DRAFT ACTION PLAN ON PROTECTION AND PROMOTION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE PERSONS BELONGING TO COMMUNITIES[1]

Building on North Macedonia's comprehensive constitutional, legal and institutional system for the protection of **communities**, this Action Plan provides for a set of measures aimed at further improvement of the rights of the **persons belonging to communities** in the areas of non-discrimination, fight against hate speech and education.

1. Introduction

This Action Plan has been developed in line with paragraph 35 of the Negotiating Framework for North Macedonia, approved by the Council of the European Union on 18 July 2022. Paragraph 35 of the Negotiating Framework outlines that North Macedonia will adopt through an inclusive process an Action Plan dedicated to the protection of the rights of persons belonging to communities, including*, inter alia,* in the field of non-discrimination, fight against hate speech, education, setting up effective measures, reporting mechanisms and identifying respective responsible institutions. The EU emphasizes the importance of protecting minorities and expects North Macedonia, as a future member, to uphold core EU values such as democracy, equality, the rule of law, and human rights, as outlined in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union. The EU has also called for a transparent and inclusive process to develop a roadmap for reforms under Chapters 23 and 24 on the rule of law, to be guided by priorities identified in the screening reports.

The Action Plan complements the existing legal and institutional framework for protection and promotion of the rights of the communities, aiming to further strengthen these rights through improved coordination, implementation and legal measures.

Hence the overall goal of this plan is to promote and improve the rights of the communities, as a continuous commitment towards sustainable social cohesion in the Macedonian interethnic society at local and national level.

2. Methodological approach

2.1. The scope of the Action Plan

The Action plan is based on the requirements of the Negotiating Framework and the findings of the screening of the *acquis* in Cluster 1 – Fundamentals (the Screening Report), and in line with the Roadmap for the Rule of Law chapters as well as relevant national policy documents aimed at the protection and advancement of the rights of communities. In this context, it is essential to note a key terminological distinction:

[1] *This is a working document and does not represent a final or officially endorsed position. Its content remains subject to further refinement pending comprehensive expert review and consultation with relevant institutional and external stakeholders. No part of this draft should be interpreted as binding or conclusive until formally finalized and duly approved through the appropriate procedures.*

whereas the Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities operates with the term "national minorities", this document follows the constitutional and the legislative terminology of North Macedonia which utilizes the term "communities" instead. In this context, the primary focus of the measures and activities in this Action Plan is on communities constituting less than 20% of the population, in accordance with the country's constitutional and legislative framework.

With regard to the rights of persons belonging to communities, the applicable standards are provided by the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of the National Minorities and European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages as well as by the UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities. In this sense, in addition to the assessment in the Screening Report, in defining the main challenges, priorities and needs, this Action Plan is based on the findings and recommendations of the relevant bodies such as the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

This has been also underlined in the Screening Report which encourages authorities "*to implement the recommendations of the Advisory Committee of the Framework Convention on National Minorities and the relevant resolutions of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe".*

The current legal and institutional framework for protection of the rights of the communities in the county has been continuously developed and promoted according to all international standards and recommendations of the abovementioned bodies, and this Action Plan puts the focus on the priority areas as identified in the Negotiation Framework, the Screening Report and the national strategic documents:

- non-discrimination[2]
- fight against hate speech[3]
- education.

For the rest of the areas recognised by the Framework Convention[4], the Action Plan refers to and relies on the efficient implementation of other relevant national policy documents, including the Rule of Law Roadmap (RLDM) as referred in the Screening Report.

In order to ensure full coherence between these documents, the Action Plan also includes clear references to the relevant policy documents and the relevant measures therein. It aims not to duplicate reform measures already contained in those documents but rather to define them more

[2] "Special attention should be given to the protection of rights and non-discriminatory treatment of citizens belonging to minorities or communities", Screening Report, page 67.

[3] "Increase effectiveness in addressing hate crime and hate speech", page 67. See also page 59.

[4] The Framework Convention main pillars: The right to self-identification; Non-discrimination and equality; Promotion of the cultural of diversity; Tolerance and intercultural dialogue; Protection from hostility and violence, with a special focus on the fight against hate speech and the hate crime; Media; Linguistic rights; Education; Participation.

precisely and to adapt them to the need to ensure a more specific protection from discrimination, and hate speech towards persons belonging to communities whose needs for the protection are not always the same as needs of other vulnerable groups.

The comprehensive set of measures and activities across the three priority areas is envisaged to be implemented over a three-year period.

2.2. The process of preparation of the Action Plan

To develop this Action Plan an intersectoral Working Group was established, chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade and comprising representatives from institutional stake holders.

To ensure full alignment between the measures and activities in this Action Plan and the findings of the Screening Report for Cluster 1, as well as the relevant provisions of the Rule of Law Roadmap, coordination was maintained with the Ministry of European Affairs.

The entire preparation process was conducted in a transparent, inclusive and meaningful manner. It combined structured consultations with national and international experts, state and municipal authorities, civil society organizations, and extensive engagement with representatives of all communities through the Agency for Community Rights Realization and its Participatory Forum. Independent expert support was provided throughout the process by the Council of Europe by the activation of the European Union and Council of Europe's Expertise Coordination Mechanism.

The consultation with community representatives began in late November 2025, when the initial draft was published on the official website of the Agency for Community Rights Realization and simultaneously shared directly with community representatives. They were invited to a dedicated session of the Participatory Forum held on 2 December 2025 and hosted by the Agency. The event enjoyed broad participation from civil society organizations and associations of all communities, together with national experts, Council of Europe experts and European Union's representatives.

At the session, the participants presented views and recommendation, and additionally communities were invited to submit detailed written suggestions and opinions by 10 December 2025. All received inputs were thoroughly analyzed and, where appropriate, incorporated into the document by the end of February 2026.

A revised draft was subsequently transmitted to the Council of Europe for further expert assessment. The recommendations received were duly integrated and an updated version was then published once again for public consultation on (17th March 2026) followed by a second dedicated session of the Participatory Forum held on 30th March 2026.

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3. Legal and Institutional Framework

Taking into account the robust constitutional, legal and institutional system for promotion and protection of the rights of the persons belonging to communities in North Macedonia, this section includes a brief overview of the main legal and institutional elements of that system, in order to enable easier understanding of the interconnection of the measures, activities and stakeholders responsible for their implementation as given in the table of the Action Plan.

The legal framework for the protection and promotion of the rights of persons belonging to the communities, non-discrimination and effective equality, is provided by the Constitution, laws and ratified international agreements[5]. In addition to this, North Macedonia has adopted a comprehensive policy and strategic framework in this field.

Constitution: The basic human rights and freedoms of citizens, which are recognized by international conventions, are among the core ideals of the constitutional order based on the concept of individual rights and the civil society. The right of non-discrimination and effective equality is set out in Article 9 of the Constitution: "Citizens of the Republic of North Macedonia are equal in freedoms and rights, regardless of gender, race, colour of the skin, from the national and social origin, from the political and religious belief, from the property and social position". Article 48 of the Constitution is especially devoted to the rights of communities (free declaration, cultivation and developing of the identity, right to use symbols, right of establishing cultural, artistic and educational institutions and associations, right of education in minority language in primary and high school). By the constitutional changes initiated by the Ohrid Framework Agreement a set of amendments was adopted that improved the rights of communities, especially amendments from IV to XVIII, which are related to the issues of languages, equitable representation etc.

3.1 Policy framework

The National Strategy for Equality and Non-Discrimination 2022-2026 is a strategic document which contributes to the promotion of the equality and non-discrimination, thus emphasizing the unity through differences and one society for all, and defines goals, activities, measures and indicators, as well as the institutions responsible for its implementation on national and local level.

