

## PAR Monitor Report North Macedonia

# PUBLIC SERVICE AND HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

2024/2025



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# IMPRESSUM

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**PAR Monitor Report North Macedonia -  
PUBLIC SERVICE AND HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

**PUBLISHER:**

**European Policy Institute - Skopje**

**AUTHORS:**

**Julijana Karai**, European Policy Institute (EPI)—Skopje

**Beba Zhagar**, European Policy Institute (EPI)—Skopje

**DESIGN:**

**Relativ**

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The WeBER3.0 team would also like to thank its main partners and associates, who have supported the project in research and other activities. Most notably, these are the SIGMA/OECD (Support for Improvement in Governance and Management),<sup>1</sup> the ReSPA (Regional School of Public Administration), and the Ministry of Public Administration, as a project associate.

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<sup>1</sup> A joint initiative of the European Union and the OECD.

## ABOUT WEBER 3.0

Building upon the achievements of its predecessors, the WeBER (2015 – 2018) and WeBER 2.0 (2019 – 2023) projects, the **Western Balkan Enablers for Reforming Public Administrations – WeBER 3.0** project is the third consecutive EU-funded grant of the largest civil society-led initiative for monitoring public administration reform (PAR) in the Western Balkans. Its implementation period is February 2023 – July 2026. Guided by the SIGMA/OECD Principles, the first two phases of the initiative laid the foundation for WeBER 3.0's ambition **to further empower civil society organisations (CSOs) to contribute to more transparent, open, accountable, citizen-centric and thus more EU-compliant administrations in the WB region.**

WeBER 3.0 continues to promote the crucial role of CSOs in PAR, while also advocating for broader citizen engagement in this process and inclusive reform measures which are user-tailored and thus lead to tangible improvements. By grounding actions in robust monitoring data and insights, WeBER 3.0 will empower civil society to more effectively influence the design and implementation of PAR. To foster collaborative policymaking and bridge the gap between aspirations and actionable solutions, the project will facilitate sustainable policy dialogue between governments and CSOs through the WeBER Platform and its National PAR Working Groups. Finally, through small grants for local CSOs, WeBER 3.0 bolsters local-level PAR engagement, amplifying the voices of citizens – the final beneficiaries of the public administrations' work.

WeBER 3.0 products and further information about them are available on the project's website at [www.par-monitor.org](http://www.par-monitor.org).

WeBER 3.0 is implemented by the Think for Europe Network (TEN), composed of six EU policy-oriented think tanks in the Western Balkans:



By partnering with the Centre for Public Administration Research (KDZ) from Vienna, WeBER 3.0 has ensured EU-level visibility.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since the last WeBER monitoring cycle, no progress has been made in this policy area; instead, a slight decline has been noted. The Government neither regularly prepares nor publishes reports on the civil service, and available data are not in open formats. However, the new Law on Administrative Servants (LAS) and the Law on Public Sector Employees (LPSE), adopted on 10 July 2025, contain provisions that may improve transparency and reporting once implemented.

The use of temporary and service contract employment continues to be high, without a system in place to monitor their numbers and duration across all institutions. A positive development is the new LPSE, which restricts temporary engagements to urgent, unforeseen activities for up to 30 days. Institutions must request candidates through the public employment service, and such hires are limited to twice per year and to a maximum of 5% of staff.

Professionalisation and merit-based recruitment continue to be carried out under the previous LAS framework, with no improvements observed in this area. The newly adopted LAS is aimed at strengthening professionalisation through principles of expertise, competence, gender equality, and equitable representation. The law improves recruitment and assessment procedures, introduces mentorship, reduces job levels in categories B and G, shortens recruitment by requiring candidates to pass the Agency for Administration (AA) exam before applying, and clarifies the AA's status. However, the actual effectiveness of the new provisions will only become evident through their implementation.

The EC's recommendation to adopt and implement legal provisions for top management services remains unaddressed, with many senior posts still held by acting managers. The draft law is currently being prepared.

There are setbacks due to a fragmented salary system and stalled reform. Some state administrative bodies continue to bypass the common system, while most civil servants remain dissatisfied with low and unfair pay. The new LAS introduces teleworking, salary supplements to retain staff, additional pay for EU/IPA-related work, and rewards for exceptional performance. However, the prompt adoption of new legislation on public administration salaries is both essential and urgent.

The Ministry of Public Administration (MPA) should ensure the effective implementation of the newly adopted LAS and LPSE, addressing issues such as temporary and fixed-term employment and reducing administrative and financial burdens on job applicants. The AA should improve transparency in selection decisions and make public announcements more citizen-friendly, with

clear job descriptions. Mandatory reporting obligations under the LAS must be fulfilled by the AA, the MPA, and the Ministry of Finance (MF), providing analytical, qualitative, and comparative data on recruitment, workforce planning, integrity, salaries, and related matters. Finally, priority should be given to the preparation and adoption of the Law on Senior Civil Service and the framework Law on Salaries, in order to address the politicisation of senior positions and the fragmented salary system in the public administration.

*The assessment of the transparency, openness and meritocracy of public service and human resource management focuses on five critical aspects - 1) transparency of statistics and reports on civil service, 2) transparency of temporary hiring in the civil service, 3) transparency and merit principle of recruitment process, 4) merit based selection and protection of top managers from undue political influence, and 5) transparency and clarity of information on the civil service remuneration. The first aspect examines the availability of statistics or reports that cover civil service structure and key elements of civil service policy and HRM. The aspect of temporary hiring focuses on conditions and limitations for temporary hiring, while also examining the application of merit-principle and the openness and transparency of the hiring procedure. The aspect devoted to the recruitment process focuses on accessibility of vacancy announcements, existence of administrative burden, equal opportunities for external candidates in the application process, institutional support to applicants, transparency of outcomes, and citizens' perception on the meritocracy of recruitment. When it comes to the top managers in the civil service, the emphasis is placed on merit-based nature of recruitment and appointment practices and the use of objective dismissal criteria, as well as on limitations on acting appointments, the extent to which appointments are protected from political influence in practice, and the competitiveness of procedures. Finally, the last aspect is devoted to transparency and clarity of the civil service remuneration system and the existence of citizen-friendly presentations on its main aspects. Findings of this report reflect the period since the publication of the PAR Monitor 2021/2022, starting from the second half of 2022, and until the end of 2024.<sup>2</sup>*

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<sup>2</sup> For 2022, only developments not captured by the PAR Monitor 2021/2022 are included.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AA	Agency for Administration
AP	Action Plan
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
FOI	Freedom of Information
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance
KIs	Key Informants
LAS	Law on Administrative Servants
LPSE	Law on Public Sector Employees
MF	Ministry of Finance
MPA	Ministry of Public Administration
PAR	Public Administration Reform
RIA	Regulatory Impact Assessment
SAO	State Audit Office
WeBER	Western Balkans Enabling Project for Civil Society Monitoring of Public Administration Reform project



# **I. WEBER PAR MONITOR: WHAT WEMONITOR AND HOW?**

## **I.1 WeBER's approach to monitoring PAR**

In line with WeBER's focus on the region's EU accession process, once the SIGMA *Principles of Public Administration* were revised in 2023, the WeBER PAR Monitor methodology was also redesigned in 2024, building on the Principles<sup>3</sup> and on SIGMA Methodology,<sup>4</sup> and complementing the monitoring by SIGMA by providing additional observations focused on transparency, inclusiveness, openness or other aspects of state administrations' work depending on PAR area in question. This revision helps maintain the focus of WeBER's recommendations on EU-compliant reforms, thus guiding the governments in the region towards successful EU accession and future membership. The main changes in the revised PAR Monitor methodology are briefly listed below.<sup>5</sup>

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3 OECD (2023), *The Principles of Public Administration*, OECD Publishing, Paris: <https://doi.org/10.1787/7f5ec453-en>.

4 Available at: <https://www.sigmaweb.org/en/publications/documents/2024/assessment-methodology-of-the-principles-of-public-administration.html>.

5 For detailed information on the scope and process of methodology revision please visit: <https://www.par-monitor.org/par-monitor-methodology/>.

**Table 1: Main changes in the PAR Monitor methodology**

### **Structure**

In order to align with the new SIGMA methodological approach, the following structural changes are introduced:

- Introduction of single indicator per PAR area, divided into sub-indicators, further consisting of several sub-indicator elements (i.e. specific criteria assessed), in order to streamline the approach and emphasise the focus on transparency, inclusiveness and openness in each PAR area.
- Introduction of types of sub-indicator elements, ensuring that all following aspects of reform are covered:
  1. Strategy and Policy,
  2. Legislation,
  3. Institutional Setup,
  4. Practice in Implementation, and
  5. Outcomes and Impact.
- Introduction of a 100-point scale, for a more nuanced assessment of progress in each PAR area.

### **Data sources**

- Introduction of interviews with “key informants”, i.e. key non-state actors engaged and familiar with the processes. These interviews serve as a data source for the “Outcomes and Impact” elements instead of the formerly implemented survey of civil society organisations.
- More systematic use of public perception survey results as a data source for “Outcomes and Impact” elements and expanding the scope of the survey to complement the assessment in five PAR areas – all except “Strategy for PAR”.
- Removal of the survey of civil servants as a data source due to persistent issues with ensuring adequate response rates across the region’s administrations.





### **PAR Monitor reporting**

- Six national PAR Monitor reports, one per PAR area (36 in total for the entire PAR Monitor), in order to facilitate timely publication and advocacy for the monitoring results rather than publishing the results of 18 months of research at the end of the process.
- Six regional Western Balkan overview reports, one per PAR area (6 in total).

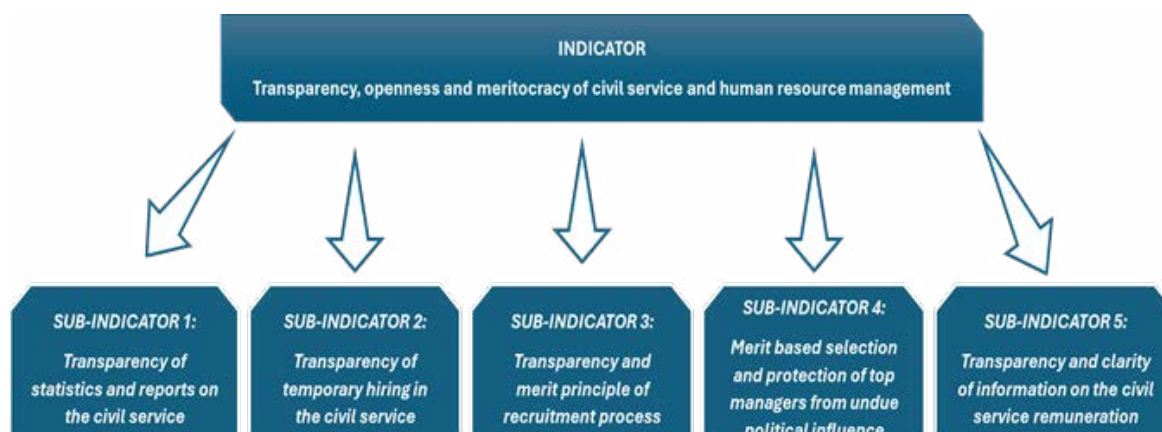
## I.2 Why and how WeBER monitors the “Public Service and Human Resource Management” area

A professional, transparent, and merit-based civil service is a cornerstone of public administration that works in the public interest. These principles are essential for safeguarding professionalism, integrity, and public trust in institutions. WeBER’s monitoring focuses on how these principles are applied in practice, beyond what is formally guaranteed in laws and strategies: from the accessibility and inclusiveness of vacancy announcements to the transparency of recruitment outcomes and the public availability of data on key aspects of the civil service. These issues directly affect the quality, responsiveness, and trustworthiness of public institutions. When recruitment is politicised, rules are unclear, or data is withheld, citizens are left with an administration that serves political interests rather than public needs. The monitoring of this area supports evidence-based advocacy for a more competent, accountable, and depoliticised civil service - one that citizens can trust to serve the public interest.

Monitoring in **the Public Service and Human Resource Management** area is based on four SIGMA Principles in this area:

-  **Principle 8:** The employment framework balances stability and flexibility, ensures accountability of public servants and protects them against undue influence and wrongful dismissal
-  **Principle 9:** Public administration attracts and recruits competent people based on merit and equal opportunities
-  **Principle 10:** Effective leadership is fostered through competence, stability, professional autonomy and responsiveness of accountable top managers
-  **Principle 11:** Public servants are motivated, fairly and competitively paid and have good working conditions

These Principles are assessed from the perspective of availability of all relevant information on different key areas of the civil service, while also examining the extent to which merit-based recruitment is present within the system, including the procedure for temporary hiring, and merit-based appointment of top managers. A focus on transparency and openness seeks to determine the extent to which relevant authorities publish information which helps interested public gain insight into crucial aspects of the system and the extent to which civil service is open to external candidates when recruiting new employees.



The monitoring period for the Public Service and Human Resource Management covers developments since the last PAR Monitor cycle, which lasted from January until November 2022. Thus, this report focuses primarily on 2023 and 2024, as well as the end-of-2022 developments not covered in the previous cycle. Although this report provides a comparison of findings with previous PAR Monitor editions, country scores are incomparable to the previous monitoring due to methodological changes.

The **first sub-indicator** focuses on the existence of statistics and reports that cover important data and key policy areas of the civil service system (such as recruitment, career development, and such). Monitoring of strategy and policy, legislation and practice aspects is performed by combining qualitative analysis of strategic documents, regulations and publicly available official data. For the assessment of outcomes and impact, researchers conduct three key informants' interviews with non-state actors who possess significant expertise in the area and/or experience participating in the analysed processes.

Table 2: Indicator elements under sub-indicator 1

Indicator element - number and title	Type
E 1.1 Strategic framework envisages improvements in transparency of basic information on civil service	Strategy and policy
E 1.2 Regulations stipulate that data on civil service and employees in the central state administration are publicly available	Legislation
E 1.3 The Government regularly publishes reports pertaining to the civil service	Practice in implementation
E 1.4 Published reports include data on employees other than civil servants in the central state administration	Practice in implementation
E 1.5 Published reports segregate data based on gender, age, and education	Practice in implementation

E1.6 Civil service data is available in open format(s)	Practice in implementation
E1.7 The government comprehensively reports on the key elements of civil service policy and HRM	Practice in implementation
E1.8 Key non-state actors consider reports on civil service policy as transparent and comprehensive	Outcomes and impact

The **second sub-indicator** assesses openness and transparency of temporary hiring in the civil service, while also looking into the application of the merit principle and the limitations to the use of temporary hiring.

Monitoring of this sub-indicator is based on the review of regulations and websites of relevant institutions, as well as official documents and data obtained through FOI requests. The assessment of the practice-type elements is conducted on a sample of most recently completed competitions for hiring temporary staff in five different central state administration bodies, i.e. 5 competition procedures for hiring fixed-term civil servants (one per body) and 5 competition procedures for hiring contracted staff (one per body), resulting in 10 procedures observed in total. For the assessment of outcomes and impact, as in the first sub-indicator, researchers conduct interviews with key informants.

Table 3: Indicator elements under sub-indicator 2

Indicator element - number and title	Type
E 2.1 Regulations stipulate conditions and limitations for hiring temporary staff	Legislation
E 2.2 Regulations stipulate openness and application of merit-principle when hiring temporary staff	Legislation
E 2.3 Procedure for hiring temporary staff is open and transparent	Practice in implementation
E 2.4 Temporary hirings are limited in practice	Practice in implementation
E 2.5 Key non-state actors consider the use of temporary hiring as transparent, limited and purposeful	Outcomes and impact

The **third sub-indicator** examines the transparency of the recruitment process and the application of the merit-principle. Specifically, the assessment focuses on the accessibility of vacancy announcements, the inclusiveness and fairness of procedures for external candidates, the level of institutional support

to applicants and of any administrative burden, as well as the availability of information on selection outcomes, including the annulment of procedures.

Monitoring of strategy and policy, legislation and practice aspects is performed by combining various data sources to maximise reliability of results. It includes qualitative analysis of strategic documents, legal acts and official data that is publicly available or obtained from responsible institutions using FOI requests. The analysis of Practice type elements under this sub-indicator is conducted on the same five ministries/central state administration bodies sampled under sub-indicator 2. For the outcomes and impact assessment, researchers conduct three key informants' interviews. Unlike the first two sub-indicators, researchers also use public perception survey results to assess outcomes and impact within this sub-indicator. The public perception survey was conducted specifically for the purposes of the 2024/2025 PAR Monitor cycle.

