov.mk/dokumenti.nsp>

9 Raising the quality and accessibility to healthcare services for men and women

10 Introducing an aligned equal methodology on collecting, monitoring and analyzing data on all types of diseases in men and women, as well as healthcare services used

- (1) 3 informative campaigns have been conducted at an annual level incorporating public debates and promotion with educational material, all with a view to advancing the health of both men and women in the context of morbidity;
- (2) Preventive examinations have been conducted aimed at early detection of malignant diseases;
- (3) 10 educational sessions have been conducted on an annual basis for school children and adolescents, as well as women living in both urban and rural environments;
- (4) A research has been conducted and a report drafted on the knowledge, skills and practice of Roma women to advance their sexual and reproductive health.

Namely, there is an evident lack in the NAP of special informative campaigns or preventive examinations of specific interest to SRH. Moreover, measures for a more wide-ranging promotion, education and protection of sexual and reproductive rights of women are either missing or insufficient in the NAP, while it also lacks researches to be expanded to other vulnerable groups (as opposed only concerning the Roma) and would thus make the contribution of both the strategy and the activities under the national plan relating to SRH indicators as outlined in Targets 3.1, 3.7 and 5.6 of the SDGs to reach a satisfactory level.

Furthermore, one of the indicators under Result 2 (5) Increased number of gynaecologists in primary healthcare to achieve greater accessibility to healthcare services, could significantly contribute to Targets 3.1, 3.7 and 5.6 of the SDGs, but the action plans lack concrete measures and activities that would in a more specific way allow for the desired number of gynaecologists to be ensured as the norms set require<sup>11</sup>. In addition, the measures only relate to institutions in primary healthcare and not to secondary and tertiary healthcare, hence limiting the contribution of the strategy and action plans to Targets 3.1 and 3.7 of the SDGs.

The lack of SRH as a separate and specific result both in the GES and the NAP creates difficulties in monitoring the contribution that the country is making to the targets set under the SDGs which are important for both SRH and advancing gender equality simultaneously. Even though some of the activities outlined in the NAP relate to aspects of SRH, it, nevertheless, is not sufficient, taking into

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11 1 team per 3000 women >15 years of age, in line with the Network of Healthcare Institutions in the Republic of Macedonia

account that the lack of concrete measures would downgrade the importance of SRH in operative planning from a gender perspective and their correlation to the SDGs. Furthermore, a large number of the indicators listed in the NAP provide a solid starting point that could further contribute to the targets set out under the SDGs of importance to SRH and gender equality, but it is necessary for the indicators in the NAP to be better specified to concern SRH.

### **To what extent are national data and statistics on SRH sufficient to monitor and report in relation to the SDGs?**

The Public Health Institute (PHI) and the Institute for the Healthcare of Mothers and Children (IHMC) keeps records on the monitoring of Indicator 3.1.112. Nonetheless, there is a lack of desegregated data on a number of demographic and socio-economic characteristics (ethnicity, place of residence, income, etc), as well as on the causes for mother mortality. The untimely updating of the data listed is also concerning. The latest official data on mother mortality provided are from 2013.<sup>13</sup>

IHMC keeps records on the number of children born alive with professional assistance, i.e. relating to Indicator 3.1.214. Nevertheless, the annual reports of the IHMC are not available in an electronic form, whereas there is also a lack of such data in the reports on the health of the general population of the PHI.

In terms of Indicator 5.6.115 the data used on SRH is the one made available by national studies conducting research on the knowledge, habits and behaviours relating to taking care of health. Hence, in the bio-behavioural study among the young and population most at risk from an HIV infection,<sup>16</sup> trends are analyzed in the knowledge and practices among different target groups as brought in correlation to the risk of transmitting HIV or sexually transmittable infections, while in the research conducted on health among adolescents<sup>17</sup> data is provided on habits and behaviours relating to health and preventive factors among students in order to evaluate health promotion

<sup>12</sup> Mother mortality per 100,000 births

<sup>13</sup> Public Health Institute (2014) Report on the Health of the Population in the Republic of Macedonia, available at <http://iph.mk/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Spoen-izvestaj-novo-so-sodrzina-i-naslovna-so-ClP.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> Percentage of births performed by professional health workers

<sup>15</sup> Percentage of women at the age of 15 to 49 making their own informed decisions with regard to sexual intercourse, the use of contraception and taking care of their reproductive health

<sup>16</sup> Ministry of Health and State Healthcare Institute (2008) Report on the Bio-Behavioral Study on the Young and Populations Most at Risk of HIV Infection in the Republic of Macedonia in 2006, available at [http://www.unicef.org/tfyrmacedonia/MK\\_BehavioralStudy\\_MK2006.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/tfyrmacedonia/MK_BehavioralStudy_MK2006.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> State Healthcare Institute (2008) Global Research on the Health among Adolescents in the Republic of Macedonia, available at [http://www.unicef.org/tfyrmacedonia/SchoolBasedHealthSurvey\\_\\_Macedonian.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/tfyrmacedonia/SchoolBasedHealthSurvey__Macedonian.pdf)

among the young and in schools. The data is not sufficiently desegregated, neither does it point out how much women are independent in making their individual decisions on their SRH, which, on the other hand, is extremely important when attempting to demonstrate the connection to taking care of SRH from a gender perspective. For example, contraception is reduced to acquiring data on how much it is being used among the young, which types of contraception they use and what their knowledge of it is, but there is no data provided on whether the decision to use it has been made as a personal choice or has been forced upon by the partner which would have allowed to conduct a research based on gender aspects.

The only data available which is being used in periodic reports on Indicator 3.7.218 is the Multi-indicator Cluster Research conducted in 2007 and subsequently in 2011 by UNICEF and the PHI19. The research offers disaggregated data on several different grounds such as method of contraception, region, areas, age, income, marital status, ethnic background. Nonetheless, the minimum standards to assess the trends in using contraception are at least two representative researches conducted on a national basis<sup>20</sup>. Additionally, the IHMC has a statistic on the number of contraceptive means issued as a data to monitor the access to healthcare services in family planning.<sup>21</sup> However, this data only allows for annual trends in contraceptive methods used in primary healthcare to be monitored, but it is not disaggregated on socio-economic and demographic grounds, neither a detailed statistics is provided on the methods of contraception.