The Gender Equality Strategy 2022-2027 is a strategic document that provides a framework for the full equality of women and men as a cross-sectoral, horizontal and universal social and political priority.

The Strategy for Regional Development 2021-2031, in its second strategic goal includes: "attractive planning regions, with improved local services, effective access to the labour market, and a higher degree of gender equality and effective social protection of the most vulnerable population groups".

[5] UN documents: Universal declaration for Human Rights; International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination; Universal Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities; UNESCO Universal Declaration for Cultural Diversity Council of Europe; Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms; Framework Convention for Protection of National Minorities; European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (signed not ratified)

The Roma Inclusion Strategy 2022-2030 is a continuation of the commitment and efforts of North Macedonia with the full integration of the Roma community in society. The strategy has 8 priority areas for measures in employment, housing, education, health, culture, Anti-gypsyism, civil registration and poverty.

National strategy for the development of the concept of "One society and interculturalism" from 2020-2022, is a document that was prepared for the first time in North Macedonia, taking into account the societal complexities on various grounds, and is the first strategy for interculturalism in Europe. The Strategy 2020-2022 initiated activities to strengthen the processes of communication and cooperation between communities in the direction of creating a society in which everyone will feel like an equal member. A new strategy has been adopted – **Strategy for development of the interculturalism and social cohesion, with an Action plan 2024-2026**. Strategy for the following period is being prepared.

3.2 Legal framework

The legal framework governing the protection of communities and their cultural, linguistic, religious and other identities in North Macedonia is comprehensive and well established. It consists *inter alia* of the following laws:

The Law for the rights of communities that are less than 20% of the population in the Republic of North Macedonia: *The* law regulates the realization, promotion and protection of the rights of the members of the communities which are less than 20% in the population in the Republic of North Macedonia and the monitoring over the enforcement of the provisions of the laws that determine these rights. The competence to monitor the implementation of the provisions of the Law lies with the Agency for community rights realization.

The Law on Committee for Inter-Ethnic Relations: The Law provides guidelines for the election and composition of a Committee for Inter-Ethnic Relations, as well as provision for using of the so- called double majority or "*Badinter* majority" for voting in a Parliament.

The Law on Local Self-Government: Article 55 of the Law stipulates that municipalities where at least 20% of the total population within the municipality – determined in the last population census – are members of a certain community, a Commission for Inter-Community Relations (CICR) shall be established. The Commission shall be composed of an equal number of representatives from each community represented in the municipality. The Commission shall consider issues relating to relations between the communities represented in the municipality and provide opinions and suggestions on ways to address them. The municipal Council is obliged to consider the opinions and proposals.

The Law on primary school: This law guarantees communities' right to education in their mother tongue as well as the right to appoint teachers who can teach pupils from the various communities in their mother tongue. Handling of pedagogical documentation in languages other than Macedonian for members of the various communities; the publishing and use of pedagogical textbooks in the language of the various communities; as well as the participation of members of the communities in commissions for evaluation of textbooks, are also guaranteed by this law.

The Law on secondary education: The Law regulates the organization, functioning and management of secondary education. The right to education in a national minority language is guaranteed. So is the issuing of certification of national minority language education and the approval of pedagogical textbooks in minority language.

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The Law on textbooks for primary and secondary education: The Law governs the production and approval of textbooks for primary and secondary education. Monitoring and assessment of the use of these textbooks in educational activities is also regulated.

Law on culture*:* The Law determines those elements of culture that are considered as fundamental values of the state. One of the priorities is "providing conditions for realization and protection of cultural identity of communities" in the Republic of North Macedonia.

Law on the use of languages*:* The Law regulates the use of community languages spoken by at least 20% of population at the national level or in the various units of local self-government.

Law on the use of flags of the communities in Republic of North Macedonia: The Law regulates the manner in which the communities in North Macedonia can use flags for expressing their identity and characteristics in public, official and private life.

Law on Prevention and Protection from Discrimination: This Law prohibits discrimination across all sectors (employment, education, housing, services) based on the following grounds: race, skin color, national and ethnic origin, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, belonging to a marginalized group, language, citizenship, social background, education, religion or religious belief, political or other belief, disability, age, family or marital status, property, health status, personal status; or any other ground. The law aligns the national legislation with the EU standards to ensure equal rights for all citizens.

Law on holidays: To further promote the rights of the religious and national communities in the country, this Law enables the communities to observe their respective holidays.

Law on Audio and Audiovisual Media Services: Improvement and protection of the cultural identity, the languages and traditions of the communities, respect for the differences among them, as well as promotion of the culture of public dialogue are stipulated among the purposes of the Law. In this sense: it prescribes these values as part of the principles to be respected by the audio and audiovisual media services while performing their work; it stipulates the number of radio and TV services in the languages of the communities aired by the Public Service Broadcaster (PSB) with special emphasis on the role of the PSB for nurturing and improving the knowledge and understanding of the cultural identity of communities as well as strengthening the mutual understanding and tolerance among the communities.

3.3. Institutional Framework

The relevant institutional framework in charge of implementation of the above-described legal framework is consisted of the following institutions and/or bodies:

The Committee for Inter-Community Relations: established based on Amendment XII of the Constitution, which refers to Article 78, the Committee considers issues of inter-community relations in the Republic and makes appraisals and proposals for their solution. The Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia is obliged to consider the opinions and proposals of the Committee.

Ministry for Inter-Community Relations: it is mandated to *inter alia* promote the rights and identities of community members, monitor language rights and inter-community relations at all levels, prepares reports and recommendations for the Government and relevant bodies and supports

fair representation in employment. The Ministry also includes Directorates dedicated to advancing education and promoting the culture of the communities.

The Agency for Community Rights Realization: with main objective for realization, promotion, protection and supervision of the realization of the rights of members of communities that constitute less than 20% of the population of the Republic of Macedonia, guaranteed by the Constitution, promoting mutual understanding and tolerance of all communities in order to maintain, nurture and strengthen social cohesion in the Republic of North Macedonia. The Agency monitors the implementation of laws related to the rights of communities that constitute less than 20% of the population, as well as the implementation of activities related to the promotion and protection of the rights of members of communities. The Agency cooperates with non-governmental and other organizations dealing with the rights of communities, as well as with local self-government units, and by providing opinions and recommendations participates in resolving issues concerning the realization of the rights of members of communities through the **Participatory Forum** - an informal, advisory and consultative body composed of representatives of citizen associations from the communities and representatives of state administration bodies and relevant institutions.

The Commissions for Inter-Community Relations (CICR): Article 55 of the Law for Local Self-Government stipulates the creation of the Commission for Inter-Community Relations in municipalities where at least 20% of the total population in the municipality (according to the last census of population), belong to a certain community, a CICR has to be established. A CICR contains an equal number of representatives from all the communities that are living within the municipality. A Statute in the municipality regulates the election of members to the CICR. The Commission overviews issues of concern for inter-community relations. Municipality Councils are obliged to consider the opinions and proposals of the CICRs when making decisions.

Ombudsman Office: The Constitution and the Law on the Ombudsman regulate the rights and responsibilities of the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman is responsible for protecting the constitutional and legal rights of citizens and other persons when violated by acts, actions and omissions by state bodies and other bodies and organizations with public authority. The Ombudsman shall take actions and measures to protect the principles of non-discrimination and equitable representation of communities at the state level, in bodies of local self-government and public institutions.

Commission for Prevention and Protection from Discrimination: The Commission for Prevention and Protection from Discrimination is an autonomous and independent body that works in accordance with the competences established by the Law on Prevention and Protection from Discrimination (LPPD) in the direction of realizing its competences, affirming human rights in society and building credibility. It consists of 7 members elected by Parliament.

