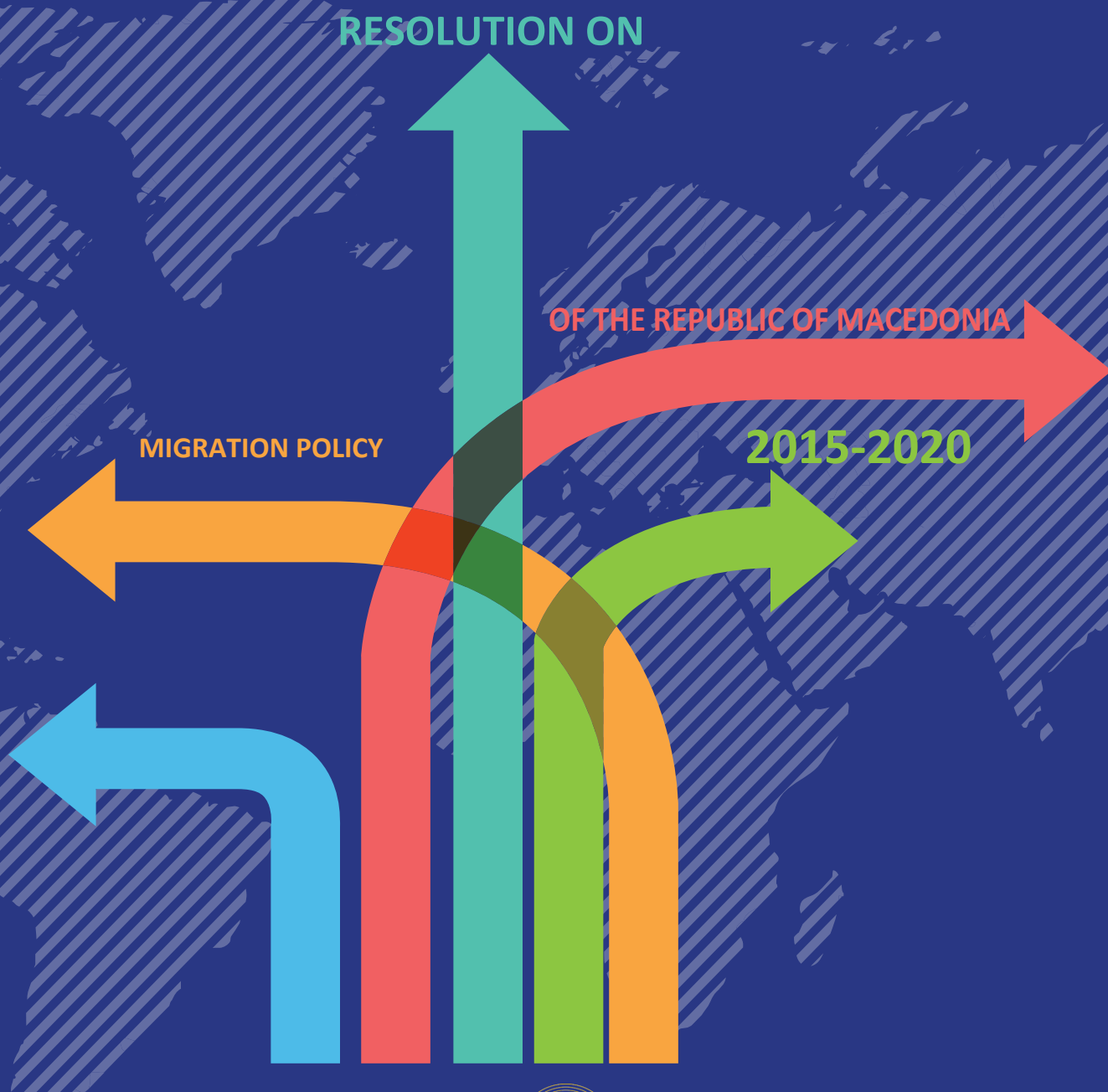


RESOLUTION ON MIGRATION POLICY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA 2015-2020



Government of the Republic of Macedonia

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**RESOLUTION
ON
MIGRATION POLICY
OF
THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA**

2015–2020



Government of the Republic of Macedonia

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ACCRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

DCM – Diplomatic and consular missions

SSO – State Statistical Office

LGU – Local Self-government Units

IOM – International Organization for Migration

IPA – Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance

ICMPD – International Centre for Migration Policy Development

MARRI – Migration, Asylum, Refugees Regional Initiative

MFA – Ministry of Foreign Affairs

MES – Ministry of Education and Science

MIPS – Macedonian Interbank Payment System

MLSP – Ministry of Labour and Social Policy

MLS – Ministry of Local Self-Government

NBRM – National Bank of the Republic of Macedonia

N-VIS – National Visa Information System

SOP – Standard Operating Procedures

UNICEF – United Nations Children’s Fund

UNHCR – Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

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ASSEMBLY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

Pursuant to Article 68 paragraph 2 of the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia, the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, adopted the following

RESOLUTION ON THE MIGRATION POLICY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA 2015–2020

INTRODUCTION

In the period following the year 2000, international migrations have shown continuous and intensive growth at a global scale, and were also characterized by different directions of movement. Statistics show that in 2013, the number of international migrants around the world reached 232 million, which represents a large increase compared to the situation in 2000 (175 million) and 1990 (154 million).¹ Namely, the international migrant stock during the period 1990–2000 increased annually by an average of 1.2 per cent, and by 3.6 per cent in the period 2000–2013. The increase of international migration is also characterized by significant changes in the type of movements. At the same time, the increased volume of irregular migration, the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings, as well as refugees and people seeking protection, especially from the new crisis areas, deserve a special attention.

The differences in the socioeconomic development and levels of standards of living between different countries, as well as the political instability in certain regions in the world, remain essential determinants of the growth of international migratory movements.

In the area of external migration of the Republic of Macedonia, over the past five years, relatively significant changes in both legal and irregular migration have been noted. Regarding the regular migratory movements, the volume of emigrants continues to be significantly larger than the volume of immigrants, which has remained at a relatively low level, with foreigners being allowed to temporarily stay as the dominant representatives. The increased migration of emigrants/immigrants is accompanied by major changes in terms of demographic and socioeconomic characteristics, as well as changes regarding the countries of destination/origin. In particular, the past several years have featured an increase in irregular migration flows, smuggling of migrants, asylum and trafficking in human beings. The Republic of Macedonia has remained a transit point for the irregular migration flows.

In terms of emigration, it is important to point to the potential migration – a phenomenon that has reached an alarming proportion in the past five years. The number of young people, high school and university students, as well as highly educated staff (especially experts in technical and natural sciences) thinking or planning to leave the country is continuously increasing.

In light of the above explained circumstances, special attention has been paid in the drafting of the Migration Policy 2015–2020 to overcome the current challenges of mass and permanent emigration, especially of young people and highly educated staff. Due concern is also given in utilizing the huge potential of migrants for the country's development on one hand, and the efficient management of immigration, particularly in addressing the challenges of the growing irregular immigration, on the other.

The adoption of a consistent Migration Policy in the Republic of Macedonia for the next five years is predicated upon both the intensified international migratory movements in the world that do not

¹ Source: <http://esa.un.org/unmigration/wallchart2013.htm>

circumvent Macedonia, and to the trends and characteristics of migration movements in the country in the period following 2009. The following key determinants for the formulation of this Migration Policy still remain:

- Changes in the intensity and the nature of emigration and immigration and its influence over the demographic and socioeconomic development of the country;
- Evident changes in the area of irregular migration, smuggling of migrants and asylum, as well as trafficking in human beings;
- The geopolitical position of the Republic of Macedonia as a transit region where traditionally the migration flows intersect in this part of the European continent; and
- The need and the will of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia to entirely and continuously harmonize the legislation in the area of migration and asylum with the *acquis communautaire*, which arise from the firm determination of the country to become a part of the European integration processes.

The document is comprised of three parts. In the first part, the principles of the Migration Policy of the Republic of Macedonia are identified, the changes and the current situation regarding the regular migration (emigration and immigration) and the irregular migration, smuggling of migrants, trafficking in human beings, asylum, are exhaustively observed, as are the instruments of the Migration Policy – the visa regime and the Macedonian citizenship. The above migration flows are observed in the context of implementation of the activities and measures adopted with the Resolution of the Migration Policy of the Republic of Macedonia 2009–2014, with future challenges identified for each area addressed. In addition, the analysis covers the legal grounds and procedures regulating the migratory movements, bilateral and multilateral agreements, relevant institutions and their cooperation, as well as the interconnection of the Migration Policy with other sector-specific policies and adopted strategic documents and policies.

In the second part, the goals and objectives of the Migration Policy are determined in accordance with the commitment to creating a comprehensive and consistent policy regarding all aspects of migration processes. At the same time, for every observed area, strategic goals and specific objectives are identified, expected results are explained, the stakeholders and partners, as well as the relevant institutions regarding the financial implications, are determined.

In the third part – which represents an Action Plan for implementation of the Migration Policy of the Republic of Macedonia 2015–2020 – on the basis of every determined strategic goal and specific objective, the measures and the activities that should contribute to the efficient implementation of the migration policy goals are determined. These refer to creating new and/or improving the current data sources, creating policies in specific areas, as well as amending and further harmonizing the regulations in the area of migration with the *acquis communautaire*, strengthening the administrative and technical capacities of the institutions and enhancing the cooperation among the relevant institutions.

Given the relatively long period of time covered by the Action Plan, the fiscal implications cannot be precisely determined. Therefore, only the relevant institutions from the aspect of the financial implications are listed in the document, as the financial implications should be determined with the annual operational plans.

The Action Plan for the implementation of the Migration Policy of the Republic of Macedonia 2015–2020 is a document the realization of which shall be continuously monitored, and the effects of the implemented measures and activities will be assessed. In addition, the Action Plan will remain open for amendments and changes in the activities in order to consistently implement the goals of the Migration Policy.

This document was prepared by the interministerial group for creating the Migration Policy of the Republic of Macedonia, which is made up of representatives of 12 institutions and 4 international organizations, each with competences in their respective areas and with shared competences in some of the other areas. The Migration Policy contains the views of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia regarding the regulation of the issues in the area of external migration and their efficient management in the 2015–2020 period. In light of the significance of migration flows and its influence on the demographic and socioeconomic development, as well as on cultural and political life, the Republic of Macedonia defines the directions for comprehensive and efficient management of migratory movements with this document.

The adoption of the Migration Policy of the Republic of Macedonia represents a significant activity which, among other things, is intended to establish a legal frame in the area of migration, harmonized with the European Union's legal framework. Pursuant to the Stabilization and Association Agreement between the Republic of Macedonia and the European Union, the country has assumed the obligation to cooperate in the area of visas, border control, asylum and migration. In addition, the Republic of Macedonia has also assumed the obligation to cooperate in the prevention and control of irregular migration and readmission.

PART ONE

**FUNDAMENTALS OF THE
MIGRATION POLICY OF THE
REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA**

1. OVERVIEW OF THE MIGRATION POLICY'S KEY PRINCIPLES

While creating the Migration Policy 2015–2020, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia remains dedicated to respecting the key principles and recommendations on migration management put forward by international organizations, especially the International Organization for Migration (IOM), which have a universal meaning.² These are as follows:

- ❖ **Respecting the international standards, human rights and protection.** This refers to the respect, protection and provision of human rights to migrants in accordance with the international law, protection of the vulnerable categories of migrants, as well as the international standards regarding migrant workers. This principle also implies suppression of xenophobia, racism and discrimination and incorporation of gender equality in the Migration Policy;
- ❖ **Comprehensive evidence-based policy, developed in close cooperation with relevant partners.** This is accomplished through the implementation of comprehensive and coherent national Migration Policy created on the basis of relevant findings, with the participation of all government institutions and in close cooperation with all stakeholders, as well as engagement with relevant partners at a national, regional and international level (government agencies, scientific institutions, non-governmental institutions, associations, migration organizations and others).
- ❖ **Addressing socioeconomic needs.** This principle is carried out by: (a) integration of migrants; (b) reintegration of returnees; (c) provision of access to medical and social services for all migrants; (d) support of labour migration (including temporary and circular migration); (e) encouragement of brain gain; and (f) integration of migration into the development processes by decreasing the transfer costs of foreign remittances, their productive use and brain gain.
- ❖ **Policy that is adaptable,** such as one that can address the challenges in times of crisis, to mitigate the risks associated with the movement of migrants.
- ❖ **Provision of access to regular migration.** This is achieved through: (a) transparent and efficient application of the migration law; (b) provision of regular migration channels in line with the national development policy; (c) collection of reliable and timely information on migration flows and dissemination of relevant information on migration policies and procedures so that migrants can make informed decisions; (d) provision of safe, flexible and cost-effective access to migrant services; and (e) efficient implementation of the visa regime and efficient migration and development management.

In light of the complexity of the migration area and the determination regarding the common purpose, the Migration Policy of the Republic of Macedonia 2015–2020 unites all relevant aspects of the policies regarding the following:

- (a) Regular migration flows (emigration and immigration);
- (b) Irregular migration and smuggling of migrants;
- (c) Trafficking in human beings; and
- (d) Asylum and refugee protection.

² IOM, "Framework for Migration Governance".

Given the significance of the instruments for managing the aforementioned migration flows, over the next five years, the Migration Policy shall pay special attention to the following:

- (a) Visa policy (visa regime);
- (b) Citizenship;
- (c) Support and protection of the citizens of the Republic of Macedonia who live and work abroad;
- (d) Regulation of the residence of foreigners and their integration;
- (e) Relevant legal aspects; and
- (f) Interstate (bilateral and multilateral) cooperation.

The complexity and dynamics of migration flows warrant the participation and support of all relevant institutions, representatives of international organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), as well as coordination and interaction with the other sector-specific policies and strategic documents.

The policies, action plan and operational plan in the areas mentioned should apply to several specific areas and/or to their particular aspects, and should be conceived in such a way that will enable their specific objectives to correspond to and be consistent with both the common goal of the Migration Policy in a broader sense and with the other relevant policies. Therefore, the **key principles** used to determine the development of the Migration Policy of the Republic of Macedonia are as follows:

- **Consistency** – mutual harmonization of specific policies (such as the following: policy regarding the citizens of the Republic of Macedonia living abroad; policy on settlement and integration of foreigners; irregular migration, smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings policy; asylum and refugees protection policy) and harmonization with the Migration Policy in a broader sense;
- **Compatibility** – harmonization of the Migration Policy with the economic, social, demographic and cultural policy of the Republic of Macedonia; checks to ascertain whether the objectives of the mentioned policies are harmonized; checks of the efficiency of adopted measures, the influence of the Migration Policy and continuous adjustment of the changes in the migration processes;
- **Transparency** – transparent and open implementation of individual policies and the entire Migration Policy regarding the administrative procedures and utilization of public funds in order to garner public confidence and support; and
- **Sustainability** – continuity in the design, preparation and monitoring of the implementation of the measures and activities of the Migration Policy, regardless of the changes in organizational structures.

In addition to the principles mentioned above, successful implementation of the Migration Policy of the Republic of Macedonia warrants that the following **key assumptions** be fulfilled:

- ✓ Accountability of relevant ministries and other institutions regarding progress in achieving the goals of the policy and their implementation;
- ✓ Public information and education campaigns aimed at garnering a broad support for the Migration Policy;
- ✓ Improvement of the national capacity for analysis, design and implementation of the Migration Policy; and
- ✓ Partnership with the countries of origin and destination, regional and international organizations, non-governmental and other civil society organizations, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders.

2.

CHARACTERISTICS OF MIGRATION PROCESSES DURING THE 2009–2014 PERIOD

Regarding the legal migratory movements over the past five years, the Republic of Macedonia was and has remained an emigration area, where the continuous growth of emigration is accompanied by significant changes in the characteristics of the migration stock. The scope of immigration has remained relatively small, where the dominant representatives are foreigners with temporary stay and exhibiting significant changes in their structural characteristics. In terms of asylum, irregular migration and smuggling of migrants, reports indicate a continuous growth in the number of irregular migrants, asylum-seekers, as well as changes in their countries of origin. As a transit area for irregular migrants and asylum-seekers, Macedonia faces numerous challenges due to the increasing numbers of such population.. All research and available data indicate that today, the Republic of Macedonia is also a country of origin and destination for trafficking in human beings, as well as a transit point for irregular migration. Most of the cases noted in the Republic of Macedonia are those of in-country trafficking in human beings or those with domestic victims of trafficking in human beings; however, in the preceding period, victims from different neighbouring countries have been identified. Sexual exploitation remains the dominant form of trafficking in human beings.

The manifested changes and the current situation regarding the given aspects of external migration are monitored in the context of the implementing the measures and activities adopted with the Resolution on the Migration Policy of the Republic of Macedonia 2009–2014. The analysis encompasses the Migration Policy instruments, the legal grounds and procedures that regulate them, the bilateral and multilateral agreements, the relevant institutions and their cooperation, as well as the interconnection between the Migration Policy and the other sector-specific policies and adopted strategic documents and policies.

2.1. Regular migration trends

2.1.1. *Fundamental characteristics of emigration abroad*

Macedonia's territory has been traditionally an emigration area from which the immigration movements abroad date back to the beginning of the last century, while the modern economic emigration dates back to the mid-1960s. Although the most popular destinations are well known, the total number of Macedonian citizens living abroad today remains unknown. Due to the long history of emigration abroad (which in some families is repeated in each generation), today there is no relevant data on the "old" emigration and their descendents (second and third generation), nor are there data on those who returned to the country. Nevertheless, in the past decades, only a small part of Macedonian citizens have officially reported their stay abroad, of which the available statistical data from domestic sources for people who temporary or permanently left the country are incomplete. The regular statistical surveys carried out by the State Statistical Office (SSO) show that the number of citizens who have left the country is quite small, and it only refers to the number of people who have officially reported their stay abroad.³ According to this data, in the 1994–2013

³ This research is based on the reports on the immigrated or settled persons obtained by the regional units of the Ministry of Interior. It is being carried out in accordance with the Law on State Statistics (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, no. 54/1997 and 22/2007), as well as the Law on Registration of Place of Domicile and Place of Residence of Citizens and the Law on Movement and Residence of Foreigners (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 36/1992, 12/1993, 43/2000 and 66/2007).

period, 11,380 Macedonian citizens left Macedonia, 2,637 (23.3%) of whom in the 2009–2013 period.⁴

Under such circumstances, the extent of emigration can be assessed only through foreign data sources from international organizations/institutions and the receiving countries. The last comprehensive data regarding the number of emigrants in certain receiving countries around the world have been provided by the World Bank. It shows that in 2010, the number of Macedonian citizens (migrant stock) residing in all the countries covered with this report stood at 447,138 people and the emigration rate was approximately 21.8 per cent (Annex 1). However, the World Bank's data for 2010 simply represent a rough approximation. In the case of the Republic of Macedonia, the data are underestimated in terms of the number of migrants in overseas countries. According to available data from the population censuses and the official statistics of Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States, the number of Macedonian citizens in these countries is 183,383 people, which is 105,707 more than the 2010 World Bank data. If this data is included in the calculations for the overseas countries, then the total number of Macedonian citizens living abroad is approximately 553,000 people, and the emigration rate stands at 26.8 per cent. These numbers can currently be seen as approximate, but it surely is a correct assessment of the current number of Macedonian emigrants abroad.

Regarding the geographical distribution of Macedonian citizens abroad, based on all available data, it can be concluded that during the 2009–2014 period, Australia, Germany, Italy, Switzerland and the United States remained the five receiving countries with the largest number of immigrants from the Republic of Macedonia. As for the European-receiving countries, the most significant destinations are the following: Austria, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Slovenia and Switzerland, (Eurostat data), and Sweden (population census, 2011). In the period following 2009, Germany, Italy and Switzerland remained the European countries receiving the largest number of Macedonian citizens, the aggregate in 2009 being 215,305 people, and 214,130 people in 2013 (Annex 1). At the same time, the highest increase is noted in Belgium, Germany, Slovenia and Switzerland where the number of Macedonian immigrants has increased to 19,175 people (Eurostat data).

In terms of the impact of the economic and financial crisis on emigration and re-emigration trends, the World Bank and Eurostat data have indicated that from 2008 to 2010, there have not been significant changes in the total number (migrant stock) of Macedonian citizens abroad. However, since 2011, the emigration trends from Macedonia have increased again. These trends correspond to the changes in the migration policies of the receiving countries.

Foreign data sources confirm that in the past years, the extent of permanent emigration remained relatively high and temporary emigration has risen significantly due to employment abroad, family reasons, education or for other reasons. When it comes to the flow of Macedonian returnees who reside abroad, the available data indicate that they were and they still remain relatively low.⁵ However, assessment of both domestic and foreign statistical data on the issues of returnees from abroad and re-emigration are very scarce.

Besides the extent, the migratory movements abroad are characterized by certain changes in the demographic and educational characteristics of the migrants. This is confirmed by Eurostat data and data from the receiving countries, indicators of the international organization, as well as research in the past years.

The Eurostat data on the migrant contingent structure according to gender and age indicate significant but different changes over a comparatively short period of time (2009–2013). This is also confirmed by

⁴ State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia website. Available from www.stat.gov.mk

⁵ The regular statistical research of the State Statistical Office for the settled people confirms the small number of returnees (1,797 people in the 2009–2013 period) although it marks an upward trend (from 259 in 2009 to 490 people in 2013) (www.stat.gov.mk).

the indicators for Germany, Italy and Switzerland, and the fact that these three countries account for 38.6 per cent (214,130 people) of the approximated migrant contingent (553,000 people) for 2013. The share of women in the total migrant contingent in these three countries has remained relatively large. Therefore, Germany accounts for about 47 per cent; in Italy, it has increased from 32.3 per cent (2009) to 46 per cent (2013), and Switzerland accounts to 48.4 per cent (2012).⁶

Regarding the structure of the Macedonian citizens abroad according to age, which is observed through sizeable age groups, Germany's share in children aged 0–14 years old has decreased from 14.5 per cent (2009) to 13.6 per cent (2013), the share of working age people has decreased from 78.9 per cent to 77.2 per cent, and the proportion of people older than 65 years has increased from 6.6 per cent to 9.2 per cent. In Italy, the share of children has increased (from 21.4% to 26.2%), as well as for people older than 65 years (from 1.1% to 1.3%); however the share of working age contingent has decreased (from 77.5% to 72.5%). Similar changes are characteristic for Switzerland, where the share of these contingents in 2012 was 23.9 per cent, 74.1 per cent and 2.0 per cent respectively. Based on these indicators, it can be concluded that around 45,000 children (0–14 years old) or 12.9 per cent of the total number of children in the country lived in these three receiving countries in 2013. In the same year, the number of people older than 65 years was around 10,000 people. The relatively high proportion of elderly people is predicated upon the ageing of the migrant contingent, as well as the increase in the number of people older than 60 years who leave the country.⁷

Regarding the educational structure of migrants, research indicates that the emigration of highly educated staff has persisted in the past five years. This is confirmed by the brain drain indicator of the World Economic Forum, which reported that in 2009–2013, Macedonia is in the group of 10 countries with the highest intensity of brain drain.⁸ The high intensity of the intellectual emigration from Macedonia has also been identified in a study by the European Commission titled “Social Impact of Emigration and Rural-Urban Migration in Central and Eastern Europe” (2012), which covers 25 countries.⁹

The continuous orientation of migrants from certain parts of the country towards the same areas/countries of destination confirms the significance of migration relations, which in the past five years has had a significant influence on the extent of emigration abroad. In addition, based on multiple indicators, it can be concluded that despite the traditional emigration areas (Pelagonija, Polog and the South-Western region) other regions in the country are also affected by emigration.

In the period following 2009, the contingent of Macedonian citizens abroad has increased on two grounds – the new emigration and the inflow of the second and third generation. In addition, permanent emigration and the conversion from temporary to permanent stay continued, while the rate of re-emigration remained relatively low. The migration contingent characteristics confirm that Macedonia, through emigration, loses a significant part of its young people and human capital, both directly and indirectly. Given the potentially enormous intellectual emigration, the brain drain issue remains a concern.

Challenges: Reducing the level of permanent emigration of the population and the workforce from the country and support of the temporary circular migration remain a challenge of the Migration Policy for the next period of five years. Moreover, a significant challenge lies in making use of the

⁶ These and the structure indicators according to age are calculated based on the data from: Eurostat: Population by sex, age and citizenship (migr_pop1ctz). in: <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>; Council of Europe, Recent Demographic Developments in Europe; и Switzerland Migration Office: www.bfm.admin.ch/content/bfm/en/tools/kontakte.html

⁷ According to the data provided in the regular statistical research carried out by the State Statistical Office, the proportion of migrants older than 60 has increased from about 12% (in 2009 and 2010) to 17.8% in 2011, 25.9% and 24.6% in 2012 and 2013 (www.stat.gov.mk).

⁸ World Economic Forum, The Global Competitiveness Report 2008–2009 (Geneva, 2008); 2009–2010 (Geneva, 2009); 2010–2011 (Geneva, 2010); 2011–2012 (Geneva, 2011); and 2012–2013 (Geneva, 2012).

⁹ European Commission and GVG, *Social Impact of Emigration and Rural-Urban Migration in Central and Eastern Europe* (VT/2010/001) – Synthesis Report (Belarus, June 2012), p. 58.

development potentials and establishing cooperation with the Macedonian citizens abroad, as well as providing incentives for return migration and reintegration into the society. The lack of data from domestic sources regarding the permanent and temporary emigration from the Republic of Macedonia abroad was and still remains one of the issues in determining the particularities of these migratory movements. The statistics from foreign sources provide certain insights; however, its inconsistency and different methodological basis should be also taken into consideration.

2.1.2. Basic characteristics of immigration (temporary and permanent stay) and integration of foreigners

Legal immigration in the Republic of Macedonia refers to the temporary and permanent stay of foreigners on different grounds, including employment of foreigners. In addition, it encompasses short-term stay of foreigners up to 90 days based on private, business and tourist visits. In the context of drafting the Migration Policy, the analysis encompasses the changes related to the number of foreigners and structural characteristics of foreigners with temporary and permanent residence, as well as of those employed in the country.

a) Temporary and permanent residence of foreigners

A foreigner who, due to various reasons, intends to stay in the Republic of Macedonia for longer than three months (90 days) must regulate his/her temporary stay. Under the Law on Foreigners,¹⁰ the Sector for Border Affairs and Migration can issue a temporary residence permit to a foreigner on the following grounds:

- Work;
- Employment or self-employment;
- Attending high school or university;
- Participating in international exchange programmes for high school or university students;
- Specialization, professional development or vocational training;
- Scientific research;
- Medical treatments;
- Family reunification; or
- Humanitarian reasons.

In addition, a temporary residence permit may be issued to foreigners who are close family members of citizens of the Republic of Macedonia, to foreigners who have Macedonian origin and to a child born in the Republic of Macedonia to foreign parents. Under the amendments of the Law on Foreigners in 2013, a temporary residence permit can be also issued on the basis of ownership of real estate in the Republic of Macedonia.¹¹

The issuance of temporary and permanent residence permit is carried out if the requirements set out in the Law and the European Union directives regarding the protective elements and biometric data are met. Permanent stay permit is issued to a foreigner who, at least five years before applying for permanent stay, has been continuously residing at the territory of the Republic of Macedonia on the basis of a temporary stay permit.

¹⁰ The Law on Aliens, as of 1 January 2008 and its amendments (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, no. 117/2008), define the legal framework on the general conditions for entry of a foreigner in the Republic of Macedonia.

¹¹ The application for temporary residence permit is submitted in the diplomatic and consular missions of the Republic of Macedonia abroad and as an exception application for family reunification can be submitted in the organizational units of the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Macedonia. During the checks for granting a temporary stay to a foreigner, the relevant institutions are contacted based on the reasons for requesting a stay.