The State Statistical Office keeps records on Indicator 3.7.222 concerning the general number of births given among adolescents under 15 years of age and ones disaggregated to each year of age from 15 to 19 separately<sup>23</sup>. However, the annual statistical reports do not provide data on the number of births given disaggregated on different grounds such as ethnicity and income, which would help create a better picture of other socio-economic and demographic features relating to adolescent pregnancy.

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18 Percentage of women in their reproductive period (15-49) whose needs for family planning have been answered by modern contraception

19 MULTIPLE indicator cluster survey (2011) Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, available at [http://www.unicef.org/tfyrmacedonia/MICS\\_ENG\\_FINAL\\_website.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/tfyrmacedonia/MICS_ENG_FINAL_website.pdf)

20 United Nations (2015) Trends in Contraceptive Use Worldwide 2015, available at <http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/family/trendsContraceptiveUse2015Report.pdf>

21 INFORMATION Health among Mothers and Children in the Republic of Macedonia in 2014, PHI Skopje Health Centre, September 2015

22 Birth rates among adolescents (aged 10-14 and 1-19) per 1000 women belonging to the same age group

23 State Statistical Office (2014) Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Macedonia, Category Population, available at <http://www.stat.gov.mk/Publikacii/PDFSG2014/03-Naselenie-Population.pdf>

## Recommendations

1. When revising the Gender Equality Strategy and drafting action plans, a separate result relating solely to SRH should be included in Strategic Goal - Healthcare as an important health aspect in promoting gender equality;

2. Comprehensive measures on SRH should be incorporated in future operative plans on gender equality that would directly contribute to meeting Goals No. 3 and 5 of the SDGs and would entail activities aimed at reducing mother mortality and adolescent pregnancy, increasing the use of contraception, as well as conducting interventions to empower women with regard to their reproductive rights. In addition, analyses of legislation and regulations should be included in the operative plans to keep track of trends surrounding the accessibility to services and respecting reproductive rights.

3. The following indicators on SRH should be collected, analysed and reported at the national level in order to answer the requirements as set out under the SDGs seen from the aspect of gender equality and should also be incorporated in future Annual Reports on the Progress Made in the Status of Equal Opportunities for Women and Men:

<b>Indicator 3.1.1</b>	Mother mortality rate per 100,000 births
<b>Indicator 3.1.2</b>	Percentage of births performed by professional health workers
<b>Indicator 5.6.1</b>	Percentage of women at the age of 15 to 49 making their own informed decisions with regard to sexual intercourse, the use of contraception and their reproductive health
<b>Indicator 5.6.2</b>	Number of laws and regulations that guarantee all women at the age of 15 to 49 access to SRH care, education and information
<b>Indicator 3.7.1</b>	Percentage of women in their reproductive period (15-49) whose needs for family planning have been answered by modern contraception
<b>Indicator 3.7.2</b>	Adolescent (10-14 and 15-19) birth rate per 1000 women belonging to the same age group

4. Health data-gathering forms should be revised to allow for collecting a wider range of disaggregated data which would, in turn, lead to a better monitoring of SRH in meeting the SDGs and gender equality, to be conducted in the following manner:

- Incorporating disaggregated data on maternal mortality (disaggregated on the grounds of ethnicity, education status, income, age, place of residence - rural/urban, etc) and mortality causes;
- Incorporating disaggregated data on the number of contraceptive means issued (disaggregated on the grounds of method of contraception used, ethnicity, education, age, place of residence - rural/urban, etc);
- Incorporating disaggregated data on adolescent pregnancy rates (disaggregated on the grounds of ethnicity, education status, income, age, place of residence - rural/urban, etc).

## ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN AND GIRLS AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Economic empowerment of women is one of the key prerequisites for advancing gender equality. The low participation in the labour market, the gender gap in salaries, unrecognized housework, as well as the limited access to resources and executive posts are important factors preventing women and girls fully realizing their potential and their equal participation in all walks of society.

The SDA perceives gender equality from a number of different perspectives which would entail that it incorporates goals and targets on various areas, the fulfilment of which is expected to lead to women achieving a higher economic status. When it comes to gender equality in the Republic of Macedonia and particularly in view of the economic empowerment of women, several goals and targets under the SDA could be singled out as being most relevant and a subject of this analysis. Being dedicated to achieving gender equality and empowerment of women and girls, Goal No. 5 incorporates two targets (5.4 and 5.a) which refer to advancing the status of women and girls in both the labour market and economic relations. Furthermore, through its Target 8 and Target 8.5, the SDA seeks to achieve full and productive employment and decent jobs for all women and men, as well as equal pay for equal work which would directly contribute improving the economic status of women. The goals listed relate to the economic empowerment of women and are to gauge and evaluate unpaid housework, the degree of promotion of the division of house chores, the degree of reforms implemented to allow women equal rights and access to economic resources, access to ownership and control over land and other types of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, all depending on national legislation in these areas. Apart from these are the goals which are indirectly connected to the economic status of women and, by that, to their equality, and they concern eradicating poverty in all its forms (Goal No.1),

eradicating hunger and achieving food safety, better nourishment and the promotion of sustainable agriculture (Goal No. 2), as well as reducing inequality in and between countries (Goal No. 10).

The initial indicators for monitoring the goals concerning the economic empowerment of women under the SDA are listed in Table 2. The collection of data necessary to monitor the indicators to gauge the economic empowerment of women should be pursued by conducting various household surveys, a Survey on Time Spent and a Workforce Survey.