The Inter-Ministerial Body for Human Rights established by Decision of the Government in 2012 (Official Gazette 55/12), it is responsible for strengthening coordination among the competent ministries and government institutions in the field of human rights in the country. It facilitates the exchange of information and data, ensures the implementation of recommendations issued by relevant UN committees, the Council of Europe,

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the European Union, and other international organizations, and proposes measures to improve the national legal framework on human rights. Additionally, it submits recommendations to the Government aimed at advancing the protection and promotion of human rights in the country.

The National Coordination Body for Monitoring Non-Discrimination and the Implementation of Laws, By-laws and Strategic documents in this Area was established by Decision of the Government from March 2018; and is undated with a Government Decision from 2025. The body is composed of Coordinator, deputy coordinator, 63 members, representatives of state institutions, local self-government units, associations, trade unions, employers' associations, independent experts. The National Coordinating Body has several responsibilities. It promotes the concept of equality and non-discrimination across all public institutions by proposing annual measures. It monitors how this concept is integrated into sectoral policies in cooperation with social partners and relevant institutions. It tracks the progress of harmonizing national laws with EU legislation and European standards on equality and non-discrimination. It reviews periodic reports from state institutions and oversees the implementation of laws, bylaws, and strategic documents in this field. It also monitors international recommendations and sets annual priorities.

4. Monitoring and evaluation

The process of monitoring and evaluation of the Action Plan will be conducted through a transparent and inclusive process. It shall be conducted by the Inter-Ministerial body for Human Rights, established by the Government with a Decision in 2012 (Official Gazette 55/12), coordinated and chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade. This body work is regulated by Rules of Procedure and is composed by representatives of institutions with competences in protection and promotion of human rights, including those responsible for implementation of measures and activities of the Action Plan.[6]

In order to ensure consistent monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of this Action Plan, the current composition of the body and the Rules of Procedure shall be amended (See Specific objective 1), to include all responsible institutions designated by this Action Plan as well as other relevant stakeholders.

The competences of the body are to strengthen the internal coordination amongst all competent governmental institutions in the area of human rights. Also, it facilitates the exchange of information and data, ensures the implementation of recommendations issued by relevant UN committees, the Council of Europe, the European Union, and other international organizations, and proposes measures to improve the national legal framework on human rights. Additionally, it submits recommendations to the Government aimed at advancing the protection and promotion of human rights in the country.

The Inter-Ministerial Body will meet and review the implementation of the Action Plan at least two times per year. Before the meetings, the responsible institutions will need to submit reports for the implementation of the measures. The Inter-Ministerial Body will take stock of the

[6] The current composition of the Inter-Ministerial body for Human Rights: chair-person Minister of Foreign Affairs, representatives from the following institutions: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of education and science, Ministry of Health, Secretariat for EU Affairs, Secretariat for implementing of the Ohrid-Framework Agreement, Ombudsman, Commission for relations with religious communities and religious groups, State Statistics Office, Direction for Data Protection, Agency for realization of the rights of the communities, Broadcasting Council.

progress of the implementation of the Action Plan, and will adopt a report, which shall include possible recommendations, proposals and overall assessment of the implementation.

These reports will be submitted to the Government and to the relevant working groups within the national negotiating structure for EU negotiations.

To ensure inclusiveness in the process of monitoring and evaluation, the Agency for Community Rights Realization, prior to the regular meetings of the Inter-Ministerial Body will convene sessions of the Participatory Forum with the representatives of the associations of the communities, where the implementation of measures of the Action Plan will be reviewed. The Forum will adopt conclusions and recommendations, which will be presented to the Inter-Ministerial Body and duly taken into consideration in its regular reporting.

The Council of Europe expertise and support will be included in the work of the Inter-ministerial body and in the Participatory Forum related to implementation of the Action Plan, thus ensuring that implementation is in line with the relevant standards in this area.

5. Funds for Implementation

The implementation of this Action Plan shall receive adequate, predictable and sustainable resources. The main source of financing shall be provided by the Governement, mainly through the existing budget programmes and budget lines of the responsible ministries, agencies and other public institutions that are targeted with this Action Plan. It is important to note that many of the measures and activities build upon ongoing work and planned activities of these institutions..

The Government will ensure that the Action Plan is financially feasible through adequate allocations in the regular annual budgeting process. Where appropriate, State Budget resources may be complemented by EU assistance, Council of Europe support, international donor contributions and other lawful sources, in line with national legislation.

5.1 Costing allocation and financing overview

During the phase of governmental adoption of this Action Plan, a short and practical costing and financing overview will be prepared in a participatory way with all responsible institutions. This overview will then be annexed to the Action Plan and updated annually based on institutions' feedback incorporated in the bi-annual implementation reports by the Inter-Ministerial Body for Human Rights.

5.2 Annual planning and financial accountability

Each institution designated as institution in charge of the implementation of the specific activities/measures of the Action Plan, shal, as part of its annual work planning and budget preparation include the activities under its mandate in its annual work programme and budget submission, and clearly indicate which programme and budget line will be used (e.g. staffing, trainings, outreach, materials, IT/data, research, grants/projects). Furthermore, they will be responsible to regularly report on executed spending linked to this Action Plan as part of the process of monitoring of

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the implementation of this Action Plan. The Inter-Ministerial Body for Human Rights shall consolidate this information and include a short financing overview in the bi-annual implementation reports.

5.3 Fair and inclusive access to project-based support

The Fund for the implementation of special programmes and projects for the realization and promotion of the rights of the members of the communities and the promotion of inter-ethnic relations and social cohesion (the Fund) within the Agency for Community Rights Realization, which was established in 2009 as per the Law on the rights of the communities that are less than 20% of the population, shall receive additional funding from the state budget (see Measure 1.8, Activity 1.8.5). Access to all financial resources through the Fund shall be fair, transparent and inclusive, ensuring equal opportunities for all communities in accordance with the Law on the rights of the communities and in line with the established international standards.

6. Table of the Action Plan

GENERAL OBJECTIVE: **Strengthening community rights and promoting sustainable social cohesion in North Macedonia's interethnic society at both local and national levels, grounded in individual rights and interculturalism**

Specific objective 1: Further strengthening of the preventive mechanisms aimed at combating discrimination in North Macedonia					
Indicators of the results at the level of the specific goal	Measurement unit	Source of verification	Base value	Base year	Targeted value in 2028
Strengthened capacities of the Ombudsman in the area of prevention and protection against discrimination in terms of human resources and budget	Systematization Act of job positions/Number of Administrative service employees % of Increased Annual budget	The annual Report of the Ombudsman	2	2025	4
Strengthened capacities of the Commission for Prevention and Protection against Discrimination	Systematization Act of job positions /Number of Administrative service employees	Annual Reports of the Commission for 2024 and 2026	17 out of 46 (37%) administrative staff filled	2025	55% of the systematised administrative staff positions filled

in terms of human resources /job systematization act and budget	% of Increased Annual budget	ECRI reports for 2023 and 2026 and suggestions Report of CoE Commissioner for Human Rights and the Fifth (Sixt) Opinion of the Advisory Committee on the FCNM	32.000.000,00 MKD Denars budget		2% increase of the Annual budget
National antidiscrimination legislative framework further improved	Antidiscrimination legislation aligned with the EU acquis, international standards and recommendations	Analysis for harmonisation of the national legal framework with EU aquis	Further alignment needed	2024	Aligned
Inclusive and efficient monitoring end evaluation of this Action Plan	Amended Government decision on the composition of the Inter-Ministerial body for Human Rights and Updated Rules of Procedure	Official Gazette	Government Decision in 2012, (Official Gazette 55/12)	2025	Amended Government decision on the composition of the Inter-Ministerial body for Human Rights and Updated Rules of Procedure