In the 2009–2013 period, the total number of foreigners with approved temporary and permanent stay in the Republic of Macedonia stood at 14,515 people. Most of them (97.5% or 14,148 people) were foreigners with approved temporary stay and only 367 foreigners with approved permanent stay. Of the total number of foreigners with approved temporary and permanent stay during this period, around 70 per cent were citizens of the following countries: Turkey (20.5%), Serbia (16.3%), Albania (13.7%), UNSC resolution 1244-administered Kosovo¹² (8.2%), Bulgaria (4.3%), Greece (3.7%) and United States (3.1%).

In relation to the reasons for granting temporary residence to foreigners in the Republic of Macedonia, more than one quarter (26.1% or 3,694 people) out of the total number of legal migrants (14,515 people) during the 2009–2013 period stayed due to employment activities, while more than one fifth due to family visits (22.7% or 3,218 people), and finally 13.3 per cent (1,876 people) for education purposes. Furthermore, in recent years, there has been an increase in the approved residence permits to foreigners based on work, employment or self-employment as a result of the enduring policy of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia to attract foreign investments. In 2012 and 2013, the number of people with approved residence due to attendance in high school or university has increased significantly. This increase is influenced by the increased interest of Turkish citizens to study in Macedonia and corresponds to the adjustment of the study programmes of several universities in the Republic of Macedonia to the needs of producing staff for the foreign labour markets and the possibility to attend classes in the students' mother tongue. The number of foreigners who are temporarily staying due to family visits, however, is continuously decreasing and has reached 545 people (2013) from 847 people (2009).

Based on available data regarding the structural characteristics of foreigners during the period 2009–2013, the following can be concluded:¹³ (a) the proportion of men is higher; (b) young people from 20 to 34 years of age are dominant (52.4%); and (c) in 2012 and 2013, the number of foreigners of Turkish nationality has increased significantly.

6) Integration of foreigners

The integration of foreigners is a process that should be carried out in three phases:

- ❖ In the first phase, which refers to the period following the arrival of foreigners, the country should focus on their inclusion in the current national protection system that comprises of access to the educational system and health-care services.
- ❖ The second phase, which should be seen as a development phase, should seek to support the independence of foreigners in terms of meeting their needs for housing, employment, as well as professional development and training.
- ❖ The third phase concerns the naturalization process that refers to obtaining permanent residence in the country or obtaining citizenship to ensure a complete integration of foreigners in the new society.

The first phase in the integration process is partly regulated with the provisions of the Law on Social Protection,¹⁴ Law on Health Care, Law on Voluntary Health Insurance,¹⁵ Law on Primary Education¹⁶

¹² Hereinafter referred to as Kosovo/UNSC 1244.

¹³ Determined based on the database of the State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia (www.stat.gov.mk).

¹⁴ Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, no. 9/09, 36/11, 51/11, 166/12, 15/13, 79/13, 164/13, 187/13, 38/14, 44/14 and 116/14.

¹⁵ Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, no.: 25/2000, 34/2000, 96/2000, 50/2001, 11/2002, 31/2003, 84/2005, 37/2006, 18/2007, 36/2007, 82/2008, 98/2008, 6/2009, 67/2009, 50/10, 156/10, 53/11, 26/12, 16/13, 91/13, 187/13, 43/14, 44/14 97/14 and 113/14.

¹⁶ Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, no.: 103/2008, 33/10, 116/110, 156/10, 18/11, 15/11, 6/12, 100/12, 24/13, 41/14 and 116/14.

and the bilateral social security agreements that the Republic of Macedonia has signed with certain countries.

Although the social security rights are guaranteed by law, there are certain difficulties to exercise them. Hence, there is an evident lack of information services for foreigners – migrants that would provide foreigners with the necessary useful information following their arrival in the country.

The issue regarding the employment of foreigners is regulated with the provisions of the Law on Employment and Work of Foreigners.¹⁷ Since its adoption in September 2007 until the present day, this law has been amended six times. The amendments in the past period were directed towards facilitating the procedures for obtaining a work permit, as well as increasing the mobility of foreigners employed in companies in Macedonia. However, even though this law protects foreigners against any type of discrimination, it also protects the domestic labour market. Under this law, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia determines an annual quota of work permits, thus limiting the number of foreigners in the labour market. The annual quota of work permits cannot exceed 5 per cent of the population of the Republic of Macedonia that is legally employed according to the SSO data. The design of a State policy regarding the number of granted work permits annually is based on the development needs of the country, as well as on the Employment Service Agency statistics.

The available statistical data indicate that during the 2009–2013 period, the Employment Service Agency has issued 9,295 work permits on all grounds, whereas in 2013, the number of work permits has doubled compared to the number in 2009. 4,716 (50.7%) out of all work permits were employment permits, 2,850 (30.7%) were personal work permits and 1,731 (18.6%) were work permits.

Concerning the structure of foreigners that obtained a work permit, it can be concluded that according to their level of education, the number and proportion of foreigners with higher levels of education has increased significantly. Thus, from the total number of employed foreigners in the 2009–2013 period, almost half (48.5%) had higher education (associate degrees, university degrees, master degrees and doctor of science degrees) and 43.9 per cent had medium-level education (secondary vocational education, qualified and highly qualified workers). According to the professions of the foreign citizens, during this period, more than one fifth of all issued work permits were granted to company managers (11.0%), managers, professors, heads of department and programmers (11.6%). This structure confirms that a relatively large number of issued permits are correlated to the increased trend of foreign investments. Regarding the countries of origin of the foreign citizens with work permits, it can be concluded that in the past five years, almost half of them have come from three countries: Turkey (25.3%), Serbia (12.9%) and Greece (11.5%).

Challenges: The number of foreigners with temporary and permanent stay in the Republic of Macedonia can be estimated as being relatively small. However, considering their characteristics, from the perspective of the demographic and socioeconomic development of the country, the need for efficient management of the economic and non-economic immigration still remains, as well as the need for further facilitation of the immigrants' integration into the society. In times of high unemployment, the Republic of Macedonia should continue with the flexible and market-oriented policy for admitting foreign workers in line with the long-term objectives of the employment policy. According to the determined specific needs, the current need remains to create relevant policies and procedures for admitting highly educated immigrants and immigrants with financial capital for seasonal employment of foreigners in certain sectors based on bilateral and multilateral agreements, as well as different types of temporary flexible employment (short-term residence of contractual workers, inter-company transfers, managers in multinational companies, trainers and others).

¹⁷ Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, no.: 70/2007, 5/2009, 35/10, 148/11, 84/12, 148/13 and 38/14.

The strong commitment of the Macedonian Government for promoting the country as an investment destination has initiated further improvements and acceleration of the procedures for employment of foreigners. Considering the commitment of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia to attracting foreign capital, a more transparent policy should be designed in the future to address the issue of the Macedonian business diaspora. The initiatives, such as Macedonia 2025 where the members are world-renowned businesspersons of Macedonian ethnic origin represent a good base for starting joint projects with the Macedonian diaspora.

Taking into consideration the different competences of the institutions, above all of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), the Ministry of Interior and the Employment Service Agency of the Republic of Macedonia, further simplification of the procedures remains one of the significant challenges in this area.

2.1.3. Migration and development

The causal relationship between emigration and immigration and development is basically determined by the scope and the structural characteristics of migrants. Having in mind that the number of foreigners who stayed and worked in the country during the 2009–2014 period has remained relatively small and cannot have more significant influence on the development, this part of the analysis is focused on the emigration abroad.

In the past five years, the emigration from the Republic of Macedonia was influenced by the same parameters as in the period before 2009, such that it corresponds to the changes in the socioeconomic progress of the country.¹⁸ Moreover, several groups of parameters have an influence on the emigration tendency, such as long-term and evident unemployment trend (especially the youth unemployment) accompanied by higher salaries and better living standards in the receiving countries that has a strong influence on the intensity of emigration. The fundamental factors for the intensified intellectual emigration are related to the increase in the unemployment of the highly educated population strata, underestimation of the expertise, as well as the limited opportunities for employment promotion. Moreover, other important determinants of emigration of Macedonian citizens abroad is interlinked to the established migration relations with the countries of destination, changes in the labor markets and immigration policies of the receiving countries that also influence on the emigration trends, especially in times of great migration potential in the country.

The continuous increase in the emigration abroad and the significant changes in its structural characteristics bring about numerous consequences and implications manifested in several areas. From the development perspective, its effect on the demographic and socioeconomic development is particularly significant. Research results indicate that in the past five years, the influence of emigration on development has been manifested through short-term and insufficient development effects, whereas the numerous negative consequences and implications have a long-term effect.

In the past two decades, the migratory movements abroad have had a significant influence over the *population development* in the Republic of Macedonia, both due to the high permanent emigration of young people and the growing trend of the number of children born abroad. For instance, according to the Eurostat data, the share of young persons (15–29 years old) in the total number of Macedonian citizens residing in Germany in 2013 was 23.1 per cent; and in Italy, the proportion of young persons was 27.6 per cent, whereas their absolute number in the both countries amounted to 38,313 people.¹⁹ If we add to this number the number of children (0–14), then in 2013, more than two fifths (45.0% or

¹⁸ Government of the Republic of Macedonia, *Resolution on Migration Policy of the Republic of Macedonia 2009–2014* (Skopje, December 2008), p. 13.

¹⁹ Calculated based on the Eurostat data from: (1) Population by gender, age and citizenship (migr_pop1ctz), available from <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>; (2) Council of Europe, Recent Demographic Developments in Europe; and Switzerland Migration Office, available from <http://www.bfm.admin.ch/content/bfm/en/tools/kontakte.html>

68,265 people) of the total number of Macedonian citizens in Germany and Italy (151,615) were at the age 0–29 years old. This illustration indicates that a significant number of the Macedonian young population is residing abroad, which indisputably has implications for the demographic changes in the country. The SSO data regarding the number of newborn children abroad also confirms this. During the 2009–2013 period, this number amounted to 19,758 children, which represents 16.7 per cent of the total newborns in the country (118,475) in the same period.²⁰ In this regard, the data of the Federal Office for Migration of Switzerland shows that in 2013, 17,953 persons – or 28.7 per cent of the total number of Macedonian citizens with permanent stay (62,515 people) – were born in Switzerland.²¹

Under these circumstances, the direct and indirect influence of the migratory movements on the acceleration of population ageing in the Republic of Macedonia is increasing. During the 2009–2013 period, the population has remained in the stadium of old age, whereas the average age of the population has increased from 36 to 38 years. In 2013, according to the number of young people (0–20 years old), the population was ranked in the stadium of deep old age. The intensive ageing of the population implies increasing problems in different domains. In this respect, special attention should be paid to the age dependency ratio, that is the balance between the elderly and the working-age population. According to the data from the population assessments in Macedonia, this ratio has increased from 16.4 per cent (2009) to 17.5 per cent (2013). The higher age dependency ratio is a burden to the pension system, especially in times of lower age limit for retirement and the increased pressure over the public finances.

The increase of emigration among the highly qualified staff, which according to all attributes can be treated as a brain drain,²² has in recent years implied further changes in the number and profile of the available labour force with higher level of education, decreasing the level of human capital, which in turn implies negative effects in scientific research and the socioeconomic development of the country. These migratory movements predominantly include engineers, and recently, medical professionals also known as “care brains”. Regardless of the rising interest of young people in technical sciences and the consequent increase in the number of graduated engineers, the labour market is continuously deficient in this kind of experts. This is verified with the changes in the Science and Engineering Indicator of the World Economic Forum for the 2009–2014 period. Macedonia’s position against this indicator ranges from the 81st position (2009–2010), the 114th position (2011–2012) and to the 92nd position (2013–2014).²³

The promotion of employment of engineers would have a multiplier positive effect on the real sector development and job creation; thus, it would contribute to increased competitiveness and employment, the two most problematic issues in the Macedonian economy in the past two decades. Along those lines, the most significant brain drain consequences to the economy and the development of the country that are closely related to the efficient utilization of talents and innovations should be closely monitored. The direct implications of emigration of highly educated professionals can be observed through the indicators related to the reliance on professional management, as well as capacity for innovation and quality of scientific research institutions. The World Economic Forum Indicators show that during the 2009–2012 period, Macedonia has been disadvantaged from the perspective of these three indicators; but according to the last report (2013–2014), certain improvements are evident.

²⁰ The number of newborn children abroad by separate years: 3,728 (2008); 3,510 (2009); 3,642 (2010); 4,012 (2011); 4,221 (2012), 4,373 (2013). Source: State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia, Natural movement of the population, Statistical reviews number: 2.4.10.08 (661); 2.4.11.10 (693); 2.4.12.07 (722), 2.4.13.12 (755) and 2.4.14.09 (787).

²¹ Source: <https://www.bfm.admin.ch/dam/data/bfm/publiservice/statistik/auslaenderstatistik/2013/ts-2013e>

²² Emigration that is long-lasting or permanent is not compensated by significant return effects based on transfer of technology, investment, foreign remittances and trade.

²³ World Economic Forum, The Global Competitiveness Report 2008–2009 (Geneva, 2008); 2009–2010 (Geneva, 2009); 2010–2011 (Geneva, 2010); 2011–2012 (Geneva, 2011); 2012–2013 (Geneva, 2012).

The consequences of emigration of highly educated individuals over the development of scientific research activities are manifested both directly and indirectly. The results of the research within the project “The Scientific Diaspora of the Republic of Macedonia” indicate that today, Macedonia has a respected scientific diaspora that is mostly created due to intellectual emigration.²⁴ Data analysis of the 85 Macedonian scientists abroad (68 with doctorate degrees and 17 with master’s degrees who work on doctoral dissertations), in terms of their level of education, indicate that when they migrated abroad, only 5 people were PhD graduates, 7 people were with master’s degrees/specializations, and 32 people (37.6%) were with completed undergraduate studies. Hence, 41 people or almost half (48.2%) of the 85 Macedonian scientists left the country as high school students, that is, they finished their higher levels of education abroad (first, second and/or third cycle of studies). Based on this data, it can be concluded that it is not about emigration of scientists, but it is about intellectual emigration and migration for the purpose of studying abroad, which means migration of people with the potential and affinities for scientific research.

In terms of the developmental effects of emigration, of particular importance are foreign remittances and foreign exchange inflow based on transfers from the Macedonian citizens abroad.²⁵ The results from the researches on migrants’ foreign remittances conducted in the past several years indicate that there is a lack of relevant data and that there are methodological limitations that hamper the determination of the remittances inflow. This arises from the different definitions and methodologies for collecting and processing data on foreign remittances and foreign exchange inflow,²⁶ as well as from the irrefutable fact that significant part of the remittances are transferred through informal channels.

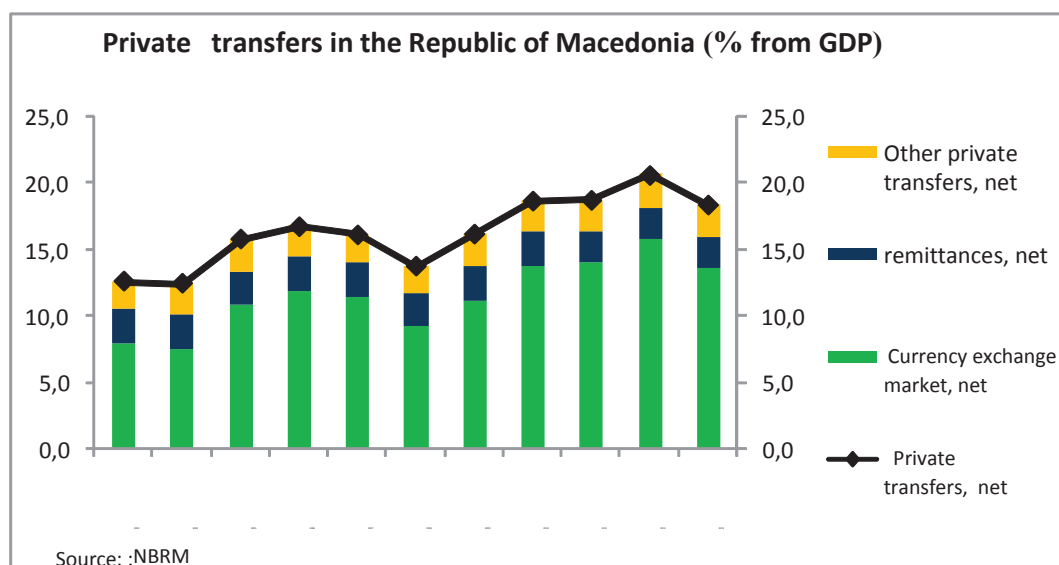
The changes in the number and structure of foreign remittances in the Republic of Macedonia can be identified through the National Bank of the Republic of Macedonia’s (NBRM) data on private transfers. This comprise of three components: foreign remittances, other private transfers and private transfers at the exchange market, where the first two components are due to emigration (Figure 1). Regarding the remittances at the exchange market, it is usually estimated that about 40–50 per cent of these funds are from Macedonian citizens living abroad.

²⁴ The study provides insight on the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the Macedonian scientists abroad, the country of origin, the time they left the country, the countries where they reside, the educational process, the scientific area, the professional engagement and the achievements in the scientific research. For more details, see V. Janeska, *Scientific Diaspora from the Republic of Macedonia* (Ss. Cyril and Methodius University, Institute of Economy, Skopje, 2014), pp. 104–129.

²⁵ These are two different terms, which means that foreign remittances represent only foreign currency remitted through the Macedonian banking system, and not the cash that is brought into the country personally or through informal channels and the foreign exchange that is invested into a foreign currency passbook in a bank.

²⁶ The NBRM and the World Bank use different definitions for the category remittances. The World Bank definition is broader and represents a set of three components: workers’ remittances, compensation of employees and migrants’ transfers. The NBRM’s definition does not include the migrants’ transfers, that is, these are included in the foreign exchange transactions. According to the data from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the category remittances represent a set of compensations of employees, workers’ remittances and other current transfers in other sectors.

Figure 1



The data for the 2009–2013 period suggest several conclusions:

- ✓ The net foreign remittances are oscillating and have a decreasing trend that does not correspond to the increase of emigration in the period following 2009. This is determined by the changes in the structure of the migrant contingent (the increase in the number of women and children, that is family emigration);
- ✓ Other private transfers (most of which are related to the pensions of Macedonian citizens who resided abroad) increased from 166 (2009) to 204 million euros (EUR) (2013), or for 22.9 per cent. Since 2012, the volume of private transfers became higher than the one for remittances for the first time. Such changes correspond to the ageing of the migrant contingent;
- ✓ The total volume of net remittances and other private transfers has increased from 336.2 (2009) to EUR 381.4 million (2013), which represents an increase of 13.5 per cent. This increase is almost three and a half times lower than the one for the 2003–2008 period (45.9%);
- ✓ The inflow of remittances brought into the country by migrants as cash or through other unofficial channels has significantly increased. It has increased from EUR 378.0 (2009) to EUR 553.4 million (2013); and
- ✓ The total volume of migrant's foreign currency inflow (on the three mentioned grounds) was and still remains significant. According to the situation in 2013, it represents 11.5 per cent of the GDP.

According to the 2012 World Bank data, most foreign remittances by Macedonian citizens living abroad (or three fifths) come from the European-receiving countries as follows: Germany (23%), Italy (22%), Switzerland (11%) and Austria (5%).²⁷ This basically corresponds to the scope of emigration from Macedonia into these receiving countries.

The development effects of foreign remittances are determined by the manner of their usage. The past decade's research on the use of foreign remittances and foreign currency inflows from Macedonian citizens abroad indicates that most of these funds are used for personal spending, building/buying and

²⁷ IMF, *Macedonia: Remittances and Economic Development*, Meeting of the Interministerial Group on Migration Policy (Skopje, May 2014).

renovating houses/apartments and furnishing, organizing family ceremonies and other expenses.²⁸ This is also confirmed by one of the latest researches from 2013, according to which 61 per cent of remittances are used for spending, 16 per cent for real estate investments, 6 per cent for education and 5 per cent for paying off debts.²⁹ Rarely, these funds are used for investments in current or new businesses. Thus, the remittances have positive effects on consumption and the standards of living of the migrant's household. However, this does not point to a long-term development effect at a macro level through an increase of consumption, especially in times of increased consumption of imported goods.

The return migration flows are essentially inter-related to the increased foreign currency inflow, increase in investments, and a transfer of technology and knowledge. The modern emigration from Macedonia is mostly either long-term or permanent, and the number of returnees has remained relatively small in the period following 2009. Hence, it may be concluded that the above mentioned effects are slightly pronounced. Taking into consideration the significant development potential of the citizens of the Republic of Macedonia abroad, if the number of returnees were increased, especially of highly educated staff and part of the successful Macedonian businessmen, it would have a significant positive influence over the country's development.

* * *

Under such circumstances – having in mind the volume and dynamics of emigration in the 2009–2013 period and the high level of potential emigration (particularly the intellectual emigration) and the low return migration, as well as its influence on the consequences and implications for the demographic and socioeconomic development of the country – there is an undisputable need for special attention to be given to emigration when designing the Migration Policy. In this part, the directions, goals and measures/activities should be classified into three segments: (a) pre-emigration activities; (b) citizens of the Republic of Macedonia temporarily or permanently staying abroad; and (c) return migration and reintegration. They should encompass several aspects, such as providing relevant data and information, enhancing relations with immigrants, using the development potentials and mitigating the consequences of intensive emigration (especially of highly educated staff), facilitating the return migration in the country and supporting temporary emigration and circulation of labour.

2.2. Irregular migration and smuggling of migrants

Regarding irregular migration, the 2009–2014 period is characterized by significant changes in the trends in this area. Namely, until 2011, most of the detected irregular migrants were Albanian citizens who had resided and/or worked illegally in the construction and agriculture sector in the Republic of Macedonia (mainly in the western and northwestern part of the country), as well as Macedonian and Albanian citizens trying to migrate irregularly to Greece for seasonal work on plantations or in the tourist sector of the neighbouring country (Table 1). The rest mainly consisted of citizens of the other neighbouring countries. The proportion of citizens of the Afro-Asian countries in the total number of identified irregular migrants was insignificant, and the crossing of the State border was neither organized nor assisted.

²⁸ A.G. Mughal, H. Cipunseva, H. Abazi, *Migration, Remittances, and the Standards of Living in the Republic of Macedonia. A report based on the 2008 quality of life survey* (South East European University, Tetovo, 2008); Global Development Network (GDN), *Development on the Move: Measuring and Optimising the Economic and Social Impacts of Migration in the Republic of Macedonia*. Country Report (Skopje, 2009).

²⁹ M. Petreski and B. Jovanovic (eds.), *Remittances and Development in the Western Balkans: The cases of Macedonia, Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina* (Scholars' Press, 2013).

Table 1. Identified persons with irregular residence in the Republic of Macedonia, 2009–2011

Nationality	2009	2010	2011
Greece	1	1	1
Albania	236	267	124
Afghanistan	24	7	52
Bulgaria	1	10	4
Serbia	5	5	12
Kosovo/UNSC 1244	2	13	14
State of Palestine	-	10	3
Somalia	-	7	6
Morocco	-	2	11
Pakistan	-	-	17
Other	3	7	15
Total	272	329	259

Source: Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Macedonia.

Consequently, the most affected segments of the State border regarding the irregular crossings were the section of the State border with Albania (when entering the Republic of Macedonia) and the section with Greece (when leaving the Republic of Macedonia). These migrants were moving from west/north-west towards south-east, and the irregular crossings of the State border and the stay in Greece were actually due to economic reasons. When dealing with the issue of irregular migration, the human and the material resources of the Ministry of Interior, mainly of the Border Police, were used. In addition, it should be pointed out that as most of the irregular migrants were from the neighbouring countries (with which a high level of cross-border police cooperation has been developed and there are relevant agreements for mutual acceptance of people with irregular stay), there were no issues in the procedures for identifying and returning to the countries of origin.

The irregular migration trends have significantly changed since 2011, mainly due to the political crises in Africa, the Near East and Middle East in 2010 (above all the so-called Arab spring in part of the countries in Northern Africa, the situation in Afghanistan, Iraq and Syrian Arab Republic). They were reflected through significant changes not only in numbers, but also in the structure of irregular migrants, nationality, gender and age structure, as well as the reasons for migration. Therefore, the proportion of citizens from the Afro-Asian countries' in the total number of identified irregular migrants began to increase continuously compared to those from the neighbouring countries (Table 2). Despite this, the number of detected irregular crossings of women and minors has increased and the reasons for irregular migration have no longer an exclusively economic character.

Table 2. Number of irregular crossings across the border of the Republic of Macedonia, situation in 2013

Nationality (10 countries with the highest proportion)	2013
Albania	400
Afghanistan	134
Syrian Arab Republic	116
Pakistan	73
Macedonia	46
Ivory Coast	36
Mali	36
Somalia	34
Senegal	31
Algeria	27
Other	559
Total	1,492

Source: Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Macedonia.

These characteristics of irregular migrants have led to changes in the directions of their movement, as well as in the manner in which they try to cross the State border. Thus, the south State border in Greece remained as the most vulnerable section of the border, used for entry of migrants in the Republic of Macedonia. Moreover, since 2013, irregular migrants entering from Bulgaria have also been registered. Furthermore, the northern section of the State border with Serbia, when leaving the Republic of Macedonia, is also under a significant migratory pressure. Regarding the manner of crossing the State border, the migrants are increasingly trying to cross the border in an organized manner and in bigger groups, and for this purpose, they use the services of migrant smugglers.

The Republic of Macedonia is characterized as a transit country for irregular migrants from the Afro-Asian countries, whose destinations are the Western European countries, hence the country has become a part of the so-called Western Balkans route in the direction from south to north, where one of the several channels is located (however, this is not the only channel; the other channels are Greece–Bulgaria–Serbia and further along, Greece–Albania–Montenegro/Kosovo/UNSC 1244 and further along, as well as sea routes Greece–Italy, and air routes Greece–other European Union countries).

Smuggling of migrants - In irregular migration, the Republic of Macedonia remains as a transit country for migrants and part of the international route for smuggling of migrants, whose destination are the countries of the European Union. Usually, the migrants' countries of origin are Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Syrian Arab Republic and the North African countries. The irregular migrants enter the Republic of Macedonia from Greece by land, using irregular crossing points, as well as by rail, hiding in freight trains. They cross the Republic of Macedonia by foot or using passenger motor vehicles, organized by criminal groups, as well as using the regular bus lines and trains. The most frequently used locations are the municipalities of Gevgelija, Dojran and a smaller part of Bitola. The municipality of Lipkovo, more precisely the populated areas of Vaksince and Lojane, are being used as an exit point from the Republic of Macedonia to Serbia. In these inhabited areas, in an organized manner, the irregular migrants settle in the homes of the locals and in stables surrounding the villages. Moreover, they are irregularly transferred to the Republic of Serbia by the organized crime groups.

In terms of the manner in which the crime of smuggling is committed, two different periods can be identified:

- The 2009–2011 period, when organized crime groups of Macedonian citizens collaborated with other crime groups from Greece and Serbia to smuggle irregular migrants through the Republic of Macedonia. During this period, the Ministry of Interior detected a high number of smuggling criminal groups, and convicted the perpetrators to serve long prison sentences.
- Since the beginning of 2012, there has been a change in the smugglers' modus operandi. Namely, organized crime groups from Afghanistan and Pakistan, which are based in Turkey and Greece, have been identified as organizers of the smuggling crime from the countries of origin to the countries of destination. As part of the international route for migrants smuggling, they have established a network of members/focal points operating in the different countries. They previously arrived in Macedonia as irregular migrants or asylum-seekers and analysed the situation in the country, establishing contacts with the Macedonian citizens. These people live in Skopje and the Kumanovo region (Vaksince and Lojane). They are recruiting people in the Gevgelija area by accepting the irregular migrants from Greece, transporting them to Vaksince and Lojane, providing accommodation and then transferring them to Serbia.

The smuggling is carried out in groups of 10 to 50 migrants and each group has a leader, who is a member of the crime group and leads the smuggled group from Greece to Macedonia. The price for the transport of the irregular migrants through Macedonia ranges between EUR 1,000 to EUR 1,500 per migrant. The migrants make the payment in each country separately through fast money transfer.