**Table 4: Indicator elements under the sub-indicator 3**

Indicator element - number and title	Type
E 3.1 Strategic framework envisages improvements of openness, transparency and merit principle of the recruitment process	Strategy and policy
E 3.2 Regulations stipulate openness, transparency, and merit principle of the recruitment process	Legislation
E 3.3 Vacancy announcements for public competitions are made broadly publicly available	Practice in implementation
E 3.4 Vacancy announcements for public competitions are presented in a way to motivate and attract external candidates	Practice in implementation
E 3.5 Responsible institution provides support and guidance to applicants	Practice in implementation
E 3.6 There are no unreasonable barriers for external candidates which make public competitions more easily accessible to internal candidates	Practice in implementation
E 3.7 The application procedure imposes minimum administrative/paperwork burden on candidates	Practice in implementation
E 3.8 Candidates can supplement missing documentation within a reasonable timeframe	Practice in implementation
E 3.9 Decisions and reasoning of the selection panels are made publicly available, with due respect to the protection of personal information	Practice in implementation

E 3.10 Information about annulled public competitions, including reasoning for the annulment, is made publicly available	Practice in implementation
E 3.11 Key informants consider recruitment into civil service as transparent and merit-based	Outcomes and impact
E 3.12 Citizens' perception of merit-based civil service recruitment	Outcomes and impact
E 3.13 Citizens' perception of the influence of personal connections in civil service recruitment	Outcomes and impact
E 3.14 Citizens' perception of the influence of political connections in civil service recruitment	Outcomes and impact

**The fourth sub-indicator** focuses on the merit-based selection of top managers and the existence of mechanisms for their protection from undue political influence. Specifically, WeBER examines if the recruitment and appointment practices for civil service top management are based on merit, by looking into the limitations on acting appointments, use of objective dismissal criteria, and the extent to which appointments are protected from political influence in practice.

Monitoring relies on the review of strategy and policy, legislation, institutional websites and official documents, supplemented by data obtained through FOI requests sent to the responsible institutions. The analysis of Practice type elements under this sub-indicator is conducted on the same five ministries/central state administration bodies sampled under sub-indicator 2. For the assessment of outcomes and impact, researchers conduct key informants' interviews, while public perception survey data is not used.

**Table 5: Indicator elements under the sub-indicator 4**

Indicator element - number and title	Type
E 4.1 Strategic framework envisages strengthening of professionalism of the civil service top management	Strategy and policy
E 4.2 Regulations stipulate competitive, merit-based procedures for the recruitment of civil service top management	Legislation
E 4.3 Regulations stipulate that acting appointments to top management positions are only made from within the civil service, for a limited period	Legislation

E 4.4 Regulations stipulate objective criteria for the termination of hiring of top management positions	Legislation
E 4.5 Existence of procedures on appointments to top management positions outside of the scope of the civil service legislation	Legislation
E 4.6 The merit-based recruitment for top management positions is applied in practice	Practice in implementation
E 4.7 Acting appointments are, in practice, only made from within the civil service	Practice in implementation
E 4.8 Ratio of eligible candidates per top managerial-level vacancy	Practice in implementation
E 4.9 Share of non-merit-based appointments to top management positions	Practice in implementation
E4.10 Key non-state actors consider that the selection and appointment process of top managers is merit-based and that they are protected from undue political influence	Outcomes and impact

Finally, the **fifth sub-indicator** examines the transparency and clarity of the civil service remuneration system, primarily focusing on the availability of information on salaries and its citizen-friendliness.

Monitoring of this sub-indicator is based on the review of regulations and websites of relevant institutions. For the assessment of outcomes and impact, researchers conduct key informants' interviews.

Table 6: Indicator elements under the sub-indicator 5

Indicator element - number and title	Type
E 5.1 Regulations define a simply structured remuneration system	Legislation
E 5.2 Information on civil service remuneration system is available online	Practice in implementation
E 5.3 Citizen friendly explanations or presentations of the remuneration information exist	Practice in implementation
E 5.4 Key informants consider information on the civil service remuneration system as transparent and clear	Outcomes and impact



## II. TRANSPARENCY, OPENNESS AND MERITOCRACY OF CIVIL SERVICE AND HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

This section presents the assessment results for North Macedonia. Each sub-section presents the results for one sub-indicator (five in total), beginning with a brief overview of developments since the PAR Monitor 2021/2022. This is followed by a detailed assessment of the sub-indicator elements, starting with the policy, legislation and institutional framework, then moving to the practice in implementation, and ending with outcomes and impact. Each sub-indicator assessment concludes with the graph showing the awarded points.

The graph below displays the overall results for the Public Service and Human Resource Management area in North Macedonia, measured on a scale from 0 to 100 points.

*Transparency, openness and meritocracy of civil service and human resource management (score 0-100)*



### II.1 Transparency of statistics and reports on civil service



**Principle 8:** The employment framework balances stability and flexibility, ensures accountability of public servants and protects them against undue influence and wrongful dismissal

***Awarded points per elements in sub-indicator 1: Transparency of statistics and reports on civil service<sup>6</sup>***

Indicator elements	Element type	Score
E 1.1 Strategic framework envisages improvements in transparency of basic information on civil service	Strategy and policy	0/0.5

<sup>6</sup> The first sub-indicator focuses on the following SIGMA sub-principles: The government has a clear policy on public service, and the political-level responsibility for the area is established; A central body, sufficiently empowered, effectively leads and co-ordinates the human resource management (HRM) system for the public service, provides support to public administration bodies, and monitors implementation; Public administration bodies have sufficient capacities for professional HRM; An effective information system supports HRM processes and provides data allowing for evidence based public service policy.

E 1.2 Regulations stipulate that data on civil service and employees in the central state administration are publicly available	Legislation	1/1
E 1.3 The Government regularly publishes reports pertaining to the civil service	Practice in implementation	1/3
E 1.4 Published reports include data on employees other than civil servants in the central state administration	Practice in implementation	0/3
E 1.5 Published reports segregate data based on gender, age, and education	Practice in implementation	0/3
E 1.6 Civil service data is available in open format(s)	Practice in implementation	0/3
E 1.7 The government comprehensively reports on the key elements of civil service policy and HRM	Practice in implementation	0.5/3.5
E 1.8 Key non-state actors consider reports on civil service policy as transparent and comprehensive	Outcomes and impact	0/2.5
<b>Total score for sub-indicator 1</b>		<b>2.5/19.5</b>

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*Since the previous WeBER monitoring cycle, there has been no progress in this area; in fact, a slight setback has been observed. The latest PAR Strategy does not include any measures to improve the situation. The Government does not regularly prepare or publish reports on the civil service or civil service policy, and the data that are published are not available in open formats. On 10 July 2025, Parliament adopted the new Law on Administrative Servants and the new Law on Public Sector Employees. Their implementation will be assessed in the coming period.*

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The researchers reviewed the current government strategic document on civil service and human resource management to determine whether improvements in the transparency of basic information on the civil service were envisioned. This review aimed to identify relevant sections in the analysed strategic documents that contain information on specific measures or activities, with clear assignment of responsibilities.

The second priority area of the PAR Strategy and its Action Plan (AP)<sup>7</sup> is titled “Public Service and Human Resource Management,” with the general objective of establishing a depoliticised, professional, and expert public administration. Under the first specific objective, focused on the depoliticisation of public administration, Measure 2.1.2 (Strengthening the role of the competency-based interviews in public administration recruitment procedures) includes several activities that indirectly relate to improving the transparency of basic information on the civil service:

- A 2.1.2.4 – Preparation of informative and educational video material for potential candidates applying for interviews and work in public administration, to be made publicly available.
- A 2.1.2.5 – Conducting interviews publicly, in the presence of all candidates invited for the interviews.
- A 2.1.2.6 – Publication of a report explaining each decision on the selection of the best candidate, based on evidence.

However, given that the researchers focused on the availability of basic data on the civil service, there are no measures or activities in the AP of the PAR Strategy that envisage improvements in the transparency and public availability of basic information on the civil service.

The researchers also reviewed the valid regulations in this area to determine whether there are requirements for publishing data about the civil service and employees in the central state administration, in the form of reports on civil service policy or separate statistics. In addition, the researchers noted whether regulations stipulate any exceptions to the obligation to publish information on the civil service, and the justifications for those exceptions. Namely, Article 20 of the LPSE<sup>8</sup> regulates the obligation of the MPA to prepare and publish a yearly report on the data gathered in the Register of Public Sector Employees (the Register), which it maintains:

“(1) The MPA shall prepare an annual report on data from the Register.

(2) The annual report shall contain the following data:

- number, type, name, branch of government, activity, and founder—for the public sector institution, and;
- number, groups, subgroups, categories, levels, titles, jobs, gender, age, level of education, and community affiliation—for public sector employees.

<sup>7</sup> Strategy for Public Administration Reform 2023–2030, <https://kvalitet.mioa.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/strategija-za-reforma-na-javna-administracija-2023-2030-so-akcziski-plan.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Law on Public Sector Employees (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 27/14, 199/14, 27/16, 35/18 and 198/18 and Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia no. 143/19, 14/20 and 208/24), [https://aa.mk/content/pdf/Drugi%20dokumenti/ZVJS/zakoni/zakon\\_za\\_vrabotenite\\_vo\\_javniot\\_sektor\\_0.pdf](https://aa.mk/content/pdf/Drugi%20dokumenti/ZVJS/zakoni/zakon_za_vrabotenite_vo_javniot_sektor_0.pdf)

(3) The data referred to in paragraph (2) of this Article, when possible and logical, shall be presented by cross-referencing each other.

(4) The report referred to in paragraph (1) of this Article may also contain additional data and information available to the Register, depending on the purposes determined by this Law and the regulations on personal data protection.

(5) The report shall be published on the website of the MPA no later than the end of the first quarter of the current year, for the previous calendar year.”

The new LPSE, adopted by Parliament on 10 July 2025,<sup>9</sup> stipulates that the Annual Report derived from the Register must be submitted to the Government for information no later than 31 March of the current year for the previous year, after which it is published on the website of the MPA. Hence, the publication of basic statistics about the civil service and employees is regulated, and there are no exceptions.

Furthermore, the websites of the MPA, AA, and MF were reviewed to determine whether reports dedicated to civil service policy implementation are made publicly available. The researchers concluded that the report for 2024 on the civil service has not yet been prepared or published, thus breaching the legal deadline for publishing it by “the end of the first quarter of the current year, for the previous calendar year”. The report for 2023 on the civil service was published on the MPA’s website within the legal deadline, on 31 March 2024.<sup>10</sup> The report includes the total number of public sector employees, as well as the numbers divided by type and category of body. It also presents data on gender structure, age, and education of employees in the public sector, and such data is broken down by central state administration bodies.<sup>11</sup>

However, it does not provide data by rank of civil servants, nor does it divide them into managerial and non-managerial positions. It also does not contain data on temporary employment.<sup>12</sup> The report for 2023 on the civil service was published on the MPA’s website in PDF format, and there are no datasets available in an open, machine-readable format. The national open data portal is currently unavailable due to its ongoing construction.<sup>13</sup> For this element, the researchers also reviewed the relevant websites to determine whether reports dedicated specifically to civil service policy implementation are comprehensive. The last available report on the civil service was considered only if it was not older than two calendar years preceding the measurement. Comprehensiveness is understood

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9 Law on Public Sector Employees (Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia no. 144/25), <https://www.sobranie.mk/detali-na-materijal.nsp?param=6967f788-d2d6-49db-9924-ec57f6ea78c8>

10 Report from the Register of Employees in the Public Sector for 2023, (<https://portal.mdt.gov.mk/post-documents/izvestaj-od-registarot-na-vrabotenite-vo-javniot-sektor-za-2023-godina-document-Cn84.pdf>)

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid.

13 <https://data.gov.mk/>

to mean coverage of the following key elements: 1. Planning; 2. Recruitment; 3. Performance appraisal; 4. Career development (promotions and demotions); 5. Professional development (training); 6. Remuneration (salaries); 7. Disciplinary responsibility, ethics, and integrity issues and measures. To award maximum points, all key issues had to be identified in published reports. Since no data were available online, FOI requests were sent to the MPA, the AA, and the MF.<sup>14</sup>

Regarding **planning**, the AA clarified that Annual Employment Plans fall under the competence of the MPA, which is also responsible for approving them.

On **recruitment**, the AA includes in its Annual Report information on job announcements, selection procedures, exams, appeals, and complaints. These reports also cover activities aimed at improving the AA's work, as well as user satisfaction surveys. However, the Annual Reports available online only go up to 2022; the last two reports have not yet been adopted by Parliament. The MPA, citing a Constitutional Court decision and the adoption of a new methodology, stated that it does not currently have such data.

Under the LAS, the MPA must report on **appraisals and training** for administrative servants and is responsible for maintaining the Register of Appraisals. The MPA submitted its Annual Report on Performance Appraisals in response to our FOI request. However, it was not published on its website during the reporting period. There is no available data or reporting on career development (promotions/demotions) or professional development (training).

For **remuneration**, an FOI request was sent to the MF, which was then redirected to the State Audit Office (SAO). The SAO provided the Final Report on Compliance Audit regarding "Salaries and Salary Allowances of Administrative Servants in the Republic of North Macedonia."<sup>15</sup> This is not the regular report that the MF should produce if a legal obligation existed. While the MF should have relevant data, the SAO's findings revealed the following:<sup>16</sup>

- Certain institutions regulate aspects of civil service employment via special laws and collective agreements, even when not exempt from the general law.
- Differences exist in salary levels for the same positions across institutions, and even within the same institution, due to individually determined salary supplements that vary during the year depending on available budget funds.

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<sup>14</sup> FOI requests were sent on 2 June 2025. The response from the AA was received on 20 June 2025. The FOI request sent to the MF on 2 June 2025 was rerouted to the SAO on 25 June 2025; the response from the SAO was received on 3 July 2025; the response from the MPA was received on 8 July 2025, with an additional one on 9 July 2025.

<sup>15</sup> Final Report on the Compliance Audit on the Topic "Salaries and Salary Allowances of Administrative Servants in the Republic of North Macedonia", [https://dzt.mk/sites/default/files/2024-06/16\\_KRI\\_RUS\\_Plati\\_nadomestoci\\_plati\\_FINAL.pdf](https://dzt.mk/sites/default/files/2024-06/16_KRI_RUS_Plati_nadomestoci_plati_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

- Some institutions do not consider years of service when calculating supplements.
- Internal controls within the MF are still performed manually, limiting effective oversight—especially in large institutions.

Under the PAR Strategy 2018–2022, an analysis of the legal framework was completed and proposals for new laws were prepared, but they were never submitted to the Government or Parliament. The new PAR Strategy 2023–2030, adopted in July 2023, foresees the establishment of a unified public sector pay system through the adoption of a new Law on the Public Sector Salaries System. Although a draft law has been prepared, it has not yet been adopted. To address the identified shortcomings, the SAO issued recommendations aimed at creating a competent, professional, and depoliticised administration.<sup>17</sup>

On the **disciplinary responsibility, ethics, and integrity issues and measures**, the MPA stated that there is no such report.

Three key informant (KI) interviews were conducted with civil society representatives and other non-state actors.<sup>18</sup> The aim was to gather perspectives on the public availability and coverage of basic statistics and reports on civil service policy implementation. The KIs conducted a brief on-the-spot survey to assess the transparency, regularity, and comprehensiveness of civil service reports. Responses were given on a four-point scale ('fully agree'; 'tend to agree'; 'tend to disagree'; 'fully disagree'), with scores calculated based on the share of positive responses ('fully agree' and 'tend to agree'). The survey focused on two statements:

1. Publicly available civil service reports and statistics are transparent.
2. Publicly available civil service reports and statistics are comprehensive.

The second KI stated that the quality and reliability of data in official civil service reports are largely influenced by the individual public institutions that act as data providers. As a result, there are valid concerns regarding the quality of the information, which directly affects the overall reliability of the reports. When asked whether citizens, the media, and civil society can easily access and understand these reports, the KI acknowledged that, while aggregated data provided by the MPA are generally available, the presentation often falls short. In particular, there is a lack of disaggregation by sector or institution. The KI further noted that the reports and statistics do not comprehensively cover key aspects of the civil service, such as recruitment, promotion, and staff turnover. Typically, data on the structure of the civil service are available at the end of the

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> The short on-the-spot survey with the first KI (CUP) was conducted on 9 April 2025; the interview with the second KI (Community Development Institute) was conducted on 22 April 2025; and the interview with the third KI (IDSCS) was conducted on 9 May 2025.

calendar year; however, information on recruitment and promotion is limited, and no data are provided on staff turnover. The KI also observed that critical data points are missing from publicly available civil service reports, which reduces transparency and limits understanding. With respect to the use of these data to improve human resource management policies in public administration, the KI expressed concern that the data are primarily published to meet legal requirements rather than to inform decision-making or drive policy improvements. Consequently, the usability of these reports is limited, as the data are often presented in aggregated formats that lack the necessary depth.