**TABLE 2:** Economic Empowerment of Women in the Sustainable Development Goals

Targets	Indicators
<p><b>5.4.</b> Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate</p>	<p><b>5.4.1.</b> Percentage of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work (for children, the elderly and persons with disabilities) per sex, age and location</p>
<p><b>5.a.</b> Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws</p>	<p><b>5.a.1.</b> (a) Percentage of citizens owning or having other rights on arable land or other types of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, depending on national legislation. Percentage of citizens with ownership or having rights to use arable land (from the overall agricultural population), per sex; and (b) participation of women among owners or holders of rights to use arable land per type of property.</p> <p><b>5.a.2.</b> Percentage of countries where the legal framework (including traditional rights) guarantees equal rights of women to ownership of land or control over land.</p>
<p><b>Target 8.5.</b> By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value</p>	<p><b>8.5.1</b> Average income (per hour) of employed women and men, per profession, age and disability (persons with disabilities)</p> <p><b>8.5.2</b> Percentage of unemployment, separated according to gender, age and disability (persons with disabilities)</p>



## Economic Empowerment of Women in the 2013-2020 Gender Equality Strategy and the 2013-2016 Action Plan and their Contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals

Economic empowerment of women is one of the priorities listed in the Gender Equality Strategy. The specific strategic goal 2.3 provides for the following: Establishing and piloting policies on overcoming barriers/obstacles and increasing employment among women (balancing private with professional life, women entrepreneurship, discrimination within the labour market). The following results are expected to be achieved via the specific strategic goal 2.3:

1. Improved legislation measures and policies on aligning private and professional life;
2. Improved access and conditions for women allowing them to start and develop entrepreneurship;
3. Improved access of women to labour policies;
4. Elimination of all shapes of discrimination on the grounds of sex in the labour market.

This strategic goal which is defined in the aforementioned manner is significantly related to the SDA in the context of the empowerment of women, whereas the results from the GES mostly contribute to Targets 5.4 and 8.5, with their contribution to Target 5.a being limited. The strategy recognizes that all women are by and large involved in unpaid housework and, therefore, the NAP envisages introducing measures and activities to balance private and public life, as well as promote reduced working hours in combination with dividing family obligations to take care of children and the elderly.

Result 1 correlates to Targets 5.4 and 8.5 of the SDGs owing to the fact that, in order to achieve it, activities, i.e. measures and policies are being introduced to contribute to balancing private and professional life, protection against discrimination, improving social services and infrastructure and through them facilitating the access to the labour market. It can be deduced from the analysis that the indicators on gauging the success rates of the NAP measures and activities relating to Result 1, although being clearly defined, for the most part prevent conducting a comprehensive and quality assessment of the impact that the activities envisaged would have and their effects in achieving the results required. Some of the indicators listed in the NAP (number of trainings conducted, number of research projects conducted, number of events hosted, etc) cannot substantially contribute to the economic empowerment of women as set out under Targets 5.4, 5.a and 8.5. Furthermore, the measures and activities, as well as relating indicators, designed in this manner, would prevent

acquiring relevant data to monitor Indicator 5.4.1 of the SDGs. Nevertheless, the Indicators titled Assessment of the Level to Which Capacities are Strengthened, Number of Cases of Discrimination Purported by Labour Inspectors Reported, and Types of Measures Undertaken and Number of Newly Open Institutions go a long way towards assessing the quality and impact of the aforementioned activities.

The GES and NAP are related to Target 5.a of the SDGs to an insignificant extent, due to the fact that they lack concrete measures and activities that would ensure equal access and rights of women with regard to the availability of resources. Economic empowerment of women is a priority target, whereas, by achieving the results defined, i.e. conducting the activities planned, their relation to Target 5.a could be heightened. Namely, the activities relating to Result 2 of the NAP are aimed at developing and promoting women entrepreneurship and their successful fulfilment of life goals, although to a limited degree, could nevertheless improve women's access to economic resources. Yet, it is important to underline that neither the GES nor the NAP recognize limited access to ownership, control over land and types of property as a problem that needs to be addressed in order to improve the economic status of women and hence, do not envisage measures and activities referring to Target 5.a.

Results 3 and 4 correlate to the SDGs due to the fact that, achieving them, could have an impact on reducing discrimination in the labour market and increasing employment rates among women, but the activities envisaged do not address the gender gap in salaries. More to the point, the measures and activities aimed at achieving the results listed provide for identifying the causes for the low participation of women in the labour market and reasons for and shapes of gender-based discrimination, strengthening institutional cooperation and capacities, as well as developing and implementing policies and measures to increase the participation of women in the labour market and reduce discrimination in both the public and private sectors. Nonetheless, the GES and the NAP should more comprehensively address gender gap in salaries in order to have a greater impact on Target 8.5.

The indicators relating to improving the access of women to employment policies (Result 3) are clearly defined and related to the relevant targets under the SDGs, while enabling that the impact of the activities envisaged is adequately gauged. However, the same cannot be said of the indicators which concern the elimination of all forms of discrimination on the grounds of gender within the labour market (Result 4). Designed in this manner, these indicators do not allow for having relevant data on the quality and impact of the activities planned and their contribution to achieving the specific result.

## To what extent are national data and statistics on SRH sufficient to monitor and report in the context of the SDGs

Indicator 5.4.124 can partially be monitored through a Survey on Time Spent that the State Statistical Office has been conducting every five years. This survey demonstrates a gender-based division of the spent in doing house chores, while the data is both comprehensive and demonstrate that women are for the large part those who take care of domestic obligations and children regardless of them being employed or not and active or not in the labour market. The data in the survey is disaggregated on the grounds of time spent, gender, age and marital status, but do not display the location of the interviewed, nor their ethnicity and income<sup>24</sup> as envisaged under the indicator.

The Agency for Real Estate Cadastre is the in-line government institution disposing of data relevant for monitoring Indicator 5.a.126. Although being in the possession of data on the percentage of ownership and property (real estate) rights and arable land disaggregated on the grounds of gender, the Agency does not publish this data on its website.

Indicator 5.a.227 on Target 5.a can also be monitored owing to the fact that it entails conducting an assessment on the legal framework regulating ownership. According to the principles as set out under the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia, citizens have the right to ownership and the right to inheritance and “ownership and rights deriving from it cannot be denied and limited to anyone, unless it is a matter of public interest as stipulated by law.” In the case of expropriating property or limiting ownership, equitable remuneration is guaranteed which cannot be lower than the market value of the property in question.<sup>28</sup> In this context, it can be stated that, in legal terms, there is no legislation in the Republic of Macedonia limiting women the right to ownership. Yet, the fact that merely a quarter of the owners of arable land and real estate in the country are women is quite indicative. It points to potential shortcomings in the implementation of regulations, as well as to a need of conducting additional research to identify the reasons for the great gender gap that exists in Macedonia when it comes to owning land and real estate.