Implemented activities – Given the characteristics of the irregular migration trends and the inability to influence their determinants, the relevant institutions could only plan and implement measures for proper dealing with the consequences. In their analyses, the competent services within the Ministry of Interior have foreseen the developments, mainly owing to the continuous monitoring of the situation in the region and beyond, and to the timely exchange of information within the developed police cooperation in the area of border operations. The risk points of the State border were identified, and relevant measures and activities were planned and undertaken (at the border and inland). Furthermore, the available human and material resources were deployed and used according to the analyses prepared.

The undertaken measures and activities aimed at detecting the irregular border crossings, as well as other activities with a direct or indirect impact on the capacities for dealing with irregular migration (for example: stimulation of legal entry and exit through modernization of the existing and opening of new border crossings, improving the conditions for stay of migrants in the Reception Centre for Aliens, enhancing the inter-agency cooperation in terms of better addressing the health needs of migrants, strengthening the human and technical capacities of the border police and others). In this regard, the border crossings were modernized, some of the police stations for border surveillance were reconstructed and others were connected to the central database. Moreover, there is almost 95 per cent coverage with the Police Digital Radio System TETRA. Also, the developments in the European Union legislation concerning the border operations were closely monitored and continuously implemented, the technical equipment was continuously enhanced and basic and specialized trainings on combating irregular migration were delivered on a regular basis.

The national border security system has been developed with full consideration of the regional approach and the firm determination for implementing the European Union standards in border operations, including harmonization of the national legislation with the *acquis communautaire*, the technical equipping, training, cross-border police cooperation, as well as practical implementation of

the standard operating procedures (SOP) in everyday border operations. This approach is applied when initiating, preparing and implementing measures and mechanisms for direct or indirect dealing with irregular migration as part of the border operations.

The changes in the irregular migrants' structure have brought about certain challenges, which in the past years were not so relevant (including lack of translators to/from Arabic and its dialects spoken by the irregular migrants, lack of applicable readmission agreements with Asian and African countries, increased number of migrants and increased duration of their stay in the Reception Centre for Foreigners, significantly higher costs for their return to the countries of origin, lack of assisted voluntary return programmes and risk to public health). Because other countries in the region are also faced with these challenges, there is cooperation in detecting irregular migrants and further actions related to detained migrants (such as identification, initiating preparations for joint flights for the return of citizens from third countries, improving conditions for accommodation and stay of detained people, exchange of experiences).

In that respect, despite the measures and activities related to the strengthening of intra-agency cooperation at a national level, the following activities in the area of cross-border police cooperation were also undertaken:

- ✓ Regular meetings at a local, regional and central level with the relevant border police services of the neighbouring countries (occasionally with Greece);
- ✓ Regular mixed patrols with the neighbouring border services, such as Albania, Bulgaria, Kosovo/UNSC 1244 and Serbia;
- ✓ Four joint contact centres for police cooperation with relevant border police services of the neighbouring countries were opened (Albania, Bulgaria, Kosovo/UNSC 1244 and Serbia);
- ✓ Regular participation in the joint operational activities organized by Frontex at the territory of the Republic of Macedonia and abroad (since 2011);
- ✓ Regular participation in the joint and coordinated operations supported by the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) at the territory of the Republic of Macedonia and in the region (since 2012);
- ✓ Regular exchange of information on border operations with Frontex;
- ✓ Participation in project activities of IOM on enhancing the capacities and cooperation between countries in the region in terms of combating irregular migration and trafficking in human beings;
- ✓ Regular participation in other operational activities whose organizers are member countries of the European Union and their institutions, which seek to combat irregular migration and cross-border crime;
- ✓ Development and maintenance of bilateral police cooperation with relevant services of the European Union member countries and with countries in the region;
- ✓ Maintenance and further strengthening of the cooperation with Frontex (including basic and specialized training, risk analysis and participation in operational activities);
- ✓ Joint border crossings for local traffic are opened with Serbia (G. Crkoriya–Golesh) and Albania (Djepishte–Trebishte) and the preparations for opening a joint border crossing for international traffic have started with Kosovo/UNSC 1244 (Belanovce–Stanchikj);

- ✓ Exchange of experience, planning and realization of joint exercises and training with relevant border police services of the neighbouring countries (Albania, Bulgaria, Kosovo/UNSC 1244 and Serbia);
- ✓ Participation in the joint initiative of United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and IOM on “Refugee protection and international migration in the Western Balkans”, which seeks to assist the States in the Western Balkans in establishing and putting into operation a protection-sensitive migration and asylum management system that meets the legitimate concerns of States in protecting their borders and territories, reaching their migration management objectives and fulfilling their obligations under international human rights and refugee law;
- ✓ Initiation and participation in projects that seek to provide conditions for exchange of translators and realization of joint flights for return citizens of the third countries, establishing regional mechanisms for exchange of information and messages on early warning;
- ✓ Initiation and participation in projects and initiatives that seek to improve the conditions for accommodating migrants in the Reception Centre for Foreigners;
- ✓ Participation in other projects and initiatives related to further strengthening the national capacities for border security and the border security of the region;
- ✓ Cooperation with DCAF, IOM, UNHCR, Migration, Asylum, Refugees Regional Initiative (MARRI), International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) and other international organizations, forums and NGOs that address the issue of irregular migration.

The aforementioned measures and activities have contributed to the effective management of the new trends in irregular migration, especially since there has been a simultaneous emergence of challenges that were not previously typical for this region, parallel to the existing ones in a relatively short period of time. Some of the above mentioned measures, activities, projects and initiatives are completely carried out and some are going to be implemented in the future.

Challenges: After the 2011 period, the relevant institutions in the Republic of Macedonia were faced with numerous challenges related to the management of irregular migration flows. Their consequences were foreseeable and expected, especially given that a certain period of time was necessary for the mass of irregular migrants moving through Turkey towards Greece and then coming closer to the south border of the Republic of Macedonia. In the meantime, additional challenges arose, such as the outbreak of Ebola in certain countries, or the sudden movement of a larger number of irregular migrants from the inside of Greece towards north, as a result of the deteriorated economic situation in this country and the decreased labor demand. The analysis of the relevant services of the Ministry of Interior show that this trend shall continue in the future, in which the realization will proceed with the current and new national and regional projects that will be initiated to further enhance the capacities for dealing with irregular migration.

The strengthening of the inter-agency, bilateral and regional cooperation between the Republic of Macedonia and the neighbouring countries (as well as with the member countries of the European Union) is of great significance in facilitating the legal flow of people and goods and addressing the irregular flows.

To establish proper communication and understand the needs and characteristics of migrants who come outside the region, enhancing the capacities of providing interpreters of the languages spoken is especially necessary. This is vital for a proper further referral and/or treatment of migrants.

Furthermore, regarding the increased number of undocumented migrants, it would be necessary to improve the cooperation with the countries of origin to determine the identity of migrants and the reasons for migration, as well as the characteristics and needs of these migrants (again, for the purposes of proper treatment). Moreover, strengthening the capacities of all agencies involved in border operations, in terms of appropriate response to the increased migration flows caused by humanitarian crises (human and natural), is important in providing an adequate treatment and protection of vulnerable groups of migrants.

The challenges that arose due to the increased number of irregular migrants outside the region include the need for improvement of the existing accommodation capacities. Adequate identification, despite determining the identity of the migrants, means determining the category to which a migrant falls, such as asylum-seeker, a victim of human trafficking, an unaccompanied minor, an irregular migrant, as well as their appropriate institutional referral. Strengthening the material, technical and human resources for proper dealing with the increased migration flows is of great importance, both in terms of combating smuggling and protecting the migrants (especially women and children). Furthermore, the need for assisted voluntary return programmes is of great significance for those migrants who are not in need of international protection.

2.3. Trafficking in human beings

All research and available data indicate that today, the Republic of Macedonia is both a country of origin and destination for trafficking in human beings and a transit point for irregular migration.³⁰ The government institutions report an increase in the number of undocumented migrants in the country, a group that is most often vulnerable to trafficking in human beings. Among them, particularly notable cases are those of unaccompanied minors, a group that the government institutions and NGOs consider to be exceptionally vulnerable and at high risk of trafficking in human beings. The legislation and policies of the Republic of Macedonia consider child begging and arranged child marriages as matters of concern, but not always as cases of human trafficking.

Internal trafficking in human beings or domestic victims of trafficking in human beings is predominant in the Republic of Macedonia. In the past period, victims from Albania, Bulgaria, Kosovo/UNSC 1244 and Serbia mainly trafficked in the catering facilities (the areas of Tetovo and Gostivar) for sexual and labour exploitation were identified. As a transit country, Macedonia is a route for transport of irregular migrants who travel from North Africa through Greece to the other European Union Member States, and from a large number of Asian countries, mostly Afghanistan and Pakistan. Although not all irregular migrants are victims of trafficking in human beings, many of them are vulnerable due to their economic situation and the social status that puts them at risk of being trafficked.

Sexual exploitation remains the main form of trafficking in human beings, as constantly analysed in various reports, both at the national and international level. Most of the detected cases in the Republic of Macedonia are young women and girls (usually younger and often even minors) trafficked for sexual exploitation. The facilities where the exploitation takes place include hotels, motels and rented houses. Labor exploitation are in different forms, such as child begging and forced labor in the areas of agriculture and construction.

³⁰ Source: Needs Assessment: Human Trafficking in Western Balkans
http://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/ct_needsassessment_western_balkans_eng.pdf

Most of the detected cases come from poor, urban and rural areas with history of family violence and physical, psychological and emotional abuse, parental neglect and extreme poverty. Most of the victims of trafficking in human beings in the Republic of Macedonia have not completed elementary education.

The traffickers are by and large individuals, often people close to the victim's family (often people who know and trust them) or members of small groups. Some cases of trafficking in human beings are well organized, while some are carried out in small groups. Although the traffickers are often part of criminal structures, they are not always part of an organized crime network. There are numerous forms and methods of recruiting people in the trafficking cycles. Recruitment is mainly conducted in person; however, there are also cases of recruitment through advertisements, internet and private employment agencies. Owners of catering facilities are often identified as perpetrators of the trafficking crime, due to the well-established system for recruitment, transport, reception of victims and their exploitation.

The methods that the recruiters use include job promises, promises of marriage (especially among Roma population) and offers to rescue the victims from difficult domestic situations (for example, divorce, domestic violence, broken homes and poor economic conditions). These types of unscrupulous recruitment methods include much lower degree of violence compared to the past, and in some cases, "there is even a contract between the trafficker and the victim". There are also cases related to sex work where the woman agrees to split the income 50/50 with the recruiter (for a certain period of time), but afterwards, when she tries to leave the recruiter, she is not allowed. Moreover, the traffickers have also changed the method of controlling the victims of trafficking in human beings and exploitation. Instead of strictly controlling the victims' movement and physical violence, the traffickers often use threats and blackmails usually directed towards the closest family members. Since bringing a case to court requires that the prosecution should prove coercion in order for a human trafficking case to be confirmed, these non-physical forms of coercion complicate the prosecution of traffickers.

The trends and patterns of trafficking in human beings in Macedonia and the region continue to change in terms of the routes, forms of exploitation and people involved. These changes pose ongoing challenges for the relevant institutions in combating trafficking in human beings and stress the need for an efficient response to the issue of trafficking in human beings, especially understanding the routes, victims, recruitment practices and forms of exploitation.

The strategic goals and measures on combating trafficking in human beings are determined in the national strategies and action plans for combating trafficking in human beings. In 2013, the Republic of Macedonia adopted a National Strategy for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and Illegal Migration 2013–2016, along with an action plan. The document consists of four strategic areas with several strategic goals, as follows:³¹

(a) Framework for support

Strategic goal 1: Coordination structures

Strategic goal 2: Legislative and regulatory framework

Strategic goal 3: International cooperation

Strategic goal 4: Information management, monitoring and evaluation

³¹ *National Strategy for Combating Trafficking in Persons and Illegal Migration in the Republic of Macedonia National Action Plan for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and Illegal Migration in the Republic of Macedonia, 2013–2016 година*, Government of the Republic of Macedonia, National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and Illegal Migration in the Republic of Macedonia.

(b) Prevention

Strategic goal 1: Identifying the reasons for trafficking in human beings/trafficking of children and irregular migration

Strategic goal 2: Strengthening the capacities for implementation of preventive activities

Strategic goal 3: Raising public awareness and education

Strategic goal 4: Reducing vulnerability

(c) Support and protection of victims and migrants

Strategic goal 1: Identification and referral of victims

Strategic goal 2: Direct support and protection of victims and migrants

(d) Pre-trial procedure and criminal procedure for trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants

Strategic goal 1: Pre-trial procedure (proactive and reactive investigations)

Strategic goal 2: Criminal procedure

The National Strategy sets out numerous measures and activities for detecting and prosecuting perpetrators, as well as the need for a comprehensive approach in addressing the status of victims of trafficking in human beings and the irregular migrants.

2.4. Asylum

In the area of asylum, during the 2009–2013 period, significant changes were evidenced in the Republic of Macedonia, manifested with a trend of significant increase in the number of submitted asylum applications. For example, during 2009, a total number of 88 asylum applications were submitted to the Asylum Department; in 2010, the number reached 147, 668 in 2011, 545 in 2012, and in 2013, the number reached 1,323. Hence, regarding the increasing trend of asylum-seekers, the Republic of Macedonia has kept up with global developments, especially related to the conflicts in the Middle East and the African continent, along with the influx of people seeking international protection due to military conflicts and political crises in their countries of origin. The increasing trend in the number of asylum-seekers has also continued in 2014. Namely, as of 31 October 2014, a total of 888 persons have submitted asylum applications. Out of these, only 10 people from Syrian Arab Republic have been granted asylum.

As a result of those changes, the number of people accommodated in the Reception Centre for Asylum-seekers has significantly increased from a constant number of about 90 asylum-seekers in 2008 and 2009, to 1,000–1,300 persons per year as evidenced in the last two years. Since 2010, the Asylum Department within the Ministry of Interior has started collecting data on the countries of origin of asylum-seekers. With this activity, 38 countries of origin of the asylum-seekers were identified, including Afghanistan, Algeria, Eritrea, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Kosovo/UNSC 1244, Pakistan, Palestine, Sri Lanka, Somalia and Syrian Arab Republic.

These significant changes were reported in the European Commission Progress Report for 2013, where it was stated that the number of asylum-seekers in Macedonia has increased compared to the situation in 2012. However, it is important to point out that in 96 per cent of the cases, the procedures, following the submitted asylum applications, were terminated and the asylum applications were withdrawn because the asylum-seekers absconded from the Reception Centre for Asylum-seekers. Hence, it may

be concluded that for most of the asylum-seekers, the Republic of Macedonia was just one more station towards their desired destination – some of the European countries.³²

In 2009, a subsidiary protection status was granted to 929 persons who sought international protection due to the events that took place in Kosovo/UNSC 1244 in 1999. This number has continuously decreased; in 2013, 573 persons were granted extension of their residence on the grounds of granted asylum due to subsidiary protection. These changes are because most of the people who reside in the country based on granted asylum due to subsidiary protection arrived in the country as a result of the crisis in Kosovo/UNSC 1244 in 1999, and they are voluntarily returning to their country of origin. Also, the decrease in the number of persons who resided in Macedonia, based on granted asylum due to subsidiary protection, is a result of a significant portion of them who have regulated their residence in accordance with the Law on Aliens and others who have obtained Macedonian citizenship.

Most of the refugees who reside in Macedonia sought international protection in 1999 as a result of the conflict in Kosovo/UNSC 1244. They are of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian ethnicity, and as of 1 September 2014, their number stands at 24 recognized refugees and 698 people with the status of persons enjoying subsidiary protection. After 15 years of exile, this population is in need of support in finding long-term solutions to their situation. Through the implementation of its policies over that period, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP) has extended support by local integration or voluntary repatriation in their country of origin.

The country's dedication to realizing the fundamental human rights of the refugee population has been portrayed with increased measures and activities for improving the refugee status in the Republic of Macedonia. This has enabled the refugee population to enjoy the same social rights as the citizens of the Republic of Macedonia.

The process of integration of refugees in the Republic of Macedonia has been carried out in line with the Strategy on Integration of Refugees and Foreigners 2008–2015 (since 28 December 2008) and the National Action Plan (since 3 November 2009) – documents that incorporate the envisaged integration measures for the 2008–2015 period. The process of local integration refers to the persons who were granted asylum into the current system of national protection. It includes health-care services and social security, as well as a developmental dimension of integration, which includes projects aiming to support the development of refugees' independence in terms of meeting their needs for housing, employment, education and vocational training. The implementation of the Strategy on Integration of Refugees and Foreigners has been carried out through a special project unit, the "Centre for Integration of Refugees and Foreigners" within the MLSP, which became functional during 2010. The centre was later transformed into a National Centre for Integration of Refugees and Foreigners and Returnees Reintegration.

Since 2010, 199 families or 788 persons have applied for local integration. Consequently, the Centre for Integration has developed 199 plans for integration of families. The formal application process started in October 2010, following the campaign for integration through which all refugees obtained detailed information on their rights and responsibilities. On average, about 90 per cent of the refugee families benefit from the Law on Social Protection. The Law on Health Insurance (adopted in February 2012) provides access to health-care services to all refugees on equal basis as the Macedonian citizens. The Centre for Integration has processed 670 individual applications, and as a result, a total number of 342 main applicants or 588 people obtained complete access to the State health-care system. In 2014,

³² The number of issued identification documents to asylum-seekers varies per year. Thus, in 2009, 48 identification documents were issued, and 50 identification documents in 2010. In 2011 and 2012, the number decreased to 34 and 30 identification documents respectively; however, in 2013, the number increased again as 54 identification documents were issued.

the construction of 20 residential units has been completed and 120 refugees were able to find a permanent solution to the housing issue. The activities in this direction continue with the construction of 100 residential units that will provide a complete solution to the housing predicament of the refugee population. Until such time that the issue of integration of the refugee population is resolved permanently, an annual programme for integration of persons granted asylum in Macedonia has been implemented as of 2012. The necessary funds for the realization of this programme are provided by the budget of the MLSP.

The applied methodology and practical support to the refugees in securing complete access to their rights, which at the same time facilitates their local integration, can be applied as a framework for future activities of the Centre for Integration of Refugees and Foreigners. Conceived as a one-stop shop system where refugees receive information and are also provided support and assistance, the manner in which the Centre for Integration of Refugees and Foreigners functions can also be applied to other groups of beneficiaries, such as the Macedonian citizens-returnees on the basis of the readmission agreement (rejected asylum-seekers), internally displaced persons, and even for the Macedonian citizens from the diaspora who are interested to return and find employment in the country.

In the area of asylum, the key challenges include:

- ✓ **Need for translators** – The increase in the number of asylum-seekers who originate from outside of this region has created a situation where, at the moment, the Western Balkan countries do not have access to translators from the languages spoken by the migrants, such as Pashto, Dari, Urdu and Farsi. Adequate communication with the asylum-seekers is crucial for the institutions in determining the identity of asylum-seekers; it is especially necessary to ensure that the asylum procedure is duly carried out, and that the asylum-seekers understand their rights and responsibilities, and are informed on all procedural details. Access to translators in the languages that the asylum-seekers understand is also important for conducting language analysis. This sort of analysis is performed in cases when there are doubts regarding the asylum-seeker's country of origin. Doubts regarding the nationality of the individual may arise when the asylum-seeker cannot speak the language he/she has stated that it is his/her mother tongue, or when the asylum-seeker has given contradictory statements or other sorts of contradictory proof regarding his/her country/region of origin
- ✓ **Identification** – In addition to determining the identity of a person, proper identification also means determining in which category the person belongs to: asylum-seeker, victim of human trafficking, unaccompanied minor or irregular migrant. Mixed migration flows mean that one person can fall into more than one of these categories; however, the officials who establish the initial contact with migrants should be trained to recognize the elements of all these categories in order to give appropriate assistance and/or referral.
- ✓ **Accommodation capacities and standards** – The increase in the number of asylum-seekers stresses the need and importance of completing the reform process that will lead to better management of the accommodation for the asylum-seekers. A fully operative reception system will not only improve its efficiency, but also ensure respect of human rights of the persons who are accommodated, with special attention to the vulnerable categories, such as unaccompanied minors and minors without families. In this context, there is a need to improve and expand the accommodation capacities by improving the existing and creating new ones (for example, special facilities for the vulnerable categories of migrants or mobile/temporary facilities/solutions) that would complement the existing centres/facilities. This could contribute to significant cost reduction on the transport of migrants from the border area to the reception centres. Inclusion of standards for respecting human rights of migrants, especially vulnerable

groups, primarily unaccompanied minors, women and families in the already developed SOPs for the reception centres, as a supplement to the initiatives focusing on infrastructure, would be of great importance. The respect of human rights during operational procedures, according to international and European Union standards and good practices, would also help with harmonizing to the European Union legislation in the context of the accession process of the European Union.

- ✓ **Financial compensation for the asylum-seekers** – Due to the increase of the number of asylum-seekers at the Reception Centre for Asylum-seekers, as well as considering the different regions from where these people come from and their cultural habits, future amendments of the Law on Social Protection should be considered. This refers to the need for financial compensation to the asylum-seekers who are not accommodated in the Reception Centre for Asylum-seekers, which is in line with the established legal procedures in some of the European Union countries.

3.

MIGRATION POLICY INSTRUMENTS

3.1. Visa regime

On 19 December 2009, the European Union abolished the short-term stay visas (90 days in 180 days, counting from the date of first entry) for Macedonian citizens in the countries that are part of the Schengen Area. The visa liberalization granted by the European Union represents one of the most significant achievements, and one of the more significant systematic accomplishments in the 2009–2013 period in terms of visa regime and policy of the Republic of Macedonia. The successful realization of this endeavor is not just a direct benefit for the citizens of the Republic of Macedonia, but also represents a concrete contribution of the Republic of Macedonia to the realization of the top national priority, which is achieving full integration in the European Union.

Most of the implemented activities in the 2009–2014 period were directed towards further harmonization with the European Union's visa regime as determined with the Council Regulation no. 539/2001. As a result, the alignment with this directive has already been achieved to a significant extent.

Moreover, activities aimed at facilitating the visa liberalization with numerous countries were undertaken to increase the number of foreign tourists, strengthen the economic cooperation with certain countries, as well as attract foreign investment. During the realization of these activities, the practice of other candidate countries in the European Union was followed as a leading example. Along those lines, in the 2009–2013 period, decisions on unilateral abolishment of visas for entry and stay up to 90 days for the citizens of 24 countries were adopted, as well as decisions on unilateral temporary abolishment of visas for temporary stay entered into force for the citizens of five countries. Agreements between the Government of the Republic of Macedonia and three countries from the region (Albania, Montenegro and Serbia) were signed regarding the conditions for travelling of citizens, related to entry and short-term stay with a valid passport and biometric identity card. International treaties and agreements were signed for the abolishment of the visa regime for holders of diplomatic and official passports.

By amending the rulebook on issuing visas to foreigners, extension and reduction of their validity, visa revocation and cancellation, as well as the form for visas and keeping records (which was created on 23 July 2013), a foreigner who is residing or staying in a country in which the Republic of Macedonia does not have accredited diplomatic or consular mission is enabled to submit the visa application to any diplomatic or consular mission of the Republic of Macedonia.

In addition, in 2009, seven border crossing points were equipped with workstation connected directly with the National Visa Information System (N-VIS)³³ and Video Spectral Comparators intended for secondary control for the purpose of discovering forged documents were installed in the six most frequent border crossing points.

Decreasing the number of unfounded asylum-seekers from the Republic of Macedonia in the member countries of the European Union/Schengen – With the entry of the visa liberalization into force, most of the Macedonian citizens began practicing the possibility of travelling freely, without visas, in the

³³ This enabled a direct control over the already issued visas in DCMs abroad, as well as electronic issuance of visas on the border crossings.

Schengen area countries. Most of the citizens are fully familiar with the rights and responsibilities of the visa liberalization and respect them; however, it was concluded that a small portion of the citizens of the Republic of Macedonia had abused these benefits for various reasons, manifested through the emergence of unfounded asylum-seekers from the Republic of Macedonia in the member countries of European Union/Schengen.

In order to suppress this phenomenon, from the very beginning until today, Macedonian authorities have actively been taking relevant measures and activities. A High Committee of Ministers was expressly established to monitor the implementation of the visa liberalization in accordance with European Union guidelines, including continued monitoring of this phenomenon. The committee works under the coordination of the MFA, and its members include the Deputy Prime Minister for implementing the Ohrid Framework Agreement, as well as Deputy Prime Minister for European Affairs, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Minister for Interior and the Minister for Justice. The Minister for the Decade of Roma Community and the Minister for Labour and Social Policy are involved in the work of the committee and annually adopt an action plan regarding the measures for decreasing the number of asylum-seekers from the Republic of Macedonia in the Member Countries of the European Union/Schengen area.

The annual action plans are focused on long-term, socioeconomic measures mainly intended for the vulnerable population groups, such as improving employment prospects, education, projects on housing and infrastructure, health mediators, securing free legal aid, measures for individuals without identification documents, financial support and privileges for the unemployed and families.

In addition to the above, the following measures were also undertaken:

General measures for identifying different regions from where asylum-seekers come, while taking into account the trend and statistics for asylum-seekers from Macedonia to the European Union/Schengen countries, as well as cooperation with the European Union's delegation in the Republic of Macedonia, embassies of European Union/Schengen countries in Skopje, activities of the DCMs of the Republic of Macedonia in the European Union/Schengen area for the purpose of monitoring the situation with the asylum-seekers from the Republic of Macedonia.

Operational measures under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Interior to identify the travel agencies, agencies for transport of passengers and persons potentially involved in the abuse of potential asylum-seekers. In this regard, the border police has been continuously implementing the following measures:

- (a) Enhanced control of Macedonian citizens when leaving the territory of the Republic of Macedonia; and
- (b) Based on a comprehensive analysis, developing a profile of a potential asylum-seeker in the European Union member countries.³⁴

Campaign for raising public awareness, encompassing measures for media coverage on the issue of visa liberalization/asylum-seekers, as well as organizing informative campaigns as part of the project "Stop the Visa Liberalization Abuse". Regarding the preventive measures, representatives from relevant institutions, non-governmental Roma organizations and Roma information centres, in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior, have continued to pursue active efforts towards combating the abuse of the visa liberalization scheme.

³⁴ Data on the potential asylum-seekers from the perspective of the destination country, the border crossing from where the person has been returned, ethnicity, gender and age, vehicle used, place of entry in the Republic of Macedonia and place/municipality of residence.

Challenges: In the next five-year period, the activities of the Republic of Macedonia as a candidate country for membership in the European Union shall be carried out in several directions. These directions include further harmonization with the visa regime of the European Union and further unilateral temporary decisions on abolishing visa regime for short-term stay with certain countries, in order to increase the number of foreign tourists and strengthen the economic cooperation with certain countries, as well as initiate adoption of bilateral agreements on abolishing the visa regime for holders of diplomatic and official passports. The N-VIS shall be continuously enhanced in line with the amendments to the legislation and shall be connected with the Integrated Database of Foreigners including asylum, migration and visas (IBAS).

Furthermore, the newly established DCMs of the Republic of Macedonia will be connected to the N-VIS. Training for the diplomatic-consular staff on the processes and procedures for issuing visas and discovering forged documents will be organized before their assignment in the DCMs

3.2. Support/protection of the citizens of the Republic of Macedonia who live and work abroad

The MFA and its diplomatic and consular network (DCMs) is responsible for the protection of Macedonian citizens who travel abroad, those who temporarily or permanently reside in foreign countries, and citizens of the Republic of Macedonia who are in need of certain consular services. Protecting the interest of citizens shall be ensured in line with the international conventions (Vienna Convention on Diplomatic of 1961 and Consular Relations of 1963) and the national legislation – the Law on Foreign Affairs (Articles 8, 26 and 28).