This KI believes there is significant potential to enhance the comprehensiveness and detail of these reports. To make meaningful improvements, institutions should start publishing their own data regularly, ensuring these reports are as detailed as possible. Many institutions already maintain detailed internal records, but these are rarely made public; making such data available would improve both the transparency and usability of the reports.

The other KI referred to the Register of Public Sector Employees report published by the MPA. Regarding the availability and transparency of these reports, it was noted that the MPA has yet to publish this year's report. In accordance with Article 20(5) of the LPSE, the reports for 2023, 2022, 2021, and 2020 were published by April of the following year for the previous year. The KI underlined that the series of Regulatory Impact Assessment reports (RIA reports) is no longer regularly updated. The MPA's website dedicated to PAR serves as a centralised hub for all new knowledge generated under the Strategy. It has been a positive example of proactive publication of reports and analyses, including meeting minutes from the PAR Special Group, the Council, and Secretariat meetings. There are not many other flagship reports by the MPA. Furthermore, there are two reports on the Quality of Institutions Index (published in 2023 and 2025), and sporadic reports on gender budgeting. There are currently no reports being produced or published regarding open data, and the open data portal is not functional (<https://data.gov.mk/>).

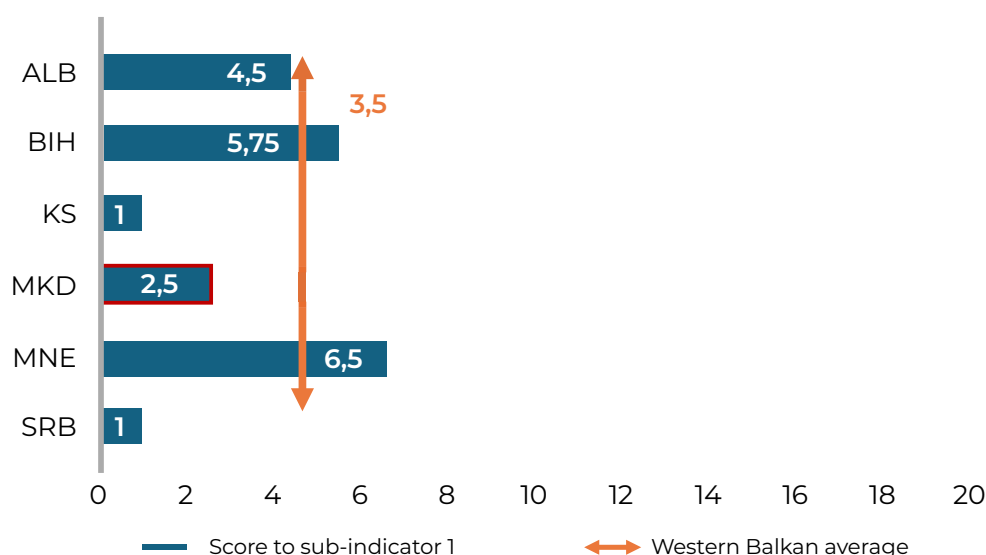
As mentioned by the KI, there are a few key data points missing in the Register, namely, the number of employees per sector. The latest report provides data on the number of institutions per sector (p. 10), but not the total number of employees across all institutions within a sector. The only available data are the number of employees in public institutions and public enterprises per sector (p. 30), which excludes other types of institutions. In addition, disaggregating data by work position groups and subgroups, as required by Article 14 of the LPSE and cross-referenced by sector, is essential for accurate analysis. Without it, workforce assessments—such as in the health sector—can be misleading, masking shortages in key roles such as doctors. Further breakdowns by gender and ethnicity would provide deeper insights into workforce composition



and equity. There are no data on the number and structure of employees in companies with partial or full state ownership. While the 2020 Annual Report from the Register briefly reported figures for fully state-owned companies, such information has since been omitted, and no comprehensive public data exist on the names, number, or size of these companies. The Annual Report is published only in PDF format. It should be accompanied by raw, anonymised data to enable further analysis and facilitate broader analytical use.

## How does North Macedonia do in regional terms?

**Sub-indicator 1: Transparency of statistics and reports on civil service (maximum score 19.5)**





## II.2 Transparency of temporary hiring in the civil service



**Principle 8:** The employment framework balances stability and flexibility, ensures accountability of public servants and protects them against undue influence and wrongful dismissal

**Awarded points per elements in sub-indicator 2: Transparency of temporary hiring in the civil service**<sup>19</sup>

Indicator elements	Element type	Score
E 2.1 Regulations stipulate conditions and limitations for hiring temporary staff	Legislation	0.5/2
E 2.2 Regulations stipulate openness and application of merit-principle when hiring temporary staff	Legislation	0.5/1
E 2.3 Procedure for hiring temporary staff is open and transparent	Practice in implementation	1.25/3.5
E 2.4 Temporary hirings are limited in practice	Practice in implementation	0/3
E 2.5 Key non-state actors consider the use of temporary hiring as transparent, limited and purposeful	Outcomes and impact	0/3
<b>Total score for sub-indicator 2</b>		<b>2.25/12.5</b>

*The monitoring results indicate a continuation of the status quo, with no notable changes since the previous cycle. The number of temporary and service contract employees continues to be high, without a system in place for monitoring their actual number and duration at the level of all institutions.<sup>20</sup> On a positive note, the newly adopted LPSE<sup>21</sup> limits temporary engagements via agencies or services to unforeseen and urgent activities, for a maximum duration of 30 days. In such cases, the secretary or authorised official must notify*

<sup>19</sup> The second sub-indicator focuses on the following SIGMA sub-principle: The public administration uses temporary employment in justified situations and within reasonable time limits.

<sup>20</sup> COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT North Macedonia 2024 Report (European Commission, October 30, 2024), [https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/north-macedonia-report-2024\\_en](https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/north-macedonia-report-2024_en)

<sup>21</sup> Law on Public Sector Employees (Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia no. 144/25), <https://www.sobranie.mk/detali-na-materijal.nsp?param=6967f788-d2d6-49db-9924-ec57f6ea78c8>

*the competent employment mediation service of the employment need, free of charge, by requesting candidates from the register of unemployed persons, in accordance with general labour regulations. Each institution may employ persons through this referral process no more than twice a year, and the total number of such employees must not exceed 5% of the institution's workforce. Exceptions are allowed only when health-related needs require more than two referrals per year or a higher number of temporary employees. In such cases, the secretary or authorised official must provide appropriate medical documentation. The implementation and impact of these provisions will be assessed in the forthcoming period.*

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The researchers reviewed the legislation in place to determine whether conditions and limitations (in volume and time) for temporary hiring are regulated. For this sub-indicator, temporary hiring in the civil service was interpreted as referring to civil servants hired on a fixed-term basis, or contracted staff through service, temporary, consultancy, or other contracts that fall outside the civil service merit-based regime.

**For fixed-term civil servants**, according to Article 6 of the LPSE<sup>22</sup>(the principle of expertise and competence), employment in the public sector is conducted by publishing an announcement, whereby a transparent, fair, and competitive selection procedure is used to select the most professional and competent candidate for the job position. Article 17, paragraph 2 of the LPSE stipulates that the acts on systematisation of job positions determine the general and special conditions, as well as the description of duties and tasks for each position, and that **conditions for temporary hiring are regulated**.

Article 22 of the LPSE.<sup>23</sup> stipulates that the head of a public institution may fill a position by concluding a contract for fixed-term employment in the following cases:

- replacement of a temporarily absent employee, who is absent for longer than one month;
- temporarily increased workload;
- seasonal work;
- unpredictable short-term activities that occur during the performance of the predominant activity of the employer;
- project work; or

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<sup>22</sup> Law on Public Sector Employees (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 27/14, 199/14, 27/16, 35/18 and 198/18 and Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia no. 143/19, 14/20 and 208/24), [https://aa.mk/content/pdf/Drugi%20dokumenti/ZVJS/zakoni/zakon\\_za\\_vrabotenite\\_vo\\_javniot\\_sektor\\_0.pdf](https://aa.mk/content/pdf/Drugi%20dokumenti/ZVJS/zakoni/zakon_za_vrabotenite_vo_javniot_sektor_0.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

- filling special positions in the offices of the President of the Republic of North Macedonia, the President of the Parliament, the Vice Presidents of the Parliament, the President of the Government, the deputies of the President of the Government, the ministers and the Secretary General of the Government, for the purpose of carrying out the tasks of special advisers.
- The employment referred to in point 1 shall last until the expiration of the approved absence of the absent employee, for a maximum of two years.
- The employment referred to in points 2, 3, and 4 shall last as long as there is a need by the institution, for a maximum of one year.
- The employment referred to in point 5 shall last until the completion of the project, and for a maximum of five years.
- The employment referred to in point 6 shall last until the end of the term of office of the official to whom the employee is assigned.

For employment in the cases set out in points 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6, the head of the institution publishes an announcement in accordance with the Labour Law,<sup>24</sup> or concludes a contract for the leasing/transfer of an employee with an agency for temporary employment. The private employment agency is not allowed to lease/transfer a worker to perform the same tasks with the same employer for more than two years, with or without interruption. Article 22 of the LPSE stipulates that the duration of the agreement for the assignment of an employee to perform the same temporary work may not exceed one year, even if the need continues.<sup>25</sup>

According to Article 22 of the LPSE, for employment in the case of paragraph 1, point 4 (unpredictable short-term activities that occur during the performance of the predominant activity of the employer) with a duration up to 30 days, the head of the institution announces the need for employment to the employment mediation service (Employment Service Agency of the Republic of North Macedonia), free of charge, by referring persons for employment from the register of unemployed persons, in accordance with the Labour Law. This can be done a maximum of twice per year, and the number of persons employed in this manner cannot exceed 5% of the total number of employees in the institution.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Labour Law (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 62/05, 106/08, 161/08, 114/09, 130/09, 50/10, 52/10, 124/10, 47/11, 11/12, 39/12, 13/13, 25/13, 170/13, 187/13, 113/14, 20/15, 33/15, 72/15, 129/15, 27/16 and 120/18 and Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia no. 110/19, 267/20, 151/21, 288/21, 111/23, 39/25, 74/25 and 124/25), <http://www.mtsp.gov.mk/content/pdf/zakoni/ZRO%20Precisten%2074-15.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> Law on Public Sector Employees (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 27/14, 199/14, 27/16, 35/18 and 198/18 and Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia no. 143/19, 14/20 and 208/24), [https://aa.mk/content/pdf/Drugi%20dokumenti/ZVJS/zakoni/zakon\\_za\\_vrabotenite\\_vo\\_javniot\\_sektor\\_0.pdf](https://aa.mk/content/pdf/Drugi%20dokumenti/ZVJS/zakoni/zakon_za_vrabotenite_vo_javniot_sektor_0.pdf)

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

For point 4 of the same paragraph (unpredictable short-term activities that occur during the performance of the predominant activity of the employer), Article 22, paragraph 10 stipulates that for a duration of up to 30 days, the head of the institution announces the need for employment to the employment mediation service (Employment Service Agency), free of charge, by referring persons for employment from the records of unemployed persons, in accordance with the Labour Law. This can be done a maximum of twice per year, and the number of persons employed in this manner cannot exceed 5% of the total number of employees in the institution.<sup>27</sup>

Article 22, paragraph 11 prescribes the maximum allowed number of special advisors in the offices of the President of the Republic of North Macedonia (5), President of the Parliament (5), the Vice-Presidents (VP) of the Parliament (one for each VP), the President of the Government (15), the deputies of the President of the Government (three for each DPM), the ministers (three for ministries with over 100 employees and two for ministries with under 100 employees, and one for each minister without a portfolio), and the Secretary General of the Government (3).<sup>28</sup>

The LPSE does not prescribe limitations for employment under points 1, 2, 3, and 5 of Article 22, paragraph 1. However, for point 1, it is reasonable that there is no limitation, since it refers to the replacement of a temporarily absent employee.<sup>29</sup>

According to Article 6 of the LPSE (the principle of expertise and competence), employment in the public sector is conducted through the publication of an announcement, whereby a transparent, fair, and competitive selection procedure is used to select the most professional and competent candidate for the job. Article 17, paragraph 2 of the LPSE stipulates that the acts on systematisation of positions determine the general and special conditions and the description of the duties and working tasks for each position.<sup>30</sup>

Hence, the conclusion is that time limitations (duration) for temporary hiring/fixed-term civil servants are regulated.

Regarding the **contracted staff/employment via agencies for temporary employment**, there are no criteria stipulated in the LPSE. According to Article 22, paragraph 8 of the LPSE, for temporary employment based on points 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6 (given in Article 22, paragraph 1) the head of the institution publishes an announcement in accordance with the general regulations for employment or concludes an agreement with an agency for temporary employment to engage an employee through the agency. According to paragraph 9, no competitions are envisaged for the temporary employment based on point 4 of Article 22,

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

paragraph 1. Article 23, paragraph 1 of the Labour Law stipulates that job announcements must contain the conditions required to perform professional tasks, but the Law does not specify how these criteria are determined.<sup>31</sup>

Again, the deviation has been made through employment via private agencies for temporary positions, given that the employees are not obliged to meet the criteria and enter the public service without a vacancy announcement, which is a breach of the principle of merit.<sup>32</sup>

There is no evidence of the criteria that agencies employ. Systematisation acts and special laws provide criteria for the employment of administrative servants on a permanent basis, but no evidence has been found that the same conditions are used regarding temporary employment.

However, the system is not transparent. There is no single limit at the administrative level, but only at the institutional level, and the criterion allows this limit to change annually ("more than 1% of the total number of employees at the end of the previous year"). Finally, Article 9 of the Law on Transformation of Temporary Employment into Fixed-Term Employment<sup>33</sup> allows the authority to engage more people temporarily, as well as for longer periods, when approved by the MF. Overall, the system is not transparent enough and does not provide for a 10% limitation.

The new LPSE, adopted by the Parliament on 10 July 2025,<sup>34</sup> limits temporary engagements via agencies or services to unforeseen and urgent activities, for a maximum duration of 30 days. In such cases, the secretary or authorised official must notify the competent employment mediation service of the employment need, free of charge, by requesting candidates from the register of unemployed persons, in accordance with general labour regulations. Each institution may employ persons through this referral process no more than twice per year, and the total number of such employees must not exceed 5% of the institution's workforce. Exceptions are allowed only when health-related needs require more than two referrals per year or a higher number of temporary employees. In such cases, the secretary or authorised official must provide appropriate medical documentation. The implementation and impact of these provisions will be assessed in the forthcoming period.

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Law on Private Agencies for Employment (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 113/18 and Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia no. 18/20 and 132/25), <http://www.slvesnik.com.mk/issues/9c4bf1db894e440c9d467076c79bda67.pdf>

<sup>33</sup> Law on Transformation of Temporary Employment into Fixed-Term Employment (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 20/15 and 44/15 and Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia no. 3/25), [https://finance.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/2009/02/Zakon\\_za\\_transformacija\\_vo\\_re-doven\\_raboten\\_odnos\\_20\\_12022015.pdf](https://finance.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/2009/02/Zakon_za_transformacija_vo_re-doven_raboten_odnos_20_12022015.pdf)

<sup>34</sup> Law on Public Sector Employees (Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia no. 144/25), <https://www.sobranie.mk/detali-na-materijal.nsp?param=6967f788-d2d6-49db-9924-ec57f6ea78c8>

Regarding openness and merit in hiring procedures for fixed-term civil servants, the LPSE envisaged only one procedure, which entails publishing an announcement and merit-based selection according to the envisaged criteria.<sup>35</sup> Article 23 of the Labour Law stipulates the obligatory elements that the public announcement should contain:

- name of the job position;
- conditions required for performing the work;
- daily and weekly working hours;
- schedule of working hours;
- amount of the basic net salary, or amount from the lowest to the highest amount of the net salary for the job position for which a worker is required;
- the application deadline, which must not be shorter than five working days;
- the deadline within which the selection will be made, and;
- accurate data about the employer (name, position, telephone, contact person, and address for submitting applications).

