

FWF GENDER FACT SHEET - MACEDONIA

FACTS & FIGURES

- Human Development Index: 80 of 189 countries (UNDP 2018)
- Gender Inequality Index: 35 of 160 countries (UNDP 2018)
- Global Gender Gap Index: 66 of 149 (WEF 2018)
- Literacy rates: Female: 96.8% / Male: 98.8% (UNESCO 2006)
- Maternal mortality ratio: 7 (deaths per 100,000 live births)
- Adolescent birth rate: 18.3 (births per 1,000 women ages 15–19)
- Child Marriage: 7%
- Population with at least some secondary education: Female: 40.2% / Male: 55.6%
- Labour force participation rate: Female: 43.1% / Male: 67.5%
- Seats in parliament: 33.3% held by women
- No official statistics were available on gender-based violence

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Bordering Greece to the north, Macedonia is officially known as the Federal Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (or FYROM) to the United Nations.

- Macedonia is rated in **the top half of human development, according to the UN Human Development Index (HDI)**, ranking 80 out of 189 countries.
- Despite this, it is still **below the average of most other countries in Western Europe**, and closer to the development level of Armenia and Georgia.
- **Human rights violations** are still reported, and involve issues such as discrimination against the Roma people, electoral irregularities, the lack of judicial independence, lack of police accountability and bad prison conditions.

Employment:

- The country's labour market is characterised by **high levels of informal employment** (estimated at over 22.5% of the total employment in the country), a **high unemployment rate** (23.7% in 2016), and a **skewed structure for labour market participation**.
- Unemployment is highest among those with lower levels of education, young people and people between the ages of 55-64.
- Furthermore, the very high rate of long-term unemployment underscores the **lack of job opportunities**, a social problem resulting in the impoverishment and social exclusion of significant segments of the population.
- The resulting imbalance between supply and demand means that **labour costs are very low**.

Textile industry:

- The textile industry is one of Macedonia's most developed economic sectors, and there are over 600 companies actively involved at various levels of production, **employing over 40,000 workers** and producing over €450 million worth of exports.
- Textiles contribute to about 12.45% of the industrial GDP (2.4% of Macedonia's GDP), and represented 12.4% of country exports in 2016.
- The Macedonian textile industry, however, represents less than 1% of global textile exports worldwide.

Labour rights:

The legal framework for labour in Macedonia is well developed, and covers all eight labour standards in the FWF Code of Labour Practices, although there are **limitations on the right to strike**.

- Several labour regulations were amended in 2016, including a **new regulation on parental leave**, for example.
- In addition, the first **law regarding minimum wage**, which was adopted in 2015 and included the textile sector, was amended in 2016 to **include fines for employers** who did not comply.
- Ratified ILO conventions are regularly reported and followed up on, although Macedonia is only **beginning to align with European Union regulations**.
- According to a 2016 report from the European Commission, while **the capacity of institutions to monitor health and safety at work has improved slightly, it remains insufficient**. The report explicitly states that the 'National Council for Occupational Health and Safety did not perform its duty to coordinate monitoring and implementing the Occupational Health and Safety regulations.'

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- **Trade union membership and union density have been falling continuously** since Macedonian independence in 1993. In 2013, **trade union density stabilised at around 30%**. Union membership rates are not increasing and, in the past, union members have transferred from one confederation to another. Still, **Macedonia has a relatively high level of unionisation** compared to other garment exporting countries.
- A national Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) specific to the textile, leather, and shoe industry does exist. But **at the factory level, CBAs are often not signed or updated**.
- There is **no developed system of workers' representation at the company level, except for unions**. Workers' councils are not considered in the legal framework or applied in practice.
- Therefore, the attempts of some companies to have worker representatives as a substitute for unionisation is understood by unions as an attempt to **undermine freedom of association**, and connected to the idea of yellow unionism, trade unions dominated by the employer and therefore not independent or free.

Gender gap:

- **Macedonia's Gender Inequality Index rank of 35 (2018)** is better than other countries in the region, such as Bulgaria (46) and Romania (68). Also substantially better than Asian garment-producing countries like Bangladesh (134), China (36), and India (127).
- In the wage equality for similar work rank in the 2016 Global Gender Gap, Macedonia records **a decrease in female legislators, senior officials, and managers, and a re-opening of its educational attainment gender gap** - and is ranked 73rd.
- **Little has been done to effectively promote gender equality**.
- There are still **restrictive procedural rules on the termination of pregnancy** that could result in the use of illegal abortions.

Gender-based violence:

- **Domestic violence** remains a concern, and the law on the prevention, protection and combating of domestic violence has serious gaps.
- There is **no definition of other forms of gender-based violence, nor accurate data on reported cases**.

LEGAL CONTEXT

National Legislation:

National laws and policies **to prevent and respond to violence against women** in place include:

- Criminal Code of 1996 (Amended in 2004)
 - Type of Measure: Violence against women > Legislation
 - Form of Violence: Sexual harassment, Sexual violence, Trafficking
- Amendments to the Law On Social Protection (Law No. 65/04)
 - Type of Measure: Violence against women > Legislation
 - Form of Violence: Domestic violence/Intimate partner violence
- Law On Family 2004 and its Amendments in 2006 and 2008
 - Type of Measure: Other relevant laws > Family law
 - Form of Violence: Domestic violence/Intimate partner violence

International Legislation:

- Macedonia is a signatory of the **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. (CEDAW)**.
- Macedonia has signed and ratified 79 international conventions, of which 75 are in force. These include ILO conventions on the abolishment of forced labour, freedom of association and collective bargaining, equal remuneration, minimum age, worst forms of child labour, discrimination, elimination of racial discrimination, rights of the child, and rights of persons with disabilities.

SOURCES:

Solidarnost: <http://solidarnost.mk/platforma/angliski>

CEDAW: [Concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women](#)

OHCHR: [Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review \(UPR\)](#)

UNDP Human Development Report 2018: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/GII>,

WEF Global Gender Gap Index 2018: <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2018/>