Macedonian Embassies and Consulates in the area of consular administrative services are authorized to perform the following:

- Notary work;
- Legalization of documents;
- Implementation of part of the procedure for admission into or revocation of the Macedonian citizenship;
- Preparation and verification of power of attorney, statements or other documents;
- Legal counseling;
- Mediation for entry into the registrar of births, deaths and marriages;
- Issue accompaniments;
- Issuance or replacement of passports;
- Issuance of passports in case of loss or theft;
- Activities in the area of family, alimony, custody of minors;
- Protection of persons incapable of work;
- Legal protection;
- Issuance of life certificates,
- Verification of national documents; and
- Other services of administrative nature necessary to regulate certain rights in front of the authorities of the country where Macedonian citizens reside.

The DCMs provide consular assistance in the following special cases: deprivation of liberty, custody or prison sentence; accident or illness. Upon request of a Macedonian citizen, consular representatives undertake the following:

- (a) Contact the family members and inform them;
- (b) Contact the relevant bodies of the foreign country and gather information regarding the details of the indictment to provide proper legal assistance;
- (c) Indicate a possible breach of human rights and humane treatment; and
- (d) Find legal counselor or translator

In case of an accident or illness, the consular protection is directed towards informing close relatives and the relevant institutions to take the necessary measures for hospital treatment, transport or extraction from the affected area.

In addition, the MFA acts upon requests of Macedonian citizens who need certain consular services abroad or those required to legalize public documents that need to be used in foreign countries that are not signatories of the Hague Convention on Legalization.

Challenges: Improving the quality of consular services offered by the MFA and the DCMs of the Republic of Macedonia abroad is one of the significant priorities of the Macedonian foreign policy. In this respect, adequate activities aimed at providing better information to Macedonian citizens on certain consular services shall be undertaken in the following period, as shall activities on shortening the time for the necessary procedure in realizing the consular activities, with special focus on activities associated with the issuance of birth/death/marriage certificates, passports and title deeds. The protection through consular missions notwithstanding, continuous provision of information on the legal migration procedures, protection through interstate agreements on cooperation in the area of labour migration, as well as regulation of private employment agencies abroad is of great importance. Special attention should be given to the protection of vulnerable categories of migrants, low qualified migrants and women.

3.3. Stay and employment for foreigners

In 2009, the temporary and permanent stay of foreigners in the Republic of Macedonia was regulated with a regulation, as well as with coherent and transparent procedures completely harmonized with those of the European Union. In the following years, the activities on the temporary and permanent stay of foreigners in Macedonia were continuously amended and improved, and the procedure for obtaining work permits for self-employed foreigners was facilitated with amendments from the Law on Employing Foreigners.

Significant progress was made to establish and develop a new central database for foreigners. The IBAS includes data on asylum, visas and migration, and represents a modern system that enables the creation of statistics on migrants according to European standards. The database will allow for the efficient search and a thorough look into the history of the movement of a foreigner in the Republic of Macedonia, and shall also save time and resources regarding the communication between institutions.

The project “Integrated Database of Foreigners”, which started in May 2009 and includes data regarding asylum, migration and visas, is in the final phase of implementation. In November 2009, an agreement on the realization of the project was signed with Norway. In the same month, a feasibility study for the project was adopted by the project steering committee. For that purpose, the Government of Norway and the Government of the Republic of Macedonia allocated EUR 700,000 each, altogether amounting to EUR 1,400,000. The project is implemented in two phases: phase one, which connects the Ministry of Interior as the host of the integrated base; and phase two, which connects the Ministry of Interior with the MLSP.

According to the provided implementation programme, in the past period, the activities from the first phase were finalized, such that adequate equipment was installed to achieve complete operationalization of the database, transfer of data from the old base to the new one, and finally training for the end users and administrators. With the adoption of the three regulations,³⁵ the legal framework on the functioning of the IBAS was completed. The realization of the aforementioned activities allowed for the IBAS database to be put into operation at the Ministry of Interior, and it has been foreseen that the database will become fully operational by the end of 2014. By completing this part of the process, the implementation activities of the first phase will be completed that would allow for the commencement of phase two, which is establishing connection with other relevant institutions.

The Ministry of Interior performs most of the activities in this area in cooperation with other ministries and institutions, which is continuously expanding and broadening especially following the adoption of the amendments to the Law on Foreigners.³⁶ Taking this accomplished progress into consideration, the European Union's Fact-Finding Committee, in the Progress Report on the Republic of Macedonia for 2013, concluded that a good legislative and institutional framework was put in place in the area of migration. Moreover, it was noted that due to the amendments to the Law on Foreigners, the procedure for obtaining a permit for temporary stay of foreigners employed in companies in Macedonia has been simplified, which is crucial in the development of the country's foreign investment opportunities.

3.4. Macedonian citizenship

The balance between the principles of international law, the individuals' interests and the national interest in the area of citizenship has been incorporated in the national legislation with the regulations of the Law on Citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia in 1992, and the amendments to the law in 2004, 2008 and 2011.

The Law on Citizenship was adopted in November 1992 during the formal establishment of the Republic of Macedonia as an independent and sovereign State, based on the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia of 1991 and used the established legal system as the basis for the functioning of the new State. This law represented a solid ground for solving the citizenship issues in the context of the succession of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFR Yugoslavia), and in the context of solving a large number of individual citizenship cases.

The current analysis of the situation in this area shows that even though the number of people who obtained Macedonian citizenship in the first few years of the practical application of the law was drastically higher than in the subsequent period,³⁷ the number of people who obtained Macedonian citizenship by naturalization does not fluctuate through the years greatly enough to influence the overall image of the country's migration trends. The analysis on the renunciation of Macedonian citizenship shows that there are no significant deviations in the number of requests for renunciation of citizenship, that is, there are no significant annual variations.

³⁵ Decree on granting access to the data from the Integrated Database for Foreigners, including data on asylum, migration and visas (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, no. 119/12); Decree on the manner of maintenance of the Integrated Database for Foreigners, including data on asylum, migration and visas (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, no. 119/12); Decree on ensuring secrecy, protection and security of the data contained in the Integrated Database for Foreigners, including data on asylum, migration and visas (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, no. 119/12).

³⁶ MLSP, MFA, MES, Employment Service Agency, State Statistical Office, Ministry of Economy, the courts and the penitentiaries.

³⁷ The period when the people who originated from the former SFR Yugoslavia and continued to live in Macedonia after the succession, have regulated their citizenship in the country.

Moreover, there is a consistency in the previous citizenship of the persons requesting Macedonian citizenship. Namely, in the period from 2009 to October 2014 when 6,530 people obtained Macedonian citizenship by naturalization, 46.7 per cent were originating from some of the successor countries of the former SFR Yugoslavia (21.1% from Serbia and 17.3% from Kosovo/UNSC 1244). During this period, a significant part (21.2%) of the total number of applicants originated from Albania and Turkey (7.2%).

It should be noted that during this period, the total number of people who obtained Macedonian citizenship (48.9%) had previously regulated their residence as foreigners, which means that their integration process in this country was completed by obtaining a citizenship. The other 27.4 per cent of people obtained Macedonian citizenship during this period by naturalization, that is, on the grounds of their origin. These people originate from the Republic of Macedonia, or are descendants of people from Macedonia, as well as former citizens who emigrated from the country in order to obtain citizenship of another country.

Regarding the issue of renunciation of citizenship, data show that out of the 6,597 persons who renounced their Macedonian citizenship in the 2009 to October 2014 period, 67.8 per cent are persons who requested renunciation in order to obtain citizenship of Germany, 16.1 per cent of Austria and 6.6 per cent of Slovenia.

Concerning the implemented activities in the area of citizenship, it is important to point to the pilot-project that issues biometric passports through the mobile units of the DCMs of the Republic of Macedonia abroad, which started in 2009. Furthermore, an action plan for receiving applications and issuing passports through the Diplomatic and Consular Representations of the Republic of Macedonia in Melbourne, Canberra, Chicago, New York, Detroit, Toronto, Berlin, Bonn, Munich, Stockholm, Copenhagen, The Hague, Brussels, London, Paris, Venice, Vienna and Ljubljana was adopted. During the 2009 to September 2014 period, a total number of 9,191 passports were issued to the Macedonian citizens who live abroad

Challenges: In the area of citizenship, the challenges for the relevant institutions in the Republic of Macedonia for the next five years can be identified in several areas:

- Consistent treatment of persons without citizenship according to the Convention on the Status of the Stateless Persons of 1954, which has been signed and ratified by the Republic of Macedonia as a successor country. Regarding this challenge, although there is no particular problem related to the stateless persons due to the succession, the issue related to the persons who reside in the Republic of Macedonia and have not yet regulated their citizenship status has not been completely closed.³⁸
- Identifying and solving the issues in the area of citizenship of persons who, even though born in the Republic of Macedonia, do not possess any personal documents for various reasons and are not registered in the registrar's book of births (the so-called *phantom* persons). Because these people do not have documents and identity, they cannot obtain citizenship, and thus they

³⁸ Namely, according to the legal regulations that regulate citizenship valid at the time of former SFR Yugoslavia, there was duality in the citizenship, that is, despite the federal citizenship, each citizen of the former SFR Yugoslavia possessed citizenship of his/her respective constituent republic and vice versa (each citizen of some of the republics possessed federal citizenship). The possession of the constituent republic citizenship was not related to the place of residence of the citizens, which means that the citizen of any of the republics of the former SFR Yugoslavia could have reported his/her residence place, and yet hold an identification card in another republic. After the succession of the country and the adoption of the Law on Citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia in 1992, there is only one citizenship for the citizens of the Republic of Macedonia and the principle of legal continuity in this law made it possible for all citizens of the republic after the independence to be treated as citizens of the Republic of Macedonia without having to prove this fact.

have no access to all the other rights in the country. The Law on Citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia includes several principles, among which of significant importance is the principle on prevention of statelessness, which is a special provision that enables stateless persons to obtain Macedonian citizenship in a simplified manner.

In regard to the aforementioned, and to consistently abide by the convention on the procedures for issuing residence permits and acquiring Macedonian citizenship, an issue that needs to be resolved is determining whether the person in question is a person whom no State has recognized as its citizen, or one who is referred to as a stateless person. In the Republic of Macedonia, this issue is becoming evident because the second and third generation of people born in the Republic of Macedonia who originate from some of the former republics of SFR Yugoslavia have become adults, and in the past period, due to various objective or subjective reasons have not regulated their citizenship status in the Republic of Macedonia, or in the republics from where their ancestors originate. On the other hand, in the past 20 years since the succession, the legislations of all successor countries of the former SFR Yugoslavia were amended, and therefore certain people from the abovementioned category were forced to go through separate procedures to obtain citizenship of those countries, or they could not exercise that right at all.

Although the Republic of Macedonia has thus far been able to successfully treat the status of these people, it is necessary to define the manner and procedures for efficient determination of whether an individual is a stateless person. In terms of proper and efficient management of this issue, it would be necessary to conduct a comparative analysis that would resolve certain issues, including:

- The competent body for leading the statelessness determination procedure;
- The manner in which the procedure is carried out, in terms of which countries should be consulted to determine whether a person is their citizen and whose responsibility it is to prove this fact – the applicant's or ex officio;
- The status of the person while the procedure is under way;
- In terms of the responses of the other countries that the person is not their citizen, it is important to verify whether the procedure is final, or there is a possibility for obtaining a citizenship in some future procedure.

Regarding the second challenge, the Republic of Macedonia in the past period has been performing a great number of activities, and their realization and development shall continue in the following period. So far, several institutions, such as the MLSP, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Justice, Registrar's Office, UNHCR and NGOs, have been actively involved in the action for registering persons who are not registered in the birth registrar (door-to-door project), which started in October 2011. This initiative has targeted persons whose birth date or first name was not included into the registrar of births, or they were not in a position to obtain the documents necessary for their registration.

The representatives of the institutions in the interministerial work groups carry out various projects related to this issue, such as informative meetings in order to raise awareness on the legal possibilities of a proper and complete resolution of this issue. Partner institutions that cooperate with the UNHCR in the Republic of Macedonia, within their competences, were actively involved in the regional project of the European Commission, which started in February 2008 and completed in October 2011. The first phase of the project, "Social Inclusion and Access to Human Rights for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities in the Western Balkans", as well as the second phase of this project, "Social Inclusion: Regional support to the marginalised communities", were successfully completed.

The MFA is also actively involved in the action, and within its limit, works on obtaining documents from other countries that are used as proof for registration procedures, as well as procedures related to name determination and acquiring of citizenship.

4.

RELEVANT LEGAL ASPECTS OF THE MIGRATION POLICY

While drafting the Resolution on the Migration Policy 2009–2014, it was concluded that the Republic of Macedonia has a relatively solid legal framework for regulating the legal and irregular migratory movements, and regarding the relevant instruments of the Migration Policy. Therefore, in the past five years, numerous activities for upgrading the current legislation and its harmonization with the European Union directives have been performed.

Asylum – The amendments to the Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection that were enacted in 2009 (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, no. 142/09) allowed for the alignment of the Macedonian standards to those of the European Union, enabling transition from humanitarian to subsidiary protection (completed during 2010). According to this law, all people who meet the requirements and were previously under humanitarian protection were granted a subsidiary protection and provided with personal documents valid for at least one year.

In 2010, the Law Amending the Law on Administrative Disputes (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, no. 150/2010) stipulated that cases in the area of asylum are under the jurisdiction of the first instance Administrative Court, followed by the second instance Higher Administrative Court, and the Supreme Court of the Republic of Macedonia shall decide upon extraordinary remedies. Moreover, the Law on Health Insurance was adopted (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, no. 50/2010). In 2011, the amendments to the Law on Free Legal Aid were adopted, based on which the legal grounds for providing free legal aid to asylum-seekers were determined.

In 2012, the Law Amending the Law on Health Insurance was adopted, which stipulated that the recognized refugees and persons under subsidiary protection shall be included in the compulsory health insurance. Thus, in terms of exercising the right to health insurance, the persons under international protection were made equal with the Macedonian citizens. The foregoing notwithstanding, the Law Amending the Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection was adopted, which was harmonized with the Directive 9/2003 from 27 January (that sets the minimum standards for accepting the asylum-seekers), the Council Directive 2004/83/EC from 29.4.2004, as well as the Council Directive for minimum standards for procedures of the member countries for granting or withdrawing the refugee status, adopted on 1 December 2005 (2005/85/EC).

The new Law on Child Protection (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, no. 23/2013) was adopted in 2013 to strengthen the rights of people with a recognized refugee status, and of people with recognized right to seek asylum due to subsidiary protection. Apart from this, in order for the Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection to be implemented, the Manual on Procedures for Implementing the Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection of the Republic of Macedonia, and the Methodology for Determining the Safe Third Country Concept were adopted in 2013.

Visa regime – On 1 October 2009, the amendments to the Law on Aliens entered into force that made it possible for foreigners, holders of a valid passport of a third country with a regulated permanent stay in a member country of the European Union, or in a signatory country of the Schengen Agreement, to enter in the Republic of Macedonia. However, on 14 December 2010, the amendment to the Law on Aliens entered into force that allowed the Government of the Republic of Macedonia to grant entry into

the country to citizens of third countries who hold multi-entry visa C valid for all signatory countries of the Schengen Agreement (Government's decision was adopted on 24 March 2011).³⁹

Citizenship – In order to completely harmonize the current legislation with the European Convention on Citizenship⁴⁰ and the international legal standards, the Law on Citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia was amended in 2004. Also, certain changes to this law were made in 2008 and 2011. The changes of the law, Amending the Law on Citizenship of the Republic of Macedonia, mainly refer to the following: (a) defining certain terms (for example, citizenship and immigrant); (b) decreasing the number of years of residence in the Republic of Macedonia as one of the requirements for naturalization, from 15 down to 8 years; (c) further specifying certain conditions from the law; and (d) enhancing the principle of prevention of statelessness, including a special provision regarding succession of the State. The amendments of the law in 2011 referred only to the harmonization of this law with the Law on General Administrative Procedure regarding legal remedies.

Although, the current Law on Citizenship has good legal ground for addressing individual requests of different categories of people on obtaining and renouncing Macedonian citizenship, the country continues to follow the trends and the directions of the European Union legislation in this area in order to harmonize with the provisions in due time.

All the available analyses indicate that the challenges of the Migration Policy 2015–2020 in the above areas are lesser than those in the previous period. Most of the amendments to the current regulation, which need to be addressed in order to fully align with the directives of the European Union, refer to the Law on Aliens. This shall result in the adoption of a new law on aliens.

³⁹ The stay in the Republic of Macedonia after every entry is limited to 15 days at the most, and the total duration of the consecutive stays in Macedonia must not exceed 3 months during every 6-month period, from the day of the first entry.

⁴⁰ The Republic of Macedonia signed the Convention in 1997, and ratified it in 2003.

5. INTERSTATE (BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL) COOPERATION ON MIGRATION

Significant instrument of the Migration Policy are the agreements/treaties on interstate (bilateral and multilateral) cooperation. For this purpose, during the 2009–2014 period, several agreements and treaties were signed, as well as decisions on the enhancement of the cooperation in the area of regular, irregular migration and visa regime.

Legal immigration – In the area of bilateral agreements on seasonal recruitment of labour force, the country has signed and ratified bilateral agreements with Germany, Qatar and Slovenia. The agreement with Germany dates back to 1995, and the quota for seasonal workers is annually determined. For every year, which starts on 1 October of the current year and ends on 30 September of the following year, the Government of Germany determines a quota of workers that can be sent from Macedonia to Germany. For this year, this country has a quota of 570 workers in the area of construction. Unlike the agreement with Germany, the bilateral agreements on seasonal employment of labour force with Slovenia and Qatar are not implemented. Despite this situation, the MLSP submitted initiatives for the signing of bilateral agreements (on employment of seasonal workers from the Republic of Macedonia) to the governments of Azerbaijan, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Italy, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Turkey and Ukraine. As expected, and considering the global recession and the decrease of job opportunities worldwide, none of the above mentioned countries has positively responded to this initiative.

Legal immigration (stay of foreigners) – In terms of social security of foreigners in the Republic of Macedonia, today, there are 19 bilateral agreements⁴¹ on coordination of the social protection systems, out of which 11 are with European Union member countries. At the moment, the country has initiated agreements on social insurance with Denmark, Hungary and Italy. It should be mentioned that until the signature of the new agreements on social insurance, the Republic of Macedonia abides by the agreements taken over from the former SFR Yugoslavia with the former Czechoslovakia, England and Northern Ireland, France, Italy, Norway and Sweden. The MLSP, according to its competences, has initiated negotiations with six additional countries,⁴² however, there has not been an interest in signing such agreements.

⁴¹ Agreement with Croatia, entered into force on 1 November 1997; Convention with Austria, entered into force on 1 April 1998; Agreement with Turkey, entered into force on 1 July 2000; Agreement with Slovenia, entered into force on 1 April 2001; Convention with the Swiss Confederation, entered into force on 1 January 2002; Agreement with the SFR Yugoslavia, entered into force on 1 April 2002; Agreement with Bulgaria, entered into force on 1 August 2003; Agreement with Germany, entered into force on 1 January 2005; Agreement with Bosnia and Herzegovina, entered into force on 1 April 2006; Agreement with the Czech Republic, entered into force on 1 January 2007; Agreement with the Netherlands, entered into force on 1 April 2007; Agreement with Poland, entered into force on 1 July 2007; Agreement with Romania, entered into force on 1 March 2008; Agreement with Luxembourg, entered into force on 1 April 2009; Agreement with Belgium, entered into force on 1 June 2009; Agreement with Australia, entered into force on 1 April 2011; Agreement with Montenegro, entered into force on 1 August 2011; Agreement with Canada, entered into force on 1 November 2011.

⁴² Quebec (conclusion of the Commission of the Government from 27 July 1998); Slovakia (conclusion of the Commission of the Government from 29 August 2000); France (conclusion of the Commission of the Government from 23 April 2002); Sweden (conclusion of the Commission of the Government from 23 April 2003); Russia; and Uzbekistan.

Moreover, in the past period, significant efforts have been made with respect to the signing of bilateral agreements related to the use of the European Health Insurance Card. The benefits from the realization of this policy are related to the utilization of health-care services abroad in cases of professional development, study, business or holidays. So far, the country has signed such bilateral agreements with Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Luxemburg, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia and Turkey.

Irregular migration and readmission – Because irregular migration is a global issue, the Republic of Macedonia pays special attention to the international cooperation in the area of migratory movements and readmission. For that purpose, a broad international cooperation and data exchange in irregular migration have been established. Thus, during the 2009–2014 period, several treaties, bilateral and multilateral agreements concerning irregular migration were signed with the countries in the region and further afield.

The implementation of the Agreement between the European Community and the Republic of Macedonia on the Readmission of Persons Residing without Authorization has been smoothly implemented, and the statistical data indicate that there is an increasing trend in the number of returnees. Most of the Macedonian returnees are from Germany, and their number has gradually increased, as demonstrated with the significant increase in 2013, compared to the statistics in 2009. In addition, the number of returned citizens from other European Union countries, such as Belgium, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland, is relatively high.

From 2009 to October 2014, four agreements on readmission were signed with Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Montenegro and Serbia. During the same period, Protocols on Implementation of the Agreement on Readmission were signed with seven European Union member countries (Austria, Bulgaria, Belgium, Estonia, Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands). There are ongoing negotiations for signing Agreements on Readmission with Kosovo/UNSC 1244, the Russian Federation, Turkey and Ukraine. At the same time, there are ongoing negotiations for signing Protocols for Implementation of the Agreement on Readmission with six European Union countries (France, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania and Slovakia). There is an initiative on the Macedonian side to sign a protocol with Greece; however, the stance regarding this proposition has not been declared yet by Greece.

Visa regime – During the 2009–2014 period, in the area of visa regime, a large number of decisions on unilateral abolition of visas for entry and stay of up to 90 days were adopted, as well as decisions on temporary abolition of short-term stay visas of foreign citizens, agreements on conditions of travel, as well as interstate agreements/treaties on abolishing the visa regime for holders of diplomatic and official passports. These activities were aimed at enhancing the economic cooperation with as many countries as possible.

The Government of the Republic of Macedonia has adopted decisions (on 19 October 2009) on unilateral abolition of visas for entry and stay up to 90 days (during each six months period, from the day of the first entry) for citizens of the countries in Annex 2 of the Council Regulation no. 539/2001, who previously needed visa to enter the Republic of Macedonia. These countries include: Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Brazil, Brunei, Chile, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Hong Kong, China, Macao, China, Mauritius, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Seychelles, Singapore, South Korea and Uruguay. The decisions were applied effective 20 October 2009. On 6 February 2010, in Munich, an agreement between the Government of the Republic of Macedonia

and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine was signed regarding the conditions on the mutual travel of citizens.⁴³

In order to strengthen the business links and increase the number of foreign tourists from the Russian Federation and Ukraine, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia, during the 2009–2014 period, has enacted a decision on unilateral temporary abolition of visas for short-term stay for the citizens of these countries.⁴⁴ In 2013, a unilateral decision for temporary abolition of visas for the above countries for a five-year period was adopted (16 March 2013–15 March 2018). Ukraine has unilaterally abolished temporarily the visa regime on short-term stay (for a period of two years, from 15 March 2013 to 15 March 2015) for Macedonian citizens and it is expected that this measure will be extended for additional three years.

In terms of increasing the number of foreign tourists and strengthening the cooperation between business owners, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia, in 2012, 2013 and 2014 unilaterally and temporarily (for a period of one year) abolished the visas for short-term stay in Macedonia for citizens of Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan.

When Taiwan Province of China was placed in the Annex 2 of the European Council Regulation no. 539/2001, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia, on 27 March 2013, unilaterally abolished for a period of five years (1 April 2013–31 March 2018), the visas for entry and stay of up to 90 days (over a six months' period, from the day of the first entry) for the citizens of Taiwan Province of China, that is, holders of Taiwanese passports. On 2 May 2011, an agreement between the Government of the Republic of Macedonia and the Government of Brazil on visa liberalization was signed. The agreement has not been ratified yet by the Brazilian Congress.

Furthermore, agreements between the Government of the Republic of Macedonia and the governments of three countries in the region⁴⁵ on the conditions of travel were signed⁴⁶ that regulate travelling with a valid biometric ID card.

On 15 May 2012 in Ankara, an agreement between the Government of the Republic of Macedonia and the Government of Turkey on the conditions of travel for the citizens of the both countries was signed, which replaced the old agreement signed during the former SFR Yugoslavia.

Moreover, interstate agreements/treaties for visa liberalization for the holders of diplomatic and official passports were signed between the Government of the Republic of Macedonia and the following: the Government of India (on 20 January 2009 in New Delhi);⁴⁷ the Government of Indonesia (entered into force on 26 August 2012); and the Government of Argentina (on 26 April 2013 in Buenos Aires).

⁴³ The agreement allowed for visa-free entry, exit and short-term stay of the citizens of both countries, holders of diplomatic and official passports, visa-free transit for all citizens in duration of 5 days, entry not longer than 30 days with a travel voucher and a confirmation for receiving a foreign tourist issued by a competent institution of both countries and entry for not longer than 90 days over a period of 180 days with a verified original invitation according to the national legislation of the countries (in case of business contacts, scientific and technical, educational, cultural and sport exchange, journalism, short-term study stay, medical treatment, visiting relatives, friends and acquaintances).

⁴⁴ The Decisions in 2010 and 2011 referred to a short period of time (1 July–15 October 2010 and 1 March–31 October 2011 for the citizens of the Russian Federation, and 15 April–21 October 2011 for the citizens of Ukraine).

⁴⁵ With the Government of Serbia, on 3 October 2011 in Ohrid; with the Council of Ministers of Albania on 14 December 2011 in Tirana; and with the Government of Montenegro on 12 April 2012 in Brussels.

⁴⁶ For entry and short-term stay for up to 90 days in a six months' period, starting from the day of the first entry.

⁴⁷ In August 2012, the Indian side submitted an initiative for amending the agreement, that is the official passports to be eligible for the visa-free regime. The activities for adjustment of the agreement have started.

Macedonia has also submitted initiatives for signing agreements on abolishing the visa regime for a short-term stay with Moldova and the United Arab Emirates (given the fact that these countries were placed at the Annex 2 of the European Council, number 539/2001 in 2014). In addition, there are ongoing initiatives for signing agreements with Vietnam and Qatar on abolishing the visa regime for the holders of diplomatic and official passports.

Taking into consideration the experience from the previously concluded agreements and their implementation, the Republic of Macedonia shall remain dedicated in the upcoming period to these activities, especially to those that imply expanding the economic cooperation, better protection of Macedonian citizens abroad and facilitated entry and stay of foreigners.

6. RESPONSIBLE/INVOLVED INSTITUTIONS FOR THE MIGRATION POLICY

The Migration Policy of the Republic of Macedonia for the 2015–2020 period encompasses all the relevant aspects of external migration, such as legal emigration and immigration, irregular migration, smuggling of migrants, trafficking in human beings, asylum and refugee protection. Moreover, the relevant aspects of the visa regime and the Macedonian citizenship are observed as well. The number of areas encompassed with the Migration Policy and their complexity imply that there is a need for involving more institutions, whose responsibilities and competences should be clearly determined and their activities harmonized and coordinated to the fullest extent. The need for this kind of approach is confirmed by the members of the interministerial group for creating the Migration Policy, which consists of representatives of 12 institutions (MFA, MLSP, MARRI, SSO, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Education and Science (MES), Ministry of Justice – Registrar’s Office, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Health, Secretariat for European Affairs, Emigration Agency) and four international organizations (IOM, ICMPD, UNHCR and United Nations Population Fund). Every member has its competences in its area and joint competences in some of the other areas that are subjects of observation in the Migration Policy.

Concerning the number of relevant institutions responsible for implementing the Migration Policy measures, it may be concluded that the creation and the implementation of the Migration Policy is relatively simplified in those areas where two to three institutions are competent. Therefore, communication between the institutions is more efficient and the results of their activities are more harmonized and of better quality. This conclusion refers to irregular migration, smuggling of migrants, trafficking in human beings, asylum, visa regime and the Macedonian citizenship. The findings on the implementation of the Migration Policy 2009–2014 confirm the aforementioned aspects.