When it comes to openness and merit for engaging contracted staff, the overall procedure for employment on a contractual basis is stipulated in Articles 21 and 22 of the LPSE. Article 22, paragraph 1 of the LPSE stipulates the reasons for engaging employees on a temporary basis (see E 2.1).<sup>36</sup> According to the same Article (paragraph 8), for temporary employment based on points 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6 (given in Article 22, paragraph 1) the head of the institution shall publish a public announcement in accordance with the general regulations for employment or conclude an agreement with an agency for temporary employment to engage an employee through the agency. This paragraph, therefore, already leaves the opportunity for the bodies not to announce public competitions, since engagement through agencies does not require a public competition. According to paragraph 9, no competitions are envisaged for temporary employment under point 4 of Article 22, paragraph 1 (unpredictable short-term activities that occur during the performance of the predominant activity of the employer), with a duration of up to 30 days. Namely, the head of the institution announces the need for employment to the employment mediation service (Employment Service Agency), free of charge, by referring persons for employment from the records of unemployed persons, in accordance with the Labour Law.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Law on Public Sector Employees (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 27/14, 199/14, 27/16, 35/18 and 198/18 and Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia no. 143/19, 14/20 and 208/24), [https://aa.mk/content/pdf/Drugi%20dokumenti/ZVJS/zakoni/zakon\\_za\\_vrabotenite\\_vo\\_javniot\\_sektor\\_0.pdf](https://aa.mk/content/pdf/Drugi%20dokumenti/ZVJS/zakoni/zakon_za_vrabotenite_vo_javniot_sektor_0.pdf)

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Labour Law (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 62/05, 106/08, 161/08, 114/09, 130/09, 50/10, 52/10, 124/10, 47/11, 11/12, 39/12, 13/13, 25/13, 170/13, 187/13, 113/14, 20/15, 33/15, 72/15, 129/15, 27/16 and 120/18 and Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia no. 110/19, 267/20, 151/21, 288/21, 111/23, 39/25, 74/25 and 124/25), <http://www.mtsp.gov.mk/content/pdf/zakoni/ZRO%20Precisten%2074-15.pdf>



The utilisation of agencies for temporary employment, although legalised in the LPSE, can be assessed as a deviation from the LPSE, since employees are not obliged to meet the criteria or enter public service without a vacancy announcement, which breaches the principle of merit. The procedure conducted via a private employment agency is performed without the publication of an announcement. The assignment of a worker to perform temporary work is based on a contract for the assignment of a worker concluded by the private employment agency with a licence for temporary employment and the employer beneficiary,<sup>38</sup> which can be assessed as a deviation.

Researchers reviewed the websites of ministries, MPA and AA to identify the most recently completed competitions for hiring temporary staff in five different central state administration bodies. Since the information was not available online, FOI requests were sent to the five sampled ministries.<sup>39</sup> They were asked to answer whether they have hired temporary staff in last two years, including through open vacancies. They were also asked to submit recruitment files for the last hiring, for each category (fixed-term civil servants and contracted staff).

In all five sampled ministries, vacancy announcements included the stated requirements and competencies, a job description, remuneration details, a description of the selection procedure, the application submission deadline, and a clear list of required documents for the fixed-term civil servants, whereas this was not the case for contracted staff.<sup>40</sup>

Researchers also examined the established practices of temporary hiring in the civil service to assess whether such engagements are limited in scope. FOI requests were sent to the same sampled institutions, seeking separate data for fixed-term civil servants and for all contracted staff. The requested information included the current number of civil servants and general employees, as well as the number of temporarily hired persons.

According to the received responses to the FOIs, the situation is as follows: the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning—30 administrative and public sector employees and no temporary hires; the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy—771 administrative servants, 305 public sector employees, and 40 temporary hires; the Ministry of Economy and Labour—114 administrative servants, 1 public sector employee, and no temporary hires; the Ministry of European Affairs—92 administrative servants, 2 public sector

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38 Law on Private Agencies for Employment (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 113/18 and Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia no. 18/20 and 132/25), <http://www.slvesnik.com.mk/issues/9c4bf1db894e440c9d467076c79bda67.pdf>

39 FOIs were sent on 2 June 2025 to the Ministry of Public Administration (response received on 08 July 2025); the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning (MOEPP) (response received on 25 June 2025); the Ministry of Economy and Labour (response received on 23 June 2025); the Ministry of European Affairs (response received on 01 July 2025); and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy (response received on 23 June 2025).

40 Ibid.

employees (special advisors via LPSE); the MPA—105 administrative servants, 7 public sector employees (special advisors via LPSE), and no temporary hires.<sup>41</sup>

The assessment was conducted under the accordance with the current LPSE provisions. The new LPSE, adopted by Parliament on 10 July 2025, introduces stricter rules for temporary engagements via agencies or other services, as mentioned above.

KIs<sup>42</sup> views on the transparency, scope, and purpose of temporary hiring in the civil service were assessed through the same interviews and methodology as those mentioned above. Respondents rated their agreement with three statements:

1. Temporary hiring (fixed-term civil servants and contracted staff) is transparent.
2. Temporary hiring in practice is limited.
3. Temporary hiring is purposeful.

One KI stressed a significant lack of publicly available information on temporary hiring in the civil service. When asked about the existence of clear criteria and procedures for hiring temporary civil servants and contracted staff, the KI explained that while such rules sometimes exist, they are often bypassed. In many cases, temporary positions are filled by individuals with close ties to institutional management, making the process highly politicised. For certain roles, however, high levels of competency are required. The KI identified this politicisation and bypassing of procedures as a central problem in temporary hiring practices. On the documentation and public communication of selection processes, the KI firmly stated that there is a complete lack of transparency. Regarding the frequency and purpose of temporary hiring, the KI noted that temporary positions are sometimes used as a pathway to permanent employment rather than solely to meet short-term needs, and that they are often applied beyond their intended scope. As a potential control measure, the KI cited budget limitations set by the MF as one of the more effective mechanisms currently in place to restrict overuse of temporary hiring. However, they also stressed that this measure alone is insufficient to address the broader systemic issues.

The other KI observed that the first, and so far the only, official inclusion of temporary employment data in the Annual Report for civil servants occurred in 2020. Since then, information on temporary employment has been sporadic, absent from official reports, and instead conveyed through public statements

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

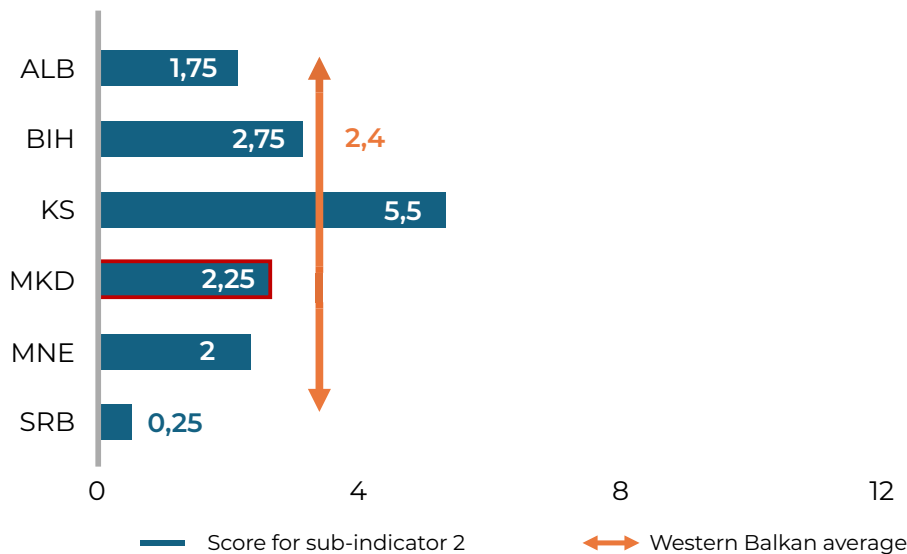
<sup>42</sup> The short on-the-spot survey with the 1st KI (CUP) was conducted on 9 April 2025; the interview with the 2nd KI (Community Development Institute) was conducted on 22 April 2025; and the interview with the 3rd KI (IDSCS) was conducted on 9 May 2025.



by officials, which are difficult to verify. While the new LPSE<sup>43</sup> introduces stricter limits and formal procedures for temporary hiring, the absence of consistent, reliable, and publicly available annual data makes it impossible to assess whether these legislative changes are effectively curbing misuse of this practice.

How does North Macedonia do in regional terms?

**Sub-indicator 2: Transparency of temporary hiring in the civil service (maximum score 12.5)**



<sup>43</sup> The new LPSE was adopted by Parliament on 10 July 2025.

## II.3 Transparency and merit principle of recruitment process



**Principle 9:** Public administration attracts and recruits competent people based on merit and equal opportunities

**Awarded points per elements in sub-indicator 3: Transparency and merit principle of recruitment process<sup>44</sup>**

Indicator elements	Element type	Score
E 3.1 Strategic framework envisages improvements of openness, transparency and merit principle of the recruitment process	Strategy and policy	0.5/0.75
E 3.2 Regulations stipulate openness, transparency, and merit principle of the recruitment process	Legislation	1/1.25
E 3.3 Vacancy announcements for public competitions are made broadly publicly available	Practice in implementation	1.5/3
E 3.4 Vacancy announcements for public competitions are presented in a way to motivate and attract external candidates	Practice in implementation	0/2
E 3.5 Responsible institution provides support and guidance to applicants	Practice in implementation	2.25/3
E 3.6 There are no unreasonable barriers for external candidates which make public competitions more easily accessible to internal candidates	Practice in implementation	0/3
E 3.7 The application procedure imposes minimum administrative/paperwork burden on candidates	Practice in implementation	0/4

<sup>44</sup> The third sub-indicator focuses on the following SIGMA sub-principles: The public administration analyses human resources (HR) and prepares and implements HR plans aligned with the budget to ensure the appropriate workforce size, mix of competencies, skills, and expertise to fulfil its mission, considering both current and future needs; public servants are recruited through transparent and open competitions, based on merit; inclusive recruitment policies and practices support diversity and equal opportunities in the public administration; recruitment is based on accurate job descriptions that provide the required candidate profile (experience, knowledge, skills, and competencies) for effective performance, reflected in vacancy announcements, along with work and salary conditions; selection committees are composed of members qualified to perform the assessment of candidates against the job requirements, without any conflict of interest, and free from political influence; selection methods provide fair and valid assessment of the experience, knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary to perform the job and enable the selection of the most suitable candidates; recruitment and selection processes are efficient, timely, user-friendly, and supported by digital tools; applicants are informed of recruitment decisions in a timely manner and have the right to ask for justification and appeal through administrative and judicial channels.

E 3.8 Candidates can supplement missing documentation within a reasonable timeframe	Practice in implementation	3/3
E 3.9 Decisions and reasoning of the selection panels are made publicly available, with due respect to the protection of personal information	Practice in implementation	2/4
E 3.10 Information about annulled public competitions, including reasoning for the annulment, is made publicly available	Practice in implementation	2/4
E 3.11 Key informants consider recruitment into civil service as transparent and merit-based	Outcomes and impact	0/2.5
E 3.12 Citizens' perception of merit-based civil service recruitment	Outcomes and impact	0.5/2
E 3.13 Citizens' perception of the influence of personal connections in civil service recruitment	Outcomes and impact	0/2
E 3.14 Citizens' perception of the influence of political connections in civil service recruitment	Outcomes and impact	0/2
<b>Total score for sub-indicator 3</b>		<b>12.75/36.5</b>

*The situation remains unchanged from the previous cycle. On 10 July 2025, Parliament adopted the new LAS,<sup>45</sup> whose main objectives are to enhance the professionalisation of administrative servants through adherence to the principles of expertise and competences, gender equality, appropriate and equitable representation, improvement of the employment procedure, and assessments based on competencies. The law also further regulates mentorship, reduces the number of job levels within categories B and G, shortens the recruitment procedure by proposing that the exam for administrative servants—organised and conducted by the AA—should be a prerequisite to a public call, and defines the status of the AA.*

The researchers reviewed the valid government strategic documents to determine whether they envisage improvements in openness, transparency, and the merit principle of the recruitment process for civil service jobs.

<sup>45</sup> Law on Administrative Servants (Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia no. 144/25), <https://www.sobranie.mk/detali-na-materijal.nsp?param=3dfabcf5-6871-4a8b-a987-88344bd-c5adb>

Namely, the second priority area of the PAR Strategy and its AP<sup>46</sup> is titled *Public Service and Human Resources Management*, and its general objective is a depoliticised, professional, and expert public administration. One of the measures under the first specific objective, focused on depoliticising public administration, is M 2.1.2: Strengthening the role of the competency-based interview in public administration recruitment procedures. Within this measure, several activities related to improving of openness, transparency, and the merit principle of the recruitment process for civil service jobs are envisaged, such as the preparation of informative educational video material for potential candidates for interview and work in public administration and its availability; the public conducting of the interview in the presence of all candidates invited to the interview; and publication of a report with an explanation of each decision for the selection of the best candidate, based on evidence.<sup>47</sup>

Also the researchers reviewed the current legislation (at the time of measurement) to determine whether there are provisions that stipulate: use of public competitions to fill vacancies; openness of the public competition process through different nationwide means of advertising vacancies (at least three); publication of the list of successful candidates being regulated; publication of information on the selected candidate (unique codes or names) being regulated; and publication of the decision to annul the competition procedure being regulated.

Namely, Article 35 of the LAS<sup>48</sup> stipulates the use of public competitions to fill in vacancies, as well as their publication on the website of the AA, and in at least three daily newspapers, one of which shall be published in the language spoken by at least 20% of the citizens who speak an official language other than Macedonian.

Several provisions in the LAS<sup>49</sup> regulate the publication of lists of successful candidates throughout the entire recruitment process. These are as follows:

- Article 39, which regulates the first phase of the recruitment process—administrative selection for employment—provides in paragraph 9 that: “The administrative selection shall be completed no later than 15 days after the deadline for the application of candidates for the public announcements, for which the Commission shall prepare for each different job position, a list with the identification codes of the candidates for whom the selection procedure has been completed

46 Strategy for Public Administration Reform 2023–2030, <https://kvalitet.mioa.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/strategija-za-reforma-na-javna-administracija-2023-2030-so-akcziski-plan.pdf>

47 Ibid.

48 Law on Administrative Servants (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 27/14, 199/14, 48/15, 154/15, 5/16, 142/16 and 11/18 and Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia no. 275/19, 14/20, 215/21, 99/22 and 208/24), [https://aa.mk/content/pdf/Drugi%20dokumenti/ZAS/zakoni/zakon\\_za\\_administrativni\\_sluzhbenici\\_2020.pdf](https://aa.mk/content/pdf/Drugi%20dokumenti/ZAS/zakoni/zakon_za_administrativni_sluzhbenici_2020.pdf)

49 Ibid.

and a ranking list with the identification codes of the candidates who have passed the administrative selection, and shall publish them on the Agency's website."

- Article 40, which regulates the second phase of the recruitment process—civil servants' exam—provides in paragraph 13 that: "Within three days from the date of the exam, in accordance with the points obtained in the administrative selection and the exam, the Commission shall prepare and publish on the Agency's website a ranking list with the identification codes of the candidates."
- Article 42, which regulates the third phase of the recruitment process—verification of the reliability of evidence and the interview—provides in paragraph 7 that: "Within three days from the date of the interview, in accordance with the points obtained in the administrative selection, the civil servants' exam and the interview, for the candidates who have obtained at least 60% of the maximum number of points in all previous phases of the selection procedure, the Commission shall prepare a final ranking list of the candidates who have successfully passed the phases of the selection procedure and publish it on the AA's website."
- Article 45, which regulates the decision on selection for employment, provides in paragraph 2 that the decision shall be published on the website of the AA: "The decision on selection shall be delivered to the selected candidate and shall be published on the website and on the notice board of the AA."<sup>50</sup>

However, the LAS does not prescribe the annulment of a competition procedure, nor the publication of a decision thereof.

According to the new LAS adopted on 10 July 2025, there is no provision for the annulment of a competition procedure either. There is, however, a provision regarding the following: "The decision on the selection, or the decision not to make a selection for employment, shall be delivered to all candidates and published on the website and the notice board of the institution and the Agency."<sup>51</sup>

The researchers also examined whether vacancy announcements for public competitions are made broadly available in practice. For the purpose of this assessment, broad public availability is defined as publication through at least three different nationwide advertising channels, including a centralised recruitment portal or website for the entire state administration and social media.