Measure 1.1: Further improvement of the antidiscrimination legislative framework in North Macedonia in part dealing with the protection of persons belonging to the communities. (reference measure RoLRDM III F Non-discrimination)	
Implementation period: 2026-2028	Type of the measure: legislative
The legislation to be amended to implement the measure:	Law on the Ombudsman, Criminal code, National Strategy for Equality and Non-Discrimination for the period 2027-2032, National action plans (2026-2028) (priority areas: antigypsism, Health and education) based on the Strategy for Roma inclusion (2022-2030), Law on Equitable Representation, Law on Associations and Foundations, Law on Prevention and Protection from Discrimination

Indicators of the results	Measurement unit	Source of verification	Base value	Base year	Targeted value in 2028
Antidiscrimination legislation aligned with the *EU acquis*, international standards and recommendations including securing internal coherence of domestic antidiscrimination legislation. Adopted CoE's CM Recommendations on combating hate speech and hate crime: Prohibition of public incitement to violence, hatred, or discrimination based on race/ethnicity, religion, belief, or nationality; Criminalisation of racially or religiously-motivated public insults, threats, or defamation; provisions against instigating, aiding or abetting such offences; and the prohibition of racial profiling	Positive assessment	Analysis for harmonisation of the national legal framework with *EU aquis* and international standards and recommendations	Further alignment needed	2026	Aligned
Amendments to the Law on the Ombudsman adopted in line with the Paris Principles for the status of national institutions and with the Venice Principles for the Ombudsman institutions for the purpose of acquiring the status A of the Ombudsman	Positive assessment	ECRI / FCNM report Decision published in the Official Gazette	In Parliamentary procedure	2026	2028

National Strategy for Equality and Non-Discrimination for the period 2027-2032	Yes/No	Ministry of Social Policy, Demographics and Youth	No	2026	2026
Adopted National action plans (2026-2028) (priority areas: anti-Gypsism, Health and education) based on the Strategy for Roma inclusion (2022-2030)	Yes/No	Ministry of Social Policy, Demographics and Youth	No	2025	2026

Activity:	Institution in charge of implementation	Implementing Partners	Implementation period
1.1.1. Antidiscrimination legislation aligned with the EU acquis and other international standards and inclusion of anti-discriminatory provisions: **Adopt new Law on Equitable Representation** **Law on Ombudsman** **Adopt new Law on Associations and Foundations**, in line with the EU acquis and European standards to strengthen the control during the registration of associations, in broad consultation process with civil society and consultation with the Venice Commission Law on Prevention and Protection from Discrimination including alignment with Directive (EU) 2024/1499 and Directive (EU) 2024/1500 on minimum standards for equality bodies	Government Ministry of Justice Ministry of Social policy, Demographics and Youth	National Coordinating Body established to monitor and supervise the implementation of the National Strategy for Equality and Non-Discrimination Commission for Prevention and Protection against Discrimination Office of the Ombudsman Participatory Forum	III Q 2026- IV -Q 2028

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1.1.2 National legislation fully aligned with the standards set in the Law on Prevention and Protection from Discrimination	Ministry of Social Policy, Demographics and Youth Commission on the Prevention and the Protection against Discrimination	National Coordinating Body established to monitor and supervise the implementation of the National Strategy for Equality and Non-Discrimination Participatory Forum	2028
1.1.3 Amendments to the Law on the Ombudsman adopted in accordance with the Paris Principles Relating to the Status of National Institutions and the Venice Principles on Ombudsman Institutions, with the Aim of Obtaining A-Status for the Ombudsman	Assembly of North Macedonia Ministry of Social policy, demographics and youth	Office of the Ombudsman	2026
1.1.4. Decision of the Government for amending the current composition of the Inter-Ministerial Human Rights Body and Updated Rules of Procedure	Government Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade	Inter-Ministerial Human Rights Body	III Q 2026

Measure 1.2.: Further alignment of the national legislation with the international and European standards referring to the right of self-identification of person belonging to communities					
Implementation period: 2026-2028			Type of the measure: legislative		
The legislation to be amended to implement the measure:			Law on Equitable Representation		
Indicators of the results	Measurement unit	Source of verification	Base value	Base year	Targeted value
Adoption of the Law on Equitable Representation, aligned with the self-identification standards, and	Yes/No	Official gazette, Opinion of the Venice Commission	In government procedure	2025	2028

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introducing required changes to other legislative acts and bylaws					

Activity:	Institution in charge of implementation	Implementing Partners	Implementation period
1.2.1. Adoption of the Law on Equitable Representation by the Assembly of North Macedonia	Government	Deputy President of the Government in charge of good governance policies	2027
1.2.2. Aligning the laws in the area of state and public administration and public sector with the enacted Law on equitable representation (such as Law on Civil Servants; Law on Public Sector Employees)	Ministry of public administration	Deputy President of the Government in charge of good governance policies	2027
1.2.3. Adoption of by-laws, as provided in the Law on equitable representation, with a view to establish specific criteria for equitable representation with full respect of the merit-based system.	Government	Deputy President of the Government in charge of good governance policies	2027

Measure 1.3.: Strengthening the independence and institutional capacity of the Commission for Prevention and Protection against Discrimination to increase its effectiveness in dealing with the prevention and protection of persons belonging to the communities (reference measure RoL RDM III. F. Non-discrimination)

Implementation period: 2026-2028	Type of the measure: capacity building

Indicators of the results	Measurement unit	Source of verification	Base value	Base year	Targeted value in 2028
Strengthened t capacities of the Commission through filling of open vacancies according to the new Systematization Act.	% of filled vacancies Systematization Act	Annual report of CPPD	37%	2025	55%

			Old Systematization Act		New Systematization Act adopted
Increased professional capacities through training on international human rights standards, ECtHR jurisprudence and national legal framework and mechanism on antidiscrimination and hate crime and hate speech, including through joint training sessions with police officers, prosecutors and judges.	% CPPD staff trained % police officers % judges % judicial associates % prosecutors % prosecutorial associates	Annual report of CPPD	20%	2025	80%
Improved visibility of the Commission	Number of meetings/workshops organised (per year) with representatives of the communities Organization of awareness-raising campaigns with the Football Federation of Macedonia aimed at reducing prejudice in relation to different ethnic communities	Annual report of CPPD	0 NO	2025	2 YES
Regular and effective coordination between CPPD and the Ombudsman	Regular meetings per year on concerning the topic of community rights protection	Annual Reports of CPPD	0	2025	4 per year
Activity:		Institution in charge of implementation	Implementing Partners		Implementation period

1.3.1. Preparation of a new functional analysis and adoption of new Systematization Act	Commission for Prevention and Protection against Discrimination	Ministry of Finance Ministry of Public Administration	III Q2026- IIQ 2027
1.3.2 Strengthen the administrative capacities of the Commission on the Prevention and the Protection against Discrimination through regular employment of additional staff.	Commission for Prevention and Protection against Discrimination	Ministry of Finance	IIIQ 2026- IVQ 2028
1.3.3. Strengthening of the independence and effectiveness of the Commission by ensuring the necessary budgetary resources in line with the ECRI recommendation.	Commission on the Prevention and the Protection against Discrimination	Ministry of Finance	III Q 2026- IV Q 2028
1.3.4. Providing continuous training for the Commission's staff on international human rights standards and ECtHR jurisprudence, including through joint training for police officers, prosecutors and judges.	Commission on the Prevention and the Protection against Discrimination	Academy for Judges and Prosecutors Ministry of Interior Relevant international organizations, such as OSCE, EU, CoE and others	IV Q 2026 - IV Q 2028
1.3.5. Increasing the visibility of the Commission in order to improve access to justice for victims of discrimination including through awareness-raising campaigns, field visits and cooperation local self-governments.	Commission on the Prevention and the Protection against Discrimination	Football Federation of Macedonia AAAVMS Relevant international organizations, such as OSCE, EU, CoE or others CSOs	III Q 2026- IV Q 2028
1.3.6. Ensuring regular and effective coordination between the Office of the Ombudsman and the Commission, through coordination meetings and cooperation in raising awareness and capacity building activities.	Commission on the Prevention and the Protection against Discrimination	Ombudsman Office	III Q 2026- IV Q 2028