Significantly different is the experience related to the implementation and creation of the Migration Policy in the area of legal emigration and immigration with evident differentiation when it comes to the two types of migration. Namely, compared to the policy on foreigners and their integration, the implementation and creation of the emigration policy is significantly more complex. This is determined by the complexity of the issues of the migratory movements of the Macedonian citizens abroad and, among other things, by their persistent or long-lasting nature, followed by the lack of relevant data and information, and the great number of directly and indirectly involved institutions in this area. The evaluation of the Migration Policy 2009–2014 has shown that part of the envisaged measures and activities in this area were not implemented. Moreover, from the perspective of migration and development, other institutions that are not part of the current interministerial group for creation of the Migration Policy should be also involved. For instance, the measures and activities on “strengthening the infrastructure for inflow of the foreign remittances through the formal channels and creating possibilities for their productive usage” were created in cooperation with the National Bank, and the measures and activities related to “identifying and attracting investors among the Macedonian citizens abroad” were created in consultation with the Ministry of Economy, the Ministry of Local Self-Government (MLS) and the Agency for Foreign Investments.

Taking into consideration the long-lasting emigration abroad, from the perspective of migration and development, it is of key importance to establish and strengthen the cooperation of the institutions at the local level with the emigrants and the returnees. In this regard, an enhanced involvement of Regional Planning Centres and the municipalities would be necessary. The migrants' organizations abroad and the non-governmental sector in the country, that is, their cooperation with the local institutions is equally significant.

In the past decade, international organizations with offices in the Republic of Macedonia, through their various activities, provided significant support through realization of projects and activities in different areas. Their expertise and dedication during the creation of the previous and current Migration Policy of the Republic of Macedonia, carried out in coordination with the relevant institutions, is of great importance. The support of the representatives of the international organizations will be significant during the implementation of the Migration Policy 2015–2020 as well.

Previous experience indicates that a different organization of the competent institutions and those with joint competences regarding the separate aspects and the entirety of the Migration Policy would be needed. Better efficiency would be achieved if, for each of the Migration Policy areas, one coordinator would be appointed to manage the cooperation between the institutions. All coordinators would comprise one body – a secretariat (coordinative group) that would contribute to a more efficient cooperation between the institutions during the realization of the Migration Policy. Moreover, special attention should be paid to the cases when the same activity is carried out by several institutions without mutual coordination, which results in inefficient implementation of the Migration Policy. The issue of providing relevant data from domestic sources, especially on emigration, development of some databases in different institutions and others remains equally important.

The above overview on the responsible and involved institutions in the development and implementation of the Migration Policy inevitably imposes the need for adopting a special document (a strategy or policy) where all the relevant aspects for efficient dealing with the migration processes in the country would be identified.

7. COORDINATION AND INTERACTION OF SECTOR-SPECIFIC POLICIES AND STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS REGARDING MIGRATION

The connection and interaction of the Migration Policy with the sector-specific policies is bi-faceted. The creation of sector-specific policies can have a lesser or greater influence on reducing the negative effects of the high permanent emigration and/or on the return flows, such that their significance in all phases of the migration cycle is unquestionable. At the same time, a consistent Migration Policy, whose measures and activities are harmonized with those of sector-specific policies may contribute to promoting the economic and social development at the national and regional level. Hence, it is very important to pay special attention to the coordination and interaction of sector-specific policies and the Migration Policy, as an important assumption for mitigating the consequences and implications of the intensive permanent emigration, the growing irregular migration, the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings in the Republic of Macedonia.

As to the pre-emigration measures applicable to legal migration, cross-referencing the Migration Policy with the relevant sector policies related to the development of the industry and the agricultural sector, the regional development, the educational policy, research and development, the employment policy and the social policy would have a significant influence on reducing the permanent emigration among the youth, particularly among the highly educated human resources.

Moreover, interrelation and coordination of sector-specific policies is also of significant importance. In terms of decreasing the permanent emigration, the link between the educational policy and the labour market policy is essential. If higher education institutions educate professionals who are not in demand by the labour market, the overall, and in particular the intellectual emigration, will be encouraged. The current situation in the Republic of Macedonia highlights the need for better harmonization between the labour market and higher education programmes to prevent the hyper-production of manpower. Moreover, there is a need for coordination between the educational and the industrial policy that would impact on the reduction of emigration of the engineering personnel that is crucial for the development of the industry.

In addition to the aforementioned observations, it is also important to stress the need for encouraging the cooperation between the business sector and higher education institutions through scholarship programmes, as well as programmes for employment of talented graduates. Furthermore, an extremely important segment of preventive measures for decreasing intellectual emigration is the so called talent management, or establishing programmes for recognizing and fostering talents. These should be accompanied by mechanisms for keeping the talented people in the country after completion of their education.

The dedication to implement the measures and activities of the Migration Policy through cooperation with the Macedonian citizens who reside abroad would contribute to an increased usage of their development potentials. This may have a positive impact on the development of all sectors, reduction of the differences in the regional development, as well as promotion of educational and scientific activities. The forging of cooperation could be viewed through two aspects: (a) focus on the benefits from the individuals and “brain gain” through engagement of the representatives of the intellectual emigration; and (b) focus on the institutional benefits, especially through cooperation of the Macedonian

institutions, with the institutions where the representatives of the intellectual/scientific diaspora of the Republic of Macedonia work.⁴⁸

In order to simplify the initial steps for establishing cooperation, it would be useful to create various networks (scientists, medical staff, engineers and others) that would generate contacts for the stakeholders and may serve as a forum discussion on different issues. Through this network, all activities regarding the post-emigration measures of the policymakers can be carried out, which would be conducive to the consistency of the activities and better engagement of human capital for the needs of the home country.

Regarding the increase of opportunities for circular migration, the interaction of the migration with the foreign policy is crucial by establishing new initiatives of interstate cooperation in the area of labour migration.

The adaptability of the Migration Policy, that is the ability to respond to the challenges caused by natural disasters and other crisis that can lead to mass migratory flows, is of particular importance. In this regard, the interaction of the Migration Policy with the crisis management policies, which are under the competence of the Crisis Management Centre, is of special importance.

In the past seven years, strategic documents and policies were adopted in the Republic of Macedonia in almost every area, which among other things impact the migration processes. Under the pressure of more pronounced problems caused by the great demographic changes and the adverse labour market conditions, several strategic documents were adopted that directly or indirectly addressed the demographic processes including emigration abroad. According to the meaning, the following should be singled out: *The Strategy for Demographic Development of the Republic of Macedonia 2008–2015* (adopted 2008); *The Strategy for Integration of Refugees and Foreigners 2008–2015* (adopted 2009); *The National Strategy for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and Illegal Migration in the Republic of Macedonia, National Action Plan for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and Illegal Migration in the Republic of Macedonia, 2013–2016*; *The Strategy for Border Management of the Republic of Macedonia (2014)*; *The National Strategy for Sustainable Development in the Republic of Macedonia (2010)*; *The Strategy for Regional Development of the Republic of Macedonia 2009–2019* (2009); *The National Employment Strategy of the Republic of Macedonia 2015* (adopted in 2011); and *The Strategy for Gender Equality 2013–2020*. The coordination of the measures/activities of the Migration Policy with these documents may contribute to its efficient realization and mitigation of the current demographic and development issues at a national and regional level.

⁴⁸ For more details, see V. Janeska, *Scientific Diaspora from the Republic of Macedonia* (Ss. Cyril and Methodius University, Institute of Economy, Skopje, 2014).

PART TWO

**MIGRATION POLICY
OF THE REPUBLIC OF
MACEDONIA 2015–2020**

1.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE MIGRATION POLICY

The creation of a comprehensive and consistent approach for the efficient management of migration processes in the area of legal, forced and irregular migration remains the main goal of the Migration Policy of the Republic of Macedonia for 2015–2020.

Considering the changes in the scope, dynamics and types of migratory movements, as well as the complexity of migration in terms of its causal connection with the demographic and socioeconomic development, while creating the Migration Policy, the Republic of Macedonia is dedicated to designing a unique approach in this area and to the commitment for the following:

- Efficient and transparent management of legal migration consistent with the national development, especially demographic development and the economic growth of the country;
- Respect of human rights, in accordance with the national and international legislation and the signed agreements in the area of forced migration; and
- Clear and effective procedures for prevention of irregular border crossings, cross-border crime, trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants.

Efficient implementation of the Migration Policy of the Republic of Macedonia requires the following:

- Utilization of legal migration as part of the overall economic and social development that would contribute to the expansion of the economic initiative and encourage capital inflow, human resources and ideas in the region and further afield;
- Creation of a comprehensive and consistent policy catering for Macedonian citizens abroad, that is, focusing their development potentials to the benefit of the progress of the country;
- Regulation of immigration in line with the development strategy of the country and the labour market needs;
- Integration of foreigners in the Republic of Macedonia and their full social and economic cohesion;
- Efficient integrated border management in the fight against irregular migration, smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings;
- Further improvement of the interstate cooperation in the area of visa policy (visa regime) and strengthening of the policy in the area of citizenship;
- Continuous harmonization of the national legislation and procedures in the area of migration consistent with amendments in the European Union legislation and international standards;
- Continuous expansion and improvement of bilateral and international cooperation with other countries, international organizations, NGOs and other relevant stakeholders in the area of migration;
- Efficient connection and coordination between all relevant institutions and organizations in the country on migration, in a manner that will enable optimal communication and cooperation, including the establishment of joint analyses and monitoring of the current situation; and
- Enhanced coordination of the Migration Policy with the sector policies and other strategic documents in the Republic of Macedonia.

2. STRATEGIC GOALS AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES IN DIFFERENT AREAS OF MIGRATION POLICY

For efficient and coordinated implementation and management of the Migration Policy of the Republic of Macedonia 2015–2020, the realization of several strategic goals and specific objectives is necessary in all relevant aspects of the legal and irregular migration, visa regime, citizenship and other Migration Policy instruments, coordination of relevant institutions and interaction with the sector policies

2.1. Regular migration – Emigration

Strategic goal 1: Reduce the intensity of permanent emigration, especially intellectual emigration, by continuously addressing the reasons for migration

Specific objectives:

- (a) Available migration potential (in total and regarding separate categories of Macedonian citizens) and identification of the reasons for migration
- (b) Prevent permanent emigration of separate categories of Macedonian citizens by improving their integration into the society
- (c) Reduce intensity of emigration among highly educated young persons and talents (brain drain)
- (d) Increase temporary migration and circulation of labour force

Expected results:

- (a) Relevant information on the scope and structural characteristics of the potential migration from the Republic of Macedonia is generated, including the migration intentions of high school students, university students from the faculties for medicine, technical sciences, applied sciences, as well as the current medical and engineering staff in the country; the reasons for migration are perceived; changes in the migration policies of the receiving countries are identified
- (b) Gradual harmonization of the labour force supply and demand in the labour market; increased employment (of people up to 35 years of age) in the regions characterized by high permanent emigration; lowering the intensity of emigration of manpower with medical and engineering background
- (c) Reduced emigration of talented students after their graduation, especially at the regional level through employment growth of talented staff in the real sector, financial and other institutions
- (d) Improved possibilities for temporary employment/temporary/circular migration abroad by establishing an information system on labor markets of the receiving countries on the possibilities for temporary/seasonal employment, as well as better provision of information to the citizens of the Republic of Macedonia regarding the possibilities for temporary emigration abroad for the purposes of education, training and others

Stakeholders and partners: MES, MFA, MLS, MLSP (Employment Service Agency), Ministry of Health, Ministry of Economy, Emigration Agency, Ministry of Finance, State Statistical Office

Financial implications: MES, MLSP, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Finance, State Statistical Office.

Strategic goal 2: Available relevant data for Macedonian citizens abroad and enhanced utilization of their potentials in terms of the country's development by establishing networks of cooperation with the migrants and improving cooperation with the migrants' organizations

Specific objectives:

- (a) Establish relevant statistics from domestic sources about Macedonian citizens leaving the country, for those who reside abroad, for the circular migration and returnees
- (b) Available data on Macedonian citizens who live abroad – total number and according to separate categories (scientists and experts, businesspersons, medical staff and others)
- (c) Improve infrastructure for inflow of foreign remittances through formal channels and create opportunities for their productive use
- (d) Increase investments by Macedonian citizens abroad (the diaspora)
- (e) Transfer of human capital (through “return of talents”, “circulation of talents” and “virtual return”)
- (f) Promote diaspora tourism
- (g) Improve the protection of the rights and interests of Macedonian citizens abroad
- (h) Enhance support for family members of the migrants in the country

Expected results:

- (a) Generated data from domestic sources on all aspects of emigration of the Macedonian citizens abroad by establishing functional registrar of population, introducing completely automated civil registry and consistent application of the legal obligation of Macedonian citizens to report their travel abroad or return
- (b) Established and continuously updated databases of separate categories of migrants (scientists and experts from different fields, businesspersons, medical staff, care brain, artists and others); established electronic databases in the DCMs for separate categories of Macedonian citizens
- (c) Decreased transaction costs for transfer of foreign remittances and established complementary financial services and products of commercial banks as an important precondition for increased inflow of remittances through the formal channels and their productive use; more productive usage of migrants' foreign remittances and increased investments at a local level financed through migrants' bonds
- (d) Increased number of investors from the diaspora through their continuous provision of information on the opportunities, procedures and benefits from investing at regional/local level in the real sector and through public–private partnership (PPP), including the introduction of a new credit line; established logistical and advisory support to the diaspora when they investigate the investment opportunities in the country; established cooperation between the local entrepreneurs/businesspersons and their partners in the diaspora, especially with well-known

- businesspersons; improved capacities of investors from diaspora (including, through trainings) for realization of business ventures; realized projects in different areas (education, health care, culture and sport; utility and road infrastructure, urban equipment; productive communal projects)
- (e) Established programmes in different areas by using the knowledge and competences of experts and scientists from the diaspora; realized programmes on strengthening the capacities of local authorities and stimulation of the local development through increased transfer of knowledge from highly educated migrants in different areas; established curricula, organization of academic events, realization of research projects and programmes for mobility in cooperation with diaspora scientists; increased competitiveness of the Macedonian economy through cooperation with experts abroad in the area of technical sciences; improved health care in the country through cooperation with experts from abroad in the area of medicine
 - (f) Increased number of tourist stays of Macedonian citizens abroad and increased usage of tourism capacities based on medical and business tourism, stays during cultural events and religious holidays
 - (g) Enhanced measures of protection of the rights of Macedonian citizens abroad, among other things, by issuing title deeds, registrar's certificates and passports to the citizens abroad in the DCMs of the Republic of Macedonia; established mechanisms for protection of migrants' rights, with a special emphasis on the vulnerable categories of migrants
 - (h) Established cooperation with the family members of migrants by informing them and increasing their financial knowledge, as well as by creating favorable conditions for institutional care and greater availability of services to elderly people whose children live abroad

Stakeholders and partners: MES, MFA, MLS, MLSP (Employment Service Agency), Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Finance, National Bank of the Republic of Macedonia, State Statistical Office, Emigration Agency, Regional Planning Centres

Financial implications: MES, MLSP, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Finance, National Bank of the Republic of Macedonia

Strategic goal 3: Encouraging return migration flows and reintegration of returnees, in terms of improved usage of their development potentials

Specific objectives:

- (a) Available findings on the scope and characteristics of the returnees and their reintegration
- (b) Available findings on the characteristics of the returnees who re-emigrated abroad and the reasons for re-emigration
- (c) Establish cooperation with Macedonian citizens abroad, especially with highly educated persons, and creating possibilities for their return
- (d) Create favorable conditions for investments by returnees and establish different forms of cooperation for transfer of their knowledge and entrepreneurial skills

Expected results:

- (a) Generated relevant data on the number and the structural characteristics of the returnees and their economic and social reintegration
- (b) Identified characteristics of re-emigration and the basic determinants for leaving the country again
- (c) Enhanced higher education and scientific activities in the country with the support of the scientific diaspora; enhanced development of different sectors of the Macedonian economy, including the health-care sector, through brain gain
- (d) Enhanced usage of the development potentials of returnees from the investments perspective through transfer of knowledge and entrepreneurial experiences, support of their economic activity and increase in the number of realized investment projects and continuous information on the procedures and the benefits provided for starting a business

Stakeholders and partners: MES, MFA, MLS, MLSP, Ministry of Interior, Employment Service Agency, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Finance, State Statistical Office, Emigration Agency, Regional Planning Centres

Financial implications: MFA, MLSP, Ministry of Interior, State Statistical Office, Ministry of Finance, Emigration Agency

2.2. Regular migration – Immigration

Strategic goal 1: Harmonize the national legislation with the European Union legislation and strengthen institutional capacities in the area of stay of foreigners

Specific objectives:

- (a) Harmonize the national legislation with the European Union legislation in the area of stay of foreigners
- (b) Enhance the institutional capacities in the area of stay of foreigners

Expected results:

- (a) Harmonized Law on Aliens of the Republic of Macedonia with the European Union regulations in the area of stay of foreigners; introduced new basis for issuing residence permit to foreigners and acceleration of the procedure for obtaining residence and work permit; implementation of the standards and procedures for returning citizens of third countries with unregulated stay
- (b) Complete functionality of the IBAS; enhanced efficiency and implementation of the legislation in the area of stay of foreigners

Stakeholders and partners: MFA, Ministry of Interior, MLSP (Employment Service Agency)

Financial implications: MLSP, Ministry of Interior

Strategic goal 2: Facilitate access of foreigners with regulated stay to their rights and solve the status of persons who originate from the former Yugoslav republics**Specific objectives:**

- (a) Establish an information office regarding the manner and procedures for exercising the rights for integration of foreigners in the Republic of Macedonia guaranteed by law
- (b) Stimulate dialogue between the immigrants and the domicile population to overcome the problems of xenophobia and discrimination
- (c) Adopt a legal decision for solving the status of people who originate from the former Yugoslav republics
- (d) Enhance social security of foreigners who stay in the Republic of Macedonia

Expected results:

- (a) Legal pre-conditions for establishing an information office and facilitated access of foreigners with regulated stay in the Republic of Macedonia to the rights guaranteed by law
- (b) Enhanced integration and decreased xenophobia and discrimination against foreigners who reside in the Republic of Macedonia
- (c) Solution to the status and complete integration of people who originate from the former Yugoslav republics
- (d) Established new interstate agreements on social insurance

Stakeholders and partners: Ministry of Interior, MLSP/Employment Service Agency

Financial implications: MLSP, Ministry of Interior

2.3. Irregular migration and smuggling of migrants**Strategic goal 1: Enhance efficiency of the relevant institutions in the detection and prevention of irregular migration****Specific objectives:**

- (a) Enhance inter-agency and bilateral cooperation to continuously monitor the situation of irregular migration
- (b) Promote and further operationalize the regional and international cooperation to efficiently address the irregular migration
- (c) Harmonize national legislation with the European Union legislation in the area of border operations, continuously keeping track of novelties in the European Union legislation and their transposition in the national legislation
- (d) Improve the material-technical and human capacities of the border police

Expected results:

- (a) Established inter-agency and bilateral cooperation to continuously monitor irregular migration in the region and further afield; further strengthening of inter-agency cooperation in combating irregular migration
- (b) More efficient tackling of irregular migration through continued and enhanced cooperation with Frontex, better coordinated regional approach and mutual cooperation and high level of bilateral cross-border police cooperation with relevant services of the neighbouring countries
- (c) Harmonized national legislation with the European Union legislation and the best practices in the area of border operations
- (d) Enhanced capacities of the border police and improved system for integrated border management

Stakeholders and partners: MFA, Ministry of Interior and other relevant institutions with competences in the area of integrated border management

Financial implications: Ministry of Interior

Strategic goal 2: Respect the rights and protect the vulnerable categories of migrants while dealing with them

Specific objectives:

- (a) Respect the rights and protection of migrants, especially vulnerable categories in terms of harmonization with the international standards
- (b) Enhance mechanisms for readmission and return of irregular migrants

Expected results:

- (a) Improved standards for reception and treatment of irregular migrants by improving the mechanisms for identification of specifics and needs, referral, accommodation and protection
- (b) Improved mechanisms for readmission and return of irregular migrants in the country of entry and country of origin

Stakeholders and partners: MFA, Ministry of Interior

Financial implications: Ministry of Interior

2.4. Asylum

Strategic goal 1. Harmonize national legislation and issuance of identification documents in the area of asylum in accordance with the amendments of the European Union legislation

Specific objectives:

- (a) Harmonize the national legislation and procedures for issuing documents in the area of asylum with the European Union legislation
- (b) Introduce the right to financial compensation for asylum-seekers

Expected results:

- (a) Defined minimum standards for provision of temporary protection in cases of influx of displaced persons, third-country nationals or stateless persons, including cases of family reunification; issuance of personal documents to persons under international protection in the Republic of Macedonia
- (b) Amendments to the Law on Social Protection and granted financial compensation for asylum-seekers who are not going to be accommodated in the Reception Centre for Asylum-seekers.

Stakeholders and partners: MLSP, Ministry of Interior

Financial implications: MLSP, Ministry of Interior

Strategic goal 2: Continuous strengthening of the capacities of the MLSP and Ministry of Interior in the area of asylum

Specific objective:

Enhance conditions in the reception facility for asylum-seekers

Expected result:

Functional reception centre with an adequate capacity and solid technical equipment; established SOPs for reception of new asylum-seekers, as well as introducing new and improved services that would be offered in the reception centre

Stakeholders and partners: MLSP, Ministry of Interior

Financial implications: MLSP, Ministry of Interior

2.5. Visa regime

Strategic goal 1: Harmonize visa regime and visa policy with the European Union *acquis communautaire*

Specific objectives:

- (a) Further harmonize the laws of the Republic of Macedonia in the area of visa regime and visa policy with the European Union regulation
- (b) Amend the rulebook on visas according to the amendments of the Law on Foreigners and prepare other relevant documents

Expected results:

- (a) Completely harmonized national legislation with the current European Council Regulations in the area of visa regime (abolished/introduced visas for short-term stay in the European Union for third countries; issuing visas at border crossings; adopted procedures for cancellation and revocation of visa validity; introduced unified form – letter of invitation/guarantee for obtaining visa; concluded agreements with external service providers and commercial intermediaries for visa application; taking biometric data when application for visa is filed; introduced right to appeal for the rejected visa applicants)
- (b) Introduced form for issuing visa in foreign passport/documents that are not recognized by the Republic of Macedonia

Stakeholders and partners: MFA, Ministry of Interior

Financial implications: MFA, Ministry of Interior

Strategic goal 2: Strengthen the institutional capacities in the area of visa regime and improving the N-VIS

Specific objectives:

- (a) Upgrade and maintain equipment for N-VIS
- (b) Strengthen the staff capacities at border crossings of the Republic of Macedonia, as well as in the DCMs
- (c) Connect the newly opened DCMs abroad to N-VIS

Expected results:

- (a) Completed technical equipping and maintenance of the new equipment in the Visa Centre, the DCMs of the Republic of Macedonia abroad and the other users of N-VIS
- (b) Improved knowledge, competences and skills of the employees at border crossings, diplomatic and consular missions of the Republic of Macedonia, Visa Centre and other users of N-VIS
- (c) Complete connection of N-VIS to the newly established DCMs of the Republic of Macedonia abroad

Stakeholders and partners: MFA, Ministry of Interior

Financial implications: MFA, Ministry of Interior

2.6. Citizenship

Strategic goal 1: Further harmonize and improve the policies in the area of citizenship

Specific objectives:

- (a) Follow and harmonize with the European Union legislation in the area of citizenship
- (b) Improve conditions in the area of statelessness
- (c) Create conditions for facilitated access to documents from the Republic of Macedonia to the citizens who live abroad

Expected results:

- (a) Harmonized national legislation with the amendments of the European Union legislation
- (b) Decreased number of people who are at risk of statelessness
- (c) Issued passports and certificates from the Registrar's books to the Macedonian citizens who live abroad through the DCMs

Stakeholders and partners: MFA, Ministry of Interior, Registrar's Office

Financial implications: MFA, Registrar's Office

2.7. Coordination and interaction of sector-specific policies and strategic documents regarding migration

Strategic goal 1: Relevant sector-specific policies and strategic documents contribute to the achievement of the goals of the Migration Policy and vice versa

Specific objective:

Coordinate between the migration and other sector-specific policies and strategies

Expected results:

Harmonized instruments and measures of the sector-specific policies and strategic documents with the Migration Policy goals and objectives

Stakeholders and partners: Interministerial Body for Migration Policy

Financial implications:

3.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE PROGRESS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION THE MIGRATION POLICY MEASURES AND ACTIVITIES

To successfully implement the Migration Policy of the Republic of Macedonia and the Action Plan for 2015–2020, the implementation of the determined measures and activities shall be regularly monitored. The ministries responsible for the realization of certain measures and activities of the Migration Policy shall submit reports to the Interministerial Group for Creation of the Migration Policy every six months (more often if necessary). Monitoring shall be carried out to determine the progress in realizing the adopted measures and activities, identify the reasons for slower pace of implementation, if such occurs, maximize the efficiency and rationally use the resources. Progress in the realization of the Migration Policy measures and activities shall be measured through the indicators set out in the document.

Evaluation of the Migration Policy of the Republic of Macedonia and the Action Plan for 2015–2020 shall be performed annually (or every second year). In parallel with the internal evaluation, an external evaluation will be also conducted if there are conditions in place. Based on the recommendations of the evaluators, the document may be revised to improve the relevance, efficiency and sustainability of measures and activities towards the set strategic goals and specific objectives of the Migration Policy.

To ensure full implementation of the Migration Policy in the next five years, the Republic of Macedonia would need to set aside significant funds. Relatively large proportion of funds for the realization of the Migration Policy would be provided through the budget for regular activities of the ministries on certain aspects of migration, as well as through funds for implementing measures determined in the separate sector-specific policies. This only confirms the significance of coordination of the Migration Policy with other sector-specific policies. This notwithstanding, the document stipulates a higher number of projects/research activities to be carried out. Some of those can be carried out with the support of the offices of the international organizations in the country. The amount of necessary financial allocation from the budget of the Republic of Macedonia for realizing the Migration Policy shall be determined more precisely with the annual operation plans.

Conclusion

Fully respecting the changes in the scope and characteristics of the legal and irregular migratory movements in the past five years, as well as the significance of the Migration Policy instruments, while identifying the directions, strategic and specific objectives of the Migration Policy 2015–2020, the Republic of Macedonia remains dedicated to the commitment of creating a comprehensive and consistent policy and to efficiently deal with the migration processes. In parallel, the national, societal, economic and cultural development is also prioritized.

The Migration Policy is based on the principles of the following: (a) respect of the international standards, protection of human rights and freedom; (b) design of a comprehensive evidence-based policy developed in close cooperation with the relevant partners; (c) addressing the socioeconomic needs of the migrants, that is integration of the new migrants, reintegration of the returnees and

provision of access to both health and social services for all migrants; (d) policy dedicated to using the advantages of the legal migratory movements to expand the free economic initiative and free flow of capital; (e) policy that will enable foreigners to reside in the country temporarily or permanently and integrate in the Macedonian society or seek asylum; (f) adaptable policy that can address the challenges in times of crisis and mitigate risks regarding the movement of migrants.

In the next five years, the Republic of Macedonia shall promote a modern Migration Policy by regulating the legal and irregular migration trends according to the development strategy of the country, in such manner that:

- It shall seek to reduce the intensity of permanent emigration of young people and highly educated manpower from the country;
- It shall encourage the return of emigrants, as well as Macedonian citizens residing abroad, and facilitate the settlement of their family members;
- It shall create conditions for improved usage of development potential of Macedonian citizens abroad by establishing networks for cooperation with the migrants and strengthening the connections with migrants' organizations;
- It shall harmonize immigration with the conditions in the labour market and the necessary inflow of certain profile of labour force, through annual quotas for employment of foreigners;
- It shall consistently abide by the Geneva Convention regarding the refugees' status, as well as the European Union measures in the area of asylum;
- It shall efficiently fight against irregular migration and smuggling of migrants, primarily by further improvement of the integrated border management system; and
- It shall continuously strengthen institutional capacities and human resources of the relevant institutions in the area of migration.