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<sup>50</sup> Law on Administrative Servants (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 27/14, 199/14, 48/15, 154/15, 5/16, 142/16 and 11/18 and Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia no. 275/19, 14/20, 215/21, 99/22 and 208/24), [https://aa.mk/content/pdf/Drugi%20dokumenti/ZAS/zakoni/zakon\\_za\\_administrativni\\_sluzhbenici\\_2020.pdf](https://aa.mk/content/pdf/Drugi%20dokumenti/ZAS/zakoni/zakon_za_administrativni_sluzhbenici_2020.pdf)

<sup>51</sup> Law on Administrative Servants, (Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia no. 144/25), <https://www.sobranie.mk/detali-na-materijal.nsp?param=3dfabcf5-6871-4a8b-a987-88344bdc5adb>

The same five sampled ministries were observed, and for each, the most recent vacancy announcement for a completed public competition was analysed. Where no information was available online, FOI requests were sent to the AA and the five sample ministries<sup>52</sup> to obtain details on the advertising methods used for the observed competitions, as well as the texts of the announcements.

The AA responded that: "Public announcements for all state administrative bodies are all published on the AA website/portal. Additionally, public announcements are published in three daily newspapers (two in Macedonian and one in Albanian), selected by the institution for which the announcement is intended. This was also the response of the five sample ministries. Public announcements are not published on any other website, except on the AA's website.<sup>53</sup> However, two of the sample ministries advertised their public announcements on their own websites. Access to the documentation from published public job announcements is granted only to the competent institutions, such as the courts, the State Administrative Inspectorate, and, potentially, in the case of an appeal against a decision on the selection for a specific public announcement, the Commission for Deciding on Appeals and Complaints of Administrative Servants at Second Instance, which is granted access to the entire documentation. The sample ministries answered that the vacancy announcements for observed public competitions are not advertised through their social media.

The researchers reviewed the texts of five vacancy announcements from the sample ministries to determine whether they are presented in a way that would motivate and attract external candidates to apply through visuals or other visually appealing formats (infographics, images, charts and graphs, and similar). According to the FOI responses, public job announcements are not published in any other format except textual form.<sup>54</sup>

52 FOIs were sent on 2 June 2025 to the Ministry of Public Administration (response received on 8 July 2025); the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning (MOEPP) (response received on 25 June 2025); the Ministry of Economy and Labour (response received on 23 June 2025); the Ministry of European Affairs (response received on 01 July 2025); the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy (response received on 23 June 2025); and to the Agency for Administration (response received on 20 June 2025).

53 Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning and Ministry of European Affairs.

54 Law on Administrative Servants (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 27/14, 199/14, 48/15, 154/15, 5/16, 142/16 and 11/18 and Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia no. 275/19, 14/20, 215/21, 99/22 and 208/24), [https://aa.mk/content/pdf/Drugi%20dokumenti/ZAS/zakoni/zakon\\_za\\_administrativni\\_sluzhbenici\\_2020.pdf](https://aa.mk/content/pdf/Drugi%20dokumenti/ZAS/zakoni/zakon_za_administrativni_sluzhbenici_2020.pdf)

Law on Public Sector Employees (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 27/14, 199/14, 27/16, 35/18 and 198/18 and Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia no. 143/19, 14/20 and 208/24), [https://aa.mk/content/pdf/Drugi%20dokumenti/ZVJS/zakoni/zakon\\_za\\_vrabotenite\\_vo\\_javniot\\_sektor\\_0.pdf](https://aa.mk/content/pdf/Drugi%20dokumenti/ZVJS/zakoni/zakon_za_vrabotenite_vo_javniot_sektor_0.pdf)

Decree on the Implementation of the Employment Procedure for Administrative Servants, (Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia no. 221/2024), <https://dejure.mk/zakon/uredba-za-sproveduvanje-na-postapkata-za-vrabotuvanje-na-administrativni-sluzhbenici-2>

Rulebook on the Mandatory Elements of the Public Announcement for Filling a Job Position in the Public Sector through Employment and the Employment Application, as well as the Form, Content and Manner of Maintaining the Register of Persons who have Provided False Data during Employment in the Public Sector, (Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia no. 242/2024) <https://dejure.mk/zakon/pravilnik-za-zadolzhitelnite-elementi-na-javniot-oglas-za-popolnuvanje-na-rabotno-mesto-vo-javniot-sektor-preku-vrabotuvanje-i-na-prijavata-za-vrabotu-1>

The legislation does not require any visualisation of the vacancy announcement; hence, all announcements are only published in textual form.

Researchers reviewed the data sources to determine whether the AA provides support and guidance to applicants in the recruitment process. Support for the candidates should include the following mandatory requirements: a guide/roadmap to the public competition process; materials for the preparation of candidates (such as test examples, useful sources, and similar items); frequently asked questions and answers; and information on how applicants and candidates in the process can request and obtain clarifications.

Regarding the **guide/roadmap** on the AA's website, there is a Guide for creating a user profile and applying for an open vacancy in both Macedonian and Albanian.<sup>55</sup> Additionally, a Guide for taking the administrative servants' exam is also available in both Macedonian and Albanian.<sup>56</sup>

Regarding **materials for the preparation of candidates**, on the AA's website, questions are available for the expert part of the exam for administrative officers,<sup>57</sup> as well as for the language examinations.<sup>58</sup> Additionally, questions are available for the general part of the exam, covering administrative management and case studies.<sup>59</sup> These exam questions are available in both Macedonian and Albanian, and the sources for the correct answers (relevant legislation) are indicated below the questions.

For the **FAQ and answers** criteria, on the website of the AA, there is an FAQ section on the employment of candidates for administrative servants<sup>60</sup> and an FAQ section on complaints and objections by candidates.<sup>61</sup>

Although the relevant legislation does not regulate the possibility of requesting clarifications on the AA's website, a contact form is available where candidates can submit their comments and questions.<sup>62</sup>

55 <https://aa.mk/content/pdf/Drugi%20dokumenti/Upatstva/Upatstvo%20za%20popolnuvawe%20profil%2029%2009%202022.pdf>; <https://aa.mk/content/pdf/Drugi%20dokumenti/Upatstva/udh%C3%ABzime%20p%C3%ABr%20krijimin%20e%20profilit.pdf>

56 <https://aa.mk/content/pdf/Drugi%20dokumenti/Upatstva/%D0%A3%D0%B-F%D0%B0%D1%82%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B2%D0%BE%20%D0%B7%D0%B0%20%D0%BF%D0%BE%D0%B-%D0%B0%D0%B3%D0%B0%D1%9A%D0%B5%20%D0%BD%D0%B0%20%D0%B8%D1%81%D0%B-F%D0%B8%D1%82%20%D0%B7%D0%B0%20%D0%B0%D0%B4%D0%BC%D0%B8%D0%B-D%D0%B8%D1%81%D1%82%D1%80%D0%B0%D1%82%D0%B8%D0%B2%D0%B5%D0%BD%20%D1%81%D0%BB-D1%83%D0%B6%D0%B1%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%B8%D0%BA%20-%2020022018.pdf>

<https://aa.mk/content/pdf/Drugi%20dokumenti/Upatstva/udh%C3%ABzime%20p%C3%ABr%20provimin%20p%C3%ABr%20n%C3%ABpun%C3%ABs%20administrativ.pdf>

57 [https://aa.mk/lista\\_na\\_prasanja\\_od\\_strucniot\\_del\\_od\\_ispitot\\_za\\_administrativni\\_sluzbenici\\_dvo-jazicno.nspix](https://aa.mk/lista_na_prasanja_od_strucniot_del_od_ispitot_za_administrativni_sluzbenici_dvo-jazicno.nspix);

58 [https://aa.mk/del\\_za\\_proverka\\_na\\_znaenje\\_na\\_edem\\_od\\_trite\\_najcesto\\_koristen\\_i\\_jazici\\_na\\_ev-ropската\\_unija\\_ang\\_fra\\_ger.nspix](https://aa.mk/del_za_proverka_na_znaenje_na_edem_od_trite_najcesto_koristen_i_jazici_na_ev-ropската_unija_ang_fra_ger.nspix)

59 <https://aa.mk/prasanja-od-opstiot-del-od-ispitot-za-administativno-upravuvanje-i-studii-na-slucaj.nspix>

60 <https://aa.mk/prasanjavrabotuvanje.nspix>

61 <https://aa.mk/prasanjazalbi.nspix>

62 <https://aa.mk/cpp.nspix>



In addition, the researchers reviewed the supporting documents requested from candidates to identify requirements that are a special burden to external candidates (such as proof of passing a state exam before application; proof of attendance/certificates of specific courses/or technical skills available only to civil servants or costly to take; medical certificates; certified translations; and similar) or those that could only reasonably be expected from an existing civil servant (e.g. very specific information on the tasks and duties of the job position for which they are being recruited).

As stipulated in Article 36 paragraph 2 of the LAS,<sup>63</sup> which regulates the application for employment of administrative servants, requirements that are a special burden to external candidates can be identified. Namely, “candidates must attach the following evidence of the data entered in the application, in scanned form:

- proof of citizenship of the Republic of North Macedonia;
- proof of general health fitness for the job position;
- certificate/diploma of completed education;
- certificate for proficiency in office programs; and
- certificate of passing a professional exam, license, or certificate from the appropriate professional field, if this is a special requirement for the job position and is specified in the public announcement.”

Although the proof of citizenship of the Republic of North Macedonia is easily obtainable, it should be provided ex officio by the institution publishing the announcement. The certificate of general health fitness is a necessary document for employment, but it should be required only at a later stage of the recruitment process, following the administrative selection. In addition, the requirement to submit a certificate for proficiency in office programs imposes an unreasonable burden, as it entails additional costs and could also be requested at a later stage.

The AA stated that all documents required for participation in a public job competition must be uploaded by candidates to their electronic profiles, as the AA does not obtain any of these documents ex officio.

In line with the new LAS adopted on 10 July 2025, the evidence for meeting the requirements—specifically the proof of citizenship and the certificate of no criminal record—will be obtained ex officio in electronic form by the AA through the National Interoperability Platform.

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<sup>63</sup> Law on Administrative Servants (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 27/14, 199/14, 48/15, 154/15, 5/16, 142/16 and 11/18 and Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia no. 275/19, 14/20, 215/21, 99/22 and 208/24), [https://aa.mk/content/pdf/Drugi%20dokumenti/ZAS/zakoni/zakon\\_za\\_administrativni\\_sluzhbenici\\_2020.pdf](https://aa.mk/content/pdf/Drugi%20dokumenti/ZAS/zakoni/zakon_za_administrativni_sluzhbenici_2020.pdf)



The researchers also examined whether candidates are allowed to provide missing documentation within a reasonable timeframe, or whether the failure to submit all required documents at the time of application results in automatic disqualification from the selection procedure.

The LAS does not mention the possibility of supplementing missing documentation after it has been submitted (via the electronic system). Article 39, which regulates phase 1 of the recruitment process—administrative selection for employment—fails to provide the opportunity for candidates to supplement missing documentation:

“(1) The verification of the reliability of the evidence shall be carried out by the Selection Commission, for which the candidates are obliged to bring, for inspection, in original or certified copy, all the evidence referred to in Article 36 paragraphs (2) and (3) of this law, at least three hours before the start of the interview.

(2) For candidates who fail to submit the evidence in accordance with paragraph (1) of this Article, the selection procedure shall be terminated.”<sup>64</sup>

However, the AA clarified that if any required document is not uploaded to the candidate’s profile, the candidate is given the opportunity to submit it later, but no later than the start of Phase 3—verification of the authenticity of evidence and the interview. Since the administrative selection phase lasts 15 days, and there is additional time between this phase and the administrative exam (Phase 2), as well as Phase 3, candidates effectively have more than five days to provide the missing documents.

The researchers also analysed the transparency of the outcome of the selection process, i.e., whether the decisions are made publicly available, and whether reasoning for the decisions is provided. Reasoning is interpreted to mean the publication of the score obtained by each candidate, or another type of reasoning (e.g., how a candidate scored in different phases of the selection procedure).

Based on the FOI responses, the decisions on the selection of candidates for employment are prepared by the institutions that publish the public job announcements, and the AA publishes them on its website exactly as they are submitted by the institutions. However, the decisions of the institutions do not include the points scored by the candidate or an explanation/reasoning of the selection decision.<sup>65</sup>

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64 Law on Administrative Servants (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 27/14, 199/14, 48/15, 154/15, 5/16, 142/16 and 11/18 and Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia no. 275/19, 14/20, 215/21, 99/22 and 208/24), [https://aa.mk/content/pdf/Drugi%20dokumenti/ZAS/zakoni/zakon\\_za\\_administrativni\\_sluzhbenici\\_2020.pdf](https://aa.mk/content/pdf/Drugi%20dokumenti/ZAS/zakoni/zakon_za_administrativni_sluzhbenici_2020.pdf)

65 <https://aa.mk/odluki.nspix>

Pursuant to the new LAS, adopted on 10 July 2025, the decision on the selection—or on not making a selection—must be delivered to all candidates and published on both the website and the notice board of the announcing institution, as well as on the AA's website.<sup>66</sup>

As indicated in the FOI responses, information on annulled vacancies was made publicly available; however, the announcements did not include the reasoning for the annulment.

The KIs tend to disagree that the process of recruitment into the civil service is based on merit and is transparent.<sup>67</sup> One of the KIs stated that while the merit-based recruitment process in the civil service is consistently applied in theory, in practice it is often manipulated, enabling politicisation to prevail. When asked whether existing mechanisms are adequate and of sufficient quality to ensure that recruitment decisions are based on merit, the KI acknowledged that, on paper, they are. However, these mechanisms are easily circumvented, allowing political influence to override merit. Politicisation was identified as the primary factor undermining merit-based recruitment. Although the KI noted that selection criteria are generally transparent, recruitment procedures themselves are often unclear and inconsistently applied, making it difficult to follow the process from start to finish. On the positive side, candidates typically have access to clear and detailed information about job openings and the selection process. Nevertheless, the KI viewed political party interference as the main obstacle to achieving fully transparent and merit-based recruitment. Such interference not only compromises the integrity of the process but also erodes public trust in the civil service. Regarding the effectiveness of appeal mechanisms for candidates who believe the recruitment process was unfair, the KI considered them largely ineffective, as they focus more on procedural legality than on substantive fairness of the process. To strengthen both transparency and meritocracy, the KI suggested that legal provisions could be enhanced. However, genuine merit-based recruitment would require selection processes to be conducted by individuals entirely independent of the institutions involved (“complete strangers”) and free from political influence.

The other KI believes that one of the challenges in civil service recruitment is the outdated understanding of work positions and how authorities determine the required employee profiles for specific roles. Staffing traditional horizontal units, such as legal, finance, and IT, relies on a straightforward separation based on educational background. In these cases, candidates are expected to hold degrees in law, economics, finance, or information science. However, the

<sup>66</sup> Law on Administrative Servants, (Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia no. 144/25), <https://www.sobranie.mk/detali-na-materijal.nsp?param=3dfabcf5-6871-4a8b-a987-88344bd-c5adb>

<sup>67</sup> The short on-the-spot survey with the 1st KI (CUP) was conducted on 9 April 2025; the interview with the 2nd KI (Community Development Institute) was conducted on 22 April 2025; and the interview with the 3rd KI (IDSCS) was conducted on 9 May 2025.

evolving needs of public administration call for the creation of new organisational units, including strategic planning, research and analysis, human resource management, and other thematic units aligned with an institution's legal competences. These positions can, and ideally should, be filled by civil servants with diverse and interdisciplinary backgrounds, rather than being limited to narrow educational specialisations. For example, a strategic planning unit within the Ministry of Health would benefit from employing not only public health experts, but also professionals with backgrounds in public policy, sociology, data science, and management. Similarly, a research and analysis unit within the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning could be staffed by individuals trained in environmental science, economics, and statistics, enabling more holistic and evidence-based policymaking. Secondly, this understanding of the changing nature of public service has not been systematically embraced or implemented in a strategic way within public administration reform. As a result, when an unconventional educational profile appears as a requirement in a public job posting, it is not necessarily a sign that recruitment practices have evolved to focus on competences rather than on formal educational background. More often, it signals that the job announcement has been tailored to favour a specific individual.

Points for this element are based on the share of citizens in the public perception survey<sup>68</sup> who “agree” or “strongly agree” that civil servants are “...recruited through merit-based public competitions.” Namely, **35.3%** of respondents strongly disagreed and **37.2%** disagreed that civil servants are recruited through merit-based public competitions, while only **6.2%** strongly agreed and **19.5%** agreed.

