

PAR Monitor Report North Macedonia

POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND COORDINATION

2024/2025



European
Policy
Institute.
Skopje



IMPRESSUM

PUBLICATION:

**PAR Monitor Report North Macedonia -
POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND COORDINATION - 2024/2025**

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European Policy Institute - Skopje

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As in the case of the previous editions of the National PAR Monitor reports, published for 2017/2018, 2019/2020 and 2021/2022, special acknowledgements go to the members of the WeBER Platform and the National Working Group in North Macedonia, as well as the other stakeholders in North Macedonia that shared their experiences through interviews, thus immensely contributing to the quality of this report. They are not individually identified in this report to protect their anonymity.

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)¹, the ReSPA (Regional School of Public Administration), and the Ministry of Public Administration as a project associate.

¹ 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.

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

Government strategic documents include measures aimed at improving transparency in decision-making, supported by a legal framework that obliges the Government to inform the public about its work. The Law on the Government establishes this general obligation, while the Rules of Procedure regulate its implementation through the publication of draft agendas, minutes, and communication via press releases, press conferences, and official websites. However, in practice, transparency remains limited. Agendas are not consistently published in advance, minutes are irregular, and decisions are primarily accessible through the paid Official Gazette rather than government websites, with certain acts remaining undisclosed due to confidentiality or security considerations.

Strategic documents also foresee improvements in government planning, coordination, and reporting, with mechanisms such as the Government Programme, Annual Work Programme, and implementation reports. Nevertheless, the legal framework does not require their public disclosure, and such reports are largely unavailable in practice. Although recent government work programmes are published, they lack performance indicators. Similarly, the framework for EU integration planning remains unclear, with the latest publicly available NPAA dating back to 2017 and no consistent monitoring or reporting since 2021.

While the Government Transparency Strategy 2023–2026 and the updated RIA Methodology strengthen the formal framework for transparency and consultations, their implementation is weak. Public consultations are limited, ex ante impact assessments are rarely conducted, and the work of governmental working groups lacks transparency. Stakeholder input is inconsistently reflected in final decisions, which is also reflected in low public perception of participation opportunities (37.6%).

Overall, despite a relatively well-developed legal and strategic framework, implementation remains the key challenge. Transparency measures, including advance notification and publication of draft laws, are applied in a formalistic and non-systematic manner. Monitoring reports are inconsistently published across sectors, and ex-post evaluations are not conducted or disclosed. Parliamentary transparency is partial, with draft laws available but lacking supporting documentation, while reporting on public hearings provides limited insight into stakeholder participation. Evidence from interviews further confirms that participation opportunities are often ineffective, characterised by limited feedback, delayed or incomplete information, and minimal influence on decision-making, pointing to weak accountability and insufficiently meaningful engagement.

The recommendations are short-term in nature, particularly as they have been consistently reiterated across three consecutive WeBER monitoring cycles. They call for strengthening evidence-based and inclusive policymaking through early and meaningful CSO engagement, timely access to information, systematic feedback mechanisms, and more representative consultation processes. They also emphasise the need to enhance transparency and accountability by improving the publication of government agendas, decisions, minutes, and implementation reports with clear performance indicators, as well as ensuring free access to legal information. Finally, they highlight the importance of improving EU integration planning through regularly updated documents, consistent monitoring and reporting, and clearer strategic frameworks, alongside more transparent and inclusive parliamentary oversight.

This report assesses the transparency and inclusiveness of four aspects of policy development and coordination: 1) transparency and inclusiveness of government decision-making process, 2) transparency of government planning and reporting, 3) transparency and inclusiveness of policy making and legislation development process, and 4) transparency and inclusiveness of policy implementation, evaluation, and parliamentary scrutiny. The first aspect examines whether transparency in government decision-making is secured through strategic commitments, legal provisions, and systematic publication of information from government sessions. The second looks at whether the government's planning and reporting obligations are regulated, and whether related documents are published on time, performance-oriented, and accessible in open formats. The third assesses whether policy-making and legislative development are transparent, inclusive, and evidence-based — covering stakeholder participation, impact assessments, consultation reporting and oversight, and the influence of public input on final decisions. The fourth examines legal and practical mechanisms for advance notification, publication of monitoring and ex-post evaluation reports, and stakeholder involvement in parliamentary oversight. The findings cover the period from 2023 until 2025, as well as the end-of-2022 developments not covered in the previous cycle.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CATI	Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing
CAWI	Computer-Assisted Web Interviewing
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
ENER	Unique National Electronic Register of Regulations
EPI	European Policy Institute
EU	European Union
FoI	Freedom of Information request
GAWP	Government Annual Work Programme
KDZ	Centre for Public Administration Research
KIs	Key Informants
MEA	Ministry of European Affairs
MPA	Ministry of Public Administration
NPAA	National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis
PAR	Public Administration Reform
ReSPA	Regional School of Public Administration
RIA	Regulatory Impact Assessment
SIGMA	Support for Improvement in Governance and Management
TEN	Think for Europe Network
WB	Western Balkan
WeBER	Western Balkan Enablers for Reforming Public Administrations

I. WEBER PAR MONITOR: WHAT WE MONITOR AND HOW?

I.1 WeBER's approach to monitoring PAR

The Public Administration Reform (PAR) Monitor methodology was developed in 2015-2016, as part of the first Western Balkans Enabling Project for Civil Society Monitoring of Public Administration Reform (WeBER) project. Since the onset, WeBER has adopted a markedly evidence-based approach in its endeavour to increase the relevance, participation and capacity of civil society organisations (CSOs) in the Western Balkans to advocate for and influence the design and implementation of PAR. The PAR Monitor methodology is a cornerstone WeBER product, enabling civil society monitoring of PAR based on evidence and analysis.

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,² and on SIGMA Methodology,³ 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.⁴

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

3 Available at: <https://www.sigmaweb.org/en/publications/documents/2024/assessment-methodology-of-the-principles-of-public-administration.html>. Accessed 18 March 2026.

4 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 “Policy Development and Coordination” area

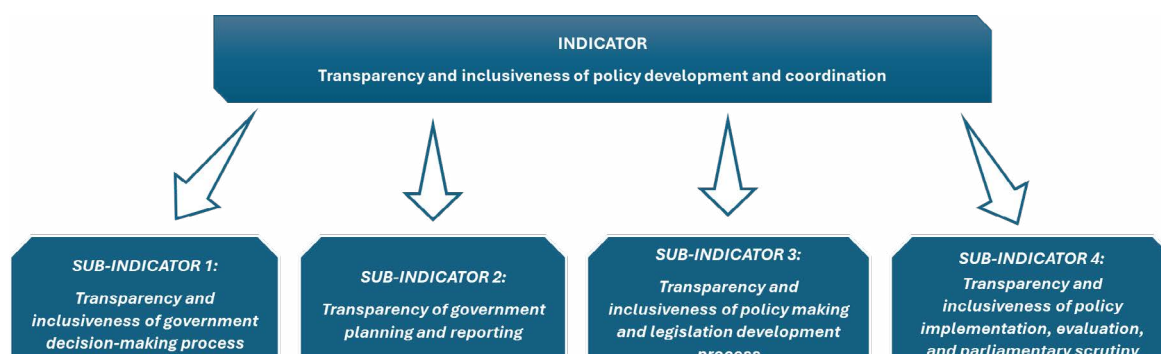
Meaningful citizen participation in the policy-making processes represents a cornerstone of good governance, by ensuring that decisions reflect the actual societal needs, are developed through dialogue with all stakeholders and affected groups and are subject to public scrutiny. Policies shaped through an open and transparent approach are more legitimate, better informed and evidence-based, and more likely to be effectively implemented. Planning plays a crucial enabling role in this process. When governments adopt, publish, and report on planning documents, they provide predictability, allow stakeholders to engage in a timely manner, and create a basis for assessing whether decisions align with stated strategic objectives. WeBER’s monitoring, thus, focuses on the transparency and inclusiveness of key elements of the policy cycle: from government planning and decision-making, through policy development, to policy implementation and evaluation, and, finally, parliamentary scrutiny. By assessing these interconnected stages, the monitoring examines how key principles of good governance transpose into the everyday practice of public administration and provides insights into how Western Balkan governments communicate their decisions with the public, and to what extent the voice of the public is heard when key decisions are being made.

Monitoring in **the Policy Development and Coordination area** is based on all six SIGMA Principles in this area:

-  **Principle 2:** Public policies are coherent and effectively co-ordinated by the centre of government; decisions are prepared and communicated in a clear and transparent manner.
-  **Principle 3:** The government plans and monitors public policies in an effective and inclusive manner, in line with the government fiscal space.
-  **Principle 4:** Public policies are developed based on evidence and analysis, following clear and consistent rules for law making; laws and regulations are easily accessible.
-  **Principle 5:** All key external and internal stakeholders and the general public are actively consulted during policy development.
-  **Principle 6:** Public policies are effectively implemented and evaluated, enhancing policy outcomes and reducing regulatory costs and burdens.
-  **Principle 7:** The parliament effectively scrutinises the government policymaking and ensures overall policy and legislative coherence.

These Principles are assessed from the perspective of the availability, accessibility and timeliness of all relevant information on the government planning, reporting and decision-making, while also examining the inclusiveness of

policy and legislative development. The focus on transparency and inclusiveness also seeks to determine if policies are regularly monitored, evaluated and subject to parliamentary scrutiny.



The monitoring period for the Policy Development and Coordination covers developments since the last PAR Monitor cycle, which lasted from January until November 2022. Thus, this report focuses primarily on the period from 2023 until 2025, 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 strategic and legal framework provisions that provide for transparent government decision-making, while also examining if key documents are available in practice: agendas for government sessions, meeting minutes, decisions and press releases. For the assessment of outcomes and impact, researchers conduct three key informant interviews with non-state actors who possess significant expertise in the area.

Table 2: Indicator elements under sub-indicator 1

Indicator element - number and title	Type
E 1.1 There is a strategic document in force that envisages improvement of transparency of government decision-making process	Strategy and policy
E 1.2 Regulations stipulate transparency of government decision-making process	Legislation
E 1.3 Government regularly publishes agenda items, minutes, and press releases from its sessions online	Practice in implementation
E 1.4 Government regularly publishes decisions from its sessions online	Practice in implementation
E 1.5 Key non-state actors consider the Government's decision-making process as transparent	Outcomes and impact

The **second sub-indicator** assesses the timeliness, availability and regularity of publishing of government planning documents and reports on their implementation, while also examining whether performance-based indicators and citizen-friendly elements are present. Monitoring of strategy and policy, legislation, and practice elements is performed by analysing strategic documents, legal acts and official data publicly available on the websites of relevant institutions. Assessment of outcomes and impact is based on the findings obtained from three key informant interviews, as in the previous sub-indicator.

Table 3: Indicator elements under sub-indicator 2

Indicator element - number and title	Type
E 2.1 There is a strategic document in force that envisages improvement of government planning and reporting practice	Strategy and policy
E 2.2 Regulations stipulate public availability of government planning documents and reports on their implementation	Legislation
E 2.3 Regulations stipulate public availability of government's European integration plans and reports on their implementation	Legislation
E 2.4 Government regularly and timely publishes its annual work plans	Practice in implementation
E 2.5 Government publishes its programme in a timely manner	Practice in implementation
E 2.6 Government's programmed and work plans contain performance indicators for monitoring achievement of results	Practice in implementation
E 2.7 Government regularly and timely publishes reports on the implementation of its work plans	Practice in implementation
E 2.8 Government regularly and timely publishes reports on the implementation of its programme	Practice in implementation
E 2.9 Government regularly and timely publishes its European integration plans	Practice in implementation
E 2.10 Government regularly and timely publishes reports on implementation of its European integration plans	Practice in implementation
E 2.11 Government's reports on implementing its programmes and work plans include assessments of achievement of key results and performance indicators	Practice in implementation
E 2.12 Government plans and reports are citizen friendly	Practice in implementation

E 2.13 Data contained in the government's reports on implementing work plans are available in open format	Practice in implementation
E 2.14 Key non-state actors consider the Government's planning and reporting activities as transparent, timely and citizen friendly	Outcomes and impact

The **third sub-indicator** seeks to examine if policy and legislation development are transparent, inclusive, and evidence-based, both in the strategic and legal framework and its implementation in practice. This includes meaningful stakeholder participation from the earliest phases, regular and comprehensive reporting on consultations, implementation of and reporting on impact assessments, oversight of consultation requirements, and the impact of public input on final decisions.

Monitoring of strategy and policy, legislation, institutional set-up, and practice aspects is performed by combining various data sources to maximise the 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 a sample of public policy documents and legal acts adopted in the period of 12 months preceding the monitoring window. Certain elements are based on a sub-sample of two adopted public policy documents and three adopted laws assessed as having significant impact on society or specific affected groups. For the outcomes and impact assessment, researchers conduct three key informant interviews with non-state actors, members of working groups for the development of sample public policy documents and laws and use the findings of the WeBER public perception survey.

Table 4: Indicator elements under the sub-indicator 3

Indicator element - number and title	Type
E 3.1 There is a strategic document in force that envisages improvement in transparency and inclusiveness of policy making and legislation development process	Strategy and policy
E 3.2 Regulations envisage transparency and inclusiveness of policy making and legislative development process	Legislation
E 3.3 Regulations stipulate minimum consultation requirements	Legislation
E 3.4 Regulations envisage online and free of charge access to consolidated versions of all policy documents and legislation	Legislation
E 3.5 Regulations stipulate mandatory ex ante assessment of impacts - including on gender equality - during policy making, and publication of IA reports	Legislation

E 3.6	There is a designated government institution for checking compliance with consultations requirements	Institutional set-up
E 3.7	Ex ante impact assessments – including on gender equality - are consistently applied during the development of policy documents	Practice in implementation
E 3.8	Ex ante impact assessments – including on gender equality - are consistently applied during the development of primary legislation	Practice in implementation
E 3.9	Reports on implemented ex ante impact assessments during the development of primary legislation are regularly published online, together with the draft documents	Practice in implementation
E 3.10	Published reports on implemented ex ante impact assessments during the development of primary legislation contain key information	Practice in implementation
E 3.11	Non-state actors participate in the Government-led working groups for policy and legislative development	Practice in implementation
E 3.12	Procedures and decisions of working groups are transparent	Practice in implementation
E 3.13	Public consultations on policy documents and primary legislation are regularly held	Practice in implementation
E 3.14	Public consultations are conducted in an early phase of policy development	Practice in implementation
E 3.15	Reports on public consultations on policy documents are publicly available	Practice in implementation
E 3.16	Reports on public consultations on primary legislation are publicly available	Practice in implementation
E 3.17	Public consultation reports contain all elements of the implemented consultation process	Practice in implementation
E 3.18	Online, central consultation portal for the implementation of consultations is regularly used	Practice in implementation
E 3.19	Designated government institution regularly checks compliance with public consultation requirements	Practice in implementation
E 3.20	Lead ministries proactively inform on public consultations	Practice in implementation
E 3.21	Consolidated versions of primary and secondary legislation are easily accessible online, and available free of charge	Practice in implementation
E 3.22	Public consultation results have impact on final policy and legislative proposals	Outcomes and impact
E 3.23	Key non-state actors consider the work of the Government-led working groups as transparent and inclusive	Outcomes and impact
E 3.24	Citizens' perception of their opportunity to participate in the development of laws and strategies	Outcomes and impact

The **fourth sub-indicator** focuses on the transparency of policy implementation through availability of monitoring reports and ex-post evaluations, advance notifications to affected groups on the upcoming changes to the legal framework, and involvement of non-state actors in parliamentary deliberations through public hearings. Monitoring of this sub-indicator is based on the review of the strategic framework, regulations and websites and documents of relevant institutions. For the assessment of outcomes and impact, researchers conduct three key informant interviews with non-state actors, participants of public hearings organised by the parliament.