The Republic of Macedonia shall continue to harmonize the national legislation and procedures in the area of migration with the amendments of the European Union legislation and international standards; therefore, it shall pay special attention to regulating the integration of foreigners in the Macedonian society and preventing xenophobia, discrimination and marginalization. In this regard, it shall, in particular, commit itself to designing and carrying out programmes for encouraging the dialogue between immigrants and the domestic population.

In terms of successful implementation of the Migration Policy, the need for further strengthening the institutional capacity still remains. In this regard, employment of new people and continuous improvement of the competences of the current human resources capabilities, and/or further material and technical equipping shall be necessary in some institutions. Considering the complexity of the Migration Policy in facilitating a successful implementation of planned activities, it is necessary to establish coordination of the mutual cooperation among the relevant bodies and institutions, as well as further specification of the competences of the established bodies and working groups in the areas of migration and integration of foreigners. In accordance with the decentralization process, it would be necessary to determine separate activities at the regional/local level, especially while implementing the measures and activities regarding the establishment of cooperation and utilization of development capacities of the Macedonian citizens abroad, as well as those regarding the immigration and integration of foreigners in the local communities.

The Migration Policy of the Republic of Macedonia and the Action Plan for 2015–2020 is a document where implementation shall be continuously monitored, along with regular assessment of the effects of the measures and activities that have been undertaken. Given the nature of this issue, for the purpose of its consistent implementation, it shall remain as an open document for possible amendments of the stipulated measures and activities.

PART THREE

**ACTION PLAN FOR
THE MIGRATION POLICY OF
THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA,
2015–2020**

**ACTION PLAN FOR THE MIGRATION POLICY
OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA, 2015–2020**

Expected results	Measures/Activities	Indicators for the expected results	Institutions-in-charge/ Organizations	Time frame (quarter/year)	Budget
Legal Migration – Emigration					
<p>Strategic goal 1. Reduce the intensity of permanent emigration, especially intellectual emigration, by continuously addressing the reasons for migration</p> <p>Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Number of Macedonian citizens who emigrated permanently, by years » Number of highly educated individuals who permanently emigrated from the country, by years <p><i>Source of data:</i> Available data from domestic and foreign sources</p>					
<p>Specific objective 1.a Available migration potential (in total and regarding separate categories of Macedonian citizens) and identification of the reasons for migration</p> <p>Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Scope and structure of the migration potential » Information on the causes of the expressed migration intentions » Information on the changes in the migration policies of destination countries <p><i>Sources:</i> Workforce survey; Researches; Analysis of migration policies of individual countries</p>					
Available relevant information on the extent and structural features of the existing and potential migrants, as well as the reasons for going abroad	Introducing an emigration module within the labour force survey that would enable an analysis of the number of Macedonian citizens abroad, analysis of the migration potential and the reasons for emigration (on an annual basis)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Number and structure of existing and potential migrants » Main reasons for emigration <p><i>Source:</i> Labour Force Survey</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » State Statistical Office » Labour Force Survey 	2018	Government of Republic of Macedonia
Observed scope and the causes for the expressed migration intentions by secondary school and university students in the fields of technical, natural and medical sciences	Research on migration intentions and the reasons for emigration of certain categories of Macedonian citizens – high school and college students (at the universities in the fields of technical, medical and natural sciences)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Number and profile of respondents with expressed migration intentions » Reasons for the expressed migration intentions 	MES in collaboration with schools and universities	2016; 2018; 2020	From the MES budget
Observed scope and reasons of the expressed migration intentions in certain professions (such as medical staff, engineering staff)	Research on migration intentions and reasons for emigration of certain highly educated categories (such as medical personnel, engineering personnel)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Number and profile of respondents with expressed migration intentions » Reasons for the expressed migration intentions <p><i>Source:</i> Conducted research</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » MES » Ministry of Health » Faculty of Medicine, Skopje » Faculty of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering » Employment Service Agency 	2015; 2017; 2019	From the Ministry of Health's budget
Identified changes in the migration policies of the destination countries that may lead to a conditional increase of emigration or the returning flows	Analysis of the changes in the migration policies of the destination countries	Availability of information on the changes in migration policies of individual destination countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » MFA » Emigration Agency 	Continuous	No implications

<p>Specific objective 1.b Prevent permanent emigration of separate categories of Macedonian citizens by improving their integration into the society</p> <p><i>Indicator:</i> Number of persons from different categories that permanently left the Republic of Macedonia, per years</p> <p><i>Sources:</i> MES; MLSP; Ministry of Health; Ministry of Economy; Employment Service Agency</p>				
Adjusted generation of skills in line with the labour market needs	Continuous analysis of the affinities of the youth availability of professional orientation and directing to the deficient professions of the labour market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Number of persons up to 15 years of age (professional orientation testing should be conducted in the ninth grade of primary education) covered with the testing for vocational orientation » Number of women (under 15 years of age) covered with professional orientation testing » Number of women (up to 15 years of age) covered with professional orientation testing » Number young people (up to 29 years of age) employed in the deficient profiles of the labour market » Number of employed women (up to 29 years of age) employed in the deficient profiles of the labour market <p><i>Sources:</i> MES; MLSP; Employment Service Agency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » MES » MLSP » Employment Service Agency 	MES, MLSP, Employment Service Agency
Increased employment of persons (up to 35 years of age) in regions characterized with high permanent emigration	Availability of programmes to stimulate employment of persons (up to 35 years of age) in regions characterized with high permanent emigration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Number of employed people (up to 35 years of age) in the regions characterized with high permanent emigration » Number of employed women (up to 35 years of age) » Number of newly introduced programmes for employment in these regions <p><i>Sources:</i> MLSP; Employment Service Agency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » MLS » MLSP » Employment Service Agency 	MLSP, Employment Service Agency
Reduced intensity of emigration of medical personnel	Developed measures for addressing the reasons for the increased emigration of the medical personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Number of newly introduced measures for addressing the reasons for the increased emigration of medical personnel » Perception of the medical personnel on the adequacy of the measures to address the reasons for emigration <p><i>Sources:</i> Ministry of Health; Employment Service Agency; Surveys</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » MLSP » Ministry of Health » Medical Faculty » Employment Service Agency 	Ministry of Health
Reduced intensity of emigration of engineering personnel	Developed measures for addressing the reasons for the increased emigration of engineering personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Number of newly introduced measures for addressing the reasons for the increased emigration of engineering personnel » Perception of the engineering personnel on the adequacy of the measures to address the reasons for emigration <p><i>Sources:</i> MLSP; Ministry of Economy; Employment Service Agency; Surveys</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » MES » MLSP » Ministry of Economy » Employment Service Agency 	Ministry of Economy

Specific objective 1.c Reduce intensity of emigration among highly educated young professionals and talents, also characterized as brain drain. Indicator: Number of highly educated persons who have permanently emigrated, by years Sources: MES; Ministry of Finance; Employment Service Agency; Companies, financial institutions and others					
Support and employment of talented personnel in the real sector, financial and other institutions	Promotion of best practices of corporate social responsibility, financial and other institutions in the process of awarding scholarships and employment of talents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Number of persons granted with scholarships; » Number of employed highly educated/talented personnel » Number of women granted scholarship » Number of employed highly educated/talented women Sources: Companies, financial institutions and others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » MES » Ministry of Economy » Universities 	Continuous	No implications
Support and employment of talented personnel in the private sector	Support and subsidy for creation/revival of the research centres in the companies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Number of employees in the research centres » Number of female employees in the research centres Source: Companies	Ministry of Economy	Continuous	Ministry of Economy
Specific objective 1.d Increase temporary migration and circulation of labour force Indicator: Number of Macedonian citizens temporarily staying abroad for employment, education, training and other grounds, per years Sources: MLSP; MES; Employment Service Agency					
Developed information systems for the labour markets of the receiving countries in terms of opportunities for temporary/seasonal employment	Continuous identification of opportunities for temporary emigration and circulation of labour force	Number of identified and implemented opportunities for temporary emigration and circulation of labour force Sources: MLSP; Employment Service Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » MLSP » Employment Service Agency 	Continuous	MLSP
Macedonian citizens are better informed on the opportunities for temporary emigration for the purpose of education, training, and temporary/seasonal employment abroad	Opening of Migrant Service Centres in all or most of the Employment Centres of the Employment Service Agency for the purpose of informing the potential migrants on migration opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Number of established Migrant Service Centres » Number of persons informed about the opportunities for temporary emigration/seasonal employment abroad » Number of potential female migrants informed on the opportunities for temporary emigration/seasonal employment abroad Sources: Employment Service Agency; Migrant Service Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » MLSP » Employment Service Agency 	Continuous	MLSP
Improved opportunities for temporary employment/temporary/ circular migration abroad	Concluding cooperation agreements and establishing other forms of cooperation for temporary employment abroad/circulation of the labour force	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Number of concluded agreements on temporary employment abroad/circulation of labour force » Number of implemented initiatives for temporary employment abroad/circulation of labour force » Number of women involved in circular migration programmes Source: MLSP	MLSP	Continuous	No implications
Improved opportunities for temporary employment/circular migration abroad	Continuous advancement of the standards in secondary and university education, as well as international recognition of professional education and qualifications of the Macedonian citizens	Number of internationally recognized educational curriculums Source: MES	MES	As of 2017 (with the implementation of the National Qualifications Framework)	No implications

Legal migration – Emigration		
<p>Strategic goal 2. Available relevant data on the Macedonian citizens abroad and enhanced utilization of their potentials in terms of the country's development by establishing networks of cooperation with the migrants and improving the cooperation with the migrants' organizations.</p> <p><i>Indicators:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Number and structure of Macedonia citizens abroad » Number and structure of returnees » Number and type of implemented initiatives for cooperation and support of the diaspora » Number and type of implemented activities for utilization of the development potential of the diaspora <p><i>Sources:</i> MFA; MIES; MLSP; Ministry of Interior; Ministry of Health; Ministry of Finance; Employment Service Agency; Emigration Agency; Institution in charge of the population registry; Office for the Management of Registers of Births, Marriages and Deaths (OMRBMD); Central Bank of Macedonia; Commercial banks; Centres for development of the planning regions; Agency for Foreign Investments; Macedonian Bank for Development Promotion; Universities</p>	<p>Government of Republic of Macedonia</p> <p>2017</p> <p>No implications</p>	
<p>Specific objective 2.a Establish relevant statistics from domestic sources about Macedonian citizens leaving the country, for those residing abroad, for the circular migration and returnees</p> <p><i>Indicators:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Number and structure of the Macedonian citizens abroad » Number and structure of returnees » Number of newborns, deceased and marriages abroad <p><i>Sources:</i> OMRBMD; Ministry of Interior; Institution in charge of the population registry</p>	<p>Government of Republic of Macedonia</p> <p>2018</p> <p>No implications</p>	
<p>Established functional population registry</p>	<p>Established inter-institutional working group <i>Source:</i> Government of Republic of Macedonia</p>	<p>Government of Republic of Macedonia</p> <p>2017</p> <p>No implications</p>
	<p>Drafted and approved project/plan by the Government <i>Source:</i> Macedonian Government</p>	<p>Inter-institutional working group and the Government</p> <p>2018</p> <p>No implications</p>
	<p>Adopted laws and regulations (published in the Official Gazette) <i>Sources:</i> Official Gazette; Institution in charge of the population registry</p>	<p>Institution in charge for the population registry</p> <p>2018</p> <p>No implications</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Level of technical equipping of the institution » Number of employed/trained personnel <p><i>Source:</i> Institution in charge of the population registry</p>	<p>Institution in charge of the population registry</p> <p>2018</p> <p>Budget and donations</p>
	<p>Data on the number and structure of Macedonian citizens abroad <i>Source:</i> Institution in charge of the population registry</p>	<p>Institution in charge of the population register</p> <p>2019</p> <p>No implications</p>

	<p>Complete the process of establishing electronic registry (register of births, deaths and marriages) and generation of data from the electronic registry for the entire country</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Creation of modules for communication and collaboration among the employees (e-Forum), module for management of the financial aspects and module for connecting the Consulates » Completion of the procurement for implementation of the decision for introduction of a fully automated registry of Macedonian citizens 	<p>Connecting 52 regions Source: OMRBMD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Created modules » Completed procurement <p>Source: Authority for keeping personal identification registers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » OMRBMD » Ministry of Justice 	<p>December 2014</p>	<p>No implications</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Creation of modules for communication and collaboration among the employees (e-Forum), module for management of the financial aspects and module for connecting the Consulates » Completion of the procurement for implementation of the decision for introduction of a fully automated registry of Macedonian citizens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Created modules » Completed procurement <p>Source: Authority for keeping personal identification registers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » OMRBMD » Ministry of Justice 	<p>May 2015</p>	<p>OMRBMD</p>
	<p>Connecting the electronic registry with health institutions and funeral organizations, as well as filling in data from health institutions and funeral organizations</p>	<p>Regular inflow of data from the health institutions and funeral organizations Source: OMRBMD</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » OMRBMD » Ministry of Justice » Ministry of Health » Funeral organizations 	<p>January 2015</p>	<p>No implications</p>
	<p>Electronic data exchange between the OMRBMD and Health Insurance Fund – implementation of the memorandum for electronic data exchange (signed on 18 September 2013)</p>	<p>Regular data exchange Source: OMRBMD</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » OMRBMD » Ministry of Justice » Health Insurance Fund 		<p>No implications</p>
<p>Introduced fully automated registry of Macedonian citizens</p>	<p>Adoption of a regulation on the content and method of maintaining the registers in an electronic format that determines the content and procedures for operation with registers in electronic form</p>	<p>Adopted regulation Source: Authority for keeping personal identification registers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » OMRBMD » Ministry of Justice 	<p>January 2015</p>	<p>No implications</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Connecting the electronic register with the Diplomatic and Consular Representations » Establishment of a working group and initiating a procedure for connecting the registry with the Diplomatic and Consular Representations 	<p>Established working group Sources: MFA; OMRBMD</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » MFA » OMRBMD » Ministry of Justice 	<p>December 2014</p>	<p>No implications</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Connecting the electronic personal identification registry with the Diplomatic and Consular Representations » Amendment of the law on personal identification for the establishment of a legal framework in connecting the electronic personal identification registry with Diplomatic and Consular Representations 	<p>Adopted amendments of the Law on personal identification (published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia) Source: OMRBMD</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » MFA » OMRBMD » Ministry of Justice 	<p>August 2015</p>	<p>No implications</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Connecting the electronic personal identification registry with the Diplomatic and Consular Representations » Adoption of by-laws and development of a legal framework to regulate the manner of communication and electronic data exchange between the OMRBMD and the Diplomatic and Consular Representations 	<p>Adopted by-laws (published in the Official Gazette of RM) Sources: MFA; OMRBMD</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » MFA » OMRBMD » Ministry of Justice 	<p>October 2015</p>	<p>No implications</p>

<p>Consistent application by Macedonian citizens to report their departure/return from abroad</p>	<p>Continuous distribution of information materials and informing the citizens on the legal obligation to report the departure/return from abroad</p> <p>Capacity-building of the institutions responsible for the consistent application of the legal obligation – purchase of additional technical equipment for the competent institutions</p> <p>Capacity-building of the institutions responsible for the consistent application of the legal obligation – training of personnel at the border crossings, police stations, administrative offices and Diplomatic and Consular Representations</p> <p>Transfer of data from the Diplomatic and Consular Representations to the Ministry of Interior on the reported residence abroad for a longer period than three months</p>	<p>Number of Macedonian citizens who reported their departure/return from Macedonia <i>Source:</i> Ministry of Interior</p> <p>Purchased scanners, computers and others <i>Source:</i> Ministry of Interior</p> <p>Number of trained staff <i>Source:</i> Ministry of Interior</p> <p>Obtained data on the number of Macedonian citizens with long-term residence abroad <i>Source:</i> Ministry of Interior</p>	<p>» MFA » Ministry of Interior</p> <p>» MFA » Ministry of Interior</p> <p>» MFA » Ministry of Interior</p> <p>» MFA » Diplomatic and Consular Representation » Sector for consular affairs</p>	<p>Continuous</p> <p>Continuous</p> <p>Continuous</p> <p>Continuous</p>	<p>Ministry of Interior</p> <p>Ministry of Interior</p> <p>Ministry of Interior</p> <p>No implications</p>
<p>Specific objective 2.b. Available data on Macedonian citizens who live abroad – total number and according to separate categories (scientists and experts, businesspersons, medical staff and others)</p> <p><i>Indicators:</i></p> <p>» Number and structure of the Macedonian citizens abroad</p> <p>» Number and structural characteristics of scientists, medical personnel, businesspersons, artists abroad</p> <p><i>Sources:</i> MFA; Emigration Agency</p>					
<p>Configured and updated database on the number and characteristics of the Macedonian citizens in the destination countries</p>	<p>Creation and continuous update of the database that will collect and systematize all the available data on the Macedonian citizens in the destination countries (from domestic and foreign sources)</p>	<p>Data on the number and structural characteristics of the Macedonian citizens in the specific countries of destination <i>Sources:</i> MFA; Emigration Agency</p>	<p>» MFA » Emigration Agency » Diplomatic and Consular Representations</p>	<p>Continuous</p>	<p>MFA budget</p>
<p>Established and updated database on the scientists abroad who originate from Macedonia</p>	<p>Creation and continuous update of an electronic database on the scientists abroad who originate from Macedonia</p>	<p>Data on the number and structural characteristics of the scientists abroad who originate from Macedonia <i>Sources:</i> MFA; Emigration Agency</p>	<p>» MFA » Emigration Agency » Universities</p>	<p>Continuous</p>	<p>No implications</p>
<p>Established and updated database for prominent businesspersons abroad who originate from Macedonia</p>	<p>Creation and continuous update of an electronic database for prominent businesspersons abroad who originate from Macedonia</p>	<p>Data on the number and the profile of the prominent businesspersons abroad who originate from Macedonia <i>Sources:</i> MFA; Emigration Agency</p>	<p>» MFA » Emigration Agency</p>	<p>Continuous</p>	<p>No implications</p>
<p>Established and updated database for medical staff (care brain) abroad originating from Macedonia</p>	<p>Creation and continuous update of an electronic database for medical staff (care brain) abroad originating from Macedonia</p>	<p>Data on the number and structural characteristics of the medical staff abroad originating from Macedonia <i>Sources:</i> MFA; Emigration Agency</p>	<p>» MFA » Emigration Agency » Ss. Cyril and Methodius University » Medical Faculty</p>	<p>Continuous</p>	<p>No implications</p>
<p>Established electronic databases in the Diplomatic and Consular Representations for certain categories of Macedonian citizens</p>	<p>Instructing the Diplomatic-Consular Representations to create electronic databases for different categories of Macedonian citizens abroad (scientists, businesspersons, medical staff)</p>	<p>Instructions distributed <i>Source:</i> MFA</p>	<p>» MFA » Diplomatic-Consular Representations » Sector for diaspora</p>	<p>Continuous</p>	<p>No implications</p>

Specific objective 2.c Improve infrastructure for inflow of remittances through the formal channels and create opportunities for their productive use					
Indicators:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Inflow and structure of remittances » Data/information on the use of remittances 					
Sources: Central Bank; Commercial banks; Ministry of Finance					
Inform citizens abroad about transaction costs	Analysis of the possibilities for establishing a ranking (score card) and/or collection and publication of comparative data on the fees of the banks and fast money transfer of remittances from abroad	Available analysis	Central Bank	2015	No implications
Established alternative system for cross-border payments that will contribute to the reduction of transaction costs for payments in euros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Adjustment/upgrade of the Macedonian Interbank Payment System MIPS with opportunities for cross-border payments in euros » Reduction of transaction costs for sending of remittances through alternative channels » Amendment of the legislative framework for payment operations with foreign countries » Creation of a legal framework for the establishment of an alternative system for cross-border payments 	Updated payment system (MIPS) Source: Central Bank	Central Bank	2015	Central Bank
Increased transfer of remittances through official channels	Promotion of official channels for transfer of remittances and implementation of measures to attract migrants' remittances	Adopted amendments of the regulations on payment operations to be published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia Source: Central Bank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Ministry of Finance » Central Bank 	2015	No implications
Identified opportunities to increase the inflow of remittances through official banking channels	Analysis of the opportunities for further liberalization of the foreign exchange regime to support the mobilization of remittances through the official banking channels. (This measure is related to the inflows of the individuals temporarily residing abroad, on the basis of a visa for stay or employment contract, with accounts in foreign banks.)	Distributed promotional material on the official channels for the transfer of remittances Source: Central Bank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » MFA » Emigration Agency » Central Bank » Commercial banks 	Continuous	No implications
Identified sources and reasons for the transfer of remittances by the migrants	Survey analysis of private transfers	Number of identified and implemented opportunities for increase in the inflow of remittances Source: Central Bank	Central Bank	Continuous	No implications
Increased financial literacy of migrants	Creation of informative brochures on the Macedonian financial system	Completed surveys Source: Surveys of the Central Bank	Central Bank	Continuous	Central Bank
Promotion of the productive usage of remittances	Provision of complementary financial services and development of other products of the commercial banks (loans for opening businesses, buying real estate and others)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Number of printed brochures » Number of migrants provided with brochures Sources: MFA; Central Bank, Emigration Agency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Number of new financial services and products of the commercial banks » Number of migrants (and number of migrant women) who use the financial services and products Source: Commercial banks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Number of new credit products of the commercial banks » Number of migrants (and number of migrant women) who use the financial services and products Source: Commercial banks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » MFA » Ministry of Finance » Central Bank » Emigration Agency Commercial banks Commercial banks Commercial banks	Continuous	Ministry of Finance No implications No implications
	Introduction of lending products where remittances would be used as security for a mortgage		Commercial banks	Continuous	No implications

Increased investments that are financed through migrants' bonds	Secure the process of future flows of remittances as an alternative method for establishing local funding of public investments (through the issuance of bonds)	Number of financed projects by issuing bonds <i>Source:</i> Ministry of Finance	Ministry of Finance	Continuous	No implications
<p>Specific objective 2.d Increase investments by Macedonian citizens abroad (the diaspora)</p> <p><i>Indicators:</i> Number and type of investments made by citizens of the Republic of Macedonia abroad by year</p> <p><i>Sources:</i> Centers for Regional Planning; Agency for Foreign Investments; Macedonian Bank for Development; Commercial banks; Employment Service Agency</p>	<p>Establishment and maintenance of a portal for investment opportunities in the real sector at a regional/municipal level</p>	<p>» Established portal</p> <p>» Lists of possible investments in certain sectors at regional level</p> <p><i>Source:</i> Centers for Regional Planning</p>	<p>» MLS</p> <p>» Centers for Regional Planning, in collaboration with Foreign Investment Agency, MFA and Emigration Agency</p>	<p>Continuous</p>	<p>» MLS</p> <p>» Centers for Regional Planning</p>
<p>Inform diaspora on the investment opportunities in the real sector through PPPs, as well as the procedures and benefits of business establishment</p>	<p>Establishment and maintenance of a portal for investment opportunities through PPPs at the level of regions/municipalities</p>	<p>» Established portal</p> <p>» Lists of possible investments through PPP at regional level</p> <p><i>Source:</i> Centers for Regional Planning</p>	<p>» MLS</p> <p>» Centers for Regional Planning, in collaboration with: Agency for Foreign Investments, MFA and Emigration Agency</p>	<p>Continuous</p>	<p>» MLS</p> <p>» Centers for Regional Planning</p>
<p>Inform the diaspora about the investment opportunities in the areas of their origin</p>	<p>Creation of a website (electronic "one-stop" system) for informing the entrepreneurs from the diaspora</p>	<p>» Available website</p> <p>» Number of implemented investments by the diaspora</p> <p><i>Source:</i> Agency for Foreign Investments</p>	<p>» MFA</p> <p>» Agency for Foreign Investments</p> <p>» Emigration Agency</p>	<p>Continuous</p>	<p>Agency for Foreign Investments</p>
<p>Established cooperation of local entrepreneurs/businesspersons with their counterparts in the diaspora</p>	<p>» Establishment of a network of organizations in the diaspora by the regional origin</p> <p>» Organization of events for businesspersons from the diaspora at regional/local level</p>	<p>Number of organized events</p> <p><i>Source:</i> Emigration Agency</p>	<p>» Foreign Investment Agency</p> <p>» Centers for Regional Planning, in collaboration with MFA and Emigration Agency</p>	<p>Continuous</p>	<p>» MFA</p> <p>» Emigration Agency</p>
<p>Established cooperation with famous businesspersons to support the development of the country of origin</p>	<p>» Establishment of a network of diaspora organizations according to the region of origin</p> <p>» Establishment of links of local entrepreneurs, businesspersons and government officials with their partners in the diaspora</p>	<p>Number of implemented cooperation agreements</p> <p><i>Source:</i> Centers for Regional Planning</p>	<p>» Foreign Investment Agency</p> <p>» Centers for Regional Planning, in collaboration with MFA and Emigration Agency</p>	<p>Continuous</p>	<p>» MFA</p> <p>» Emigration Agency</p>

Established new credit programme of the Macedonian Bank for Development – Fund for the Diaspora	Amendment of the legislation providing legal basis for the establishment of a new credit programme for returnees from abroad – Fund for the Diaspora	Amendments to the Law on Customs Tariff (Published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia) <i>Source:</i> Macedonian Bank for Development	Macedonian Bank for Development	Second Quarter 2015	Macedonian Bank for Development
Encourage investments by the returnees from abroad by securing additional funding.	» Establishment of a new credit programme » Provision of additional funding to encourage investments by the returnees from abroad	» Number of loans granted from the Fund for the Diaspora » Number of beneficiaries of the new credit programme » Number of women beneficiaries of the new credit programme <i>Source:</i> Macedonian Bank for Development	Macedonian Bank for Development	Fourth Quarter 2015	Macedonian Bank for Development
Ensure access to specialized business trainings for migrants	Introduction of a special credit lines for citizens abroad Development and delivery of business training	Number of loans granted <i>Sources:</i> Central Bank, commercial banks » Number of implemented training events » Total number of migrants who participated in the specialized training » Number of female migrants who participated in the specialized training <i>Source:</i> Employment Service Agency	Commercial banks	2016	» MES » Employment Service Agency
Strengthened capacities of investors from the diaspora to realize business ventures	Support of training programmes by NGOs and international organizations	Number of completed training events <i>Source:</i> Employment Service Agency	Commercial banks	Continuous	» MES (through the Center for Education of Adults) » Employment Service Agency
Implemented projects in the areas of education, health and sports; utility infrastructure; road infrastructure; urban equipment; productive municipal projects; culture and others	» Guidance of private funds from the diaspora to finance businesses or construction of public infrastructure » Create programmes by the principle 3x1 (with domestic investors participating with three and migrants with one part in financing of programmes)	Number of completed projects <i>Source:</i> Centers for Regional Planning	Commercial banks	Continuous	Centers for Regional Planning
Established logistical and advisory support to the diaspora in exploring the investment opportunities in the country and facilitating the communication with the Macedonian institutions	Establishment of a department for the diaspora – within the sector for services to investors in the Agency for Foreign Investments	Number of established contacts with the Agency for Foreign Investments and completed projects <i>Source:</i> Agency for Foreign Investments	Commercial banks	Continuous	Agency for Foreign Investments