Researchers awarded points for this element based on the percentage of citizens who responded “disagree” or “strongly disagree” to the statement: “One needs personal connections to get a job in the public administration in my country (i.e., family ties, kinship, friendship, and similar).” In the survey, **4.5%** strongly disagreed, 11% disagreed, **35.7%** strongly agreed, and **47.1%** agreed.<sup>69</sup>

This element is also scored according to the share of citizens in the public perception survey who responded “disagree” or “strongly disagree” to the statement “...that securing a job in public administration requires political connections, such as party membership or personal ties with political parties.” In the survey, **4.9%** strongly disagreed, **12%** disagreed, **29.27%** strongly agreed, and **51.8%** agreed.<sup>70</sup>

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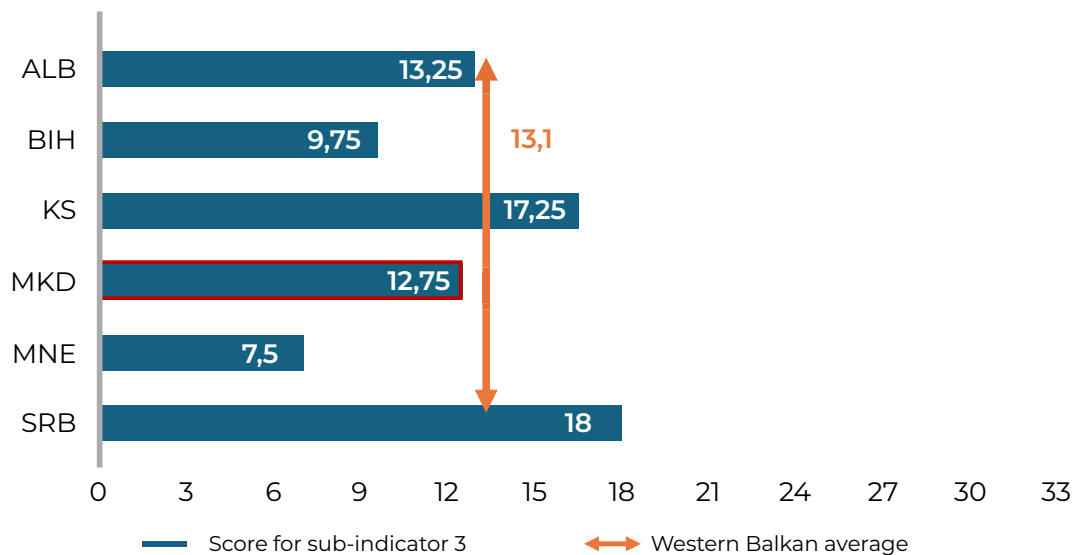
68 The public perception survey was conducted from 1 February 2025 to 22 February 2025, N=2008

69 Ibid.

70 Ibid.

## How does North Macedonia do in regional terms?

**Sub-indicator 3: Transparency and merit principle of recruitment process**  
(maximum score 36.5)



## II.4 Merit based selection and protection of top managers from undue political influence

➡ **Principle 10:** Effective leadership is fostered through competence, stability, professional autonomy and responsiveness of accountable top managers

*Awarded points per elements in sub-indicator 4: Merit based selection and protection of top managers from undue political influence<sup>71</sup>*

Indicator elements	Element type	Score
E 4.1 Strategic framework envisages strengthening of professionalism of the civil service top management	Strategy and policy	0.5/0.75
E 4.2 Regulations stipulate competitive, merit-based procedures for the recruitment of civil service top management	Legislation	0/1.5
E 4.3 Regulations stipulate that acting appointments to top management positions are only made from within the civil service, for a limited period	Legislation	0.5/1
E 4.4 Regulations stipulate objective criteria for the termination of hiring of top management positions	Legislation	0/2
E 4.5 Existence of procedures on appointments to top management positions outside of the scope of the civil service legislation	Legislation	3/3
E 4.6 The merit-based recruitment for top management positions is applied in practice	Practice in implementation	0/4
E 4.7 Acting appointments are, in practice, only made from within the civil service	Practice in implementation	0/3

<sup>71</sup> The fourth sub-indicator focuses on the following SIGMA sub-principles: The law establishes top managers as a specific category; the scope of top management is adequately defined, ensuring that senior managerial positions in ministries and agencies are not treated as political positions; top management positions are made attractive through fair recruitment, competitive remuneration, professional challenges, autonomy, and mitigation of career risks; recruitment procedures are merit-based, professionally led, impartial, and transparent, allowing selection and appointment of top managers with sufficient high-level experience, knowledge, skills, and competences to perform their job well against predefined standards; recruitment policies and practices support equal opportunities, gender balance, and non-discrimination in top managerial positions; top managers in public administration have clearly defined objectives aligned with the mission of the organisation and objectives of the government, and their performance is regularly assessed; top managers in public administration have sufficient professional and managerial autonomy, enabling them to assume responsibility for the management of staff, resources, and work.

E 4.8 Ratio of eligible candidates per top managerial-level vacancy	Practice in implementation	0/2.5
E 4.9 Share of non-merit-based appointments to top management positions	Practice in implementation	0/2.5
E 4.10 Key non-state actors consider that the selection and appointment process of top managers is merit-based and that they are protected from undue political influence	Outcomes and impact	0/2.5
<b>Total score for sub-indicator 4</b>		<b>4/22.5</b>

*No developments have occurred compared to the previous cycle. The EC recommendation to adopt and implement the legal provisions on top management services remains valid.<sup>72</sup> Namely, numerous senior positions remain occupied by acting managers. Several management post-holders were dismissed before the end of their mandates and were subsequently replaced with acting managers following the May 2024 parliamentary elections.<sup>73</sup>*

The researchers reviewed the current government strategic document, the PAR Strategy, to determine whether strengthening professionalism in top (senior) civil service management is envisaged. Namely, the second priority area of the PAR Strategy and its AP is titled “Public service and HRM”,<sup>74</sup> and its general objective is depoliticised, professional, and expert public administration. One of the measures under the second specific objective, focused on expert public administration (the development of the profession of administrative officer), is M 2.2.1. Professionalisation of civil service top management in public administration (senior civil service), with a gender-sensitive aspect. Within this measure, several activities related to the strengthening of professionalism in the civil service top management are envisaged:

- A 2.2.1.1. Establishment of a legal framework for civil-service top management;
- A 2.2.1.2. Preparation of manuals and other tools for members of the bodies of civil service top management<sup>75</sup> and for future candidates for civil service top management;

<sup>72</sup> “COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT North Macedonia 2024 Report” (European Commission, 30 October 2024), [https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/north-macedonia-report-2024\\_en](https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/north-macedonia-report-2024_en)

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Strategy for Public Administration Reform 2023–2030, <https://kvalitet.mioa.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/strategija-za-reforma-na-javna-administracija-2023-2030-so-akcziski-plan.pdf>

<sup>75</sup> Commission for SMS, Board for Selection of the Members of the SMS Commission, and SMS Selection Committee.

- A 2.2.1.3. Training of members of civil service top management bodies.

Furthermore, the valid regulations/legislation were reviewed to determine whether there are provisions that stipulate merit-based procedures for the recruitment of top management positions in the civil service. In this regard, the state of play is as follows:

Top managers, such as secretaries/directors, are appointed and dismissed without competition and competency assessment, merely upon political discretion.<sup>76</sup> In the absence of legislation specifically focusing on the senior civil service, the LAS regulates the criteria for access to senior civil service positions, applying the principle of merit. According to the LAS, a senior civil servant, categorised as B (B4—head of unit), is appointed by the head of the institution. There are special conditions for the job position of head civil servant at level B4 that have to be met; nevertheless, the system is only partially based on merit regarding senior civil servants and remains highly discretionary: the sole condition for an individual to be appointed as a state secretary or secretary general of an institution is to hold a B4 job position level.<sup>77</sup> The EC concluded that public service and human resources management are insufficient, and the politicisation of the public service has continuously undermined the consistent application of provisions on merit-based and transparent processes.<sup>78</sup>

In addition to the identified deficiencies in the implementation of the existing legislation, it was noted that the long-awaited revised legislation on civil servants and public sector employees (aiming to ensure merit-based recruitment and fair promotions and dismissals), including the draft Law on Senior Civil Service, had not been adopted.<sup>79</sup>

The draft Law on Senior Civil Service<sup>80</sup> aims to establish a merit-based and expertise-driven senior civil service to improve organisational capacity and promote good governance in public institutions. It defines the senior civil service as the highest management positions—such as state secretaries, directors, directors general, and inspectors general—who act as a link between political leadership and administration and are directly accountable to elected officials. The law outlines key principles guiding the selection and work of senior managers, including equal access, fairness, gender equality, autonomy, accountability,

76 SIGMA Monitoring Report: Public Administration in the Republic of North Macedonia 2024 [https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2025/01/public-administration-in-the-republic-of-north-macedonia-2024\\_03a4d4f2/071bad9d-en.pdf](https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2025/01/public-administration-in-the-republic-of-north-macedonia-2024_03a4d4f2/071bad9d-en.pdf)

77 Karai Julijana and Zhagar Beba, “Law on Senior Civil Service: Is the Government Hesitant to Adopt it?”, European Policy Institute (EPI)—Skopje, 2024, <https://epi.org.mk/wp-content/uploads/Law-on-Senior-Civil-Service.pdf>

78 “COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT North Macedonia 2024 Report” (European Commission, October 30, 2024), [https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/north-macedonia-report-2024\\_en](https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/north-macedonia-report-2024_en)

79 Ibid.

80 ENER, Draft Law on Senior Civil Service, 19 July 2023, [https://ener.gov.mk/Default.aspx?item=pub\\_regulation&subitem=view\\_reg\\_detail&itemid=74070](https://ener.gov.mk/Default.aspx?item=pub_regulation&subitem=view_reg_detail&itemid=74070)



transparency, professionalism, and ethical conduct. It mandates the creation of a Senior Civil Service Commission, composed of five full-time members serving five-year terms, responsible for overseeing the selection of senior managers and maintaining expert databases.<sup>81</sup> Selection procedures are merit-based and conducted by specialised selection commissions for each position. Senior managers are tasked with managing institutional operations, resources, and implementing government policies. They must act in accordance with the Constitution, laws, and government priorities, upholding high standards of integrity and ethics, and adhering to a Code of Ethics. Performance evaluations are based on achieving annually agreed goals. This law, in development since 2017, provides a comprehensive legal framework to standardise senior civil service appointments and enhance the professionalism and accountability of senior public officials.<sup>82</sup>

In the absence of legislation focusing specifically on the senior civil service, there are no legal provisions for the appointment of acting top managers, or for the termination of employment of top managers.<sup>83</sup> However, in practice, there are cases of appointment of acting top managers, especially acting directors.<sup>84</sup>

The researchers reviewed the relevant websites and regulations to determine the existence of any deliberation or vetting mechanism/procedure that is political in nature, i.e., beyond what is regulated by the civil service legislation, and which interferes with the top appointment processes for top management positions. Namely, no such political deliberation mechanism exists; however, top managers, such as the secretaries, are appointed without competition and competency assessment, merely upon political discretion. The legislation regulating this area is highly discretionary, given that there are no such mechanisms in place. As mentioned above, in the absence of specific legislation, the LAS regulates the criteria for access to senior civil service positions, including applying the principle of merit.<sup>85</sup>

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81 Ibid.

82 Karai Julijana and Zhagar Beba, "Law on Senior Civil Service: Is the Government Hesitant to Adopt it?", European Policy Institute (EPI)–Skopje, 2024, <https://epi.org.mk/wp-content/uploads/Law-on-Senior-Civil-Service.pdf>

83 According to the LAS, the mandate of secretaries ends with the mandate of the official who appointed them, and after the expiration of the mandate, the secretary is reassigned to a position at the same level as the one they held prior to being appointed as secretary.

84 "COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT North Macedonia 2024 Report" (European Commission, 30 October 2024), [https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/north-macedonia-report-2024\\_en](https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/north-macedonia-report-2024_en)

85 According to the LAS, a senior civil servant, an administrative servant of the category B (B4—head of unit), is appointed by the head of the institution. There are special conditions for the job position of head administrative servant at level B4 that have to be met; nevertheless, the system is only partially based on merit and remains highly discretionary: the sole condition for an individual to be appointed as a state secretary or secretary general of an institution is to hold a B4 job position level. Law on Administrative Servants (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 27/14, 199/14, 48/15, 154/15, 5/16, 142/16 and 11/18 and Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia no. 275/19, 14/20, 215/21, 99/22 and 208/24), [https://aa.mk/content/pdf/Drugi%20dokumenti/ZAS/zakoni/zakon\\_za\\_administrativni\\_sluzhbenici\\_2020.pdf](https://aa.mk/content/pdf/Drugi%20dokumenti/ZAS/zakoni/zakon_za_administrativni_sluzhbenici_2020.pdf)



In that regard, the five sample ministries<sup>86</sup> indicated that no vacancy announcements are issued for the selection or appointment of state secretaries. They stated that state secretaries are appointed in accordance with the LAS, with a single candidate being appointed directly, without any competitive selection process.

The attitudes of KIs regarding meritocracy and the protection of top managers from undue political influence were assessed through the same KI interviews.<sup>87</sup>

The first KI noted that the process for selecting and appointing top managers in the civil service is essentially non-existent. When asked whether the selection of senior civil servants is consistently based on merit rather than political considerations, the KI expressed doubt, stating that merit is not the primary factor in these decisions. To ensure greater merit-based decision-making, the KI emphasised that the first step must be the adoption of relevant legislation. Although a law on senior civil service has been drafted for years, no government has been willing to endorse it. The KI also stated that there are no safeguards in place to ensure that top managers in the civil service are selected based on their qualifications and experience. Without such safeguards, the selection process lacks the necessary integrity and transparency.

Furthermore, the KI highlighted that the current system for appointing senior civil servants is neither transparent nor fair. There is a lack of clarity and consistency in how appointments are made, which undermines public trust in the process. Finally, the KI pointed out the absence of mechanisms to protect top managers from undue political interference. Without such protections, appointments and decisions remain vulnerable to political influence, further compromising the merit-based nature of the system.

The other KI noted that without a legal solution that regulates the process horizontally, appointments continue to be governed by a patchwork of sector-specific regulations, each prescribing different requirements. The procedure is often abused through the appointment of interim top managers, since this designation allows them to bypass the full recruitment process. The practice of appointing directors based on party affiliation and coalition agreement remains widespread. There is no credible system for assessing performance, which not only creates room for unjustified dismissals but also makes it impossible to properly evaluate the quality of an individual's work. More broadly, there is a lack of culture among political elites that values and understands

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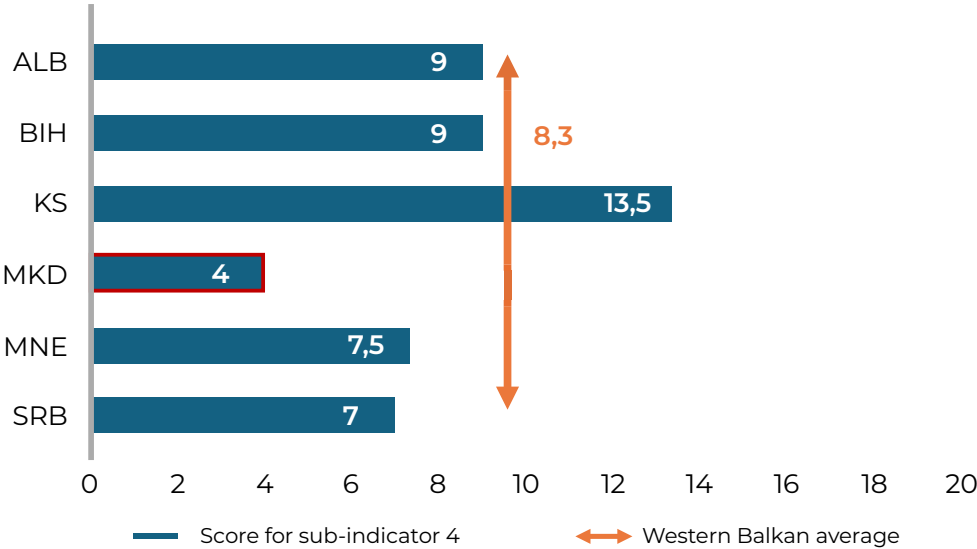
86 FOIs were sent on 2. June 2025 to the Ministry of Public Administration (response received on 8 July 2025); the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning (MOEPP) (response received on 25 June 2025); the Ministry of Economy and Labour (response received on 23 June 2025); the Ministry of European Affairs (response received on 1 July 2025); and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy (response received on 23 June 2025)

87 The short on-the-spot survey with the 1st KI (CUP) was conducted on 9 April 2025; the interview with the 2nd KI (Community Development Institute) was conducted on 22 April 2025; and the interview with the 3rd KI (IDSCS) was conducted on 9 May 2025.


the importance of merit-based appointments. There are no political consequences for poor management, partly because it is difficult for the public to draw clear connections between mismanagement and outcomes. Even when these connections are made, they compete with other issues during elections, reducing their influence on voter decisions.