Table 5: Indicator elements under the sub-indicator 4

Indicator element - number and title	Type
E 4.1 There is a strategic document in force that envisages transparency and inclusiveness of policy monitoring and evaluation practices	Strategy and policy
E 4.2 Regulations envisage sending advance notifications to affected groups on the upcoming changes to the legal framework	Legislation
E 4.3 Parliamentary rules of procedure envisage participation of interested parties in parliamentary discussions, in the form of public hearings	Legislation
E 4.4 Lead ministries publish advance notifications to the affected groups on the upcoming changes to the legal framework	Practice in implementation
E 4.5 Lead ministries regularly publish monitoring reports on implementation of policy documents	Practice in implementation
E 4.6 Monitoring reports on implementation of policies are citizen friendly	Practice in implementation
E 4.7 Lead ministries publish ex-post evaluations on implementation of policies	Practice in implementation
E 4.8 Ex-post evaluations on implementation of policies use external data and information produced by non-state actors	Practice in implementation
E 4.9 Parliament involves stakeholders, affected groups, and other non-state actors in public hearings	Practice in implementation
E 4.10 Online transparency of the work of parliaments	Practice in implementation
E 4.11 Key non-state actors consider involvement of stakeholders in public hearings as effective	Outcomes and impact

II. TRANSPARENCY AND INCLUSIVENESS OF POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND COORDINATION

This section presents the assessment results for North Macedonia. Each sub-section presents the results for one sub-indicator (four 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 Policy Development and Coordination area in North Macedonia, measured on a scale from 0 to 100 points.

*Transparency and inclusiveness of policy development and coordination
(score 0-100)*



II.1 Transparency and inclusiveness of government decision-making process

➡ **Principle 2:** Public policies are coherent and effectively co-ordinated by the centre of government; decisions are prepared and communicated in a clear and transparent manner.

Awarded points per element in sub-indicator 1:

Inclusiveness and transparency of government decision-making process⁵

Indicator elements	Element type	Score
E 1.1 There is a strategic document in force that envisages improvement of transparency of government decision-making process	Strategy and policy	0.5/0.5

⁵ The first sub-indicator focuses on the following SIGMA sub-principles: The centre of government (CoG) enables and facilitates policy co-ordination across ministries and relevant institutions to ensure overall policy coherence and better and more sustainable policy outcomes; Government decisions are prepared, approved and followed up in a transparent, effective and timely manner, based on clear rules and procedures, through the relevant decision-making structures, including government sessions.

E 1.2 Regulations stipulate transparency of government decision-making process	Legislation	1/1
E 1.3 Government regularly publishes agenda items, minutes, and press releases from its sessions online	Practice in implementation	0.5/2
E 1.4 Government regularly publishes decisions from its sessions online	Practice in implementation	0/2.5
E 1.5 Key non-state actors consider the Government's decision-making process as transparent	Outcomes and impact	0.75/3
Total score for sub-indicator 1		2.75/9

State of play

Since the previous WeBER monitoring cycle, the legal and strategic framework for transparency of Government decision-making has been strengthened, notably through the adoption of the Government Transparency Strategy 2023–2026 and the new Rules of Procedure of the Government (2024), which foresee the publication of agendas and minutes from Government sessions. However, in practice transparency remains limited,⁶ as agendas are often not published in advance, minutes are inconsistently available, and Government decisions are communicated mainly through brief press releases rather than full documents.⁷

Researchers examined the valid government strategic documents (e.g., strategies or programmes) to identify whether they include goals, measures, or activities aimed at improving the transparency of the government decision-making process, with clearly assigned responsibilities. If no such actions are foreseen in the documents, no points are awarded.

Namely, the PAR Strategy 2023–2030⁸ includes measures aimed at improving the transparency of government decision-making. Under Priority Area 1 (Policy Making and Coordination), Specific Objective 1.1 (A consistent and functional system for policy-making and law-making established) foresees Measure 1.1.2 Improving the system of policy coordination and Government decision-making.

6 Available at: https://www.sigmaweb.org/content/dam/sigma/en/publications/reports/2025/01/public-administration-in-the-republic-of-north-macedonia-2024_03a4d4f2/071bad9d-en.pdf. Accessed 18 March 2026.

7 COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT North Macedonia 2025 Report (European Commission, November 4, 2025), https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/north-macedonia-report-2025_en. Accessed 18 March 2026.

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

This measure includes Activity 1.1.2.1 Preparation of new Rules of Procedure of the Government, intended to operationalize the functions of the “Government Centre” and strengthen transparency and the decision-making process. The General Secretariat of the Government is designated as the responsible institution, with responsibilities clearly assigned in the Action Plan tables.

An important document addressing the broader improvement of transparency is the Government Transparency Strategy 2023–2026 with its Action Plan.⁹ The Strategy includes Priority Area 6: Transparency of processes, which aims to ensure integrity and transparency in decision-making in cases where officials exercise discretionary power or authority. Within this priority area, two specific objectives are defined: (1) using transparency measures to reduce the risk of abuse of discretionary authority, and (2) promoting accountability in the use of discretionary powers through mandatory justification and reporting. Under these objectives, the Action Plan foresees several measures and activities aimed at improving the transparency of government work, with responsibilities clearly assigned to the relevant institutions in the Action Plan tables.

Researchers reviewed the regulations in force at the time of measurement to assess whether there is a legal requirement to publish key information from Government sessions online, including agenda items, minutes, adopted decisions/acts, and press releases. Relevant legal provisions (articles or paragraphs) establishing such requirements were identified and cited. The analysis also notes any exceptions to the publication of this information and the justifications for those exceptions.

According to the Law on the Government of the Republic of Macedonia, Article 7 paragraph 1 the Government is obliged to inform the public about its work and the implementation of its annual work programme. Paragraph 3 of the same article further provides that the manner of informing the public about the work of the Government is regulated by the Rules of Procedure of the Government.¹⁰

Chapter 20 of the Rules of Procedure of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia regulates informing the public about the work of the Government. Article 92 stipulates that the Government informs the public through press conferences, press releases, and by publishing information on the websites and social media channels of the Government and state administration bodies, as well as through other means of public communication. Furthermore, the same article provides that draft agendas must be published on the Government’s website before the sessions of the General Collegium, Government

⁹ Government Transparency Strategy with its Action Plan 2023-2026, <https://portal.mdt.gov.mk/post-body-files/nacionalni-strategii-file-idF4.pdf>

¹⁰ Law on the Government of the Republic of Macedonia, “Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia” no. 59/00, 26/01, 13/03, 55/05, 37/06, 115/07, 19/08, 82/08, 10/10, 51/11, 15/13, 139/14, 196/15, 142/16, 140/18 and “Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia” no. 98/19

working bodies, and Government sessions themselves. It also requires that the minutes of the sessions be published after their adoption, together with the list of attending members and invited third parties.¹¹

Regarding the publication of Government decisions (adopted acts and other documents), Article 76 paragraph 1 of the Rules of Procedure of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia stipulates that Government decrees, decisions (одлуки), instructions, and programmes must be published in the “Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia”. However, paragraph 2 of the same article provides that decisions (решенија) are published in the “Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia” unless the Government decides otherwise.¹² In addition, paragraph 4 states that the Government may decide to publish certain conclusions. While these provisions allow for the publication of some decisions and conclusions, they also leave their disclosure to the discretion of the Government, enabling it to decide not to make certain information publicly available.¹³

Regarding exceptions to the publicity of information, Article 7 paragraph 2 of the Law on the Government of the Republic of Macedonia¹⁴ stipulates that the Government shall not publish information related to national security, official or business secrets, as well as personal data of citizens, in accordance with the legislation on personal data protection. In addition, Article 62 of the Rules of Procedure of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia¹⁵ provides that materials assigned an appropriate level of classification must be reviewed at closed Government sessions. The subject of classification may include information related to security, defence, foreign affairs, security and intelligence activities of state administration bodies, as well as systems, devices, projects and plans of importance for security, defence or foreign policy, and certain scientific, technological, economic and financial matters of significance for the state. Materials containing classified information, as well as conclusions from the minutes of closed Government sessions referring to such materials, are handled in accordance with the regulations governing classified information and are therefore not available to the public.

Researchers reviewed relevant government websites to assess whether materials from Government sessions are publicly available, including agendas, minutes, and press releases. During a three-month monitoring period, they observed each Government session and checked whether agenda items were

¹¹ Rules of Procedure of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, “Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia” no. 276/24

¹² *ibid*

¹³ *ibid*

¹⁴ Law on the Government of the Republic of Macedonia, “Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia” no. 59/00, 26/01, 13/03, 55/05, 37/06, 115/07, 19/08, 82/08, 10/10, 51/11, 15/13, 139/14, 196/15, 142/16, 140/18 and “Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia” no. 98/19

¹⁵ *ibid*

published either before or after the sessions. Publication within the monitoring period qualifies for points, while agendas published in advance of sessions receive additional points. Researchers regularly monitored the sources to determine the exact timing of publication.

During the monitoring period, a total of 24 Government sessions were observed.¹⁶ Agenda items were regularly published for all sessions, accounting for 100% of cases. However, minutes from the sessions were published in only 54% of cases, indicating that they were not consistently disclosed. Press releases were published for just 4% of the sessions, showing very limited regular communication regarding session outcomes. In addition, agenda items were not published in advance of any session (0% of cases); instead, they were published either on the day the session took place or later.

Researchers reviewed government websites to assess whether adopted decisions (acts and documents not labelled as confidential) from observed Government sessions are publicly available within one week after each session. If it is not possible to determine the total number of agenda items or adopted decisions, particularly those marked as confidential, researchers submit a FoI request at the end of the monitoring period requesting a list of all agenda items per session with indications of which were confidential, a list of all decisions adopted during the same period with indications of which were confidential, and the publication dates of all non-confidential decisions. Based on the received data, researchers determine how many non-confidential decisions were published online. Decisions published in the Official Gazette are accepted for scoring, provided that the Government website includes links redirecting to those publications and that access to the Official Gazette is free of charge. If decisions are available only through a paid-access Official Gazette, the element receives zero points.

Namely, the adopted Government decisions are not published on the Government website¹⁷ in their full form. Instead, they are communicated after the relevant Government session through press releases that provide only a summarized overview. While adopted acts are formally published in the Official Gazette, access to these publications is not freely available and requires a paid subscription.

In addition, researchers conducted three key informant interviews (KIs) with civil society representatives and other non-state actors to gather insights on the transparency of the Government's decision-making practices¹⁸. In addition to the interviews, participants complete a short survey assessing their views on the transparency of government decision-making using a four-point scale

¹⁶ <https://vlada.mk/mk-MK/otvorena-vlada/zapisnici-i-dnevni-redovi-od-sednicite-na-vladata>

¹⁷ <https://vlada.mk/mk-MK/odnosi-so-javnost/soopstenija>

¹⁸ Interviews were conducted with: Prolocal on 15.01.2026; Impetus on 15.01.2026 and Rural Coalition on 22.01.2023

(fully agree, tend to agree, tend to disagree, fully disagree). The survey covers perceptions of the transparency of Government session agendas, minutes, decisions, and communication through press releases. Points are allocated based on the share of positive responses.

According to the first KI, the Government agenda items for sessions are generally made public through press releases, press conferences, and publication on the official Government website. However, access to agendas prior to the sessions appears to be limited mainly to participants of the sessions, which restricts opportunities for broader stakeholder engagement and reduces transparency before decisions are taken. Official meeting minutes represent the main public record of Government sessions. While they usually contain information on adopted decisions, they provide limited insight into the discussions, arguments, or reasoning behind those decisions. Consequently, their contribution to accountability is constrained, as the public cannot fully assess how and why particular decisions were reached. Government decisions are typically communicated in a formal and legalistic format. Although this ensures legal precision, the lack of contextual explanation can reduce clarity and accessibility for the wider public. This is particularly noticeable in policy, budgetary, or politically sensitive decisions, which tend to be less transparent than technical or procedural matters. Such limitations are often associated with centralized communication practices and political considerations.

Government press releases are generally concise and focus primarily on outcomes rather than on the decision-making process. They tend to provide only general information, with limited detail on the policy rationale, alternative options considered, or implications for implementation. While press releases usually reflect the formal content of adopted decisions, they only occasionally communicate the broader context and reasoning behind them.

A fully transparent and accountable Government decision-making process would require timely public access to comprehensive documentation, including agendas and supporting explanatory materials before sessions take place. It should also ensure clear justification of decisions, meaningful involvement of relevant professional experts, and communication that is understandable and accessible to the public. Such practices would strengthen public trust, facilitate informed scrutiny, and enhance overall accountability.

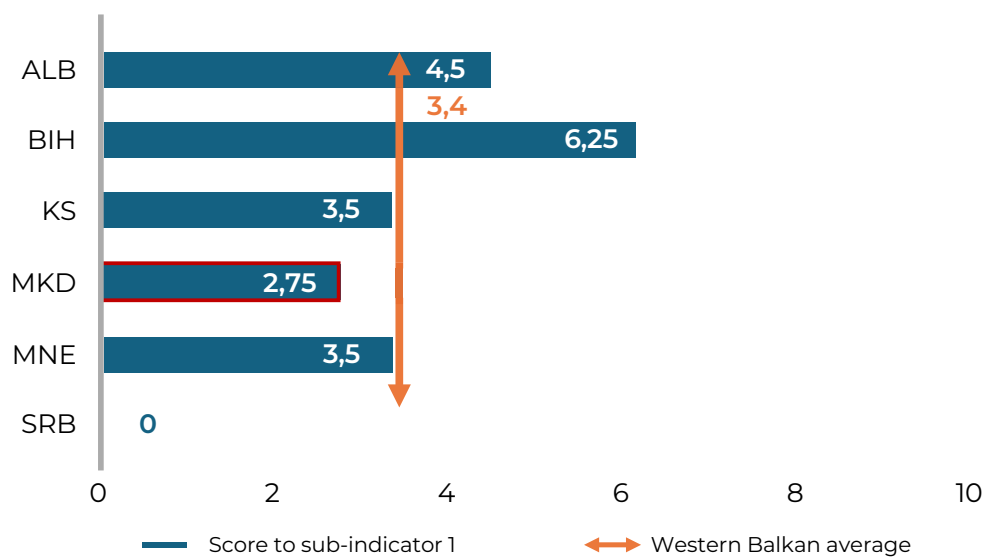
According to the second key informant, in practice access to information on Government session agendas, the reasoning behind decisions, and detailed minutes remains very limited. Even where there is active cooperation with individual institutional representatives, progress in advancing policies, reforms, or substantive changes is often slow and constrained by institutional and procedural barriers. Although agendas are usually published in advance, they are often presented at a very general level, providing limited detail on the

substance of the items discussed and rarely including supporting background materials. Meeting minutes are either not published or are available only as brief summaries, while verbatim or more detailed records are generally not accessible to the public. Decisions are made public, but often without comprehensive explanations, supporting documentation, or accompanying impact assessments. Press releases are issued regularly and in a consistent manner; however, they tend to be selective and promotional, focusing more on public relations messaging than on providing comprehensive, citizen-oriented, and substantive information about the decision-making process. Information on Government session agendas is generally published in a timely manner on the official Government website and shared through social media and press conferences, making it formally accessible to the public, media, and civil society. However, while access to agendas is open, this does not always translate into meaningful transparency or participation.