<p>Specific objective 2.e Transfer of human capital (through “return of talents”, “circulation of talents” and “virtual return”)</p> <p>Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Number of completed projects, programmes » Number of experts and scientists, highly educated personnel in the area of technical and medical sciences from abroad who are involved in the programmes » Number of realized virtual and/or short-term returns of intellectual and expert diaspora <p>Sources: MES; MLSP; Ministry of Economy; Centers for Regional Planning; Universities</p>					
<p>Established programmes in different areas by using the knowledge and skills of experts and scientists from the diaspora</p>	<p>Creation of programmes through voluntary support of experts and scientists from the diaspora in different areas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Number of implemented programmes » Number of volunteers who participated in the programmes <p><i>Source:</i> Centers for Regional Planning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Government » Universities » Centers for Regional Planning 	Continuous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Government » Universities » Centers for Regional Planning
	<p>Creation of programmes by engaging (with material and non-material support) of experts and scientists from the diaspora in different areas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Number of implemented programs » Number of experts and scientists who engaged in the programmes <p><i>Source:</i> Centers for Regional Planning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Government » Universities » Centers for Regional Planning 	Continuous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Government » Universities » Centers for Regional Planning
	<p>Implementation of programmes for “return” of experts and scientist from the diaspora in partnership with international organizations and other actors (temporary return, virtual return – transfer of knowledge through expatriate nationals)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Number of implemented programmes » Number of engaged experts and scientists » Participation of women scientists and experts in these programmes <p><i>Source:</i> Centers for Regional Planning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Government » Universities » Centers for Regional Planning 	Continuous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Government » Universities » Centers for Regional Planning
	<p>» Engagement of the diaspora representatives as partners</p> <p>» Creation of a joint programme of the representatives of the diaspora and local institutions (in different areas)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Number of implemented programmes » Number of engaged representatives of the diaspora <p><i>Source:</i> Centers for Regional Planning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Government » Universities » Centers for Regional Planning 	Continuous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Government » Universities » Centers for Regional Planning
<p>Introduction of educational curriculum, organization of academic events, implementation of research projects, mobility programmes in collaboration with scientists from the diaspora</p>	<p>» Engagement of the diaspora representatives as partners</p> <p>» Linkage between local communities abroad with municipalities of origin through twinning programmes (arrangements)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Number of twinning programmes implemented at local level » Number of engaged representatives of the diaspora <p><i>Source:</i> Centers for Regional Planning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Universities » Centers for Regional Planning 	Continuous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Universities » Centers for Regional Planning
	<p>» Establishment of a network of highly educated staff abroad as a platform for “brain gain”</p> <p>» Continuous upgrade of the network of scientific diaspora and collaboration with the local higher educational institutions</p>	<p>Number of implemented programmes, projects, academic events</p> <p><i>Sources:</i> MES; Universities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » MES » Government » Universities 	Continuous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » MES » Government » Universities
<p>Increased competitiveness of the Macedonian economy through cooperation with foreign experts in technical sciences</p>	<p>» Establishment of a network of highly educated staff abroad as a platform for “brain gain”</p> <p>» Creation of a network of highly educated staff abroad in technical sciences and support for cooperation with local institutions/enterprises</p>	<p>Number of completed programmes, projects</p> <p><i>Source:</i> MES</p>	Government	Continuous	Government

Advancement of the health-care activities in the country through cooperation with foreign experts in medical sciences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Establishment of a network of highly educated staff abroad, as a platform for "brain gain" » Creation of a network of highly educated medical personnel abroad and support of the cooperation with health institutions 	Number of completed programmes, projects Source: Ministry of Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Government » Ministry of Health 	Continuous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Ministry of Health
Strengthen cooperation with the Macedonian diaspora	Establishment of a body responsible to assess the needs of the Macedonian institutions and companies and to identify the needed experts from the diaspora who are interested in transferring their knowledge	Number of implemented short-term returns of the intellectual and expert diaspora Source: MES; MLSP; Ministry of Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » MES » MLSP » Government » Ministry of Economy 	2017, continuous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » MES » MLSP » Government
Specific objective 2.f Promote diaspora tourism					
<i>Indicators:</i> Number of implemented visits for usage of health services, business cooperation, cultural events, religious holidays <i>Sources:</i> Ministry of Economy; Ministry of Health; Ministry for Local Self-government					
Increased usage of the local health-care services by its citizens abroad	Promotion of medical tourism for the citizens staying abroad	Number of implemented visits for usage of health services Source: Ministry of Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Ministry of Health » Agency for support and promotion of tourism 	Continuous	Ministry of Health
Increased usage of the Macedonian tourist capacities by its citizens abroad	Promotion of business tourism for the citizens staying abroad	Number of implemented tourist visits for business purposes Source: Agency for support and promotion of tourism	Agency for support and promotion of tourism	Continuous	Agency for support and promotion of tourism
Increased visits by the diaspora for the cultural events and during the religious holidays	Promotion of tourism associated with cultural events, holidays and others for the citizens staying abroad	Number of implemented visits related to the cultural events, religious holidays Source: Ministry for Local Self-government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Ministry for Local Self-government » Agency for support and promotion of tourism 	Continuous	Ministry for Local Self-government
Specific objective 2.g Improve the protection of the rights and interests of Macedonian citizens abroad					
<i>Indicators:</i> » Number and type of mechanisms for improving the protection of the rights and interests of citizens of the Republic of Macedonia abroad » Number of citizens of the Republic of Macedonia abroad included in the activities related to the protection of the rights and interests <i>Sources:</i> MFA; MLSP; Employment Service Agency					
Initiated issuance of property documents by the diplomatic and consular offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Introduction of new consular services » Implementation of a pilot project for issuance of property documents by the DCMs of the Republic of Macedonia in Belgrade, Vienna, Detroit and Toronto 	Number of property documents issued by the DCOs of Macedonia in Belgrade, Vienna, Detroit and Toronto Source: MFA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » MFA » Agency for Real Estate Cadastre 	First Quarter 2015	MFA
Issuance of certificates from the personal identification registers by the diplomatic and consular offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Introduction of new consular services » Implementation of a pilot project for issuance of certificates from the personal identification registers by the Macedonian Embassy in Belgrade 	Number of issued certificates from the personal identification registers by the Macedonian Embassy in Belgrade Source: MFA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » MFA » OMRMBD » Ministry of Justice 	First Quarter 2015	MFA
Installed so-called base stations in the transatlantic and certain European countries for issuance of passports to Macedonian citizens abroad	Procurement and installation of so-called base stations for issuance of passports to citizens of Macedonia abroad by the DCMs in the transatlantic and certain European countries	Number of issued passports to citizens of the Republic of Macedonia in the transatlantic and certain European countries Source: Ministry of Interior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » MFA » Ministry of Interior 	Fourth Quarter 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » MFA » Ministry of Interior

Existence of mechanisms for protection of the rights of migrants, with special emphasis on vulnerable migrants (seasonal workers, unskilled workers and migrant women)	Establishment of advisory services to potential migrants/ migrants in relation to the protection of their rights through the Migrant Service Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Number of potential migrants/ migrants participating in advisory services » Participation of women migrants/ potential migrants in advisory services <i>Source:</i> Employment Service Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » MLSP » Employment Service Agency 	Continuous	MLSP
Continuous monitoring of the work of the recruitment agencies for employment abroad	Regulation of conditions for employment of migrants in the bilateral agreements for temporary/seasonal employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Number of agencies included in the monitoring mechanism » Total number of agencies <i>Source:</i> MLSP	MLSP	Continuous	MLSP
Signing of inter-agency agreements that will ensure protection of the rights of workers referred to temporary and seasonal work abroad	Bilateral agreements contain provisions for contractual conditions under which migrants are recruited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Number of people for which the Employment Service Agency has mediated for employment abroad » Number of signed inter-agency agreements <i>Sources:</i> MLSP; Employment Service Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » MFA » MLSP » Employment Service Agency 	2016 Continuous	No implications
Specific objective 2.h Enhance support for family members of the migrants in the country					
<i>Indicators:</i>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Number of printed brochures » Number of opened homes for the elderly » Number of assisted people whose children are out of the country » Number of implemented programmes » Number of elderly people whose children are out of the country and who are beneficiaries of such programmes 					
<i>Sources:</i> MLSP; Ministry of Finance; Central Bank					
Increased financial literacy of family members	Development of informative brochures about the possibilities for safe receipt of remittances by the family members of migrants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Number of printed brochures » Number of family members provided with brochures <i>Sources:</i> Ministry of Finance, Central Bank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Ministry of Finance » Central Bank » Ministry for Local Self-government 	Continuous	Ministry of Finance
Created favorable conditions for institutional care of elderly people whose children are out of the country	Support of private initiatives for institutional care for elderly people whose children are out of the country	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Number of opened homes for the elderly » Number of assisted people whose children are out of the country <i>Source:</i> MLSP	MLSP	Continuous	No implications
Increased availability of services for the elderly whose children are out of the country	Design programmes for development of services for families of elderly people whose children are out of the country	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Number of implemented programmes » Number of elderly people whose children are out of the country and who are beneficiaries of such programmes <i>Source:</i> MLSP	MLSP	Continuous	MLSP

Legal migration – Emigration					
Strategic goal 3. Encourage return migration flows and reintegration of returnees, in terms of improved usage of their development potentials					
<i>Indicators:</i>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Number of realized projects/programmes for returnees from abroad and their reintegration » Number of implemented programmes for engagement of scientists, engineering staff, medical personnel from abroad » Number of realized programmes for transfer of knowledge and entrepreneurial skills of returnees 					
<i>Sources:</i> MES; Agency for Emigration; Universities and research institutes; Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Health; Agency for Foreign Investment; Centers for Regional Planning					
Specific objective 3.a Available findings on the scope and characteristics of the returnees and their reintegration					
<i>Indicators:</i> Number of implemented projects for returnees and programmes for their reintegration					
<i>Source:</i> Emigration Agency					
Generated relevant data on the number and structural features of returnees	Implementation of projects for understanding the characteristics of returnees from abroad	Number of implemented projects <i>Source:</i> Emigration Agency	» Ministry for Local Self-government » Emigration Agency	Continuous	Emigration Agency
Enhanced socioeconomic reintegration of returnees from abroad	Creation of programmes for reintegration of returnees from abroad	» Number of implemented programmes » Number of successfully reintegrated returnees <i>Source:</i> Emigration Agency	» Ministry for Local Self-government » Emigration Agency	Continuous	Emigration Agency
Specific objective 3.b Available findings on the characteristics of the returnees who re-emigrated abroad and the reasons for re-emigration					
<i>Indicators:</i> Number of implemented projects for the returnees who re-emigrated abroad and the reasons for the re-emigration					
<i>Source:</i> Emigration Agency					
Obtained relevant information about the re-emigration specifics	Implementation of projects aimed at obtaining information on the scope and structural features of returnees who re-emigrated abroad at the regional level	» Number of implemented projects » Data on the scope and structural features of the re-emigration <i>Source:</i> Emigration Agency	» Ministry for Local Self-government » Emigration Agency	Continuous	Emigration Agency
Identified causes for the re-emigration and creation of conditions for its reduction	Implementation of projects aimed at identifying the reasons for re-emigration and creating policy to address these	» Number of introduced projects » Number of introduced measures to address the re-emigration <i>Source:</i> Emigration Agency	» Ministry for Local Self-government » Emigration Agency	Continuous	Emigration Agency
Specific objective 3.c Establish cooperation with Macedonian citizens abroad, especially with highly educated persons, and creating possibilities for their return					
<i>Indicators:</i> Number of implemented programmes for engagement of scientists, engineering personnel, medical personnel from abroad					
<i>Sources:</i> MES; Ministry of Economy; Ministry of Health; Universities and scientific institutes					
Advanced highly educated and scientific activity in the country with the support of the scientific diaspora	Design programmes for engagement of scientists from abroad in the realization of educational and research projects	» Number of implemented programmes » Number of scientists engaged <i>Sources:</i> MES; Universities and scientific institutes	» MES » Universities and scientific institutes	Continuous	Universities and scientific institutes
Address constrains in the Macedonian economy through transfer of knowledge – brain gain	Design programmes for hiring of engineers from abroad in the implementation of the projects in the private sector	Number of implemented programmes <i>Source:</i> MES	» MES » Ministry for Local Self-government	Continuous	MES
Improved conditions in the health sector through transfer of knowledge – brain gain	Design programmes to recruit medical personnel from abroad in the implementation of projects in the health sector	Number of implemented programmes <i>Source:</i> Ministry of Health	Ministry of Health	Continuous	Ministry of Health

<p>Specific objective 3.d Create favorable conditions for investments by returnees and establish different forms of cooperation for transfer of their knowledge and entrepreneurial skills</p> <p><i>Indicators:</i> Number of implemented programmes for transfer of knowledge and entrepreneurial skills of returnees</p> <p><i>Sources:</i> Foreign Investment Agency; Centers for Regional Planning</p>					
Continuation of the economic activity of returnees and increase of the number of implemented investments projects	Creation of brochures on the investment opportunities in the real sector through PPP	» Number of printed brochures » Number of returnees who have received brochures <i>Sources:</i> Foreign Investment Agency; Centers for Regional Planning	» Ministry for Local Self-government » Foreign Investment Agency » Centers for Regional Planning	Continuous	Ministry for Local Self-government
Introduction of returnees to the procedures and benefits of starting a business	Provision of access to information about the benefits and procedures for investments by creating websites	Number of created websites for the returnees <i>Source:</i> Foreign Investment Agency	» Ministry for Local Self-government » Foreign Investment Agency	Continuous	Ministry for Local Self-government
Increased transfer of knowledge and international experience for stimulation of entrepreneurship	Creation of programmes for transfer of knowledge and entrepreneurial skills of returnees	Number of implemented programmes <i>Source:</i> Centers for Regional Planning; Foreign Investment Agency	» Ministry for Local Self-government » Centers for Regional Planning » Foreign Investment Agency	Continuous	Ministry for Local Self-government
<p>Regular migration – Immigration</p>					
<p>Strategic goal 1. Harmonize the national legislation with European Union legislation and strengthen the institutional capacities in the area of stay of foreigners</p> <p><i>Indicators:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Adopted new Law on Foreigners » Available data from IBAS » Number of completed trainings <p><i>Sources:</i> MFA; MLSP; Ministry of Interior</p>					
<p>Specific objective 1.a Harmonize the national legislation with the European Union legislation in the area of stay of foreigners</p> <p><i>Indicators:</i> Adopted new Law on Foreigners and by-laws and its continuous alignment with European Union legislation</p> <p><i>Sources:</i> Ministry of Interior</p>					
Introduced additional grounds for issuance of residence permit to foreigners	Adoption of a new law on foreigners and its by-laws regulating the grounds for issuance of residence permit to foreigners	Adopted new Law on Foreigners and by-laws (Published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia) <i>Source:</i> Ministry of Interior	» MFA » Ministry of Interior	First Quarter 2015, (by-laws – six months after the adoption of the law)	No implications
Facilitated and accelerated procedure for issuance of residence permit and work permit	Adoption of a new law on foreigners and its by-laws regulating the issuance of residence permits and work permits	Adopted new Law on Foreigners and by-laws (Published in the "Official Gazette of RM") <i>Source:</i> Ministry of Interior	» MFA » Ministry of Interior » Employment Service Agency	First Quarter 2015, (by-laws – six months after the adoption of the law)	No implications
Implemented standards and procedures for the return of third country citizens with irregular stay	Adoption of a new law on foreigners and its by-laws regarding the return of third country citizens with irregular stay	Adopted new Law on Foreigners and by-laws (Published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia) <i>Source:</i> Ministry of Interior	» MFA » Ministry of Interior	First Quarter 2015, (by-laws – six months after the adoption of the law)	No implications
Harmonized Law on Foreigners with European Union legislation in the area of stay of foreigners	Continuous harmonization of the Law on Foreigners with the amendments in the European Union regulations on residence of foreigners	Adopted new Law on Foreigners and by-laws (Published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia) <i>Source:</i> Ministry of Interior	» MFA » Ministry of Interior	Continuous	No implications

<p>Specific objective 1.b Enhance the institutional capacities in the area of stay of foreigners</p> <p><i>Indicators:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Operational data exchange among the institutions involved in IBAS » Number of trainings, seminars, courses <p><i>Source:</i> Ministry of Interior</p>					
Full functionality of the IBAS by connecting the MFA, MLSP and the Employment Service Agency	Implementation of the second phase of the project Integrated database of foreigners	Operational data exchange among the involved institutions <i>Sources:</i> MFA; MLSP; Ministry of Interior	» MFA » MLSP » Ministry of Interior Employment Service Agency	First Quarter 2015	» MFA » MLSP » Ministry of Interior
Efficient implementation of the legislation in the area of residence of foreigners	Organize training courses and seminars aimed at enhancing the skills and knowledge of the staff in the relevant institutions	Number of organized trainings, seminars, courses <i>Sources:</i> MFA; MLSP; Ministry of Interior	» MLSP » Ministry of Interior	Continuous	» MLSP » Ministry of Interior
Legal migration – Immigration					
<p>Strategic goal 2. Facilitate access of foreigners with regulated stay to their rights and solve the status of persons who originate from the former Yugoslav republics</p> <p><i>Indicators:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Open and functional Information Office for Foreigners » Number of implemented programmes in support of the dialogue between immigrants and the domestic population » Adoption of a new Law on Aliens and by-laws regarding the status of the people from the former Yugoslav republics <p><i>Source:</i> MLSP, Ministry of Interior</p>					
<p>Specific objective 2.a Establish an information office regarding the manner and procedures for exercising the rights for integration of the foreigners in the Republic of Macedonia guaranteed by law</p> <p><i>Indicators:</i> Number of people who have used the services of the Information Office for Foreigners</p> <p><i>Sources:</i> MLSP; Ministry of Interior</p>					
Created legal preconditions for the establishment of an information office	Legislative changes for establishing the Information Office	Adopted legislative changes (published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia) <i>Source:</i> MLSP	» MLSP » Employment Service Agency	2017	No implications
Facilitated access for foreigners with regulated residence to the institutional benefits guaranteed by law	Established functional information office	» Number of people who benefited from the information office » Number of foreigners, including women, who have acquired certain rights of integration that are guaranteed by law <i>Source:</i> MLSP	» MLSP » Employment Service Agency	2017 Continuous	MLSP
<p>Specific objective 2.b Stimulate dialogue between the immigrants and the domicile population to overcome the problems of xenophobia and discrimination</p> <p><i>Indicators:</i> Number of implemented programmes for stimulation of dialogue between the immigrants and the domestic population</p> <p><i>Source:</i> MLSP, Ministry of Interior</p>					
Reduced xenophobia and discrimination against foreigners in the Republic of Macedonia	Establishment of programmes for stimulation of dialogue between immigrants and the domestic population, in order to overcome the problems of xenophobia and discrimination	Number of implemented programmes <i>Sources:</i> MLSP, Ministry of Interior	» MLSP » Ministry of Interior » Employment Service Agency	Continuous	» MLSP » Ministry of Interior

<p>Specific objective 2.c Adopt a legal decision for solving the status of people who originate from the former Yugoslav republics <i>Indicators:</i> Adopted new Law on Foreigners and by-laws regarding the status of the persons from the former Yugoslav republics <i>Source:</i> Ministry of Interior</p>					
Full integration of people who come from the former Yugoslav republics	Adoption of a new law on foreigners and its by-laws regarding the status of the people from the former Yugoslav republics	Adopted new Law on Foreigners and by-laws (Published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia) <i>Source:</i> Ministry of Interior	» MFA » Ministry of Interior	First Quarter 2015 (by-laws – six months after adoption of the law)	No implications
<p>Specific objective 2.d Improve the social safety of the foreigners residing in Macedonia <i>Indicators:</i> Number of signed contracts for social insurance <i>Source:</i> MLSP</p>					
Concluded new interstate agreements on social insurance	Implementation of measures for signing interstate agreements on social insurance	Number of signed contracts <i>Source:</i> MLSP	MLSP	Continuous	MLSP
<p>Irregular migration and smuggling of migrants</p>					
<p>Strategic goal 1. Enhance efficiency of the relevant institutions in the detection and prevention of irregular migration <i>Indicators:</i> » Number of meetings, participation in Frontex events, conducted trainings, signed Cooperation Protocols » Established joint contact centre with Greece » Adopted new Law on Foreigners and by-laws and changes in the law on border operations and by-laws » Adopted Strategy and action plan for development of the border police, fully equipped mobile units and number of completed trainings » Adopted National Strategy on Integrated Border Management for the 2015–2019 period and implementation of the action plan <i>Sources:</i> Ministry of Interior, MFA, MLSP</p>					
<p>Specific objective 1.a Enhance inter-agency and bilateral cooperation to continuously monitor the situation of irregular migration <i>Indicators:</i> » Number of meetings, participation in Frontex events » Number of signed Cooperation Protocols » Number of completed trainings <i>Sources:</i> Ministry of Interior; other responsible ministries</p>					
Continuous monitoring of the situation of irregular migration in the region and beyond	Regular exchange of statistical data with Frontex	Number of exchanged statistical data <i>Source:</i> Ministry of Interior	Ministry of Interior	Continuous, weekly and monthly	No implications
	Regular participation at the meetings of the Frontex Network for Risk Analysis in the Western Balkans	Number of participations at the meetings <i>Source:</i> Ministry of Interior	Ministry of Interior	Continuous, based on the Frontex's invitation	Frontex
	Regular organization of meetings at local, regional and central level with relevant authorities in neighbouring countries	Number of meetings held <i>Source:</i> Ministry of Interior	Ministry of Interior	Continuous, according to a mutually agreed dynamics	From Ministry of Interior's budget
	Regular participation in meetings, conferences, workshops on irregular migration	Number of participations to the events <i>Source:</i> Ministry of Interior	Ministry of Interior	Continuous	From Ministry of Interior's budget, organizers, international organizations
	Use of the established web platforms for the exchange of statistical data and early warning in the region	Web platforms are actively used <i>Source:</i> Ministry of Interior	» Ministry of Interior » Authorized personnel with access to the platforms	Continuous, according to the needs	No implications
Monitoring of irregular migration flows and use of public media and the official foreign sources for obtaining data on the irregular migration flows	The data are used in the preparation of the national risk analysis <i>Source:</i> Ministry of Interior	Ministry of Interior	Continuous	No implications	
Preparation of a risk analysis for irregular migration on a strategic, regional and local level	Prepared risk analysis <i>Source:</i> Ministry of Interior	Ministry of Interior	According to a mutually agreed dynamics	No implications	

Further strengthening of the inter-agency cooperation in the fight against irregular migration	Enhancement of the existing and signing of new memorandums and cooperation protocols	Number of signed and revised protocols on cooperation Source: Ministry of interior	» Ministry of interior ministries » Other responsible ministries	According to needs	No implications
	Joint trainings and drills with the representatives of other relevant ministries	Number of implemented trainings and drills Source: Ministry of interior	» Ministry of interior ministries » Other responsible ministries	Continuous, according to the training plan	From Ministry of interior's budget
	Regular meetings with representatives of other relevant ministries	Number of meetings Source: Ministry of interior	» Ministry of interior ministries » Other responsible ministries	Continuous, according to the needs	No implications
	Regular exchange of information with other relevant ministries	Number of exchanged information Source: Ministry of interior	» Ministry of interior ministries » Other responsible ministries	Continuous, according to the needs	No implications
Specific objective 1.b Promote and further operationalize the regional and international cooperation to efficiently address the irregular migration					
<i>Indicators:</i>					
» Number of implemented joint operational activities and projects					
» Established joint contact centre with Greece					
Source: Ministry of Interior					
Extension and strengthening of cooperation with Frontex	Participation in the operational activities of Frontex	Number of operational activities in which it was participated and number of participants Source: Ministry of interior	Ministry of interior	Continuous, on Frontex's invitation	Frontex
	Participation in meetings and other events organized by Frontex	Number of participations Source: Ministry of interior	Ministry of interior	Continuous, on Frontex's invitation	Frontex
	Participation in preparation of products of the Frontex risk analysis	The reports to to Frontex are regularly submitted Source: Ministry of interior	Ministry of interior	Continuous, weekly, monthly, yearly	No implications
	Participation in preparation of training materials for Frontex	Number of participations Source: Ministry of interior	Ministry of interior	Continuous, on Frontex's invitation	Frontex
Established coordinated regional approach and mutual cooperation in dealing with irregular migration	Participation in joint and coordinated operations	Number of participations Source: Ministry of interior	Ministry of interior	Continuous, by a mutual agreement	From Ministry of interior's budget
	Initiation of new regional projects and programmes aimed at capacity-building for dealing with irregular immigration and improving the conditions for the stay of irregular migrants and asylum-seekers	Number of new regional projects Source: Ministry of interior	Ministry of interior	Continuous	Projects
	Implementation of regional and international projects	Number of implemented projects Source: Ministry of interior	Ministry of interior	Continuous	Projects
	Implementation of joint flights for return of citizens of third countries	Number of implemented joint flights Source: Ministry of interior	Ministry of interior	Continuous, according to the needs	Budget and foreign aid
High levels of bilateral cross-border police cooperation with the competent authorities of the neighbouring countries	Exchange of information through the established joint contact centres for police cooperation	Number of exchanged information through the established joint contact centres for police cooperation Source: Ministry of interior	Ministry of interior	Continuous	No implications
	Establishment of a joint contact centre with R. of Greece	Established joint contact centre for police cooperation Source: Ministry of interior	Ministry of interior	2015	From Ministry of interior's budget
	Joint trainings and drills	Number of trainings and drills Source: Ministry of interior	Ministry of interior	Continuous	From Ministry of interior's budget
	Implementation of joint patrols	Number of implemented joint patrols Source: Ministry of interior	Ministry of interior	Continuous, according to mutually agreed dynamics	No implications

<p>Specific objective 1.c Harmonize national legislation with the European Union legislation in the area of border operations, continuously keeping trace of novelties in the European Union legislation and their transposition in the national legislation</p> <p><i>Indicators:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Adopted new Law on Foreigners and by-laws » Adopted amendments to the Law and by-laws on border management <p><i>Sources:</i> MFA, MLSP, Ministry of Interior</p>					
<p>Compliance with the European Union legislative framework and the best practices</p>	<p>Preparation and adoption of a new law on foreigners and appropriate by-laws</p>	<p>Adopted new Law on Foreigners and by-laws (Published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia)</p> <p><i>Sources:</i> MFA; MLSP; Ministry of Interior</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » MFA » MLSP » Ministry of Interior, 	<p>2015</p>	<p>No implications</p>
	<p>Amendment of the law on border management and other laws and regulations relating to the border operations to comply with the amendments of the European Union legislation</p>	<p>Adopted amendments to the law on border management and regulations (published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia)</p> <p><i>Source:</i> Ministry of Interior</p>	<p>Ministry of Interior</p>	<p>Continuous, on the basis of the previously adopted European Union rules and regulations</p>	<p>No implications</p>
<p>Specific objective 1.d Improve material-technical and human capacities of the border police</p> <p><i>Indicators:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Adopted Strategy and action plan for development of the border police » Technically equipped mobile unit » Number of implemented trainings » Adopted National Strategy and Action Plan on Integrated Border Management for the 2015–2019 period <p><i>Sources:</i> Ministry of Interior; Other responsible ministries</p>					
<p>Strengthened capacities of the border police</p>	<p>Adoption of a strategy and action plan for the development of the border police (within the Strategy for Development of the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Macedonia)</p>	<p>Adopted a strategy and action plan for development of the border police</p> <p><i>Source:</i> Ministry of Interior</p>	<p>Ministry of Interior</p>	<p>2015</p>	<p>IPA 2010, National co-financing</p>
	<p>Adoption of an anti-corruption programme for the border police (within the anti-corruption programme of the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Macedonia)</p>	<p>Adopted programme</p> <p><i>Source:</i> Ministry of Interior</p>	<p>Ministry of Interior</p>	<p>2015</p>	<p>IPA 2010/ National co-financing</p>
	<p>Development of a concept of police intelligence within the central, regional and local police departments and regional centres for border affairs within the Bureau for Public Security</p>	<p>Final report of the project</p> <p><i>Source:</i> Ministry of Interior</p>	<p>Ministry of Interior</p>	<p>2015–2016</p>	<p>IPA</p>
	<p>Connection of six police stations for border surveillance with the central database</p>	<p>Connect all police stations to the central database</p> <p><i>Source:</i> Ministry of Interior</p>	<p>Ministry of Interior</p>	<p>2015</p>	<p>From Ministry of Interior's budget</p>
	<p>Strengthening of capacities in dealing with irregular migration and trafficking in human beings (through the participation in the project activities of IOM)</p>	<p>Number of employees covered with the capacity-building activities</p> <p><i>Source:</i> Ministry of Interior</p>	<p>Other responsible ministries in cooperation with Ministry of Interior</p>	<p>Continuous</p>	<p>Projects</p>
	<p>Preparation and implementation of a project to strengthen the capacities of the border police in detecting all forms of cross-border crime</p>	<p>Final report of the project</p> <p><i>Source:</i> Ministry of Interior</p>	<p>Ministry of Interior</p>	<p>Projects</p>	<p>Projects</p>
	<p>Implementation of the report for minimum/maximum standards of technical equipping of the police stations for border control and border surveillance, police stations for securing the State border and mixed police stations, according to the approved funding</p>	<p>Improved technical equipment standards of the police stations for border control</p> <p><i>Source:</i> Ministry of Interior</p>	<p>Ministry of Interior</p>	<p>Continuous, by previously agreed dynamics</p>	<p>From Ministry of Interior's budget and donations</p>
	<p>Technical equipping of the mobile unit for suppression of cross-border crime and compensatory measures</p>	<p>The mobile unit is fully technically equipped.</p> <p><i>Source:</i> Ministry of Interior</p>	<p>Ministry of Interior</p>	<p>2015/2016</p>	<p>From Ministry of Interior's budget and donations</p>