24 Percentage of time spent in unpaid housework (and care) separated by gender, age and location.

25 State Statistical Office (2015). 2015 Survey on Time Spent, available at <http://www.stat.gov.mk/Publikacii/2.4.15.20.pdf>

26 Percentage of citizens owning or having other rights on arable land or other types of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, depending on national legislation. Percentage of citizens with ownership or having rights to use arable land (from the overall agricultural population), per sex; and (b) participation of women among owners or holders of rights to use arable land per type of property.

27 Percentage of countries where the legal framework (including traditional law) guarantees women equal rights to owning land or control over land.

28 Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia (1991) Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Article 30, available at <http://www.sobranie.mk/ustav-na-rm.nspix>

Indicator 8.5.129 on achieving Goal 8.5 is partially quantifiable by the existing data of the SSO. The SSO has published several publications<sup>30</sup> incorporating average incomes of employed men and women, disaggregated on the grounds of profession and age, but they have not been disaggregated on the grounds of how much women and men are paid by the hour and they also lack data on persons with disabilities. On the other hand, research shows that women from ethnic minorities are the most likely to work for the lowest income<sup>31</sup> and hence why it is important for the SSO to collect and stratify data on employment and income rates among women from ethnic minorities. Such data on employment and income rates should also be disaggregated on a municipality by municipality basis in order to identify local environments needing additional measures and policies to stimulate economic activity among women.

Indicator 8.5.2 can almost entirely be monitored and the SSO disposes of data on unemployment percentages, disaggregated by sex and age, except in the case of persons with disabilities. The Employment Agency has been regularly collecting and updating data on the unemployed, disaggregated by ethnicity, age and sex, including an overview of unemployed persons with disabilities and taking into account their age, degree of education and disability types.

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29 Average income (per hour) of employed women and men, per profession, age and disability (persons with disabilities).

30 State Statistical Office (20145). Employed and Net Salaries, available at <http://www.stat.gov.mk/Publikacii/2.4.15.05.pdf>

31 Reactor – Research in Action (2010). Women in Macedonian Economy, available at <http://www.reactor.org.mk/CMS/Files/Publications/Documents/Nacionalna%20-%20mak%20FINAL.pdf>

## Recommendations

1. To monitor the progress that the country is making on the matter of gender equality, the following indicators on economic empowerment as recommended under the SDGs should be collected and analyzed as part of national reporting mechanisms, as well as be incorporated when drafting Annual Reports on the Progress Made on Equal Opportunities between Women and Men:

<b>Indicator 5.4.1</b>	Percentage of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work (for children, the elderly and persons with disabilities) separated per sex, age and location.
<b>Indicator 5.a.1</b>	Percentage of citizens with ownership or having rights to use arable land (from the overall agricultural population), per sex; and (b) participation of women among owners or holders of rights to use arable land per type of property.
<b>Indicator 5.a.2</b>	Percentage of countries where the legal framework (including traditional law) guarantees women equal rights to owning land or control over land.
<b>Indicator 8.5.1</b>	Average income (per hour) of employed women and men, per profession, age and disability (persons with disabilities)
<b>Indicator 8.5.2</b>	Percentage of unemployment, separated according to gender, age and disability (persons with disabilities)

2. The new NAP should envisage activities on economic empowerment of women which are relevant to Goal N0.5 of the SDGs, i.e. activities to recognize and value unpaid housework, as well as implementing measures to enable women to have equal rights to economic resources, ownership and control over land, and full and productive employment and decent jobs for all women and men;

3. The State Statistical Office has been regularly collecting data on incomes of both women and men disaggregated by hour, municipality and ethnicity. The additional data in the Survey on the Time Spent should be disaggregated to include the other criteria as stipulated under the SDGs such as the location of interviewees, their ethnicity, disability and income;

4. The capacities of the Agency for Real Estate Cadastre should be strengthened and a regularly updated data base should be introduced providing data on assets owned by women and men in the Republic of Macedonia.

## **POLITICAL PARTICIPATION/INCLUSION OF WOMEN IN DECISION MAKING AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

The political inclusion of women is a fundamental human right as guaranteed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Beijing Platform of Action. These international instruments recognize the different barriers affecting the degree of political participation of women and expect their member states to introduce mechanisms to equal political participation between women and men. According to numerous studies, it is more likely that women would support legislation and measures promoting equality, improving the status of women, social programs, education and healthcare.<sup>32</sup> Research conducted in Macedonia reaffirm the fact that women on municipal and city councils place greater priority on issues relating to healthcare, social matters, education and investments in social infrastructure.<sup>33</sup> Yet, the inclusion of women in politics and in executive posts remains a challenge and, although considerable steps have been made forward to promote the participation of women in political life, the gender gap remains a challenge when it comes to key political offices (ministerial and mayoral) and executive posts in government and public institutions.

This analysis will reflect on the Sustainable Development Goals No. 5 and 16, as well as relevant sub-goals and indicators seeking to ensure the full and effective participation of women and equal opportunities in leadership/executive posts at all levels of decision making in the political, economic and public life. In more precise terms, Target 5.5 gauges the promotion of gender equality through the political inclusion of women at the local and national level and the increase in the number of women holding managerial (executive) posts. In addition, under Goal 16.7, it gauges the promotion of gender equality through participative, responsible and representative decision making at all levels,

32 Wittmer, D. E., & Bouché, V. (2013). The limits of gendered leadership: Policy implications of female leadership on "women's issues". *Politics & Gender*, 9(3), 245-275.  
33 Reactor – Research in Action (2010). Women in Politics: The Path to Political Offices and Impact at Local Level in Macedonia, available at <http://bit.ly/2dM6va2>

gender-based distribution of posts in public institutions (national and local legislative bodies, public administration and the judiciary) and the percentage of population (as per the different sexes) who believe that decision making is indeed inclusive.

Indicators on the goals are placed by the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Indicators for the Sustainable Development Goals within the Statistical Commission of the United Nations.<sup>34</sup> The indicators on Goal 16 promote inclusive societies for sustainable development and access to justice, building efficient, responsible and inclusive institutions for all, and are applicable to gender equality and the promotion of the inclusion of women in decision making.

According to the UNFPA,<sup>35</sup> the monitoring of the level to which the goals set are being met at the local level will only be successful through indicators to be incorporated into the SDA. To date, the sources of information to track the degree to which the goals set are being met at the local level has been the report of the UN Statistics Division, the Report on the Implementation of Resolution 66/130 on Women and Political Participation of the UN General Assembly, the reports of CEDAW and national government sources, including the Permanent Missions of various countries to the United Nations.