The third KI noted that the availability and quality of meeting minutes remain a significant challenge. Minutes are often published with substantial delays or are incomplete, limiting insight into the discussions and rationale behind decisions and negatively affecting accountability. Published Government decisions are generally clear and understandable, particularly those that attract media and public attention. Nonetheless, transparency is applied unevenly. Certain categories of decisions, such as lower-level personnel appointments or issues of limited public interest, are communicated only briefly or not explained at all, raising concerns about selective accountability. The Government press releases are usually general and informative, covering all adopted decisions, but the level of detail varies. While some decisions are thoroughly explained, others are merely announced without context or justification. In most cases, press releases reflect the content of decisions, but when information is limited or omitted, delayed meeting minutes remain the only source of clarification. A fully transparent and accountable Government decision-making process should ensure that all decisions are communicated clearly and in a timely manner. This includes proactive publication of agendas, draft decisions, supporting documents, and meeting minutes on accessible official platforms. Decisions should be explained clearly, including their rationale and expected impact, and mechanisms for public feedback should be in place. Transparency must apply consistently to all decisions to strengthen accountability and public trust in the Government.

How does North Macedonia do in regional terms?

Sub-indicator 1: Transparency and inclusiveness of the government decision-making process (maximum score 9)



II.2 Transparency of government planning and reporting

 **Principle 3:** The government plans and monitors public policies in an effective and inclusive manner, in line with the government fiscal space.

Awarded points per element in sub-indicator 2:

Transparency of government planning and reporting¹⁹

Indicator elements	Element type	Score
E 2.1 There is a strategic document in force that envisages improvement of government planning and reporting practice	Strategy and policy	0.5/0.5
E 2.2 Regulations stipulate public availability of government planning documents and reports on their implementation	Legislation	0.25/0.5
E 2.3 Regulations stipulate public availability of government's European integration plans and reports on their implementation	Legislation	0/0.5
E 2.4 Government regularly and timely publishes its annual work plans	Practice in implementation	0.75/1.5
E 2.5 Government publishes its programme in a timely manner	Practice in implementation	1.5/1.5
E 2.6 Government's programmes and work plans contain performance indicators for monitoring achievement of results	Practice in implementation	0/1.5
E 2.7 Government regularly and timely publishes reports on the implementation of its work plans	Practice in implementation	0/1.5
E 2.8 Government regularly and timely publishes reports on the implementation of its programme	Practice in implementation	0/1.5

¹⁹ The second sub-indicator focuses on the following SIGMA sub-principles: Policy planning documents meet quality requirements and contain adequate analysis and information, including on policy objectives, indicators with targets and monitoring framework. They are developed in a participatory manner and are publicly available; Performance and results, including achievement of policy objectives and outcome indicators, are regularly monitored and reported on; monitoring reports are published on time to enable public scrutiny; The government effectively implements EI plans through prioritising and costing of EI-related commitments, taking into consideration the available resources and capacities of the administration.

E 2.9 Government regularly and timely publishes its European integration plans	Practice in implementation	0/1.5
E 2.10 Government regularly and timely publishes reports on implementation of its European integration plans	Practice in implementation	0.5/1.5
E 2.11 Government's reports on implementing its programmes and work plans include assessments of achievement of key results and performance indicators	Practice in implementation	0/2
E 2.12 Government plans and reports are citizen friendly	Practice in implementation	0.5/1.5
E 2.13 Data contained in the government's reports on implementing work plans are available in open format	Practice in implementation	0/1.5
E 2.14 Key non-state actors consider the Government's planning and reporting activities as transparent, timely and citizen friendly	Outcomes and impact	0/3
Total score for sub-indicator 2		3.5/20

State of play

Since the previous monitoring cycle, the strategic framework has improved, and it introduces measures to strengthen government planning coordination and reporting. However, the legal framework remains unchanged, with no obligation to publish implementation reports, which are still not publicly available. Government planning documents are published online but lack performance indicators, while EU integration planning remains weak, with outdated versions of NPAA online, and no regular monitoring or reporting.²⁰

Researchers review valid government strategic documents in force at the time of assessment (e.g. strategies, programmes or similar) to determine whether they foresee improvements to government planning and reporting practices. They identified relevant sections that outline goals, concrete measures or activities, and clearly assigned responsibilities. If no strategic document envisaged such actions, no points are awarded.

²⁰ Available at: https://www.sigmaweb.org/content/dam/sigma/en/publications/reports/2025/01/public-administration-in-the-republic-of-north-macedonia-2024_03a4d4f2/071bad9d-en.pdf. Accessed 18 March 2026.

The PAR Strategy 2023–2030²¹ includes provisions aimed at improving government planning and reporting practices. Under Priority Area 1: Policy Making and Coordination, Specific Objective 1.1 seeks to establish a consistent and functional system for policy-making and law-making. Within this objective, two measures are directly related to strengthening planning and reporting practices: M1.1.1 Developing and maintaining a functional mechanism for harmonising long-term with medium-term and annual planning, and M1.2.2 Regular and timely informing the public about the work of the Government and the implementation of planning documents. Measure M1.1.1 foresees several activities aimed at strengthening the strategic planning framework and improving coordination between planning and budgeting processes. These include: conducting an analysis of capacities for strategic planning, policy-making, monitoring, and the integration of gender aspects within the General Secretariat and line ministries (A1.1.1.1); harmonising the Methodology for Strategic Planning and the preparation of the Government Annual Work Programme with the Law on Budgets (A1.1.1.4); adopting a methodology for the preparation of the National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis (NPAA) (A1.1.1.9); and programming the NPAA for the period 2023–2030 (A1.1.1.10).

Measure M1.2.2 focuses on improving transparency and reporting on government planning documents. In this context, Activity A1.2.2.2 foresees the regular and timely preparation and publication of reports on the implementation of sectoral strategies, the NPAA, and the Government Annual Work Programme.

The Action Plan accompanying the PAR Strategy clearly assigns institutional responsibilities for each measure and activity through detailed implementation tables, ensuring accountability for their execution.

Researchers reviewed regulations valid at the time of measurement to determine whether requirements existed for publishing government planning documents and reports on their implementation. Relevant provisions establishing planning and reporting mechanisms were identified, along with rules requiring their publication and the timelines for disclosure. The assessment considered the existence and publication of the government programme or multi-year plan, the annual work plan, and reports on their implementation.

The legal framework in force at the time of assessment establishes planning and reporting mechanisms for the work of the Government, as well as certain rules on the publication of government acts. Article 6 of the Law on the Government of the Republic of Macedonia²² establishes the obligation for the Government to prepare an annual work programme in order to plan its activ-

²¹ 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>

²² Law on the Government of the Republic of Macedonia, “Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia” no. 59/00, 26/01, 13/03, 55/05, 37/06, 115/07, 19/08, 82/08, 10/10, 51/11, 15/13, 139/14, 196/15, 142/16, 140/18 and “Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia” no. 98/19

ities. Furthermore, Article 7(3) of the same law provides that matters related to informing the public about the work of the Government shall be regulated by the Rules of Procedure of the Government.

The Rules of Procedure of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia²³ further regulate the planning and reporting framework. Article 16(1) provides for the adoption of the Programme proposed by the Prime Minister to the Assembly upon the election of the Government, which functions as the Government's Medium-Term Work Programme. According to Article 16(4), this programme is operationalised through the Annual Work Programme of the Government, which incorporates the Government's strategic priorities, fiscal policy, obligations stemming from legislation, strategic planning documents, sectoral strategies, and commitments related to the EU accession process.

The same article also establishes a reporting mechanism. Article 16(5) stipulates that the General Secretariat prepares the Draft Annual Work Programme based on the initiatives of the main budget users, monitors its implementation, and prepares semi-annual and annual reports on its implementation for consideration by the Government. Article 16(7) further provides that the Government reviews the semi-annual and annual reports on the implementation of the Annual Work Programme at a thematic session.

In relation to publicity requirements, Article 76(1) of the Rules of Procedure stipulates that Government decrees, decisions, instructions, and programmes shall be published in the "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia." However, the Rules of Procedure do not explicitly require the publication of the semi-annual and annual reports on the implementation of the Annual Work Programme.

Similarly, the Methodology for Strategic Planning and Preparation of the Annual Work Programme of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia²⁴ requires the General Secretariat to prepare semi-annual and annual reports on the implementation of the Government's Annual Work Programme (item 6.5). Nevertheless, this methodology does not establish an obligation for these reports to be publicly disclosed.

Researchers also reviewed regulations in force at the time of measurement to determine whether European integration planning documents and reports on their implementation were required and publicly disclosed. Relevant legal provisions establishing planning and reporting mechanisms were identified, as well as rules on publication and timelines for disclosure.

²³ Rules of Procedure of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" no. 276/24

²⁴ Annual Work Programme of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia, "Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" no. 124/08 and 58/18 and "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" no. 223/19

Article 18-a of the Law on Organization and Work of State Administration Bodies²⁵ defines the competencies of the Ministry of European Affairs (MEA) in relation to the country's EU integration process.

According to this provision, the MEA is responsible for coordinating and harmonising the work of state administration bodies and other institutions involved in preparing the country for EU membership, including accession negotiations. It also coordinates the implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the Republic of North Macedonia and the European Union, as well as other agreements concluded with the EU and the functioning of the related joint bodies. Furthermore, the MEA ensures coordination of activities related to the preparation of the Macedonian version of the EU acquis, alignment of the work of national representatives in EU institutions and bodies, and coordination of foreign assistance from the European Union, its Member States, and other donors supporting reforms linked to the EU integration process. In addition, the MEA is responsible for informing the public about activities related to European integration and European affairs, as well as performing other EU-related tasks assigned by the Government or determined by law.

This general provision envisages informing the public about activities related to the EU integration process; however, it does not establish a specific obligation to publish the Government's European integration planning documents or reports on their implementation. Moreover, the legal framework does not explicitly define a formal European integration planning instrument, nor does it clearly establish the National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis (NPAA) as a legally mandated document. Consequently, government European integration plans and reports on their implementation have not been systematically published.

This institutional gap has also been highlighted in the SIGMA report Public Administration in the Republic of North Macedonia 2024.²⁶ According to the report, the NPAA has not been clearly established or confirmed in the regulatory framework as the Government's official medium-term planning document for EU integration. Likewise, requirements for its preparation, regular updating, monitoring, and reporting—along with its relationship to other government planning documents—have not been clearly defined.

In practice, short-term planning of EU integration activities is carried out through the Government Annual Work Programme (GAWP). However, analysis of the 2023 GAWP indicates that only around 25% of planned EU integration measures were implemented. MEA has indicated that internal planning tools exist for short-term

²⁵ Law on Organization and Work of State Administration Bodies, "Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" No. 58/00, 44/02, 82/08, 167/10, 51/1 and "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" No. 96/19, 110/19 and 121/24

²⁶ Available at: https://www.sigmaweb.org/content/dam/sigma/en/publications/reports/2025/01/public-administration-in-the-republic-of-north-macedonia-2024_03a4d4f2/071bad9d-en.pdf. Accessed 18 March 2026.

planning, yet their formal status and their relationship to the Government's official planning instruments, including the GAWP and the NPAA, remain unclear.²⁷ Furthermore, since 2021 there has been no regular monitoring or reporting on the implementation of the NPAA 2021–2025. Instead, the programme is typically evaluated only during the preparation of the next programming cycle. As a result, it is difficult to assess the effectiveness of the NPAA as the Government's medium-term planning instrument for EU integration.²⁸

Researchers assessed whether the last two annual work plans were published online on the official Government website in a regular and timely manner. If legal deadlines for publication existed, compliance with those deadlines was examined; if not, publication within one week of adoption was considered timely. Where adoption and publication dates were not clearly indicated online, a freedom of information request was submitted to the relevant government office to obtain this information.

Article 6 of the Law on the Government of the Republic of Macedonia²⁹ establishes the obligation for the Government to prepare annual work programmes as a tool for planning its activities. Both the 2025 Government Annual Work Programme³⁰ and the 2024 Government Annual Work Programme³¹ are publicly available on the official Government website. However, the legal framework does not establish specific deadlines for the public disclosure of these programmes. In addition, the official Government website does not indicate the dates when the documents were published online, although the dates of their adoption are provided.

According to the FoI response, the 2025 Government Annual Work Programme was adopted on 21 January 2025 and published on 24 January 2025. The 2024 Government Annual Work Programme was adopted on 16 January 2024 and published on 30 January 2024. Based on these dates, the 2025 programme was published in a timely manner (within one week of adoption), while the 2024 programme was published approximately two weeks after its adoption.

Researchers also assessed whether the current Government programme was published online on the official Government website in a timely manner. If legal deadlines existed, compliance with those deadlines was examined; if not, publication within one week of adoption was considered timely.

27 *ibid*

28 *ibid*

29 Law on the Government of the Republic of Macedonia, "Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" no. 59/00, 26/01, 13/03, 55/05, 37/06, 115/07, 19/08, 82/08, 10/10, 51/11, 15/13, 139/14, 196/15, 142/16, 140/18 and "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" no. 98/19

30 2025 Government Annual Work Programme, <https://portal.mdt.gov.mk/post-body-files/strateski-prioriteti-file-HPfo.pdf>

31 2024 Government Annual Work Programme, <https://portal.mdt.gov.mk/post-body-files/strateski-prioriteti-file-8hKD.pdf>

Where adoption and publication dates were not clearly indicated online, a FoI was submitted to obtain this information.

The current Government Programme for the period 2024–2028 is publicly available on the official Government website.³² The legal framework does not establish specific deadlines for the public disclosure of government programmes or other multi-annual planning documents, and the Government website does not clearly indicate the date when the programme was published online.

The programme itself is dated June 2024 and was submitted to the Assembly on 18 June 2024.³³ According to the FoI response,³⁴ the Government Programme 2024–2028 was published online on 6 July 2024. Given the absence of legally prescribed publication deadlines, this publication is considered timely.

The researchers assessed whether Government work plans include performance indicators for monitoring the achievement of results. Namely, the 2025 Government Annual Work Programme³⁵ and the 2024 Government Annual Work Programme³⁶ include the titles of planned initiatives and, for each initiative, specify the proposing institution, a brief explanation, expected outcomes, and fiscal implications but do not contain performance indicators. The 2024-2028 multi-annual work programme of the Government provides a narrative overview of the Government plans but does not contain specific performance indicators as well.³⁷ Researchers also assessed whether reports on the implementation of Government work plans for the last two reporting cycles were published online on the official Government website in a regular and timely manner. If legal deadlines existed, compliance with those deadlines was examined; if not, publication within one week of adoption was considered timely. Where adoption and publication dates were not clearly indicated online, a freedom of information request was submitted to obtain this information.

A reporting mechanism on the implementation of the Government's Annual Work Programme is established in Article 16 of the Rules of Procedure of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia.³⁸ Article 16(5) stipulates that the General Secretariat prepares the Draft Annual Work Programme based

32 Government Programme for the period 2024–2028, <https://portal.mdt.gov.mk/post-body-files/strateski-prioriteti-file-B1ns.pdf>

33 https://360stepeni.mk/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Dokument-Predlog-programa-za-rabota-na-Vladata_2_240618_195329-1-1.pdf

34 FoI request was sent to the General Secretariat of the Government on 06.02.2026, response was received on 19.02.2026

35 2025 Government Annual Work Programme, <https://portal.mdt.gov.mk/post-body-files/strateski-prioriteti-file-HPfo.pdf>

36 2024 Government Annual Work Programme, <https://portal.mdt.gov.mk/post-body-files/strateski-prioriteti-file-8hKD.pdf>

37 Government Programme for the period 2024–2028, <https://portal.mdt.gov.mk/post-body-files/strateski-prioriteti-file-B1ns.pdf>

38 Rules of Procedure of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" no. 276/24

on the initiatives of the main budget users, monitors its implementation, and prepares semi-annual and annual reports on its implementation, which are submitted to the Government for consideration. In addition, Article 16(7) provides that the Government reviews the semi-annual and annual reports on the implementation of the Annual Work Programme and the Legislative Review at a thematic session. However, the Rules of Procedure do not establish an obligation to publish these reports. Similarly, the Methodology for Strategic Planning and Preparation of the Annual Work Programme of the Government requires the General Secretariat to prepare semi-annual and annual reports on the implementation of the Government's Annual Work Programme (item 6.5), but it also does not provide for their public disclosure.³⁹ Hence, reports on the level of implementation of the Government's Annual Work Programme are not publicly available.

