



Република Северна Македонија

**Министерство за труд
и социјална политика**

- Сектор за социјална заштита -

Subject: Human Rights Council Resolution 43 / L.34

Recreation and leisure

1(a). Does your country have laws, policies, plans, strategies or guidelines¹ and departments at any level of government relating to the inclusion of persons with disabilities in mainstream (not disability-specific) recreational and leisure physical activity, including but not limited to:

- In the Republic of North Macedonia, in the Law on Sports in Article 22a, paragraph 1, indent 1, the competencies of the municipalities, the municipalities of the City of Skopje and the City of Skopje in the field of sports, also include the competencies, within the meaning of this Law, for sports and recreational activities of persons with special needs (disability), as well as support of the system of manifestations and forms of competition for persons with special needs (disability).

- Private settings: Private gymnasiums, sports clubs, sports associations and foundations, summer camps, marathons, swimming pools, among others;
- Public and private tourism platforms: tourism facilities (e.g. beach, mountain, forest, among others), including services for persons with disabilities;
- Public settings in urban areas: Urban sports trails, cycling trails, public physical training, yoga, recreational sports, playgrounds for children, recreational facilities for older persons, among others.
- Nature trails: hiking trails, nature centers, toilets, viewing platforms, count with accessibility and services.

1(b). What are the challenges to implementing the above? Are you aware of good practice related to the above?

- Despite the advocacy of the organizations for people with disability, there is still no accessible beach with a ramp that provides access to lakes, as well as no adapted showers and toilets. There are no access trails for people with disabilities to the forests and tourist centers. The same applies for the facilities where sports and recreational activities are done, which have no access ramps, elevators, adapted toilets, showers and changing rooms.

¹ These regulations and guidelines should refer to ensuring accessibility of venues/facilities, accessibility of information and communications, reasonable accommodation, support service provision, affordability, procurement, data collection and disaggregation, among others.



Република Северна Македонија

**Министерство за труд
и социјална политика**

- Сектор за социјална заштита -

- The National Union of Persons with Physical Disability – Mobility Macedonia, through the Football Federation of Macedonia, joined the UEFA project – “Captains of Change”. The aim of this project is to influence the creation of equal opportunities for all in the football world, regardless of gender, religion, nationality and physical ability. “Captains of Change” is a project that refers to the creation of smooth access for people with disabilities to the stadiums in Macedonia. Mobility Macedonia formed a team of athletes with physical disabilities in futsal, and thus made the first modest steps in the football world. The National Arena “Todor Proeski” in Skopje is fully accessible for people with disabilities, as well as the sports center “Jane Sandanski” in Skopje which is built in accordance with accessibility standards. Basketball, handball, indoor soccer and volleyball can be practiced in the multi-purpose hall, and next to it there is an auxiliary training hall, as well as a swimming pool, spa center and a modern fitness center.

Mobility Macedonia is implementing the project “Inclusive Playgrounds for Children” in partnership with the MLSP, with the aim to improve the social life of children with disabilities and provide the opportunity for their proper growth and development. The project involves equipping a space with props accessible to children with disabilities, that is, a children's playground that will provide safe play, socialization and proper growth and development. The project has been implementing since 2013, and so far 16 inclusive playgrounds have been built: 8 in the city of Skopje (Gradski Park, Gjorche Petrov, Kisela Voda, Day-care Center for Children with Cerebral Palsy in Kapishtec, Center for Autism in Topansko Pole, Karposh, Shuto Orizari and the Institute for Rehabilitation of Children and Youth in Topansko Pole) and 8 throughout the country (Kavadarci, Novo Selo Strumica, Resen, Prilep, Bitola, Kavadarci, Veles and Shtip). The implementation of the project continues.

Education

2(a). Does your country have laws, policies, plans, strategies or guidelines on physical education in public and private schools, including in special education, informal education and extra-curricular activities, relating to the inclusion of persons with disabilities, particularly children and young people, to avoid their exclusion or exemption from physical education and facilitating contact with disability-specific sports? What are the objectives of these instruments?

The inclusion of persons, that is, children and youth in the overall education system in the Republic of North Macedonia is of particular importance and full attention is being paid to this process. In that regard, provisions are implemented in all important documents that refer to the inclusion of children and youth in formal and



Република Северна Македонија

**Министерство за труд
и социјална политика**

- Сектор за социјална заштита -

informal education, including the acquisition of knowledge and skills in physical and health education.