Due to a lack of comparable data from all countries and regions, a standardized methodology should be developed, as well as a guide on collecting data at the local level.

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34 <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/47th-session/documents/2016-2-IAEG-SDGSs-Rev1-E.pdf>

35 United Nations Population Fund (2015) Compilation of Metadata on Indicators for Global Monitoring of Sustainable Development Goals and Targets, available at <http://unstats.un.org/SDGss/files/Metadata%20Compilation%20for%20SDGS%20Indicators%2023%20October%202015%20Update.pdf>

## Political Participation/Inclusion of Women in Decision Making in the Sustainable Development Goals

Targets	Indicators
<p><b>5.5.</b> Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life</p>	<p><b>5.5.1.</b> Proportion of seats held by women in parliament and municipal councils</p> <p><b>5.5.2</b> Proportion of women in managerial positions</p>
<p><b>16.7.</b> Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels</p>	<p><b>16.7.1.</b> Percentage of positions (according to sex, age, disability and population groups) in public institutions (national and local legislative bodies, public administration and the judiciary) in the context of national distribution</p> <p><b>16.7.2</b> Percentage of population believing that decision making is inclusive and participative according to sex, age, disability and population group.</p>

### Political Participation of Women in the 2013-2020 Gender Equality Strategy and the 2013-2016 Action Plan and their Contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals

Through Specific Strategic Goal 2.1, the Gender Equality Strategy envisages the following: Increased gender-responsible participation of women in decision making processes in the legislative and executive branches, in party politics and editorial broadcasting, being expected to achieve the following results:

1. A balanced participation of women in working bodies in the legislative and executive branches and integrating gender perspective in executing the competences of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia;
2. Special measures adopted on equitable representation of women in the executive branch;
3. Strengthened capacities of judges and public prosecutors on gender-based perspective in the judicial branch.



The goals of the GES on advancing political inclusion of women are by and large aligned with Target 5.5.36 of the SDGs and relate to the effective participation of women and equal opportunities in leadership/executive posts at all levels of decision making in the political, economic and public life. More specifically, the Strategy provides an outlook on the lack of inclusion of women in the executive branch at both the national and local levels, as well as in the appointment of ambassadors and diplomatic representatives. Hence, it puts forward measures to achieve Results 1 and 2. The measures to achieve Result 1 relate to advancing equal participation of women in working bodies at the national and local levels, as well as in working bodies and committees at the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia.

In order to achieve Result 2, special measures have been planned to be introduced to achieve a balanced participation of women in executive posts in the public administration and regularly keeping and publishing statistical records disaggregated by gender on officials, civil servants on executive posts, ambassadors and diplomatic representatives appointed, as well as government-appointed members of executive boards at public companies and institutions.

Result 3 is not relevant to the issue of meeting the goals on political inclusion as set out in the SDGs and will, hence, not be a subject of this analysis. Finally, if the activities aimed at achieving Results 1 and 2 are implemented, it is expected that these results will have a considerable impact on the SDGs and Goal 5.5.37.

The inclusion of citizens and the degree of citizen participation in decision making is one of the key indicators showcasing the level of openness and democracy in any given society. Being a part of the Open Government Partnership initiative, the Republic of Macedonia is committed to open, transparent and reliable institutions communicating and cooperating with the citizens. In this sense, it is important to underline that the Gender Equality Strategy does not in any, way, shape or form correlate to Sub-goal 16.7 and Indicator 16.7.238 of the SDGs and the country has not made any research or analyses to point out the degree of citizen participation of women and men and the manner in which citizens could become involved in decision making at the local and national levels. The GES and NAP do not outline goals, activities and indicators to provide for the inclusion of women in decision making outside of the political process.

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36 To ensure full and effective participation of women and equal opportunities in leadership at all levels of decision making in the political, economic and public life  
37 To ensure full and effective participation of women and equal opportunities in leadership at all levels of decision making in the political, economic and public life  
38 Percentage of population believing that decision making is inclusive and participative according to sex, age, disability and population group.

The Indicators outlined in the NAP regarding the Specific Strategic Goal 2.1 and Results 1 and 2 which are applicable to SDA are defined, quantifiable and relevant and can help monitor the advancement of political inclusion of women. Displaying statistical data on the political inclusion of women and men is one of the indicators under the SDA, but also under the GES and NAP with greater efforts needed on the part of the institutions to implement the activities aimed at monitoring this indicator. The NAP provides for regularly keeping and publishing gender-based disaggregated statistics on officials, civil servants in executive posts, ambassadors and diplomatic representatives appointed, as well as government-appointed members of executive boards at public companies and institutions. Yet, these legal obligations are still not being adhered to and there are no gender-based disaggregated data on gender composition in executive posts published on the websites of the institutions, in spite of it being one of the measures stipulated in both the Strategy and the NAP.

The Strategy and the NAP acknowledge the lack of gender-disaggregated data – “there is a lack of a harmonized approach to data collecting based on sex to provide a solid foundation for analyzing the status and creating policies to lead to advancing gender equality. At the same time, a need has been established for promoting statistical indicators and establishing a harmonized system to allow all relevant stakeholders access to data for purposes of conducting analysis on on-going statuses, identifying shortcomings and producing relevant and useful proposals on measures and activities to be further taken.”

One of the indicators under this goal is to achieve “an increase in the quota of the less represented sex on election party tickets under the Electoral Code of up to 40%.” In 2015, the quota of the less represented sex was increased to 40% which would certainly encourage a greater participation of women in politics, but the implementation of the law at the next municipal and general elections should continue to be monitored.

### **To what extent are the national data and statistics on the political participation of women sufficient to monitor and report under the SDGs**

The indicators listed in the GES are relevant to meeting Target 5.5.3 of the SDGs, but there is a lack of publicly available gender-disaggregated data which is also a challenge faced by institutions including the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, its working bodies, the ULSG and political

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39 To ensure full and effective participation of women and equal opportunities in leadership at all levels of decision making in the political, economic and public life

parties. The Assembly and the ULSG do not keep gender-disaggregated records on the number of women and men at the Assembly and municipal councils, but the publicly available data displayed on the websites of the Assembly and the ULSG (for the most part) can be useful in determining the number of women in parliament and local self-governments. Taking into account that such data does indeed exist, it is necessary to promote the technical capacities of the technical departments of the Assembly and the ULSG for keeping and regularly updating gender-disaggregated statistics.