Researchers assessed whether reports on the implementation of the Government programme were published online on the official Government website for the last two reporting cycles in a regular and timely manner. If legal deadlines existed, compliance with those deadlines was examined; if not, publication within one week of adoption was considered timely. Where adoption and publication dates were not clearly indicated online, a freedom of information request was submitted to obtain this information. The Rules of Procedure of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia refer to a medium-term Government programme that is operationalised through the Government's annual work programmes.⁴⁰ However, the Rules of Procedure do not include provisions requiring the publication of this programme or reports on its implementation. Consequently, no reports on the implementation of the Government's medium-term programme are publicly available.

Researchers assessed whether the last two European integration plans (the current and the previous) were published online on the official Government website or the website of the institution responsible for EU integration policy, in line with any applicable legal deadlines. If no legal deadlines existed, publication within one week of adoption was considered timely. Where adoption and publication dates were not clearly indicated online, a freedom of information request was submitted to obtain this information. Researchers also assessed whether reports on the implementation of European integration planning documents were published online and if they provide information on the achievement of key results and specific performance indicators, rather than only on completed activities.

³⁹ Annual Work Programme of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia, "Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" no. 124/08 and 58/18 and "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" no. 223/19

⁴⁰ Rules of Procedure of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" no. 276/24

However, the latest National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis (NPAA) available on the official website of the Ministry of European Affairs dates from 2017, indicating that more recent plans are not publicly available.⁴¹ Also, according to SIGMA, there has been no regular monitoring or reporting on the implementation of the NPAA since 2021, indicating the absence of publicly available reports on the implementation of EU integration plans.⁴²

Also, it was assessed whether Government planning documents and reports on their implementation present key information in a clear and citizen-friendly manner, including through introductions, summaries, or other simplified textual or graphical elements, as well as their availability in open, machine-readable format. The programmes examined contain an introduction and clearly defined objectives; however, they do not include summaries or graphical elements that would facilitate easier understanding. The language used is generally clear and understandable. As abovementioned, reports on the implementation of these programmes/plans, as well as the NPAA and NPAA related reports, are not publicly available. Consequently, it is not possible to assess whether these documents are presented in a citizen-friendly manner and in open, machine-readable format.

Attitudes of KIs on the transparency, timeliness, and citizen-friendliness of Government planning and reporting activities are assessed through KI interviews. Interviewees evaluated statements regarding the transparency, timeliness, and citizen-friendliness of these activities.⁴³

According to the one KI, the Government planning documents generally set out priorities, objectives, and expected results in a structured manner, providing an overall strategic direction for Government action. While these documents formally articulate Government intentions, the clarity and practical relevance of objectives and expected outcomes vary across sectors and institutions. Opportunities for external stakeholder and public input during the planning stage do exist; however, they are applied inconsistently across different planning documents. In many cases, consultation is limited in terms of target groups, scope, and timing, which reduces the potential for meaningful participation and weakens the inclusiveness of the planning process.

In terms of timeliness, formal mechanisms are in place to align planning and reporting cycles with budgetary and policy cycles. Nevertheless, implementation remains uneven, and deadlines are not always respected. This weakens the coherence between planning, budgeting, and reporting, and reduces the

41 <https://mep.gov.mk/en-GB/eu-integracii/nacionalnata-programa-za-usvojuvanie-na-pravoto-na-eu>

42 Available at: https://www.sigmaweb.org/content/dam/sigma/en/publications/reports/2025/01/pub-lic-administration-in-the-republic-of-north-macedonia-2024_03a4d4f2/071bad9d-en.pdf. Accessed 18 March 2026.

43 Interviews were conducted with: Prolocal on 15.01.2026; Impetus on 15.01.2026 and Rural Coalition on 22.01.2023

usefulness of planning documents as tools for effective policy management. Recent institutional restructuring, including the establishment of new ministries and the merger or closure of existing ones, has further affected the timeliness of reporting. These changes have led to delays that complicate policy follow-up, disrupt continuity, and weaken accountability by limiting the ability to assess performance against planned objectives. Communication of planning and reporting outcomes to citizens remains limited. Information is primarily shared through formal publications, press releases, or official statements, with little effort to translate key messages and results into accessible formats. As a result, public awareness of and interest in these documents remain low, constraining their role in fostering transparency, public engagement, and accountability.

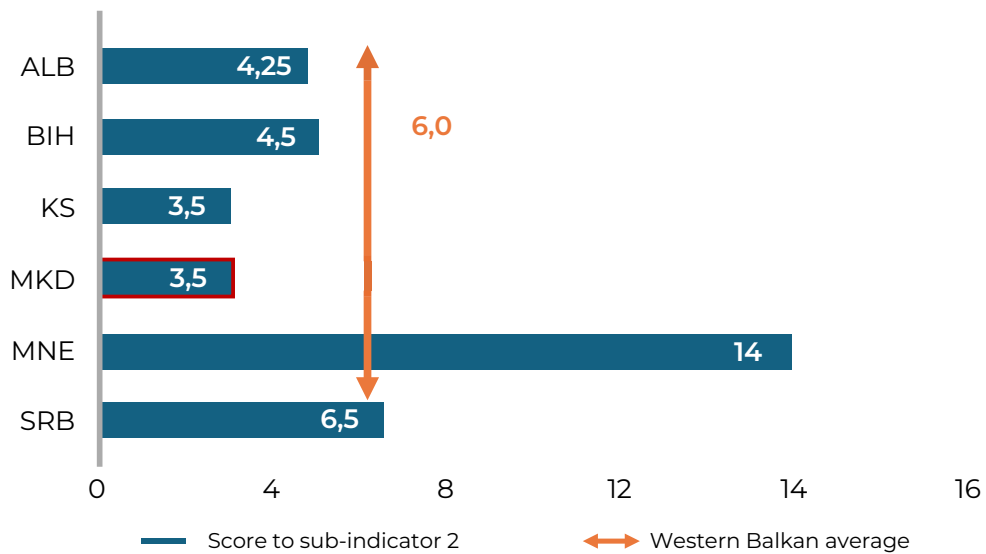
The second KI noted that regarding planning and reporting, official documents often present results and policy effects in a limited and opaque manner, which directly contributes to low levels of public interest and trust. Access to ministers remains a significant challenge: meetings with civil society representatives are rarely approved, and communication is frequently confined to lower administrative levels, offering little genuine opportunity to influence decision-making. Although strategic documents formally exist, reporting is fragmented across institutions and often difficult to trace or consolidate. Delays in reporting and the late publication of plans are common. This is illustrated by the delayed and limited public information regarding the establishment of the Safer Internet Centre and the plan for its operationalisation. Moreover, documents are typically technical and lengthy, and are not adapted for non-expert audiences; executive summaries, plain-language explanations, and visual formats are rarely used.

The third KI noted that Government planning documents generally outline priorities, objectives, and expected results, but their clarity and level of detail vary. While some documents provide clear definitions of priorities and outcomes, others remain too general, making it difficult to assess their intended impact. Opportunities for stakeholder participation exist but are inconsistent, with some strategic documents developed through broader consultations, while others (such as annual Government work programmes) offer limited or no opportunities for engagement. Although mechanisms exist to align planning and reporting cycles with budgetary and policy timelines, adherence to these timelines is inconsistent, with some documents published late and reporting not always corresponding to implementation schedules. This reduces the usefulness of the information for oversight and accountability. The informant also highlighted limited feedback to stakeholders on submitted proposals and insufficient transparency in publishing detailed annual work programmes. Overall, Government communication on planning and reporting outcomes is generally informative through press releases and official platforms, but

the level of detail varies, and key documents or supporting information are sometimes published late. Consequently, while citizens can access general information, their understanding of the full content and implications of these documents remains limited, contributing to low public engagement.

How does North Macedonia do in regional terms?

Sub-indicator 2: Transparency of government planning and reporting (maximum score 20)



II.3 Transparency and inclusiveness of policy making and legislation development process

- ➡ **Principle 4:** Public policies are developed based on evidence and analysis, following clear and consistent rules for law making; laws and regulations are easily accessible.
- ➡ **Principle 5:** All key external and internal stakeholders and the general public are actively consulted during policy development.

Awarded points per element in sub-indicator 3:

Transparency and inclusiveness of policy making and legislation development process⁴⁴

Indicator elements	Element type	Score
E 3.1 There is a strategic document in force that envisages improvement in transparency and inclusiveness of policy making and legislation development process	Strategy and policy	0.5/0.5
E 3.2 Regulations envisage transparency and inclusiveness of policy making and legislative development process	Legislation	0.5/3
E 3.3 Regulations stipulate minimum consultation requirements	Legislation	1.25/3.75
E 3.4 Regulations envisage online and free of charge access to consolidated versions of all policy documents and legislation	Legislation	0.75/1.5

⁴⁴ The third sub-indicator focuses on the following SIGMA sub-principles: A whole-of-government policy to promote better regulation, evidence-based and inclusive policymaking is established and applied in practice during policy development and legislative drafting; Procedures are in place and consistently applied and monitored to enable pro-active and effective public consultations with stakeholders and the general public, allowing businesses, non-governmental organisations and citizens, including from vulnerable groups to participate in and inform government policymaking; All primary and secondary legislation, including consolidated versions, is easily accessible and available free of charge through a central online database(s). Administrative guidance documents, forms and materials essential for complying with regulations are easily available for businesses and citizens; Regulatory impact assessment (RIA), or other similar tool(s), is adopted and systematically used to support policy development, facilitate consultation and inform decision-making at all key stages of policymaking, covering both primary and secondary legislation, including the impact on the environment and climate where necessary; Consultation with the general public is conducted in an accessible and transparent manner; Ministries hold constructive dialogue with key external stakeholders and collect, analyse and use all responses when finalising the policy proposal. They transparently report on the outcome of the public consultation process and how consultees' views have shaped and influenced policy; All possible impacts of policy proposals are systematically analysed; reasonable efforts are made to quantify and monetise key impacts, including additional costs on the state budget, businesses and citizens; Ministries have clear internal rules and procedures for planning and managing effectively the development of policies and legislative drafting.

E 3.5 Regulations stipulate mandatory ex ante assessment of impacts - including on gender equality - during policy making, and publication of IA reports	Legislation	0.5/1.75
E 3.6 There is a designated government institution for checking compliance with consultations requirements	Institutional set-up	0/0.75
E 3.7 Ex ante impact assessments – including on gender equality - are consistently applied during the development of policy documents	Practice in implementation	0/1.5
E 3.8 Ex ante impact assessments – including on gender equality - are consistently applied during the development of primary legislation	Practice in implementation	0/2
E 3.9 Reports on implemented ex ante impact assessments during the development of primary legislation are regularly published online, together with the draft documents	Practice in implementation	0.75/1.5
E 3.10 Published reports on implemented ex ante impact assessments during the development of primary legislation contain key information	Practice in implementation	1.5/2.5
E 3.11 Non-state actors participate in the Government-led working groups for policy and legislative development	Practice in implementation	1.5/2
E 3.12 Procedures and decisions of working groups are transparent	Practice in implementation	0/2.5
E 3.13 Public consultations on policy documents and primary legislation are regularly held	Practice in implementation	0/2
E 3.14 Public consultations are conducted in an early phase of policy development	Practice in implementation	0/1.5
E 3.15 Reports on public consultations on policy documents are publicly available	Practice in implementation	0/1.5
E 3.16 Reports on public consultations on primary legislation are publicly available	Practice in implementation	1.5/1.5
E 3.17 Public consultation reports contain all elements of the implemented consultation process	Practice in implementation	0.75/3.75

E 3.18	Online, central consultation portal for the implementation of consultations is regularly used	Practice in implementation	2.25/2.25
E 3.19	Designated government institution regularly checks compliance with public consultation requirements	Practice in implementation	0/1.5
E 3.20	Lead ministries proactively inform on public consultations	Practice in implementation	2.5/2.5
E 3.21	Consolidated versions of primary and secondary legislation are easily accessible online, and available free of charge	Practice in implementation	0/1.5
E 3.22	Public consultation results have impact on final policy and legislative proposals	Outcomes and impact	0.75/3.75
E 3.23	Key non-state actors consider the work of the Government-led working groups as transparent and inclusive	Outcomes and impact	1/3
E 3.24	Citizens' perception of their opportunity to participate in the development of laws and strategies	Outcomes and impact	0.5/4
Total score for sub-indicator 3			16.5/52

State of play

Since the previous monitoring cycle, the legal and strategic framework for transparency and consultations has improved, notably with the adoption of the Government Transparency Strategy and updated RIA rules.⁴⁵ However, implementation remains weak and inconsistent, with limited public consultations, low use of impact assessments, and insufficient transparency in decision-making.⁴⁶ Stakeholder participation is often formal rather than meaningful, and public perception of participation opportunities remains low, indicating no significant overall progress.

45 COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT North Macedonia 2025 Report (European Commission, November 4, 2025), https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/north-macedonia-report-2025_en. Accessed 18 March 2026.

46 Available at: https://www.sigmaweb.org/content/dam/sigma/en/publications/reports/2025/01/public-administration-in-the-republic-of-north-macedonia-2024_03a4d4f2/071bad9d-en.pdf. Accessed 18 March 2026.

Researchers reviewed government strategic documents in force at the time of assessment to determine whether they included measures to improve the transparency and inclusiveness of policy-making and the legislative development process. They identified relevant sections outlining goals, measures, or activities with clearly assigned responsibilities. If no such actions were envisaged in the documents, no points were awarded.

The Government Transparency Strategy with its Action Plan 2023–2026 includes several measures aimed at strengthening transparency and inclusiveness in the policy-making and legislative development process.⁴⁷ Under Measure 1, which focuses on increasing institutional accountability in the use of ENER during the preparation of laws and strategies, the Action Plan foresees activities such as preparing and submitting feedback on citizens' comments and improving ENER to provide information on the stages of the consultation process and the adoption of acts. Measure 2 aims to strengthen consultations on bylaws through ENER, including the publication of draft bylaws for stakeholder consultation not only on the websites of the responsible authorities but also on ENER, as well as the publication of draft topics for discussions on issues of public interest. In addition, Specific Objective 2 focuses on expanding consultation processes on topics proposed by citizens, civil society organisations, and businesses. Relevant activities include sharing information on policy and legislative development processes through official websites, social media, and press releases, as well as publishing Government documents that are reviewed and discussed during Government sessions. The General Secretariat of the Government is designated as the main responsible institution for many of these activities, although several other institutions are also involved. Responsibilities for each measure and activity are clearly assigned in the implementation tables contained in the Action Plan.

Researchers reviewed regulations in force at the time of assessment to determine whether they provided for transparency and inclusiveness in the policy development process, including stakeholder consultations, public consultations on draft proposals, and transparency and inclusiveness of working groups. The review covered provisions related to policy planning documents, primary legislation proposed by the Government, and normative secondary legislation adopted by the Government.

The legal framework establishes several provisions aimed at ensuring transparency and inclusiveness in the policy and legislative development process. Article 10 of the Law on Organization and Work of State Administration Bodies requires state administration bodies, when preparing laws and other regulations within their competence, to conduct consultations with citizens.⁴⁸ These

47 Government Transparency Strategy with its Action Plan 2023-2026, <https://portal.mdt.gov.mk/post-body-files/nacionalni-strategii-file-idF4.pdf>

48 Law on Organization and Work of State Administration Bodies, "Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" No. 58/00, 44/02, 82/08, 167/10, 51/11 and "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" No. 96/19, 110/19 and 121/24

consultations may be carried out through public announcements on the type, content, and deadlines for adopting regulations, organizing public hearings, and obtaining opinions from interested civil society organisations and other legal entities.