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Measure 1.4. Awareness raising on non-discrimination of persons belonging to the communities and the promotion of equality (reference measure RoL RDM III F Non-discrimination)					
Implementation period: 2026-2028			Type of the measure: awareness raising		
Indicators of the results	Measurement unit	Source of verification	Base value	Base year	Targeted value in 2028
Enhanced awareness on non-discrimination and promotion of equality	Number of sectors targeted and number of people trained	Annual report of CPPD	0 activities 0 sectors	2025	1. health sector 2. education sector 3. private sectors employers 4. public administration 5. law enforcement 6. judiciary (National and local)

Activity:	Institution in charge of implementation	Implementing Partners	Implementation period
1.4.1. Developing non-discrimination awareness raising campaigns on persons belonging to the communities in health sector, education sector, private sectors employers, public administration, law enforcement sector and judiciary.	National Co-ordination Body on Anti- discrimination	CSOs	IIIQ 2026-III Q 2028
1.4.2. Implementing non-discrimination awareness raising campaigns on persons belonging to the communities in health sector, education sector, private sectors employers, public administration.	National Co-ordination Body on Anti- discrimination	CSOs	IV Q 2026- III Q 2028

Measure 1.5. : Strengthening of the professional capacities of police officers, judges and prosecutors for handling discrimination cases with focus on discrimination of persons belonging to communities (reference measure RoLRDM III. F. Non-discrimination)					
Implementation period: 2026-2028		Type of the measure: capacity building			
Indicators of the results	Measurement unit	Source of verification	Base value	Base year	Targeted value in 2028
Trained police officers to recognize, investigate and properly enter data on discrimination cases in the case management system, including data on the cases of discrimination of persons belonging to the communities.	Number of police officers trained	Report on the implementation of this AP	0	2025	120
Trained prosecutors, judges and associates to recognise, investigate, prosecute, punish and properly enter data on discrimination, including on cases of discrimination of persons belonging to the communities.	Number of judges, prosecutors and their assistants trained	Report on the implementation of this AP	0	2025	80

Activity:	Institution in charge of implementation	Implementing Partners	Implementation period
1.5.1. Training the police officers in order to increase their skills to recognise, investigate and prevent ethnic profiling, and act upon discrimination cases in the case management system, including data on the cases of discrimination of persons belonging to the communities.	Ministry of Interior Centre for training of the MOI	National Co-ordination Body on Anti-discrimination CSOs Academia	III Q 2026- IV Q 2028
1.5.2. Training the prosecutors, judges and associates in order to increase their skills to recognise, investigate, prosecute, punish and properly enter data on discrimination, including on cases of discrimination of persons belonging to the communities.	Academy for Judges and Public Prosecutors	National Co-ordination Body on Anti-discrimination CSOs	III Q 2026- IV Q 2028

		Academia	
1.5.3. Continuous monitoring of the prosecutorial and court jurisprudence in discrimination cases through annual reports including the disaggregated data on discrimination of persons belonging to the communities and the recommendations for improvement.	Ministry of Justice	Academia CSO The Network for Prevention of Discrimination	III Q 2026-IV Q 2028

Measure 1.6.: Ensuring continuous promotion of interculturalism					
Implementation period: 2026-2028		Type of the measure: capacity building/awareness raising			
The legislation to be amended to implement the measure:					
Indicators of the results	Measurement unit	Source of verification	Base value	Base year	Targeted value in 2028
Provided support for the realization of projects and an increased level of intercultural dialogue in the country for the communities less than 20%	Number of projects approved/financed	The Annual Report of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism	31 projects 7.906.300,00 MKD Denars	2025	+/-40 projects +/- 10.000.000,00 MKD Denars 25% increased

Activity:	Institution in charge of implementation	Implementing Partners	Implementation period
1.6.1. Support for the realization of projects and initiatives aimed at the development of intercultural dialogue and the promotion of the culture of the communities	Ministry of Culture and Tourism	Cultural institutions and other Government institutions, Association of the Units of Local Self-Government, CSOs and individuals	III Q 2026-IVQ 2028

Measure 1.7 : Further improvement of the linguistic rights of persons belonging to the communities					
Implementation period: 2026-2028		Type of the measure: legislative and capacity builidng			
Indicators of the results	Measurement unit	Source of verification	Base value	Base year	Targeted value in 2028
The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages ratified	Yes/No	The Official Gazette	No	2025	Yes
The Agency for implementation of languages spoken by at least 20% of the citizens strengthened in terms of human resources (employment of additional professionals and administrative staff based on the job systematization act)	Staff employed	Annual report of the Agency	Planed/employed Total: 78/36 sector for translation and proofreading (25/12) Sector for planning, coordination and development (17/6)	2023	sector for translation and proofreading (25/17) Sector for planning, coordination and development (17/10)

Activity:	Institution in charge of implementation	Implementing Partners	Implementation period
1.7.1. Ratification of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and further Harmonization of national legislation.	Assembly of North Macedonia	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade Agency on the implementation of the language that is spoken by at least 20% of the citizens of the Republic of North Macedonia Agency of Community Rights Realisation	2028

		Inter-Community Relations Committee	
1.7.2. Developing a mechanism for continuous employment of additional translators and bilingual/multilingual staff at institutions at national and local level through providing necessary budgetary means and to ensure the availability of key forms and documents in the languages of communities, where applicable.	Agency for Community Rights Realisation Agency on the implementation of the language that is spoken by at least 20% of the citizens of the Republic of North Macedonia	Ministry of Finance	IV Q 2027
1.7.3. Strengthening of the Agency for implementation of languages spoken by at least 20% of the citizens through the employment of additional professionals and administrative staff and providing necessary budgetary means.	Agency for implementation of languages spoken by at least 20% of the citizens	Ministry of Finance	IQ 2027-IV Q 2028

Measure 1.8.: Strengthening social cohesion in the society through development of the equal opportunities of communities					
Implementation period: 2026-2028		Type of the measure: policy and capacity building			
Indicators of the results	Measurement unit	Source of verification	Base value	Base year	Targeted value in 2028
Increased number of Commissions for Intercommunity Relations established in the local self-governments with less than 20% representation	Number of Commissions where eligible/in accordance to the Law	Report of the Ministry of Local Self-Government Reports on implementation of this Action Plan OSCE reports	TBD	2025	TBD

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Strengthening capacities of the Agency for Community Rights Realization in terms of human resources and budget	Systematization Act for job positions /Number of Administrative service employees in the Agency % of Increased Annual budget	Annual Reports of the Agency	18 out of 45 (40%) administrative staff filled Budget 2025 17.6M MKD	2025	Budget 24M MKD +12.5M MKD
Providing consistent budget support for the sessions of the Participatory Forum	Organization of up to three Forums per year	Annual Reports of the Agency	2	2025	3 Participatory Forums per year
Increasing the budget support for programmes and project activities of the associations of citizens belonging to the communities below 20%	Number of projects financed annually Amount of budget allocated (per year)	Annual Reports of the Agency	100.000 MKD	2025	20 per year 12.5M MKD
Promotion of the visibility of the Agency and its mandate	Number of field visits, promotional campaigns and events Improved web site of the Agency	Annual Reports of the Agency	4	2025	8-10 per year

Activity:	Institution in charge of implementation	Implementing Partners	Implementation period
1.8.1. Strengthening the institutional capacities of the Agency for Community Rights Realization – human resources and budget	Agency for Community Rights Realization	Ministry of Finance Ministry of Public Administration	III Q 2026 - IV Q 2028