Due to non-implementation of legal obligations, the participation of women in leadership and executive posts as provided for by Indicator 5.5.240 cannot be fully quantified. The lack of such data has an additional impact on introducing special measures, i.e. it delays the introduction of special measures which would help to indeed increase the number of women in executive posts in public and government institutions. The Sector for Equal Opportunities has over the last 5 years conducted only research on the participation of women in public and political life in the units of local self-government. Nevertheless, the report of the National Ombudsman<sup>41</sup> lists the overall number of individuals employed in the public administration and the gender distribution of elected and appointed individuals, individuals in executive and non-executive posts and employed in the government bodies. Based on the data listed in the report of the Ombudsman, the gender distribution in different posts can indeed be determined, but there continues to be a lack of gender distribution in executive posts per each individual institution. In order to successfully implement the GES and meet the SDGs, it is necessary to raise the capacities for successful monitoring of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and the Sector for Equal Opportunities, but institutions not implementing the NAP should also be pressurized for not observing their legal obligations and not publishing gender-disaggregated data on their websites.

As regards Indicator 16.7.1,<sup>42</sup> a primary source of data<sup>43</sup> is defined as keeping records of employment in the administration at the national level in keeping with the obligations outlined by ICCPR and CEDAW. The different population groups are to be defined at the level of each country separately and depending on the ethnic and religious groups living in it. This indicator is gender-relevant and would help demonstrate gender differences in the participation of women and men in decision

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40 Percentage of women in managerial positions

41 Ombudsman of the Republic of Macedonia (2015) Annual Report on the Degree of Ensuring, Respecting, Promoting and Protection of Human Rights and Freedoms, available at [http://ombudsman.mk/upload/Godisni%20izvestai/GI-2015/GI\\_2015-za\\_pecat.pdf](http://ombudsman.mk/upload/Godisni%20izvestai/GI-2015/GI_2015-za_pecat.pdf)

42 Percentage of posts (per sex, age, disability and population group) in public institutions (national and local legislative bodies, public administration and the judiciary) in the context of national distribution.

43 United Nations Population Fund (2015) Compilation of Metadata on Indicators for Global Monitoring of Sustainable Development Goals and Targets, available at <http://unstats.un.org/SDGss/files/Metadata%20Compilation%20for%20SDGs%20Indicators%2023%20October%202015%20Update.pdf>

making. The data on this indicator should be divided at all levels of local and national government (the executive branch, parliament, the judiciary, the police, etc) per posts (senior management, mid-level management, professionals, supporting staff) and type of employment contract (short-term, temporary, permanent).

When it comes to distribution at the national level, Indicator 16.7.1,<sup>44</sup> i.e. the data on the percentage of posts (per sex, age, disability and population group) in public institutions (national and local legislative bodies, public administration and the judiciary) is being collected by the Office of the Ombudsman. Although the report of the Ombudsman partially displays the gender distribution of jobs in the administration, there is still no data on the gender distribution of employees in the public administration per ethnicity. Additionally, the report does not list information on types of employment and contracts, i.e. whether the employees are on short-term, temporary or permanent employment contracts. Gender-based analysis of data is particularly important, taking into account the low level of participation of women in the labour market and the discrimination they face when applying for jobs. Such data is not being collected by any government institution or, if collected, is not being made publicly available.

Taking into consideration Indicator 16.7.2<sup>45</sup>, citizen participation in decision making is primarily conducted via EHEP, community fora or via (project) cooperation assisted by civil society organizations. Research conducted by civil society organizations is the only one making relevant data available which can help analyze the involvement of citizens in decision making and whether decision making is inclusive and participative. Moreover, there are no quantifiable indicators to gauge the percentage of population believing that decision making is inclusive and participative divided by sex, age, disability and population groups.

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44 Ibid

45 Percentage of population believing that decision making is inclusive and participative per sex, age, disability and population group.

## Recommendations:

1. In order to monitor the progress that are country has been making in terms of gender equality, the following indicators on the political participation/inclusion of women as recommended by the SDGs need to be analysed within the national reporting mechanisms, as well as to be incorporated when drafting the Annual Report on the Progress Made on Equal Opportunities between Women and Men:

<b>Indicator 5.5.1</b>	Proportion of seats held by women in parliament and municipal councils
<b>Indicator 5.5.2</b>	Proportion of women in managerial positions
<b>Indicator 16.7.1</b>	Proportions of positions (by sex, age, persons with disabilities and population groups) in public institutions (national and local legislatures, public service, and judiciary) compared to national distributions
<b>Indicator 16.7.2</b>	Proportion of population who believe decision making is inclusive and responsive, by sex, age, disability and population group.

2. When drafting the new NAP, the following activities supported by quantifiable indicators to implement them should be put forward: Keeping statistically disaggregated data on election party candidate lists and seats won at the national level; Establishing a practice of keeping gender-disaggregated records of voter turnout; An analysis of how much the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly is being adhered to in terms of equitable representation of women both sexes in parliamentary committees and working bodies; A report on equitable representation of women and men in parliamentary bodies and committees; Gender-disaggregated statistical data on the Assembly, its working bodies and committees published on the website of the Assembly, Representation of women in executive posts and data published on the websites of in-line ministries;

3. The MLSP/SSO/In-line ministries/ULSG should collect gender-disaggregated data at all levels of local and central government (in keeping with the provisions of the GES) per post (senior management, mid-level management, supporting staff, etc) and types of employment contracts (short-term, temporary, permanent) in order to identify gender-based discrimination (should such indeed exist);

The Ombudsman should include data on gender distribution in its reports disaggregated on the grounds of ethnicity, disability and divided per each separate institution;

4. The new NAP should put forward national research and analyses on the percentage of population believing that decision making is inclusive and participative per sex, age, disability and population group.

## GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

According to the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women<sup>46</sup>, violence against women is “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life”. The broadest definition is given at the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention<sup>47</sup>), according to which – gender-based violence against women is a violation of human rights, and a form of discrimination against women that includes all acts of gender-based violence that result in, or are likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life

In the Republic of Macedonia, numerous activities related to combating domestic violence and trafficking of women and children have been undertaken within the past couple of years. What remains is the challenge to implement measures and activities against other forms of gender-based violence, such as sexual harassment, rape, economic violence, traditional and harmful practices and the like. Since gender-based violence against women is one of the most severe forms of human rights violation, the recommendation is to analyse it as a whole, therefore, it should encompass all forms of violence.

46 The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women – CEDAW (1987), United Nations General Assembly, available at <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/cedaw.pdf>

47 Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (2011), Council of Europe, available at <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=090000168046031c>

In the context of combating gender-based violence in the Republic of Macedonia, several goals and targets listed among the SDGs may be highlighted as most relevant and are the subject of this analysis. Namely, goal number 5 of the SDA recognises the importance of the prevention of and the protection from gender-based violence against women by proposing two separate targets: 5.2. eliminate all forms of gender-based violence against women and girls in public and private spheres, including human trafficking, sexual and other forms of exploitation; 5.3. eliminate all harmful practices such as child, early, and forced marriage, and female genital mutilation.

Furthermore, the SDGs, through Goal 11 and target 11.7, aim to provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, elderly persons and persons with disabilities, and by doing so, shall directly contribute to the protection of women from GBV in public spaces. Targets and indicators for gender-based violence are also incorporated in Goal number 16; they call for countries to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels, in other words, to reduce all forms of violence and violence related deaths everywhere, and end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against, and torture of children.

According to the Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDGs Indicators within the UN Statistical Commission, the indicators through which countries should monitor the progress they are making in terms of prevention of and protection from gender-based violence against women are as follows:

## Prevention of and protection from gender-based violence within the Sustainable Development Goals

Targets	Indicators
<p><b>5.2</b> Eliminate all forms of gender-based violence against women and girls in public and private spheres, including human trafficking, sexual and other forms of exploitation.</p>	<p><b>5.2.1.</b> Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls (aged 15-49) subjected to physical and/or sexual violence by a current or former intimate partner, in the last 12 months</p> <p><b>5.2.2.</b> Proportion of women and girls (aged 15-49) subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner, since age 15</p>
<p><b>5.3.</b> Eliminate all harmful practices such as child, early, and forced marriage, and female genital mutilation</p>	<p><b>5.3.1.</b> Percentage of women aged 20-24 who were married or in a union before age 18</p>
<p><b>11.7.</b> By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities.</p>	<p><b>11.7.2.</b> Percentage of women subjected to physical or sexual harassment, by perpetrator and place of occurrence (in the last 12 months)</p>
<p><b>16.1.</b> Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere.</p>	<p><b>16.1.1.</b> Number of victims of intentional homicide, by age group and sex.</p>
<p><b>16.2.</b> End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.</p>	<p><b>16.2.3.</b> Percentage of young women and men at the age of 18-24 who experienced sexual violence by the age of 18.</p>



## Gender-based violence as part of the Gender Equality Strategy 2013-2020 and the Action Plan 2013-2016, and the contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals

The National Gender Equality Strategy 2013-2020 as separate strategic goals singles out the promotion of a legal framework, the protection from, and punishment for gender-based violence through the specific strategic goal 2.2: to raise social awareness of gender-based violence and improve the legal framework that provides standards for effective protection from, and punishment for different forms of gender-based violence.

The strategy defines the following results as essential in improving the prevention of and protection from gender-based violence:

1. Recognition of gender-based violence as violence based on the inequality between men and women in society.
2. Strengthened capacities of the professional structures within all institutions, in the area of social protection, education, health care, defence and safety, and economy, in order to recognise different forms of GBV.
3. An established system for systematic data collection of different forms of GBV.
4. Improved institutional response, successfully implemented measures of protection, and sanctions for different forms of GBV.

If we are to compare the results from the GES with the targets set in the SDGs, we can conclude that they are partially connected and contribute to the above mentioned targets. The strategy recognises that gender-based violence is founded upon the inequality between men and women in society and it dwells on recognising different forms of gender-based violence. Furthermore, the anticipated results of the Strategy indicate that there is a need of systematic data collection of different forms of GBV; the results are encompassed in the proposed activities of the Action Plan 2013-2016; one of the proposed activities is to conduct a national study on the occurrence and frequency of gender-based violence.

It is of great importance that the GES is the first document that provides a definition about gender-based violence. Namely, the legal regulations and strategy documents in the Republic of Macedonia

almost exclusively refer to domestic violence. Within the Law on Prevention of and Protection from Domestic Violence, the definition on GBV is only briefly elaborated: “gender-based violence against women is a form of violence that is directed against women because they are women, or that affects women disproportionately”<sup>48</sup>. Hence, in terms of fulfilling the targets and monitoring the indicators of the SDGs, the main challenge is also to implement measures and activities against other forms of gender-based violence such as sexual harassment, rape, economic violence, traditional and harmful practices and the like. First and foremost, it is essential that all forms of gender-based violence are precisely defined in all strategy documents and laws, in order to start fulfilling the targets and monitoring the indicators of the SDA.

The existing Gender Equality National Action Plan 2013-2016, as part of the specific strategic goal, anticipates: undertaking activities for protection of, and sanctions for gender-based violence via public awareness campaigns and building a culture of intolerance of gender-based violence; undertaking informative activities at educational institutions, at all levels of the educational system; training professional staff and holding lectures at universities; conducting a national study on the occurrence and frequency of gender-based violence, developing and establishing a singular methodology and a coordinated data selection system; analysis of the criminal justice system, the measures of protection, and the recommended changes, that shall provide effective and timely legal protection and punishment, and develop a National programme for protection and reintegration of women victims of GBV.

Both the GES and the NAP have not defined measurable and relevant indicators through which the progress and impact of the policies and programmes for prevention of and protection from gender based violence against women might be monitored. The national strategy presents only results, while the action plans define indicators on a process level that measure success and percentage of successful activities, and in most part refer to raising public awareness and strengthening capacities. Only the indicator Number of identified victims of gender-based violence and number of provided services for support and reintegration, provides an opportunity to monitor and measure the quality and impact of the undertaken activities; even though the data has to be additionally segmented by forms of violence, age group, place of occurrence and ethnicity.