Upgrading of System for Integrated Border Management (IBM)	Training of the border police according to the national curriculum for advanced and special trainings for the border police	Number of implemented trainings Source: Ministry of Interior	Ministry of Interior	Continuous	From Ministry of Interior's budget and foreign donations
	Upgrading the existing database of specimens and forged documents	Increased number of specimens and documents in the base Source: Ministry of Interior	Ministry of Interior	Continuous	From Ministry of Interior's budget
	Integrated Border Management – completed implementation of the TETRA standards – Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) 2009	Full implementation of TETRA standards Source: Ministry of Interior	Ministry of Interior and other responsible ministries	2016	From Ministry of Interior's budget and IPA 2009
	Adoption of a National Strategy and Action Plan on Integrated Border Management for the 2015–2019 period	Adoption of National Strategy and Action Plan Source: Ministry of Interior	National Coordination Centre on Integrated Border Management and the responsible ministries	2015	No implications
	Implementation of the Action Plan for the development of the established system of IBM	Implementation of Action Plan Source: Ministry of Interior	All responsible ministries	2015–2019	From Ministry of Interior's budget
	Implementation of the Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) between the institutions with IBM competences and initiating procedures for signing new MOUs	Number of audited and signed MOUs Source: Ministry of Interior	Responsible ministries	Continuous activity	From Ministry of Interior's budget
	Strengthening the capacities of the agencies with border management competences for an appropriate response to the increased migration flows caused by humanitarian crises	Number of trainings conducted Source: Responsible ministries	Responsible ministries	Continuous activity	Project activities

Irregular migration and smuggling of migrants**Strategic goal 2.** Respecting the rights and protection of the vulnerable categories of migrants*Indicators:*

- » Number of accommodation facilities (total, women, children)
- » Enhanced SOPs for receipt at the border crossings
- » Number of irregular migrants who used interpretation assistance
- » Number of completed trainings; number of people trained
- » Implemented standard procedures for voluntary return of migrants

Source: MFA; MLSP; Ministry of Interior

Specific objective 2.a Respecting the rights and protection of the vulnerable categories of migrants is enhanced in line with the international standards*Indicators:*

- » Number of accommodation facilities (total, women, children)
- » Improved SOPs for receipt at the border crossings
- » Number of people (irregular migrants) who used interpretation assistance
- » Number of completed trainings

Sources: MLSP; Ministry of Interior

Enhanced standards for receipt and treatment of irregular migrants by improving the mechanisms for identifying the migrants' specifics and needs, their referral, placement and protection	Improvement of the capacities for reception and accommodation of irregular migrants, especially the vulnerable categories (unaccompanied minors, women victims of violence and/or torture)	» Number of accommodation facilities » Number of appropriate capacities for accommodation of women and children <i>Sources:</i> MLSP; Ministry of Interior	» MLSP » Ministry of Interior	2015–2020	» Budget » International foundations and donations
	Development and/or improvement of the SOPs, regulations and other acts governing the shelters' operation	Prepared/improved SOPs and/ or other acts <i>Sources:</i> Ministry of Interior	Ministry of Interior	2016	» Ministry of Interior » International organizations
	Development and/or improvement of the SOPs for reception at the border crossings, regulations and other acts governing the operation of the same in terms of properly identifying the needs of the vulnerable categories of irregular migrants (unaccompanied minors, victims of violence and/or torture, women, families)	Prepared/improved SOP and/ or other acts <i>Source:</i> Ministry of Interior	» Ministry of Interior » Border Police	2015	» Ministry of Interior » International organizations
	Establishment and implementation of standards for determining and accomplishing the best interests of the minors (unaccompanied and/or separated minors)	Prepared SOPs for determining and accomplishing the best interests of the minors (unaccompanied and/or separated children) <i>Sources:</i> MLSP; Ministry of Interior	» MLSP » Ministry of Interior	2016	» MLSP » Ministry of Interior, » International organizations and donations » MLSP » Ministry of Interior » International organizations and donations
	Preparation of brochures on the status, rights and obligations of the irregular migrants, their translation in the languages spoken by the migrants	Prepared brochures and number of languages in which they are translated and printed <i>Sources:</i> MLSP; Ministry of Interior	» MLSP » Ministry of Interior » International organizations	2015	» MLSP » Ministry of Interior » International organizations and donations
	Operationalization of programmes for irregular migrants (medical and legal assistance, counselling, assistance in establishing contacts with family or friends, appointment of a guardian for the unaccompanied minors)	Number of programmes and the number of persons who were involved at the same <i>Sources:</i> MLSP; Ministry of Interior	» MLSP » Ministry of Interior » Civil sector	2015–2016	Republic of Macedonia's budget

<p>Establishment of mechanisms (through the use of material, technical and/or human resources) for interpretation from/to the languages spoken by the irregular migrants in order to establish an effective communication and better protection</p> <p>Training of professionals from the border police and other institutions that are in direct contact with the irregular migrants in order to protect the rights of the vulnerable categories of migrants, as well as to facilitate the legal flow of goods and people and prevent irregular flows</p>	<p>Number of people (irregular migrants) that benefited from interpretation assistance <i>Source:</i> Ministry of Interior</p> <p>Number of trainings conducted and number of professional trained <i>Sources:</i> MLSP; Ministry of Interior</p>	<p>Ministry of Interior</p> <p>» MLSP » Ministry of Interior » Office of the Public Prosecutor » International organizations</p>	<p>2015–2016</p> <p>2015–2019</p>	<p>» Budget » International organizations and donations</p> <p>» Ministry of Interior » International organizations and donations</p>	
<p>Specific objective 2.b Enhance mechanisms for return and readmission of irregular migrants <i>Indicators:</i> Number of signed protocols; Implemented standard procedures for voluntary return of migrants <i>Source:</i> MFA; MLSP; Ministry of Interior</p>					
<p>Enhanced mechanisms for readmission and return of irregular migrants in their countries of origin or entry</p>	<p>Signed Protocols for implementation of the readmission agreement with Greece</p> <p>Signing of a memorandum for voluntary return of persons under international protection between Macedonia and Kosovo/UNSC 1244 (from the Kosovo crisis in 1999)</p> <p>» Establishment of standard procedures for assisted voluntary return of migrants to their countries of origin » Organization of trainings for implementation of the assisted voluntary return » Implementation of the assisted voluntary return of persons/migrants who are not in need of international protection</p>	<p>Signed Protocol <i>Sources:</i> MFA; Ministry of Interior</p> <p>Signed Protocol <i>Sources:</i> MFA; Ministry of Interior</p> <p>» Prepared SOPs and number of persons returned according to the SOP » Number of professionals included in the trainings <i>Sources:</i> MLSP; Ministry of Interior</p>	<p>» MFA » Ministry of Interior</p> <p>» MFA » Ministry of Interior</p> <p>» MLSP » Ministry of Interior</p>	<p>2015</p> <p>2015</p> <p>2015–2016</p>	<p>No implications</p> <p>No implications</p> <p>» Ministry of Interior » International organizations and funds</p>
<p>Asylum</p> <p>Strategic goal 1. Harmonize national legislation and issuance of identification documents in the area of asylum in accordance with the amendments of the European Union legislation</p> <p><i>Indicators:</i></p> <p>» Adopted new legislation harmonized with the EU directives » Number of issued identification documents » Established legal basis for introduction of compensation to the asylum-seekers <i>Sources:</i> MLSP; Ministry of Interior</p> <p>Specific objective 1.a Harmonize the national legislation and procedures for issuing documents in the area of asylum with the European Union legislation</p> <p><i>Indicators:</i></p> <p>» Adopted new Law on Asylum and temporary protection and a new rulebook » Number of issued identity documents to persons under international protection <i>Source:</i> MLSP; Ministry of Interior</p> <p>» Established minimum standards for granting a temporary protection in the event of a mass influx of displaced persons » Established standards for third country nationals or stateless persons who are under international protection » Adopted regulations for family reunification</p>					
<p>Adoption of a new Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection in order to comply with the Directive 2001/55/EC of the Council, Directive 2011/95/EC of the European Parliament and the Council and Directive 2003/86/EC</p> <p>Adoption of a rulebook in line with the new Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection</p>	<p>Adopted new Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection (published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia) <i>Sources:</i> MLSP; Ministry of Interior</p> <p>Adopted rulebook (published in Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia) <i>Source:</i> Ministry of Interior</p>	<p>» MLSP » Ministry of Interior</p> <p>Ministry of Interior</p>	<p>2016</p> <p>2017</p>	<p>No implications</p> <p>No implications</p>	

Harmonization of the procedure for issuance of identity documents to persons under international protection in line with the European Union legislation	Improvement of the procedure for issuing identity documents to people under international protection	Number of issued identity documents to persons under international protection <i>Source:</i> Ministry of Interior	Ministry of Interior	Continuous	Ministry of Interior
Specific objective 1.b Introduce the right to financial compensation for asylum-seekers					
<i>Indicators:</i> » Established working group » Adopted amendments of the Law on Social Protection <i>Source:</i> MLSP					
Amendments to the Law on Social Protection that will regulate the right for compensation of the asylum-seekers that will be accommodated in the Reception Centre for Asylum-seekers	Creation of a working group to deal with the proposed changes Adoption of the Amendments of the Law on Social Protection for regulation of the right for compensation of asylum-seekers	Started a procedure for preparation of legislative changes <i>Source:</i> MLSP Adopted amendments of the Law on Social Protection (published in Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia) <i>Source:</i> MLSP	MLSP MLSP	2017 2017	No implications No implications
Asylum					
Strategic goal 2. Continuous strengthening of the capacities of the MLSP and Ministry of Interior in the area of asylum					
<i>Indicators:</i> Number of employees, implemented trainings and new available services in the Reception Centre for Asylum-seekers <i>Source:</i> MLSP; NGOs					
Specific objective: Enhance conditions in the reception facility for asylum-seekers					
<i>Indicators:</i> » Number of new employees » Number of implemented trainings and new services in the Reception Centre <i>Sources:</i> MLSP; NGOs					
Established SOPs for the reception of asylum-seekers	Personnel and technical equipping of the Reception Centre for Asylum-seekers in Vizbegovo	» Number of new employees in the Reception Centre » Number of implemented trainings <i>Source:</i> MLSP	MLSP	2015	MLSP
Introduction of new and improved services in the Reception Centre	Inclusion of NGOs in the work of the institution	Number of new services provided to the asylum-seekers <i>Source:</i> MLSP	» MLSP » NGOs	2015	MLSP
Visa regime					
Strategic goal 1. Further harmonize visa regime and visa policy with the European Union <i>acquis communautaire</i>					
<i>Indicators:</i> » Adopted new Law on Foreigners » Amendments of the rulebook on issuance of visas to foreigners <i>Source:</i>					
Specific objective 1.a Further harmonize the Macedonian legislation in the area of visa regime and visa policy with the European Union regulation					
<i>Indicators:</i> Adopted new Law on Foreigners and its harmonization with the European Union legislation in the field of visa regime <i>Source:</i> MFA; Ministry of Interior					
Abolished/ Introduced short-stay visas for third-country nationals	Adjustment of the Law on Foreigners with the European Council's Regulation no. 539/2001	Adopted amendments of the Law on Foreigners (published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia) <i>Source:</i> MFA	MFA	Continuous	No implications

Issuance of visas at the border crossing by the Ministry of Interior	Adjustment of the Law on Foreigners with the Regulation (EC) no. 810/2009 of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe for establishing Visas Code from 13 July 2009	Adopted new Law on Foreigners (published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia) Sources: MFA; Ministry of Interior	» MFA » Ministry of Interior	Fourth Quarter 2015	No implications
Adopted procedures on the manner of abolishing the visa sticker for the annulment and revocation of the visa's validity	Adjustment of the Law on Foreigners with the Regulation (EC) no. 810/2009 of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe for establishing of Visas Code of the community (Visa Code), from 13 July 2009	Adopted new Law on Foreigners (published in Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia) Sources: MFA; Ministry of Interior	» MFA » Ministry of Interior	Fourth Quarter 2015	No implications
Introduced unified form of invitation/ guarantee letter for obtaining Macedonian visa	Adjustment of the Law on Foreigners with the Regulation (EC) no. 810/2009 of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe for establishing of Visas Code of the community, from 13 July 2009	Adopted new Law on Foreigners (published in Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia) Sources: MFA; Ministry of Interior	» MFA » Ministry of Interior	Fourth Quarter 2015	No implications
Signed agreements with external service providers and commercial intermediaries for implementation of the visa application process	Adjustment of the Law on Foreigners with the Regulation (EC) no. (EC) no. 810/2009 of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe for establishing of Visas Code, from 13 July 2009	Adopted a new Law on Foreigners (published in Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia) Sources: MFA; Ministry of Interior	» MFA » Ministry of Interior	Fourth Quarter 2015	MFA
Taking biometrics data (fingerprints) when applying for visa	Adjustment of the Law on Foreigners with the Regulation (EC) no. 810/2009 of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe for establishing Visas Code, from 13 July 2009	Amendments to the Law on Foreigners (published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia) Sources: MFA; Ministry of Interior	» MFA » Ministry of Interior	Fourth Quarter 2016	MFA
Introduced right to appeal for the rejected visa applicants	Harmonization of the Law on foreigners with the European Union regulation (EC) no. 810/2009 of the European Parliament and the Council of Europe for establishing a Visa Code from 13 July 2009	Amendments of the Law on Foreigners (published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia) Sources: MFA; Ministry of Interior	» MFA » Ministry of Interior	Fourth Quarter 2016	» Government » Appeal Commission
Specific objective 1.b Amend the rulebook on visas according to the amendments of the Law on Foreigners and prepare other relevant documents Indicators: Adopted amendments of the rulebook on visa issuance to foreigners Sources: MFA; Ministry of Interior					
Introduced form for issuance of visa to foreign passports/ documents that are not recognized by the Republic of Macedonia	Harmonization of the Law on Foreigners with the Regulation (EC) no. 333/2002 of the Council of 18 February 2002	Amendment of the rulebook on the manner of issuance of visas to foreigners, extension and shortening of their validity, revocation and cancellation of visas, as well as on the visa format and the manner of keeping of records Sources: MFA; Ministry of Interior	» MFA » Ministry of Interior	Fourth Quarter 2015	MFA

Visa regime					
<p>Strategic goal 2. Strengthen the institutional capacities in the area of visa regime and improving the N-VIS</p> <p><i>Indicators:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Fully equipped N-VIS » Enhanced capacities of the staff at border crossings » Electronic issuance of visas in the newly opened diplomatic and consular representations <p><i>Source:</i> MFA</p>					
<p>Specific objective 2.a Upgrade and maintain equipment for N-VIS</p> <p><i>Indicators:</i> Fully equipped N-VIS</p> <p><i>Source:</i> MFA</p>					
The Visa Centre, DCMs of the Republic of Macedonia abroad and the other users of N-VIS are technically equipped	Equipping all users of N-VIS with new equipment or technical upgrade and its maintenance	Fully functional and equipped N-VIS <i>Source:</i> MFA	MFA	Continuous	MFA
<p>Specific objective 2.b Strengthen the staff capacities at the border crossings of the Republic of Macedonia, as well as in the DCMs</p> <p><i>Indicators:</i> Improved knowledge and skills of the staff at the border crossings</p> <p><i>Source:</i> MFA</p>					
Enhanced knowledge and skills of the employees at the border crossings of the Republic of Macedonia, in the DCMs abroad, Visa Centre and the other users of N-VIS	Organization of trainings and lectures on the legislation regulating the visa policy and the usage of N-VIS	Fully trained personnel that use the N-VIS <i>Source:</i> MFA	MFA	Continuous	No implications
<p>Specific objective 2.c Connect the newly opened DCMs abroad to N-VIS</p> <p><i>Indicators:</i> Available electronic issuance of visa in the newly opened diplomatic and consular representations</p> <p><i>Source:</i> MFA</p>					
Full connectivity of N-VIS with the newly opened diplomatic and consular offices abroad	Connecting the newly opened diplomatic and consular offices with N-VIS	Available electronic issuance of visas in the newly opened DCMs abroad <i>Source:</i> MFA	MFA	Continuous	MFA
Citizenship					
<p>Strategic goal 1. Further harmonize and improve the policies on citizenship</p> <p><i>Indicators:</i> Adopted amendments in the area of the citizenship</p> <p><i>Source:</i></p>					
<p>Specific objective 1.a Monitoring and compliance with European Union legislation in the area of the citizenship</p> <p><i>Indicators:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Harmonized legislation in the area of the citizenship » Number of identified individuals in risk to be without citizenship » Number of solved cases of persons without citizenship » Number of issued passports and birth certificates to the citizens who live abroad <p><i>Sources:</i> MFA; MLSP; Ministry of interior; Ministry of Justice – OMRBMD</p>					
Harmonized domestic legislation with the changes of the European Union legislation	Transposition of the new provisions of the European directives that regulate the citizenship	Adopted amendments (published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia) <i>Source:</i> Ministry of interior	» MLSP » Ministry of interior » Ministry of Justice – OMRBMD	Continuous	No implications

<p>Specific objective 1.b Improve conditions in the area of statelessness</p> <p><i>Indicators:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Number of individuals identified with risk of absence of citizenship » Number of solved cases of persons without a citizenship <p><i>Sources:</i> MLSP; Ministry of Interior; Ministry of Justice – OMRBMD</p>					
	Conducted analysis to determine the situation in terms of individuals without citizenship	Number of individuals identified as persons with risk related to the lack of a citizenship <i>Sources:</i> MLSP; Ministry of Interior; Ministry of Justice – OMRBMD	» MLSP » Ministry of Interior » Ministry of Justice – OMRBMD	2015–2016	No implications
Decreased number of individuals who are at risk to be without citizenship	Analysis and assessment of the need for changes in the legislation	Adopted amendments in legislation (published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia) <i>Source:</i> Ministry of Interior; Ministry of Justice – OMRBMD	» Ministry of Interior » Ministry of Justice – OMRBMD	Second Quarter 2016	No implications
	Solution to individual cases of people without citizenship	Number of solved cases <i>Sources:</i> Ministry of Interior; Ministry of Justice – OMRBMD	» Ministry of Interior » Ministry of Justice – OMRBMD	2017	No implications
<p>Specific objective 1.c Create conditions for facilitated access to documents from the Republic of Macedonia to the citizens who live abroad</p> <p><i>Indicators:</i> Number of issued passports and birth certificates <i>Source:</i> MFA; Ministry of Interior; Ministry of Justice – OMRBMD</p>					
Issued passports and birth certificates from the registers abroad	Enable significant number of DCMs abroad for issuance of passports abroad	Number of issued passports <i>Source:</i> MFA; Ministry of Interior	» MFA » Ministry of Interior	Continuous	Within MFA's budget
	Creation of conditions for issuance of certificates from the personal registry	Number of issued birth certificates <i>Sources:</i> MFA; Ministry of Justice – OMRBMD	» MFA » Ministry of Justice – OMRBMD	Continuous	Within OMRBMD's budget
<p>Coordination and interaction of sector-specific policies and strategic documents regarding migration</p>					
<p>Strategic goal 1. Relevant sector-specific policies and strategic documents contribute to the achievement of the goals of the Migration Policy and vice versa</p> <p><i>Indicator:</i> Perception of the policymakers on the coordination of the measures and instruments of the sector-specific policies and the Migration Policy <i>Source:</i> Survey among the policymakers</p>					
<p>Specific objective: Coordinate between migration and other sector-specific policies and strategic documents</p> <p><i>Indicator:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Number of working groups » Number of coordinated measures and activities of the Migration Policy and the sectoral policies <p><i>Source:</i> Intersectoral group for creating a Migration Policy</p>					
Instruments and measures of the sector-specific policies and strategies are consistent with the goals of the Migration Policy and vice versa	Active participation of representatives from the interministerial working group on Migration Policy in other working groups for designing and implementing policies with mutual implications	Number and type of working groups in which there are nominated representatives from the interministerial group on Migration Policy Number and type of measures in the Migration Policy and other sector-specific policies that are mutually consistent <i>Source:</i> Interministerial working group on Migration Policy	Interministerial working group on Migration Policy	Continuous	No implications

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Number of Macedonian citizens in separate European and overseas receiving countries

Receiving countries	Data of the World Bank, 2010	Eurostat data		Official statistics of the countries	
		Number	Year	Number	Source of data and year
Overseas countries					
Australia	59,013			83,983	Statistics Bureau, 2006
				93,571	Population census, 2011
United States	7,892			51,955	Population census, 2002
Canada	9,901			31,265	Population census, 2001
				37,050	Statistics Office, 2006
New Zealand	870			807	Population census, 2006
European Union countries					
Austria	20,420	19,323	2013	13,696	Population census, 2006
				16,473	
Belgium	61	6,898	2013	10,667	Statistics Office, 2002
				2,535	Population census, 2007
Bulgaria	0	1,111	2013	5,071	Population census, 2001
Czech Republic	538	1,773	2013	533	Population census, 2001
				1,746	Statistics Office, 2007
Cyprus	18				
Denmark	2,689	2,653	2013	1,607	Population census, 2002
				3,815	Population census, 2008
Estonia		1	2013		
Finland	280	218	2012	23	2000
				679	2009
France	10,498	2,839	2005	2,560	Population census, 1999
Germany	99,646	77,200	2013	62,295	Federal Statistics Office, 2006
				67,147	Federal Statistics Office, 2011
Greece	1,366	747	2001	936	2001
Hungary	25	140	2013	73	2001
Ireland	79	66	2013	35	2002
Italy	101,539	74,415	2013	78,090	Statistics Institute, 2007
				92,919	2010
Latvia		2	2010		
Lithuania	1				
Luxembourg	304	356	2001	254	2001
Malta		23	2008		
Netherlands	25	856	2013	23	1995–2000
				1,091	Population census, 2012
Croatia	12,047			4,270	Population census, 2001
				4,138	Population census, 2011
United Kingdom	1,702	41,621	2005	1,284	Population census, 2001
Poland	248	54	2013	204	Population census, 2001
				316	Statistics Office, 2008
Portugal	17	21	2013	12	2001

Romania		142	2012		
Slovakia	2,883	403	2013	156	2001
				623	Population census, 2011
Other European countries					
Norway	1,040			715	Population census, 2002
				3,136	Statistics Bureau, 2007
Russian Federation				492	Population census, 2010
Switzerland	46,581			56,092	Federal Statistical Bureau, 2000
				61,668	Federal Statistical Bureau, 2012
Neighbouring countries					
Albania	6,457			4,697	1989
Bosnia and Herzegovina	20			2,278	Population census, 2005
Serbia				25,847	Population census, 2002
Other countries					
Argentina	246				
Brazil	337				
Japan	30			15	2000
Mexico	3			2	2000
Turkey	35,308			31,515	2000

Sources: World Bank (2011): Bilateral Migration Matrix (November 2010) in: <http://go.worldbank.org/JITC7NYTTO> (last access 31 May 2011) and World Bank Fact book on Migration and Remittances 2011; Eurostat; Council of Europe, Recent Demographic Developments in Europe; OECD.

Total number of Macedonian citizens in European receiving countries, 1996–2013		1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	
Country																				
European Union	33,984	54,395	61,511	71,482	79,271	107,149	109,493	119,638	137,369	189,894	152,905	169,474	179,879	193,015	179,887	184,394	202,245	196,772		
Austria						13,696	13,202	14,427	15,288	15,998	16,275	16,271	16,797	18,001			19,214	19,323		
Belgium				826		1,119	2,462	1,747						2,703	2,931	3,290	5,976	7,068	6,898	
Bulgaria						1,391								1,373	1,385		1,335	1,223	1,111	
Czech Republic														1,481	1,817	1,989	1,854	1,770	1,733	
Cyprus							761	845	843		821	1,116	1,277							
Denmark			834	1,103	1,415	1,545	1,694	1,803	1,898	1,949	2,024	2,109	2,109	2,185	2,259	2,337	2,416	2,499	2,653	
Estonia		53	80	116	131	144	150	147	155	167	163	162	162	155	170	192	199	218	1	
France				2,073				2,073		2,839										
Germany	33,984	38,774	42,550	46,167	49,420	51,841	55,986	58,250	61,019	61,105	62,093	66,219	66,433	66,196	66,651	70,140	71,517	77,200		
Greece			44		34	747	39		32	50	52	56	62	77	81	128	144	141	140	
Hungary			26			41														
Ireland															28	36	34	40	66	
Italy		11,596	13,456	16,647		21,110	26,051	28,073	34,019	51,208	58,460	63,245	74,162	78,090	89,066	92,847	89,900	85,825	74,415	
Latvia			1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	19	9	3	3	3	2			5	
Lithuania						1								12						
Luxembourg						356					3	3	9							
Malta						25								23						
Holland		449	480	505	505	500	590	646	677	711	762	762	710	711	717	764	775	843	856	
Poland								88					63	65	91	97	96	53	54	
Portugal		1	1	1	1	4	22	24	27			44	44	51	19	20	11	11	21	
Romania						1	1	120		120	121	121	121	121	120					
Slovakia										388	185	204	580	651	349	421	488	392	403	
Slovenia		2,200	2,412	2,277		3,565	4,125	4,323	3,897	4,057	4,134	5,122	5,936	7,448	7,818	9,087	8,817	9,079	9,550	
Spain		19	33	56	92	148	209	273	305	305	354	424	408	471	530	509	549	538	563	
Sweden		1,303	1,594	1,676	1,676	1,819	1,925	1,715	1,420	1,326	1,304	1,288	1,338	1,297	1,434	1,517	1,660	1,683	1,780	
United Kingdom							2,459				41,621									
Other																				
European Countries	39,611	45,330	48,723	51,403	54,597	56,191	59,136	60,421	61,141	61,381	60,362	60,184	60,426	59,909	60,043	60,426	60,741	61,631	62,534	
Iceland			3	6	10	16	17	20	18										19	
Lichtenstein	71	71	77	77	80	83	98	107	113											
Norway		113	140	178	207		289	341	334	373										
Switzerland*	39,540	45,146	48,503	51,142	54,300	56,092	58,585	59,953	60,676	60,898	60,362	60,184	60,426	59,909	60,043	60,426	60,741	61,631	62,515	
Ukraine							147													
TOTAL	73,595	99,725	110,234	122,885	133,868	163,340	168,629	180,059	198,510	251,275	213,267	229,658	239,788	253,058	240,313	245,135	263,876	259,306		

*Switzerland Migration Office data for 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013.

Sources: Eurostat (2012): Population by sex, age and citizenship (migr_poplctz) in <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>; Council of Europe, Recent Demographic developments in Europe, Switzerland Migration Office, www.bfm.admin.ch/bfm/en/home/ueberuns/kontakt.html

ASSEMBLY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

No. _____
_____ year
Skopje

President
of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia
Trajko Veljanoski, signature

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