Further provisions are set out in the Rules of Procedure of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia.⁴⁹ Article 25 requires the competent ministry to publish draft laws on its website and in the Unique National Electronic Register of Regulations (ENER). Interested stakeholders may submit comments and proposals within 30 days from the date of publication. Ministries are also required to include an overview of received comments and explanations for non-accepted proposals in the regulatory impact assessment report, which must be published on the ministry's website and on ENER. Draft laws and the related consultation reports must remain publicly available for at least one year after the law enters into force. Draft laws proposed under urgent procedure are exempt from this requirement. The Rules of Procedure also allow for the establishment of working groups to revise or further develop draft acts following Government sessions. However, the legal framework does not provide detailed rules regarding the composition, functioning, transparency, or inclusiveness of these working groups.

The consultation process is further regulated through the Methodology for Regulatory Impact Assessment, adopted in June 2025.⁵⁰ The methodology requires ministries to involve stakeholders throughout the RIA process, including during the stages of problem identification, development and comparison of policy options, and assessment of potential impacts.

Additional guidance is provided by the Guidelines on the procedure in the work of ministries in implementing regulatory impact assessment.⁵¹ These guidelines define possible consultation methods, including public review of draft laws, public hearings, requests for written comments, stakeholder meetings, participation in working groups, and public debates using electronic tools available on ENER.

Researchers reviewed regulations in force at the time of assessment to determine whether they established minimum requirements for public consultations on policy and legislative acts. The review examined provisions related to the minimum duration of consultations, advance notification to stakeholders, publication of supporting documents, the use of at least two consultation channels, and mandatory reporting and feedback on consultation results.

49 Rules of Procedure of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" no. 276/24

50 Methodology for Regulatory Impact Assessment, "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia", no. 118/2025

51 Guidelines on the Procedure in the Work of Ministries in the Process of Implementing a Regulatory Impact Assessment, "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia", no. 119/2025

These requirements were assessed for both stakeholder consultations during the development process and public consultations on draft proposals.

The legal framework establishes several minimum requirements for conducting public consultations in the policy and legislative development process. According to Article 25 para 4 of the Rules of Procedure of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, any interested party may submit opinions, comments, and proposals on published draft laws through the Single National Electronic Register of Regulations (ENER) within 30 days from the date of publication. This provision establishes the minimum duration of the public consultation period.⁵²

Additional requirements are defined in the Guidelines on the procedure in the work of ministries in the process of implementing regulatory impact assessment.⁵³ Article 9 requires ministries to inform stakeholders about the start of the regulatory impact assessment process at least five days in advance by publishing a notification on ENER and on the ministry's website. The notification must contain key information, including the name of the ministry, the title and purpose of the draft law, a description of the problem addressed, the timeframe for preparing the draft law, the planned consultation methods, information on public debate, and contact details for submitting comments and suggestions. Article 17 of the Guidelines requires that the draft law and the draft regulatory impact assessment report be published on ENER and on the website of the responsible ministry no later than 30 days before the submission of the report to the MPA, unless the document contains classified information. The Guidelines also define several consultation formats.⁵⁴ Article 22 provides that stakeholder consultations may be conducted through public review of draft laws, public hearings, written submission of comments and suggestions, participation in working groups established by the ministry or the Government, stakeholder meetings, and public debates using electronic interactive tools available on ENER. Finally, Article 25 establishes reporting requirements on the consultation process. The regulatory impact assessment report must include information on the methods used to involve stakeholders, the participants in the consultation process, the opinions and suggestions received, and an explanation of which inputs were accepted or rejected and the reasons for these decisions.⁵⁵

Researchers reviewed regulations in force at the time of assessment to determine whether they required the online publication and free access to consolidated versions of legislation in force and policy documents. Relevant legal provisions establishing such requirements were identified and cited.

⁵² Rules of Procedure of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" no. 276/24

⁵³ Guidelines on the Procedure in the Work of Ministries in the Process of Implementing a Regulatory Impact Assessment, "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia", no. 119/2025

⁵⁴ *ibid*

⁵⁵ *ibid*

The Law on the Publication of Laws and Other Regulations and Acts in the Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia regulates the publication of legislation in the Official Gazette. Article 1 provides that laws, regulations, and other acts are published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, both in printed and electronic form.⁵⁶ Article 3 of the Law specifies the categories of documents that must be published in the Official Gazette. These include the Constitution and constitutional amendments, laws and other acts adopted by the Assembly, international agreements, decrees and decisions of the President and the Government, by-laws and other acts adopted by ministries and state administration bodies, decisions of the Constitutional Court, acts of judicial and prosecutorial bodies, acts of regulatory authorities and other entities exercising public powers, collective agreements, acts of local self-government units where required by law, as well as other documents such as EU declarations and United Nations Security Council resolutions.⁵⁷

However, access to the full content of documents published in the Official Gazette is not free of charge. Article 14 of the Law provides that the Public Enterprise responsible for publishing the Official Gazette finances its operations through revenues generated from subscriptions and sales of the Gazette and other publications in printed and electronic form, as well as from fees for services and access to the electronic database of regulations.⁵⁸ Consequently, access to the database of regulations and the full content of published acts is subject to paid subscription.

Researchers reviewed regulations in force at the time of assessment to determine whether they required the mandatory application of ex ante impact assessments, including gender impact assessment, during the development of policy documents and legislation. They identified relevant provisions establishing such requirements and examined whether reports on conducted impact assessments were publicly available, including any applicable exceptions.

According to the Rules of Procedure of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, the mandatory application of ex ante impact assessments is required only in the process of drafting laws.⁵⁹ The Rules of Procedure do not extend this requirement to policy documents or secondary legislation. The same approach is reflected in the Methodology and the Guidelines on the procedure in the work of ministries in the process of implementing a regulatory impact assessment.⁶⁰ None of these documents explicitly require

⁵⁶ Law on the Publication of Laws and Other Regulations and Acts in the Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, "Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" No. 56/99 and 43/02 and "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" No.21/21

⁵⁷ *ibid*

⁵⁸ *ibid*

⁵⁹ Rules of Procedure of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" no. 276/24

⁶⁰ Guidelines on the Procedure in the Work of Ministries in the Process of Implementing a Regulatory Impact Assessment, "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia", no. 119/2025

gender impact assessment as part of the regulatory impact assessment process. Moreover, Article 17 of the Guidelines further regulates the publication of regulatory impact assessment documentation. It stipulates that the draft RIA report and the draft law must be published on the ENER and on the website of the responsible ministry no later than 30 days before the submission of the draft RIA report to the MPA.⁶¹ An exception applies in cases where the draft RIA report contains classified information, in which case it is not published on ENER, and the existence of such classified information must be indicated on the first page of the report.⁶²

Researchers reviewed regulations and acts governing the organisation and structure of centre-of-government bodies to determine whether responsibility for verifying compliance with external consultation requirements is assigned to a specific institution.

According to the Methodology on Regulatory Impact Assessment, each ministry is responsible for conducting consultations as part of the regulatory impact assessment process, while the MPA is responsible for promoting the RIA system.⁶³ In line with the Rules of Procedure of the Government, the MPA also provides opinions on draft laws subject to RIA.⁶⁴ These opinions are based on the draft RIA report submitted by the competent ministry and assess whether the draft law complies with the procedural requirements established in the regulations governing the RIA process. In practice, however, the role of the MPA is limited due to insufficient administrative capacity. As a result, its involvement largely consists of verifying whether a draft law is accompanied by a RIA report, without conducting a more substantive review of the consultation process or the quality of the impact assessment, except in cases where the ministry itself is responsible for the draft legislation.

Researchers reviewed regulations and acts governing the organisation and structure of centre-of-government bodies to determine whether responsibility for verifying compliance with external consultation requirements is assigned to a central institution. According to the Methodology on Regulatory Impact Assessment, ministries are responsible for conducting consultations as part of the RIA process, MPA is tasked with promoting the implementation of RIA.⁶⁵ In accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Government, the MPA also provides an opinion on draft laws that are subject to RIA. This opinion is based on the draft RIA report submitted by the competent ministry and assesses the

61 *ibid*

62 *ibid*

63 Methodology for Regulatory Impact Assessment, "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia", no. 118/2025

64 Rules of Procedure of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" no. 276/24

65 Methodology for Regulatory Impact Assessment, "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia", no. 118/2025

compliance of the draft law with the regulations governing the RIA process.⁶⁶ However, the MPA's role in this process is limited in practice due to insufficient administrative capacity and staff shortages. As a result, its involvement is largely restricted to verifying whether a draft law is accompanied by a RIA report, without conducting a more substantive review of the consultation process or the quality of the impact assessment, except in cases where the ministry itself is responsible for the draft legislation.

Consistency in applying ex ante impact assessments was assessed by examining the share of policy documents adopted during the observed period that were accompanied by such assessments. The analysis compared the total number of adopted policy documents with those for which an ex ante impact assessment had been conducted. Both full and partial assessments, including evaluations of additional expenditure needs for planned activities, were considered. Only policy documents for which impact assessments are legally required were included in the assessment. Namely, the relevant legislation does not provide for ex ante impact assessments to be applied during the development of policy documents, but rather only when developing laws.

Also, consistency in applying ex ante impact assessments was evaluated by measuring the proportion of laws adopted during the observed period that were subject to such assessments. This was calculated by comparing the total number of enacted laws with the number of laws for which an ex ante assessment was conducted, expressed as a percentage. The analysis covered all laws adopted in the 12 months preceding the monitoring period, including amendments to primary legislation, and considered the full sample regardless of the proposer.

In the observed period, 276 laws were adopted by the Assembly that required ex ante impact assessments under the legal framework. However, ex-ante impact assessment was conducted for only 14% of them. Impact on gender equality is not addressed in the conducted ex-ante impact assessment as it is not one of the elements comprising the reports on ex-ante impact assessment.

Researchers assessed whether the results of ex ante impact assessments were published online for all laws adopted during the observed 12-month period. For each law, they verified publication at two key stages: first, as part of the documentation for public consultation processes, and second, where the government was the official proposer, alongside the approved law proposal. Reports are published for all ex ante impact assessments for the consultation process on ENER. Out of 276 laws ex ante impact assessments was conducted for 14%, as abovementioned. They were available on ENER at the stage of Government approval of the law proposal. However, they were not published on the Assembly's website alongside the adopted law proposal.

⁶⁶ Rules of Procedure of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" no. 276/24

Researchers selected a sample of five ex ante impact assessment reports (from those 14%), to evaluate whether they included key analytical components. These covered elements such as problem definition, policy objectives, justification for intervention, policy options, affected groups, impact and cost assessments, implementation and enforcement, monitoring and evaluation, and the use of external data sources.

The assessment of the selected sample of five RIA reports showed varying levels of completeness and quality. Three reports: on the Law on Accessibility of Websites and Mobile Applications of Public Sector Institutions⁶⁷, the Law on Administrative Servants⁶⁸, and the Law on Amendments to the Law on Primary Education⁶⁹, contained all required analytical elements. In contrast, the RIA for the Law on Internal Affairs lacked key components, including policy options, identification of affected groups, and references to external data sources, while the remaining elements were only briefly addressed.⁷⁰ Similarly, the RIA for the Environmental Law was incomplete, as it did not include an assessment of all relevant impacts, nor did it elaborate on policy implementation and enforcement mechanisms or monitoring and evaluation frameworks.⁷¹ Overall, while some reports demonstrated a comprehensive approach, others revealed notable gaps in meeting the required standards.

Researchers examined a sample of five cases (two policy documents and three laws), using publicly available information and, where necessary, FOIs to determine whether non-state actors had participated as members in government-led working groups. Membership was verified against formal decisions on the appointment of working group members.⁷² The sample was selected based on the expected significance of the documents and laws for society and affected groups, with internal consultation to ensure a consistent approach. Where no working groups had been established for the selected cases, alternative policy or legislative processes from the same period were analysed using the same selection criteria.

The analysis of the selected sample indicated that non-state actors were, in most cases, formally involved in government-led working groups. For the Developmental Sectoral Strategy for the Judiciary 2024–2028, formal membership included a broad range of civil society representatives, including academia, professional associations, chambers, and members of the Blueprint Group for

67 https://ener.gov.mk/Default.aspx?item=pub_regulation&subitem=view_reg_detail&itemid=83382

68 https://ener.gov.mk/Default.aspx?item=pub_regulation&subitem=view_reg_detail&itemid=84684

69 https://ener.gov.mk/Default.aspx?item=pub_regulation&subitem=view_reg_detail&itemid=84612

70 https://ener.gov.mk/Default.aspx?item=pub_regulation&subitem=view_reg_detail&itemid=88217

71 https://ener.gov.mk/Default.aspx?item=pub_regulation&subitem=view_reg_detail&itemid=86980

72 FOIs were sent to the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Public Administration on 13.02.2026; response from the Ministry of Justice received on 25.02.2026, response from the Ministry of Education and Science received on 04.03.2026. MPA sent a non-concrete response on 3 April 2026, addressing only one of the questions and outside the deadline.

Reform in the Judiciary. Similarly, the Education Strategy 2018–2025 involved extensive participation of national and international CSOs, with more than 30 non-state actors engaged throughout the process; however, due to document retention rules, formal evidence of the working group decision was no longer available.

For the legislative sample, the Law on Public Prosecution included representatives from academia and the civil society sector, while the Law on Associations and Foundations demonstrated particularly broad inclusion, with representatives from multiple CSO platforms across diverse thematic areas, as well as participation from the Council for Cooperation between the Government and Civil Society. In contrast, no information was obtained for the Law on Top Management Servants, as no response was received to the FoI request.⁷³ Overall, the findings suggest a generally inclusive approach, albeit with some gaps in documentation and access to information.

For the same sample of two policy documents and three laws, researchers reviewed publicly available sources to assess whether key documents on the work of government-led working groups were accessible to the public. This included examining the availability of decisions establishing the working groups with lists of members, as well as meeting records such as conclusions, minutes, or reports. The analysis showed a consistent lack of transparency across all sampled cases. For both policy documents, the Developmental Sectoral Strategy for the Judiciary 2024–2028 and the Education Strategy 2018–2025, as well as for all three laws (the Law on Public Prosecution, the Law on Associations and Foundations, and the Law on Top Management Servants), no publicly available information was found regarding decisions on the establishment of working groups or documentation on their work, such as meeting minutes or reports. In all cases, relevant information could only be obtained through FoI requests, indicating that such materials are not proactively disclosed to the public.⁷⁴

Regularity of external consultations was assessed by calculating the share of policy documents adopted by the government and laws enacted in the assembly that underwent public consultations during the observed 12-month period. This was measured as the proportion of consulted documents and laws relative to the total number adopted, expressed as a percentage. Public consultations were defined broadly as any engagement with external stakeholders, such as citizens, businesses, or civil society, at any stage of policy development. Where multiple consultation rounds occurred for a single document or law, they were counted as one. The findings indicate a very limited practice of public consultations. No public consultations were conducted for policy documents, while consultations were held for only a small share of laws. Specifically, public consultations took place for approximately 15% of the 276 laws observed during

⁷³ *ibid*

⁷⁴ *ibid*

the period, highlighting a low level of systematic engagement with external stakeholders in the legislative process.

In addition, the researchers assessed the share of public consultation processes for policy documents that resulted in publicly available reports. Where separate reports were not required, results included in other documents were accepted. In multi-stage consultations, only the final report was considered, and it was expected to reflect all stakeholder inputs. However, public consultations are not held for policy documents.

The share of public consultations on primary legislation that resulted in publicly available reports was assessed as well. The final report was considered in cases of multi-stage consultations, and reports were expected to capture all stakeholder inputs across different consultation formats.