How does North Macedonia do in regional terms?

**Sub-indicator 4:** Merit based selection and protection of top managers from undue political influence (maximum score 22.5)



## II.5 Transparency and clarity of information on the civil service remuneration

 **Principle 11:** Public servants are motivated, fairly and competitively paid and have good working conditions

**Awarded points per elements in sub-indicator 5: Transparency and clarity of information on the civil service remuneration**<sup>88</sup>

Indicator elements	Element type	Score
E 5.1 Regulations define a simply structured remuneration system	Legislation	1.5/1.5
E 5.2 Information on civil service remuneration system is available online	Practice in implementation	0.5/2
E 5.3 Citizen friendly explanations or presentations of the remuneration information exist	Practice in implementation	0/2
E 5.4 Key informants consider information on the civil service remuneration system as transparent and clear	Outcomes and impact	0/3.5
<b>Total score for sub-indicator 5</b>		<b>2/9</b>

Since the previous monitoring cycle, the situation has largely remained the same, with some setbacks, particularly given the fragmented system of salaries in the civil service,<sup>89</sup> which is distorted by tailor-made solutions aimed at increasing wages for employees of certain bodies.<sup>90</sup> While a planned salary reform is on hold, public bodies are manoeuvring to escape the common system, and the vast majority of civil servants are dissatisfied with low and unfair salaries. There are no clear regulations allowing teleworking and flexible

<sup>88</sup> The fifth sub-indicator focuses on the following SIGMA sub-principles: The public administration offers a competitive package of financial and non-financial compensation—remuneration and benefits, development and career opportunities, job security, and a respectful and inclusive work environment—to attract, motivate, and retain employees and teams with the required skills and competences; the salary system is transparent to employees and the public, while ensuring a sufficient degree of protection for sensitive personal data.

<sup>89</sup> “COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT North Macedonia 2024 Report” (European Commission, 30 October 2024), [https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/north-macedonia-report-2024\\_en](https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/north-macedonia-report-2024_en)

<sup>90</sup> SIGMA Monitoring Report: Public administration in the Republic of North Macedonia 2024, [https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2025/01/public-administration-in-the-republic-of-north-macedonia-2024\\_03a4d4f2/071bad9d-en.pdf](https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2025/01/public-administration-in-the-republic-of-north-macedonia-2024_03a4d4f2/071bad9d-en.pdf)

*working patterns, and absenteeism is not monitored.<sup>91</sup> On 10 July 2025, Parliament adopted the new LAS, which introduces the possibility of teleworking/remote work, as well as provisions for salary supplements to retain civil servants. These include a salary supplement for EU and IPA structures and participants in IPA projects, and a monetary reward for exceptional engagement.<sup>92</sup>*

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The researchers reviewed the primary and secondary legislation on civil service remuneration to establish whether it provides a simple structure for a remuneration system, meaning the existence of a tabular presentation with clearly provided coefficients or other numerical values per civil service rank/position (or ranges of coefficients), and a clear and limited set of rules for calculating supplements (both statutory and discretionary). In addition, the researchers reviewed the legislation to determine whether there are clear legal provisions on the following criteria:

1. Defined table with clear coefficients or other numerical values per civil service rank/position;
2. Regulated amounts of salary supplements;
3. Regulated conditions and/or limits to the use of salary supplements;
4. Regulated options for a combination of different salary supplements;
5. Regulated limits to the amounts of performance-related discretionary supplements;
6. Regulated clear criteria for performance-related discretionary supplements.

It has been established that all the criteria are fulfilled. Namely, regarding **the first criterion**, Article 86 of the LAS<sup>93</sup> regulates the salary components as follows:

“The salary of an administrative servant shall consist of the following components:

- basic component; and
- exceptional component.

Subsequently, Article 87<sup>94</sup> lists the parts of the basic salary, which include:

- minimum salary;
- part of the salary for the level of education;

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91 Ibid.

92 Law on Administrative Servants, (Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia no. 144/25), <https://www.sobranie.mk/detali-na-materijal.nsp?param=3dfabcf5-6871-4a8b-a987-88344bdc5adb>

93 Law on Administrative Servants (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 27/14, 199/14, 48/15, 154/15, 5/16, 142/16 and 11/18 and Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia no. 275/19, 14/20, 215/21, 99/22 and 208/24), [https://aa.mk/content/pdf/Drugi%20dokumenti/ZAS/zakoni/zakon\\_za\\_administrativni\\_sluzhbenici\\_2020.pdf](https://aa.mk/content/pdf/Drugi%20dokumenti/ZAS/zakoni/zakon_za_administrativni_sluzhbenici_2020.pdf)

94 Ibid.

- part of the salary for the rank; and
- part of the salary for seniority.”

Paragraph 3 of this Article contains a table of points based on the level of qualifications/education, while paragraph 4 of this Article contains a table of points per civil service rank.

Paragraph 5 of this Article defines that: “The part of the salary for length of service of the administrative servant shall be valued at 0.5% of the sum of the minimum salary, the part of the salary for the level of education, and the part of the salary for the rank, for each completed year of service, up to a maximum of 20%.”

**The second, third, and fourth criteria** are envisaged in Article 92,<sup>95</sup> which regulates the salary supplement for night work, shift work, and overtime, states that:

“(1) An administrative servant is entitled to a salary supplement for the following:

- night work;
- shift work;
- work during weekly rest;
- work during holidays established by law; and
- work longer than full-time working hours.

(3) The salary supplement for night work per hour shall be valued at 35% of the amount of the basic salary per hour.

(4) The salary supplement for shift work per hour shall be valued at 5% of the amount of the basic salary per hour.

(5) An administrative servant who was engaged to work in accordance with the conditions of paragraph (1) lines 3, 4, and 5 of this Article shall be entitled to an equivalent number of free hours or days for work performed outside regular working hours.

(6) The administrative servant shall use the free hours or days by the end of the month following the month in which the work was performed.

(7) If the administrative servant is not provided free hours or days in accordance with paragraph (6) of this Article, he shall be paid a salary supplement in the amount of 35% of the amount of the basic salary, calculated per hour.

Article 92, paragraph 8, determined that the aforementioned supplements are not mutually exclusive:

“The salary supplements from paragraph (1) of this Article are not mutually exclusive.”

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

The fifth and sixth criteria are under Article 94-a, which regulates the criteria and the amount of the performance bonus: “An administrative servant who has been assessed with an annual grade of ‘A’ shall be awarded a performance bonus in the amount of the salary received in the last month of the year for which the assessment was conducted, provided that funds are available for that purpose in the institution’s budget.”<sup>96</sup>

However, there is no general information on salaries in the entire civil service publicly available (for example, average, minimum, or maximum figures), and no detailed information on salaries broken down per civil service ranks/position. Although Articles 86 and 87 of the LAS outline the details of civil servants’ salaries, the remuneration system is not presented in a citizen-friendly way, as key elements are neither clearly nor simply explained. For instance, a citizen wishing to calculate a civil servant’s salary must first know the value of the coefficient (or point), which is determined annually by a government decision.<sup>97</sup>

Information on salaries for specific job positions is available in vacancy announcements (both internal<sup>98</sup> and external<sup>99</sup>) for filling civil service jobs. Namely, the Decree on the Implementation of the Employment Procedure for Administrative Servants,<sup>100</sup> based on the LAS, and the Rulebook on the Mandatory Elements of the Public Announcement for Filling a Job Position in the Public Sector through Employment and the Employment Application, as well as the Form, Content, and Manner of Maintaining the Register of Persons who have Provided False Data during Employment in the Public Sector,<sup>101</sup> based on the LPSE, includes the obligation of institutions to list information on salaries for specific job positions available in vacancy announcements, and therefore all announcements contain this information. Namely, only in North Macedonia do such vacancy announcements provide precise information on the salary being offered.<sup>102</sup>

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96 Ibid.

97 Ibid.

98 Example of an internal exam: <https://portal.mdt.gov.mk/post-documents/interen-oglas-broj-012024-document-WbA2.pdf>

99 Example of an external exam: <https://www.fakulteti.mk/job/09052025/ministerstvo-za-finan-sii-vrabetuva-4-sluzhbenici>

100 Decree on the Implementation of the Employment Procedure for Administrative Servants, (Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia no. 221/2024), <https://dejure.mk/zakon/ured-ba-za-sproveduvanje-na-postapkata-za-vrabetuvanje-na-administrativni-sluzhbenici-2>

101 Rulebook on the Mandatory Elements of the Public Announcement for Filling a Job Position in the Public Sector through Employment and the Employment Application, as well as the Form, Content, and Manner of Maintaining the Register of Persons who have Provided False Data during Employment in the Public Sector, (Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia no. 242/2024), <https://dejure.mk/zakon/pravilnik-za-zadolzhitelnite-elementi-na-javniot-oglas-za-popolnuvanje-na-rabot-no-mesto-vo-javniot-sektor-preku-vrabetuvanje-i-na-prijavata-za-vrabetu-1>

102 SIGMA Monitoring Report: Public administration in the Republic of North Macedonia 2024, [https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2025/01/public-administration-in-the-republic-of-north-macedonia-2024\\_03a4d4f2/071bad9d-en.pdf](https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2025/01/public-administration-in-the-republic-of-north-macedonia-2024_03a4d4f2/071bad9d-en.pdf)

KIs' views on the transparency, clarity, and public availability of the civil service remuneration system were assessed using the same interviews. They were asked to rate their agreement with two statements: whether the system is transparent and whether it is sufficiently clear.<sup>103</sup>

One of the KIs assessed the transparency of the civil service remuneration system as sufficient, noting that the current salary structure is clear and that the criteria for determining salaries and bonuses are publicly available and easily accessible. However, this KI rated the fairness of the civil service salary structure in relation to the duties and responsibilities of different positions as quite low. The system is perceived as rewarding underperforming employees, which undermines its fairness. The KI also pointed out that the civil service remuneration system is not regularly updated to reflect changes in the cost of living or other economic factors, which can lead to disparities between salaries and the actual economic environment. Additionally, the KI noted that there are no appropriate mechanisms in place to ensure the salary system remains equitable across different levels of the civil service. Instead, numerous sectors have created their own subsystems to address perceived inequities.

Regarding the transparency of the remuneration system to both current employees and potential candidates, the KI highlighted that potential candidates only receive information about the basic salary when applying for a job. In contrast, current employees often rely on internal channels to access information. The KI stated that the public is likely not adequately informed about how civil service remuneration is structured and allocated, which further diminishes the system's transparency. To address these issues, the KI suggested adopting a unified law on salaries in the public sector, which would make the civil service remuneration system more transparent and clear for all stakeholders involved.

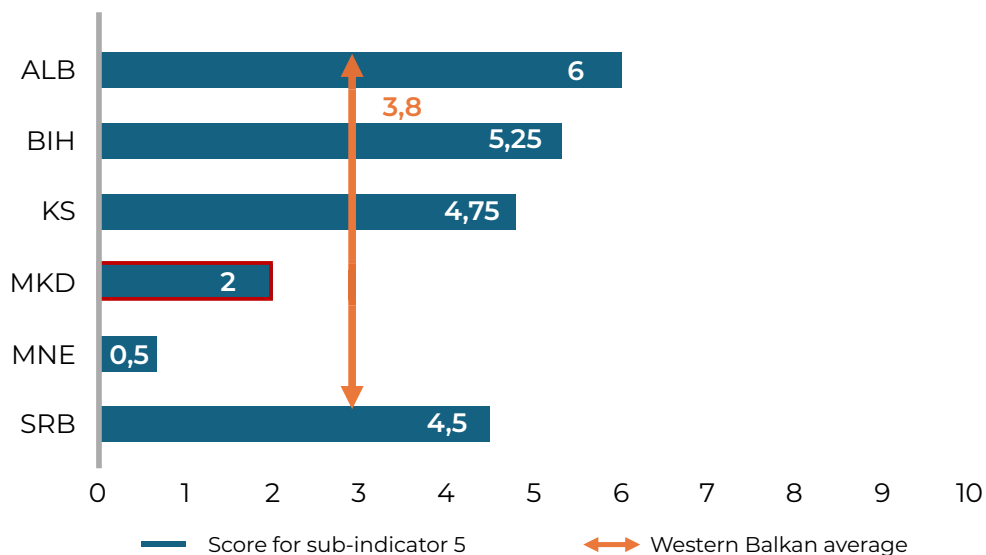
The other KI noted that the remuneration system is regulated by general and sector-specific laws, as well as collective agreements influenced by unions. Despite an oversized public sector, there are shortages of core service providers due to low, non-competitive salaries, leading to an unbalanced workforce.

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<sup>103</sup> The short on-the-spot survey with the 1st KI (CUP) was conducted on 9 April 2025; the interview with the 2nd KI (Community Development Institute) was conducted on 22. April 2025; and the interview with the 3rd KI (IDSCS) was conducted on 9 May 2025.

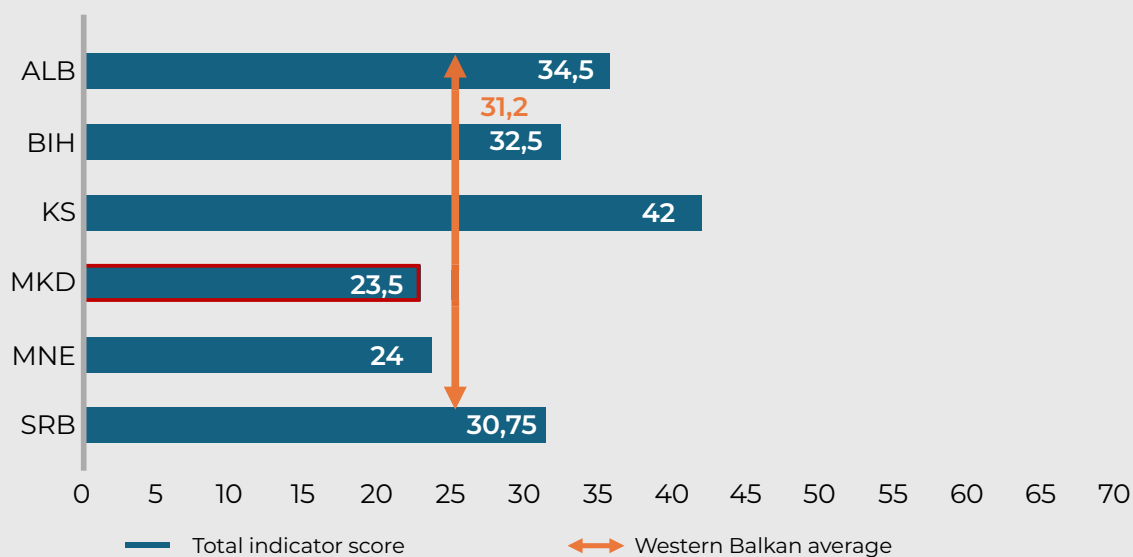
## How does North Macedonia do in regional terms?

**Sub-indicator 5: Transparency and clarity of information on the civil service remuneration (maximum score 9)**



## Overall scores comparison in the Public Service and Human Resource Management area

**Indicator: Transparency, openness and meritocracy of civil service and human resource management**



A regional overview report for the Strategy area, with results for all WB administrations, is available at [www.par-monitor.org](http://www.par-monitor.org)



## II.6 Recommendations for the Public Service and Human Resource Management

### II.6. 1 Tracking Recommendations from PAR Monitor 2021–2022

Recommendations	(short term/medium term/long term) <sup>104</sup>	Status	Explanation
1. The Report presenting official data on public service employees should contain (analytical) data on temporary employments.	Short term	No action taken	The Reports from the Register do not contain such classification. Temporary employment is not part of the 2023 Report. The 2024 Report has not yet been published.
2. Obligatory reports deriving from the LAS should be produced and published and should contain qualitative and comparative data.	Short term	No action taken	The reports were not produced and published. The MPA submitted (via FOI) the Annual Report on performance appraisals, but the report has not yet been published.
3. The MISA (now MPA) should publish reports on career development (promotions and demotions) of public service employees.	Short term	No action taken	The reports were not produced and published.
4. The MoF should publish reports on salaries (and awarded bonuses) of public service employees.	Short term	No action taken	The report was not produced and published.