1.8.2. Strengthening the Participatory Forum of the Agency through consistent budget support	Agency for Community Rights Realization	Ministry of Finance CSOs	IIIQ 2026 - IV Q 2028
1.8.3 To strengthen the Participatory Forum through revisions of the Methodology of the Participatory Forum and allocation of funds for at least 2 annual meetings.	Agency for Communities Rights Realisation	Ministry of Finance CSOs	II Q 2026 - IV Q 2028
1.8.4. Enlarging of the Participatory Forum with new Members to Include Representatives of other ethnic communities in the country	Agency for Community Rights Realisation	Participatory Forum	IIIQ 2026
1.8.5. Increased budget support for the Fund for the implementation of special programmes and projects for the realisation and promotion of the rights of the members of the communities and the promotion of inter-ethnic relations and social cohesion	Agency for Community Rights Realization	Ministry of Finance EU, Council of Europe, international donors, other sources	IIIQ 2026 – IVQ 2028
1.8.6 Promotion of the visibility of the Agency through promotional campaigns, events and field visits to the units of local self-government; Improved web site of the Agency	Agency for Community Rights Realization	Association of the Units of Local Self-Government Media CSOs	IIIQ 2026 - IV Q 2028 IIIQ 2026 – IV 2028
1.8.7 Encourage the process of establishing and functioning of the commissions for intercommunity relations within the local self-governments following the good practices in local self-governments that have already established commissions.	Local Self Governments Association	Ministry of Local Self-Government	IIQ 2026- IV Q 2028
1.8.8 To increase support to programmes that build employable skills for communities less than 20%, particularly women and persons at higher risk of unemployment, as multiple vulnerable persons.	Ministry of Economy and Labor	Agency for Employment Implementation of the Operational plan for employment and active employment measure	IIIQ 2026 - IV Q 2028

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Specific objective 2: Improvement of mechanisms of protection with a special focus on the fight against hate speech against persons belonging to the communities					
Institution in charge of implementation and reporting: Ministry of justice and Ministry of interior, reporting: Ministry of justice, Public prosecutor office,					
Indicators of the results at the level of the specific goal	Measurement unit	Source of verification	Base value	Base year	Targeted value in 2028
Increased capacities of Judiciary and Public prosecution in handling and prosecuting hate speech cases	Updated Annual Programme of the Academy of judges and prosecutors in handling and prosecution hate speech cases including against persons belonging to communities	Annual Report of the Academy of Judges and Public Prosecutors	Current Annual Programme	2025	Updated Annual Programme
Increased capacities of the Law Enforcement Agencies with regard to identifying and processing racial and ethnic motivated violence and hate speech	Number of police officers trained annually	OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR): Monitors hate crimes across member states, offering tools and guidance to improve national responses. European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA): Conducts research and provides data on discrimination and hate crimes within the EU, aiding in policy development.	2000	2018	100%
Improved methodology aimed at data collecting and increasing accuracy of official statistics on hate speech cases (disaggregated by the	Yes/No	Annual reports of the State Prosecutors Office	No	2025	Yes

grounds for protection and by communities)		Annual reports on the work of courts			
Ensure full transparency of court proceedings in hate speech cases, in compliance with national legislation, international standards and fair trial guarantees, including the presumption of innocence.	Press releases or public information materials on ongoing and/or concluded hate speech cases per year, ensuring anonymization and respect for fair trial rights	The State Prosecutors Office and Courts online media channels CSO`s reports	Partially met	2025	Fully met

Measure 2.1. : Prevention of hate speech against persons belonging to communities in public discourse through the strengthening capacities of journalists and media					
Implementation period: 2026-2028		Type of the measure: capacity building			
Indicators of the results	Measurement unit	Source of verification	Base value	Base year	Targeted value in 2028
Increased knowledge and skills of journalists in traditional, online and social media to recognise, report and prevent hate speech and hate crime against persons belonging to the communities.	Number of journalists trained	Reports by the Association of Journalists and Council of Media Ethics of Macedonia	0	2025	60
Activity:		Institution in charge of implementation	Implementing Partners		Implementation period

2.1.1. Developing of the Training Toolkit in the field of hate speech with a special focus on the protection of persons belonging to the communities (Program, Curricula and the Training materials) for journalists based on HELP/ECRI based online courses and the Toolkit for Human Rights Speech	Association of Journalists	Association of Public Prosecutors PR Service of the Public Prosecutor's Office	III-IV Q 2026
2.1.2. Organisation of training session for journalists aimed at strengthening their capacities to recognise and not use hate speech against persons belonging to the communities in creating media content as well as to learn how to report on such cases in media.	Association of Journalists	Association of Public Prosecutors PR Service of the Public Prosecutor's Office	I Q 2027-IV Q 2028
2.1.3. Developing and delivering trainings for judges and prosecutors on informing the public about hate speech and hate crime cases against persons belonging to the communities	Academy of Judges and Public Prosecutors	Public Prosecutor's Office PR Service Association of Public Prosecutors Association of Journalists	III Q 2026-IV Q 2028
2.1.4. Continuous updating of the diversity reporting guidelines to ensure reflection of societal diversity and interculturalism in news coverage, programming, and content production in order to prevent hate speech in media.	Council of Media Ethics of Macedonia	Association of Journalists	IQ-IV Q 2027
2.1.5. Public dissemination of information of hate speech cases by the Press Relations Service of the State Public Prosecutor's Office to ensure proper access to information for journalists and accurate reporting on these cases in media.	Press Relations Service of the State Public Prosecutor's Office	Media	III Q 2026-IV Q 2027

Measure 2.2.: Prevention of hate speech against persons belonging to the communities among public officials (Reference to Measure III.8.f) in the ROLRDM)	
Implementation period: 2026-2028	Type of the measure: legislative
The legislation to be amended to implement the measure:	- The Code of Conduct for Members of the Parliament - The Code of Conduct for the Members of the Government

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		- The Code of Conduct for civil servants			
Indicators of the results	Measurement unit	Source of verification	Base value	Base year	Targeted value in 2028
Amending the Code of Conduct for Members of the Parliament based on ECRI's General Policy Recommendation includes provisions against hate speech by members of the Parliament in the Parliament and the public discourse in general.	Yes/No	The Code of Conduct for Members of the Parliament	No	2025	Yes
Amending the Code of Conduct for the Members of the Government expressly prohibits hate speech by members of the Government and in line with ECRI's General Policy Recommendation.	Yes/No	Report on the implementation of this AP The Code of Conduct for the Members of the Government	No	2025	Yes
The Code of Conduct for civil servants in public administration expressly prohibits hate speech in line with ECRI's General Policy Recommendation.	Yes/No	The Code of Conduct for civil servants	No	2025	Yes

Activity:	Institution in charge of implementation	Implementing Partners	Implementation period
2.2.1. To amend the Code of Conduct for Members of the Parliament in order to include provisions against hate speech by members of the Parliament in the Parliament and the public discourse against persons belonging to communities.	The Parliament		2028
2.2.2. To amend the Code of Conduct for the Members of the Government in order to include provisions against hate speech by	The Government		2028

members of the Government against persons belonging to communities.			
2.2.3. To amend the Code of Conduct for civil servants in public administration in order to include provisions against hate speech.	Ministry of Public Administration		2028

Measure 2.3.: Awareness raising on the risks and harmful consequences of associated with hate speech among general population (reference measure RoLRDM III F Non-discrimination)					
Implementation period: 2026-2028		Type of the measure: awareness raising			
Indicators of the results	Measurement unit	Source of verification	Base value	Base year	Targeted value in 2028
Number of cities where the raising awareness campaigns for youths on hate speech and hate crime were implemented at the local level in 8 regions of North Macedonia.	Number of cities/regions	Report on the implementation of this AP	0	2025	8
Thematic meetings of the Commission for relationship with religious communities dedicated to prevention of hate speech and hate crime within religious groups and communities resulted in the adoption of the conclusions and recommendations on how to present challenges.	Number of meetings per year	Report on the implementation of this AP	1	2025	2
Media literacy module for formal education developed to help the public, especially youth, to recognize, resist and counter hate speech.	Yes	Bureau for Development of Education	0	2025	1