Public consultations were conducted for a limited share of the observed laws, covering almost 15% of the 276 cases. However, in all instances where consultations took place, the corresponding reports were made publicly available and were generally comprehensive in scope. A total of 41 consultation reports were identified, covering a wide range of legislative areas, including public administration, education, environment, digitalisation, energy, and internal affairs.⁷⁵ These reports were accessible through the ENER platform and provided detailed insights into stakeholder inputs and the consultation process, indicating a high level of transparency and documentation quality where consultations were carried out.

⁷⁵ The following draft laws were identified as having publicly available consultation reports: Draft Law amending and supplementing the Law on Road Traffic Safety; Draft Law on Accessibility of Websites and Mobile Applications of Public Sector Institutions; Draft Law amending and supplementing the Law on Foreigners; Draft Law on Innovation Activity, Scientific and Technological Development and Entrepreneurship; Draft Law on Secondary Education Institutions of Religious Communities; Draft Law amending and supplementing the Law on Police; Draft Law on Internal Affairs; Draft Law on Public Sector Employees; Draft Law on Administrative Servants; Draft Law on Inspection Supervision; Draft Law on Professional Development and Training of Administrative Officials; Draft Law on Archival Material and Archival Activities; Draft Law on Electronic Communications; Draft Law amending and supplementing the Law on Electronic Documents, Electronic Identification and Trust Services; Draft Law on Security of Network and Information Systems; Draft Law amending and supplementing the Law on Primary Education; Draft Law amending and supplementing the Law on the Environment; Draft Law on Energy; Draft Law amending the Law on Educational Inspection; Draft Law amending and supplementing the Law on Offences against Public Order and Peace; Draft Law amending and supplementing the Law on Media; Draft Law amending the Law on Primary Education; Draft Law amending and supplementing the Law on Electronic Communications; Draft Law amending and supplementing the Law on Inspection Supervision; Draft Law amending the Law on Educational Inspection; Draft Law amending and supplementing the Law on Administrative Inspection; Draft Law on the National Qualifications Framework; Draft Law amending the Law on Protection from Environmental Noise; Draft Law amending the Law on Ambient Air Quality; Draft Law amending the Law on Nature Protection; Draft Law amending the Law on Packaging and Packaging Waste Management; Draft Law amending and supplementing the Law on Electronic Documents, Electronic Identification and Trust Services; Draft Law on Textbooks in Primary and Secondary Education; Draft Law on Vocational Education and Training; Draft Law amending the Law on Waste Management; Draft Law amending the Law on Genetically Modified Organisms; Draft Law amending the Law on Management of Batteries and Accumulators and Waste Batteries and Accumulators; Draft Law amending the Law on Waters; Draft Law on Adult Education; Draft Law amending and supplementing the Law on Primary Education; Draft Law amending and supplementing the Law on the Environment

Researchers reviewed consultation reports for the selected sample of policy documents and laws to assess their completeness. A report was considered comprehensive if it listed all stakeholder comments individually, provided clear feedback on whether each comment was accepted, rejected, or partially accepted, and included a justification for any rejection or partial acceptance.

The review of consultation reports for the selected sample revealed significant gaps in both availability and quality. No consultation reports were published for the two policy documents, the Developmental Sectoral Strategy for the Judiciary 2024–2028 and the Education Strategy 2018–2025. For the legislative sample, a report was available for the Law on Public Prosecution, however, it did not include information on comments received or their integration into the draft text.⁷⁶ In contrast, the report for the Law on Associations and Foundations met most of the required criteria, as it listed all submitted comments individually and provided clear feedback, with all proposals accepted, and in that regard no justification for rejection was needed.⁷⁷ Similarly, for the Law on Top Management Servants, a consultation report was published, but it lacked information on stakeholder comments and their treatment.⁷⁸ Overall, the findings indicate limited transparency and incomplete reporting practices in consultation processes.

Regularity in using the central consultation portal was assessed by verifying whether all identified consultation processes were announced on the portal. To meet the criteria, consultations needed to be announced with relevant documents, allow online submission of comments, and include publication of final consultation reports. Where multiple consultation rounds occurred, a single announcement on the portal was considered sufficient.

The findings indicate full compliance with the use of the central consultation portal. All identified consultation processes were announced on the portal, together with the relevant supporting documents, covering a total of 41 draft laws. In each case, comments were collected online through the portal, ensuring accessibility and participation. Furthermore, final consultation reports were published for all consultation processes, demonstrating a consistent practice of transparency and completeness in the use of the portal.

Researchers verified whether the designated centre-of-government institution (MPA) checked compliance with consultation requirements for all identified public consultations. Where such information was not publicly available, FoI requests were used.⁷⁹ Namely, For all public consultations implemented on

76 https://ener.gov.mk/files/propisi_files/plan/61_1050930403Нацрт%20Извештај%20за%20проценка%20на%20влијанието%20на%20регула.pdf

77 https://ener.gov.mk/files/propisi_files/report/83_608672279_Нацрт%20Извештај_1.2.pdf

78 https://ener.gov.mk/Default.aspx?item=pub_regulation&subitem=view_reg_detail&itemid=114787

79 FoI request was sent to MPA on 13.02.2026. MPA sent a non-concrete response on 3 April 2026, addressing only one of the questions and outside the deadline.

the adopted abovementioned policy documents and enacted primary legislation, researchers verified that there is non-public information on whether MPA checked compliance with consultation requirements.⁸⁰

In addition, researchers assessed how proactively authorities informed stakeholders about public consultations by examining the communication channels used for a sample of policy documents and laws. This included reviewing whether consultations were announced through ministry or government websites, social media, e-consultation portals, media, and email communication. The assessment was not limited to legally required channels but also considered any additional communication methods that could be verified.

The analysis shows a clear distinction between consultation practices for policy documents⁸¹ and laws⁸². While both rely consistently on institutional websites and email communication, policy documents are characterised by less structured and less transparent outreach, with inconsistent use of social media and no use of the ENER. Media engagement was present but limited, mainly through online articles or coverage following events, rather than proactive outreach. In contrast, the preparation of laws demonstrates a more systematic and formalised approach, including consistent use of ENER, broader application of social media, and more structured dissemination through online media. Compared to policy documents, the consultation process for laws appears more standardised, transparent, and aligned with formal requirements, although it still relies on online media and could benefit from further diversification of outreach methods.

Researchers also assessed whether consolidated versions of primary and selected secondary legislation were easily accessible online and free of charge. To meet the criteria, legislation needed to be: 1. searchable through multiple categories; 2. available in consolidated form (including amendments), and 3. accessible without subscription fees. For secondary legislation, only acts with significant regulatory impact were considered.

The assessment showed mixed results regarding accessibility of legislation. Criterion 1 was not met, as the search function on the official Government website does not provide access to primary or secondary legislation, but instead returns news and announcements; however, ministry websites do enable searches of legislation across multiple categories. Criterion 2 was fulfilled, as consolidated versions of legislation, combining initial acts and subsequent amendments, are publicly available on both Government and ministry websites. Criterion 3 was also met, with all primary and relevant secondary legislation accessible online free of charge. The Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia

80 *ibid*

81 Developmental Sectoral Strategy for the Judiciary 2024–2028 and the Education Strategy 2018–2025

82 Law on Public Prosecution, Law on Associations and Foundations and Law on Top Management Servants

does not offer free access to primary and secondary legislation as such, rather only to editions of the Official Gazette from previous years. To access a specific act of primary or secondary legislation, paid subscription is required.

Researchers reviewed consultation reports for the selected sample to determine the total number of comments received and the number accepted, calculating the share of accepted comments for each case. Partially accepted comments were counted as half for the purpose of this calculation.

The assessment of consultation reports for the selected sample revealed limited availability of data necessary to calculate the share of accepted comments. For both policy documents, the Developmental Sectoral Strategy for the Judiciary 2024–2028 and the Education Strategy 2018–2025, no consultation reports were published. For the Law on Public Prosecution⁸³ and the Law on Top Management Servants⁸⁴, although consultation reports were available, they did not include information on the number of comments received or their treatment, preventing further analysis. Only the Law on Associations and Foundations provided sufficient detail, with nine comments received and all of them accepted, resulting in a 100% acceptance rate.⁸⁵ Overall, the lack of comprehensive reporting in most cases limits the ability to systematically assess responsiveness to stakeholder input.

Researchers conducted interviews with three KI who had participated in government-led working groups to assess whether ministries properly considered inputs from non-state actors, including whether proposals were accepted or rejected and whether reasons were provided. Interviewees were also asked whether decisions and documents produced by the working groups were accessible to them. In addition to qualitative insights from the interviews, participants completed a short survey using a four-point scale to evaluate these aspects. The assessment focused on whether ministries decide on stakeholder proposals, provide justification for their decisions, and ensure access to working group outputs, with results quantified based on the share of positive responses.⁸⁶

The first KI noted that based on participation in several working groups in 2025, cooperation was generally professional and constructive, with open and collegial interactions. However, the extent to which participants could influence outcomes varied across processes, depending on institutional practices and leadership. Proposals were formally submitted and recorded, but follow-up and feedback were inconsistent, and as processes were still ongoing, final decisions on acceptance or rejection had not yet been confirmed. Civil society

83 https://ener.gov.mk/files/propisi_files/plan/61_1050930403Нацрт%20ИЗВЕШТАЈ%20за%20проценка%20на%20влијанието%20на%20регула.pdf

84 https://ener.gov.mk/Default.aspx?item=pub_regulation&subitem=view_reg_detail&itemid=114787

85 https://ener.gov.mk/Default.aspx?item=pub_regulation&subitem=view_reg_detail&itemid=73921

86 Interviews were conducted with: Prolocal on 15.01.2026; Impetus on 15.01.2026 and Rural Coalition on 22.01.2023

input was formally considered, and discussions were generally open, allowing for meaningful exchange. Documentation, including draft materials and minutes, was usually shared in a timely manner, though with some variation. The Government body responsible for cooperation with civil society demonstrated particularly strong coordination and administrative capacity. Overall, effective inclusiveness depended not only on formal participation but also on early involvement, transparent feedback, and the extent to which stakeholder input influenced final outcomes.

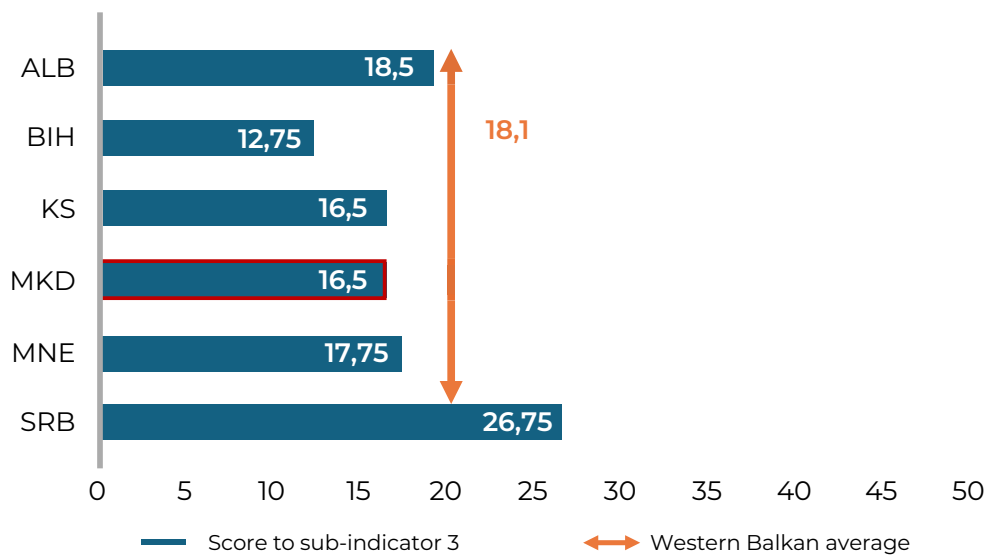
The second KI pointed out that drawing on long-standing experience in working with institutions, working groups, public consultations, and parliamentary processes, the overall assessment is that the level of government transparency remains limited and insufficiently systematised. Although certain transparency mechanisms formally exist—such as announcements, press releases, and the publication of documents—they are often delayed, incomplete, or not made public in a timely or accessible manner. While proposals submitted through consultations are received and, in many cases, partially reflected, decision-making remains largely ministry-driven, with only limited openness to deeper or more systematic transparency. Feedback is generally provided in the form of written justifications; however, access to real-time data, forward planning, and decision-tracking is inconsistent. In practice, access to information is uneven and frequently depends on personal contacts rather than on predictable, institutionalised disclosure mechanisms.

The third KI stated that the experience of working groups varies significantly depending on the institution, topic, and process. Some, such as the National Action Plan for Open Government Partnership, ensured broad and meaningful stakeholder involvement, while others were more institution-driven and offered limited participation. Follow-up on submitted proposals was generally inconsistent, with feedback rarely provided and limited clarity on whether inputs were accepted or rejected, except in a few positive cases where detailed explanations were given. While some civil society proposals were accepted and incorporated, others were rejected due to policy priorities or resource constraints, and feedback on these decisions was not systematic. The extent to which civil society input was considered also varied, with proposals sometimes treated equally but often given less weight, and openness to critical perspectives remaining limited. Access to documentation and timing of information sharing were inconsistent, with materials sometimes provided late or not at all, hindering meaningful participation. Where institutions provided clear feedback and traceability of inputs, transparency and engagement were significantly improved, though such practices were not widespread. Overall, genuinely inclusive working groups were characterized by timely information, transparent decision-making, and meaningful consideration of stakeholder input, whereas in other cases participation remained largely formal.

Citizens' perception of their opportunity to participate in developing laws and strategies was assessed based on the share of survey respondents who agreed or strongly agreed that they have such opportunities in North Macedonia. Based on the survey results, 37.6% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they had the opportunity to participate in the development of laws and strategies in North Macedonia. In line with the scoring methodology, this result falls within the 20%–40% range and corresponds to 0.5 points.⁸⁷

How does North Macedonia do in regional terms?

Sub-indicator 3: *Transparency and inclusiveness of policy making and legislation development process (maximum score 52)*



⁸⁷ Public perception survey conducted between 1st February until the 22nd February 2025. The margin of error for the sample of 1008 citizens is $\pm 3,52\%$, at the 95 % confidence level.

II.4 Transparency and inclusiveness of policy implementation, evaluation, and parliamentary scrutiny

⇒ **Principle 6:** Public policies are effectively implemented and evaluated, enhancing policy outcomes and reducing regulatory costs and burdens.

⇒ **Principle 7:** The parliament effectively scrutinises the government policymaking and ensures overall policy and legislative coherence.

Awarded points per element in sub-indicator 4:

Transparency and inclusiveness of policy implementation, evaluation, and parliamentary scrutiny⁸⁸

Indicator elements	Element type	Score
E 4.1 There is a strategic document in force that envisages transparency and inclusiveness of policy monitoring and evaluation practices	Strategy and policy	0.25/0.5
E 4.2 Regulations envisage sending advance notifications to affected groups on the upcoming changes to the legal framework	Legislation	0.5/0.5
E 4.3 Parliamentary rules of procedure envisage participation of interested parties in parliamentary discussions, in the form of public hearings	Legislation	0.5/0.5
E 4.4 Lead ministries publish advance notifications to the affected groups on the upcoming changes to the legal framework	Practice in implementation	0/1.5
E 4.5 Lead ministries regularly publish monitoring reports on implementation of policy documents	Practice in implementation	0.5/2.5

⁸⁸ The fourth sub-indicator focuses on the following SIGMA sub-principles: The responsible institutions effectively monitor policy implementation and ensure regulatory compliance, based on robust and relevant data, including evidence gathering through direct feedback and consultations with affected stakeholders; Ex post evaluation of major laws and policies is an integral part of the better regulation agenda and is linked to the analysis conducted during the development of the policy. The public administration makes evaluation results publicly available and uses them to inform future policy; Businesses and citizens receive advance notification about upcoming changes in the rules and regulations that will affect them, and sufficient time is allowed for the affected groups to adjust to and align with the new regulatory framework; Parliamentary committees debate and scrutinise legislative initiatives, with active participation of government ministers and senior public servants, and ensure consultation with key stakeholders, while also minimising any risks of undue external influence; The parliamentary services provide expert advice and support to members of parliament for initiating and drafting new laws based on evidence and with input from key stakeholders.