In that regard, Article 40 paragraph (7) of the Law on Primary Education states that during the extended stay which includes students from different classes and grades, students study, do homework, work on other school responsibilities and participate in cultural-artistic, sports and other activities, in accordance with the annual work program of the school, in accordance with the Instruction for extended stay of students from different classes and departments, which is determined by the Minister, at the proposal of the Bureau.

Pursuant to Article 43 of the same Law, at least five teachers who have been employed for an indefinite period of time in the primary school, establish a school sports club, in compliance with the Law on Associations and Foundations and the Law on Sports. These sports clubs also refer to the special primary schools (primary schools with resource centers), in which children and youth with special needs are members of.

Pursuant to Article 41 paragraph (1) which refers to the development of different interests in students, the primary school organizes extra-curricular activities in compliance with the Concept for Extra-curricular Activities which is determined by the Minister at the proposal of the Bureau and pursuant to paragraph (5) when organizing extra-curricular activities the school ensures protection against discrimination on any grounds, as well as application of the affirmative measures for inclusion of all students.

The Article 42 paragraph (1) refers to the extra-curricular activities and reads as follows: the school plans and organizes excursions, picnics and other extra-curricular activities in accordance with the annual work program of the school and paragraph (2) refers to the manner of conducting excursions, picnics and other extra-curricular activities, which is determined by the Minister, at the proposal of the Bureau, for which a Rulebook has been prepared that applies for all children and youth, without exception.

As a novelty in Article 54 paragraph 5 of the Law on Primary Education it is stated that for implementing the physical and health education curriculum from first to fifth grade, a teacher of physical and health education is included, together with the class teacher.

In Article 59 paragraph (13) of the Law on Secondary Education, teachers in secondary education for students with special educational needs may be persons with completed higher education referred to in paragraphs 2 and 3 of this Article, who have acquired adequate special education and have passed a professional exam.

The Article 31-a of this Law refers to the development and promotion of all forms of sports activities for all students, therefore at least five teachers who have been



Република Северна Македонија

**Министерство за труд
и социјална политика**

- Сектор за социјална заштита -

employed for an indefinite period in high school, establish a school sports club, in compliance with the Law on Associations and Foundations and the Law on Sports.

For full inclusion of children and youth in the education system, a Concept for Inclusive Education has been prepared and approved by the Minister at the proposal of the Bureau for Development of Education.

In the curricula, the subject of physical and health education is compulsory and is realized 3 hours per week, that is, 108 hours per year.

For children and young people who are receiving education in special primary and secondary schools (primary schools with resource centers), adapted curricula have been prepared for all subjects, including the subject of physical and health education. The curricula are adapted based on the disability, as follows:

- adapted curriculum in physical and health education for the students with hearing loss;
- adapted curriculum in physical health and education for the students with visual impairment;
- adapted curriculum in physical and health education for the students with mental disabilities;
- adapted curriculum in physical and health education for the students with autism;
- adapted curriculum in physical and health education for the students with multiple disabilities;

The students with special educational needs are also included in extra-curricular and outside of school sports and recreational activities:

- opportunity for participation in various sports activities, clubs and sports clubs. preparations and participation in the Special Olympics.

2(b)(i). Are teachers and professors of physical education trained to include students with disabilities in either mainstream or disability-specific physical education?

In addition to adequate special education (Article 59 paragraph (13) of the Law on Secondary Education), teachers of physical and health education together with teachers of other subjects, have the opportunity for additional professional development for work with children with special educational needs through the following activities:

- Attending trainings for educational work with students with special educational needs, organized by the Bureau for Development of Education with the support of UNICEF, as well as training for preparation of an Individual Educational Plan for work



Република Северна Македонија

**Министерство за труд
и социјална политика**

- Сектор за социјална заштита -

with a specific student with disability, according to his/hers capabilities, abilities, affinities and needs.

- Teachers in the immediate educational work with children and youth with special educational needs, also have the opportunity to receive help and support from the professionals from the school inclusive teams (educator, psychologist, special educator and rehabilitator, doctor, etc.).

2(b)(ii). Do persons with disabilities who want to be teachers and professors of physical education have access to equal certification to exercise the profession?