Activity:	Institution in charge of implementation	Implementing Partners	Implementation period
	Ministry for Social Policy	Association of journalists	IIIQ-2026-

2.3.1. Development and implementation of the awareness raising campaigns on hate speech within local youth communities	Demography and Youth	CSOs	IVQ 2028
2.3.2. Organisation of the thematic meetings of the Commission for Relationship with Religious Communities dedicated to prevention of hate speech within religious groups and religious communities to discuss and publicly address the present challenges	Commission for Relationship with Religious Communities and Groups	Religious communities	IIIQ 2026- IV Q 2028
2.3.3. Development and implementation of the awareness raising campaign on hate speech via online media and social media aimed at raising awareness of the general public on the risks associated with it	Ministry for Social Policy, Demography and Youth	Association of journalists CSOs	IVQ 2026 - IVQ 2028
2.3.4 Media literacy module for formal education to increase awareness amongst the youth to recognize, resist and counter hate speech.	Bureau for development of education	Ministry of Education and Science	2028

Measure 2.4 : Improving the legislative framework to enable efficient prevention and law enforcement of hate speech (Reference measure the ROLRDM III.F Non-discrimination)					
Implementation period: 2026-2028		Type of the measure: legislative			
The legislation to be amended to implement the measure:		- Law on prevention and protection against discrimination(LPPD) - Law on Media - The Law on the Ombudsman			
Indicators of the results	Measurement unit	Source of verification	Base value	Base year	Targeted value in 2028
The LPPD incorporates an explicit definition of hate speech, to divide the hate speech from other harassment actions and define the misdemeanour penalties for hate speech in line with ECRI's General Policy Recommendation No. 15 and the Council of Europe Recommendation CM/Rec (2024)16	Yes/No	LPPD	No	2025	Yes

of the Committee of Ministers to member states on combating hate speech					
Law on Media prohibits hate speech in online media as misdemeanours and provides for the responsibility of the internet intermediaries in line with the Council of Europe Recommendation CM/Rec (2024)16 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on combating hate speech	Yes/No	Law on Media	No	2025	Yes

Activity:	Institution in charge of implementation	Implementing Partners	Implementation period
2.4.1. To develop amendments to the LPPD in order to incorporate an explicit definition of hate speech, divide the hate speech from other harassment actions and define the misdemeanour penalties for hate speech in line with ECRI's General Policy Recommendation No. 15 and the Council of Europe Recommendation CM/Rec (2024)16 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on combating hate speech.	Ministry for Social Policy, Demography and Youth	National Coordinative Body Academia CSOs	IV Q 2028
2.4.2. To develop amendments to the Law on Media to introduce new provisions that prohibit hate speech in online media as misdemeanours and provides for the responsibility of the internet intermediaries in line with the Council of Europe Recommendation CM/Rec (2024)16 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on combating hate speech.	Ministry of Digital Transformation AVMU	Association of Journalists	2028

Measure 2.5: Strengthening institutional and procedural mechanisms addressing/sanctioning hate speech against persons belonging to the communities (Reference to Measure III.8.f) in the ROLRDM)

Implementation period: 2026-2028		Type of the measure: capacity building			
Indicators of the results	Measurement unit	Source of verification	Base value	Base year	Targeted value in 2028
Include hate speech as separate area within the scope of work of one of the Deputy Ombudsman	Yes/No	The annual Report of the Ombudsman	No	2025	Yes

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Designate one of the departments within the Ombudsman to deal with hate speech violations	Yes/No	The annual Report of the Ombudsman	No	2025	Yes
Develop internal guidelines within the Office of the Ombudsman to promptly react and track reported cases of hate speech against persons belonging to communities	Yes/No	The annual Report of the Ombudsman	No	2025	Yes

Activity:	Institution in charge of implementation	Implementing Partners	Implementation period
2.5.1. Include hate speech as separate area within the scope of work of one of the Deputy Ombudsman	The Office of the Ombudsman	Ministry of Finance The Office of the Ombudsman	2027
2.5.2. Designate one of the departments within the Ombudsman to deal with hate speech violations	The Office of the Ombudsman	Ministry of Finance	2028
2.5.3. Develop internal guidelines within the Office of the Ombudsman to promptly react to cases of hate speech against persons belonging to communities, including, but not limiting to the following: a) Providing advice and information on the procedures to be followed by victims of hate speech including via web portal. b) Ensuring prompt reaction and tracking of reported cases, and providing further guidance to individuals. c) Standardising the information sharing and coordination procedure with other relevant institutions that may receive or should proceed upon receiving information on cases of hate speech, such as, MoI, Public Prosecutors Office, CPPD, MFAFT, etc. d) Standardising the collection, analysis and regular publication of disaggregated data on cases of hate speech, with the CM/REC (2022)16-Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on combating hate speech art. 58-61 e) Standardising the communication policy with media and general public on cases of hate speech. f) Exchanging good practices with EU member states	The Office of the Ombudsman	Ministry of Interior Public Prosecutors Office CPPD MFAFT CSOs	2028

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2.5.4. To improve the track record in the Council on Media Ethics (CMEM) and the Registry of Professional and Ethical Online Media against online hate speech and keep up to date statistics on the cases of hate speech in media, including disaggregated data on the hate speech affecting persons belonging to the communities	Council on Media Ethics	Ministry of Digital Transformation Association of Journalists Agency for Audio and Audio-Visual Services	2027
2.5.5. Enhancing accessibility and awareness of reporting mechanism - the online application "Red Button" launched in 2015 by the Ministry of Interior, through which complaints about online hate speech, as well as hate crimes, can be submitted in a simplified manner online	Ministry of Interior	CSOs	II Q 2027
2.5.6. Establishing support mechanism providing information and psychological, administrative and legal assistance and support to victims of hate speech and hate crimes	Ministry of Justice Ministry for Social Policy, Demography and Youth	CSOs	III Q 2028
2.5.7. Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services (AVMU) continues implementing its practice for detection and sanctioning of hate speech in media services under its jurisdiction	Agency for Audio and Audio Visual Services	COE, Associations of media and journalist	Continously

Measure 2.6.: Improved capacities of police, public prosecution and courts in dealing with hate speech and hate crime cases (Reference to Measure III.8.f) in the ROLRDM)

Implementation period: 2026-2028	Type of the measure: capacity building

Indicators of the results	Measurement unit	Source of verification	Base value	Base year	Targeted value in 2028
Police officers trained to recognise and differentiate between hate crime and hate speech, investigate and properly enter data on hate crime cases against persons	Number of police officers trained	Report on the implementation of this AP Annual report of the Ministry of Interior	0	2025	120

belonging to the communities in the case management system in accordance with the international standards and most recent case-law					
Judges, prosecutors and associates trained to recognise, and differentiate between hate crime and hate speech as well as to investigate, prosecute, punish and properly enter data on hate crime cases in accordance with the international standards and most recent case-law against persons belonging to the communities in the case management system	Number of judges, prosecutors and their assistants trained	Annual Report of the Academy of Judges and Public Prosecutors	0	2025	60