Naturally, it should be taken into account that the strategy itself indicates that there is a need of establishing a system and methodology for coordinated data selection of different forms of GBV.

<sup>48</sup> Article 4, paragraph 10 of the Law on Prevention of and Protection from Domestic Violence, (“Official Gazette of The Republic of Macedonia” No.138/2014, 33/2015 and 150/2015)

Moreover, the strategic goal 2.2. from the NAP lists activities such as conducting a national study on the occurrence and frequency of gender-based violence and developing and establishing a singular methodology and system for coordinated data collection. Unfortunately, the anticipated activities have not been undertaken by the appropriate institutions, that is why the lack of access to relevant data is still the key challenge in this area.

### **To what measure national data and statistics on the political involvement of women are sufficient for monitoring and reporting to the SDGs**

Publicly available and pro-actively published data from the systematic collection of segmented statistical data, as well as publicly available data from studies on the general population, are the main drawback in terms of monitoring gender-based violence against women in the Republic of Macedonia, which at the same time presents a challenge for monitoring the achievement of the SDGs, more specifically the part on GBV. The MLSP keeps a record of reported cases of domestic violence, by sex, form of violence and passed measures of temporary protection. The Mol on the other hand, keeps record of registered cases of domestic violence by place of occurrence, sex of the victim and the perpetrator, and legal classification. In terms of human trafficking, at the MLSP a system for collecting statistical data on victims of human trafficking has been established, in order to monitor the trend of human trafficking without collecting and processing personal data, so as to protect the identity and other personal information about the victims.

The SSO in their annual reports on social protection of children, young, and older persons<sup>49</sup>, provide a review of registered cases of users of social services related to protection from domestic violence, a list of persons – victims of sexual harassment, as well as a record of the number of underage persons that wanted to enter into marriage before turning 18. The published data is presented annually, by sex and age. In addition, even though as part of the NAP a national study is anticipated, one that shall record the occurrence and frequency of different forms of gender-based violence against women, such as sexual and psychological violence, this activity has not been undertaken, which hinders the monitoring of indicators 5.2.150 and 5.2.251 from the SDGs.

49 State Statistical Office (2015). Social protection of children, young, and older persons, 2014-2015. Accessible at <http://www.stat.gov.mk/Publikacii/2.4.15.17.pdf>

50 Percentage of women and girls at the age of 15 and older, subjected to sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner, in the last 12 months, by form of violence and by age group.

51 Percentage of women and girls at the age of 15 and older, subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner, in the last 12 months, by age group and place of occurrence.

Indicator 5.3.152 cannot be monitored as well, since in the latest reports on social protection of children, minors, and adults, published by the State Statistical Office, there are a number of registered cases of persons with interest to enter into marriage before turning 18. This means there is no record of cases of underage girls and boys that live in a union, that is, they are not registered, even though according to the Council of Europe Convention on prevention of and protection from violence against women and domestic violence, underage marriages are a form of gender-based violence which is unfortunately rarely recognised and addressed as such. In order to make this problem more transparent, first a number of research studies have to be conducted to analyse the scope of the problem and to estimate the number of children that are exposed to early and forced marriages, including traditional marriages not registered by the competent bodies, and to develop specific measures for reducing and eliminating this practice.

Indicator 11.7.253 that refers to the percentage of women exposed to physical or sexual harassment, by perpetrator and place of occurrence, cannot be monitored as well, since there is no precise definition, means of recognition and system for registering and monitoring these forms of gender-based violence in our country, as forms of violence against women. The same goes for indicator 16.2.354.

It is evident that in the Republic of Macedonia, the available data refers only to several forms of gender-based violence against women. Moreover, the data is not classified according to all relevant categories, such as ethnicity, geographic location and the like, in accordance with the “no one gets left behind” principle. In short, it can be concluded that the existing data in the Republic of Macedonia is insufficient for monitoring the SGO indicators that are of great importance for GBV, with the exception of indicator 16.1.155 which can be monitored in full, because the Mol has this data at their disposal.

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52 Percentage of women at the age of 20 to 24 that were married or in a union before the age of 15 and the age of 18.

53 Percentage of women subjected to physical or sexual harassment, by perpetrator and place of occurrence (in the last 12 months).

54 Percentage of young women and men at the age of 18-24 who experienced sexual violence by the age of 18.

55 Number of victims of intentional homicide, by age group and sex.

## Recommendations

1. All gender equality action plans that are to be developed should include activities and indicators for tackling all forms of gender-based violence against women, relevant to and in accordance with the recommended goals and indicators listed in the SDGs; they should also be included in the Annual report on the progress of the equal opportunities of women and men

<b>Indicator 5.2.1</b>	Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls (aged 15-49) subjected to physical and/or sexual violence by a current or former intimate partner, in the last 12 months
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<b>Indicator 5.2.2</b>	Proportion of women and girls (aged 15-49) subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner, since age 15
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<b>Indicator 5.3.1</b>	Percentage of women aged 20-24 who were married or in a union before age 18
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<b>Indicator 11.7.2</b>	Percentage of women subjected to physical or sexual harassment, by perpetrator and place of occurrence (in the last 12 months)
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<b>Indicator 16.1.1</b>	Number of victims of intentional homicide, by age group and sex.
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<b>Indicator 16.2.3</b>	Percentage of young women and men at the age of 18-24 who experienced sexual violence by the age of 18.
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2. The definitions on violence against women, gender-based violence against women and all forms of violence against women in the relevant laws/by-laws/strategies and policies should be reconciled with the adopted international declarations and conventions;

3. The annual reports on the activities of the mandates of the Official State Coordination Bodies for prevention of and protection from gender-based violence against women should be publicly available;
4. The institutional capacities, and the systems for statistical, administrative and judiciary data collection of all forms of gender-based violence against women by sex, age, ethnicity, victim-perpetrator relationship, geographical location, disability, should be strengthened, and the public availability of the data should be improved;
5. Relevant national studies that shall focus on different forms of gender-based violence against women should be conducted, and they should include categorised data by sex, age, ethnicity, disability, income, and place of residence;
6. The new NAP should anticipate establishing special services to support women subjected to gender-based violence (according to population and geographical distribution), and should annually monitor the amount of allocated budget funds for these services, in order to meet the SDGs which recognise different forms of GBV;



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