E 4.6 Monitoring reports on implementation of policies are citizen friendly	Practice in implementation	0/1.25
E 4.7 Lead ministries publish ex-post evaluations on implementation of policies	Practice in implementation	0/2.5
E 4.8 Ex-post evaluations on implementation of policies use external data and information produced by non-state actors	Practice in implementation	0/2.5
E 4.9 Parliament involves stakeholders, affected groups, and other non-state actors in public hearings	Practice in implementation	1.5/2.25
E 4.10 Online transparency of the work of parliaments	Practice in implementation	0.5/2
E 4.11 Key non-state actors consider involvement of stakeholders in public hearings as effective	Outcomes and impact	0/3
Total score for sub-indicator 4		3.75/19

State of play

Since the previous monitoring cycle there has been only limited progress. While the legal and strategic framework has been slightly strengthened, including updates to the PAR Strategy, RIA Guidelines, and parliamentary Rules of Procedure, these changes remain largely formal and have not translated into consistent practice. Key shortcomings persist, including passive stakeholder engagement, inconsistent publication of monitoring reports, absence of ex-post evaluations, and limited parliamentary transparency due to missing supporting documentation. Stakeholder participation remains weak and largely ineffective, with minimal feedback and impact on decision-making.⁸⁹ Overall, implementation gaps continue to dominate, with little substantive improvement.⁹⁰

The researchers reviewed the current strategic documents to determine if they include measures for improving the communication and cooperation of the SAI with external stakeholders. They identified relevant sections detailing specific activities with clearly assigned responsibilities. Points are awarded only if the documents outline concrete measures aimed at enhancing public communication of the SAI and enhancing cooperation with external stakeholders.

⁸⁹ Available at: https://www.sigmaweb.org/content/dam/sigma/en/publications/reports/2025/01/public-administration-in-the-republic-of-north-macedonia-2024_03a4d4f2/071bad9d-en.pdf. Accessed 18 March 2026.

⁹⁰ COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT North Macedonia 2025 Report (European Commission, November 4, 2025), https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/north-macedonia-report-2025_en. Accessed 18 March 2026.

Researchers reviewed government strategic documents in force at the time of measurement to assess whether transparency and inclusiveness in policy monitoring and evaluation practices are foreseen. They identified relevant sections outlining goals, measures, or activities with clearly assigned responsibilities.

The review of the PAR Strategy 2023–2030 confirms that transparency in policy monitoring and evaluation is addressed through Specific Objective 1.1, which aims to establish a consistent and functional system for policy-making and law-making.⁹¹ In this context, Measure 1.2.2 foresees regular and timely informing of the public about government work and the implementation of planning documents, including the preparation and publication of reports on sectoral strategies, the NPAA, and the Government Annual Work Programme. Responsibilities for these activities are clearly assigned within the Action Plan. However, while transparency is adequately covered, the strategy does not envisage specific measures or activities aimed at improving the inclusiveness of policy monitoring and evaluation practices, indicating a gap in stakeholder engagement in this phase of the policy cycle.

Researchers also reviewed applicable regulations in force at the time of measurement to assess whether lead ministries or responsible bodies were required to publish or send advance notifications to affected groups regarding upcoming legal changes prior to their enforcement. Relevant provisions establishing such requirements were identified and cited, where applicable, as well as exceptions to these requirements.

The Article 9 of the Guidelines on the procedure in the work of ministries in the process of implementing a regulatory impact assessment⁹² establishes a clear requirement for advance notification of stakeholders on upcoming legal changes. It stipulates that the responsible ministry must inform stakeholders no later than five days before the start of the RIA process and the preparation of a draft law included in the Annual RIA Plan, through publication on ENER and the ministry's website. The notification must include detailed information, such as the name of the ministry and draft law, a description of the problem and purpose of the law, the timeframe for preparation, modalities for stakeholder involvement, information on public consultations, access to draft documents, contact details for submitting feedback, and a designated contact person. This provision ensures a structured and transparent approach to early stakeholder engagement in the legislative process.⁹³

91 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>

92 Guidelines on the Procedure in the Work of Ministries in the Process of Implementing a Regulatory Impact Assessment, "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia", no. 119/2025

93 ibid

The applicable parliamentary rules of procedure were reviewed to assess whether interested parties were allowed to participate in public hearings, citing relevant provisions where they existed and noting any conditions or exceptions. Articles 128 and 129 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia⁹⁴ provide a framework for the participation of external stakeholders in the work of parliamentary bodies, including public hearings. These provisions allow scientific and professional experts involved in drafting legislation to attend and participate in discussions, while also enabling working bodies to invite a broad range of stakeholders such as representatives of institutions, municipalities, public enterprises, trade unions, and civil society organisations to contribute their views. Furthermore, working bodies may decide to hold public discussions, in which these stakeholders, including civil society representatives, are formally invited to participate. While participation is clearly permitted, it remains at the discretion of the working body, indicating that stakeholder involvement is not mandatory but conditional on invitation or a decision to hold a public hearing.⁹⁵

Researchers assessed the same sample of laws, as in Element 3, to determine whether lead ministries informed affected groups about upcoming legal changes through their websites. Where such information was not available online, Fols were sent to verify whether other notification methods were used. To qualify for point allocation, notifications had to be issued no later than the start of the formal legal drafting process.

The assessment of the three sampled laws indicates limited and inconsistent practices in notifying affected groups about upcoming legal changes. For the Law on Public Prosecution and the Law on Associations and Foundations, Fol responses confirmed that notification was conducted solely through publication on the official website of the Ministry of Justice, with no evidence of additional outreach methods such as direct communication or engagement through representative bodies. In the case of the Law on Top Management Servants, no response to the Fol request was received, preventing verification of whether any notification took place. Overall, these findings suggest a reliance on passive forms of communication and a lack of systematic, proactive stakeholder outreach.⁹⁶

The websites of line ministries responsible for sectoral policy documents were assessed in order to find out whether monitoring reports on their implementation were regularly published. The assessment covered five selected policy

94 Rules of Procedure of the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia, "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia", no. 248/2023"

95 *ibid*

96 FOIs were sent to the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Public Administration on 13.02.2026; response from the Ministry of Justice was received on 25.02.2026. MPA sent a non-concrete response on 3 April 2026, addressing only one of the questions and outside the deadline.

areas from the following: rule of law and fundamental rights, environment and climate action, transport, energy, competitiveness and innovation, education, employment and social policies, and agriculture and rural development, while PAR was assessed separately. Only policy documents adopted at least three years prior to the monitoring year and still valid in the preceding year were considered. The analysis focused on the availability of monitoring reports for the last two consecutive calendar years, in line with legal deadlines, with adjustments made where reporting deadlines had not yet passed. Regularity was defined as the publication of monitoring reports at least annually, with half-yearly reports accepted if they covered the full calendar year.

The review of selected policy areas shows uneven practices in the publication of monitoring reports. In the area of rule of law and fundamental rights, monitoring reports were regularly published⁹⁷, including annual reports for 2022, 2023, and 2024 on the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy 2022–2027 and the accompanying action plan, indicating compliance with reporting requirements.⁹⁸ In contrast, no publicly available monitoring reports were identified for agriculture and rural development, environment and climate action, competitiveness and innovation, or transport, despite the existence of relevant strategic documents in these sectors. Overall, the findings suggest that while some sectors demonstrate consistent reporting practices, the majority lack regular and transparent publication of implementation reports.

Also, it was assessed whether monitoring reports were presented in a citizen-friendly format that enables easy understanding of key results. It examined whether the reports included clear summaries and visual or simplified elements, such as infographics, graphs, or summary tables, to present information in an accessible and concise manner. However, there are no policy evaluation documents publicly available.

Researchers reviewed the websites of line ministries in the five selected policy areas to assess whether they had published at least one ex-post evaluation report in the last three calendar years, including the year of measurement. These evaluations, conducted after the completion of policy interventions, were examined as distinct from regular monitoring reports, focusing on their role in assessing impacts and informing future policies.

97 Development Sectoral Strategy for the Judiciary 2024–2028, <https://portal.mdt.gov.mk/post-body-files/strategijii-file-luvL.pdf>; Annual Report 2024 on the Implementation of the Development Sectoral Strategy for the Judiciary 2024–2028, <https://portal.mdt.gov.mk/post-body-files/izvestai-regulativa-file-Nj5C.pdf>

98 Gender Equality Strategy 2022–2027, https://cms.mtsp.gov.mk/content/pdf/2022/strategija/_Стратегија_за_родова_еднаквост_2022_2027.pdf;

Annual Report For 2022 and 2023 on the Implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy 2022–2027 and the NAP for Gender Equality 2022–2024 (<https://portal.mdt.gov.mk/post-body-files/rodova-ednakvost-mstp-file-lfFO.pdf>);

Annual Report For 2024 on the Implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy 2022–2027 and the NAP for Gender Equality 2022–2024 (<https://portal.mdt.gov.mk/post-body-files/rodova-ednakvost-mstp-file-jiN8.pdf>)

The review found that there is no established practice of publishing ex-post evaluation reports on the implementation of policy documents in North Macedonia. This finding is consistent with SIGMA's 2024 monitoring report on public administration, which notes that although an ex-post Impact Assessment Methodology was adopted in 2013, it has not been applied in practice. Furthermore, there is no designated authority responsible for ensuring that such evaluations are conducted or reported, and the administration does not prepare or publish policy evaluation reports.⁹⁹ This indicates a systemic gap in assessing policy impacts and using evidence to inform future policymaking.

Researchers reviewed parliamentary information for the 12 months preceding the monitoring period to assess whether stakeholders and other non-state actors participated in public hearings on proposed acts. They identified the total number of hearings held and the extent of such participation, using freedom of information requests where necessary. The review found that there are no publicly available reports on the work of the Assembly for 2025. The most recent available report covers the period from 25 August to 31 December 2024, following parliamentary elections earlier that year.¹⁰⁰ According to this report, five public hearings were held during the observed period; however, it does not provide information on the participants or whether stakeholders, affected groups, or other non-state actors were involved. This lack of detailed reporting limits the ability to assess the extent of inclusiveness in parliamentary public hearings.

Researchers reviewed parliamentary websites to assess whether key law-making documentation was published online, including draft laws in procedure, their justifications, ex ante impact assessments, and public consultation reports, where applicable. They identified all draft laws under consideration at the time of analysis and recorded the availability of these documents.

The review shows that draft laws are systematically published on the Parliament's website, with 4 laws in first reading and 61 in second reading available online, along with notifications to MPs and, in some cases, committee reports.¹⁰¹ This indicates a basic level of transparency regarding the availability of draft legislation. However, key supporting documents such as justifications, ex ante impact assessments, and public consultation reports are not published, limiting the depth of information available for public scrutiny. This finding aligns with SIGMA's 2024 monitoring report, which highlights that important regulatory management tools, including RIAs and public consultations, are

99 Available at: https://www.sigmaweb.org/content/dam/sigma/en/publications/reports/2025/01/public-administration-in-the-republic-of-north-macedonia-2024_03a4d4f2/071bad9d-en.pdf. Accessed 18 March 2026.

100 Report on the work of the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia for the period 25.8.2024 - 31.12.2024, <https://www.sobranie.mk/content/izvestai/izveshtajsobranie%2025.8.2025-31.12.2025.pdf>

101 <https://www.sobranie.mk/materijali-parlament.nsp>

not systematically used to inform parliamentary lawmaking, and that RIA reports prepared by ministries are not shared with the Parliament. Although the new Rules of Procedure adopted in May 2024 introduce provisions that could improve the use of impact assessments, it remains too early to assess their practical implementation.¹⁰²

Researchers conducted interviews with KI who had participated in public hearings to assess whether their input was effectively considered by parliamentary committees. They completed a short survey rating their agreement with a statement on whether their proposals were taken into account.¹⁰³

One of the KI stated that participation is formally encouraged, and proposals are generally presented and discussed, including within working groups and public hearings. However, while civil society involvement exists on paper, it often remains largely formalistic in practice. Submitted proposals do not consistently receive clear or reasoned feedback, and explanations for their acceptance or rejection are rarely provided. In addition, documentation is frequently shared late, incompletely, or even after procedures have been finalised, which significantly constrains opportunities for meaningful participation, informed engagement, and effective accountability.

The other KI noted that participation has mainly taken place in areas such as local and rural development and gender equality, with recent involvement in a public hearing on the selection of members of the Commission for Protection against Discrimination. While participants are generally given equal opportunities to express their views, submitted proposals are not accepted and are typically rejected due to lack of prioritisation or budget constraints. Additionally, no follow-up information is provided after hearings regarding how contributions were considered.

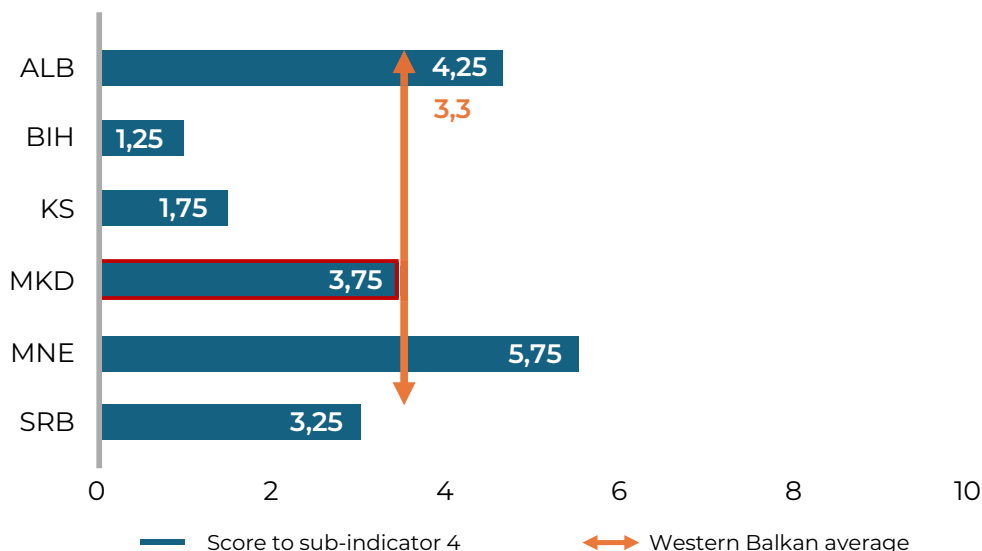
One of the key informants reported no prior participation in public hearings, linking this to broader systemic constraints. As a result, it is not possible to assess the adequacy of existing feedback mechanisms or their contribution to the accountability of parliamentary committees. This absence of engagement may itself point to limited accessibility, insufficient outreach, or low awareness of opportunities for civil society participation in parliamentary hearings.

¹⁰² Available at: https://www.sigmaxweb.org/content/dam/sigma/en/publications/reports/2025/01/public-administration-in-the-republic-of-north-macedonia-2024_03a4d4f2/071bad9d-en.pdf. Accessed 18 March 2026.