Yes, if they meet the necessary criteria in accordance with the enrolment policies of the respective faculties or higher education institutions that educate such a profile of staff. However, in practice, persons with disabilities do not have access to an equal certificate to practice the profession of teachers and professors of physical education. A person with a disability can enrol in studies for coaches in certain sports at the Faculty of Physical Education, Sport and Health, but cannot enrol in the program for professors of physical education;

2(c). What are the challenges to implementing the above? Are you aware of any good practices related to the above?

Students with disabilities have achieved results and won many awards and medals in various sports in regional and national competitions, as well as from their participation in the Special Olympics.

Sports

3(a). Does your country have national, regional and local sports departments addressing and promoting competitive sports that cover both mainstream and disability-specific sports, either integrated or separated?

In North Macedonia there are national sports federations of athletes with disabilities (for people with physical disabilities, blind people, deaf people and people with intellectual disabilities). They have a network of local organizations operating in the territory of one or more municipalities. They are independent and separate from the clubs and federations of athletes without disabilities. The National Federation for Sports and Recreation of the Disabled of North Macedonia – Paralympic Committee of North Macedonia is considered the umbrella organization.



Република Северна Македонија

**Министерство за труд
и социјална политика**

- Сектор за социјална заштита -

3(b). Do disability-specific competitions have a similar structure to mainstream competitions, either integrated or separated, to organize local, regional, national, continental and international competition?

Athletes with disabilities have a separate system of competitions consisting of municipal, regional and state championships, while the most successful athletes compete in European and world championships, Paralympic Games, Deaflympics and Special Olympics. Since the independence of our country, Branimir Jovanovski (Barcelona, 1992) and Olivera Nakovska Bikova (London, 2012) won gold Paralympic medals and set world and Paralympic records, while Vancho Karanfilov won a silver Paralympic medal in Athens in 2004, all in shooting sports.

3(c). What are the challenges that persons with disabilities face to access training centers prepared for high-performance sports at local, regional and national levels?

The main issues athletes with disabilities face are the following:

- the inaccessibility of sports facilities due to architectural barriers;
- lack of quality equipment and specific sports equipment for conducting training process and participation in competitions;
- lack of adapted city and intercity public transport;
- lack of special educational programs in primary and secondary schools for work with children and youth with disabilities in physical education classes;
- insufficient number of professionals interested in conducting a training process for persons with disabilities;
- insufficient financial resources for organizing a regular training process, and participation in competitions from local, regional, state and international level for athletes with disabilities;

3(d). Are there laws, policies and mechanisms in place to ensure fair distribution of public grants, awards and other financial support to ensure that sportspersons with disabilities have equal opportunities to succeed in competitive sports?

The national sports federations of people with disabilities are financially supported by the Agency for Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. The funds they receive are not enough to carry out preparations and participate in international competitions, which is why very often the competition program must be reduced.

Athletes with disabilities, if they meet the strict criteria, are entitled to a sports scholarship just like non-disabled athletes, and if they win medals at the European or world championships or at the Paralympic or Deaflympics, they are entitled to a



Република Северна Македонија

**Министерство за труд
и социјална политика**

- Сектор за социјална заштита -

National Sports Award. Olivera Nakovska Bikova and Andrej Stojanovski are world-class scholarship holders, in shooting and in swimming respectively, while Branimir Jovanovski, Vancho Karanfilov, Vangel Zhabev and Ragmi Arifovski are holders of the National Sports Recognition for the affirmation of RNM in the world;

3(e). Please provide information on the organizational structures of disability-specific sports, including examples and good practices. Kindly consider the following aspects when replying:

- Are they separate structures, or are they integrated into mainstream federations and clubs?

There are special sports federations that act as umbrella organizations. The municipal and inter-municipal clubs operate within the sports federations.

- Are they decentralized covering the whole territory or they only operate in capital city/area?

They cover the whole territory of the Republic of North Macedonia;

- Are they sports-discipline specific, or they integrate multiple disciplines?
- Do they receive equal funding opportunities compared to mainstream sports?
- Are joint activities between sportspersons in disability-specific sports and mainstream sports encouraged or carried out to facilitate exchange among sportspersons within similar disciplines?
- Are persons with disabilities considered in sports beyond their role as sportspersons, including as referees, coaches, spectators, administrators, workers, volunteers in the sports industry, board members, among others?