<sup>104</sup> Recommendations for which the assessed time for implementation is up to one year are labelled as short-term. Medium-term recommendations are expected to be implemented within a period of one to three years. Long-term recommendations require more than three years to be implemented.

5. The number of temporary engagements for performance of tasks characteristic of the civil service in the central state administration should be limited by law and its usage should be revised..	Long term	Partially implemented	A positive development is the new LPSE, which restricts temporary engagements to urgent, unforeseen activities for up to 30 days. Institutions must request candidates through the public employment service, and such hires are limited to twice per year and to a maximum of 5% of staff. However, the actual effectiveness of the new provisions will only become evident through their implementation.
6. The LPSE should determine specific criteria (as those under the LAS) for the selection of individuals to be employed in the state administration under fixed-term contracts.	Long term	Partially implemented	A positive development is the new LPSE. However, the actual effectiveness of the new provisions will only become evident through their implementation.
7. The Law on Agencies for Temporary Employment should be revised and aligned with the provisions of the LPSE, or it should be annulled, and the procedure for temporary employments should be conducted under the LPSE.	Long term	Partially implemented	A positive development is the new LPSE, which introduces stricter rules for temporary engagements via agencies or other services, as mentioned above. However, the actual effectiveness of the new provisions will only become evident through their implementation.
8. Announcements for employment in the civil sector should contain information about a focal point for clarification requests.	Long term	No action taken	No improvements since the last PAR Monitor.

9. The approach and language of the announcements should be more citizen friendly, explaining what the position in question entails and should elaborate upon activities and work of the institution/body/sector hiring, i.e., there should be a job description.	Long term	No action taken	No improvements since the last PAR Monitor.
10. In order to avoid excessive administrative and financial burden on candidates, only essential documents should be demanded in the first stage (CV, motivation letter, and optionally a recommendation letter).	Long term	No action taken	No improvements since the last PAR Monitor.
11. In order to avoid excessive administrative and financial burden on candidates, only essential documents should be demanded in the first stage (CV, motivation letter, and optionally a recommendation letter).	Long term	No action taken	No improvements since the last PAR Monitor.
12. Documents such as proof of citizenship should be acquired by institutions ex officio.	Long term	Partially implemented	A positive development is the new LAS. However, the actual effectiveness of the new provisions will only become evident through their implementation.
13. When publishing the decision on the selection procedure, the AA should offer a comprehensive reasoning as to why a certain candidate has been selected, or not.	Long term	No action taken	No improvements since the last PAR Monitor.

14. The appointment of category A (Secretaries) employees should be revised. There is ample room for political influence considering that the Minister/head of Institution appoints the Secretary, i.e., a new Law on Top Management Service/ Law on Senior Civil Service should be adopted.	Long term	No action taken	No improvements since the last PAR Monitor. The law should be drafted and adopted.
15. The LAS vaguely defines the conditions under which labour market adjustment supplements can be requested. Having in mind that part of the Article (paragraph 3) has been annulled by the Constitutional Court, and paragraph 2 refers to the annulled paragraph 3, which is still in the LAS, this shortcoming should be corrected under the amendments to the LAS.	Long term	Partially implemented	A positive development is the new LAS. However, the actual effectiveness of the new provisions will only become evident through their implementation.
16. The effectiveness of integrity and anti-corruption measures should be continuously analysed and monitored.	Long term	Partially implemented	No improvements since the last PAR Monitor.

## II. 6.2 Recommendations from the 2024/2025 Monitor report

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*Recommendations from the monitoring cycle 2024/2025 for the Public Service and Human Resource Management area are listed below. The recommendations are grouped into three types, according to the estimated time needed for their implementation. Recommendations for which the assessed time for implementation is up to one year are labelled as short-term. Medium-term recommendations should be implementable within a period of one to three years. Long-term recommendations require more than three years to be implemented.*

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### Short-term recommendations<sup>105</sup>

1. The Annual Report of the Register for Public Service Employees, prepared and published by the Ministry of Public Administration, should provide analytical data disaggregated by civil service ranks, managerial and non-managerial positions, as well as information on temporary employment.
2. Obligatory reports under the LAS shall be produced and published by the following institutions: the Agency for Administration (Annual Work Report, including data on recruitments in the public administration); the Ministry of Public Administration (covering data on workforce planning, performance appraisals, promotions and demotions, training, disciplinary responsibility, and integrity); and the Ministry of Finance (providing data on salaries, remuneration, and bonuses). These reports should contain both qualitative and comparative data.
3. Given the recent adoption of the new LPSE, the Ministry of Public Administration should ensure its proper implementation, particularly with respect to provisions on temporary and fixed-term employment.
4. Given the adoption of the new LAS, the Ministry of Public Administration should ensure its proper implementation, particularly with regard to reducing excessive administrative and financial burdens on candidates applying for positions in the public administration.
5. When publishing decisions on selection procedures, the Agency for Administration should provide comprehensive reasoning, explaining why a particular candidate was selected or not.

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<sup>105</sup> In this monitoring cycle, all recommendations are short-term, considering that they have been repeated for many years, not only in the PAR Monitors but also by the EC Country Reports.

6. The Agency for Administration must ensure that the approach and language of public announcements are more citizen-friendly, clearly explaining the responsibilities of the advertised position and including the full job description.
7. The Law on Senior Civil Service should be prepared by the Ministry of Public Administration and adopted as soon as possible, given the lack of merit-based competitions and the politicisation of top management.
8. The framework Law on Salaries should be prepared by the Ministry of Finance and adopted as soon as possible, given the fragmented and distorted system of salaries in the administration.

## METHODOLOGY APPENDIX

For producing this report for North Macedonia, the following research methods and tools were used for data collection and calculation of elements:

- Analysis of official documentation, data, and official websites;
- Requests for free access to information;
- Interviews with stakeholders and key informants;
- Public perception survey.

Monitoring heavily relied on the analysis of official documents publicly available on the websites of administration bodies and on the data and information contained therein. However, in cases where the data was not available, researchers sent requests for free access to information to relevant institutions in order to obtain information necessary for awarding points for the elements.

Table 7: FOI requests sent in North Macedonia

Institution	Date of request	Date of reply to the request
Agency for Administration	02.06.2025	20.06.2025
Ministry of Public Administration	02.06.2025	08.07.2025 and 09.07.2025
Ministry of Finance	02.06.2025	Rerouted the FOI to SAO on 25.06.2025, the response from SAO was received on 03.07.2025
Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning	02.06.2025	25.06.2025
Ministry of Economy and Labour	02.06.2025	23.06.2025
Ministry of European Affairs	02.06.2025	01.07.2025
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy	02.06.2025	23.06.2025

Interviews with key informants were conducted and used as a base for point allocation for elements 1.8, 2.5, 3.11, 4.10 and 5.4. Additionally, they were used to collect qualitative, focused, and in-depth inputs on monitored phenomena. Interviews with other stakeholders (such as representatives of public administration bodies) were additionally used in the research to complement and verify otherwise collected data and findings. Selection of interviewees was based on purposive, non-probability sampling, targeting interlocutors based on their expertise on the topic.

Key informant interviews were comprised of a set of up to four questions where the participants expressed their agreement on a four-point scale: fully disagree, tend to disagree, tend to agree and fully agree. Points under elements 1.8, 2.5, 3.11, 4.10 and 5.4 were allocated if all key informants stated that they tend to agree/fully agree with the statement. Additionally, a set of open-ended questions was used, allowing for a discussion with interviewees and on-the-spot sub-questions rather than strictly following a predetermined format. Interviewees were given full anonymity in terms of personal information and institutional/organisational affiliation.

Table 8: Interviews conducted in North Macedonia

Date	Interviewees
9.04.2025	Center for Change Management (CUP)
22.04.2025	Community Development Institute
9.05.2025	Institute for Democracy Societas Civilis - Skopje (IDSCS)

## **List of interview questions**

### **• Element 1.8**

The following questions are used for point allocation for the element 1.8. Point allocation is determined based on fully agree/tend to agree responses. For each question where all key informants fully agree/tend to agree with the statement, 1 point is allocated.

1. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: **Publicly available reports and statistics on civil service are transparent.**
  - a) fully disagree
  - b) tend to disagree
  - c) tend to agree
  - d) fully agree



2. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: **Publicly available reports and statistics on civil service are comprehensive enough.**
  - a) fully disagree
  - b) tend to disagree
  - c) tend to agree
  - d) fully agree

Additional guiding questions (not used for point allocation, but relevant for providing qualitative insight necessary for the assessment):

1. How would you assess the quality and reliability of data published in official civil service reports?
2. Can citizens, the media, and civil society easily find and understand these reports?
3. Do the reports and statistics cover all relevant aspects of the civil service (such as recruitment, promotion, and staff turnover)?
4. Are there any critical data points missing from publicly available civil service reports? If so, which ones?
5. To what extent are the published data used to improve human resource management policies in the public administration?
6. How would you assess the usability and structure of the reports – are the data clearly presented and tailored to different audiences?
7. Is there room for improvement in the comprehensiveness and level of detail in these reports? If so, how?

## • Element 2.5

The following questions are used for point allocation for the element 2.5. Point allocation is determined based fully agree/tend to agree responses. For each question where all key informants fully agree/tend to agree with the statement, 1 point is allocated.

1. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: **Use of temporary hiring in civil service, such as fixed-term employment of civil servants, and hiring of contracted staff, is transparent.**
  - a) fully disagree
  - b) tend to disagree
  - c) tend to agree
  - d) fully agree
2. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: **Use of temporary hiring in civil service is, in practice, limited.**
  - a) fully disagree
  - b) tend to disagree
  - c) tend to agree
  - d) fully agree

3. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: **Use of temporary hiring in civil service is purposeful.**

- a) fully disagree
- b) tend to disagree
- c) tend to agree
- d) fully agree

Additional guiding questions (not used for point allocation, but relevant for providing qualitative insight necessary for the assessment):

- 1. In your opinion, is there sufficient publicly available information about temporary hiring in civil service?
- 2. Are there clear criteria and procedures for hiring temporary civil servants and contracted staff?
- 3. Do you think the selection process for temporary positions is adequately documented and communicated to the public?
- 4. In your opinion, what are the most common problems with using temporary hiring in civil service?
- 5. In your opinion, how frequently are fixed-term and contracted positions used compared to permanent employment? Are temporary positions primarily used to address short-term needs, or are temporary engagements sometimes becoming permanent roles instead?
- 6. Are there cases where temporary hiring is used beyond its intended scope?
- 7. What measures, if any, are in place to prevent excessive reliance on temporary staff in public administration?

- **Element 3.11**

The following questions are used for point allocation for the element 2.5. Point allocation is determined based on fully agree/tend to agree responses. For each question where all key informants fully agree/tend to agree with the statement, 1 point is allocated.

1. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: **Process of recruitment into civil service is based on merit.**

- a) fully disagree
- b) tend to disagree
- c) tend to agree
- d) fully agree

2. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: **Process of recruitment into civil service is transparent.**

- a) fully disagree
- b) tend to disagree
- c) tend to agree
- d) fully agree

Additional guiding questions (not used for point allocation, but relevant for providing qualitative insight necessary for the assessment):

1. Do you think the merit-based recruitment process in civil service is consistently applied in practice?
2. Do you consider the mechanisms in place to ensure that recruitment decisions are based on merit to be adequate and of sufficient quality?
3. Are there any factors that undermine merit-based recruitment in civil service?
4. How transparent are the selection criteria and procedures for civil service recruitment?
5. Do you consider that candidates have access to clear and detailed information about job openings and selection processes?
6. What challenges exist in making civil service recruitment fully transparent and merit-based?
7. How effective are appeal mechanisms for candidates who believe the recruitment process was unfair?
8. What improvements could be made to enhance both transparency and meritocracy in civil service recruitment?

- **Element 4.10**

The following questions are used for point allocation for the element 2.5. Point allocation is determined based on fully agree/tend to agree responses. For each question where all key informants fully agree/tend to agree with the statement, 1 point is allocated.

1. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: **Top managers (senior civil servants) are selected and appointed based on merit.**
  - a) fully disagree
  - b) tend to disagree
  - c) tend to agree
  - d) fully agree
2. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: **Top managers (senior civil servants) are sufficiently protected from undue political influences.**
  - a) fully disagree
  - b) tend to disagree
  - c) tend to agree
  - d) fully agree

Additional guiding questions (not used for point allocation, but relevant for providing qualitative insight necessary for the assessment):

1. How do you assess the process of selecting and appointing top managers in civil service?

2. Do you believe that the selection of senior civil servants is consistently based on merit rather than political considerations? How could the selection and appointment process for top managers be improved to ensure greater merit-based decision-making?
3. What safeguards are in place to ensure that top managers in civil service are selected based on their qualifications and experience?
4. In your opinion, is the current system for appointing senior civil servants transparent and fair?
5. In your opinion, how would you assess mechanisms for protection of top managers from undesirable political interference, if any?

- **Element 5.4**

The following questions are used for point allocation for the element 2.5. Point allocation is determined based on fully agree/tend to agree responses. For each question where all key informants fully agree/tend to agree with the statement, 1 point is allocated.

1. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: **Civil service remuneration (salary) system is transparent.**
  - a) fully disagree
  - b) tend to disagree
  - c) tend to agree
  - d) fully agree
2. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: **Civil service remuneration system (salary) is sufficiently clear.**
  - a) fully disagree
  - b) tend to disagree
  - c) tend to agree
  - d) fully agree

Additional guiding questions (not used for point allocation, but relevant for providing qualitative insight necessary for the assessment):

1. How would you assess the transparency of the civil service remuneration system?
2. Do you consider the current salary system in civil service to be clear? Are the criteria for determining salaries and bonuses in civil service publicly available and easily accessible?
3. How do you evaluate the fairness of the civil service salary structure in relation to the duties and responsibilities of different positions?
4. In your opinion, is the civil service remuneration system regularly updated to reflect changes in the cost of living or other economic factors?
5. Are there mechanisms in place to ensure that the salary system remains equitable across different levels of civil service?
6. How is the transparency of the civil service remuneration system communicated to both current employees and potential candidates?

7. Do you think that the public is adequately informed about how civil service remuneration is structured and allocated?
8. What improvements, if any, would you suggest to make the civil service remuneration system more transparent and clearer for all stakeholders?

The public perception survey is based on a questionnaire targeting the general public (18+ permanent residents) of North Macedonia. The survey was conducted through computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) in combination with computer-assisted web interviewing (CAWI).

The survey was conducted between 1st February and 22nd February 2025. The margin of error for the sample of 1008 citizens is  $\pm 3,52\%$  %, at the 95 % confidence level.

**Table 9: public perception survey questions in the area of Public Service and Human Resource Management**

<b>Statement 2</b>	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know/ No opinion
Public servants are recruited through public competitions based on merit (i.e. best candidates are enabled to get the jobs).	35.3%	37.2%	19.5%	6.2%	1.9%
<b>Statement 3</b>	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know/ No opinion
One needs personal connections to get a job in the public administration in my country (i.e., family ties, kinship, friendship and similar)	4.5%	11%	35.7%	47.1%	1.7%
<b>Statement 4</b>	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know/ No opinion
One needs political connections to get a job in the public administration (i.e., membership in political party/organisation, personal ties with political parties)	4.9%	12.2%	29.9%	51.8%	1.3%

## LIST OF REFERENCED SOURCES IN THIS REPORT

- Decree on the Implementation of the Employment Procedure for Administrative Servants
- Draft Law on Senior Civil Service
- EC 2024 Country Report on North Macedonia
- Final Report on the Compliance Audit on the Topic “Salaries and Salary Allowances of Administrative Officials in the Republic of North Macedonia”
- Law on Administrative Servants
- Law on Labour Relations
- Law on Private Agencies for Employment
- Law on Public Sector Employees
- Law on Senior Civil Service: Is the Government Hesitant to Adopt it?
- Law on Transformation of Temporary Employment into Fixed-Term Employment
- Report from the Register of Employees in the Public Sector for 2023
- Rulebook on the Mandatory Elements of the Public Announcement for Filling a Job Position in the Public Sector through Employment and the Employment Application, as well as the Form, Content, and Manner of Maintaining the Register of Persons who have Provided False Data during Employment in the Public Sector
- SIGMA Monitoring Report: Public administration in the Republic of North Macedonia 2024
- Strategy for Public Administration Reform 2023–2030 and Action Plan



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