¹⁰³ Interviews were conducted with: Prolocal on 15.01.2026; Impetus on 15.01.2026 and Rural Coalition on 22.01.2023

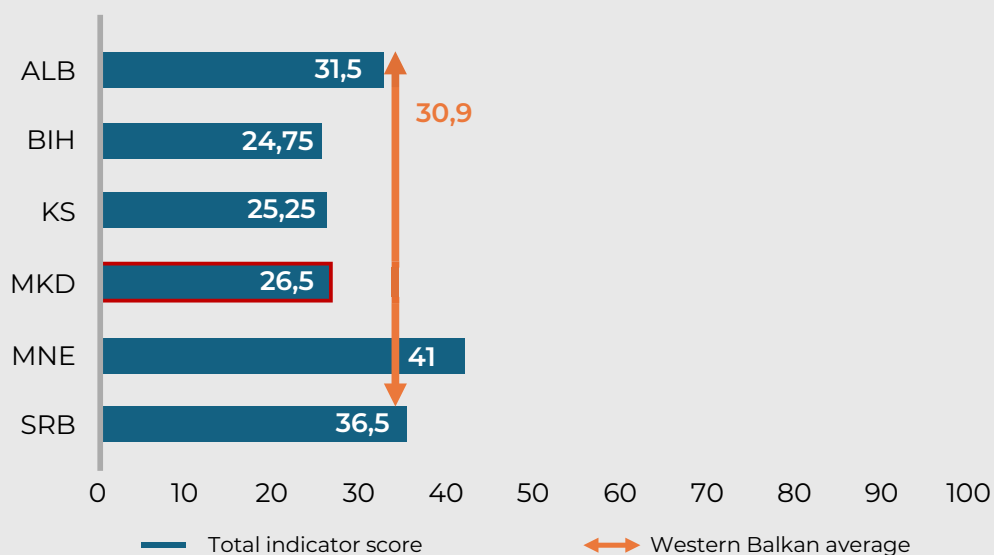
How does North Macedonia do in regional terms?

Sub-indicator 4: Transparency and inclusiveness of policy implementation, evaluation, and parliamentary scrutiny (maximum score 19)



Overall scores comparison in the Policy Development and Coordination area

Indicator: Transparency and inclusiveness of policy development and coordination



Regional overview report for Public Financial Management area, with results for all WB administrations is available at: www.par-monitor.org

II.5 Recommendations for the Policy Development and Coordination area

II.5.1 Tracking recommendations from PAR Monitor 2021/2022

Recommendations	(short/medium/long term) ¹⁰⁴	Status	Explanation
1. State institutions should prepare and appropriately publish reports about their strategic documents and plans.	Short term	No action taken	The legal framework remains unchanged, with no obligation to publish implementation reports, which are still not publicly available.
2. Government reports should contain relevant updates about the progress in attaining set EU accession priorities and they should be adequately integrated in all upcoming strategies. These strategies and documents should have an appropriate set of indicators, timelines, and objectives, which is not the case now.	Short term	No action taken	EU integration planning remains weak, with outdated versions of NPAA online, and no regular monitoring or reporting.
3. The access to the Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia should be free of charge for all citizens.	Short term	No action taken	Only the old editions are free of charge.
4. State institutions should adequately and thoroughly reference to evidence-based findings of CSOs in adopted policy documents, policy papers, ex-ante impact assessments, ex-post policy analyses, etc.	Short term	Partially implemented	The assessment showed varying levels of completeness and quality. While some reports demonstrated a comprehensive approach, others revealed notable gaps in meeting the required standards.

¹⁰⁴ 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.

<p>5. RIAs should be published under the adequate tab on the ENER, as well as on the websites of the line Ministries.</p>	<p>Short term</p>	<p>Fully implemented</p>	<p>Article 17 of the Guidelines on the procedure in the work of ministries in the process of implementing a regulatory impact assessment further regulates the publication of regulatory impact assessment documentation. It stipulates that the draft RIA report and the draft law must be published on the ENER and on the website of the responsible ministry no later than 30 days before the submission of the draft RIA report to the MPA.</p>
<p>6. When preparing RIAs, the Government should consider CSOs findings and adequately refer to them in the documents.</p>	<p>Short term</p>	<p>Partially implemented</p>	<p>This practice is not yet fully consistent across all documents, as a notable proportion still lacks such references. As a result, while progress is sustained, the situation can still be assessed as partially implemented, with further efforts needed to ensure systematic and comprehensive inclusion of CSO evidence in all relevant government documents.</p>
<p>7. State institutions should proactively and systematically provide feedback about evidence-based proposals and recommendations given by CSOs in the policy-making process.</p>	<p>Short term</p>	<p>Partially implemented</p>	<p>The review of consultation reports for the selected sample revealed significant gaps in both availability and quality. Overall, the findings indicate limited transparency and incomplete reporting practices in consultation processes.</p>
<p>8. State institutions should consult CSOs in the early stages of the policy-making process to develop priorities and objectives in partnership with them, instead of inviting CSOs to debate and comment on already prepared documents.</p>	<p>Short term</p>	<p>Partially implemented</p>	<p>In most cases, CSOs are still primarily engaged at later stages, typically through consultations on already drafted laws, strategies, or policy documents, including via ENER or public debates. Early-stage involvement, such as joint priority-setting or co-creation of policy objectives, remains limited and is the exception rather than standard practice.</p>

<p>9. State institutions should provide adequate and timely information to CSOs regarding the content of legislative or policy proposals. Relevant information should be provided to CSOs at least 20 days ahead.</p>	<p>Short term</p>	<p>Partially implemented</p>	<p>In many cases, draft documents are published with shorter consultation deadlines than the recommended minimum of 20 days, limiting the ability of CSOs to engage in a meaningful and informed manner. Although some institutions adhere to the prescribed timelines and provide supporting documentation, others continue to apply shortened procedures or fail to ensure timely dissemination of information.</p>
<p>10. State institutions should develop a systematic database of contacts to ensure that diversity of interests is represented in the consultation processes (women's groups, minority rights groups, trade unions, employers' associations, etc.), and should appropriately invite them to take part in the consultations by adequately understanding their area of interest.</p>	<p>Short term</p>	<p>Partially implemented</p>	<p>State institutions have made limited progress in developing systematic and inclusive databases of CSO contacts to support diverse and representative consultation processes. While some institutions maintain internal contact lists or stakeholder registries, these are often fragmented, outdated, or project-based, and do not ensure comprehensive coverage of different interest groups.</p>
<p>11. Explanatory materials relevant to the legislation should always be made visibly available on the ENER and on websites of respective institutions. These materials should be prepared in a citizen friendly manner.</p>	<p>Short term</p>	<p>Partially implemented</p>	<p>There has been moderate progress in ensuring the availability of explanatory materials related to draft legislation on ENER and institutional websites. In many cases, draft laws are accompanied by basic supporting documents, such as explanations or summaries, which are published alongside the proposals. However, the practice remains inconsistent. Not all institutions systematically publish comprehensive explanatory materials, and when they do, these are often technical and not sufficiently tailored to a broader, non-expert audience. Citizen-friendly formats, such as simplified summaries or visual explanations, are still rarely used.</p>

II.5.2 Recommendations from the 2024/2025 Monitor Report

Recommendations from the monitoring cycle 2024/2025 for the Policy Development and Coordination 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.¹⁰⁵ Medium-term recommendations should be implementable within a period of one to three years. Long-term recommendations would likely require more than three years to be implemented.

Short-term recommendations

1. The MPA and the state institutions should ensure the systematic, consistent, and meaningful integration of evidence-based findings produced by CSOs across all stages of the policy cycle, including adopted policy documents, policy papers, ex-ante impact assessments, and ex-post analyses. This requires establishing clear standards and guidelines for referencing external evidence, as well as strengthening quality control mechanisms to ensure completeness, transparency, and methodological rigor.
2. State institutions should consult CSOs in the early stages of the policy-making process to develop priorities and objectives in partnership with them, instead of inviting CSOs to debate and comment on already prepared documents.
3. The MPA and the state institutions should provide adequate and timely information to CSOs regarding the content of legislative or policy proposals. Relevant information should be provided to CSOs at least 20 days ahead.
4. The MPA and the state institutions should proactively and systematically provide feedback about evidence-based proposals and recommendations given by CSOs in the policy-making process
5. State institutions should develop a systematic database of contacts to ensure that diversity of interests is represented in the consultation processes (women's groups, minority rights groups, trade unions, employers' associations, etc.), and should appropriately invite them to take part in the consultations by adequately understanding their area of interest.
6. The General Secretariat should publish draft agendas, supporting documents, and explanatory materials well in advance of Government sessions to enable informed public scrutiny and stakeholder engagement.

¹⁰⁵ The recommendations are short-term, particularly given that they have been consistently repeated across three consecutive WeBER monitoring cycles.

7. The General Secretariat should present the Government decisions and related materials in clear, understandable language, complemented by summaries and explanations tailored to the general public.
8. The General Secretariat should ensure comprehensive minutes from all Government sessions are consistently published, including summaries of discussions, key arguments, and reasoning behind decisions.
9. The General Secretariat should regularly publish implementation reports on Government's planning documents, ensuring they include clear and measurable performance indicators.
10. The Government should ensure that the access to the Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia is free of charge for all citizens, in order to promote transparency and equal access to legal information.
11. MEP should strengthen the EU integration planning by ensuring up-to-date publication of key documents, including the NPAA, establishing regular monitoring and reporting on accession priorities, and integrating clear indicators, timelines, and objectives across all relevant government strategies.
12. The Assembly should enhance the transparency and inclusiveness of parliamentary oversight by ensuring systematic reporting on public hearings, including detailed information on participating stakeholders, and by promoting the consistent involvement of CSOs and other non-state actors in parliamentary processes.

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 6. FOI requests sent in North Macedonia

Institution	Date of request	Date of reply to the request
General Secretariat of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia	06.02.2026	19.02.2025
Ministry of Public Administration	06.02.2026	/
Ministry of Justice	06.02.2026	25.02.2026
Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning	06.02.2026	09.02.2026
Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia	06.02.2026	25.02.2026
Ministry of Public Administration	13.02.2026	MPA sent a non-concrete response on 3 April 2026, addressing only one of the questions and outside the deadline.
Ministry of Justice	13.02.2026	25.02.2026
Ministry of Education and Science	13.02.2026	04.03.2026

Interviews with key informants were conducted and used as a base for point allocation for elements 1.5, 2.14, 3.14, 3.23 and 4.11. 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 or involvement in the observed processes.

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 1.5, 2.14, 3.14, 3.23 and 4.11 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 7. Interviews conducted in North Macedonia

Date	Interviewees
15.01.2026	Prolocal
15.01.2026	Impetus
22.01.2023	Rural Coalition

List of interview questions

- **Element 1.5**

The following questions are used for point allocation for element 1.5. 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, 0.75 points are allocated.

1. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: **Agenda items for the Government's sessions 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: **Minutes of the Government's sessions are transparent.**
 - 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: **Decisions from the Government's sessions are transparent.**
 - a) fully disagree
 - b) tend to disagree
 - c) tend to agree
 - d) fully agree

4. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: **The Government publicly informs on its decisions via press releases.**
 - 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 are agenda items for Government sessions typically made known to the public or stakeholders?
2. Who usually has access to agenda items before sessions take place, and how does that affect transparency or participation?
3. How useful are the existing records of meeting minutes for understanding how decisions were reached? Additionally, does the current level of transparency of meeting minutes contribute to accountability?
4. Do you find that the decisions made at Government sessions are presented clearly and understandably to the public?
5. Are there types of decisions that are more or less transparent than others? If so, why do you think that is the case?
6. How would you describe the tone and level of detail of Government press releases — are they informative, selective, or general?
7. Do you think the press releases reflect the actual content and rationale of Government decisions?
8. In your opinion, what should a fully transparent and accountable Government decision-making process look like?

- **Element 2.14**

The following questions are used for point allocation for element 2.14. 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: **Government's planning and reporting activities 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: **Government's planning and reporting activities are timely.**
 - 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: **Government's planning and reporting activities are citizen friendly.**
 - 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 Government planning documents explain and present clearly Government priorities, objectives, and expected results?
2. Are there opportunities for external stakeholders or the public to provide input during the planning stage? Does this practice vary among planning documents?
3. When it comes to timeliness, are there mechanisms to ensure that planning and reporting cycles are respected and aligned with budgetary or policy cycles?
4. Can you recall a case where the timeliness of reporting (or lack of it) had an impact on policy follow-up or accountability?
5. How effectively does the Government communicate the outcomes of its planning and reporting to citizens, in terms of conveying key messages and results? How do you assess citizens' awareness or interest in these documents?

- **Element 3.23**

The following questions are used for point allocation for element 3.23. 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: **In the work of the working groups, lead ministries decide on my proposals/proposals of my organisation (accept them or reject them).**
 - 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: **In the work of the working groups, lead ministries provide reasons for decisions to accept or reject my proposals/proposals of my organisation.**
 - 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: **In the work of the working groups, decisions and documents that came as the result of working groups' proceedings are available to me/my organisation.**
 - 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. Reflecting on your experience in participating in working groups, how would you describe the overall atmosphere and dynamics of cooperation?
2. What was the usual process after you submitted a proposal, how was it recorded or followed up?
3. Can you recall examples of proposals that were accepted and others that were not? If there were examples of your proposals being rejected, can you identify if the reasons for rejecting proposals were usually linked to policy priorities, legal constraints, or other factors?
4. Did you feel that your input was considered equally to the inputs provided by representatives of government bodies?
5. Did you find that the lead ministry/institution was open to alternative perspectives or critical feedback?

6. Were there topics or issues where discussion seemed less open or pre-decided?
7. When it comes to decisions and outputs of the working group, when did you usually receive the documents (draft laws/policy documents, meeting minutes, preparatory material, conclusions, etc.): during the process, after each meeting, or only once the final product was published?
8. Were the documents clear enough to understand how different inputs were reflected in the final version?
9. What would you say distinguishes a genuinely inclusive working group from one that is only formally inclusive?

- **Element 4.11**

The following questions are used for point allocation for element 4.11. Point allocation is determined based on fully agree/tend to agree responses. If all key informants fully agree/tend to agree with the statement, 3 points are allocated.

1. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: **During public hearings, parliamentary committees consider my proposals/proposals of my organisation.**
 - 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 often have you or your organisation taken part in such hearings, and in what policy areas?
2. In your experience, do all participants have equal opportunities to express their opinions?
3. When you or your organisation submitted comments or recommendations, how were they received and treated by members of the committee?
4. After a hearing, do you receive any follow-up information on how your contributions were treated?
5. Do you think that the current feedback mechanisms are sufficient to ensure accountability of parliamentary committees?

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 until the 22nd February 2025. The margin of error for the sample of 1008 citizens is $\pm 3,52\%$, at the 95 % confidence level.

Table 8: Public perception survey questions in the area of Policy Development and Coordination

Statement 1	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know/ No opinion
I have the opportunity to participate in developing laws and strategies of the North Macedonia	1	2	3	4	99

LIST OF REFERENCED SOURCES IN THIS REPORT

- 2024-2028 multi-annual work programme of the Government
- 2024 annual work programme of the Government
- 2025 annual work programme of the Government
- EC 2025 Country Report on North Macedonia
- Government Transparency Strategy with its Action Plan 2023-2026
- Guidelines on the Procedure in the Work of Ministries in the Process of Implementing a Regulatory Impact Assessment
- Law on the Government of the Republic of Macedonia
- Law on Organization and Work of State Administration Bodies
- Law on Publication of Laws and Other Regulations and Acts in the Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia
- Methodology on Regulation Impact Assessment
- Methodology on Strategic Planning and Preparation of the Annual Work Programme of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia
- Rules of Procedure of the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia
- Rules of Procedure of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia
- SIGMA Monitoring Report: Public administration in the Republic of North Macedonia 2024
- Strategy for Public Administration Reform 2023–2030 and Action Plan



Funded by
the European Union

With funding from
 Austrian
Development
Agency

Produced within Western Balkan Enablers for Reforming Public Administrations – WeBER 3.0 project. WeBER 3.0 is implemented by Think of Europe Network - TEN and Centre for Public Administration Research – KDZ.

WeBER 3.0 is funded by the European Union and the Austrian Development Agency - ADA. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the authors only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or ADA. Neither the European Union, ADA, TEN nor KDZ can be held responsible for them.

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