Activity:	Institution in charge of implementation	Implementing Partners	Implementation period
2.6.1. Update Trainings on investigation of hate crime (Program, Curricula and the Training materials) for police officers in order to strengthen their competences for acting in the cases of hate crimes and fill the data in the case management system	Ministry of Interior Training Centre	CSOs Academia	III Q 2026- III Q 2028
2.6.2. Update Trainings on investigation, prosecution and punishment of hate crimes (Program, Curricula and the Training materials) for prosecutors and judges in order to strengthen their competences for acting in the cases of hate crimes and fill the data in the case management system	Academy for Judges and Public Prosecutors	CSOs Academia	III Q 2026- III Q 2028
2.6.3. Provide for the necessary adaptation of the case management and monitoring system in the Public Prosecution to ensure technical prerequisites for proper entry, collection, monitoring and analysis of data on hate crime cases, from the reporting, through prosecution, to the final outcome of the cases	State Public Prosecutor's Office	State Public Prosecutor's Office	III Q 2026- III Q 2028

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2.6.4. Continuous monitoring of the prosecutorial and court jurisprudence in hate crime cases through the development of the annual reports, including disaggregated data on grounds of protection and of communities	Ministry of Justice	Supreme Court State Public Prosecutor's Office CSOs Academia	III Q 2026 - IV Q 2028

Specific objective 3: Further strengthening of intercultural education in primary and secondary schools					
Indicators of the results at the level of the specific goal	Measurement unit	Source of verification	Base value	Base year	Targeted value in 2028
Intercultural and non-discriminatory criteria systematically applied in the evaluation and approval of textbooks[7]	Application of the textbook evaluation methodology including intercultural and non-discrimination criteria in the assessment of textbook manuscripts	Opinions and reports of the Bureau for Development of Education and textbook review commissions	Methodology adopted	2025	Methodology consistently applied
Availability of education in community languages and elective subjects on language and culture of	Monitoring and support for the implementation of	Data and reports of the Ministry of Education and Science	System in place	2025	Continuous support and

[7] In 2025 the Ministry of Education and Science adopted a new Methodology for the evaluation of textbooks. The methodology includes specific criteria ensuring that textbooks do not promote stereotypes or prejudice and that they reflect the multiethnic composition of the country, promote equality, respect for diversity and intercultural understanding. The Bureau for Development of Education provides expert opinions in the evaluation process, while textbook review commissions assess manuscripts in accordance with these criteria.

communities ensured and further supported[8]	teaching in community languages and elective subjects				monitoring ensured

Measure 3.1.: Further alignment of the education policy and institutional framework with relevant international standards regarding the right to education of persons belonging to communities					
Implementation period: 2026-2028		Type of the measure: legislative			
The legislation to be amended to implement the measure:		• Rulebook on the organization of work of the Ministry			
Indicators of the results	Measurement unit	Source of verification	Base value	Base year	Targeted value in 2028
Alignment of education legislation and policies with relevant recommendations of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.	Yes/No	The Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia The Advisory Committee Report	No	2025	Yes
Strengthened institutional coordination and capacity for the development and improvement of education in the languages of communities	Yes/No	Annual reports of the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry for Inter-Community Relations	No	2025	Yes

Activity:	Institution in charge of implementation	Implementing Partners	Implementation period

[8] In North Macedonia education is provided in five languages of instruction: Macedonian, Albanian, Turkish, Serbian and Bosnian across all subjects in primary and secondary education. In addition, the education system offers elective subjects such as *Language and Culture* for smaller communities, including Turkish, Serbian, Bosnian, Vlach and Romani, allowing pupils belonging to these communities to study their language and culture from grade 3 to grade 9. Even in cases where the minimum number of pupils is not met, the Ministry of Education and Science may approve smaller groups in order to ensure the effective enjoyment of the right to learn one's language and culture.

3.1.1. Review the legislation and policies related to education and introduce amendments where necessary in order to ensure alignment with relevant recommendations of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.	Ministry of Education and Science	CSOs Academia	IV Q 2026-IV Q 2028
3.1.2. Strengthen institutional coordination between the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry for Inter-Community Relations in the field of education in the languages of communities, including through appropriate institutional and regulatory measures.	Ministry of Education and Science Ministry for Inter-Community Relations	CSOs	IV Q 2026- IV Q 2028

Measure 3.2.: Strengthening access to learning the languages and cultures of communities through digital learning tools and dedicated institutional support					
Implementation period: 2026-2028		Type of the measure: capacity building			
Indicators of the results	Measurement unit	Source of verification	Base value	Base year	Targeted value in 2028
Digital learning platform for the languages and cultures of communities developed and made operational for pupils and teachers[9]	Yes/No	Reports on the implementation of the Action Plan Reports of the Bureau for Development of Education	No	2025	Yes
Centralized database of teachers involved in teaching the languages and cultures of communities established	Yes/No	Annual reports of the Ministry of Education and Science	No	2025	Yes

[9] Pupils belonging to communities in North Macedonia may learn their language and culture as an elective subject. Due to the limited availability of qualified teachers and teaching materials for smaller communities, a digital learning platform and a centralised database of teachers will be developed to support teaching and ensure wider access to quality learning resources. Funding for the platform will be ensured through the budget of the Bureau for Development of Education.

Activity:	Institution in charge of implementation	Implementing Partners	Implementation period
3.2.1 Develop and launch a digital learning platform for the languages and cultures of communities containing professionally developed teaching materials, recorded lessons and exercises for pupils and teachers.	Bureau for Development of Education / Ministry of Education and Science	CSOs Academia	III Q 2026-IV Q 2028
3.2.2 Develop professionally prepared digital learning materials and recorded lessons for the teaching of the languages and cultures of communities, aimed at supporting teaching in schools where the availability of qualified teachers and textbooks is limited.	Bureau for Development of Education	CSOs Academia	III Q 2026-IV Q 2028
3.2.3 Establish a centralised database of teachers involved in teaching the languages and cultures of communities in order to support coordination, planning and professional support for the implementation of these subjects in schools.	Bureau for Development of Education Ministry of Education and Science		III Q 2026- II Q 2028

Measure 3.3.: Supporting schools in implementing activities promoting intercultural dialogue, respect for diversity and interaction among pupils from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds

Implementation period: 2026-2028	Type of the measure: awareness raising

Indicators of the results	Measurement unit	Source of verification	Base value	Base year	Targeted value in 2028
Schools supported through the Ministry's annual call for activities promoting intercultural dialogue and interethnic integration[10]	Number of schools	Ministry of Education and Science reports / public call results	56 schools	2025	increase compared to baseline

[10] The promotion of multiculturalism, intercultural dialogue and interethnic integration in schools in North Macedonia is supported through an established legal and policy framework. Article 46 of the Law on Primary Education provides for the establishment of School Integration Teams responsible for planning and implementing activities that foster interaction, respect for diversity and cooperation among pupils from different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. These activities are included in annual school programmes and

Activity:	Institution in charge of implementation	Implementing Partners	Implementation period
3.3.1 Schools include and implement activities promoting intercultural dialogue and respect for diversity in their annual school programmes.	Primary and secondary schools	Municipalities	III Q 2026-IV Q 2028
3.3.2 School Integration Teams organize activities encouraging interaction and cooperation among pupils from different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds.	Primary and secondary schools	Municipalities	III Q 2026-IV Q 2028
3.3.3 Schools organize activities involving parents aimed at promoting understanding and respect for diversity.	Primary and secondary schools	Parents' councils; Municipalities	III Q 2026-IV Q 2028
3.3.4 The Bureau for Development of Education provides accredited training on intercultural education through the catalogue of professional development programmes for teachers.	Bureau for Development of Education	Accredited training providers	I Q 2027-IV Q 2028

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supported through public calls and funding provided by the Ministry of Education and Science. In addition, broader policy initiatives, including the Strategy for Roma Inclusion (2022–2030), as well as numerous projects implemented over the past decade in cooperation with civil society and international partners, have contributed to strengthening multicultural and intercultural education. The present Action Plan therefore builds on these existing mechanisms with the aim of further supporting and improving their implementation.